

12 October 2019 – U12 Bees v Northwich Vickies

After a week's break, the Bees resumed with a thrilling game against top of the table Northwich Vickies.

A strong start saw wide players Menna and Georgia stretching Northwich's defence with their pace, with Raphi providing able support from a more advanced central midfield position. Emma was a willing runner too, and it wasn't long before Waverton were testing the opposing goalkeeper who made good saves from Raphi and Emma before Georgia continued her hot scoring streak, rifling into the left corner from the right hand side of the box to give the Bees a deserved lead. Captain Amelia rose to the challenge of playing against stronger attackers, and along with Sophia, made numerous crucial tackles on the edge of the Waverton box and vital interceptions when defending high. Waverton continued to make chances, but were pegged back as the League leaders showed their qualities to level the scores. However, before half-time, Georgia fired in another shot which was too hot for the goalkeeper to handle, and Millie was on hand to nonchalantly tap in her second goal of the season to give the Bees a deserved half-time lead.

After the break, Waverton continued to play with confidence and no little determination. Goalkeeper Sarina was a little busier and was alert on half-a-dozen occasions to come off her line and snuff out dangerous through balls, and left-back Elsa got her team out of trouble a few times by rescuing risky goal kicks with some commendable skill under pressure to turn away from Northwich's strikers who were ready to pounce and then surging upfield. Elsa also, along with fellow fullback Sophia – and her replacement Amelie – stopped Northwich's wingers from getting around or inside them to cut off the supply to Northwich's strikers, helped out by Menna, Georgia and Millie tracking back. In the middle of the pitch, central midfielder Ruby, playing in a deeper holding role for the first time, was magnificent in repeatedly regaining possession either by good positioning, muscling her opponents off the ball, or – on one notable occasion – stopping a surging run through the middle dead in its tracks with a crunching tackle.

Northwich though had a purple patch midway through the half and scored three in fairly quick succession to make the score 4-2. The Bees heads didn't go down though, continuing to believe in themselves, and with good reason as they kept playing great football to take the game to their unbeaten opponents. Centre-forward Raphi was excellent in her link play, repeatedly launching counter-attacks and getting the ball out to wide players Millie and Georgia with some wonderful first-time touches and Northwich's keeper was again called upon to make several good saves from Menna and Millie and cut out a couple of very dangerous crosses from Georgia as the Bees kept knocking on the door. The pressure told and with three minutes to go, Raphi bravely stabbed home from close range despite close attention from Northwich's goalkeeper to set up a grandstand finish.

It was all Waverton: Ruby was so disciplined and dominant in the centre of the pitch by this point that Northwich struggled to get past her and she was able to get forward to begin and join attacks, safe in the knowledge that behind her no-nonsense clearances from Amelia, Amelie and Elsa would keep the Bees in the opposing half. With Waverton still going forward with skill and resolve, the full-time whistle blew to end a fantastic game of football between two excellent teams. The Bees unbeaten run may have ended, but the consensus amongst parents and coaches was that was the best the girls have played this season: praise indeed bearing in mind their previous games.

After the game the girls were the quietest I think they have ever been, symptomatic of the effort they had put in, but there was no disappointment as they knew just how well they had played in the match despite the final score. The only downside to the whole day was the untimely demise of Amelia's lucky tattooed banana at the age of just two weeks after being trodden on by an unnamed coach.

Elsa was Player of the Match, as selected by her defensive partner in crime Sophia, for her constant tackling.