

Junior Football Team v Sherborne Boys School.

This promised to be the most daunting football match so far this term: playing Sherborne Boys at home. Our worst fears seemed to be confirmed when the opposition appeared, every player was bigger than most of our team. The mountain to climb seemed to have grown even bigger. At the last minute, we realised that it was their Year 10 team that had come to play a different match!.

An icy wind blew across the pitch as we lined up for the kick off. Then it started to rain! The first few minutes were played against the elements rather than the opposition. The strong, swirling wind meant that passes were only accurate if made along the ground. Fortunately, the wind was from behind us most of the time so it was more of a problem for Sherborne Boys. Our problem was to not over-hit the ball. Lyuben and Andrei were constantly chasing through balls that were just beyond their reach. Marko was unable to attempt his classic long range shots as the wind drove them in every direction except straight.

Soon our opponents began a series of relentless attacks on our goal. Jack, Ben and Etienne were magnificent in mid-field, chasing after every loose ball and linking up with our forwards. Jonny, Ken, Ahmed and Yes were equally resolute in defence, constantly pushing the attackers to the sidelines. With Mikhail absent, Nikita was our goalkeeper and he was kept very busy for the first half. We managed to withstand numerous attacks in the first half and launched several of our own. However, the Grosvenor players appeared to be the more exhausted team at half-time.

Ahmed went into goal at the beginning of the restart, whilst Nikita went to provide more height in the midfield. Early pressure gave us a corner kick but it was easily cleared by Sherborne. During the next ten minutes, our opponents launched endless attacks and we were hemmed into our goal area. The pressure was briefly lifted when a long forward pass allowed Lyuben to make a solo run. Unfortunately, there were just too many defenders and not enough support from our team. Sherborne were then awarded a couple of free kicks close to our goal, but both shots were blocked by a solid wall of defenders. By now it was obvious that our opponents had more stamina and our boys had to draw on their last reserves of energy. Sherborne boys just missed with a long range shot and then managed to miss an easy chance. Our forwards briefly managed to escape from their own half, only to be driven back. Against the run of play, we managed to secure two corners but were unable to convert either opportunity.

It was at this point that we conceded a goal and heads begun to drop. However, this team does not surrender easily and we now played some of the best football of the match. Andrei finally managed to break free from the defenders and launched a blistering shot. It was deflected by the upright. Two minutes later, Marko missed the goal by a whisker! Thirty seconds later the final whistle blew.

Although, the boys lost by a goal, I know that they realized that they had put in an excellent performance. We would welcome the opportunity for a re-match.