



Eagles U18 Boys 2008 Premiers

Against all odds - West Torrens U18's broke through for their first Premiership in many years against arch rival Brighton on Saturday 30th August at Finsbury Reserve.

Finishing the regular season in 4th spot – 7 wins / 6 losses the young Eagles were determined to go through the major round undefeated – comfortably defeating Woodville / Burnside 14-5 in the 2nd Semi Final and then getting over the top of Glenelg 9-6 in the Preliminary Final. Setting up another Grand Final battle with Brighton.

The mid season win over Brighton by 18 goals was tempered with the fact they had a few players missing on that day but would serve as a great confidence builder going into the GF. Playing on our home ground and to beat them at full strength was the motivating factor. A total team game was required to beat the “individual” game of Brighton.

The game started out slow and pressured as both teams settled but the Eagles teamwork and stick skills saw them lead 2-1 at quarter time.

The team's confidence grew by having Damien Herron in goals who was like a brick wall and had a fantastic finals series supported by breaking runs by Luke Little & Owen Retallick – who played his best game of the year. Michael Yallop (U'15) also supported our defence and had a fine season in goals when required.

By half time the lead had extended to 5-2 with our defence holding firm and our attack taking it's chances and converting. Oliver Valero & Peter Tait had 2 goals each by half time and Brayden Simpson (U'15) had chipped in for 1.

The 3rd quarter (commonly known as the premiership quarter) was exactly that – with the Eagles ramming home 5 goals to 1. Ryan Simpson exploded for 3 goals with Pete adding another 2. Brighton was shell shocked and called a stick check as a desperate attempt to slow our momentum – it failed! By the end of the 3rd quarter the score had blown out to 10-3 but the Eagles weren't finished yet.

James Harley & Matt “Beaver” Smith were controlling face-offs and alternating in defence. Quick movement out of the middle was generated by Ty King (U'15), Grant Badcock and Sam Dietrich – setting up countless scoring opportunities and applying defensive pressure when required. Henry “Chooka” Pearce was again the architect in the midfield & attack, finishing with 1 goal and 3 assists and continually putting the ball in a scoring position for our attackers to finish.

The final quarter saw the Eagles pile on another 4 goals to 1. Our attack line of Ryan, Pete & Ollie combined for 11 goals with most of the hard work coming from up the ground. Constant pressure by our defence on the Brighton attack generated numerous turnovers and our locking off on key players strangled their playmakers.

Brighton finished the game with only 4 goals. To put this into perspective, they averaged 14.5 goals per game for the season.

Coach Mark Harley and his assistants, Keith Little & Ryan Covert, had the perfect game plan to beat Brighton – identifying and neutralizing the threats / exposing the weaknesses - and the players carried out this plan to the letter.

Congratulations to players & coaches from the parents and spectators who were amazed at what a group of players can achieve when they unite and play as a “TEAM”.

U'18 EAGLES – PREMIERS 2008