

Hotscots FC v Newcastle Panthers

Saturday 28th June 2008



Hotscots starting eleven

Stevie Gray, Fraser May, Michael Black, Colin S, Kevin Rowe, Seamus Kealey, Stuart Sutherland, Alan Rogers, Paul Fleming, Darren Girdwood, Craig Anderson (subs, Nick Dickson, Stevie Blythe, Jonathan MacBride, Stuart Mallen, Stuart Parnham)
Manager : Conor Simpson
Cochrane Park, Etherstone Avenue, Newcastle, kick off 3pm.

The Hotscots travelled to Newcastle for the Panther's inaugural 11-aside game on the last Saturday in June, continuing on with their pre-World Cup preparations and training.

There was a strong showing in terms of players and the Manager probably had one of his strongest squads yet available and was therefore able to play a strong, attack-minded team with a solid defence. The only missing piece in the jigsaw puzzle was the keeper at the back, Ross.

The pitch itself was in very good condition and the weather conditions were fair also with a light breeze and a little bit of rain in the first half.

The Panthers had a strong showing for their first game and certainly showed that they meant business through their pre-match warm-up exercises and drills.

The game kicked off with some tentative forays from both sides into the opposing halves, although the dead lock was eventually broken with Hotscots building strongly which led to a free kick just outside the box on the left wing. Stu S floated it in beautifully to be met by Craig A with Michael B finally getting up good and strong to head it over the keeper into the far corner. Very pleasing in terms of battling in the box and starting to show that the training on Thursdays starting to sink in!

Unfortunately, there was a bit of disorganisation at the back approximately 5 minutes later with the Panthers attacking from a corner won by their impressive centre forward.

A mix-up with the Panthers kit meant that they had no squad numbers on their backs and this led to confusion for the Hotscots initially in terms of picking up men coming through.

The centre forward, John eventually blasted the ball with an impressive half volley into the goals following a poor clear out. Some more defensive drills on set-pieces required!

The Hotscots rallied round however, but needed a fantastic penalty save from Stevie G who had bravely stepped up to deputise for Ross. In fact it was Stevie who had just caught their centre-forward who had burst through on the edge of the box. What a fantastic recovery. Well done!

This gave the Hotscots renewed vigour and Seamus K, who had been putting in a good work-man like performance on the wing scored with a magnificent effort from well outside the 18 yard box on the left wing.

A newly buoyed team then began to take control with Paul F orchestrating things in the middle of the park and Stuart S picking up loose balls and acting as a good counterbalance to his marauding runs.

Seamus K needed to come off with blisters to be replaced by Nick D.

Stuart S then scored a superb goal again from long range with about 10 minutes to go, followed by an own goal.

Fraser M had his best game to date and really showed why he deserved starting position at left back. Colin S as ever was calm as you like, marshalling his troops in front of him with confidence. Another strong performance from Kevin R also, keeping attacks down their left wing to a minimum- he was receiving excellent support from Alan R.

All round, a thoroughly enjoyable half with some good physical displays and competitive drive in the middle of the park.

Second Half- Hotscots 4-1 Panthers

The Manager made wholesale changes at the start of the second half, bringing on Stuart P for Michael B, Jonathan McB for Fraser M, Stevie B for Kev R, Stuart M for Alan R (although Alan came on again after 5 minutes with Stuart's shoes unable to withstand the frenetic pace).

The highlight of the second half was definitely the outstanding performance from our main forward player, Craig A. Almost like someone had lit the fuse paper, he was unstoppable with a superb 4 goals taken- with good variety, strength and some excellent movement off the last man- linking up very well with Paul F.

However, the Panthers got a second through a cleared free kick for the Hotscots taken by Stuart S. Paul F collected the ball and perhaps made a wrong turn into a tide of Panthers who released their danger man again who, in fairness, scored a wonderful goal following a ranging run deep into Hotscots territory beating a hapless Stevie B unable to match his pace (easy on those fags, big man!) and thwarting Colin S.

However the Hotscots were unbowed and with Craig A's domination at the front, some superb man marking from Stevie B on the Panthers forward following his goal (marked him out of the game) and some strong performances from Craig P, Jonathan McB and Nick showing good physical presence as well.

Another penalty decision against the Hotscots with Stevie B being unfairly penalised for taking down the player in the box, Stevie G was extremely brave diving into the melee and picked up a nasty bang on the head for his efforts, luckily, the Panthers Manager, Rob, pulled his effort wide, although Stevie G had it covered.

Finally, the Captain, Paul F capped off a satisfying performance with a couple of goals- his first a well taken effort curled round the outstretched keeper and his second, and the

Hotscots' tenth, was a cheeky grass level header- mind we don't get tarred with the same brush as the Falcons, now!

Final Score- Hotscots 10-2 Panthers.

A really good result for Scotland's number one LGBT team, and a confidence booster on the back of beating a select eleven from Balfour Beatty and a good showing at a 5-a-side tournament before that.

The Hotscots will be welcoming the Panthers back to Edinburgh for the return leg on the 18th July.

Happy Days!