

Priory School Sports Report

Year 6 'It's A Knockout' Cup Match Report- Shanklin C of E Primary 1 v 0 Priory School



The Year 6 football team kicked off their 2011/2012 campaign with a trip to local neighbours Shanklin C of E Primary School in the 1st round of the new Year 6 Cup competition. With all of the island's Primary Schools now moving up to Year 6, this years competitions now sees us play 8 a-side football. We have had experience in playing Shanklin before on two previous occasions, both last season, which included the highly memorable 'mud bath' match in which we lost 7-5 and a friendly game that we won 1-0. Both games against them have been very competitive and tight matches, so we new what to expect from this game.

Unfortunately we travelled to the game with a squad of 10 due to Matt being unable to play due to illness. Matt. L made his first start in goal for the Year 6 team after his impressive performance against The Bay in the previous match, with Alex also making his debut for the school since recently joining. We started the match with a slightly different formation than to which we normally play due to playing 8-a-side football and the new players we now have compared to last season. So we started with Kit and Tom, who was making his first start outfield for the team, in defence with Mikee just in front of then. Olivier provided us with the engine in midfield, as Samuel and Aaron provide attacking support to George upfront. This game provided us with a big challenge, a new formation and players playing in unfamiliar positions, but we coped very well.



As I had asked, we started the game very brightly. We knew Shanklin were going to be a strong side to beat, especially with the new players they had compare to last year, so we knew we had to start strongly. From the off we had the impetus to attack and create chances. Within minutes we had our first opportunity with the ball falling to George, after good work from Mikee, for Aaron to shoot just wide. As the half drew on though it was evident the game was going to be won in midfield with lots of passing and tackling in the middle of the pitch, but little threat at either end. But we were playing well, defensively we were solid with Matt making a couple of good stops, but apart from that Kit and Tom were dominating defensively, winning tackles and headers with ease all game. So with Olivier and Mikee doing lots of running and chasing in midfield, it freed up Samuel and Aaron to run with the ball. Several times they both took on players only for good last ditch defending to save a goal, especially when Samuel almost went through one-on-one. The remainder of the half was very tight, but we had two very good chances before the whistle. Chance number one fell to Kit who hit a powerful corner against the post with it bouncing out to him again, a couple of centimetres further out and it could have easily have fallen to one of our players at the near post, very unlucky! The second came with Olivier winning the ball after Tom's tackle, good play from Aaron and Samuel meant that a through ball was played to George, who turned his

defender excellently to go through on goal and was about to shoot. Unluckily, he was deemed by the referee to have 'pushed' the player out of the way, although I didn't see anything wrong with it, apart from a great bit of skill from George. This signalled half time. After a very pleasing half we were very confident we could grab a result.

We started the second half as we began the first half with a solid defensive setup and some good forward passing. As the game moved on, both teams started to commit more players forward in search of a win. Shanklin did manage to create a few chances in the second half, including one that forced Matt into fine save to tip the ball round the post. We then brought on Jack and Alex in midfield to add some legs to the team. Shanklin did however have a player with a long throw-in who was hurling the ball into the box at every opportunity available, but we were able to deal with it well with our taller players like Tom, Jack and Kit heading the ball away or Matt coming out to claim the ball, a job that he did very well all game. But we were also creating chances, Tom had two long range drives go just wide of the post alongside Samuel, Alex and Aaron having shots well saved. George, who was a nuisance to the defence, was also getting chances but despite charging through the defence many times he couldn't get a clear sight of the target.



With time ticking, and the match minutes away from the end, it seemed inevitable that the game was going into extra time. But we were dealt a very cruel blow as we conceded a very unfortunate goal very late in the match. The long throw-in, that we had coped with so well with during the game, finally outdid us. It was very cruel after such an excellent performance from the boys. As the throw came in it reached the box but went short of the goal taking a bad bounce, which then bobbed up, hitting a player's knee, before heading towards the back post. It caught us unaware, but the ball seemed as it was safely going out of play before a Shanklin player popped up at the far post, sliding in to poke the ball in from a very tight angle. It was a very good finish after such a fluky bounce, but we did not deserve to be 1-0 down. So we pushed forward in search of a goal and switched Tom and George around, with Aaron now partnering Tom upfront as I urged the boys forward. Shanklin responded by pulling all but one player back to defend their lead. With only minutes left Samuel ran down the wing after a pass from Tom and had two shots well blocked before the ball fell to Mikee who powered the ball at goal with the shot tipped away. Aaron then got the ball on the edge of the area with his shot being saved, we were causing panic! Shanklin did create a chance

but Kit managed to block the ball well for a corner. Then came our best chance. Samuel skipped past one challenge, after bringing the ball out of our half, before being hacked down for a free kick. Tom stepped up and hammered the ball towards the goal, it was a heart in mouth situation as the ball sailed towards the top corner, but the keeper athletically chucked himself across the goal, tipping the ball onto the crossbar and out for a corner. Great shot, great save! This was one of the best saves I have seen in my two years as coach, and on another day I'm sure it would have gone in for a wonder goal, but it was not to be. Funnily enough, their goalkeeper then had to go off as he had to leave, so Shanklin went down to 7 players, if only he had left a few minutes before! But we couldn't muscle together another chance with so little time left and the whistle went.

Overall, a great performance in yet another closely fought game against Shanklin. We passed, defended and attacked well which is all I can ask for. Matt again had a great performance in goal, Kit had another talented improved performance and Tom had a very impressive debut in both defence and as a striker in his first outfield game. Captain Aaron and Samuel yet again put in a tiredless performances in the middle, leading the team from start to finish. Mikee gave his best performance yet and Olivier again put in a shift in defensive third to create chances for others. Special praise also goes to George who played in an unfamiliar role as a striker but his effort rewarded him with an impressive performance whilst making a nuisance to defenders and taking in my instructions well, also well done to Alex who had a very competent game on his debut. Looking at the match, it think we edged the first half and Shanklin the second, so extra time was probably the right result, but this is football and you can dominate a match and still lose. It was just unfortunate that such a good performance they got the bit of luck that we needed. But we have our heads held up high after an impressive team display and we look forward to the next match. I was especially pleased in this match with our willingness to pass the ball in attack and the want to create shots on goal during our possession, which I asked for before the match. This Shanklin team was a lot stronger than the last time we played them, so it shows our continued improvement. We are really starting to look like a competitive team now as we are playing well in all areas of the pitch. There are plenty of games to come now until around April so I'm confident that our impressive performances can continue and a win will follow. Competition for places within this football team in the school is high now due to a lot of new players joining the school, so it is good to see the players wanting to give 100% to play for the team and not loose their place.

Finally, I would like to credit our players in this game and last Wednesday's match against The Bay. It has come across to me since I became the Junior School Football Coach, especially in these matches, to how good our sportsmanship is during matches. If we commit a foul, our players will pick the other player up and shake his/her hand after the tackle as a show of respect and fair play to the other team. Despite some of the bad decisions against us in this game and others, we don't argue and get on with the job. After every game we always shake hands with the opposition- win, lose or draw. It is great to see as a lot of teams fail to do these simple things in a match, but it shows our great sportsmanship as a team and the boys and girls that play are a credit to themselves and the school.

A great performance boys, well done and pat yourself on the backs! Check back for more match reports, and pictures, soon to read about how we get on. See you next game.

Mr J Collings

Junior School Football Coach

