



NORTHWEST LIGHTNING YOUTH GIRLS

MATCH REPORT

NORTHWEST LIGHTNING YG9 v BALGOWLAH SUNS
ROUND 7 – SUNDAY 26 MAY 2024
ERN HOLMES OVAL

Summary of Game

Conditions were cold but not overly so for today's home clash against the Balgowlah Suns. After all, I was still able to hold my pen! The ground was wet from the morning dew and the ball turned into a cake of soap pretty quickly as Nikki and Alica put the girls through their pre-game warm up. Being an Eagles man, I'm used to this ground being enemy territory so it was a bit strange to have it as a home match for me! The volunteers at Penno were getting ready for a big day of footy on a day where the weather conditions looked like they were going to be quite stunning. It was early so the BBQ was being fired up, markers and gazebos were being put up and bread rolls were being precisely cut as we prepared for our match.

This of course was Indigenous Round and our players were sporting a special strip for the occasion. The jerseys looked fantastic and I found out later it was designed by GWS player Alicia Newman. The beautiful design represented the players, coaches, parents and administrators of a footy club. A thoughtful idea and something we can all relate to as it's a special experience being part of a footy club.

It wasn't long and play was underway. It was definitely a tough tussle early with neither side getting much of a chance in the forward third. Juliet, Hannah and Indi were working overtime in the middle where most of the action was taking place. The Suns had a brief period where they were on the attack but Iris, Estella and Charlotte repelled them on all fronts with some fierce defence. In fact, the defence from both sides was a real feature. None of the girls were scared to get in and make tackles in this rare scoreless first term.

The first score of the match was a Suns behind that came early in the 2nd quarter but our back three in Tilly, Juliette and Margot were working tirelessly and did well to keep the scoring to a single point. The Suns did score eventually but Iris got us going forward from the restart with a fine clearance. Juliet found some space from the kick and booted the first Lightning goal! Overall, Balgowlah had the better of the play in the 2nd term but the three backs mentioned before did a great job slowing down the momentum of our opposition.

Into the third quarter and almost immediately a clearance from the middle found Estella. She ended up being the filling in a 3 girl Balgowlah sandwich but was still able to get the handpass away to Indi who streaked away to nail our second major score! The momentum had shifted and suddenly it was the visiting team who was under pressure. Tilly got a nice handpass away to set up the next big Lightning play. Our forwards toughed it out near the goal and Charlotte was awarded a free kick from their combined hard work. Charlotte expertly drilled the ball through the sticks like a 300 game



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full forward. After the ball sailed through the posts, the crowd was treated to a post goal celebration too! After a Suns score, we were back on the attack. Unfortunately, Estella got belted in a brutal hit and she had to have a short stint on the sidelines. Not for long though.. Soon she was back on the field, kicking a smart goal for the home team with some handy pre-goal advice coming from Simon in the very neutral position of Goal Umpire.

Into the final term and the Suns started well with a few of their kicks finding their mark and impacting the scoreboard. In one play, the ball landed in the bushland behind the goals sending parents from both teams on a frantic search. This gave the girls a break and they used the time to catch up and have a chat about what they had for dinner last night. Juliet had sushi. Back to the action and Margot made a couple of nice runs in the back third and the versatile Abba who was guesting in all positions and for both teams was having an impact.

The final siren blew and girls from both teams shook hands and congratulated each other on a very competitive clash. It was time for the team song and the girls did a pretty good job despite it having more words than 'American Pie' by Don McLean. To end proceedings, Manager Nicole gave everyone a Zooper Dooper which was received gratefully by all.

After the match, the girls got to take part in a Smoking Ceremony as part of the Indigenous Round celebrations. Brother Tu-Wai from the Stradbroke Islands explained the significance of the Smoking Ceremony and encouraged all to get involved. The audience, both young and old were captivated, respectful and gaining knowledge. If only this was the case 200 years ago... However, with our girls and the other players there today we can be assured that the future is bright for reconciliation and acceptance for all with this generation and the next.

Player of the match - Estella Flaxman

Goals

Estella 1

Charlotte 1

Juliet 1

Indi 1(1)

Report by Greg Allan