

MATCH REPORT



HBE UNDER 15 vs North Shore Swans Heeney
Elimination Final– 17/8/2025
Mike Kenny

Semi-final footy was finally upon us. Personally, I was quite excited about it all so I can only imagine how other parents, players and coaches felt. A lot of these boys have been together for a very long time - some since the very start in Auskick and Under 8s. They're such a tight knit group who thrive on inclusivity and fun - I was so happy to see them achieve some success and play in their second final for the Eagles...

For the match, we had accomplished home final status because of our solid ladder position. Unfortunately, after some shocking weather and Rofe being absolutely trashed in the wet a couple of weeks ago, we didn't get to play at 'The Home of Football'. The fixture had been moved to Mike Kenny Oval which was at least a good, nearby substitute.

The Heeney version of the North Shore Swans were our opponents today and we had performed well against them so far this season. However, as anyone who has watched any sport knows, funny things happen in finals. You also never really know who you're actually going to be playing on the day when it comes to facing the bigger clubs. Whatever the case, we knew the Swans would be trying their guts out as it's not everyday you get to play in a semi-final.

Callum and Josh W were welcome inclusions for today's clash but Jake S, Tom N and Jake G were missing due to injury. Jake G's was a particularly cruel one, doing an ankle only days before at basketball. Thankfully, the very solid Andrew and Lachy from the 14s were here to bolster our side.

The boys were all at the ground early and they all seemed enthusiastic in the warm-up. Luke fired up the troops whilst Rich, Tim and Nick put the Eagles through their paces. This was by far the most professional warm-up situation I'd seen all year - I was hoping the boys weren't wearing themselves out before the game!

MATCH REPORT



Pre-match, the HBE 15's disappeared into the sheds for some last minute strategy from Tim and Nick. The bounce wasn't far off - you've got to love finals footy!

Conditions were perfect, a breeze favouring the team running left to right the only noticeable obstacle. The final was underway and North Shore were first to score with a behind but the Eagles were soon back at the right end of the field. The ball was cleared expertly by Emmett and Henry, some scramble went on for a while until Luke slotted our first major! North Shore countered with an attacking chance but Henry put pay to that with a sharp defensive mark.

A useful forward entry from Zach found Luke who kicked to Callum. Goal! Great to see you back up front Callum! Following this, some tough work in the backs from Tom C and Jack R gave Henry a chance to clear the ball. He again found Luke who found Josh W who took a spectacular mark - unfortunately only a behind to show for it. No problem, we were back on the attack soon enough with Henry who had found himself up in the front half. He kicked to Tyler who marked, kicked and goaled beautifully. A competitive but impressive first quarter, Eagles 19-1.

Onto the 2nd and with the wind now at our backs we were on the attack almost immediately. Ollie started the scoring with a cracking goal from a distance. Soon after, a nice spoil from Lucas and a bit of aggression that is usually only reserved for me, sent us in the right direction. Josh W was looking very focused in his return match adding to our score with a behind. Jack R then started a great attacking move for the next goal. He scrambled well to find Josh W who then kicked to Ethan who booted it through for a monster of a 6 pointer! Shortly after, Tyler was awarded a free for a late hit. He found the elusive Josh W who was rewarded for his brilliant effort with his first goal. North Shore hit back with a goal of their own - I'm not sure how, I was writing away and they had scored... Never mind, Ollie found some space to kick for Callum who did the rest. Down the other end, our backs were outstanding, always getting the job done when they were called upon. An example of this was Lachy taking an excellent defensive mark to stop the Swans in their tracks. 45-13 to the Eagles at the main break.

Ollie continued the cavalcade of points with another goal almost immediately after half time. With the wind behind them, North Shore began to get a few more touches but only managed a behind for their efforts. We remained on top for the majority of the quarter. Alistair, as always, was working hard up front and was unlucky not to score. Ollie dazzled the crowd with his skills in the mids, Josh W continued to impress whilst Andrew was excelling with any tidy-up work at the back.

MATCH REPORT



He sent a nice kick forward which set us on yet another attacking foray, Ollie did the rest and scored another major as a result of all the hard work from the team. Other highlights included Lucas going for a rare run through the centre, the crowd cheering on the big ruckman. Jack A also impressed with a stack of hustle and bustle all over the pitch. The third was a closer quarter but still a good one for our boys. 54-14 our way with one term to come.

To start the last, Callum pulled off a sharp tackle to regain possession and send momentum our way. Unfortunately, the Swans got it back and sent it their way after a free kick. Tom C was having none of this, he snatched it out of the air and booted it back into our attacking half. From this, Tyler flew to take a stunning mark and he promptly sent it forward to Josh W. Josh kicked sharply at an angle with a pinpoint kick to Callum who slotted it through for an absolute beauty of a goal! He grabbed another soon after from some great teamwork from all the boys to get it forward. Tyler joined the party, kicking another goal to the right of the sticks. Another great passage of play followed with Emmett sending a great kick upfield. Tyler, Lucas, Zach and Ethan all combined well to eventually get the ball to Ollie - disappointingly only a behind but it sure looked great up till that stage! The game started to lessen in quality somewhat towards the end as the result was pretty clear to both sides. Tempers began to flare a bit but then the final siren wailed - we had run out 80-14 winners!

A very strong performance from the mighty Eagles! Coach Tim gave his final words, clearly happy with the effort and the result. A rousing rendition of the team song followed with Luke leading the charge in his passionate and irresistible style. It certainly was a very exciting and excellent achievement to win our first final as a group. Onto next week for a grand final qualifier against local rivals Pennant Hills Demons where we will continue the stirring 2025 journey of the mighty U15 Hornsby-Berowra Eagles.

Boundary Umpire Watch

I can't end this report without a special mention to our boundary umpire for the game - Neal. I was a big fan of his work on the day as he sprinted like a gazelle on the boundary line in front of us all, following the pill with laser-like precision. Nathan wasn't quite as keen on his performance, offering a few post-match criticisms... I disagreed with his harsh assessment of "No vertical lift" on Neal's throw-ins. Sorry Nathan, Gloria and our other celebrity parents who have worn the famous black and white bib this year, I thought Neal was exemplary! Words - Greg Allan

MATCH REPORT



MATCH REPORT



MATCH REPORT



MATCH REPORT

