

MATCH REPORT



HBE UNDER 17 vs South West Devils

Round 6 - 24/05/2026

The Home of Football - Rofe Park, Hornsby Heights

Skies were overcast and the ground quite damp from the recent rain for our Round 6 fixture against the South-West Devils. The Under 17s Eagles were keen to get back on the winner's list after suffering a tough last round loss against the Manly Bombers. To help the cause, we welcomed back a host of players who were missing from our last game. We looked a lot stronger on paper but it was hard to know what to expect - the Devils had some decent form on the board and looked to have a fair bit of size in their line-up.

We had another milestone to celebrate today, this time it was for a club legend in Jack Robson. As we know, Jack is a gutsy, wholehearted player who loves pulling on the Eagles jumper... almost as much as the other boys love playing with him. Jack's impressive banner was unfurled just next to me - our Hornsby-Berowra colours shining brightly in direct contrast to the gloomy sky above. Pete had added two HBE logos that were placed alongside Jack's 100 game message which I thought was a nice touch. It's always a shame when these amazing creations get destroyed within seconds! Jack led the boys through with a proud smile on his face as the 15s, who had just won a close one of their own, clapped our Eagles on.

We didn't have to wait long and play was underway with the Devils immediately on the attack. Emmett and Henry defused a chance for the opposition but they were first to score with a behind. The Eagles hit straight back with some sharp work at the back by Will and Sam. From their effort, Jake S found some space which is never a good thing if you're playing Hornsby... Jake S dazzled the crowd with some individual play, booting our first goal of the match. From the ensuing bounce, Lucas won the tap well and Luke was able to gather up the ball. He won a free and kicked beautifully to Ollie, he marked and made no mistake in kicking our 2nd! The HBE attack continued, Ollie had another chance and so did Callum but only 1 pointers were the result. We were definitely on top in the early stages but South-West managed to string a few kicks together and score a goal of their own which rolled through the sticks luckily.

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Our Eagles regained their focus straight away with a customary Henry intercept mark and some nice tussle from Luke switching the momentum back. Jake S pounced on the ball and was again in the clear, his kick looked good but cannoned into the post. Never mind, Callum had a difficult shot from way out wide not long after which sailed through the posts for a cracking major score! The Ollie and Jake S show continued and they combined to find Callum who smashed it through for another 6 from a decent distance. To top things off, Jake S grabbed another 'coach-killer' goal in the dying seconds of the quarter to give us a very handy 34-7 lead at the break.

The 2nd term started well with 2 quick behinds to HBE and yet another goal from Ollie. Jake S continued the onslaught finding Josh who was lurking ominously to the left of the posts. He made no mistake, faultlessly slotting the ball through the sticks. Following this, Ethan won a free in the middle and found Ollie who kicked an unlucky behind. Ethan was looking particularly sharp in his return match and was having a big impact on the positive play. One of these being when he kicked to Luke who took an excellent mark in front of the posts and was then able to convert into another 6 for the Eagles! A rare attacking play from the Devils was stifled by you guessed it...Henry and Emmett, their combined work found Curtis and then Jake S who added another goal to his growing tally. The Devils, who were probably wishing they were back in the much more forgiving surrounds of Hell, finally had a bit of success as they soccered a loose ball through for a much-needed goal.

Apart from a behind from Will where he combined well with Alistair, the last section of the quarter was scoreless. Still, the Eagles seemed well on top. Despite the size of some of the visiting players, we appeared to be dominating in every aspect of play and we led at the main break 64-13. The boys looked energised and buoyant as Tim and Nick delivered their half-time message. Luke followed suit with his traditional rousing rev-up!

The 3rd quarter started with a cracker of an intercept mark from Aiden. He combined well with Ronin to send the ball forward. Ethan's efforts were then rewarded with a set-shot that just missed the target. Following this, Will combined nicely with Tyler - unfortunately Tyler thought he'd give the Devils a bit of a hand by kicking the wrong way! Whoops... No damage done with HBE back on the attack soon enough with Ethan and Tyler working hard up front and Curtis booting a super goal. From a ripper of a tackle and a resulting free kick, Jack A kicked with precision to Ethan who was able to score a well-deserved goal. Lucas continued to fly high in the ruck, winning the ball continuously for our team.

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From some of this forward momentum, Curtis was unlucky not to get another 6 pointer. Ollie made up for it straight after with another major.

As the decimation continued on the field, an ice cream truck rolled into the Rofe carpark which provided a bit of a distraction to the boys. Hungry heads turned to the right as kids from all over lined up to pick their flavour, our Eagles could only watch on enviously. Never one to be backward in coming forward, Jack R even asked Tim if he could go over and get an ice-cream. The question got the response it deserved from the coach...

Back to the action and Will, Luke and Jake S put on a nice combined play as the rain started to hammer down. The sudden downpour had little effect on our scoring ability as Aiden booted through another goal. Milestone man Jack R then combined with Emmett and Henry to put on a defensive show which halted a South-West chance. Because of this, we were able to work the ball forward with Will being a big feature in the attacking play. He was able to kick to Jake S who got on the end of it all for another 6 just before the three quarter time siren. The score was 93-19 at the break but the scoring had stopped by then so the margin was most likely larger.

In the final term, we had a few extra off the field because of the mercy rule. This provided a bit of a party atmosphere on the bench as our boys smiled away and shared some fun banter - no ice-cream though. On the field, Ronin and Luke weren't about to stop as they put on a play to pour more misery on the Devils. With the advantage they had, South-West got to spend a bit more time in their attacking half. Our backs kept repelling them though with Tom C and Jack A combining well. This resulted in even more forward momentum for the Eagles which saw Zach put on a nice play which involved Ethan. I also noticed a beautiful mark and kick from Jasper which again found Ethan. Aiden benefitted from all of this great work as he nailed another goal for the mighty Eagles! As the clock wound down, South-West scored a consolation goal but Jack R was quite ruthless in stopping them from getting another. Emmett then did the same! The final siren blew with the Hornsby-Berowra Eagles victorious with a massive 107-34 win.

HBE were back in the winner's circle with a comprehensive victory - we were dominant in all facets of the game today. We out-ran our opposition, tackled harder, jumped higher and kicked and marked with stunning accuracy. The final words from Tim were understandably positive, Jack R followed saying some nice words to the group in his 100th game.

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After the match, we gathered at the clubhouse as Clare, Belinda, Gloria and Dana had put on a beautiful spread of food and drink for everyone to enjoy. What a great way to finish a Sunday? The parents, relatives, friends and players enjoyed each other's company as we all basked in the glory of a great win but also the warmth and inclusivity of our beloved club.

Words - Greg Allan

