

## Year 10 Boys' Football

A strong line-up faced the visiting team, Hartismere, in the County Cup clash. Teddy Baker was available after missing the last game due to ITFC Academy commitments, Euan Childs was also back into the midfield after being absent with an injury. Farlingaye looked the stronger team right from the start and exerted some good pressure on our opposition. Josh Knight went close with a couple of chances and we looked very comfortable at the back, Tom Curtis was hardly called into action at all in the Farlingaye goal.

Plenty of chances were created but none converted in the remainder of the first half. This created a bit of tension, as players began to think it could be one of those games. However, early in the second half, Josh Knight scrambled home our opener after Josh Smedley had seen his header saved. From then on we had a firm grip on the game and continued to push for more goals. Teddy Baker scored from the penalty spot and George Fricker came on to score from distance. The final score was a comfortable 4-0 win.

Another away trip, saw them travel to Peterborough. We had a strong squad of players who were in good spirits despite the lengthy journey.

We were playing Nene Park Academy, who have strong connections with Peterborough United. They have their training pitches at the school and many of our opposition were a part of the Football Academy set-up.

We started the game in a strong and confident manner and were quickly rewarded when Matt Sheridan finished well after some excellent work from Josh Knight down our righthand side. The pitch was heavy and bobbly at the same time and made it difficult for either team to play flowing football, it was going to be a battle.

They had one or two excellent players, their striker was strong and quick and kept Josh Smedley and Olly Fisher busy throughout the game. He managed to force his way into the box and his deflected shot looped over Tom Curtis in our goal. For our second goal, it was almost an exact copy with Josh Knight once again beating their left back to fire in a cross, this time Matt Sheridan was able to meet it at the front post and get enough of a connection to squeeze it past their keeper.

The second half was even more of a battle with both sides having good chances. Eventually they broke through and equalised. Chances continued to fall to both sides but the main drama was still to come! With less than a minute to play they managed to force the ball over the line, but the eagle eyed linesman ruled it out. We responded and took the ball straight up the other end, it was a last gasp chance, just as we went to shoot a defender put in a clumsy tackle and reluctantly the home referee awarded us a penalty. There was uproar and some of the home team began to walk off. Teddy Baker had the confidence to step and take the penalty. Their Goal keeper saved it! And the final whistle was blown. We had to quickly recover ourselves and dig deep for extra time. Again, there were chances and we could have nicked it at the last, George Fricker had a half-chance as did Josh Smedley.

The inevitable happened and we faced a penalty shoot-out. We have had a lot of experience of these over the past 4 years and on this occasion it was not our day as we lost 4-2. A bitter disappointment but a hugely valuable life lesson. Traffic hold ups on the A14 gave us plenty of time to ponder things and it was good to see so many of the players remain positive and in good spirits.

We remain in the County Cup and as ever will set our sights on the next game. Well done lads!

Mr Sparkes