

U18 GIRLS INTER-REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022

This weekend the East Region U18 Girls (2005 born and younger) travelled to Bolton to compete in the inter Regional Tournament.

The team; Megan Colderwood (Captain), Lottie Winstanley, Ashleigh Fenton (GK), Martha Smith, Sofia Galati, Jess Tunks, Eve Barnes, Caitlin Winkworth, Maisy Head, Madeleine Pike, Eleanor Munno, Mackenzie Holt, Christina English(GK)

The team had been designated Division 2 following the result of the U14 tournament in 2018 (No U16 tournament took place due to the Covid-19 Pandemic) 7 of the 13 squad selected had been members of the 2018 team.

Day 1 - Saturday, 3 matches in one afternoon!

Game 1 – East vs Ireland

The teams inter regional tournament started with Captain Megan scoring the first goal in the first 30 seconds of the match, Ireland fought back hard gathering pace and quickly took the lead over Q1 and Q2. The girls rallied hard led by some excellent game play by both Lottie and Megan. Despite accumulating both exclusion fouls and penalties against them drawing Q3 and then winning Q4 but unfortunately the huge effort of the comeback was too late and we ended up losing 10-6. Goals coming from Lottie, Megan and Sofia.

Game 2 – East vs West Midlands

Next up was West Midlands, following the progress and result of Game 1 the girls' spirits were high and their thirst for victory led the way, they came out determined and stronger. The team matched West Mids goal for goal for the first 5 minutes of the game but unfortunately West Mids resolve was stronger with them pulling ahead through Q2 and Q3. The score going into Q4 was 7 - 17, the girls sheer will and determination kicked in with a monumental push and some exceptional play from Caitlin, Sofia and Mackenzie winning the last quarter 5 -2. Despite ultimately losing the game 12-19 the teams' spirit, effort and amazing determination not to be beaten was truly inspiring. Goals coming from Lottie, Megan, Sofia and Caitlin

Game 3 – East vs East Midlands

Despite losing Game 2 the team were fuelled by adrenaline and their resolve to end Day 1 with a win - after a mere 1 hour break they were ready to go again. This time instead of having to chase the lead we scored first and quickly pulled ahead ending Q1 4-1. A lead which they continued build on throughout Q2 ending the quarter 5-2. Q3 saw the East Mids team step-up their game play, pulling back to 6-4 at the end of Q3. Despite East Mids best efforts to fight back the team maintained the lead securing their first win 9-5 at full time. Goals coming from Lottie, Megan, Martha and Sofia

Day 2 - Sunday

Game 4 – East vs Scotland

After a well-deserved rest the team returned to the Pool ready to continue their progress, targeting win number 2, this time taking on the Scottish National team. It's fair to say the game didn't start in the best fashion with a succession of exclusion fouls and penalties but despite this the team built up a 4-0 lead at the end of Q1. The team continued to go from strength to strength with their game play through Q2 leading the game in both defence and attack, but fatigue and exclusions were starting to slow them down. Q3 saw fresh legs, in the form of injured centre back Eve, boost the teams resolve and assist in hampering the Scots determined efforts to pull back. The team continued with their game play - never letting up. The game ending in a truly nail-biting 8-9 victory to East finishing their tournament in spectacular style and ultimately preventing Scotland from claiming the tournament crown. Goals coming from Lottie, Megan, Sofia, Martha and Mackenzie

The tournament was an amazing team effort and they improved game on game. Captain Megan's constant encouragement, support and enthusiasm ensured the team attacked every game with true determination and team spirit, this tenacity, drive and motivation gaining her the teams MVP award. Both Goal Keepers; Ashleigh and Christina made some spectacular saves cheered on by the whole team every time. Some consistent goal scoring by Lottie, Sofia and Megan racking up 11, 10 and 9 goals respectively throughout the tournament. At all times the attacking play was assisted and set up by some text book game play, all of the squad contributing to the success of the team not only in their two wins but also in the other two closely contended games.

Throughout the weekend the team came together and grew both individually and as a team, in and out of the water, supporting, cheering and ensuring they all gave their absolute best. The entire weekend was a brilliant experience; players, supporters and Officials all came together to make the weekend a memorable and enjoyable experience for all. The girls were awesome in their spirit, determination and camaraderie. The supporters were amazing and the Officials could not have done more to make the weekend a success. Well done and thank you to everyone involved.