

## **CLUB**

February matches saw Club take on some very tough competition in the HKCC Demons, HKFC Typhoons and Hantang Phoenix.

The first match up was a top of the table clash against HKCC Demons. The first round encounter had been a hard fought victory for Club with a close scoreline of 28-23. Club were keen to avoid repeating this, and were hoping to get off to a good start to the game. Things didn't go exactly to plan however, and it took the first half of the game for Club to really fire up and begin to demonstrate cohesive and dominating match play. The second half of the match was all in Club's control with the defensive unit of Jessica McCauley and Victoria Smith effectively shutting down HKCC's shooters. Excellent defensive pressure through the mid-court came from the combinations of Vanessa Cuvelier, Elise Daly, Tassie Brakenridge and Claire Quigley who were able to force lots of errors and provide lots of turnovers for Club's shooters, Melissa Atkins, Robin Atkinson and Natacha Cuvelier. In the end the scoreline stretched out for a comfortable 45-19 victory to Club.

After a well-earned rest to welcome in the Year of the Monkey, Club returned to Monday night netball for the local derby against the HKFC Typhoons. The Typhoons team have been having a great season so Club knew that they would have to play with great intensity to ensure victory. Both teams played strong, tough netball with great contests for the ball through the court and in rebounds. Defences snatched plenty of intercepts, and the shooters on both sides scored some beautiful goals from slick feeding. In the end, Club took the victory with a score of 31-20 and both teams looked a cause for concern for the rest of the competition.

Club enjoyed a week off for a bye before taking on Hantang Phoenix in the last match in February. This meeting is always a physical and noisy encounter, with the Hantang cheer squad providing plenty of vocal support. Club were able to field a full team for the evening although they were missing their great leader, coach Karin Looram. After an unsettled and rushed start, Club were able to regroup and begin to play their own game. Great defensive effort from all players on court provided turnovers and returned the ball to Club's shooters. It was not an error free game and leaves Club with some things to work on going into the business end of the season but in the end it was an easy victory for Club, with a scoreline of 31-11.

## **TYPHOONS**

After a few weeks off the HKFC derby between Typhoons & reigning champs Club was a great game. Club came away with the win 31-20 with both teams displaying real strength and determination. Typhoons then played Hantang Phoenix unfortunately going down 28-34. After this match both Typhoons and Hantang Phoenix sat on equal points on the ladder, Typhoons in 3rd on goal average. Next game for Typhoons against Valley Panthers key in retaining 3rd place on the ladder. After a solid and hard fought match Typhoons came away with an impressive win 39-25. Only a handful of games remaining before finals it will be close in determining the final rankings. Watch this space....

## **WHIRLWINDS**

*February 1st vs. Puma's 35-14*

*15<sup>th</sup> February vs. Kowloon Sapphires 38-33*

This top of the table rematch was always going to be a close and entertaining game. After being surprised in round one by the physicality of Sapphires, Whirlies approached this game with determination and a clear strategy in mind (as well as two **solid** umpires). The game started off as expected with both teams goal for goal throughout the first quarter. The Whirlies shooters both had their eye in and continued to shoot tremendously throughout the rest of the half. Up by 1 at half time the team bought on fresh legs to help run the sapphires ragged. During the third quarter the defence upped the intensity and managed to turn over a few centres to lead by 3 at three quarter time. Throughout the fourth quarter Whirlies showed consistency in attack and were able to capitalise on a few turnovers in the defence quarter eventually closing out the game with a 38-33 win over the Sapphires. After two close games against the Sapphires it is without a doubt that the Division 2 final series is going to come down to the wire!

*22<sup>nd</sup> February vs. Giants 32-18*

The game this week was all about pace. Watching the giants play netball is like watching a game on fast forward. The speed of the game seemed to catch Whirlies by surprise and meant that they got off to a bit of a shaky start. With the score even at quarter time Ronnie gave the team some solid advice "slow it down, play your game". Whilst this advice seemed to be received by a number of bamboozled Whirlies faces, it worked. Throughout the next two quarters Whirlies played as a team and calmly fed the ball up the court after winning turnovers in defence. At three quarter time Whirlies had pulled away slightly from the giants which meant the team could try the new combinations they had been working on in training. Notable mention to Sue who played with 100% intensity throughout the game and worked hard to chase after every ball. The giants have improved out of sight since round one and are a good reminder that Whirlies need to continually work on new and existing combinations coming into the finals.

*29<sup>th</sup> February vs. HKCC Griffins 40-30*

As per Katy Chandler's suggestion last time we met the Griffins that a boozy Whirlies social was required to fix all our problems, the team forewent training prior to this game to participate in the Netball Division's Amazing Race Social. Thankfully everyone survived the curry & beer sculling, however Whirlies still went into this game with a slightly depleted squad. Fortunately, the Griffins were even worse off and took to the court with only 6 players. A continuously consistent Griffins team shot phenomenally and held most of their centres throughout the game despite being down a player. The free player seemed to throw Whirlies to begin with and they struggled to capitalise on the extra space. Throughout the game though Whirlies capitalised on loose balls and double marked Griffins players wherever possible to finish the game with a decent win. Takeaways from today's game - extra players off the court (especially those holding the scoreboard) can influence the scoreline just as much as those on the court.

## **TORNADOES**

*15th February:*

After the return from the CNY break, Tornadoes took on Valley Cougars. We were lucky enough to have Minal back from Singapore to show us she hasn't forgotten her skills. The

match was close all evening with scores at the breaks of 7-6, 16-16 and 25-24 and final result of 33-32 for a 1 point win for Tornadoes. The Cougars were strong all evening with some great intercepts in all areas of the court. Tornadoes however effectively used the available space, made some clean hard passes and applied strong defensive pressure to ensure there were the sufficient turnovers to result in a 1 point win. Final result 33-32. Go Tornadoes!!

#### *22<sup>nd</sup> February:*

There was rainy weather on 22nd February, the night the HKFC Tornadoes played HKU Knights at the Aberdeen Outdoor Courts. The condition of the court was far from ideal as the rainy weather throughout the day created a very slippery floor which was covered in puddles of water! Tornadoes had a slow start against HKU Knights with the first quarter ending at 3-6, second quarter at 9-10 and third quarter at 13-17. This was mainly due to the wet ball as it constantly slipped out of our possession. In the fourth quarter, Tornadoes were able to close the 4 point gap and ended the match with a 24-24 draw. Throughout the game, Kylie was absolutely fearless and was able to do clear changes of direction without hesitation despite the wet surface. Cheers to Tornado for a great comeback in the last quarter which showed that we definitely had the capacity to win!

## **HURRICANES**

#### *February 24th 2016*

The Hurricanes headed into this game unsure and with some nerves, the last time we played against the Kowloon Diamonds, was a very tough match (considering we only had seven players) that resulted in a draw. This time, the Hurricanes were able to come away from this match with a win, having doubled the Hurricane's score!

The first quarter allowed the Hurricanes to pull away with a sure lead, with amazing courtplay and focus we were able to score 11 points in this quarter and the Diamonds could only manage to score one.

The second quarter carried on the consistency from the first, again we only allowed the Diamonds to get away with one point. In this quarter we managed to get six points. Ending the quarter with the score 17-2 for us.

After halftime we made some changes onto the court and we were successful in settling the play. The Diamonds were able to score a few more goals in this quarter, although we still won this quarter. The final score after this quarter was 25-8.

In the final quarter, we were able to protect our lead. Our amazing defense only allowed their shooters to get one shot. The final score was 30-9, one of the greatest wins yet for the Hurricanes!

#### *February 22nd 2016*

The hurricanes went into this week's game nervous as due to Chinese New Year they hadn't trained together for a week. The Hurricanes played against the Valley Leopards, who they just beat last time they met. However, the team started strong, managing to pull away from the Leopards, winning the quarter 7-4.

The hurricanes made no changes and kept pressing on during the second quarter, winning the quarter 15-9. In the third quarter, changes were made and some fresh legs came on!

The hurricanes struggles to get back into the rhythm of the game with the new players on. Sadly, they lost the third quarter, but were still ahead 19-15.

In the final quarter, the hurricanes were fighting to ensure a win. Although losing the final quarter, they were still able to win the match by the skin of their teeth! The game ended with a final score of 22-23.

*February 1st 2016*

In our game against the HKCC Optimists, we went onto the court with lots of confidence and this showed in our style of gameplay. We were running the score up in the first half, ensuring we could get as far ahead of the Optimists as possible. The final score at the end of the first half was 24-11. We had double the points the Optimists did.

The third quarter saw many changes for the Hurricanes, which, unfortunately left us unsettled and it took us a while to build up our confidence and regain control. The Optimists got away with quite a few points, although we still managed to win this quarter.

With a few more changes in the last quarter, we were fighting to double the score of the Optimists for an extra point. Unfortunately we fell short of the extra point by two goals, although we came so close! The score at full time was 30-16 for the Hurricanes. This game brought back our confidence and from here we are hoping to get our winning streak back!