

Westbury & UB F 1 – 2 Ross

29/01/2005

Ross rob the Banks

At the start of Saturday's Gerrard Hockey League North East-West League, 35 points separated Ross Mens 1st XI from their opponents, Westbury and United Banks F, who occupied bottom slot. However, Westbury almost turned the form book upside down with a spirited display that combined the energy of youth with the guile of experience. Ross, in contrast were shambolic; in particular, their passing was frequently erratic. Nonetheless, Ross returned from Bristol with a 2-1 victory.

Such was the malaise that gripped the Ross team that even the defence, which has been the firm foundation of Ross' success all season, looked uncertain on occasions. Mitch Greenham was called upon to make some excellent stops in goal behind the familiar line-up of Greg Weston, Edward Peck and Andy Evans. In midfield, Ross clearly missed the tenacity of Tom Walton and the creativity of Phil Evans, although Tom Minton, Brian Clare, Adrian Williams, Sam Warner and Andy Cross worked hard. Upfront, Richard Harbottle and Andy Ridgway created a number of half-chances without ever really looking very threatening. Wilem Hagen and James Adamson were also on hand to contribute, but Ross failed to establish any flow to their game.

Ross were lucky to be level at 0-0 at half-time. Half way through the second half, the prolific Andy Ridgway fired home from one of Ross' few short corners. Westbury hit back immediately, with one of their tireless midfield players sneaking forward to flick the ball past Greenham and Cross. Cross went close to scoring himself shortly after, but it was left to Harbottle to settle the game in Ross' favour with a beautiful strike from the edge of the Westbury D, arguably against the run of play.

Ross remain 3rd in the league, four points behind the second team with only one more game to play. Greg Weston was Brabo man of the match for his fine blocks and sagacious distribution of the ball.