

Ross 2nd XI v Winchcombe

Stats

Date	For	Against	Venue	Fixture	SHM MOTM
25/10/08	0	3	home	league	Edward Peck

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The Woes of Winchcombe

Over recent years, Winchcombe has become something of a barometer for Ross Men's Hockey Club. For several seasons this Cotswold team was the one that calibrated the form of their Herefordshire opponents. A win for Ross foretold of good results in other fixtures; a defeat suggested a hard road ahead. It was a measure of the promise of Ross Men's 1st Team that in 2007/08 it did the double over these tenacious foes; a promise delivered when they ended up champions of N4 Financial Solutions Hereford and Gloucester League Division Two.

Last Saturday saw another visit of the man in the white van and his compatriots to these parts, this time to play Ross 2nd XI. Many of the Ross starting line-up knew what to expect. Captain for the day Edward Peck, along with Tim Jones, Tony Faulkner and Richard Harbottle, had crossed swords with the men in green on numerous occasions. Relishing the challenge, he had called up two more of the magnificent eleven that were the backbone of the team earlier in the century: Mitch Greenman and Rufus Davies. For many of the sixteen man Ross squad, however, this was their first chance to benchmark their skills against these worthy antagonists from a distant village of which they know little.

Ross stared promisingly, with Andy Wright and Matthew Saunders endeavouring to get a grip of the midfield and Adam Couch and Chris Chalk establishing channels down the flanks. However, the Winchcombe defence was in robust form and none of the younger Ross forwards sent over the top – Geraint Morris, Sebastian Sullivan and Alex Hawkins – had any more success in converting the small number of chances that were created than the old warhorse Harbottle. Nonetheless, there were stirring if short contributions from Nick Clark and Richard Stewart in midfield. At the back, David Skyrme continued to show the form that has made him a regular starter in this developing Ross side.

Notwithstanding Ross' bold efforts, Winchcombe scored three times without reply. Leaving that ephemeral detail to one side, the game will be mostly remembered for three spectacular goal line saves by Ross defenders. First, Davies made a probably over-elaborate dive to his right to push the backboard-bound ball wide. Next, Peck showed his characteristic nonchalance to push a smart drive onto the post and then clear the rebound. Finally, Jones, standing on the goal line, pinged a low shot over both his head and the bar to safety.

There was much to like about this Ross performance, not least the crop of young talent that is growing with every game. At the same time, there is probably some way to go before this particular team registers high pressure on the Winchcombe barometer.

Thanks, as always, are due to umpire John Setchfield. Edward Peck was voted South Hereford MotorCaravans Ltd Man of the Match, albeit on an unusually low turnout, for not allowing the pressures of leadership to interfere with the natural rhythm of his game.

Hereford & Glos. Division 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Lansdown B	5	4	1	0	16	6	10	13
Winchcombe	5	4	0	1	18	5	13	12
Cheltenham C	5	3	1	1	25	8	17	10
Gloucester City D	5	3	0	2	13	11	2	9
Lansdown C	5	2	2	1	6	8	-2	8
Newent B	5	2	1	2	16	14	2	7
Ross-on-Wye A	5	2	1	2	7	8	-1	7
Cirencester C	5	2	0	3	7	14	-7	6
Stroud B	5	2	0	3	7	20	-13	6
Sherborne A	5	1	1	3	8	14	-6	4
Hereford B	5	1	0	4	6	14	-8	3
Cheltenham D	5	0	1	4	6	13	-7	1

Cirencester C	1	Lansdown B	3
Lansdown C	0	Cheltenham C	4
Newent B	5	Gloucester City D	0
Ross-on-Wye A	0	Winchcombe	3
Sherborne A	4	Hereford B	0
Stroud B	2	Cheltenham D	1