

MEDIA RELEASE

BENDIGO BANK WESTVIC HOCKEY STATE LEAGUE 3 SENIOR WOMEN

Match Report – elimination final

Date: Sunday 6th September
Venue: Footscray Hockey Centre
Opposition: Casey

Final Score: Casey 2 – WestVic 0

Team Members: Kym Southwell, Megan Nestor, Claire McKenzie, Jenny Ford, Rosie Ballard, Anna McClelland, Bianca Maher, Ruth Ryan, Jess Watts, Hannah Maloney, Ebony Stephen, Lauren Hudd, Kaylene Ferrier, Emily Innes

Best Player: Ruth Ryan

WestVic lose to Casey

WestVic travelled to Footscray to take on the Casey Cannon women in the Hockey Victoria State League 3 Elimination Finals for 2009.

WestVic finished third on the ladder, but only one point separated them from the experienced Casey Team. In previous games against Casey, WestVic had lost and then drawn; so coming into this game the women felt there was a real chance they could go one better and secure a win.

After the toss, WestVic won the pass-back and started with a quick attack into the circle. The initial pace of the game was frenetic with lots of contested play. WestVic took the early chance of a field goal but just missed the goal with a wide deflection. Hannah Maloney worked hard to penetrate the top of the circle with both mid-fielders Anna McClelland and Rosie Ballard continually feeding the ball through. Ebony Stephen worked the ball down the right wing and looked for support in the circle, but was often cut off by the strong Casey defence.

Casey made their passes count and at times had the WestVic defence on the back-foot. They were able to secure the first penalty corner and convert this to take the lead 1-0.

Casey continued to apply pressure on the WestVic team with hard running and accurate passing. WestVic, through defenders Bianca Maher, Megan Nestor and goalie Ruth Ryan repeatedly repelled

the Casey attack and looked for any chance to switch the play and get WestVic on an offensive breakaway. Awarded another short corner, the Casey women worked a variation that eliminated the WestVic defence and secured them a clear 2-0 lead going into the half time break.

WestVic coach Kim Halbert-Pere urged the women to lift during the half time address. While behind on the scoreboard, the women knew they had just as many scoring opportunities as the Casey team and with some commitment and determination, they might be able to work back into the game.

The second half saw the WestVic women match the Casey team for desperation for the ball. Many more attacking opportunities were forthcoming through hard running and team play by Ballard and captain Kym Southwell. Winning numerous penalty corners, the WestVic women peppered the goals, but were denied by the agility and skill of the Casey goalie. Emily Innes and Hannah Maloney followed up on rebounds and linked well, but were constantly frustrated and unable to score.

Jess Watts and Claire McKenzie on the half line provided vital links between the WestVic defence and attack. Watts ran hard without fail all game and kept the ball in WestVic's possession as much as she could.

Fighting to the last minute, the WestVic team were awarded a penalty corner on the final whistle. Throwing everything they had at the Casey defence, WestVic tried valiantly to score, even though the game was already decided. Unfortunately, they were unable to get past the Casey defence with the final score 2-0.

The WestVic women played a fantastic season in State League 3 and really held their own against far larger and more experienced clubs. It's a credit to all the players for their efforts all year to make the finals in only the team's 2nd year of playing state league hockey.

The winner of next weekend's Casey v Mornington semi final will take on Footscray at the State Hockey Centre on the 20th September.

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