



# Hitchin Hearts Belles FC 2010-2011 Under 10's Match Report



Date: Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2010  
Kick-off: 10:00 am  
Venue: Knebworth  
Competition: U10's League match V Knebworth

Following the hefty defeat last week to St Albans, we knew that the girls had to raise their game to get anything out of this match, especially as Knebworth had already beaten St. Albans themselves!

The midweek email exchanges between the coaches had a common theme...Back to Basics!

Before the game we lost Tashai, to an injury in the warm up? I hear you ask, no, to a late hair appointment for her Mum's party, things weren't looking good.

But on this bright and crisp October morning, there was a sense of togetherness, a response from the girls that was different to last week, an energy amongst them, a look in their eyes as if to say to us coaches, 'We know what you're going to say, so we'll go out and show you'.

The only tactical change was to not commit both wide midfielders in the build up play and use one almost as an attacking full back. All we asked for was, quicker reaction and more defensive commitment....the rest was down to them.

Suffice to say, before the coaches could gather the discarded track-suit tops, water bottles and equipment and take their place on the side line, Courtney was through on goal and made the keeper made two fine reaction saves.

Gemma and Chloe E were solid at the back, tackles were being made, team mates were covering each other and beginning to work in pairs, one would mark the player; the other would mark the space behind.

The girls were pressing their opponents and making them rush things and quickly regaining possession, perhaps the St Albans game was a blessing in disguise as this week, we were the aggressors.

Mid-way through the 1<sup>st</sup> half, Katie, our powerful wide midfielder was set free down the left wing and found the target but it looked as though the shot would not trouble the keeper, somehow the ball trickled underneath the goalie and we were 1-0 up. After last week, we'll take that!

The impressive Erin battled hard and won ball after ball in the centre of midfield and fed Nemo who enjoyed lots of space in a withdrawn wide right position. Nemo's intricate footwork allowed her time on the ball and with perfect timing, found Courtney who showed an excellent turn of pace to bear down on goal and calmly put the Belles into a 2-0 lead.

Knebworth stuck to their guns and were soon rewarded with a goal when their forward stole in between Gemma and Zhane (our stand-in keeper) to make it 2-1 at Half Time.



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On came Rosie to bolster defence and made some timely interceptions together with some cool distribution. Katie moved into the central midfield role and Erin dropped back into defence for a 'breather' having run her socks off.

With Courtney now out wide, causing havoc, nicking the ball and running the length of the pitch time and time again. "Courtney, you've done the hard bit, now let the ball go" came the cry from the coaches to the exhausted winger.

Eventually Courtney did exactly that and exchanged measured passes with Zhane in the box to pop home her second of the game. 'See, let the ball do the work, it doesn't get tired like we do'.

Gemma swapped the goalie shirt with Chloe E and became our 3<sup>rd</sup> keeper of the morning and added some much needed energy to the outfield team and broke up any remaining Knebworth attacks.

With seconds remaining on the clock, Courtney dug deep for one more trademark run and this time repaid the compliment with a fine pass to Zhane who struck the ball first time into the back of the net to end the match 4-1.

A wonderful reaction by the girls and 3 very happy coaches/manager and not an Arsenal game in sight to ruin the afternoon.

**Team:** Chloe E, Erin, Rosie, Katie, Courtney, Nemo, Gemma, Zhane,

**Final score:** 4 v 1

**Player of the Match:** Erin (energetic and creative in midfield – a great summer signing and on a free transfer to boot). A big well done to all the girls for raising their game, more of the same please next week!