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Whippets land Southern title

Jonny Weeks

A GLORIOUS season for Haringey Greyhounds has been capped with the under-16s team lifting the Southern League division two title.

Following in the skate-marks of the seniors who won the southern play-offs last month, the under-16s – the Whippets – claimed the league title and automatic promotion after winning 18 of their 20 matches this season.

An impressive 6-3 victory against Oxford a fortnight ago finally guaranteed the top spot after weeks of anticipation.

"It has been a historic season for us," said Whippets' coach Mark Fox.

"We have taken 37 out of 40 points with only one defeat all year. We had the tightest defence in the league and the best disciplinary record, which is very important because it meant we kept our players on the ice."

The under-16s have narrowly missed out on promotion in the last two seasons – on goal difference last year and in the play-offs the year before.

Fox attributes this season's tri-

ICE HOCKEY

umph to key results earlier in the campaign.

"When we played Gosport, we were losing 3-1 and came back to win 4-3 with a last-minute goal," he said.

"That established us as a team looking for promotion. Then we beat Invicta, who are a really good team, 4-1 away."

The Whippets biggest win of the season was 19-0 over Swindon, which helped bolster their goal difference to an average of more than six per game.

The attacking line was led by Freddy Trimble, who has such raw talent he has been playing sporadically for the senior team this season.

He missed the Greyhounds' national senior final to play in a recent crunch match for the under-16s against Cardiff, which ironically, they lost.

And despite flitting between the juniors and seniors, Trimble went on to break the 60-goal mark for the Whippets and finished as the second highest scorer in the league.

"We have a powerful, fast-skating, high-scoring forward line," said Fox. "Freddy has been excellent, as has Chris Fox, who scored 49 this year."

"At the back we had a very tight defence led by Max Bennett and Reon Burns."

"But I think it is important to note that all 15 players over three lines have contributed. They have been a fantastic team."

Fox said the relationship between the junior and senior teams is vital for the long-term prospects of the club.

"The junior club feeds the seniors and the seniors help the juniors by giving players like Freddy valuable experience," he added.

"It's an important symbiosis and it means the future of the club is looking very good."

● Haringey's under-14s are also on course for glory this season, having made the play-offs.

● **Blitten by success...**
Haringey Whippets (right) line up after winning the Southern League under-16 crown. Picture: Jonny Weeks



Hampstead secure promotion

Hampstead women 1 Fulham 0

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

A 35-YARD goal from Lins Roberts sealed Hampstead women's promotion to division two in only their second competitive season in the Greater London Leagues.

Roberts' 44th minute strike was the only goal in a "must-win" encounter against Fulham which gave Hampstead second spot in division three on goal difference ahead of two other sides also on 28 points.

Hampstead started cautiously and a few half-chances went begging early on, the best of which fell to Sasha Stewart, who did not connect cleanly with the ball on 14 minutes and shot wide from 10 yards.

Soon after Hampstead had an indirect free-kick saved on the line, followed by a succession of corners which eventually led to the goal.

Carly Grayston curled the ball in to the near post and the ball was cleared

out of the area to Roberts, whose first effort rebounded straight back to her.

The right-back then reacted quickest and hit the ball low and hard into the back of the net. There was only time for Fulham to restart the match before the referee blew for half time.

Hampstead needed to recompose themselves and ensure that they went out in the right frame of mind to seal victory in the second period. And they started brightly and it seemed certain that a second goal would come sooner rather than later.

Kate Freeman had a good chance as did Stewart and Grayston, but somehow the ball failed to find the back of the net.

Fulham caused a few scares too – and in one break they rounded the Hampstead keeper Laura Coxy Mifsud only to be stopped by the steaming Roberts, who dived in

superbly to win the ball and concede a corner.

Hampstead hit back and won two corners in the closing minutes, one of which was headed onto a post by Stewart.

"The team had to be strong today," said manager Brad Solomon. "We were stopped from playing our normal fluid game in the first half but Roberts' goal helped us believe in ourselves and in the second we played some good flowing football."

"It was a scrappy game but it is three points that matter and I'm exceptionally proud of what this team have achieved this season."

"Together they have reached the quarter-finals of the FA League Cup and won promotion and I cannot fault the spirit of this team."

"It is a proud moment for anyone involved with the club."

Hampstead begin a summer season on AstroTurf in two weeks.



● My ball... Hampstead keeper Laura Coxy Mifsud punches clear against Fulham.

SWIMMING

Gold for Swiss duo

PHILIP Albright and Susan Halter won gold medals for Camden Swiss Cottage at the Open International Guernsey Masters.

Albright, competing in the 35-40 age-group, won the 100m and the 200m free as well as the 100m and the 200m medley. He was also second in the 50m free and the 100m breaststroke.

Halter (80-85) won the 50m, the 100m free and the 200m back. She also came third in the 50m and the 100m back.