

St Faith's U12 A National Final's Day Match Report

The St Faith's U12 Boys arrived at Culford school, very excited and brimming with confidence. They started off brilliantly, winning their first game 5-0, against a strong Bedford side. Next up was Bromsgrove, eventual semi-finalists, and it was a tight 1-1 draw. St Faith's then eased passed Spratton Hall 3-0. All in all a good start. But, up next was Cheltenham. They were a very good side, with an outstanding centre forward. We lost 2-1. A set back, but we knew we had to carry on.

A good next two games with a draw and a win, put us through in 3rd place, through to the knockout stages. Edgeborough were our opposition in the quarter final, who posed a strong fight for our team. But we came out firing, scoring 2 goals in the first 5 minutes. Edgeborough fought back, putting our defence under a stern test, but St Faith's managed to see out the game. Up next, in the semi-final, was Cheltenham. We knew what challenge lay ahead, so we were ready for what was to come. And wow were we ready, as St Faith's scored 3 goals in the first half!!! But we knew that was only half the job. Anything could happen. Cheltenham fought back, with all guns blazing, scoring 2 goals, and a great save by our keeper Solomon, kept us with the lead. With 2 minutes to go, St Faith's held the ball up in one corner and the clock ran down, and down and down... and the whistle blew, and St Faith's were in the National hockey final!!!

In the Final we faced the home side, who hadn't lost a match, Culford. We were nervous, but raring to go. Off we went, with Culford kicking off. Both teams started well, with Culford having 2 short corners, and again Solomon making two great saves. It was a tense first half. With second half came the first great opportunity for St Faith's. Jack was brought down in the D by the keeper. He looked up to see the referee and PENALTY!!! Jack stepped up to take. The referee's whistle blew and he fired it JUST LEFT of the post. Jack was devastated, but knew he had to keep going, and there would be other chances. And sure enough there was. Theo collected the ball in our half. He passed it to Jack, who drove from inside our half, up to just before the D eliminating 2 players on the way. Jack then gave it to Pablo on the top right of the D, who drove towards goal. He beat one player, then another!!! Just the keeper to beat. He dribbled up to the keeper who came out, but what he didn't know was that Ross was on his left. Pablo slipped it to Ross and he walked it in for a GOAAAL!!! The team, (and also the coaches Mr Welch and Mr Thompson, who started jumping round like little children) were jumping for joy. But one more play remained. We all kept looking at the referee to see when he would blow his whistle... and there it was!!!! WE had just become NATIONAL CHAMPIONS!!!!!! We were so happy and overjoyed, we started hugging each other like we had won the lottery. What a day, one the whole team will never ever forget. We may not have 2 or 3 outstanding individual players, but we were a proper TEAM.

Match Report by Jack C