



HOCKEY



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Dear Hockey parents, players and supporters

Thank you for your ongoing support for the newsletter and for SACS Hockey in general. It has been good to have photos and informative points being sent in – it all helps to make the newsletter more interesting.

U15A/16A Matches – what’s it all about?

Over the past few seasons you may have noticed that, although official age-groups only exist for U14, 16 and 19, there has been a growing number a U15A teams emerging from our “brother schools”.

There is no official policy about this, but the thinking behind it is that Grade 8 boys, who may have been playing in the U14A for the year, were finding themselves dropped by a league or two when entering the U16 age-group in Grade 9. A boy could go from the U14A to the U16B or C. RBHS and WBHS felt this could have a dampening effect on some young boys and so the "U15A" team was created to try and get around the issue. SACS, as well as a couple of other schools, has followed suit.

In terms of where these teams fit into the U16 league, so to speak, the U15A team is seen at the "second-best" U16 team, therefore being pitted against other U16B teams at schools who do not have the U15A team.

So, if you're not confused already, it works out like this: The U16A teams play each other; then our U15A team will play (for example) Fairmont U16B, our U16B will then play Fairmont U16C and so on.

We believe that this is in the best interests of keeping the top young players motivated during that Grade 9 year and that we all benefit. I hope this helps!



SACS Old Boys dominate UCT's First XI which plays in club hockey's premier league!

(L-R): Matt McKechnie, Jordan Fourie, Ross Maharage, Anton von Loggerenberg, Brandon Hanekom, Jack Teversham, Nick McKechnie, Gregg Clark (UCT and SACS coach) and Pierre le Roux (WPCC and SACS coach)

Front: Jack Forrest

Absent: Mike Gildenhuys (injured)

PERSONALITY PROFILE

In keeping with our aim to introduce you to our outside coaching staff, this week we take a peek into the life of SACS' hockey professional, **Gregg Clark**.

I think it's fair to say that the name Gregg Clark is synonymous with South African hockey as he was involved at the very pinnacle of the game for over a decade.



He is married to Nadine and they have a beautiful little daughter, Ruby (6), who was featured in a photo in our first edition. Nadine, herself, was a star hockey player, having represented South Africa as well, and having also represented our country at two World Indoor Championships. Add to that that she is an actuary with Old Mutual, and you can see that the Clark household is brimming with successful genes!

Getting back to Gregg, he is an Old Boy of King Edward VII School (KES) where he represented Southern Gauteng "in Standard 9 and 10", rather dating himself with that comment! It was in his Matric year that he first represented his country in what was to be a long and distinguished national career.

The South African U21 team was next on his list of achievements (1991) and it was during this period in his life that he moved to Durban to complete his tertiary education in Marketing. He spent about twelve years in KZN, two of which had him residing in the UK whilst playing hockey there. Although he has been living in Cape Town for a few years, he does admit to still having a strong affinity for KZN.

It is very hard to know how to express the following, suffice to say that Gregg Clark has earned an astonishing **250 senior caps for the Proteas** over eleven-and-a-half years!

The KES website acknowledges that that is a national record for caps in **any** sport, and it would be interesting to know whether it is an international record too. If you add to that his four years as the Proteas' official coach, and his overall participation in **four Olympic Games**, then you begin to get an idea of how very lucky we are to have him on board at SACS.



Although he has no historic link with SACS, he has been playing for, and coaching, UCT for a few years.

And if he wasn't busy enough, he has business interests too, one of which is his involvement with EnCodePro, the analysis software that SACS uses.

And so, to Gregg, Nadine and little Ruby, it is so good to have you as part of the SACS family and we wish you many happy memories in your time with us!

PAUL ROOS REVIEWS

This past weekend we hosted our “mini intervarsity” friends, Paul Roos Gymnasium. As we expected, there were some tough matches, but SACS' never-say-die attitude was evident in every match. Most of the matches were at home, though a few teams did travel through to Stellenboach to play at the Maties' astroturf.

Coaches' Match Reports

1st XI

“Bouncebackability” is actually in the Oxford Dictionary! Following the Bishops result, the team had been told that they needed to demonstrate some of this. Having recently played PRG at the Wynberg festival and drawn 1-1, it was a game that we knew was going to be hard, but that a good result was possible.

With the game split into quarters, it gave the potential for the boys to press the re-set button a little more frequently and thus not fall into a rut as in the previous week.

The first quarter was competitive: 0 - 0 at the end. The second quarter saw PRG benefit from a mistake by SACS at the back. Neat interplay between their forwards resulted in them netting a back-stick shot.

In the third quarter SACS lost possession a little too easily and conceded three quick penalty corners. Unable to completely clear the first save from Liam Peter, a second was awarded. This time the flick beat Liam to his low right corner. The third came shortly after a variation off the top again beat Liam in his low right corner, highlighting a weakness in our PC defence. The team managed to pull a scrambled goal back from the stick of Murray Barrett-Smith, but there was too much to do, and the PRG defence too savvy to let the pressure tell. Final score 1-3 .





2nd XI

As with most teams playing against Paul Roos Gym, we were really up against it on Friday.

The second team lost 0 - 6 and were fairly comprehensively outplayed. Once again, we conceded [gifted] three very soft goals and this makes the score-line very unflattering.

The SACS men did however fight until the very end, but were not good enough on the day. Paul Roos set the bench-mark in local hockey and our boys will no doubt see that mark as a target worth chasing.



3rd XI

The Thirds set out with a determined attitude to improve on last week's setbacks. The gentlemen had shown in practice that there was the intent to move forward.

SACS started off well, creating a few chances up the wings and doing a superb job of keeping Paul Roos in the outside channels. Paul Roos soon resorted to overheads to try and penetrate though a solid defensive midfield. The SACS men were able to have a fair number of goal opportunities, but the backboard was never struck.

Paul Roos took the few chances they had and two goals in quick succession were followed by another two as the young Maties showed more ferocity and determination to get ahead.

There has been much improvement in decision-making during play and, as the boys get to know each other, the communication will also improve. This will help tighten man-marking and provide more options for the man on the ball.

4th XI

There was certainly an improvement from the 0 - 5 loss last weekend against Bishops. We were more successful in keeping possession of the ball, particularly in the second half.

Paul Roos have more U19 teams than SACS and their depth is far greater. They were more agile and athletic on the field and were able to pounce on the ball quicker, particularly in our D. The opposition were often left unmarked and they had plenty of space to shoot at goals.

Goalkeeper Max Becker made several good saves, but Paul Roos' forwards were too strong. We scored a well-crafted consolation goal in the second half, which gave me some hope as to what our links and forwards are capable of. I am pleased that the players are practising harder and hopefully our efforts will soon be rewarded.

U16A

Friday's match against Paul Roos was a particularly tough one, against a very strong and well-drilled team. The opposition put our defenders under a great deal of pressure, and marked our midfielders very tightly and, as a result, we found it difficult to build up any forward momentum.

After conceding two well-worked goals, we did manage to score midway through the second half and keep ourselves in the game. However, a late goal by Paul Roos sealed the game, them winning 3 -1. Man of the match, Nick Rethman, had a superb game in goal,

making a few excellent saves keeping out some stinging shots at goal.

U15A

The first-half performance from the boys was good. We are putting in the hard yards early and creating opportunities, but are not making it count in our favour.

In the second half, we lost our structure and were stretched in vital areas of the field. This resulted being under pressure for longer periods of play. When we do get possession, there is a tendency to give it away too quickly and the pressure starts to build again.

Fortunately, we weathered the storm well as there was, for a while, not a goal scored. Paul Roos eventually broke the deadlock with about six minutes left of the match. The boys responded positively to this and, with about two minutes of the game left, we obtained our only penalty corner. We scored with a straight shot at goal to draw the match. A good result by the team!

U16C

The U16C team knew the match against Paul Roos would be a challenge, especially after some demoralising results from the previous year.

Major emphasis was placed on extra cover defence supplied by the links, which they executed to the best of their ability. The team also showed great tenacity and the game as a whole was a major improvement from last year. There were some fifty-fifty calls going in favour of Paul Roos which ultimately set the team back by three goals to nil.

The SACS U16C will need to show more mental grit in future games. The team has solid belief in themselves and their teammates and I am sure there will be continuous improvement throughout the season.

U16D

The U16D team managed to remain unbeaten with a hard fought 1-1 draw against Paul Roos on Saturday at home. It was a tremendous effort by the boys that made the draw feel like a win.

In the first half, the teams were evenly matched. There were several scoring opportunities on both sides, but good defensive work and solid goal-keeping kept both teams goalless going into half time. In the second half the boys started to tire, but fought on, putting in good defensive and attacking moves. With ten minutes of play left, Paul Roos was able to score off one of several short corners. Congratulations to keeper Greg Hoyle for defending the others.

The equaliser came when Rahul Jogie slipped a ball past the opposing keeper with three minutes left on the clock. In the last minute of the game, Paul Roos were looking to score off another short corner but were denied by Kyle Zacks bravely taking a ball on the knee and preventing the goal (*see photos below*).

We expected tough opposition and the boys showed lots of guts and determination in not allowing Paul Roos to take the upper hand. Well done to all the boys for playing with a fighting spirit throughout and for putting their bodies on the line (in some cases literally). Last week's 7 - 0 defeat of Bishops left the defence largely untested, but they showed this week that they are more than equal to the task. We are looking forward to a good season from all players.

Thanks to Mr Daniel Fiser for his technical input and the parents for their support.





Kyle Zachs takes one for the team in a short corner!

(photo: S. Musikanth-Zacks)

U14A

The team was well aware that this was going to be an exceptionally tough fixture. We had played Paul Roos previously at a festival in April (a fixture we eventually won 3-0... although that score-line flattered us greatly), but we knew the quality of their technical ability, as well as their ability to play at a high tempo.

And that is exactly what we got... a much-improved opposition who really played with great skill in every position and at an incredibly high tempo.

It was a real test for the SACS team to be able to maintain the pace the opposition was setting, as well as trying to execute our skills under enormous pressure. We didn't always get it right, but we made sure we always keep our opponents under similar pressure and we never stopped competing for every 50/50 or loose ball.

Both teams had several good opportunities, but the deadlock wasn't broken until roughly six minutes from the end. Andrew Lovely (playing in a somewhat new role to him up front) bagged a half chance for SACS with a neat dink over the keeper.

Paul Roos managed to find an even higher gear in the last five minutes, but SACS absorbed the pressure and won a match we perhaps weren't quite entitled to, given the quality of the opposition. It was a great victory for the team... well done boys!





U14B

The majority of the SACS U14B team pitched up horrendously late for their away fixture in Stellenbosch. Unfortunately, this ill-discipline translated onto the turf as the boys failed to mentally pitch up. After thirty seconds of play a loud thud was heard as a Paul Roos striker smashed the ball into the bottom corner of our goal.

Fortunately, we were able to hold on for the rest of the half, thanks to defiant defending and outstanding goalkeeping from Gian Luca Virisimo.

The second half was a much more spirited display with bursts of brilliance from Kaden Solomons down the touch line. In the dying seconds of the game we created our one-and-only opportunity. Unfortunately, Lady Luck was not on our side as the ball struck the post before being cleared by a Paul Roos defender.

The fixture ended in a 0 - 1 loss. The boys, whilst losing the fixture, learnt the importance of being mentally ready for a game. I am confident that this experience will benefit us greatly in the future.

U14C

The team had a hard match on Saturday, coming out with a loss of 1-13 against a very strong Paul Roos side. Our boys went out there very determined but, sadly, they were greatly out-played and out-skilled on the astroturf.

Paul Roos conceded one goal from a short corner given in the second half, making the score 8 -1 ten minutes into the half. Subsequently, SACS managed to hold them off for a while longer, but Paul Roos soon bounced back vigorously and had a most convincing win.

The U14Cs are determined to come back with much intensity as they now know their greatest areas of weakness and strength.



TEAM	OPPONENTS	SCORE
SACS 1 st	PRG 1 st	1 - 3
SACS 2 nd	PRG 2 nd	0 - 6
SACS 3 rd	PRG 3 rd	0 - 4
SACS 4 th	PRG 4 th	1 - 8
SACS 16A	PRG 16A	1 - 3
SACS 15A	PRG 16B	1 - 1
SACS 16B	PRG 16C	0 - 4
SACS 16C	PRG 16D	1 - 1
SACS 16D	PRG 16E	0 - 3
SACS 14A	PRG 14A	1 - 0
SACS 14B	PRG 14B	0 - 1
SACS 14C	PRG 14C	1 - 13

