



# Hitchin Hearts Belles FC 2010-2011 Under 11's Match Report



Date: Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
Kick-off: 10:00 am  
Venue: Met Police Sports Ground, Bushey  
Competition: League

## Garston Ladies 3 v 3 Hitchin Belles U11s

A beautiful, sunny day albeit with a noticeable autumnal nip in the air, was the setting for an incredibly exciting game of girls football at Bushey today as the Belles U11s kicked off the new season against Garston Ladies. Football is, usually, a sport full of over used clichés but this was definitely, and I make no apology for using it, “a game of two halves”.

Only 9 of the 12 player squad were available for this first game of the 2010-11 HGFPL season. Emily was today's captain and the Belles got the game, and their season underway, after Garston chose ends. The first few minutes were evenly balanced as both sides tested each other out. Hitchin's passing game looking particularly good whilst Garston's taller, more physical players looked as though they could make some handy runs. Garston's No.7 looked particularly impressive, and her clever dribbles and ball control was soon giving the Belles defence problems. 11 minutes in and Garston opened the scoring after good play down the right opened up the Belles defence, and the Purples striker easily fired home from close range. The Belles, somewhat shell shocked, launched an immediate counter-attack from the kick off but Emily's shot was just wide. 2 minutes later and Garston doubled their lead as, again, excellent work down the right culminated in a perfectly flighted ball in to the Belles box, in between two defenders and on to the foot of a Garston player to knock it in to the net. The Belles were clearly reeling but things soon got a whole lot worse as Garston went 3 up after the Belles failed to clear their lines, and only two thirds of the way through the 1<sup>st</sup> half had gone at that! Had it not been for Meg and Jess O, making strong tackles it could have become somewhat overwhelming. Finally though, the Belles stirred to life and began to take control of midfield, Sasa and Kinnari winning the ball and making good use of it. The last 10 minutes of the half was all Belles as they moved the ball about intelligently, used the available space and started to play as a team. Emily came closest to pulling a goal back, only to see the Garston keeper make a fantastic save to stop her thunderous, goal bound drive. But was it too little too late?



Kinnari in a race for possession



Sasa attacks the ball



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**Half time score: 3 v 0**

## Second Half

Although never having been in this position before the Belles were chomping at the bit at the start of the second half, but knew they needed an early goal if they were to salvage anything from this game. Sadie had a couple of early chances but saw one go wide and another well saved by the Garston keeper. The Belles were dominating play with their quick breaks and use of the wide areas and, 4 minutes in to the half, they got the breakthrough they deserved as Sadie latched on to a through ball from Sasa. Although she still had several Garston players to beat, she managed to hold them off before unleashing an unstoppable shot which, although the keeper managed to get her hands to, smashed high in to the net. Consolation goal or beginning of a comeback? The Belles were now applying continuous pressure and with Emily's speed and Kinnari's pull backs, and deft touches the girls were starting to worry the hosts. Any Garston forays were being mopped up well by the defence with Ciara, Jess, Meg and debut girl Jessica getting in the tackles and clearances that the midfield and forwards could build on. Nicole in goal was giving great distribution from her hands and it was from one of these kicks that Sadie grabbed her second of the day and brought the Belles to within touching distance, as Sadie controlled Nicole's kick halfway in to the Garston half, took it to the edge of the box and coolly buried it past the helpless keeper. Still the pressure went on and every time the Belles broke you could now sense the possibility of another goal with only good defending keeping the ball away and Emily must have been cursing the Garston goalie as she stopped yet another of her shots and the keeper also did very well to stop Sadie scoring from what seemed an almost impossible angle. With time ticking away it was starting to look as though Garston's 1<sup>st</sup> half onslaught was just enough to give the hosts all 3 points but, with two minutes to go, up popped Sadie on the corner of the area to shoot across the keeper and plant the ball in the opposite corner of the net and salvage a point for the Belles.



Sadie lines up the shot.



Celebrating the equaliser

**Team:** Nicole, Meg, Jess O', Ciara, Jessica, Kinnari, Sasa, Emily (**capt**), Sadie

**Player of the Match:** Sadie, who kept plugging away even after 1<sup>st</sup> half misses and got her just rewards, her first hat trick of the season!!