

## Cup Drama for U14s

It was a dramatic morning of Cup football at York College on Saturday as the girls took on Brayton Belles in the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the League Cup. The girls were 2-0 down with only 8 minutes left when Emily fired a wonderful shot into the bottom corner to give the girls hope, and then with only a minute left, Koré bundled home the equaliser to leave the match 2-2 at full time. After 2 penalties scored and three missed for each team from the minimum 5 penalties, it came down to the 6<sup>th</sup> set, and Isabella scored, leaving the pressure on the Belles. A fine save by Freya sent the team wild as they won the penalty shoot-out 3-2. A first ever cup win for the team and a brilliant morning for the girls, coaches and spectators.



**Team:** Amelia, Emily, Robyn, Amy L, Abi, Elen, Freya, Koré, Rose, Isabella, Amy G

**Captain:** Robyn

**Cup Match:** Won 2-2 (Emily, Koré) 3-2 on Penalties (Elen, Rose, Isabella)



**Player of the Match:** Koré. A fantastic performance from Koré as she exemplified the spirit and commitment within the team. She never stopped running and trying and gave 100% for the whole match. Her forward runs were powerful and threatening, she was strong in defence and she thoroughly deserved her first goal for the team. A superb display

## Match Report

The game started positively for the girls with excellent pressure on the Brayton goal. Amy L had a good chance that was cleared off the line, and then a lovely short corner between Robyn and Isabella set up a chance for Amy L, but it was saved. Brayton slowly started to get themselves into the game and their pacey forward line and wingers were starting to ask questions of Abi, Amelia, Rose and Emily who were playing as a back four. Freya had to push the ball round the post from a low shot, and the girls were fortunate from some weak shooting by the visitors as they held on against mounting pressure. As the game approached half-time, a poor clearance gifted Brayton the opening goal, but the girls didn't let their heads go down as Elen had a great shot saved and Amy L made a superb run down the wing, showing all her skills, but her cross was cleared. The half ended 1-0 to Brayton, but the girls had held their own against the higher ranked team and could easily have been in front themselves.

The second half started similarly to the first with some early BWR pressure as Amy L went close with a great run and shot that went just wide. It didn't take Brayton long to step up a gear and they first hit the post, and then scored a second goal. BWR responded by going 3 at the back and pushing Emily up front alongside Amy L. This gave the girls more attacking options, but Brayton were still threatening to score a third and Rose, Abi and Amelia had to be at their best to contain them, with Freya's safe hands tidying up everything else. With only 8 minutes to go, good work by Robyn set up Emily just inside the box. She moved the ball on to her right foot and fired a wonderful shot into the corner. 2-1 and a lifeline for the girls to get back into the match. It was now all BWR as an Emily cross was just out of reach of Isabella, and a shot by Koré went just wide. Emily then had another shot saved after good work by Abi and Robyn. Only 60 seconds remained when a Robyn through ball was chased down by Emily who collided with the Keeper and the ball squirmed free and was bundled over the line by Koré to send everyone wild. The girls easily saw out the final few seconds to leave it 2-2 at full-time.

With no extra time in the Cup rules, it was straight to penalties, and a first set of 5 as minimum. Elen was first up for BWR and calmly fired the ball home, and Freya saved the first Brayton penalty so 1-0. Emily stepped up second but her penalty was saved, and Freya couldn't prevent the Brayton equaliser, 1-1. Third up was Rose and she fired her penalty in, but so did the Brayton player, so 2-2. Up fourth for BWR was Robyn, and fifth was Amy L, and both penalties were saved, but Freya was on brilliant form and she saved both Brayton penalties leaving it 2-2 after the first 5. It was now sudden death, and the turn of players who weren't keen on taking a penalty. Up first was Isabella and she bravely fired her penalty into the corner, so it was down to Freya who easily stopped a weak final penalty to win it for the girls!! A brilliant fight back from 2-0 down had finished with a win for BWR!!

Penalty hero Freya was brilliant all game, with safe handling and great command of her area. Amelia was tough in the tackle and didn't let anyone get past her all game. Abi switched around the defence with ease and looked accomplished on the ball and when coming forward. Rose was like a rock in the centre of defence, with crunching tackles and positive clearances. Emily made some excellent saving tackles in the first half and then was a constant threat up front in the second. She took her goal brilliantly and really kick started the recovery. Elen in the centre of midfield ran her socks off, always pressing the ball, and doing a brilliant job singlehandedly in the middle. Robyn was an inspirational captain as she led by example, always a threat going forward, plus some match saving tackles at the back. Isabella ran herself into the ground on the wing and gave the Brayton defence a torrid time with her skill and pace. Amy L was so unlucky not to get a goal as she led the line superbly with lung busting runs, and lots of skill and bravery. Amy G continued her excellent progress and fitted into the defence with ease. She is improving with every game and has now added heading to her list of skills. Koré played in almost every position and was sensational all over. Her commitment and never say die attitude was infectious on the team and she deserved the equalising goal.

A brilliant fightback, against a very good team, showed just how good the girls are getting. The girls never gave up and deserved the victory. Well done girls!