

COBHAM COLTS U15 - MATCH REPORTS 2008/09
MEDWAY NEWS YOUTH LEAGUE DIVISION 1

Date	Versus	Venue	Score	Cobham Scorers
14/9/08	Bredhurst Juniors	Away	<u>2-7</u>	Jack, Sunny
21/9/08	Spartac	Home	<u>1-6</u>	Jack
28/9/08	Bredhurst Juniors	Home	<u>1-1</u>	Jack
5/10/08	Cliffe Royals (League Cup)	Away	<u>3-1</u>	Jack (3)
12/10/08	Rainham Eagles	Away	<u>2-4</u>	Kyle, Jack
2/11/08	Rainham Eagles	Home	<u>2-5</u>	George, Liam
9/11/08	Pegasus 81 (League Cup)	Away	<u>2-5</u>	Jack, Sule
23/11/08	Grasshopper Juniors (Kent Cup)	Home	<u>3-1</u>	Miguel (2), Andrew
30/11/08	Spartac	Away	<u>0-8</u>	
7/12/08	Lordswood Youth	Home	<u>8-2</u>	Liam (2), Pelumi, Miguel (3), Kyle, Jack
21/12/08	Ramsgate FC (Kent Cup)	Home	<u>0-8</u>	
18/1/09	Milton & Fulston United	Away	<u>0-4</u>	
22/2/09	Oak Athletic	Away	<u>1-3</u>	Own Goal
1/3/09	Pegasus 81	Away	<u>1-4</u>	Sule
8/3/09	Oak Athletic	Home	<u>1-9</u>	Jack
15/3/09	Milton & Fulston United	Home	<u>4-2</u>	Jack, Miguel (3)
22/3/09	Thamesview Youth Rangers	Home	<u>0-4</u>	
29/3/09	Thamesview Youth Rangers	Away	<u>1-3</u>	Sule
5/4/09	Pegasus 81	Home	<u>3-7</u>	Liam, Jack (2)
19/4/09	Lordswood Youth	Away	<u>2-1</u>	Jack (2)

(Click on score for match report)

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Bredhurst Juniors 7 Cobham Colts 2

It was a case of welcome to the first division for Cobham against a very strong Bredhurst side. Bredhurst made most of the early running and dominated possession in the first half, as Cobham struggled to get into the pace of the game.

Bredhurst scored the opener after about 15 minutes and soon added a second after a good move with quick passing. Only good defending and goalkeeping kept the score down. Cobham started to get more into the game after about half an hour when Sam came on for his league debut and shored-up the centre of midfield. Although Bredhurst still looked the more threatening team, Jack pulled one back after he lobbed the keeper from a clever through ball by Miguel before half time.

Cobham played much better at the start of the second period, and soon levelled the score. Andrew won the ball on the left before finding Sunny on the edge of the centre circle, who hit a half volley into the top corner. For the next 20 minutes the game was quite even with both team creating chances, but it was Bredhurst that went ahead again.

In the last 10 minutes, Bredhurst's fitness showed and four late goals made sure they were the deserved winners. For Cobham, there were lots of encouraging signs, showing that they can compete physically at this level - but need to do it for 80 minutes. They kept in touch for most of the game with a team that finished third last year and on this form should do at least as well this season.

Man of the Match: Andrew

Team: Paul(GK), Luke, Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Charlie, Sunny, Carl, Miguel, Jack, Liam. Subs: George, Sam

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Cobham Colts 1 Spartac 6

Looking solid in defence and midfield and with excellent movement up front, Spartac dominated the first period and were 3-0 ahead at half-time. Cobham could not get hold of the ball, were second best in most challenges and spent the whole time defending. Without the regular Cobham keeper, Miguel played in goal and did a really good job - making some fine saves to keep the score down.

The second half was much more even, with Cobham winning their fair share of tackles and keeping hold of ball much better than in the first 40 minutes. All the Cobham team raised their game, with Luke, Andrew and Pelumi standing out in defence. However, Sam was the Cobham MOTM with a strong display both in midfield and defence.

Jack got a deserved goal for Cobham with a good finish after about 55 minutes to pull it back to 3-1. Both teams then had chances before Spartac got their fourth ten minutes later, then adding two late goals to make it 6-1 to the away team.

As in the previous week, the opposition demonstrated the step up in quality in the 1st division and Cobham took too long to get into the pace of the game. Spartac deserve credit for playing some really good football, combining clever movement with sharp passing. Cobham can also take encouragement from their second half performance when they competed and passed well.

Man of the Match: Sam

Team: Miguel (GK), Luke, Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Sam, Charlie, Sunny, Kyle, Jack, Liam. Subs: Tom

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Cobham Colts 1 Bredhurst Juniors 1

Cobham turned in their best performance of the season to earn a draw against the same team that comprehensively beat them a fortnight earlier. Every player fought for the ball from the first to the last minute. Although Bredhurst had the better of the first half and created far more chances, an outstanding performance from Paul in goal kept them at bay.

The second half was more even in terms of chances, and a great save by the Bredhurst keeper denied Liam when through on goal. Paul was eventually beaten on about 50 minutes by a good curling shot into the far corner. Bredhurst then went to try to kill the game off with another goal, but Cobham gradually got back into it. Jack was rewarded for his excellent play throughout the game with a great first time shot from the edge of the box that curled into the top corner.

Bredhurst pressed hard to regain the lead, but the defence of Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi and Sam continued to limit goal scoring chances and, when they did get through, Paul made a couple of unbelievable saves. The defence were helped by tough tackling in midfield by Carl, Sunny and Kyle (who also had a shot that just went over the bar), while Liam, Jack and George also worked hard to close down. Cobham nearly snatched a surprise winner but Pelumi was quickly shut out when ready to strike from 4 metres out.

Man of the Match: Paul

Team: Paul (GK), Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Sam, Carl, Kyle, Sunny, George, Jack, Liam. Subs: Luke

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Cliffe Royals 1 Cobham Colts 3 (Cup)

Cobham progressed to the next round of the cup without playing very well. Cliffe Royals worked hard to close down the space and Cobham found it difficult to get any rhythm to their game. Both teams struggled to make clear chances as the defences were on top.

Jack broke the deadlock in the first half after battling to win the ball from a Sunny pass, before placing a low shot into the corner. Cobham started much more brightly in the second period, having changed to 4-4-2 and started to make some chances with good passing. They went two up after 50 minutes, when excellent work down the right by Miguel ended with a low cross that Jack tapped in from close range. Unfortunately, Cobham grew complacent with the second goal and the midfield kept giving the ball away too easily as aimless flicks replaced the passing. However, Jack got his hat-trick with a long range free kick that dipped under the bar.

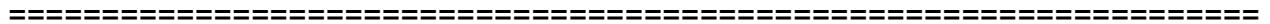
To their credit, Cliffe kept going and had a couple of chances before getting a consolation goal towards the end of the game.

Dalton played well, but it was Pelumi who stood out with a dominant performance at the heart of the defence. Andrew stepped up in goal and also did well.

Man of the Match: Pelumi

Team: Andrew (GK), Luke, George, Dalton, Pelumi, Charlie, Sunny, Carl, Miguel, Jack, Liam

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Rainham Eagles 4 Cobham Colts 2

With only 10 players, Cobham did well to make a game of it. Rainham played some great passing football to make it difficult for Cobham in the first half. Brilliant goalkeeping by Miguel and the offside trap kept Rainham at bay in the first half. Andrew also did really well at left back, coping with the clever play by the Rainham number 10 and often outnumbered 3 to 1.

Cobham came out strongly in the second period and soon took a surprise lead when Kyle finished neatly from close range after good build-up play and a clever ball from Jack. A long half volley from Jack soon after made it 2-0. Cobham controlled the game for a while and both Liam and Miguel went close, before Rainham got their passing game back and came back strongly.

Andrew was now in goal and saved a one-on-one and later made a good reaction save before Dalton cleared off the line. It looked like it could be Cobham's day, but a combination of being a player short and good passing from Rainham took its toll with

Cobham running out of steam in the last quarter. Rainham got a goal back and quickly added an equaliser. Two late goals saw Rainham home.

Cobham were unlucky not to have taken something from the game, but their legs went in the last 15 minutes on hot day. Equally, Rainham deserved the win in the end having created more chances over the match and they played some attractive pass and move football. All the Cobham players gave 100% and should be proud of a great effort.

Man of the Match: Miguel

Team: Miguel (GK) Andrew (GK), Sam, Dalton, Pelumi, Kyle, Sunny, Carl, Jack, Liam

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Cobham Colts 2 Rainham Eagles 5

Cobham slumped to their second defeat of the season against a determined Rainham side. The first half was fairly even, with Cobham probably enjoying more possession but Rainham creating the better chances. Sunny did well alongside Sule who had a good debut in the centre of midfield.

The Rainham goalkeeper had an excellent game, starting in the first few minutes when he managed to tip over a Jack shot that looked destined for the top corner. In Cobham's goal, Sam stood in as the emergency keeper and did well, making some good saves.

Rainham went in at half-time a goal up, taking one of the many chances created by running off the shoulder of the centre halves. Some of the Cobham players kept ball watching and kept losing their opponents.

Cobham struggled in the second half. Liam did well to keep going despite a knee injury and Jack was on and off the pitch with a migraine. Rainham took advantage and soon added a second, before George finished well to pull one back. Rainham continued to create chances as more gaps appeared and added three more goals. Liam got another for Cobham towards the end of the game, but by then Rainham had deservedly wrapped-up the three points.

From a coach's view, it was disappointing how easily Cobham gave the ball away - even when not under pressure. To their credit, however, the players kept going with only nine fit players and made a decent game of it. Dalton stood out as the Cobham man of the match with a determined captain's performance: winning most of his challenges and using the ball well. Andrew also had an effective game at left back.

Man of the Match: Dalton

Team: Sam (GK), Luke, Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Sunny, Sule, Liam, Carl, Jack, George

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Pegasus 81 5 Cobham Colts 2 (Cup)

Two early goals at the start of each half saw Pegasus 81 through to the quarter finals of the MNYL Cup. Cobham started with 10 players and were soon two down from long range efforts.

After about 15 minutes Sunny joined the Cobham team who then started to have more of the play. At least five good chances went begging for Cobham and they hit the woodwork, before Jack got his eighth goal of the season. Dalton, Luke, Sam and Pelumi played well in defence and Sule stood out in midfield with strong tackling and simple passing. Arron also made his debut for Cobham in goal.

At 2-1 down at half-time the game was set-up for a Cobham comeback, but it was Pegasus who again started strongly and they quickly added two more goals to go 4-1up. Cobham then made some good chances which should have been finished, but Pegasus also created more opportunities in an end to end game. Sule got his first goal for Cobham following-up a saved shot and the Pegasus keeper made a great save, somehow pushing a powerful shot onto the bar.

For Cobham there were some good signs in the number of chances they created and they played some neat football at times. Man of the match went to Luke for a very good first half and playing on for the rest of the match despite a bad knock to his shoulder which made it difficult for him to run.

Man of the Match: Luke

Team: Arron (GK), Luke, Sam, Dalton, Pelumi, Sunny, Kyle, Sule, Miguel, Jack, George

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Cobham Colts 3 Grasshoppers 1 (Kent Cup)

Two goals from Miguel and another from Andrew were enough to see Cobham through to the next round in a hard fought game. Cobham started off brightly and created a couple of early chances before Andrew went off injured after a strong challenge in the penalty area. Luke came on at left back and did a good job as did Carl at right back. Arron made a smart save diving to his right for Cobham to keep the score level on 15 minutes.

Cobham took the lead after about 25 minutes with a header from Miguel. Jack nearly added a second soon after with a powerful angled shot that cannoned off the bar. Kyle, Sam and Sule all had good games in midfield with some sound tackling and passing.

Liam had his best game so far this season on the left both in attack and with working hard to defend, while Jack did really well in the first half with his hold-up play and creating chances.

In the second-half, Miguel added his and Cobham's second with a smart left foot finish past the advancing keeper from a great pass from Dalton, who stood out as the best player in the game. However, Grasshoppers soon pulled a goal back after a good move that was finished well with a first time shot into the corner.

Midway through the second half Charlie did really well on the right to get a cross in which Andrew put way from close range. Andrew then went on to win a penalty, which Jack thumped against the post, and then cleared off the line from a free kick.

This was a good all round performance where everyone worked hard and put in some great tackles – especially Dalton and Pelumi at the back. For the first time in a while Cobham were able to field substitutes and this made a big difference with covering injuries and giving some the chance of a rest.

Man of the Match: Dalton

Team: Arron (GK), Carl, Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Sam, Kyle, Sule, Miguel, Jack, Liam. Subs: Luke, Charlie

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Spartac 8 Cobham Colts 0

Spartac ran out comfortable winners with four goals in each half. Cobham made a bright start and did most of the attacking for the first 10-15 minutes, but still found themselves two goals down.

The Spartac captain had an excellent game and proved too good for Cobham, often beating a couple of players and attracting others to leave huge gaps elsewhere that were filled with Spartac runners. Despite the score line, Miguel (who stood in as goalkeeper) made some good saves.

Liam gave a strong performance in the second half and Sule put some good tackles in the game, but Sam was awarded the Cobham man of the match after giving 100% throughout - with good passing and running.

Man of the Match: Sam

Team: Miguel (GK), Carl, Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Sam, Sule, Sunny, Charlie, Jack, Liam. Subs: Luke

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Cobham Colts 8 Lordswood 2

Cobham got their first win of the season in the league with a good all round performance. After not taking some early chances, including a close range shot from Kyle that was brilliantly saved by the Lordswood keeper, Cobham fell behind to a long range effort that dipped under the bar.

Cobham continued to do most of the attacking and were rewarded with a trademark Liam goal when he cut inside the full-back before curling the ball into the opposite corner. Cobham went into half-time 2-1 ahead after Pelumi followed up quickly to stab the ball over the line. Liam and Jack stood out in the first half, both working really hard and creating lots of problems for the Lordswood defence.

Two goals at the start of the second period by Liam and Miguel seemed to have made the game safe, but Lordswood soon pulled it back to 4-2. Arron then went onto make a couple of sharp saves, but after the hour Miguel scored again with a powerful angled drive into the bottom corner and later went onto to complete his hat-trick with a strike from outside the box - rounding off a great individual performance. In between, Kyle got a deserved goal for his effort when he scored from close range after great work by Sunny on the right. Jack completed the scoring with a curling free kick from 40 metres.

All the Cobham team played well with Sunny and Charlie also putting in probably their best games of the season so far. Andrew and Dalton again stood out with their excellent running with the ball and passing, and Sam proved his versatility once more after starting in central midfield before moving to the right and then full-back.

Overall, the Cobham passing was much shorter and sharper and the running off the ball was much better than in previous games.

Man of the Match: Liam

Team: Arron (GK), Luke, Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi, Sam, Kyle, Charlie, Jack, Miguel, Liam. Subs: Carl, Sule, Sunny

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Cobham Colts 0 Ramsgate FC 8 (Kent Cup)

Although the score does not suggest it, Cobham did quite well against the best side faced this season. From the Kent League, Ramsgate played some nice football, keeping the ball well and they were particularly strong at switching the play. They went in 3-0 up at half time and could have had more, but Cobham also created a few really good chances that should have been scored.

Cobham kept battling throughout the match and the score would have been closer if they had taken some of their chances and not conceded a number of soft goals. Charlie and Kyle stood out for Cobham, with Charlie taking the MOTM for working really hard both in defence and attack on the right of midfield. Sule had a strong second half, and Sam and Dalton also did well at the back.

Man of the Match: Charlie

Team: Arron (GK), Carl, Andrew, Dalton, Sam, Kyle, Sule, Miguel, Charlie, Sunny, Liam. Subs: Luke

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Milton & Fulston 4 Cobham Colts 0

Milton & Fulston deservedly won this game. First to most loose balls and with sharper passing, Milton's better work rate gained them their first win of the season.

Milton took the lead after about 25 minutes with an excellent curling shot into the top corner of the net, before adding another two before half-time.

At the start of the second half, Cobham did look like they might get in the game as they attacked for 10 minutes or so. But they never recovered after Milton made it 4-0 with a soft goal on their first attack of the second period. After that both sides had a few chances and Milton held on comfortably for the win.

For Cobham, there were few bright spots with nearly all the players below par. Pelumi had a strong first half and Kyle, Sule and Dalton kept working hard, but generally the work rate and standard of play fell well short of their form before Christmas.

Man of the Match: None

Team: Arron (GK), Carl, Andrew, Pelumi, Dalton, Sam, Kyle, Sule, Miguel, Charlie, Liam. Subs: Luke

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Oak Athletic 3 Cobham Colts 1

Cobham turned in one of their best performances of the season and were perhaps unlucky not to leave with a point. Cobham started brightly and attacked for most of the first half, without causing the Oak keeper too many problems. Sule went close a couple of times with headers from corners and Jack hit the bar with a long range half volley that bounced onto the goal line.

Oak were dangerous on the break as Cobham again struggled with the ball behind the defenders. Arron made a couple of excellent first half saves as he enjoyed his best game of the season. However, he could not prevent a soft goal on the stroke of half time. Cobham defended a free kick from the centre circle too high up and watched as the Oak striker finished well from a simple ball over the top.

Cobham got a deserved equaliser soon after the restart when an Oak player deflected a corner into his own net. After that, the game was fairly even with Oak again getting more shots on target, forcing Arron to make some more good saves. With about 15 minutes left Oak again took the lead from a disputed corner with a strong header. A few minutes later Oak got their third with back post header from another free kick.

The Cobham players were disappointed by the result, but can take credit from a good performance. Pelumi had a strong game in defence against a fast Oak striker and Sule and Kyle stood out in midfield. Somehow Sam played much of the game with a broken rib and looks like being out for some time.

Man of the Match: Kyle

Team: Arron (GK), Andrew, Pelumi, Dalton, Sam, Kyle, Sule, Sunny, Charlie, Jack, Liam. Subs:

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Pegasus 81 4 Cobham Colts 1

With Arron going off injured early in the game and Liam hobbling with an ankle injury, Cobham effectively played most of the game with ten players so the score line for them was not too bad!

Pegasus took the lead with a nice finish as they got behind the Cobham defence. Both teams had good chances in the rest of the first half. Jack could not take a couple of one and one chances, and Andrew (as the stand-in keeper) did well in goal especially with coming off his line quickly. Pegasus generally had the better efforts on goal, however, and added a second before half time.

In terms of possession, it was again fairly even in the second half. Dalton played well in defence and Luke tackled well at left back. The outcome of the game was put beyond doubt with two penalty decisions. Pegasus scored from a penalty that was awarded after Andrew clearly got to the ball first to put it out for a corner before momentum took him and the Pegasus player into each other. Sule then got a goal back with a nice touch from a Jack free kick to cap his best game of the season. It then looked like Cobham would have the chance to pull another back when Charlie clipped the ball past the Pegasus keeper before being fouled on the edge of the area - but play was waved on. Soon after, Pegasus wrapped up the game with their fourth goal.

Cobham bad luck with injuries this season continues. Well done to Liam for staying on the pitch to make up the numbers.

Man of the Match: Sule

Team: Arron (GK), Andrew, Carl, Pelumi, Dalton, Kyle, Sule, Sunny, Charlie, Jack, Liam. Subs: Luke

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Cobham Colts 1 Oak Athletic 9

The two very good Oak forwards and their excellent number 8 in midfield were too much for Cobham to cope with as Oak ran away with the game in the second half. Oak took the lead on two minutes after play was surprisingly allowed to carry on after Dalton was bundled over from behind when in possession on the edge of the area. After that, Cobham enjoyed a fair share of possession for the next 20-30 minutes, but Oak always looked more dangerous in front of goal. Although Miguel made some good saves, Oak were soon 4-0 up mainly through runs off the defenders' shoulder onto the through ball. To their credit, both teams kept the ball on the ground and played some nice passing football throughout.

Sunny stood out in the first half for Cobham with non-stop running and Carl put in some strong challenges. Jack pulled a goal back with an accurate long range free kick that somehow crept over the Oak keeper and just under the bar.

Any chance of a second half fight back by Cobham went out with the weather. The wind suddenly came up with long patches of heavy rain and sleet right into their faces. Despite Oak scoring regularly, the Cobham players kept going with Jack working hard up front against a strong defence and Andrew doing well in goal against the elements and repeated Oak attacks. Junaid made his Cobham debut and played very well on the left of midfield in the second period.

Well done to Oak for some great passing and finishing.

Man of the Match: Jack

Team: Miguel (GK), Andrew, Luke, Pelumi, Dalton, Carl, Kyle, Sule, Sunny, Junaid, Jack. Subs:

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Cobham Colts 4 Milton & Fulston Utd 2

Both sides worked hard and tackled well to make this a competitive match on a sunny afternoon. Milton edged the first quarter - putting Cobham under some pressure without creating too many shots on goal. Arron did well, however, coming off his line quickly

and with organising the defence. At the other end Kyle went close and Liam saw a shot curl just wide of the post.

After 15 minutes, Milton took the lead with what must be a contender for goal of the season. Winning the ball on the edge of their own box, they broke quickly. A few seconds and four passes later with the ball going from one side of the pitch and back again, the Milton captain ran onto a brilliantly weighted pass and side footed the ball into the corner of the goal.

This seemed to wake Cobham and they started to play more in the opponent's half. Jack had a couple of good chances before heading back across goal from a great Kyle cross from the right to pull the scores level.

After the break, the game went up a notch with some hard tackling from both sides. Pelumi was outstanding in defence with some strong challenges and interceptions, with Dalton, Andrew and Luke picking-up anything he missed. Cobham shortened their passing and kept hold of the ball much better, with Sunny continuing to have his best game in midfield. Milton also played some good football to make it an entertaining game. Cobham took the lead after about 50 minutes when Miguel ran clear on goal from a Jack through ball and, after his first shot rebounded off the post, crashed it into the net from short range.

Cobham then had another couple of chances, including one cleared off the line after a mighty goal mouth scramble. Milton then came back strongly for the next few minutes and equalised with a free kick from outside the box. It was then fairly even until Cobham got their third. Similar to the first Milton goal, Cobham broke from the edge of their own box and Miguel finished a good move by converting Jack's clever pass after the keeper did well to save the first attempt. Soon after, Jack had a free kick into the top corner well saved. Miguel then got his hat-trick with a header after Charlie did really well to beat the full back and send in a sharp cross from the by-line.

The standard of football from the two bottom teams was very good and testament to the high quality of the U15's Division 1. The game could have gone either way, but on the number of chances made Cobham just deserved the points.

Man of the Match: Sunny

Team: Arron (GK), Andrew, Luke, Pelumi, Dalton, Kyle, Sule, Sunny, Charlie, Liam, Jack. Subs: Miguel

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Cobham Colts 0 Thamesview Youth Rangers 4

This was a really entertaining game to watch and was played in a sporting manner. Both teams kept the ball on the floor and tried to pass their way to goal.

Not surprisingly, top of the table Thamesview made most of the early running, but a man of the match display by Arron in goal kept them at bay. However, they got the breakthrough on about 20 minutes when Cobham were slow to react to a pass through the middle. Although Thamesview went close a few times, the post, Arron and some great defending – especially by Pelumi and Andrew stopped them adding more goals in the first half. As the game went on Cobham started to grow in confidence, dominating the last 10 minutes of the half. Sunny passed the ball well in midfield and Charlie and Liam looked dangerous out wide. Andrew went closest with a long pass that bounced over the keeper and went just wide before Miguel could get his head onto it.

Cobham started the second half brightly, but with only 11 players the midfield started to tire and Thamesview again took control. They scored their second after 50 minutes and soon after had a great shot canon off the bar. Andrew, Dalton, Pelumi and Luke did really well in defence with Arron adding some more good saves behind them. As the game went on Cobham found it harder to get out of their half and two goals in final quarter gave Thamesview a 4-0 win. Cobham did not give up though, with Jack and Miguel working really hard up front and making difficulties for the defenders. Sule nearly got a consolation goal with a powerful header that just went wide from Jack's corner.

Well done to both sides and to the referee who helped make it such a good game.

Man of the Match: Arron

Team: Arron (GK), Andrew, Luke, Pelumi, Dalton, Sule, Sunny, Charlie, Liam, Miguel, Jack. Subs:

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Thamesview Youth Rangers 3 Cobham Colts 1

Ten men Cobham nearly pulled off a major surprise with an excellent display in the return match against Thamesview. Once again, it was a really good game to watch with both teams trying to play quality football.

Thamesview enjoyed most of the possession in the first half, but Cobham kept their shape well and worked really hard to keep them at bay. However, defensive errors led to three Thamesview first half goals. At 1-0, Liam nearly equalised with a strong run and shot but was denied by an excellent save. Besides another shot that hit the woodwork, the Cobham keeper was otherwise untested in the first 40 minutes.

The second half saw an unexpected twist. Cobham started to win lots more of the ball. Jack and Kyle in the centre of midfield put some good moves together, and Cobham started to look the better side. Charlie had a great second period working really hard and beating the full back a number of times. After going close a couple of times, Sule pulled goal back after 55 minutes slotting his shot past the advancing keeper from a

through ball from Charlie. Pelumi, Dalton and Miguel were great in defence and were well protected by the midfield. Andrew grabbed the man of the match by adding some great passing and dribbling to sharp defending. At one stage he beat 4 or 5 players before getting a clip on his ankle just as he looked like he would beat the last defender.

Both sides had further chances. Arron made a couple of sharp saves and Pelumi, Miguel and Sule all went close with headers.

Well done to both sides, but special credit to Cobham for making it such a close game with a player short.

Man of the Match: Andrew

Team: Arron (GK), Miguel, Andrew, Pelumi, Dalton, Kyle, Sule, Charlie, Liam, Jack. Subs

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Cobham Colts 3 Pegasus 81 7

This game sums up Cobham's season. Once again short of players, Cobham fought valiantly with 9 players at the start and 8 in the second half.

There was always only going to be one winner. After falling behind to an early deflected shot from Liam, Pegasus made the extra players count by using the width and passing the ball well to keep possession. Cobham chased the ball too much and inevitably gaps appeared, especially when the play was switched, and Pegasus soon gained the lead and went 5-1 by half-time.

After Charlie went off injured early in the second period, a cricket score looked likely. However, Cobham kept their shape much better, letting Pegasus have the ball deep and out wide but leaving less space in front of the goal. As expected, Pegasus had the lion's share of possession. They kept the ball well, but found it more difficult to create clear chances. Kyle had taken over from Miguel in goal and made a few good saves, but stood little chance with the two that went in – one an excellent angled shot from the left. In the last 20 minutes, Cobham started to make a few chances on the break. Jack pulled a goal back after a flowing passing move. He then scored a stunner, somehow managing to turn under pressure on the touchline before hitting a half volley that flew into the far top corner from 40 metres.

Once again, Pelumi and Andrew were really strong at the back, Miguel was great as a stand-in centre half and Luke also had good second half. Liam, Kyle and Charlie worked really hard in midfield, as did Sule who never stopped running, tackling and heading for the whole game to get the man of the match award for Cobham.

Well done to all the Cobham team for playing with their heads in the second half and for sticking with it when other teams may have given up.

Man of the Match: Sule

Team: Miguel (GK), Luke, Andrew, Pelumi, Kyle, Sule, Charlie, Liam, Jack. Subs

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Lordswood 1 Cobham Colts 2

Cobham finished their season with a good away win at Lordswood. After Lordswood made a bright start, Jack gave Cobham the lead with a deflected free kick that wrong footed the keeper. After that, Cobham got into their stride and created lots of clear cut and half chances which they couldn't put way. Keeping the passing short, Sunny and Sule started to run more of the game in midfield of the pitch and Charlie and Liam caused lots of problems out wide for the Lordswood defence. At the other end, Lordswood tested Arron in goal a couple of times – including forcing him to make a great scrambling save to push a shot away from just inside the post.

Lordswood came out in the second half full of determination to get the equaliser and had most of the territory in the next 20 minutes. However, equally determined defending by Luke, Pelumi, Dalton and Andrew restricted the number of chances - although Arron did have to make a couple of decent stops. Cobham continued to play well in patches and made some good chances on the break. With a quarter of the game left, Jack broke through the middle and added his and Cobham's second with a cool finish in the corner with only the keeper to beat. Cobham then started to play again as they did in the first half and should have added a couple of more goals before Lordswood got a goal back with around 8 minutes to go to set-up a nervy end to the game. Before that Lordswood hit the bar with a good header and Andrew had a great shot tipped onto the post at the other end.

On the number of good chances made, Cobham probably deserved the win and should have scored a few more goals. But that may have made the score unfair on Lordswood who enjoyed a fair amount of possession.

Man of the Match: Whole team!

Team: Arron,(GK), Luke, Andrew, Pelumi, Dalton, Sule, Sunny, Charlie, Liam, Jack, Miguel. Subs

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Season Review 2008/09

It would be easy to say that we did not score enough goals and conceded too many. But the season was not that straightforward and disrupted by players leaving and injuries.

After getting promoted in the last two seasons, we needed to strengthen the squad with a couple of players that had played at the higher level before – but instead lost a couple of key players early on. Paul the goalkeeper left after two and Tom was out injured for the whole season. George then gave up football after a few games. Later on Jack was out for a few weeks, Sam missed the final seven games with a bad injury and Carl was not available for the last five matches.

The step-up to Division 1 was much bigger than from 3 to 2 and Cobham took a few games to get used to the much faster pace and more physical nature of the games. We seemed to be coming to terms with it when the bad weather enforced a long winter break. The standard of play was also much higher, with 3 or 4 teams probably good enough to play in the Kent League.

Apart from losing a very good goalkeeper, Paul's departure disrupted the whole team, as the boys often had to play out of position to cover the keeper spot until a new one could be found. The defence found it particularly difficult and were understandably a bit disorganised at times as they were not sure what the stand-in keeper would do! Arron joined us in goal in October and although he had not played before, his lack of experience was made up for by a being a committed trainer and very willing to learn. This paid off in the last few games of the season when he put in some good performances and made some outstanding saves.

The squad was improved when Sunny returned to the club and Sam joined. Although he had not played club football before, Sam started off really well with a fully committed attitude and high levels of fitness. He quickly picked up the positional and tactical parts of the game. Sunny began the season a bit slower but finished the season off very well by making good use of his pace, strength and passing ability. With his natural footballing attributes he should aim to stand out next season. Suleman joined the team in October and went on to play in all the remaining games. With a fearless approach to tackling and high levels of fitness he improved as the season went onto and is sure to be even more of an asset in 2009/10 now he has picked up some experience in playing in a league side.

Andrew and Dalton once again stood out to be among the best players over the whole season – usually setting the standard for consistency, reading the game, positional sense, tackling and accurate passing. But this season Jack and Pelumi also stepped up and matched their levels of performance, although they brought different qualities. Jack added a physical side to his undoubted goal scoring ability (again finishing top scorer with 15 goals) and technical skills, and has become much more of an all round and team

player. Pelumi now reads the game much better and has improved his positional sense and first touch to supplement his natural strength and pace. He was the most consistent performer in the second part of the season. Elsewhere in defence, Luke again showed his fearless attitude to the game with some brave tackling – often holding his own against much bigger and faster opponents.

After the New Year, Kyle returned to the form that won him player of the year last season. Charlie and Liam both deserve recognition for regularly attending training and playing most of the matches. Both had difficult roles when we were often short of players, as they had to work tirelessly to support both the defence and attack from wide midfield. Well done also to Miguel who played in a number of positions to help out the team when we were short of a goalkeeper and other players. In all, he did a great job as keeper, right-back, centre half, right midfield and his usual position as striker!

It was sad to see George leave after 7 matches into the season after giving Cobham many years of loyal service and playing 84 games. Carl also finished his long Cobham playing career with 78 games and will also be missed.

Two special mentions must go to Jack and Andrew who both made it a century of 11 a-side appearances for Cobham. Jack finished with 101 caps and Andrew reached the 100 mark on the last day of the season.

Roll on next season. Hopefully, we will be able to put out a full side each week and win a few more games!

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