



FOOTBALL **BLOODS FIGHT BACK!**

Saffron Walden Town 3 Thetford Town 1
Thurlow Nunn League Premier Division

THE BLOODS fought back from a goal down, to gain an important victory which gives them a strong chance of finishing in the top half of the table in their first season in the Premier Division.

Walden had six good scoring chances in the first quarter of the game, and a string of corners, but the Thetford defence fought hard to try and gain any points possible, in their battle to avoid relegation.

Having dominated the first half an hour, Walden conceded a goal from Thetford's first scoring chance. A long throw into the box in the 28th minute, deflected off captain Sam Bond at the near post, and looped up into the top right hand corner of the goal.

The Bloods nearly equalized in the 31st minute, when from another corner the ball was laid back to Matt Snelling, who drove the ball inches wide of the right hand post from 15 yards out.

Walden finally got the goal that their pressure deserved, when three minutes before the interval a free kick just outside the box was floated to the far post where Perry Moody scored his first goal for the club with a firm header.

Both teams had a good chance to score in the first three minutes of the second half. Graeme Turner and James Thomas combined to knock the ball wide with just the keeper to beat, and for Thetford Robbie Priddie shot wide from a good position.

Walden continued to have most of the play, and eventually took the lead in the 70th minute when a good through ball to Graeme Turner, saw the Walden centre-forward lob the keeper to score the Bloods second goal.

Craig Calver went close with a shot and a header, and Spike Bell was denied when his superb downward header was tipped round the post at full length by Matt Barker in the Thetford goal.

Two minutes from time Graeme Turner made another excellent home crowd happy when he received the ball with his back to goal, then turned and shot low into the corner of the goal to make it 3-1, which was a fair reflection of the game.

Walden now need just one point from their remaining two games to finish in 10th place, and if Brantham loose at Godmanchester on Monday, as expected, a win or two draws would guarantee 9th place.

ATHLETICS **Gold for George!**



SYDNEY International Regatta Centre, Australia, was the setting for the 2016 Penrith ITU World Paratriathlon Event on Sunday.

There are seven rounds of the ITU World Paratriathlon Event Series. Points won in the early rounds qualify athletes for the ITU Paratriathlon World Championships and, more importantly, qualify national slots at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games this September.

Local paratriathlete, George Peasgood, was competing in the PT4 category. This is the most competitive category, with the largest number of competing athletes.

The race started with a 750m open water swim in the Regatta lake that was used for the 2000 Sydney olympics rowing event. George had a great swim, exiting the water in first position, in a time of 9min 49sec, with the fastest swim of the day. With a speedy transition he was soon out on the bike which consisted of a 20km multi lap flat race around the lake. George held on to his lead, posting the fastest bike split of his category of 30min 40sec. George then set off on the 5km run, around the perimeter of the lake. With a sore foot, George held onto his lead to bring Great Britain home a gold medal, finishing in a time of 1hr 2min 33sec, 1min 23sec ahead of second place.

George's next international race will be the European championships, in Lisbon, Portugal, at the end of May, however he will be part of a relay team competing at this coming weekend's WaldenTri triathlon.

Buchallet wins bronze at European Duathlon!

WALDENTRI members Matt Bainbridge (pictured below left) and Michael Buchallet (below right) travelled to Kalkar in Germany to represent Great Britain in their respective age groups in the European Duathlon Championships.

The Championships took place on the grounds of an unused nuclear power plant converted into a children's amusement park, complete with rollercoaster and rides built into the old cooling tower. Both were racing in the sprint event which consisted of a 5km run followed by a 20km bike leg and finally a 2.5km run. Bainbridge finished a creditable 9th in the 30-34 year age category in 1hr 40sec.

Buchallet was competing in the 45-49 year age category. A strong first run brought him into the initial transition in third place just a handful of seconds behind the first competitors. Buchallet took the lead early in the bike leg but three stronger cyclists passed him later. But, a swift second transition and battling second run allowed him to fight back and crossed the line in 3rd place in 59min 38sec, only 16sec behind the silver medalist.

The next Rendez-Vous for Team GB duathletes Bainbridge and Buchallet is the World Championships taking place in Spain on June 5.



RUGBY **Walden 8 points clear**

Saffron Walden 27 Holt 5

WALDEN cemented their League title with an efficient win against a good Holt team.

With the incentive of putting on a good show in front of some fantastic support who had come to help celebrate with the team, it was not long after the kick off that Walden forwards and backs combined with some great controlled rugby that after several phases an overlap was created on the right for winger Adam Miles to open the scoring wide out, 5-0 after 6 minutes.

Walden were dominating all areas of the game and winning good ball in the scrum and line-outs and looking dangerous every time they had possession but Holts defence was good and held firm for another 20 minutes but eventually the pressure told. Flanker Matt Holden was next on the score board as he charged over under the posts and full back Tom Price stepped up to convert, 12-0.

Walden kept the intensity up and on the half hour mark they won a penalty 40 metres out, it was taken quickly before Holt had time to regroup and a couple of passes later the ball was fed out to Miles who out paced the covering defence to once again score in the corner, 17-0.

On the stroke of half time a couple of sloppy bits of defending and a penalty

allowed Holt to get the ball down the field and into the Walden 22 scoring a well worked try wide out to leave the half time score 17-5.

Any hope Holt had of coming back into the game were quickly dispelled as Walden received the ball from the kick off and kicked it long and high to clear. Unfortunately for Holt the ball was spilled and 2nd row James Gosden and No 8 Brad Baker were quickest to react combining for Baker to score Walden's Bonus point try 22-5 after 42 minutes.

For the next half an hour the game was pretty even as Walden's make shift front row began to tire and Holt having more of the ball but some fine defence kept the visitors at bay as Walden to their credit battled hard showing good character in the circumstances with both the league and the match already won.

Walden also used the bench to good effect and it was one of the subs who scored the last try of the game with only a few minutes remaining when winger Vili Navia received the ball and side stepped 2 players and dived over the line leaving the final score at 27-5.

Another fine victory with Walden 8 points clear at the top of the table with the last match played.

SWIMMING **Three wins out of three for Saffron Seals!**

Essex Swim League, Division 3, Round 3

SAFFRON SEALS travelled to Basildon on Saturday April 16 and made it three wins out of three! The swimmers took on teams from Harwich, Hornchurch, Leyton and Eltham Stingrays and, with a depleted squad but a great team spirit, managed a win by 2 points.

Some fantastic swims were recorded, with seven PB times achieved (Nathan Abbotson, Zoe Dale-Webb, Sophia Diggins, Ben MacDermott, Lewis Marsh, Jack Stanton-Stock and Ruth Wilkinson). The final points score was Seals 194 pts, Harwich 192 pts, Hornchurch 152 pts, Leyton 117 pts, Eltham Stingrays 64 pts.

The final round of this league will be held at Becontree Sports Centre on 7th May, when Seals need to achieve third place or better to secure the top position in this division.

HOCKEY **Walden return from World Cup with gold and silver medals**

SAFFRON WALDEN Hockey Club players Jenni Goddard and Gisella Gale returned from the FIH Masters World Cup in Canberra, Australia victorious with a gold and silver medal.

Playing at a venue with three water based astro pitches with the tournament run by friendly and efficient volunteers, including 5 age groups both Men and Womens' teams coming from Malaysia, South Africa, USA, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Australia.



● Jenni (left) and Gisella

Jenni's (pictured above left) team, the over 55s, reached the finals against New Zealand beating them 2-0, and as NZ had beaten them in the round robin, coming out with the Gold medal was all the more satisfying.

Gisella's (above right) team the over 60s also played New Zealand in their final and were beaten in the final few minutes of the match 1-0. During the tournament Gisella scored 3 goals for her team.

KEEP IT BRIEF! Because we usually have only one sports page each week, we ask our correspondents to keep their match reports to a minimum so that we have a chance to include everyone.

JUDO

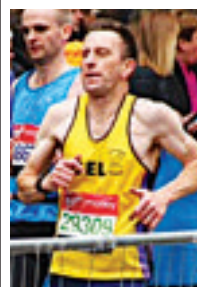
● Congratulations to Ollie Kerr who gained his black belt recently after 8 years of hard work!



YOUTH RUGBY **U13s clean sweep at Cams tournament**

WALDEN U13s entered a squad into the Cambridgeshire 7s hosted by Shelford, meeting the hosts in the first game. Walden narrowly won 25-24 with scores from James Perkins, Olly Davies, Harry Mitchell and Morgan Evans, Thomas Powell converting two. Next up were Huntingdon, the boys very keen to even matters after losing to them earlier in the season. Hugo Carey, Perkins, Axel Early and Ollie Langton scoring, Powell and Evans converting two to win 24-5. With growing confidence they boys played Cambridge winning 19-10 after scores from Perkins, Carey and Evans, Evans also converting two. Finally Bury, with tired legs they held firm and won 12-7 after two tries from Perkins and Mitchell, Perkins converting to ensure of victory and an outstanding performance from the lads, showcasing their high skill level. Mitchell's try was a contender for try of the season, chipping past three defenders, outsprinting them to collect the ball and score. James Perkins scored in every game, not a bad first appearance for the club!

LONDON MARATHON **Club chairman steels the show!**



CLUB CHAIRMAN Nigel Coates (left) got the performance of the day from the Striders at the London marathon on Sunday.

Nigel's amazing running in his 20th London Marathon finished 23rd in the M55-59 age category and was top 2000 of 38000 runners and got inside the 3-hour barrier with 2hr 59min 26sec in what was an incredible performance.

Rebecca White continued her impressive start to the year and crossed the line in 3hr 19min 17sec to claim a sub 3hr 30min marathon.

Elsewhere in the competition there were more Saffron Striders on show with Alan Jones (3hr 47min) Arthur Oliva (3hr 49min) and Caroline Thompson (3hr 17min) also crossing the famous finishing line at Buckingham Palace.

WaldenTri Marathon PBs

SEVERAL MEMBERS of WaldenTri took part in this year's Virgin London marathon on Sunday. The weather conditions made it challenging at times, with a flurry of snow thrown in for good measure.

Teresa Peasgood (pictured below right) and Sarah Switzer (below left), both Good for Age runners, started together at the Green Start, with the celebrities. Sarah finished in an amazing 3hr 21min, a new PB by 15 minutes. Teresa crossed the finish line in 3hr 44min. They were both running for Beating Bowel Cancer. Anyone still wishing to sponsor them can do so on virginmoneygiving.com/TeresaPeasgood or virginmoneygiving.com/SarahSwitzer.

Dave Ives was running his second marathon in eight days, having completed the Brighton marathon last weekend. He finished in an amazing 4hr 9min and was raising money for Breast Cancer Care via justgiving.com

Jess Hudson also ran London in a great time of 3hr 25min and giving her a new marathon PB.

