

### Letchworth held to a draw by Bury

On Saturday evening Letchworth Roller Hockey Club hosted Bury St Edmunds' premier league team at North Herts Leisure Centre, knowing that if they win every remaining game this season, they will win the league.

The game opened with both sides evenly matched, and neither able to gain the advantage in the opening minutes of play. Nearly 9 minutes of the first half had gone before James Taylor put the home side ahead, only for the visitors to equalise 4 minutes later. The hosts were not demoralised though, and Taylor scored a blistering goal less than 20 seconds later to put the hosts back in the lead. It took another 10 minutes of full on, end to end, play before Bury were able to equalise just 2 minutes before half time, and neither team was able to take advantage before the whistle.

The second half was more eventful in every way, with both side seeing players blue carded (sent off for 2 minutes). The hosts were the first to suffer, with the visitors following only 12 seconds later, leaving both sides with only 3 outfield players on, and no power play advantage to either side. LRHC scored through Taylor after 1½ minutes, meaning Bury could bring another player back on – advantage to them, as they now had 4 players, while LRHC still had 3. With 15 seconds of power play left, the visitors scored to bring them back level, and allow the hosts to put another player back on. Both teams now had full squads in play, and 15 minutes in which to win or lose. The home side were the first to score through Taylor, but the visitors pulled back again 3 minutes later – still nothing to separate the 2 teams.

The last 5 minutes were frantic as both sides tried to claw a win, but neither were prepared to give up the fight. The visitors had another player blue carded with less than 3 minutes play remaining, and the host were quick to take advantage , scoring from a direct free hit. However, this was not enough to secure the win, as the visitors were then able to bring another player on and equalised 30 seconds later. With neither side able to break the deadlock, it went to the very final seconds, with both sides desperate to gain the vital point, and a player from each side sustaining a cut to the elbow needing first aid treatment. A draw was the best either could manage, but was a fair reflection of the play by both teams. This was passionate hockey at its best, and showed what an exciting sport this truly is. Final score 5 – 5.

Team: D Milne (GK), C Gibson, M Giancola, C Westrop, N Allen, A Allen (C), C Amaral, B Howes (GK), R Jupp, J Taylor.