

Subject: The Match: Sunday 15th June
Kalamunda 1 – 0 Nedlands

I still can't believe this scoreline. A game we controlled was cruelly snatched away by a moment of really bad luck. And no time to recover! Last time we were at Kalamunda we came away smiling having collected the league winners trophy last season. Unfortunately, not so happy memories this time!

Well what weather on Sunday morning – reminded me of typical match conditions back home in South Wales. Watching the torrential downpour and waiting to make the long journey east to the hills I had doubts as to whether the game would go ahead. I guess we should be glad we didn't have to be on the foreshore putting the nets up! Now what fun that must have been.

Compounding the weather conditions, our task was made more difficult by two late withdrawals on Sunday morning which left us down to a squad of 10. Fortunately, Jack's younger brother Ben, one of the Under 12s, had come along with kit and was drafted into the team. Many thanks Ben – you did a great job, especially having already played a game in the same conditions earlier in the morning.

The tactical jockeying began even before the game with Kalamunda performing an extravagant 30 minute warm-up routine in the pouring rain while Nedlands decided to stay warm and dry and perform a short sharp warm up prior to kick off. Neither strategy seemed to gain an advantage – both teams were up for the game from the start and everyone looked like they had jumped fully clothed into a bath before we'd even kicked off!

Nedlands settled quickly with our characteristic competitiveness showing in spite of the conditions. It was difficult to expect too much quality but I have to say we did play some nice stuff on occasion and puddles permitting. Captain for the day, Connor, was finding space down the right and doing some good work which Kalamunda recognized and responded to with some strong challenges. Chances were few and far between with both defences strong. Half time came with the score 0-0 but I felt that we had the beating of Kalamunda based on the first half showing. The main half time instruction was to try to get more shots in especially given the difficult conditions for the goalkeepers - cold, wet and a very slippery ball. As it turned out, the conditions contributed to our down fall.

We switched goalkeepers at the start of the second half with Nick C replacing Jack R. The pattern of play continued with Nedlands increasingly getting on top. We were playing some good stuff down both wings but as in the first half shots were rare. It should be mentioned that this was in no small way to a couple of very good Kalamunda defenders. At one point Nedlands had Kala pinned in their penalty box for several minutes with a series of 4 consecutive corners. Connor's delivery was excellent and a couple of desperate clearances nearly resulted in own goals but we just couldn't make the breakthrough. Meanwhile, at the other end of the pitch a patient Nick C. got colder and wetter.

Then, with about 10 minutes to go, the hard working but “substituteless” Nedlands suffered a big blow. Jack R, who was combining well with David down the left, went on a mazy run. With the ball skidding just ahead of Jack, a defender saw his chance and ran across to put in a crunching tackle taking man and ball. It was a hard but fair tackle (just about) but unfortunately Jack’s calf took the impact. This effectively ended Jack’s game although he bravely stayed on the pitch and was able to make a nuisance of himself.

We reorganized but had lost a bit of attacking potency and the game seemed destined to be a draw. Then, with 30 seconds left and the ref looking at his watch, disaster struck. On a rare break Kalamunda won a throw-in near our penalty box. A resultant harmless looking cross was met by Luka, who it must be said had had a very strong game. Luka did the right thing in the circumstances and tried to clear first time. However, the wet ball skidded off the outside of his boot and spun towards the goal (instead of the halfway line). Nick, who had correctly moved off his line to cut off the cross, was completely wrong footed and although he tried couldn’t quite recover in time to make the save. Nedlands players, coach, manager and fan club just could not believe it. And neither could Kalamunda. There was only just enough time for Nedlands to kick off and begin an attack before the ref blew for time.

Having lost a game that we should have won, especially in such unlucky circumstances and after such a great effort in terrible conditions understandably there were some very upset lads at the end. It wouldn’t have been so bad if a Kalamunda player had won it with a piece of skill. Kalamunda are turning into my bogey team. The Masters played them a few weeks ago – against the run of play Kalamunda took the lead with an own goal (familiar?). We were all over them all game and only just before the end were we able to grab an equalizer.

Every one of the boys who played deserves a big pat on the back for their efforts. I hope you’ve all dried out!

This Sunday we are at home to Bassendean, kick off 8.30am. Please confirm availability asap.

As already forewarned, the club is organizing official team photos this weekend and our scheduled slot is before the game at 7.50am. Please try to be there.

Training Saturday usual place and time. This week the session will be taken by a special guest coach called Gary Newman (don't think he is the late 70s pop star!). Please try to make it.

Updated league table below. We’ve dropped one place to 4th but its still really close with lots of games to play.

Ladder as at round 08, 15 Jun 2008

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Agn	Diff	Points
Noranda Soccer Club	8	7	1	0	40	5	35	22
Heathridge Soccer Cl	8	5	2	1	22	8	14	17
Kalamunda United Soc	8	4	2	2	9	6	3	14
Nedlands Football Cl	8	4	1	3	13	7	6	13
Canning City Soccer	8	4	0	4	11	22	-11	12
Subiaco City Soccer	8	3	2	3	13	14	-1	11
Melville City	8	3	0	5	13	20	-7	9
Whitford City Soccer	8	2	1	5	21	34	-13	7
Bassendean Juniors	8	1	2	5	13	24	-11	5
Swan I.C. Soccer Clu	8	1	1	6	7	22	-15	4