

Holland Tour Report – Team 2

We had two coaching sessions at the fabulous Maastricht Sports Complex - focusing on positioning for 11-aside and attacking the circle drills.

Our first match saw us travel to Nova. Isla was our captain and was extremely nervous about gifting our opposing captain with the 'masterclass' Tranby pennant. This trepidation was soon full of joy when she was presented with a signed shirt at the end of the fixture. This lovely gift epitomised what was an incredibly friendly fixture, which we won 5-0. With Lottie opening up the scoring, with a great goal at the end of a crazy run, beating several players en route to goal. At quarter time it was discussed how to turn our dominance into goals, keeping Izzy high up the pitch. She played this role exceptionally well and finished after a great clearance from defence. Emily got a blow to the hand and could not continue so with Isla keen to play on pitch we swapped the two. In the last quarter we played our best hockey. This resulted in three goals, a brace for Lily, the first of which was an excellent move after a well worked free hit, by Addie and Ella. The last goal was scored by Isla, to cap off a great experience. The girls then enjoyed the Dutch hospitality, especially the Madeira cake, which was a permanent feature at all of our matches. They also had time to watch a game between an English touring boys team and Nova.

Our 2nd match was again at Nova. This time Lily was captain, and received the same generous hockey shirt. This time we were playing against far superior opponents. We also had a few changes in personnel which meant that lots of players had to play out of position. Miss Davis also had to umpire which made it extremely difficult to help organise the team through the opening stages. We went 1-0 down. After some stern words at half-time and everyone repeating what Miss Davis wanted to see from them as individuals in the second quarter the girls then equalised, through Claudia, after Miss Davis played advantage. This incensed the opponents who were not happy that we played on after it had hit their feet in the D. The language barrier really did not help. Shortly after we went into the lead through a well taken goal from Maisie. A lead we managed to hold to the end. Alice, Josie and Sienna were unbelievable in defence, with Maria intervening superbly when the defence was breached. Lottie, Maisie and Stella worked tirelessly to stop them attacking down the right.

In our final game Lottie was captain, as we travelled over an hour away for our fixture against HC Peel en Maas. This was where we received our best hospitality, with a pennant as a gift to our captain. We played our best game, attacking down the right and switching from left to right with great pace and control. We finished with a 2-0 win with another great deflection on the left post from Claudia, after fantastic link up play between Stella and Emily. A second then came from Lily after an excellent elimination skill from Stella at a short corner.

Lottie again was voted player of the match, a reward that could have equally gone to Emily, Sienna or Stella.

As always I am exceptionally proud of our girls; although at times they were frustrated they listened and were determined to succeed. They also enjoyed playing and succeeding together as a team, especially in that second match.