

Strong Lions draw with Warriors



Top form: Man of the match Calum Mathieson scored three times for the Lions at Chelmsford.

Pic by Julianne Bonner

**National League South II
Chelmsford Warriors 8
Lee Valley Lions 8**

AN AMAZING game saw Lee Valley Lions come from behind to take a dramatic late lead only to be pegged back at the last by Chelmsford, in what was the Hackney club's best performance of the season.

Lions made their way to Chelmsford on Saturday with a severely depleted squad, missing the likes of Philippe Mueller, Glenn Roper and Christian Faulkner.

Nonetheless, Lions opened proceedings with a beautiful first goal scored after six minutes, eight seconds by Gary Dodds, assisted by new signing, Kwabina Oppong-Addai and Blair Dubyk.

Dodds was floored by one of Chelmsford's young guns and this was soon followed by a small bout of fisticuffs which erupted at the other end of the ice.

Dave Richards received 2+2+10 minutes for roughing, plus 10 minutes for misconduct, while fellow defenceman,

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James Hatfull, also received 10 mins for misconduct.

Deciding on penalties for both teams took referee Jobling several minutes but when the period finally got going again, Lee Valley pulled together and fired in their second goal at 9.27.

This would be first of three for 21-year-old Calum Mathieson, assists going to Calum Heath and Graham Lewis.

A two-goal lead didn't deter Chelmsford and the Warriors' first goal was scored by Courtney Grant on the powerplay at 13.43 as Heath sat out 2 mins for cross-checking.

Their equalising goal was well rehearsed and executed.

Ex-Lion Ashlee Cave took the puck round the back of the net and passed to Dan Raven, who slotted it past netminder Ruth Cattell at 16:38.

The second period soon descended into a farce after several fights broke out. Referee Jobling lost all control, failing to penalise perpetrators correctly, while missing offences which occurred

directly in front of him.

Despite not throwing a single punch, Richards was ejected from the game at 25.47, receiving a whopping 70 minute penalty.

Blair Dubyk and Adam Peach were both sidelined for roughing at the same time and later in the period Phil Carson would receive similar punishment. Although Chelmsford did not escape penalties, they were not dealt with as harshly, despite being the instigators.

Their side also did not escape injury, as Paul Merchant was whisked away to hospital for stitches and treatment for concussion, his blows upon Dubyk having been answered with a single devastating punch.

Thanks to the colossal penalties incurred, Lee Valley found it impossible to maintain their strength and Chelmsford scored three powerplay goals in just over six minutes.

The Lions answered back at 38:05 as James Hatfull scored from Calum Mathieson's pass, but Chelmsford swiftly responded with a further powerplay goal from Lee Hounslow, taking their lead to 6-3.

Lee Valley were not going to go down without a fight and soon struck back in the final period, Calum Mathieson's slick goal at 42.08 assisted by Richard Hodge and Graham Lewis.

Ricky Mills immediately fired the puck in the net for the Warriors and, still in the same minute, Adam Peach scored Lions' fifth.

Chelmsford protested strongly to referee Joblin when Hatfull fired in his second of the night, but the goal was allowed and Lee Valley were now snapping at the heels of their opponents. Their well-deserved equaliser arrived at 46.56, when Mathieson scored his hat-trick goal, assisted by Heath.

The Lions nipped into the lead when Heath scored on the powerplay, but jubilation was short-lived when Chelmsford's Will Poulston defeated Cattell at 55.48, again with a powerplay goal, to bring the final score to 8-8.

The game was entertaining but marred by appalling standards of refereeing.

Lee Valley Lions' performance was, without doubt, one of their best this season and it warranted more than the single point the team achieved.