



Lancaster City Water Polo Qualify for British Finals

Despite having four senior players absent, Lancaster City safely negotiated a potentially tricky preliminary group to qualify for the British Championship finals in Manchester later this month.

Current Internationals Scott Carpenter, Glen Robinson and Alex Parsonage are all currently in Australia playing in the Australian National League and therefore Lancaster were severely depleted as they were drawn with Portobello, Cheltenham and Bristol Central with the top two teams from the group progressing to the finals weekend.

First game of the weekend was against Scottish Champions Portobello. Lancaster started brightly with frequent quick attacks stretching the Portobello defence to breaking point. However, the finishing early on was poor and by the end of the first quarter Lancaster trailed Portobello 2:1.

Lancaster kept up the pace in the second period and gradually started to get on top with goals from Ciaran James, new signing Daniele Maggioni and a brace from Tom Curwen. To establish a 3 goals advantage at half time. Another debutant, Paul Cowburn, was settling in well and managed to contain Scottish Centre forward Frazer Rutherford who was effectively snuffed out and only contributed a single goal in the whole game.

Only goal in the third period was scored by Tom Curwen to extend the lead to 4 goals heading in to the final period. Lancaster finished strongly in the final quarter with further goals coming from Andy Squires (2), Tom Curwen (3) and ran out eventual winners by 13:7.

Next up was Cheltenham. Lancaster started very strongly and established a 5:1 advantage by the end of the first quarter. Main contributions came from veteran Colin Burgess who scored 3 plus goals from Daniele Maggioni and Ciaran James. Lancaster continued to push forward in the second period and extended their lead with further goals from Tom Curwen, Andy Squires and Michael Brown. Coach Alberto Bertolotti then took the opportunity to rotate his squad and provide his senior players with additional rest. During this period Matt Little provided some additional pace to the play. In addition there was a cameo outfield performance from back up goalkeeper Zak Sly who as well as some impressive counter attacks added to the defensive blocking capacity of the squad. The lead was extended to 8 by the end of the third period with goals shared throughout the squad with efforts from James Wannop, Tom Curwen, Ciaran James and another from Colin Burgess. The scoring was 3:3 in the final quarter as Lancaster finished the game convincing winners by 18:10.

Final game of the weekend was against Bristol who had also clocked up two victories. Both sides had therefore already qualified for the semi finals but the game would decide who would qualify as Group winners and face runners up from Group B. Lancaster again came out the blocks quickly with early goals from James Wannop, Ciaran James and a first quarter hat-trick from Tom Curwen giving Lancaster a 6:1 advantage by the end of the first period. The next two period were fairly even as Bristol picked up their game but struggled to made any inroads into the Lancaster advantage. Lancaster

British Championships Preliminary Round 2010

Report Jeff Parker



picked up the play again in the final quarter and goals from Colin Burgess (2), Tom Curwen (3) and a first goal for Paul Cowburn resulted in a final victory margin of 17:10.

Lancaster now face 2008 champions Rotherham Metro in the semi final in what is a repeat of the thrilling final last year which Lancaster managed to edge 8:7 with the winning goal only coming 7 seconds from the end of the game.

Semi Final Draw

Lancaster V Rotherham

Manchester V Bristol.