

## Maroon Wave Battle Hatboro Horsham to a 0-0 tie

Ardley-(ACU)- October 31, 2009

The U14 girls had the entire week of practice washed out and were itching to get back on the pitch. The week continued to be unkind as forward Caitlin Kushnir also joined Sierra Krohnemann and Maria Campion on the I/R. The team would have to play with only 14 healthy players and even that wouldn't last through the first half. It was Halloween and this was a scary predicament.

Maddie Bavis started in the net and played extremely aggressively on the marsh like field that was Ardsley Park, including a fantastic recovery of an H-H shot that got past her. After every sprint out to the top of the box Bavis came up muddy and smiling. MacKenzie Beltz played extremely strong defense, confounding the H-H forwards before making a clearing or transitional run into the midfield.

The rapidly recovering Erin Flach (Sweeper) appeared to have beaten her flu like symptoms and had total control of all the angles, vectors and slopes. Stopper Maura Gouak tackled strongly and shut down any center rush while providing great balance to either outside defender. Nina Fakolujo held down the right side of the defense and once in possession of the ball never turned it over.

The midfield of Gabby Ferruzzi, Emily Rankin, Colleen Lavelle, and Veronica Asman was also supplemented by Kelsey Travor, Yegene Hong and Carolyn Lyons and held together that third like links on a chain. In at forward were Jessie Levin and Anna Hallahan, supplemented at times by Travor and Lyons. Everyone was solid and the game was a physical battle with mud flying everywhere. Conditions were bog – like and one might think a cranberry planting may be in the making not a soccer game.

Both teams played the ball long to their forwards, neither could get off a strong shot. In the 26<sup>th</sup> minute Rankin was fouled and felled by an H-H player and would not return for the rest of the day, repairing to the bench with a 7lb bag of ice on her ankle. Down to 13 healthy players the strategy had to be rethought.

In the second half Bavis moved to outside right defender and continued to defend in relentless fashion, Fakolujo moved to Stopper and never missed a beat, taking and keeping possession. Gouak went into goal and was especially vocal and strong making one spectacular save of a wet spinning ball that took more bounces than a pinball.

The Maroon Wave drove deeply down the wings with Hallahan ripping a couple shots that the H-H keeper pulled down. Asman, Ferruzzi and Travor all tried to get the ball in the net but the muck slowed everything down. In the 57<sup>th</sup> minute Carolyn Lyons, in at forward, made an inside outside move and got around two defenders and had a nice opportunity at 15 yds but couldn't get the ball on frame.

In the 61<sup>st</sup> minute Hallahan put a shot up high, moving left to right that went over the outstretched arms of the H-H 'keeper but carried just over the cross bar. In the 64<sup>th</sup> minute the Maroon Wave would get a Halloween scare of their own after a particularly aggressive charge inside the box drew a penalty kick.

The PK came off low and just to the right of Maura Gouak who calmly gathered the ball in and cleared it out to the midfield. Both teams pushed hard for the remaining time but couldn't put anything in the net. After 8 games, including the Columbus day tournament the Maroon Wave have only allowed 6 goals, 3 of which were in the season opener.

Coach McCartin and Coach Rankin both came away pleased with the team's balance of aggressive play, perseverance and sportsmanship in the face of such a big challenge.