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# Epsom & Ewell dominate Croydon (in football friendly).

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The 60 spectators who were present at Fetcham Grove on Tuesday evening witnessed an interesting match, full of scoring opportunities. Although we looked very good, particularly in the first half, Croydon, nicknamed the Trams, will have come away from this match believing that they could and should have got something out of the match on the balance of possession.

The visitors pushed us back to start with, but we took the lead in the 12th minute when a clever through ball from midfield reached Athan Smith-Joseph in space and that is always a dangerous situation for the opposition as our striker, revelling in his more central role this season, simply strolled around the keeper and planted the ball into the empty net.

A Ryan Smith free kick was superbly tipped onto the post and away six minutes later before our own keeper was in action soon after to keep out one of a number of free kicks that we conceded around the edge of the penalty area. He would repeat the save on the half hour, this time to his left, but somewhat against the run of play we extended our lead in the 37th minute after Louis Chin received the ball twenty yards out after good work from Smith-Joseph and he smashed the ball into the net from twenty yards. The shot took a slight deflection, quite probably off one of our own players, but had it been a defender, there's no way it would have been classed as an own goal, so I have credited it to Chinny.

The visitors had a final opportunity just before half time, but an unmarked header was sent straight at our keeper.

We made six changes at the half and many other substitutions would follow throughout the second period. We made it 3-0 in the 48th minute when a Smith free kick was fumbled by the Croydon keeper, and although he recovered well to scoop the ball away before it crossed the line, the loose ball was tapped in by Adam Grant.

We conceded a penalty in the 62nd minute which was dispatched, and then we had a bit of a scuffle following a foul which led to a slight delay, but we scored a fourth goal in the 74th minute after a fine crossfield pass from Jahobi Maher found our striker, whose shot was almost stopped by the keeper, but the ball still had enough on it to cross the line before a defender could reach it. The visitors had the final chance of the evening but a fine defensive block preserved the score line and the whistle blew soon after.

Over the course of the match we fielded 22 players, which tells me that there is still much work to do before this squad is trimmed down to a manageable amount. However, the strength in depth across the squad appears impressive at this stage of the season. It will be interesting to see how this squad copes in the remaining two friendlies, both of which are challenging ones away to Step Four teams Walton & Hersham and Leatherhead.

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