

Gritty Hampstead dig deep for home finale



● Champions... Hampstead with the English League, division one trophy, back left: Paul Hilton, Ian Smith (manager), Mark Darbon, Gary Boucher, Soma Singh, Rob Turner and Sue Angus (physio). Front: Craig Carolan, Jono Arcscott, Andrew Von Mayer, Mike Williamson, Mark Sully, Justin King and Matt Hetherington.

Pictures by Max Flego

Patrick Mooney

HOCKEY

Hampstead 2 Beeston 1

HAMPSTEAD, the newly-crowned English League division one champions, rounded off their home campaign with a tense win over struggling Beeston at Paddington Rec on Sunday.

The champions were without Tom Matthews and Rob Thompson while their Birmingham opponents needed victory to avoid the relegation play-offs.

However, Hampstead's pedigree and pride saw them come from a goal down to make it 15 wins out of 17. Afterwards, Hampstead were presented with the League trophy by David All-

cock, the chairman of the English Hockey League management committee, who paid tribute to Soma Singh the team's player-coach and to the Hampstead president, Peter Boizot.

Hampstead began well despite an adjusted line-up, but were unable to get a shot on target in the opening quarter other than a quality save from a Justin King short corner in the sixth minute.

However, it was the visitors who opened the scoring in the 12th minute when they caught the Hampstead defence square, pushing up on the half-way line.

Hampstead did not panic. They

continued to play a patient game but Beeston did not help themselves by giving the ball away with unforced errors. They also appeared tentative and unwilling to press home their advantage.

Hampstead finally got back on level terms in the 25th minute from their second short corner - King sweeping the ball in with a drag-flick.

Just before half-time skipper Rob Turner was harshly yellow-carded for an apparently innocuous tackle but Hampstead held out comfortably.

In the second half, Hampstead again appeared more willing to go for the win than their opponents, and it was no surprise when Craig Carolan fired home

in 62nd minute following passes from Mike Williamson and Matt Hetherington. Earlier, he had twice narrowly shot wide.

Singh then came off and was replaced by Jono Arcscott, with Mark Sully coming into the centre half position, which he adapted to well. Hampstead then relaxed for the final minutes spreading play around.

On Sunday, Hampstead travel to relegated East Grinstead for their final League encounter.

Hampstead: Garbe; Von Mayer, Boucher, King, Turner, Sully, Singh (Arcscott), Williamson; Darbon, Carolan, Hetherington.

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Turner: We won't pay stars

HAMPSTEAD skipper Rob Turner has confirmed the club will NOT pay players in the premier division next season, writes Patrick Mooney.

Certain top-flight teams do offer financial incentives but Turner explained: "We are not in a position to do that. What we are trying to do is build a fund that should enable players, who are willing to commit themselves to the club, to cover such things as travelling expenses and kit.

"We do not have a policy at Hampstead to actively pay players to play. It is not the way the club likes to operate. We like to think people will come to play for the right reasons."

He added: "There is a sponsorship programme being put into place in which we are looking for firms to come on board. And our president Peter Boizot provides certain funds - he pays for our player-coach."



● Too good... Hampstead's Jono Arcscott nips in to beat two Beeston players on Sunday.