

## Mixed results for women's water polo

York v Manchester 6 – 7

York v Lancaster 15 – 4

York v Northumbria 3 – 6

Two narrow defeats against Manchester and Northumbria were accompanied by a huge 15-4 triumph over Lancaster when York ladies hosted the first BUCS tournament of the season.

York's opening fixture saw them pitted against a skilful Manchester team. Both sides started strongly but it was the visitors who found the net first. York were not easily rattled, however, and Beth Richards soon equalised. Efforts from player of the tournament Jenny Worrell and captain Fiona Whiting were saved by an in-form Manchester keeper, and York, finding themselves on the defensive, conceded from a man down. Manchester piled on the pressure and extended their lead soon after. York held their own to win a penalty, converted by Richards, but the gap increased back to two after an amazing Manchester shot. Worrell scored shortly after to end the half trailing 3-4.

A fired up York came into the second half with a point to prove. Ellie Roche found the top right corner with a superb shot but Manchester were not giving the hosts an easy ride, finding their way past keeper Fran Falcini twice more. Slick passing between Richards and Becky Hall saw Richards add her third goal of the game. York's defence held strong, Sarah Peacop anchoring well at centre back, and Richards scored her fourth of the game with a spectacular effort from the halfway line. Not content with a draw, Manchester kept pushing and scored from a penalty in the dying seconds to steal a 6-7 victory.

York's hotly anticipated fixture against Lancaster did not disappoint. Richards maintained her excellent form and netted York's first goal soon after the whistle. Whiting added the second, before a good individual effort from Peacop made it three. Lancaster were clearly rattled, with a shaky defence allowing several attempts by Katherine Newton before Worrell extended the lead to 4. Richards added two more, before Roche made it 7. York were in no mood to ease up, and Richards scored twice more to go into the second half leading 9-0.

The second half started in a similar fashion, with York heaping pressure on the visitors. A blatant rule infringement by Lancaster earned York a penalty that Richards calmly converted. Worrell made it 11, and Peacop saw a gap in the defence to extend the lead to 12. Roche grabbed her second of the game after an awesome drive from halfway, and Becky Mott showed her swimming prowess to outpace her marker and fire home in her debut. Lancaster seemed to recover themselves slightly, scoring their opening goal in the final few minutes. Worrell fought hard for her third goal of the game, before York, feeling generous, allowed Lancaster three consolation goals and the match finished at an outstanding 15-4 to York.

The final fixture, against a fresher Northumbria side, was a scrappier affair. York, clearly tired from steamrolling Lancaster, allowed the visitors to run away with a 5-0 lead before Richards opened the scoring for the hosts just before half time. The second half was more evenly matched, Northumbria extending their leading to 6-1 before a long period of strong defence and missed opportunities. Whiting led her team by example, scoring twice to end the game a respectable 3-6 to Northumbria.

Following the game, captain Whiting said "it's been a great but exhausting day. I'm a little sad for the girls because I don't think the score in the last game reflected how well we played, but it's amazing to beat Lancaster by such a huge margin so early in the season. Hopefully we will be able to increase that by Roses!!"

YORK: Falcini, Mott, Newton, Roche, Peacop, Richards, Whiting (c), Hall, Russell, Jordan, Chidwick, How, Worrell

Player of the Tournament: Jenny Worrell

