



PRESS RELEASE (for immediate publication)

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PAHC09/03

NOTTINGHAM SLIP TO FIRST DEFEAT AGAINST CHAMPIONS

Manchester HC 32 – 18 University of Nottingham HC

The University of Nottingham Handball Club's Men's team's 100% record came to an end as they lost to the champions, Manchester. Having won both home games so far this season, Nottingham's first trip North also brought their first taste of defeat. Having suffered a blip in form before their participation in the European Challenge Cup, Manchester returned to winning ways with another emphatic victory.

Both teams started strongly, with the scores level at 5-5 shortly after the start of the game. However a change of personnel midway through the first half brought a flurry of goals from the 9 metre line as Manchester began to take control. Nottingham made a tactical change in defense, moving to a 5-1 formation to restrict the long range goals. The pace of Manchester's counter-attacks, however, meant that every mistake was punished and the home team built up a commanding advantage at half time. In the second half, Nottingham fought bravely, but even a strong showing was not enough to reduce the deficit and Manchester ran out comfortable winners in the end. Nottingham's cause was not helped by their inability to score penalties, as four different players found the Manchester goalkeepers unstoppable from 7 metres. Some great saves throughout the match kept Nottingham's attack at bay, while a great performance from the visitors' keeper, Mathieu Flotat was not enough to prevent a heavy defeat.

Nottingham's top performer was Jon Mardaras, who scored 8 goals to make him joint top scorer for the season so far. Ali Karakipirik, Dana Muhammed and debutant William Eyssautier also added important goals, but were unable to affect the result. Manchester produced an excellent team performance, with Karim Hammache's 9 goals and Jeremy Pidon's 8 being most notable.

Nottingham performed well, but the strong defence they had shown in the previous two matches could not cope with the strength of Manchester's attack. They will look for their first away win of the season in next weekend's clash with Wirral Handball Club, at Liverpool Greenbank Sports Centre. Nottingham have taken 4 points from an available 6 against the top 3 teams from last season and will face a team that have struggled thus far. For more information, see www.handballclub.co.uk

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The University of Nottingham Handball Club was established in February 1992 and is currently the only handball club in the East Midlands. The men's team are taking part in the National Division One North League in 2009/10.

The club trains on Tuesdays (9-10:30pm) and Thursdays (8:30-10:30pm) at Nottingham University Park Sports Centre. Training is open to students and guests, male and female, of all levels from beginners up.

More information is available from Ahmad Beltagui, University of Nottingham Handball Club communications officer, 07717226565, nottingham_handball@hotmail.com or online at www.handballclub.co.uk