



Match Report

Charlton Park 2nd XV 5 v Maidstone Mustangs XV 12

Away, Saturday 2nd February 2013, Kick-off 2:30pm

The reverse fixture had seen the Mustangs lose an early lead to suffer a 7-19 defeat and they travelled to Charlton Park's Kidbrooke ground to avenge that early season reversal.

With a strong wind blowing and despite the Mustangs playing down the slope in the first half it was the home side that took the early lead, when their centre found a gap in the usually solid Mustangs defensive line, to cross the whitewash. This was the first try in open play that the Mustangs had conceded in their last three outings, which demonstrated the massive improvement and the benefit of the effort put in on cold, wet training evenings at the club.

After this early setback the Mustangs then woke up and were gaining ground through some searing runs from the forwards and the backs. The pressure from the speed of the visitors defensive line was causing problems to Charlton Park's backs, and a dropped pass by the home winger was quickly pounced upon by Dan Eastwood showing great soccer skills he was able to kick the ball on and follow up to score, with Jason Smith converting. With no further scores the visitors carried a 7-5 advantage into the half-time interval, which was a fair reflection of the contest so far.

Despite playing up the slope and against the wind in the second half, the Mustangs were much quicker out of the blocks although large periods of the match were contested in a midfield struggle for superiority. Pressure by the Mustangs eventually told, from a scrum on the Park 10m a rehearsed move from the training ground released fullback Jason Smith to cross for a second try.

The closing minutes saw Charlton Park throw everything into the attack but the Mustang's resolve and defensive organisation held firm to secure a hard fought 5-12 win.

In summary this was a determined performance by the Mustangs who under the leadership and motivation of skipper Andy Bacon showed great maturity in adapting to the conditions and the necessary playing styles; particularly pleasing was their discipline and the penalty count diminishes with each passing week.