

Maidstone Vets vs Canterbury Cardinals sat 6th Oct at Canterbury

The vets travelled to Canterbury to meet old "friends and foe" in a fixture resurrected. It is some 5 or 6 years since the vets last played the Cardinals and despite the scoreline it is hoped that the fixture remains an annual event. No doubt Canterbury will wish so having won the first of half of Saturdays match by a resounding 40 to nil points. However, the second half proved to be a completely different matter, albeit that Canterbury won, with the score being 12-10 to the home side. Amazing advantage the use of the slope on the Canterbury first team pitch can provide, although obviously Canterbury took better advantage of the hill in the first half.

In a match played in excellent spirit and refereed sympathetically Canterbury's mobile and skilful backs division were the real difference between the two sides with the forward battle being evenly matched. It was, however, not until about minute 30 that the vets realised that cleanly won lineout ball followed by controlled mauling was the way to negate any slight advantage Canterbury may have had upfront. This was reinforced early in the second half when, from just such control, the vets registered their first points with Bob Purfitt earning his second try in two weeks. This was shortly followed by further forward domination at ruck time leading to Pete Grays try from all of one foot (by the time of reading that distance will have extended no doubt to, at least, 25 yards!). Unfortunately, and in no small part due to the size of the first team pitch, Keith Coomber was unable to convert either try, as he probably thought he was attempting to convert from France rather than close to the touchline in Canterbury.

A reverse fixture is planned for later in the season and the vets look forward to welcoming the Cardinals to The Mote where, given their natural habitat on The Somme, there is expectation of a closer result.