



Match Report

Invicta League

Mustangs XV 0 v Tonbridge Juddian 2nd XV 29

Played at The Mote, Maidstone, Saturday 20th September, 2014

This is a much changed Mustangs XV to that which had convincingly despatched their TJ counterparts in both of last year's league fixtures and the sides cause was not helped by the unavailability of a number of players from last week's convincing victory. With both Neil Graves and Dane Smith unavailable the side saw a very much reshuffled back division; an earlier match report quoted 'if you can play in the centres, you should also be able to cope in the back row', well the reverse was tested in this fixture and saw flank forward Jack Lamb occupy one of the centre berths, alongside Tom Holmes. The forwards cause was also not helped by the late call up of Will Fox to the 1st XV and the absence of Ian Lee. However, they still fielded a competitive back row with Mike Werahiko making his club debut, as was Dane Petheran, who occupied the key fly-half spot.

As the heavens opened the game kicked off with Maidstone defending the scoreboard end; the early exchanges were evenly matched with handling errors from both sides. In the 8th minute following a well defended maul, from a TJ's lineout, an altercation ensued with the TJ's lock receiving a straight red card for punches thrown.

The first half continued with errors from both sides and with the referee allowing no latitude for the conditions that the game never really got into a steady rhythm. Both sides defended well with some big tackles being made, especially from young winger Sam Austin. The deadlock was eventually broken in injury time just before the interval when TJ's kicked a penalty from in front of the posts awarded for offside at the breakdown to give themselves a slender 0-3 half-time lead.

From the start of the second period Maidstone attacked and played some good rugby with penetrating runs from number 8 Damian Grab and flanker Mike Werahiko, with the try line only a matter of metres away, one pick and drive too many led to a turnover and TJ's moved the ball quickly and despite a valiant effort from Maidstone's scrambling cover defence, TJ's scored a break away try which was converted to extend their lead to 10-0.

The half continued with the weather changing from rain to sun and back again, the referee continued to find fault with both sides and it was stop start with the game not getting beyond three phases before and infringement was penalised..

In the 70th minute TJ's extended their lead from a scrum with the number 8 picking up, quick recycled ball from the break down saw the TJ;s prop on hand to power over from 10 metres to touchdown, the conversion was good, 17-0.

With changes being made the penultimate score of the afternoon saw Maidstone defending a bit too narrow with the TJ's winger scoring in the corner. 22-0.

In Injury time Maidstone, playing catch up rugby trying to get something out of the game, were inter passing well, with forwards and backs combining and managed to get in behind the TJ's defence, Unfortunately either a rogue call or the similarity of shirt colours saw the ball passed into a TJ's backs arms who broke away to score under the posts to make the final score 29-0.

TJ's put up the high ball all afternoon and it was dealt with well by full back Craig Fawcett who looked secure and confident, in reply Dane Petheram kicked well and the back row of Huppatz, Grab and Werahiko competed well at the breakdown.

Scrum half, Alex Przyjemski looked lively all afternoon and got the ball away well when it was presented quickly and made some telling breaks from both the base of the scrum and at the breakdown.

Too many conceded penalties were Maidstone's downfall and the occasional lapse in concentration leading to a couple soft tries, but on a positive note the scrum functioned well after a few early teething troubles, and the whole side defended bravely led by Jack Lamb against a side whose 1XV plays 2 leagues higher than Maidstone's.

Maidstone: Maytum, East, Fitzpatrick, Murray, Laqeratebua, Werahiko, Huppatz, Grab, Przyzemski, Ruaux, Petharen, Lamb (c), Holmes, Austin, Fawcett. Replacements (both used): Rush, Day.