



## Match Report

Invicta League

Mustangs XV 27 v Dover 2<sup>nd</sup> XV 10

Played at New Line Learning, Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2014



Injuries and unavailability meant this was a changed side from the Mustangs last outing, and with the entire club's pitches more akin to paddy fields than sports fields, the fixture had been relocated to the school's pitch at New Line Learning.

On a surface that had held up remarkably well to the wet weather it was the Mustangs that struggled in the early stages to get to grips with the game and the referees interpretations, particularly at the breakdown; following a raft of penalties skipper Nick East was despatched to the 'sin bin' to ponder a remedy for the problem. Although the Mustangs struggled to get out of their own half in the first quarter, solid defending meant their line was never under any real pressure even with reduced manpower. It wasn't until they were restored to a full complement that the scoring commenced, with Dover capitalising on an infringement in kickable range to set the scoreboard rolling.

This seemed to galvanise the Mustangs into action and it was from the restart that they started to inject some tempo into the game and string together some cohesive patterns and support play. James Douglas was on the end of some good interplay between forwards and backs but still had work to do to make the touchdown wide on the left to give the Mustangs the lead, converting his own score.

The home side continued to press the visitors and were unlucky not to score shortly before the interval from a 5m Scrum with their tight five in the set piece beginning to assert themselves.

Coach Weston made some changes at half time, with debutant Alex Przyjemski making his debut at scrum half and in some positional changes Alex Clarke moving to the No 10 slot. Despite playing up the slope in the Mustangs continued to inject some tempo into the game with some strong carries by Alex Hadi, Joel Byford and Michal Majcher making inroads into the heart of the Dover defence. Majcher was first to cross wide on the right after a period





of concerted pressure, with a score by Sam Bailey followed shortly after to extend the lead to 17-3.

The bonus point and score of the match came from Alex Eastwood after some excellent build up play put the team on the front foot, quick hands moved the ball to the right wing and although Eastwood still had

work to do the try was scored half way out from the posts.

Dover were struggling to get out of their half and after a penalty awarded to Maidstone that saw Dover marched back 10m, the Mustangs took the option of a scrum on the 5m, with the superior bulk of a now dominant pack Alex Sterzu was able to control the ball at the back of the advancing scrum to touch down.

To their credit Dover didn't cave in and in the closing minutes were able to exert a period of pressure of their own with their forwards making ground into the Mustangs 22m. A period of staunch defending by Maidstone managed to hold them at bay, but a 5m scrum in front of the posts gave Dover the field position they required. Some quick hands from the set piece and attacking running lines saw their right wing cross in the corner to reduce the deficit and round out the scoring.



In summary, the conditions were always going to prevent this from being a showpiece game of rugby; and although starting slowly and struggling to adapt to the referee once the Mustangs had got a grip on the game it was a hold they were unlikely to relinquish.

Maidstone Mustangs:

Byford, Bailey, Majcher, Iles J, Lee, East(c), Hadi, Sterzu, McPherson, Van De Westerlo, Douglas, Eastwood D, Hart, Eastwood A, Clark.

Replacements: Przyjemski, Evans, Hyland