



## Match Report

Invicta League

O Elthamians 19 v Mustangs XV 10

Played at Foxfields, Saturday 21st December, 2013

The last competitive fixture of 2013 saw the Mustangs travel to take on the 2<sup>nd</sup> string of National 3(SE) club Old Elthamians, the current Invicta League leaders. On a pitch where synchronised swimming and mud bathing might of been more appropriate, a late pitch inspection saw the referee give the go ahead to play, although in all fairness it was in everyone's opinion the right decision as after all, rugby is a winter game and both sides were keen for the fixture to go ahead.

It was definitely not a day to be a back as both sets of forwards fought for every inch of ground to make space for the backs, with the main battleground being the middle of the park. The game saw some big collisions between both packs, and considering the conditions some excellent play as both sides adapted to playing with a ball that was to coin a phrase from 'Blackadder' "as slippery as a slippy thing that was very slippery"!

The home team took the lead after pressuring the Mustangs defence and considering the conditions putting in an adventurous crossfield kick to the to the wing for the outside back to catch and despite being tackled , he managed drive over the line . An excellent conversion attempt from the touchline by the Elthamians standoff against the prevailing wind saw the extra points added.

The Mustangs soon hit back with the pack making good ground to tie in the Elthamians defence and create space for Sam Brill to sidestep through two tackles to put the game at 7-5. Old Elthamians , stretched their lead with a well worked try down the left flank but were unable to add the extra points. Maidstone were by no means cowed by this reversal and soon hit back, a penalty kicked to touch, saw some classic forward play from the resultant lineout with Josh McKenzie getting the touchdown from the catch & drive to reduce the deficit to 12-10 at half-time..

The game could of gone either way in the second half with both teams attacking and defending with intensity, both sides having chances to score. However, with the clock running down it was no doubt going to be a special score to win the game, and it went to the home side; after pressuring the Mustangs defence, a shrewd grubber kick was put through to pierce the visiting defence for the touchdown with the conversion a formality to take the tie 19-10.

In summary, this was a 80 minute performance by the Mustangs and proved how well they can play against very good opposition, even in poor conditions; and the league leaders had to work extremely hard for the result.