



Match Report

Invicta League

Mustangs XV 17 v Tonbridge Juddians Warriors XV 10

Played at The Mote Saturday 25th January, 2014

With heavy overnight rain prior to the fixture, if you thought the match was going to be a battle of the forwards then you wouldn't have been far wrong. It was the visiting TJs Warrior Xv that set their stall out early, providing ball to their big centre to drive over the gain line to put their pack on the front foot. It needed a big defensive effort from the Mustangs to stem these attacks, although it was the visitors that opened the scoring when the home side were penalised for an infringement and TJs gratefully taking the points on offer.

Maidstone responded with some attacking play of their own, driving play into TJs territory and as with the Mustangs, after a period of defensive effort they also infringed with Brad Ford taking the points to level the scores. With the battle for territory becoming a real #’arm wrestle’ in the heavy conditions it was TJs that were next to score as a after a prolonged period of possession they managed to work their way up the pitch, eventually breaching the home defence to touchdown out wide and a good conversion attempt adding the extras to give the visitors a 3-10 advantage. The Mustangs reduced the deficit shortly before the interval with another penalty converted by Ford.

With coach Rich Weston and Skipper Nick East calling for level heads, patience and hard graft in the second half, knowing that there was still all to play for in the second period. The Mustangs started well, with Ford kicking well from hand to gain territory and the chasers applying pressure to the TJs defence to force another penalty which Ford gratefully accepted to reduce the deficit to just one point. It wasn't all Mustangs play though , as TJs applied pressure of their own, but with the home side's well organised and solid defence holding them at bay.

The Mustangs took the lead with scrum half Michael Messini getting the crucial score after the home side took a series of tap penalties in an attempt to inject some tempo into what was primarily a forward battle, with the No9 able to take advantage to dart over for his first try for the club.

The match was by no means won, with just a single score the difference, but a TJs infringement within the range of Ford's boot gave the Mustangs the cushion they needed to run out 17-10 winners in a solid performance against a strong TJs outfit.