



Match Report

Invicta League

Old Alleynians 2nd XV 0 v Mustangs XV 38

Played at Dulwich Common, Dulwich, Saturday 27th September, 2014

With the 1st XV having to sit this week out due to an imbalance in numbers in the league, it would have been tempting to overload the Mustangs with an abundance of 1st XV talent to put points on the board. However, that temptation was in large part resisted, although some players in need of further match practice did feature in this fixture. Lenny Van de Velde, who had been present at preseason training but unavailable for the club's first three fixtures made his club debut in a run out to stake a claim for next week's cup fixture, the front row saw a rotation of players and the Iles brothers looked to continue to build their partnership in the second row.

The corresponding fixture last season was a tight encounter with only a single point separating the sides in the 21-22 scoreline, this encounter promised much of the same against a side currently second in the early season standing. However, this match was much different with the Mustangs holding the early first half ascendancy. Van de Velde marked his debut with some impressive line breaks in mid-field as well as demonstrating some subtle ball handling and impressive defensive play when required. It was Van de Velde who opened the Mustangs account following a swift team move that saw 2nd Row James Iles break the Alleynians defensive line and making the offload for the opening score.

Hooker Josh McKenzie was also making a statement for 1st XV selection and was on hand to complete an impressive passage of play through several phases to touchdown, Ford added the extras to give the Mustangs a 0-12 lead approaching the interval. There was time for one more score before half-time as Josh Pankhurst, running at pace, found the gap in Alleynians defence to take the score at the interval to 0-17 to the visitors.

The second half was much scrappier affair, with Alleynians stepping up their game and putting pressure on the Mustangs; only some stout defence and big defensive tackles prevented them breaching the Mustangs line. With no addition to the half-time score going into the last quarter of the game, it was the Mustangs fitness that began to tell. A telling break by Van de Velde saw Dane Smith on hand to take the final pass to cross close to the posts, with the extras a formality for Ford to take the score out to 0-24 and quash any thoughts Alleynians may have harboured of a comeback. Winger Alex Clark followed this up being on the end of the final pass from an impressive flowing piece of rugby, again Ford added the extras. The final score was in complete contrast and came from a set piece lineout, with McKenzie hitting the jumper and James Iles driven over for the score; in a change of kicking duties, James Douglas added the extras to take the final tally to 0-38.

In summary, this was a tougher encounter than the one-sided scoreline shows, against a strong Alleynians outfit. At times the Mustangs produced some excellent rugby in what was a solid all round performance, although they must work on maintaining their concentration and structure for the full eighty minutes.

Maidstone: Fox, McKenzie, Byford, Iles J, Iles M, Fitzpatrick, Pankhurst, Grabb, McPherson, Smith D, Clark, Van De Velde, Smith L, Morosan, Douglas, **Replacements:** Williams, Ford, Fiji John