

MMB 19 Dover IV 7

The game began with a minute's silence for the death of a Dover player and was played throughout in the fine spirit of social rugby. Maidstone Barbarians' deepest sympathies go to Dover for their loss.

Maidstone made a fast start with three unanswered tries; the usual suspects, Seal (twice) and Gillies bounding and leaping through the opposition defence after good team play had created strong positions for them. Seal converted two and narrowly missed the other with a fine display of place-kicking. Dover fought back with persistent pressure on the Maidstone line finally being rewarded with a short range try down the blind side, which was converted for the full seven points. From then on there was a fine ebb and flow to the game, with both teams showing good defensive skills to counter some imaginative running and kicking in attack. Although the second half was scoreless, it was a thoroughly enjoyable game to play in and to watch, with two fairly evenly matched teams giving their all.

For Maidstone, the special mentions this week go to the afore-mentioned Gillies and Seal, of course, for setting their usual high standards, but also to Tom Clarke for breaking tackles on frequent bursts from the back of the scrum, to Graeme Davie for a good display in a new position at flanker and to Barney Carpenter for a gritty performance and an inspirational catch and run that almost set up a final score at the end of the second half. However, as Colin Frost said at the end, the whole team should be happy with what was another very strong and fully committed performance.

Thank you too to Dover for a really good game.