

Spitfire Gold Veterans Cup

Maidstone 61

Aylesford 5

Following two narrow defeats at first team level, the vets were looking to put the record straight and regain bragging rights for the best team in Maidstone. Late withdrawals were a concern:

Dane Smith- verruca

Horse-athletes foot

Dave Ruaux-ingrowing toenail

Rich Gray-asthma (genuine)

Jim Walker –diahorrea (verbal)

Nick East-badly smudged mascara

All had doctor's certificates or notes from their mum, apart from Jim whose self- certification was written in crayon. Very dodgy.

Despite this Maidstone still turned out 23 stout and true veterans, which was just as well as Aylesford had more drop outs than us and arrived with only 12 players. Thanks to Neil Cole, Rich Ewence, Jason Hudson who started for Aylesford to make it a 15 aside game. Poor Richard received a nasty injury to his eye requiring steri-strips and had to depart early, while Neil was marking hatrick hero Chris Leggatt and was willing half-time to come when he could swap sides. He must have thought he was still playing for Aylesford when he made a great break beating 2 defenders but then strangely threw the ball straight towards one of his old team mates. Dementia is inevitable at this age.

Knowing that Aylesford lacked backs, Maidstone changed their game plan from keeping it tight to pushing the ball wide. As soon as they found space they looked increasingly threatening, especially with the pace of the previously mentioned Leggatt, who could be in line for a first team call up after this performance. Similarly, when Simon Seal's 35 year legs got going it was difficult for the 40/50+ age bracket to get near him. Inevitably most of the 9 tries came from the back- Leggatt 3, Bates, Chunky (cheeky interception), Ferris dummy and go from 5 metres, Seal from long range and I am not sure who got the 8th-answers on a postcard please. DC kicked pretty much all the conversions in the first half and rolled back the years by orchestrating the play and the moves. Despite this dominance, Maidstone did manage to entertain the crowd by butchering 3 man overlaps, knocking on when it was easier to catch and especially when our smallest player Mark Ingram was yellow carded for a high tackle. So plenty to work on at training-which is every Thursday, and Tuggy will put you through your paces.

Just remembered that Rich Cutbill did score a try topping yet another consistent performance with and without the ball, and in the bar afterwards.

Credit must go to the forwards for providing the ball in the first place. Mark, despite the yellow card threw in some lovely line out ball for Colin Frost and managed to get on the end of a scoring pass. Lurch was plucking out kick offs like a veteran. Clarke, Duggan, Court and Purfitt were always going forward and Mayhem scored his now showpiece try with a blistering 1 meter charge. Those of you who are going to Twickenham should look out for Martin, who stars in the half time entertainment

and apparently still takes his kit just in case England are short-they could do a lot worse. Mention too, to the second half cameo of our old favourite one man wrecking ball Richard Parker, who managed to shrug off many would be tacklers, but also showed his ball skills with 2 draw and gives which ended in a beautiful second half score- I think for James Ferris. Which now totally messes up my try count. Karim, Mick Walker and Jason Hudson all joined in the festival of rugby in the second half, and again thanks to Tom Clark, Lurch, Chris Leggatt and Bob Purfitt for playing for Aylesford after the break following injuries to 2 of their players.

Despite the score, Aylesford battled manfully. They should have scored from a driving maul on half time, but their wizened prop Tony didn't ground the ball when he was over the line- dementia moment number 2. They failed on another couple of similar opportunities and it was down to Bob Purfitt to show them how to do it when he drove over for their only score with a wry grin on his face-nice one Bob.

Credit too to the referee who managed both teams well, made few errors and contributed to the positive flow of the game.

Special thanks as well to our wonderful bar staff Carol, Helen, Liz and Danielle, who give great support on the field and even greater service in the bar. Plus Sharon Cole and Kate Wright, who I believe were responsible for the amazing roast potatoes and honey glazed sausages-beautiful.

A good start to the group stages but there will be tougher challenges ahead. Well done to all the players and get well soon to the injured and unwell. Anyone else over 35 and semi retired/retarded let me know if you are interested in joining us.

Next game Sunday 25th November away to Old Gravesendians 2pm KO all support welcome. One Club.

PM