

## Match Report 03/02/2018

Aylesford III (7) vs. Maidstone Vets / Barbarians (40)

Meet the team ;

01 Tom Clarke 1st half / Chris Hogg 2nd half

02 Mark Ingram 1st half / Anthony Round 2nd half

03 Christopher Hogg 1st half / Pete Gray 2nd half

04 Karim Neseiyif ( Captain )

05 Nigel Maddaford retired hurt late 2nd half / Tom Clarke

06 Tina-Paul Massey retired 2nd half / Adrian Clark

07 Simon BoomTime Seal retired 2nd half (cramp) / Graeme Davie

08 Ian Lee

09 Gary Whitehead

10 Lex Delamere-Ayling

11 Lee Morrison retired 1st half (head injury) / Marco Trismegisto Bauchiero

12 Adrian Clark re-deployed to flanker during 2nd half/ Craig Caunt in 2nd half

13 Craig Caunt 1st half / Sam Cowdry 2nd half

14 Karl Floyd 1st half / Anthony Peter Haigh 2nd half

15 Chris Leggat

Camera Crew :

Jayne Seal , Caitlan Seal & Ella Seal ( photos available to view on Barbarians (open) facebook page)

“Give them NOTHING! But take from them EVERYTHING!” King Leonidas / Craig Caunt

And so the tone was set when what seemed like the cast of 300 was made available to put together a combined Vets Barbarian team to take on Aylesford III on their patch!

We even brought our very own Trojan Horse for the occasion and our fixtures secretary advised Aylesford of our numbers with the intention of offering our spares.

Aylesford looked the gift Horse in the mouth and declined having pulled out all the stops to match the Maidstone hoards!

There was an ominous pre match chat from the ref (5mins +) on the new laws of the game some of which he disagreed with and so would not apply!

I have to confess that I may have slightly offended the ref at the club before the game as I mistook him for a tramp begging for money as he was chugging a can of white lightning!

And so to the game, the first quarter saw Aylesford dominating both possession and territory thanks in no small measure to the ref. There then ensued a battle of wits between this ref and our scrum half. To his eternal credit Gary did not react to the serious goading and kept his focus on the game.

It was during this period we lost our flying winger Lee Morrison with a head injury as he was sent to A&E by our physios. (Thankfully he was given the all clear and will be back playing soon.)

The tide eventually turned as the forwards got the measure of the opposition and proceeded to totally dominate the scrum. Irrespective of who's put in, the Maidstone pack would secure possession thereby laying the platform for the backs to put on a show of their own.

A similar tale was taking place in the line out. Such was the dominance of Simon Seal at two and Paul Massey at four, Aylesford resorted to throwing beyond the tail in the hope of securing some possession from the set pieces.

So....., in the absence of our regular wordsmith Matthew Ellesmere, and also the lack of a volunteer to write this report, the try scorers were asked to pen their recollections for posterity (and to make my life easier.)

As the tide turned in our favour, so to the score board began to reflect the passages of play;

Try 1 Craig Caunt (outside centre);

"First try was a basic dsp (\*) around 15 meters from the try line, forwards got us the position on the field through some great ball carrying, then we spread it and broke through their defence and was in under the post"

(\*) dummy switch pop

Craig also converted his try.

Game on, following the kick off Maidstone worked the hard yards back up the pitch and kept the pressure on all fronts;

Try 2 Tom Clarke (Prop)

"....it was something like this.... On the 22 caught from the ruck ball spun left from Gary, caught by me, smashed two players and handed off the third..... the time it took me to get my breath back you would have thought I had run from our 22 ! (was a great game and many years since I last played prop, I have to say I actually enjoyed being back in the position I started playing in.....)"

Conversion missed.

“Heads up, heads on, focus, its nil nil” and so Aylesford kick off..... the towering Nigel Maddaford catches, fends off the first few hits, turns, presents and.....

Try 3 Simon Seal (Flanker)

“.....I received the ball just outside our 22, I threw a dummy kick to the oncoming defender then set off, breaking through two tackles, a quick side step on the full back and then a foot race to the try line and scored under the posts.”

Conversion – Craig Caunt

“Heads up, heads on, focus, games have been lost from this position” .....and so Aylesford kick off, but the attempt didn’t quite make the required distance. “Scrum back please” calls our very own Trojan Horse with a knowing smile on his face!

So with foot on the jugular, pressure was maintained on the Aylesford neck as Maidstone’s fat boys in perfect harmony with the pretty boys gained significant territory forcing Aylesford to infringe time and again. Eventually a penalty is given.....

Try 4 Simon Seal (Flanker)

“.....My second try, Paul Massey took a quick tap penalty and made a break, he passed the ball to me within an inch of perfection and I broke through one tackle and slid over the try line whilst the last defender was trying to tackle me...”

Conversion – Craig Caunt

Half time 26 – 0

Half time brought about the scheduled changes and the very welcome return to action of Prop Pete Gray.

The big man was quick into action as Aylesford had regrouped and were intent on getting back into the game only to run time and again into a great Maidstone rear guard action as all the changes were bedding in.

Mr Grey was incurring the wrath of the ref as he kept slowing the play down, his excuse for not having kept up with the law changes fell on deaf ears as the infringements were illegal in any era of the game.

Once the changes were up to speed, possession and territorial advantage swung back to Maidstone and so again Aylesford were on the back foot. One passage of play saw Maidstone forwards and backs all handling, linking and creating spaces for the winger, but just as a senior spectator was heard to gasp “its like watching the dream team” the winger (nameless) with only a simple catch and placement of the ball over the try line knocked on .....! (see twat of the day contender).

Thankfully the next opportunity was only round the corner as the Maidstone lineout came to the fore.....

### Try 5 Lex Delamere-Ayling

“.....my try came from winning Aylesford’s lineout, with Gary under pressure throwing an absolute beauty of a pass to me, I take it up to the line and step the fly half and then a handoff to keep him away, I run through the huge gap left by the inside centre and a little goosetep to speed round the fullback and under the posts.....”

### Conversion – Lex Ayling

Make no mistake, Gary Whitehead’s part in that try was sublime, a fingertip catch of the intercepted lineout throw and split second torpedoed pass, a third the width of the pitch, into the Fly-halves run. It was worthy of the entrance fee alone.

Aylesford were not here to make up the numbers and their backs came to the fore as they kept up a sustained passage of play only to be thwarted time and again by Maidstone’s backs ably marshalled by the experienced of Adrian Clark with Chris Leggatt plugging the gaps and running the ball back time and again.

The set piece restarts were regularly won by the forwards and whilst Aylesford had a five meter scrum under the posts this posed no threat as once again the dominant pack won back the ball .....only for the next contender for twat of the match to put his hand up for consideration.

A simple clearance was probably the order of the day, however Craig (Carlos Spencer) Caunt tried a little chip and catch in our 22, only for the chip to be caught and run straight in for an Aylesford try, perhaps just reward for Aylesford’s continuous pressure and not giving up on the game.

Feeling miffed that they had scored, Maidstone were determined to make amends and straight from the kick off Anthony Peter Haigh flew up the wing and caught the ball, recycling it back to the onrushing support, leading to.....

### Try 6 Craig Caunt (inside centre)

“.....the 2nd try was pot luck really after trying something earlier in the game and it cost us 7 points. I tried again and this time paid off a nice little dink over the top chase and the bounce was nice for me to collect and dive over the line....”

### Conversion – Craig Caunt

The conversion was the last kick of the game.

Full time: Maidstone 40 Aylesford 7.

A blend of Vets knowhow, Barbarians raw strength and dazzling youth of two former under 17s (Lex Ayling and Sam Cowdry) made for a phenomenal team performance the likes of which have not been seen at this level since the heady days of the all-conquering dream team!

Twat of the day !

Contenders;

Simon Seal, on for a hat-trick having played superbly out of position on the flank only to go down part way through the 2nd half claiming he had cramp. Jug avoidance is a serious crime in these parts.

Craig (Carols Spencer) Caunt, for having the cojones to try something audacious in his own 22. Sadly when it doesn't come off, you put yourself forward for this award!

Marco, the up to now nameless winger, for butchering what would have been try of this or any other season!

And the Winner is.....

Marco !

Man of the Match !

Contenders;

Gary Whitehead, commanding scrum half directing the forwards, making big hits, outrageous skills in setting up that try, and lastly keeping on the right side of that ref !

Simon Seal , playing out of position on the flank, dominant in the lineout, two tries and an all round strong running game.

Craig Caunt, playing inside and outside centre, tricks, flicks and hard tackling, 2 tries and 5 out of 6 conversion rate.

Lex Ayling, scorer of a stunning try , this former under 17 youth product is now playing in his first season in senior rugby, producing a commanding performance at fly-half throwing some serious shade on his Aylesford ( first team) opponent and the rest of the Aylesford backs.

And the Winner is.....

Lex. ( A credit to himself and all those involved in his development at the club)

A big thank you to Mrs Horse for letting Ian off house building duties, Tommy Clark for finally acquiescing to play prop, Pete Gray for stepping on the pitch once again. A special thank you to Chris May, Mike Gillies, Josh Mackenzie and Peter Bulford who all knew about the number of players we had and despite wanting to play, stood down but made themselves available up until the last minute if the need arose.

Lads, it was Aylesford, thank you all for bringing your A game !

Apologies for typos, grammar, spellings, leaving out any other significant moment and the lateness of getting this out.

Remember this day, men, for it will be yours for all time! – King Leonidas / Skipper KN