

05/01/20

Evergreen Cup match

Canterbury Vets 8 - 20 Maidstone Vets

John Faulkner try

Ben Weston try

Ben Court 2 tries

Match report by P Massey

Needing a win to possibly make the semi finals, Maidstone travelled with a strong side to face an unknown quantity in Canterbury.

There was also doubt before KO about whether there would be uncontested scums- much to the concern of Mayhem and Plowman who were looking forward to a good grunting session in the front row.

Canterbury did manage to supply two props and a good contest ensued.

Maidstone started brightly, and welcomed back John Faulkner after a rugby sabbatical. He showed a good turn of speed from full back and proved to be an elusive runner. He fielded a Canterbury clearance and ran from outside their 22 to cut through and score in corner.

The Chris Ashton splash was not quite achieved, more like the Faulner Flop, but it got Maidstone off to a solid start.

Canterbury got back on terms after a period of pressure in the Maidstone 22, using good hands along the line to score wide out. 5 - 5.

The referee had never officiated a vets game, and unsurprisingly awarded lots of penalties at the breakdown for not releasing the ball or the tackled player.

I think most players were playing pre 2000 rules where this did not apply. Canterbury were awarded one directly in front of the posts and slotted it to take the lead. 8 - 5.

Half time. (8-5)

Due to the strength of the squad, changes were made at half time in the hope that new legs and the slope would turn things around.

However, Canterbury were not in on this and another kickable penalty threatened to extend their lead. However, the kick was missed.

Still not sticking to the script Canterbury then almost score in corner but Spike Smith intercepts and saves the certain try.

This was perhaps their last opportunity and it seemed to galvanise Maidstone into upping their game and playing with greater intensity and rugby awareness.

Colin Frost was having a field day in the line out, stealing all the opposition ball and the scrum started to assert its authority.

The backs too were running harder and with great threat. This eventually led to their second try where DC had a good run, passes to Ferris , onto Court , hard yards made, back to Ferris , out to Chunk, out to Ben Weston to score in the corner. 8 - 10.

He hasn't realised it but Ben may have found his true position.

Maidstone are now making the most of slope and pressure Canterbury's 22. Ferris takes a neck high (seatbelt tackle) yellow card to Canterbury. (with 7 minutes to go).

Following this the ball is passed out of a ruck, Spike runs ball back in and cuts through, passes to Ben Court to score in the corner. 8 - 15.

The final try was mystifying to almost everyone ; players, spectators and the referee.

From the restart, Canterbury playing desperation rugby win the ball and charge through but are held up by Gary Whitehead, who steals the ball , smuggles it to Ben Court who breaks off from the maul in the clear.

He runs 10 metres with no one around him and kicks the ball away as he thinks the ref is going to blow up.

A moment of clarity shows that the whistle has not gone and he proceeds to chase the kick and go the whole length of the pitch to score. 8 - 20

Full time 8 - 20.

A very satisfying and hard fought win. Thanks to Canterbury for being great hosts and great competitors.

Well done to all involved.

PM.

Squad.

01 Matt Plowman
02 Mark Ingram / Jo McCarthy
03 Martin Maytum
04 Richard Ewence / Chris May
05 Nigel Maddaford / Ben Court / Spike Smith
06 Nick East
07 Spike Smith / Colin Frost
08 Ben Weston / Ben Court

09 James Ferris
10 Mick Walker / Gary Whitehead
11 Adrian Clark / Ben Weston
12 Duncan McLintock / Mick Walker
13 Dave Charlton
14 Stuart Bates
15 John Faulkner
16 Karim Neseiyif (Waterboy & unused sub)
17 Paul Massey - Manager

Post Script;

Bit of a bummer - Thanet (unexpectedly) beat Sevenoaks by a narrow margin.

So each of Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Thanet have won 2 lost 1.

However, Thanet got a bonus point against us so we may not make the semi final after all.

Hopefully Richard can get us in the plate or something so that we can continue in the competition.