

Well today was a day of chilly wind, and not just from the prop forwards...from the Touchline it was a bracing experience.

Approaching the pitch it was quite clear that the opposition were not only large but also quite young...this could be due to age creeping up on me and the fact that EVERYONE looks young these days...but I did have to change the settings on my camera, so that any action photo's were not too out of focus!

On the whole it seemed a nice club, nicely kept pitch which was next to a pansy ball pitch with a game in full swing. From behind a hedge of leylandi trees there was another game of pansy ball being played, from which such language which could not be repeated was drifting over the far end of our pitch.

really!

Our ref was very enthusiastic. He informed both teams that he was a Colts Referee and, therefore, he would talk to the players throughout the game, he would tell them only once if they were offside and the next time ping them...I wondered whether he might require a 1000 word essay from all players at the end....He was dressed in a nice faded green shirt.

Foots Cray did not have enough players and so Ian Davies and Brian Costello valiantly volunteered to don their rather fetching blue and yellow shirts, which did not match their rooster red socks I might add...

Anyway the whistle blew and the game started, I was chatting so missed the beginning bit, sufficeit to say the ball was being carried one way and then the other...

Initially it was clear that the Vets were not too keen to tackle some of the lumps on the other team, but it soon became clear that although the Foots Cray side had youth on their side they did not have the experience of the Vets. Many times the FC lot would get the ball and charge at full pelt down the pitch, only to be tackled to the ground, or for the ball to be held up or turned over or other such things, (steve tells me all these terms but to be honest I'm not too sure what they all mean....its most exciting though!).

I am a girl...

At one point the Vets were held up at the tryline for what seemed like ages, in fact I became rather distracted by a bird flying over the pitch at that stage, and I admit missing quite alot of the action as I stared in a vague fashion at the sky...

So by half time the score was 7-0 to Foots Cray, injuries included a scratch on one of the opposition and a twisted ankle. I, on the other hand was beginning to suffer from mild hypothermia and my nose had gone a little pink.

I was pleased it was half time, by my reckoning the action should all be over on my side of the pitch and therefore I could get a few good pics. Steve was now playing Full Back and had left the responsible position of running the line on the far side pitch rather vacant. The ref shouted a couple of times at a few of the Vets players on the bench, including a rather pretty dog, for someone to run the line...no one took any notice..I thought there was little point in me doing it, as I can't run very well and would not be able to take photos. In the end Steve Vincent took on the job with little doggy in tow. (Funny, my surname is Vinson..)

Anyhooo...

Matt Ellesmere was charging here and there with the ball in hand, I was most impressed, and his kicking was, as usual, damn fine - apart from one kick which unfortunately went straight into the hands of the opposition, momentarily I was reminded of a certain young Scotty from the Barbarians. (this could've been in the first half...oh well).

I'm afraid I only know a couple of names of the players so if I don't mention you, it is not because you didn't merit a mention! There were some stonking runs put in by the Vets both with ball in hand and in the chase, most of all which ended in the Vets winning the ball. Following one of the aforementioned a

scrum was called and, after much huffing and puffing and bumfuddling the ball had popped out and had found its way into the hands of Pete (half the man I used to be) Gray, who deftly passed it to another Vets player (sorry don't know the name) who started to run towards the tryline.

With steam coming out of his ...well all orifices.. he made his way through the opposition, ball clutched firmly in his hands. Karim was only moments behind in support when the ball carrier was most rudely brought to the ground and the ball popped out of his hands right into the oncoming Karim. I'm still not sure quite how the next bit happened..

The ball landed plump into the burley hands of Karim who was, at this stage, stumbling a little on account of having to leg it half way down the pitch. Somehow Karim managed to stay on his feet and lurch...no no no launch himself towards the tryline and, in less than 5 graceful leaps, he was over the line and on the ground, ball in hand, bringing the score to 7-5! I was most impressed as I had managed to capture the entire play on camera!

The elation of this score was still hot on the lips of spectators and also in the strip of Karim when the opposition scored a try which should never have happened! Never had the phrase "should've gone to specsavers ref!" been more apt, but I know now you mustn't shout these bits of advice at a rugby game, and so I kept quiet...

The opposition had made a stealthy run through our pack towards their try line, a couple of Vets had caught them up and were about to tackle the ball carrier in the opposition 22 (ooerr mrs) when a member of the opposition pushed one of our people over, thus stopping him tackling the bloke with the ball, which led to said bloke scoring a try! phew that was a bit tricky to type, especially after a large glass of sloe gin...There was much shouting, stamping and gnashing of teeth but, as the ref said, if I didn't see it I can't give it! This then made the score 12-5. They failed to convert the try, which secretly made me giggle.

Not perturbed by this infringed tryment...or whatever, the Vets held their heads high, they were not going to be beaten by this team of younguns, noo sireee and, within a few minutes (or it might've been longer, only a whole flock of strange birds then flew over the pitch, and I was informed that they were actually Ringed Parakeets! Wow! who'd a thought they would be this far into the country! and I became, once again, slightly distracted) where was I? Oh Yes! Anyway we got the ball again and ran it all the way down the pitch and Arran plonked it carefully down between the posts! I was a bit confused as he appeared to first put it down to the left of the posts, then picked it up and jogged it to the middle...anyway whatever, it was a try! which brought the score to 12-10 and only a couple of minutes to go!!

A conversion from Pete Gray was the last play of the game, which brought the scores even and the whistle blew and that was that! Yippideedoodleday!

I have been informed that Karim did a very neat backhanded pass to Matt at one point in the game, which caused much "ooing" from teammates, however, as the ref said, if I didn't see it, I can't give it... or write about it!

Much Love

Yours

Lizzie