

Chobham 34 Medway 22 (London South 1) – 19th September 2015

Medway's long unbeaten run in league rugby, which stretched back almost a year to October 2014, finally came to an end on Saturday at Chobham. They knew that this was likely to be one of the toughest games as their opposition narrowly missed out on promotion last season. Medway's preparations were somewhat disrupted with several injuries necessitating changes to the side that convincingly beat Havant last time out.

The summary of the game can be broken into three; First 25 minutes, Medway scored first and then Chobham showed real class to score three quick fire tries to open up a 21 -10 lead; Second, serious injury to the Chobham winger, the game was stopped for 50 minutes; Third and remainder of the game, a more even contest and a spirited rally by Medway, particularly in the final 20 minutes.

On a lovely autumn afternoon, Medway started brightly and set up camp deep in the home side 22. A well-executed line out drive looked to result in a try for the visitors, but the ref awarded a penalty try for illegal side entry by the Chobham prop and sent him to the bin for 10 minutes, 7 – 0 lead for the visitors. Straight from the kick-off, Medway's clearance kick didn't find touch, and Chobham quickly moved the ball back and forth to score an excellent try in the corner. An impressive conversion levelled the scores.

Medway retook the lead on 10 minutes through a Dan Harvey penalty. Chobham responded again and took control of the game scoring two converted tries in quick succession, both capitalising on Medway errors, 21 – 10. The game was then halted for the Chobham winger to be treated.

Following the long break, Chobham quickly picked up where they left off, scoring their fourth converted try, and a penalty to open up a 31 – 10 half time lead. Medway's plight was not helped by two yellow cards during the first half.

Medway rallied in the second half, and Chobham were happy to contain the visitor's threat and rely on their impressive set piece to supply a steady stream of quality possession. After a quarter of an hour of the second half, Medway were permanently reduced to fourteen men for a second yellow card to the same player. Despite the set-back, they showed good character to score two well worked tries in the final twenty minutes from Ben Dance and Charlie Wardzynski.

Overall, Chobham were worthy winners, and possibly the score line flattered the visitors. The quality of their set piece, the accuracy of their back play and their clinical finishing showed what is required

to be successful at this level. However, Medway's second half performance was to be applauded in the face of adversity.

Lastly, and most importantly we wish the Chobham player a full and speedy recovery for what looked a very nasty injury.

Medway's team;

Mataapa, Sandison, O'Leary, Johnson, Rutherford, Huntley, Beaumont, B Dance, J Dance, Harvey, Garofalo, Burns, Tila, Catlin, Wardzynski, Subs; Petch, Humphrey, Weobley (all used).