

Match Report - Saturday 19/9/15

Deal & Betteshanger II - 19 v Medway Development Squad – 28

Squad: Greg Woodward, Mark Coveney, Jordan Campbell, PG Smith, Jordan Stubbington, Lewis Marriott, Mo Pangarker, Toby Gerdes-Hansen, Sam Jenkins, Matt Cross, Adam Day, Sean Marriott, Sean Crittenden, Tom Smith, Stan Orris, Ted Grant, Ben Shove,

Tries: Dady, Crittenden, Orris

Medway's Development Squad made the long trip to Deal for their first game of the new season with three of the side making their debut in senior rugby and, with a long unavailability list, a number of the lads playing out of position. They found themselves up against a big, experienced and aggressive Deal side who spent the game trying to impose themselves physically on their younger opponents – but without success.

Deal started well spending the first five minutes in the Medway half as the visitors struggled to clear their lines. A quick Deal lineout provided the first try of the game as a number of missed tackles from the Medway defence saw the Deal centre score for an early 7-0 lead. Medway won a penalty from the restart which scrum-half Sam Jenkins took quickly only to be tackled almost immediately allowing Matt Cross to step up and get Medway going with three points and reduce the lead to 7-3. They were on the scoreboard again three minutes later when Deal were caught offside at a scrum and Matt Cross again slotted the kick to make the score 7-6. Both defences had now got organised and the next fifteen minutes were played between the twenty-twos with plenty of effort but for no reward. However, Medway made the most of a small piece of good fortune when a speculative kick into Deal's twenty-two bounced awkwardly for the Deal full back and very kindly for Sean Crittenden who had followed up well. He took the ball and sent it along the backs where No.8 Toby Gerdes-Hansen joined the line, beat a defender and offloaded in the tackle to winger Adam Dady who touched down in the corner for a try on debut. An excellent conversion from Matt Cross saw Medway take a 7-13 lead. Having just scored Medway were then guilty of letting Deal straight back into it as a knock-on on their five metre line saw Deal pick up from the scrum and drive over for their second try which reduced the score to 12-13. Deal re-took the lead five minutes later as quick ball from a lineout was sent along the back line to the winger who scored in the corner and with a successful conversion the half ended with Deal leading 19-13.

Medway started the second half really well putting Deal under pressure in their half and when they were awarded a penalty for a late tackle they kicked to touch, secured the lineout and set the backs off. Quick hands and direct running saw Sean Crittenden cross the line and when Matt Cross slotted yet another kick, Medway had the lead again at 19-20. Deal came straight back on the attack and had a period of sustained pressure in the Medway twenty-two with a series of scrums but an excellent turnover from Sam Jenkins finally allowed them to clear their lines. As tempers began to fray and the number of off the ball incidents began to rise,

Medway refused to be intimidated and they increased their lead to 19-23 when yet another penalty for hands in a ruck allowed Matt Cross to continue with his excellent kicking display. The final try came when flanker Mo Pangarker picked up a loose ball and kicked up field with full back Stan Orris putting in a good chase. The Deal full back allowed the ball to bounce and then he tried to kick it off the ground but it didn't find touch which allowed winger Adam Daddy to pick it up and pass it to Ores who put in a grubber kick over the Deal try line, followed it through and then dived on it for the final score of the game. When the final whistle went on what had been a bad tempered game Medway had secured a deserved 19-28 win.

This was a good win for a young side who stood their ground and refused to be intimidated. As Coach Jenkins said – he and Manager Brighters were proud of them.

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