

Match Report - Saturday 12/9/15

Sevenoaks II – 19 v Medway Extra 1st XV – 10

Squad: Lyam Johnson, Mark Coveney, Al Waterman, Luke Osborne, Tom Sandison, Toby Gerdes-Hansen, Richie Desmond, Joe Williams, Sean Marriott, Matt Wadhams, Matt Brightman, Marc Capper, Bobby Ellis, Micky Hutton, Rhys Burns, Sean Crittenden

Tries: Hutton, Brightman

The two teams met with both of them looking to record their first win of the season. They were also looking to build some stability and structure within their teams on a windy and pleasant day.

So it was that there was a lot of honest endeavour and commitment on display. However there was little evidence of finesse and well-structured play. Indeed the key difference between the sides was that Sevenoaks had an experienced fly half who kicked for position well and never tied to overplay. For their part Medway fielded a variation on last week's side with some new faces and combinations which need some time to gel. If they can channel their enthusiasm that currently sees them forcing the play when there is no need, then they will become a solid side. Especially so if their front row of Waterman, Coveney and Johnson continue to dominate the scrums as they did today. In fact it is a mystery how Medway lost in spite of their complete domination of the scrums, which saw the 3 Sevenoaks props constantly drawing lots as to when they should play and on which side of the scrum. Playing up the slope and into a strong wind Medway sought to control the play and prevent the Sevenoaks side from taking advantage of the elements. This did not work out as planned as indiscretions and errors saw them concede territory and points to their determined opponents. A converted penalty for Sevenoaks was soon followed by a try in the corner by their winger and this was very well converted from the touchline. 10-0. Medway tried to dig in but 2 restarts that went straight out typified their play at this stage. So it was that they found themselves trapped for long periods in their own half and 2 more indiscretions that were punished made it seem that the half time score would be 16-0. However some more composed play saw Medway pin their opponents in their own 22 and from another dominant scrum the ball was quickly moved along the line to perennial youngster and wing - Mickey Hutton - who somehow tiptoed along the touchline to touch down in the corner. HT 16-5.

With the wind on their backs Medway were confident on taking control of the game, although despite their pain and suffering in the scrums Sevenoaks proved them-selves to be very dogged opponents and with their fly half constantly relieving pressure intelligently the second half became a frustrating affair. Add to this a lack of composure, poor decision making and at times poor skill and it goes some way to explaining coach Essenhigh's deeply frustrated demeanour. In fact Sevenoaks came very close to scoring twice in the second half. Once when their winger was bundled into touch on the corner flag and the other time when their winger, who had broken clear of all the defenders, was called back by the Medway touch judge - whose judgement was nosily queried by the locals. Eventually the scrum pressure and some better kicking made a real difference and from a scrum 20 yards from the Sevenoaks line Williams broke from the base, fed live wire scrum half Sean Marriott who passed to winger Matt Brightman who ran in for his first try for the 2nd XV. With the points

difference only 6 Medway were confident. However it needed some desperate defence to prevent their opponents from scoring score a try. Play restarted with a Medway scrum from which they failed to clear their lines as a direct consequence of doing an unnecessarily elaborate "exit play". Penalty conceded in front of their own posts and the score line pushed out to 19-10. The last 10 minutes saw a lot of "huffing and puffing" but the lack of cohesion and execution of the basics saw the game come to a hard fought end.

Sevenoaks deserved their victory, especially when you consider their difficulties in the scrum. Medway - well they are building but it will need a few weeks of stability in the side before they can fulfil their potential.

E.I. Addio - the Touch Judge!