

Tottonians 10 Medway 18 (London South 1) – 14th November 2015

Medway produced a superb team effort to beat Tottonians in atrocious conditions for rugby in round nine of the league on Saturday. Despite a few players carrying injuries, a strong Medway team made the long journey to Southampton to face Totts for the first time in league action. The two teams had played before, back in 2012 in the Intermediate Cup at Priestfields when Tottonians prevailed. In non-stop heavy rain, and with a strong cross wind blowing, the two teams produced an entertaining, closely fought game for the supporters with the result remaining in doubt until the final five minutes.

Medway as a team were good, but also individually there were some outstanding performances. The front five worked tirelessly and crucially winning the scrum battle; Rutherford, Easton and Sandison were good in the lineout; Huntley and Gardner carried superbly all afternoon; James Dance was at his destructive best at scrum half; Dan Harvey's kicking was imperious; Tila and Liua'ana probed and were strong in the centre; and lastly the back three of Garofalo, Ebanks, and Wardzynski were secure in defence and threatening in attack.

Medway started quickly and were the first to attack. After only two minutes, Medway's pack put Totts under pressure and James Dance snatched the loose ball to make a break, Totts were penalised at the breakdown and Harvey slotted the kick to give the visitors an early lead. Straight from the restart Totts went on the offensive. Medway initially repelled their strong attacks but when a well organised driving maul was illegally pulled down, Medway No.8 Matt Gardner was sent to the bin for 10 minutes. Totts wasted no time in making their numerical advantage count and scored an excellent converted try to take a 7 – 3 lead after only 9 minutes.

The rest of the first half remained scoreless despite the best efforts of the two teams. Medway enjoyed plenty of possession, good field position and went close to scoring on several occasions but a combination of taking wrong options at critical moments, and stout Totts defence kept them at bay. Half time 7 – 3 to Totts.

With the elements now slightly in their favour Medway began to dominate in the second half. The prolonged and relentless pressure told and Totts were penalised at regular intervals. Despite the terrible conditions, Medway's Dan Harvey kicked superbly, converting five out of five attempts on goal in the second period. Totts replied with a single penalty themselves mid-way through the half but just couldn't win sufficient possession to pose a significant threat. Medway sealed this tight encounter after 37 minutes when Harvey's fifth kick gave them an eight point winning advantage.

Medway's Coaches, Taff Gwilliam and Ginger Longstaff, were delighted with their team knowing that getting a result at this venue, after such a long journey and in such terrible conditions was no mean feat!

Lastly, Tottonians were fantastic hosts making Medway supporters feel very welcome, the game was keenly fought but played in good spirit and the whole club were sporting in defeat. Thank you!

Medway are at home against Gosport and Fareham next Saturday, 21st November in a league game.

Medway's team;

Mataapa, Sandison, O'Leary, Easton, Rutherford, Huntley, Beaumont, Gardner, J Dance, Harvey, Ebanks, Tila, Liua'ana, Garofalo, Wardzynski, Subs; Petch, Cooley, Chalmers.