

Medway 39 Twickenham 24 (London South 1) – 12th December 2015

In front of seventy five past players, who had attended a reunion lunch before the game, Medway lined up to play Twickenham for the first time ever at Priestfields on Saturday. The weather was dry, but as usual this season, a very strong wind was blowing down the pitch and the locals chose to play into the elements in the first half. Given that they led by 13 points to nil at half time shows how good they were in the first period. Indeed, with a little more precision and better handling at key moments, they could and probably should have led by more at the interval.

The second half was more balanced and a try fest for the spectators with each side scoring four touch downs apiece.

Medway opened the game playing well, the forwards starved Twickenham of quality possession and when they had the ball, were patient holding on to the ball, mixing up close drives with wider backs moves. Several good scoring opportunities went begging before the deadlock was broken after 20 minutes with an excellent team try that seemed to involve every player with Luke Burns getting the final touch down. Harvey kicked a good conversion to put Medway 7 – 0 up and then extended the lead with a simple penalty just three minutes later. More good play from Medway followed as they stretched Twickenham from one side to the other but more handling errors at key moments prevented them from extending the lead. On the stroke of half time, Harvey kicked another penalty to put Medway 13 points to the good at the interval.

Twickenham were a different side in the second half and showed their intent right from the kick off. A sweeping move, with excellent handling, demonstrated their attacking threat and only desperate defence kept them out. Ebanks and Burns combined to relieve the pressure and Medway set up camp in the Twickenham 22. Dan Huntley forced his way over the line but was held up, however, the visitors were unable to take the pressure at the resultant scrum and the ref awarded a penalty try to Medway, 20 – 0.

The remainder of the game was an open and even contest with Medway scoring a further three tries through Conor Chalmers, Doug Ebanks, and an outstanding solo effort from Charlie Wardzynski. Twickenham were excellent when in possession and scored four good tries to gain a deserved bonus point. One could question the home defence, but Twickenham were made to work hard for their tries and all came after long periods of possession and sweeping moves involving great handling skills in difficult weather conditions.

Medway were pleased with the bonus point victory to reach the half way point of the season having won 10 out of their 13 games and sitting fourth in this competitive league. Man of the match went to full back Charlie Wardzynski who had his best game yet in a Medway shirt. Dan Huntley carried tirelessly and Liua'ana and Beaumont worked hard all afternoon.

Next week, Medway make the long trip to the south coast to face Havant, kick off 1400.

Medway's team;

Petch, Sandison, O'Leary, Easton, Weobley, Huntley, Beaumont, Ebanks, Garofalo, Harvey, Chalmers, Burns, Liua'ana, Ellis, Wardzynski, Subs; Cooley, Fernyhough, Morant.