

Medway 30 Guildford 18 (London South 1) – 26th September 2015

Unbeaten Guildford, with three wins from three games this season, visited Priestfields on Saturday for the first time ever in league rugby. The weather was perfect, with bright sunshine and a gentle breeze blowing. Medway needed to bounce back from the loss suffered at Chobham last week, but knew they would be in for a tough game.

Medway welcomed Max Easton back into the second row, Billy Humphrey in at hooker, and a new centre partnership of Owain Fussell and Joe Bosomworth, the latter making his 1st XV debut.

At the end of the day, Medway were pleased with the bonus point win, but disappointed by the quality of their performance. Poor decision making, bad execution, handling errors and lots of needless penalties, all seemed to come at once in the same game, and therefore it was somewhat surprising the locals still managed to prevail, and win the game.

Guildford opened the game well, scoring an excellent try after only two minutes. Stung into action Medway hit back quickly, Owain Fussell made a good break, the ball was then worked left and Charlie Wardzynski beat several men and passed inside for Luke Burns to run round and score a try under the posts, 7 – 5 to Medway. The two teams traded penalties and Medway edged further away with a second successful kick from Dan Harvey after 24 minutes, 13 – 8.

Time after time, when Medway won possession, or established good field position, they squandered the scoring opportunity through frustrating errors. Despite this, they did manage to extend their lead on the half hour mark through a well organised forwards drive resulting in a touch down for Billy Humphrey, and an excellent touch line conversion from Dan Harvey, 20 – 8.

Soon after the interval, Guildford slotted a second penalty to narrow the gap and Medway began to look shaky as their lineout and scrum came under pressure. Guildford missed another penalty kick before Medway calmed the nerves with their third try, scored by Luke Burns following good work by the forwards, 25 – 11.

Medway sealed the game midway through the second half when good line out ball was quickly passed down the backs for Sammy Garofalo to touch down in the corner, 30 – 11. Guildford did finish the game with a flourish scoring a late consolation try, and very nearly scoring another at the death, which would have given them a losing bonus point.

Overall, pleasing result, poor performance, but good character from the whole team to win even when things are not working well. Man of the match went to Tom Beaumont, Charlie Wardzynski stood out in the backs and Ben Dance played well. The front five withstood a stern test but did enough for the team to prevail and win the game.

Next week Medway travel to Charlton Park which has always proved to be an extremely difficult fixture.

Medway's team;

Mataapa, Humphrey, O'Leary, Easton, Rutherford, Huntley, Beaumont, B Dance, J Dance, Harvey, Garofalo, Bosomworth, Fussell, Burns, Wardzynski, Subs; Petch, Morant, Weobley (all used).