

Medway 44 Horsham 17 (London SE2) - 1st October 2016

A workmanlike performance saw Medway secure their fourth consecutive bonus point win against Horsham on Saturday and remain top of the league. In the end they ran out comfortable winners but Horsham made life difficult at times and started the game particularly strongly. Medway scored seven tries, four in the first half and three in the second and conceded just two but will not be totally happy with some aspects of their game.

The lunchtime rain cleared just in time for kick off and conditions were near perfect for running rugby. The visitors took an early lead when a simple rewind move following a line out found Medway's defence napping and they scored a well taken converted try after only two minutes. Dan Harvey reduced the lead after six minutes with a penalty and shortly afterwards Medway took the lead via their first try when Harvey made a clean break to set up Henry Hall for an easy run in, 8 -7 to the locals.

Medway played pretty well for the remainder of the first half and gradually drew away from Horsham scoring tries on 17, 23 and the bonus point fourth, after on 34 minutes. Eighteen year old Alfie Orris, who had another accomplished game on the wing finished the first, the Dance brothers combined well to set up Tom Beaumont for the third and following excellent work by Charlie Wardzynski, Dan Harvey made a superb individual break to score the fourth. Horsham looked dangerous in attack and used their big centres to try to punch holes in the Medway defence. Medway led by 27 – 10 at half time.

Medway struggled for much of the second half to string their play together. Individual errors and a high penalty count disrupted their play but they did enjoy a purple patch and scored three tries in eight minutes. James Dance snapped up a loose ball after 12 minutes of play and nipped in under the posts to get the touch down. Five minutes later, Medway ran a penalty from in front of the Horsham posts and big Tom Sandison crashed over. The third and last was the best of the afternoon when multiple phases and most of the team combined to create a gap for Peter Walsh to score and increase the lead to 44 – 10. The final 20 minutes of the game were pretty dull as both teams struggled to play flowing rugby. In the closing stages Horsham intercepted a Medway pass and their speedy winger went the length of the field to score under the posts.

Overall, Medway were satisfied with their days work and coaches Gwiliam and Longstaff have a number of things to work on in training. Youngsters Charlie Wardzynski and Alfie Orris sparkled in the backs and Tom Sandison and Dan Huntley were equally impressive in the forwards.

Next week Medway travel to face Crowborough for their fifth league game.

Medway's team;

Matappa, Cooley, O'Leary, T Sandison, Fernyhough, Beaumont, Stubbington, Huntley, J Dance, Harvey, B Dance, Hall, Walsh, Orris, Wardzynski, Sub; Humphrey, Chalmers, Burns (all used)