

Old Colfeians 9 Medway 14 (London SE2) 29th October 2016

With only three minutes to go, Old Colfeians kicked their third penalty to establish a 9 – 0 lead over visitors Medway and put themselves a clear two scores ahead and be dead cert's to win this game. What followed was an amazing twist as in the last two plays, Medway scored a brace of converted tries to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Their second try was a brilliant effort as from the kick off restart, they went through more than 20 phases of play, before finally opening up a gap for hooker Billy Sandison to score the winning try. The final moments were a cruel blow to Old Colfeians players and supporters who only seconds before thought they had won the game.

As expected, this was the toughest test that Medway have faced so far this season. Old Colfe's were pumped up and brought a level of physical intensity that Medway have not seen before during this season. Medway had more try scoring opportunities than their hosts but time after time, as they got into the red zone, they left with nothing.

From the very first scrum of the game it was evident that Medway had a clear advantage but despite numerous five metre scrums, they were unable to convert this dominance into points. Surprisingly, even in such a tight game, they refused simple penalty kicks on goal in preference for more scrums which never yielded any points. To make matters worse, for long periods Medway abandoned their usual high tempo fluid approach, in preference for a physical arm wrestle which suited their opponents who more often than not, were able to disrupt and steal the visitor's ball.

The first half was a fairly even affair with both sides enjoying good periods of pressure but the respective defences held firm. Simple penalty kicks from both sides were surprisingly missed. Medway did manage a few free flowing moves and good line breaks from Pete Walsh and then Jordan Stubbington where thwarted by Old Boy's last ditch tackling. Medway looked odds on to take the lead shortly before half time but the period of concerted scrum pressure and refusal to kick for goal ended in nothing. On the stroke of half time and to rub salt in the wounds, Old Colfe's broke out of defence and kicked a simple penalty to give themselves a slender 3-0 half time lead.

Straight from the second half restart Medway attacked and again refused a simple 3 pointer for yet more scrums that resulted in zilch. Another excellent Medway scoring opportunity was missed after twelve minutes when the ball was lost right on the OC'S try line. As the Medway's frustration grew so did the Old Boy's confidence and they came more into the game. Their fly half made a clean line break and was just stopped by a great tackle from Medway full back Charlie Wardzynski. After 20 minutes, Medway got turned over from a lineout drive and gave away a penalty. OC's kicker made no mistake and doubled the lead to 6 points. No one could have expected what occurred at the end of the game. Medway lost skipper James Dance with three minutes to go and was replaced by brother Ben. From the next scrum, OC's were awarded the penalty and successfully kicked for a 9 point lead. What followed was just amazing! Medway host fifth placed Beckenham next week which promises to be another stiff test.

Medway's team;

Matappa, Sandison, O'Leary, Stubbington, Fernyhough, Beaumont, Humphrey, Huntley, J Dance, Harvey, Burns, Hall, Walsh, Orris, Wardzynski, Subs; B Dance, Clement, Easton (all used)