

## Chobham 28 Medway 38 (London 1 South) - 30th September 2017

Medway travelled to Surrey on Saturday to take on Chobham who like Medway, came into this week's game off the back of a fine win the previous week. Medway's victory against Sevenoaks had come at the cost of losing three players to injury so this would be a test of their squad's strength in depth. Medway gave a debut to young centre Sam Sharpe. The game kicked off and Medway were soon on the front foot on the back of strong running from Dan Huntley. Chobham were caught offside and Harvey's solid kicking saw the visitors ahead 3-0. With Medway applying the pressure Medway were awarded two more penalties and Harvey was successful with the latter to stretch the lead to 6-0. With the game only 15 minutes old Medway suffered the loss of influential lock Debeer with an ankle injury. Billy Humphrey, a hooker, came off the bench and Medway reshuffled their pack. Medway continued to pressure and despite losing their lock were dominant in the scrum with Cooley, Sandison, Whitnell and O'Leary providing an excellent platform. This paid dividends when on 19 mins Medway went ahead 13-0 after they were awarded a penalty try as they drove for the line.

Chobham are a tough side and they battled to get a foothold back in the game. Their tenacity paid off when a line out in the corner saw them score an unconverted try out wide 13 -5. Immediately from the kick off Chobham retained the ball and forced the Medway defence into committing a penalty which was duly kicked by Alex Thompson to make the score 13-8. Chobham were now in the ascendency, the young Medway team were struggling to contain the home side and conceded a second unconverted try out wide to bring the scores level. Chobham now had their tails up and continued to press the Medway side who whilst defending their line had Dan Huntley sent to the sin bin.

Chobham completed an excellent second quarter for them when on the stroke of half time they went over in the corner for their third unconverted try to lead 18-13. Having dominated the opening exchanges Medway needed to re-gather themselves.

The second half kicked off and still down to 14 men Medway found themselves defending their line. They managed to keep the home side out then an excellent break by Tom Beaumont sees them deep into Chobham's half where the home side concede a penalty. Harvey converts to bring Medway back to 18-16. Chobham recover the ball from the kick off and look to attack wide but Tom Beaumont intercepts and he puts Alfie Orris away for a try against the run of play. Harvey converts and Medway retake the lead 23-18. Medway regain possession following kick off but fail to clear their lines and with their defence disorganised Chobham capitalise and score their bonus point try (unconverted) out wide to level the scores. Medway were now back up to a full compliment with Huntley returning to the field. With the match entering the final quarter both sides were looking to secure the victory and it was Chobham who scored first when they capitalised on an error. An attempted grubber kick by Harvey was blocked and Chobham raced away to score their fifth unconverted try and lead 28-23.

Medway secured the ball from re-start and turned the Chobham defence through a good kick from Harvey backed up by excellent kick chase pressure from Chalmers, Beaumont and Hall. Medway then have series of scrums on the Chobham line. Strong scrummaging saw Medway drive Chobham back and Humphrey secures the touch down. The conversion from Harvey gives Medway the lead 30-28. Immediately from the kick off Jordan Stubbington wins the ball and strong running from him breaks the Chobham defensive line. Max Easton in support drives down the touchline, Orris re-cycles the ball to Beaumont who feeds Sam Sharpe to score a fine try on his debut in the corner.

The try was unconverted. This gives Medway their try bonus point and the lead 35-28. Medway continued to attack with Hall and Ben Dance prominent and thought they had scored when Orris went over in the corner but a knock on was ruled.

Medway continued to pile the pressure on the home side keeping them pinned back in their own 22m. The dominance of the Medway scrum provided the platform for Medway who were now on the front foot going through the phases. Eventually the home side conceded another penalty in front of their posts. Harvey made no mistake and Medway led 38-28. With 6 minutes left Medway closed out the game with James Dance organising the ball retention and denying the home side the ball to secure a fine bonus point away win against tough opponents.

Next week Medway take on Old Tottonians at Priesfield.