

London Cornish 15 Medway 59 (London 1 South) - 21st October 2017

Medway travelled to Roehampton on Saturday to take on a London Cornish side who had just had a run of 4 bonus point victories. The pitch was in perfect condition and although windy some good rugby was expected from both these high scoring teams. Medway kicked off and the home side failed to deal with it conceding a line out near their line. Medway went successfully for the catch and drive with Tom Beaumont getting the touchdown. Harvey converted for Medway to lead 7-0 in the first minute! The game restarted but London Cornish conceded a penalty for offside and found themselves defending in their 22 after a fine kick from Harvey. Medway won the line out ball, good work from Gardner created space for Harvey who sliced through the home defence for a try which he converted. 5 minutes gone and Medway up 14-0.

Within a couple of minutes London Cornish found themselves defending their line again after they were penalised for a high tackle. Medway pressed the line and although the initial attempt was held the follow up short drive saw Gardner score and Harvey convert for a 21-0 lead with just 13 minutes gone. London Cornish were shell shocked. Another high tackle saw them pushed back deep in their 22m and from the resultant line out Medway scored again. Mike Gardner getting his second and Medway's 4th try. Harvey again converted and with only 16 minutes on the clock Medway were 28-0 up with the try bonus point secured. On 19 minutes a rare foray into the Medway half saw London Cornish win a penalty to get on the scoreboard 28-3

Medway continued to pile on the pressure. Ball secured from the kick off saw Medway play through a series of phases and penalty advantages to stretch the home defence. Excellent build up play with virtually the whole team involved saw Alfie Orris finish sharply out wide. Harvey again was successful with the conversion to see Medway out to 35-3 with only 22 minutes played. Medway were rampant, their skills and organisational execution were giving London Cornish a torrid time. Medway were dominating territory and Cornish had no answer. Medway scored two more tries within 3 minutes, a Harvey break saw some great interplay down the left with Antony Clement and Sam Sharpe. The ball was offloaded for Henry Hall to finish smartly. Harvey converted 42-3. The next try was scored by Tom Beaumont and was the result of great ball retention and execution of phases to narrow the home side and score out wide. The conversion was missed.

London Cornish are a proud club and at no point did they give up. On the stroke of half time they pressed Medway into conceding successive penalties and a sharp break from the home scrum half saw him scamper home for the unconverted try to make the half time score 47-8.

London Cornish are a good side but this was a scintillating opening half from the visitors. After such an opening it was no surprise that the second half did not live up to the first. London Cornish were showing pride and application. They were retaining the ball better and trying to starve Medway of possession. Medway made changes with Ross Cooley entering the fray for Alex O'Leary and Billy Humphrey for Josh Hawkins. The first try of the second half did not come until the 63rd minute. James Dance broke from the breakdown on the half way line Tom Beaumont in support was tackled short. Quick ball was secured from the ruck and Billy Humphrey drove over for the unconverted try. 52-8. Sam Garofalo replaced James Dance. On 72 minutes poor discipline from the home team allowed Medway to set up on the home line and although the ball went loose Billy Humphrey re-gathered and beat two defenders to score. Harvey converted and Medway were 59-8 ahead.

The final score of the game went to the home side and although shell shocked never gave up trying. The ball found its way to their dangerous right winger who beat off some weak tackling to score a converted try. Medway were victors by 59-15. A fantastic first half performance, one of the finest seen by the travelling Medway supporters, had put an end to the home sides fine run of wins. Coach Taff Gwilliam said ` to secure the try bonus point after only 16 minutes away to a quality side like London Cornish is just fantastic. The whole team were superb'.