

Monday 28th January 2008

OA's U9's Weekly News

OAs dominate the local derby matches with Harpenden RFC on Sunday 27th January 2008

It was a pleasure to host our local friends and rivals from Harpenden on this bright and mild winter's morning. The games were played in the high spirits and with the determination that a local derby match deserves. Our OAs under 9s dominated the morning despite losing the odd game here and there. Overall our teams won 6 of the 9 games played. A fine achievement after our squad reshuffles. Congratulations to all the players and coaches.

I would also like to take the chance this week to thank our various other unsung heroes who help us make all this happen week after week but are mentioned less often. These include **Laura Benfield** who administers the age group and is fixture secretary for the whole mini section of the club. **Kelly Radovanovic** coordinates the first aid. **Matthew Moffatt** is our Hertfordshire Referee Society member. In addition, this week we also had our tour of duty for car park marshalling - thanks to **Graham Olive**, who marshalled the marshals, and **all the others who volunteered and/or assisted** us fulfil these duties (I believe these included **Denise Jeram, Liz Hanlon, the Lears, Nick Piggott, Jim Wight.**)

Brian Clark
Head Coach

Correction - in the last edition of the Weekly News the report on the Greens was attributed to one of the coaches. I have since been informed that it was written by **Martin Wackett** who is now their regular correspondent. Apologies Martin and thanks!

The Reds

Conditions on Sunday were perfect for rugby and the Reds responded with their best set of performances this season against our local rivals, and in many cases school mates, from Harpenden. It was also pleasing to note that the Reds had a 100% turn out and I believe this helped maintain the strong performance throughout the morning.

Game 1 **OA Reds 5 - Harpenden Whites 0**

The first game against Harpenden Whites, was hard fought and at last we saw the strong rucking that we have practiced in training paying off. Time after time the Reds won possession and drove on, though the clear superiority was not being reflected in the score line. If only we could bring the wings into play more often the tries would start coming much more frequently. As it was the only try of the game came from a fantastic break off a maul from Captain **Jonathan Powdrell**, with help from **Zach West**, who then "*sprinted*" the length of the pitch (well at least 6 yards) to score in the corner. It was especially pleasing for Jonathan to score as it helped wipe the memory of the Reds defeat against Harpenden B in last years County final.

Try scorer - Jonathan Powdrell

Game 2 **OA Reds 15 - Harpenden Blacks 5**

The performance against Harpenden Blacks was outstanding. This was a very physical game and it was pleasing to see the Reds continue to be strong in the rucks, which in turn allowed the half backs **Caswell Sparks** and **Ronan Harris** a bit more freedom which resulted in a try a piece. The first try was hotly disputed by Harpenden who had a misunderstanding as to where the try line was - not so the Reds! However the game was always tight and it wasn't until the final minute that a good passing move found **Jack Tahesh** in space on the wing to run in unopposed and seal a fine 15-5 victory.

Try scorers - Caswell Sparks , Ronan Harris , Jack Tahesh

Game 3 **OA Reds 45 - Harpenden Reds 0**

The morning was rounded off with a convincing 45-0 victory over Harpenden Reds with the highlights being **Ryan Owen** scoring 4 tries from fly half. Unsurprisingly the game was brought to an early finish.

The boys played extremely well this week and all of them deserve a lot of praise. It was a real team effort.

Try scorers - Oliver Palmer, Caswell Sparks, Ronan Harris(2) , Ryan (4) , Adam Ford

Player of the week goes to **Ronan Harris** for a superb display of direct running, commanding fly half play and three tries to round it off.

Report by Rick Powdrell

Coaches - **Rick Powdrell** and **Guy Palmer**

Players - Jonathan Powdrell , Zach West, Oliver Palmer, Ashling Lamer, Rory Superfine, Toby Palmer, Adam Ford, Jack Tahesh , Finlay Cripps, James Yurkwich, James Clark, Caswell Sparks, Ronan Harris, Ryan Owen , Harry Newman-Booth

The Yellows

Bright sunshine inspired the Yellows to their most pleasing performance of the season on Sunday.

It was plain to see that after the latest squad moves the team is beginning to settle down and the players getting to know each other, and each other's play more and more. Without two of the season's playmakers who have since moved to the Reds, the Yellows were required to work harder in all aspects of the game and they responded magnificently. So caught up in the excitement of the day were coaches Dawn and Simon that we entirely forgot to note the scorers. So try scorers are from memory and apologies to all players (and Head Coach Clark) if I miss your name. Would the parents of any players I miss off please email me with corrections.

Game 1 OA Yellows 25 v Harpenden Reds 0

A quick reorganisation of positions ensured an interesting start to a game that the new look Yellows could well have struggled in. But manful defence and positive play shut Harpenden out from the start. Aggressive defence pushed Harpenden back over the gain line on each attack and good all round play lead to **Connor Mitchell** scoring the first try.

Euan Wattley, **Jake Mlodecki** and **Joseph Hensman** scored further tries to ensure a comfortable 25 - 0 win.

Try scorers - Connor Mitchell, Euan Wattley, Jake Mlodecki, Joseph Hensmen (2)

Game 2 OA Yellows 10 v Harpenden Whites 25

The score line doesn't reflect another excellent performance by the Yellows. Harpenden Whites were much tougher opposition and the Yellows matched them in nearly all aspects of the game. But for a couple of breakaway tries and the referees' different interpretation of the maul, the score would have been even closer. The Yellows made a number of forced positional experiments and the coaches were delighted with how the players responded. **Joseph Hensman** played with heart throughout and scored two tries.

Try scorers - Joseph Hensmen (2)

Game 3 OA Yellows 0 v Harpenden Blacks 25

Again the score line flatters Harpenden a little after another good Yellows performance. Defence was particularly good throughout. Once again the referee blew up very quickly at the maul which effectively penalised our forwards game. That different referees interpret the laws differently is a fact of rugby and something we must learn to react to and adapt our game as necessary.

This was a fine day's rugby and congratulations to each of the yellow squad. All of you played very well and you must congratulate yourselves on the effort and skill you showed. We've still lots to work on and your coaches look forward to the forthcoming strategy and skill sessions in the coming weeks. One thing to work

on wherever possible is fitness which did let us down a little in the third game. One session of rugby must be supplemented by other activities that work on fitness during the week.

Player of the Week - Two players deserve a special mention. **Connor Mitchell** in defence and attack was outstanding, well done Connor. The man of the match award however goes to **Joseph Hensman** who was simply superb in all aspects of the game, especially in his sheer commitment.

Report by Simon Mitchell & Dawn Sewell

Coaches - Dawn Sewell and Simon Mitchell

Players - Thomas Dee, Harry Deeks, Matthew Ellis, John Greener, Paul Greener, Joseph Hensman, Rory Jeram, Connor Mitchell, Jake Mlodecki, Joshua Montoya Timperley, Thomas Murphy, Edward Sewell, Eاون Wattley.

Treatment room - Jack Rye.

The Greens

OA Greens 15 v Harpenden Reds 0

The Greens started the game looking sharp and well organised. Customary strong and elusive running brought tries for **Angus Wight** (2) and **Toby Spence** to establish a strong early lead. The revelation of the morning was the team's tackling. Every player put in good tackles with **Ryan Doherty**, **Luke Benfield**, **Maxim Vuolo** (apparently leaving his father seriously out of pocket) and **Oliver Marshall** being the most prominent. Special mention should go to **William Mackay** who tackled ceaselessly and chased back to carry out a try saving tackle on a Harpenden player who was clean through.

The Harpenden team were better organised after the break resulting in a scoreless second half and a 15-0 victory for the Greens.

Try scorers - Angus Wight (2), Toby Spence

OA Greens 5 Harpenden Whites 20

The Greens took to the field with confidence for their second game of the morning. They came up against a far better organised Harpenden side than in the first game and consequently try scoring opportunities were at a premium. The Green's only score came after an excellent break by **Oscar Finnie** who ran half the length of the pitch to score in the corner.

Once again the team's tackling was excellent and Harpenden had to work extremely hard for each of their 4 tries

Try scorers - Oscar Finnie

Apart from the great improvement in tackling the other encouraging aspect of the games was the improved ball retention of the team, the result of understanding how to make the ball available once tackled and better support play and teamwork.

All in all, two good performances which the team can build on and approach the rest of the season with confidence.

Player of the Week - William McKay.

Report by Martin Wackett

Coaches - Jim Finnie and Stephen Barbour

Players - Oscar Finnie, Luke Barbour, Joseph Wackett, Angus Wight, Oliver Marshall, William Mackay, Ethan Piggott, Toby Spence, Rhys Williams, Maxim Vuolo, Ryan Doherty, Luke Benfield

The Blues

OA Blues 25 - Harpenden Blacks 5

A cameo appearance by the Blues on Sunday saw them play only one match against our cousins in black. This was a good competitive game with a very easy win for the Blues that was never really in doubt.

A dominant first half saw the Blues turn around 15 - 0 up and coasting. **Cameron Clark** led the way with a couple of early scores - one set up nicely by scrum half **Ruairi McGowan** who bought the ball out of an attacking scrum and committed the defence before passing to Captain Clark to score.

Charlie Moffatt was playing on the wing and touched down a good team try highlighted by good passing play between **William 'Parky' Parkinson** and **William Stewart**.

The forwards played well in the first half and kept the men in black away from our ball which was recycled quickly.

The second half saw **Simon Jones** take over at no 9 and keep the ball flowing, the forwards fell off the pace a bit to make this half a lot closer however the result was not a question of a win, but more a question of by how many tries.

The score from Harpenden was from a restart as one of their lads ran straight though our line in which there was no communication or attempt to tackle made. However, all in all an easy win and good run out.

Try scorers - Cameron Clark (3), William Parkinson, Charlie Moffatt

Player of the Week - **Simon Jones** for good play in a new role and an excellent attitude in what was a fragmented morning for the team.

Report by Andrew Radovanovic

Coaches - **Andrew Radovanovic, Tim Birchinall and Steve Pope**

Players - Ethan Arpino, Ed Birchinall, Cameron Clark, Daniel Hanlon, Simon Jones, James Lear, Ruairi McGowan, Jonathan Olive, William Parkinson, Robbie Pope, Luke Simpson, William Stewart.

Treatment room - Archie Radovanovic, Kane White.