

Monday 19th February 2007

OA's U8's Weekly News

The Matches played away to Amersham and Chiltern and at home to Barnet (Saracens Elizabethans) on Sunday 18th February 2007

This week the Blues and Greens entertained Barnet at home whilst the Reds and Yellows were away to Amersham and Chiltern.

The Greens

Although it's very difficult to compete with the regular correspondent's (Martin) match reports, I've given it a go!

The Greens played two very different games on Sunday splitting the wins with the two Barnet teams. The first game against Barnet B was a very open game with lots of good attacking runs from both sides. The Greens gained the upper hand by running straight and supporting the ball carrier, with Oscar Finnie and Matthew Ellis showing excellent form going forward. Matthew would have had a couple more tries if he had managed to resist the magnetic pull of the touch lines. The Barnet team scored several tries by running straight through the Green's defensive lines – tagging remains an area to develop. I got great satisfaction from the two occasions the team stopped Barnet on the 7th Tag than any of the scores – this tells me the boys can do it – they just need to work as hard on defending as scoring. The error count from the Greens was very low with nice passing after the tag – although there was not one pass in open play during the whole game and this again is an area to develop. The Fullback (Ryan Golds) was man of the match for his excellent reading of the game and try saving tags – often overworked but never lacking in commitment, Ryan had a really strong showing. Well done Ryan.

The second game against a stronger Barnet A team was not as successful; mainly because the Barnet team had a couple of larger athletic boys who ran straight through the Greens on nearly every possession. It is puzzling how some of the Green boys can run like the wind with the ball in hand and barely break into a jog when defending? The Barnet team managed to stop the Greens on several possessions and so won the game with something to spare. The positives from the Greens were good commitment, concentration and a strong desire to support the ball carrier on every attack. Most of all, the desire to play well was clear to see in all the boys. Again Oscar Finnie and Matthew Ellis shone with some nice attacks and Ryan Golds did his very best to stop the Barnet attacks with some excellent tagging. The last time I ran with the Greens was several months ago and the progress of the whole squad is clear to see – a very encouraging sign – well played boys.

Finally a note on my new friend, Harry Deeks, who asked me more questions in an hour than I have asked my wife in seven years of marriage – a couple were even about rugby. Harry has lots

of energy and is a great personality and when little more of that energy is focused on the game we will have a heck of a player.

OA's 6 Barnet B's 4

Tries - Matthew Ellis 4, Luke Barbour, Oscar Finnie.

OA's 4 Barnet A's 9

Tries – Oliver Marshall, Oscar Finnie 2, Elliot Lusby-Park

Player of the Week - Ryan Golds

Top Tagger - Ryan Golds

Top Attackers - Matthew Ellis / Oscar Finnie

Report by Andy Radovanovic

The Blues

The Blues played the same two teams as the Greens. The boys put in very competent displays, were well organised and comfortably on top in both games. In particular, we experimented with the boys playing alone (without the assistance of a coach) on the pitch. This is an important progression since next season, with the laws of their new contact game, they will not be allowed any coach on the pitch.

Although the team played very well as a cohesive team, the week belonged to 3 boys in particular – **William Parkinson** for his excellent all round play (including 4 tries), **Charlie Moffatt** for his strong showing in attack and defence (3 tries), and **Jonathon Powdrell** for the event of his 2 tries (which is becoming more frequent this season). However, as the details below show, the boys played as a complete team and moved the ball along the line to good effect to produce overlaps and wrong foot the Barnet defence. In defence they were also very strong, winning several turn-over balls through hot tagging, and they managed to keep a clean sheet against the Barnet B's. Cameron Clark worked tirelessly pulling tags in the centre of the field to keep Barnet at bay.

The scores on the doors for the Barnet games are as follows:-

Blues 8 - Barnet A's 3

Try scorers - Charlie Moffatt – 3, William Parkinson – 1, Cameron Clark – 1, Archie Radovanovic – 1, Jonathon Powdrell – 1, Ethan Arpino – 1.

Blues 7 - Barnet B's 0

Try scorers - William Parkinson – 3, Jonathon Powdrell – 1, Archie Radovanovic – 1, William Stewart – 1, Ethan Arpino – 1.

Report by Brian Clark

The Reds

This Sunday we made our first visit to Amersham and Chiltern (a big thank you to Steve Pope for arranging this) and hopefully this fixture will prove to be the turning point of the season. After an enjoyable warm up session with the opposition we got down to the real action.

From the start of the first game the Reds showed more purpose in their play than they have done in recent weeks, with a definite improvement in tagging and defensive play. I also sensed a desire to win that has been missing. Despite this good all round display the Reds were playing catch up after letting in a couple of early tries and ended up losing 8 -5.

The second game saw the Reds play their best rugby for a long time inspired by impressive displays from Euan Wattley (who ended up running in 4 tries), James Lear (2 tries) and Toby Palmer (2 tries). Simon Jones added another try and the Reds won more comfortably than the 10-7 margin suggests. Also very pleasing were the tagging efforts from Toby Spence and Luke Benfield and encouraging contributions from Robbie Pope and Jake Mlodecki. Well done Reds and keep up the improvements.

The morning ended with a rugby version of Quidditch, which I think the boys enjoyed despite taking a few knocks.

For his overall haul of 5 tries **Euan Wattley** is the attacker of the week and defender of the week goes to **Luke Benfield**. Congratulations boys!

Match details:

Game 1 - Lost 5 – 8. Tries – Euan Wattley, Toby Palmer, Toby Spence and James Lear (2)

Game 2 - Won 10 – 7. Tries – Euan Wattley (4), James Lear (2) , Toby Palmer (2) and Simon Jones

Report by Rick Powdrell

The Yellows

Fun was clearly the order of the day on Sunday when the Yellows and Reds travelled to a very hospitable Amersham and Chiltern.

The squads from OAs and A&C started the day with a mixed ball skills session. A number of the exercises were new to our boys (and the coach) and I think everyone benefited from a different approach.

After a lengthy practice session the Yellows played two competitive, and very exciting, games against hosts. A&C had a distinct style - very good handling mixed with some interesting tricks - which our boys took a while to get used to. The first game we **lost 7-4** and **drew the second 9-9**.

The depleted squad played very well - with **Caswell Sparks, Ryan Owen, Oliver Palmer and Jasper Williamson** impressing in particular.

The day finished with a mass game of "rugby Quidditch" which had the coach in mind of a medieval village vs village ball game such was the ferocious nature of the contact. OA's, playing as Griffindor won comfortably.

Special thanks to Amersham and Chiltern for the warm welcome and very well organised day.

Report by Simon Mitchell