

Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital 2nd XV- Early Season Report

Played 6, Won 3, Lost 2, Drawn 1. Points For 165 Against 94

The 2nd XV season looked difficult from the outset with expectations high following last season's successes, and promotion out of the Kent Merit Tables. However, after six consecutive weekends of hard rugby confidence is soaring, and following last weekend's resounding win over league leaders Sidcup, Guy's 2nd XV sit proudly at the top of the table.

Whilst many of the seasoned stalwarts remain, a number of younger talents have emerged. Matt Brown and Jim Ruddock have become front row regulars, and along with Tim Wright and Morgan Bayhnam, in the second row, are the new faces in the pack. Behind the scrum Pat Gush, Shay Reading and Andrew Vaughton still dominate the midfield, whilst Marc Carbass is beginning to shine out wide.

The season began with a friendly against Folkestone 2nd XV, who dominated a smaller Guy's pack. Guy's scored twice in the first half, with a short-range effort from Italian George and a length of the pitch flowing move finished off by Richard Breeze. Folkestone 2nd XV capitalised on their forward dominance during a second half storm and ran out 18-29 winners.

The following week saw a vastly improved performance from Guy's, as they beat Dartfordian 2nd XV, 50-12, in their first league game. The rout was inspired by a try direct from the kick-off, as the ball passed through numerous sets of hands, before Jamie Jackson touched down under the posts. The league threw-up a difficult away fixture at Old Dunstonian's the following week, and once again Guy's suffered at the hands of a larger pack. The Guy's backline lived off scraps throughout most of the game and with only 10 minutes remaining Guy's trailed by 17 points. Two quick tries from Roy Turner brought Guy's back into contention, setting up a last gasp penalty for Gavin Brigstocke to secure a 31 all draw.

A break in the league enabled Guy's to play friendlies against old rivals Blackheath (Lost 9-3) and Old Pelhamians (Won 38-5). Both games were exciting encounters and enabled several new players to have a run in the side.

The season's highlight so far, must be the recent 25-8 win over Sidcup 2nds, which coincided with the absence of their captain and scrum half Gavin Brigstocke. The Guy's pack dominated both tight and loose play, and the backs produced a clinical performance with Marc Carbass (2), Harvey Pynn, Guy Brenos and Percy all running in tries. With the league season hotting up and the UH cup looming, Guy's recent performances are boding well for a successful season.

Guy's run five Saturday sides and are always keen to introduce new players. Training is on a Monday and Thursday at 7pm at Honor Oak Park and all standards are welcome.

Gavin Brigstocke