

Guy's Hospital (Penguins) v Dorking Vets Sat 18th October 2008

'And gentlemen in England now a-bed shall think themselves accurs'd that they were not here'... Whilst not a fight upon Saint Crispin's day, it was nevertheless a monumental effort. And we were indeed a 'few, a happy few', yes, but still too few at kick off time! I lost a number to injury during the week and a couple at the 11th hour on Saturday afternoon. Then 3 key players were still in traffic at 3.00 pm. (Sportingly, the oppo were happy to wait for them.) However, the merry band of Penguins chalked up another great victory: this time over the might of Dorking RFC. Despite doing our utmost to throw the game away towards the end we tackled ferociously and clung on to the slender lead. The Penguins last tasted defeat in early April since when, South Molton, The Scanlan Cup and 2 Italian sides were made ours! 3 games in, and this season has begun as we ended the last.

Once again we witnessed the silky hands and the nimble feet of the back line, living off scraps and creating chances from relatively little. Early on Guy's struggled against a strong pack but bravery and commitment around the fringes stemmed what might otherwise have become a tide. Losing set pieces kept us on the back foot for a while but the furious tackles were frustrating Dorking and forcing errors. They were surprised by our determination as were our supporters who, prior to kick-off, remarked at how professional Dorking looked while we looked "...like a bunch of misfits..." It was a thundering tackle from Nick Tobin that helped turn over a Dorking attack and lead to our first Try. Unfortunately Nick had hurt himself in the process and later had to leave the field. From the scrum Guy's broke blind with Ed Sixsmith leading the charge. The ball came back quickly and was shipped across the back line, this time to the left. Carbass dummied to Davis on the wing, stepped inside and cut a line past 3 defenders to score. A relatively easy conversion was squandered but the ball was very heavy and had a bit of grass on it. Gush made up for the miss soon after with a well taken penalty. After dominating the half and living inside Dorking's 22 we had again failed to cross the line more than once. We were fortunate to carry the 8-0 lead into half time after we were marched 10 metres closer to our sticks following a penalty decision. Poor kicking saved us on this occasion.

We confined their scores to the corners but it was their superior forward power that was our concern as the game progressed. Guy's continued to look dangerous in the backs and felt confident. A tap penalty from Sixsmith was popped to Gush who stepped, wriggled and changed direction so many times it confused the ref, the opposition and his own team. He found a gap between their forwards and held off the full back to touch down. Hudson, Howell and Gibson in the front row continued to squeeze every drop of power from their bodies while Lee and Holmes provided the support from behind. The match was more balanced in this half as Dorking replied with another forward try. After a powerful run and some poor Guy's tackling, their No. 8 was floored by Wing Nut in what was a brave, try-saving tackle. Dazed and bloody he left the field briefly. From the following scrum with Guy's down to 13 men, Dorking picked from the base and bundled over the blind side to score. Next was Guy's turn: although more graceful, nonetheless deadly. Davis burst onto a sweeping back line move and carried ahead, Langrish was at hand to clear out and the move continued. A neat scissors followed an over head pass and the final loop put Sixsmith clear for the 3rd try.

Nervous realisation appeared to set in that we could pull off an improbable win. Having staged an outstanding 1st half we began to implode towards the end of the 2nd. Decisions were clear and confident, the direction was obvious but the execution under pressure was dreadful. Panic and uncharacteristic actions were comical: running when we should kick, kicking when we should run! In fairness, Dorking were stronger and more focussed and penetrated through intense forward pressure. They scored a final try in the corner from a penalty which brought them within 3 points. They had some fresh legs who could have made an enormous difference in the first half. Their speedy full back caused all sorts of problems, cutting great lines and showing great strength to shrug off tackles. One of his arching runs took him from one end to the other and only a last ditch

tap tackle from Carbass in the dying minutes prevented a certain score. The last 15 minutes were tight but Guy's held on to another deserved victory.

Team: Clive Hudson, Terry Gibson, Chris Howell, Simon Holmes, Chris Langrish, Nick Tobin, Ed Sixsmith, Pat Gush (Captain), Shay Reading, Marc Carbass, Pat Davis, Richard Lee, Rhodri Martin, Josh Hudson, Wing Nut (Dork)

Result: W18-15 **T:** Carbass, Gush, Sixsmith **C:** 0 **P:** Gush