

University of Essex RFC 2nd XV vs Guy's King's and St Thomas' RFC 2nd XV
Played at University Fields, Colchester on Wednesday 22nd October 2003
Kick Off 2:15pm

Final Score Essex 8 – 25 GKT

Bishop: "I'm afraid you've got a bad egg Mr. Jones!"

Parson: "Oh no, my Lord, I assure you! Parts of it are excellent!"

Cartoon in *Punch*, 9th November 1895

The second fixture of GKT's BUSA campaign took the second team on a road trip to the Essex seaside for their first away fixture, against the University of Essex. The previous away fixture against this side at the start of last season had seen a last-gasp victory for GKT courtesy of the prodigious Tom Bevir, unfortunately absent this week, and so the result of this contest could be hard to predict, both teams have won their opening game this season. Several key players were absent through peripheral placements, illness or Spanish classes (???), but GKT were nonetheless able to field a very strong side, albeit with only two substitutes, both of them forwards. The skipper's misgivings about a lack of bosch in his team were soon dispelled by the sight of the Essex forwards taking the pitch, who were clearly all advocates of the extremely popular Atkins Diet, the college rugby outfit suffering from the unforgivable absence of a on-campus pie shop. The GKT warm-up had to be shortened beyond what would have been desirable, and in combination with a fresh sea-breeze the Guy's line out consequently suffered, and will need a lot of work before next week's fixture. Once again, however, Guy's achieved near-total dominance of the scrummage, and after one of Phil Welch's wind-assisted kicks cleared the opposition's dead ball line, Essex opted for a 22-drop out rather than face the might of the Guy's front row back in our own half. Despite the strength in the scrum and some intelligent running play by the backs, Guy's had a sloppy start, and ended up conceding an early try. Poor discipline and the somewhat capricious decision making by the referee, a Mr Duncan Welch, saw Guys concede too many penalties, and despite the wind one of them was bound to slot between the posts eventually (although it should be said at this juncture that the Essex Captain was perhaps not the most objective judge of his own kicking ability). Finding themselves 8 – 0 down, a Pentecostal fire suddenly descended upon the assembled Guy's men, manifested in the Gallic flair of Angry Ginger Serge Neumand, whose spectacular running left the whole team wondering how we had ever managed without him. The GKT International Brigade of Sancos (another garlic-eater), Togay (Turkey) and Rory (Ulster), with the irrepressible Celtic spirit of the Boys from the Valleys (Adam, Phil and Owen), surged back in to the game. Fresher Simon started the fight back diving over the line to ground the ball and restore the self-belief that had been lacking for the first twenty minutes of the game. This self-belief did not extend to a certain lock forward, who had been so perturbed by the poor opening performance that he assumed that he must be playing for KCL RFC, a faux-pas that was to cost him dearly before the night was out with eight-shots of auto-juniper. Another great try from Sancos Boland gave GKT a narrow two-point lead at half time. This was not, however, a comfortable position to be in, and GKT would have their work cut out in the second half if this game was to end in anything like a satisfactory result. The players duly obliged, and some excellent rugby ensued for the next thirty-five minutes. An awesome try from the long-absent Serge followed after some excellent pressure from the Guys team, who had very little defending to do in the entire second half, the occasional excursion by Essex into our half of the pitch being quickly and ruthlessly expelled. Yet knock-ons at the crucial moment deprived Guy's of several scores, and despite a debut try from Jimbo and an outstanding high-velocity run from Brad, Guy's were unable to fully consolidate their territorial advantage. The game finished on 25 – 8, after a lacklustre dying five minutes which bordered on

the truly woeful when more than one player spilled the ball just metres out from an undefended try-line. Happily, this was all soon forgotten as the Guy's boys boarded their coach destined for alcoholic oblivion, where some of the older players exhorted the Freshers to adopt a magnanimous sentiment towards members of the ICSM. Togay's lyrical explanation of why he had recently been made redundant from an emporium known as "Chicago's" had the team in high spirits, who all agreed without dissent that the Captain was definitely a wicked man, and he does indeed get drunk whenever he can. After pausing to try and ease Central London traffic congestion in time-honoured GKT style, the team returned home to Tommy's (*and you'll have to fill in the rest for yourself, I really don't have a scooby do, - Skip*).

A comfortable win then, but not the glitch-free performance GKT will need to reliably produce all season if the Dream of promotion is to be made real. The game really was a "parson's egg", excellent in parts. Some really first-rate football was exhibited from every single player, surely a strong foundation upon which to build our campaign, but the various imperfections will have to be ironed-out over the coming weeks if we are to beat every team in our league and claim first place. Training is at seven o'clock on Monday evening at Honor Oak Park. Don't be late.

Squad: Rory Gleadhill, Iain Wilson, Owen Williams, Duncan Austin (Capt.) Hasan Khan, Ben Diggins, Will Natrass, Serge Neumand, Simon Trotter, Tim Seng, Brad Tiffin, James B Powell, Togay Koc, Sancos Boland, Phil Welch, Adam Prewett, Jez Nettleton, Sang Ha, Butch

Tries: Simon Trotter, Serge Neumand, Sancos Boland, James B Powell, Brad Tiffin

Pen: Serge Neumand, Simon Trotter, Ben Diggins Adam Prewett (auto-gin)