

Guy's Penguins Vs Farnham 27-26  
Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2005

Getting the rail replacement bus service from Waterloo to Cobham has now become a habit for many members of the team and the hour or so long journey provides a time to catch up on some sleep to wear off the effects of a Friday night. However, today it was to be different. It was to be the last game on our pitch as the use of the grounds and clubhouse has now been renounced to Chelsea Football Club. Nothing could be more evident of this than the security guards trying to prevent us from making the famous walk from the train station to the clubhouse. You will be all proud to know that we ignored the shouts of anger and carried on letting them know that for the time being Cobham was still ours; at least for that afternoon it was going to be.

Relegated to the girls changing rooms, which are the size of a broom-cupboard, to make way for the ever increasing amount of football teams using the ground, the familiar group of loyal players began to assemble. After our game against Barnes the week before, where we were smashed into the ground, team spirits were not high. However, with the arrival 17 players things began to look up and Allan Jones, our resident fly-half, began to get a smile on his face.

We won the toss and elected to kick off. Bang! Our forwards led by Shaun Summers, a South African nephrologist and Frenchman Fabrice Bollet, hit Farnham hard. We had scored within the first ten minutes. There was shock on the captain's face when he realised that we might actually win a game. With Charlie Beardmore playing at inside centre and a new recruit for the day, Henry Gurney an accountant from Ernst and Young, at outside centre, the pair ran at the opposition and tackles were not missed. Allan Jones' smile got bigger because I can assure you that on the rugby pitch nothing pleases Allan more than someone that can tackle. Farnham's discipline deteriorated rapidly. Their captain had a very lippy attitude and at one moment every time the whistle went, we were awarded a penalty. To be honest I can hardly remember any of the tries due to the shock that we were scoring so many. The two that stood out were when Shaun ran through every player of the opposition with them all hanging on to him. Then in the last five minutes, when Charlie Beardmore, with a quick ball out from a breakdown, ran diagonally from the 22 through the unaware forwards that were getting up from the ruck, to score in the right-hand corner. Magical! The forwards worked hard and made this game what it was, they went in determined and gave the scrum-half lots of clean ball so that Allan at fly-half could be creative. Farnham had so many handling errors we were very lucky at times. Even with the massive Fabrice jumping we struggled in the line-out and we had to resort to two man tactics, which worked better. However, this did not stop us winning by one point and every player giving it all in what was a close and competitive game. Man of the Match has to go to Shaun Summers for the unending agony he inflicted on Farnham.

At times playing for the Penguins is a struggle. Some weeks we hardly have a team and on others Clive Woodward would be proud. It always amazes me how Terry Gibson, our President, along with Chris Howell my co-captain, are both there every week without fail and giving it everything. No man is too big to be taken down and today they proved that. I have only been playing for two years and am always aware of the history, blood, sweat and energy that is put into the running Guy's Hospital Rugby club. Saturday was the end something big and no moment summed it up more than when I glanced out of the bar window after the match to watch the groundsman, Alan Moss, standing out on his own; surveying the empty pitches on what was his last day at work. Cobham has seen many years of rugby from both the former St Thomas' Rugby Club and for the past 16 or so years under the banner of Guy's Rugby Club; the oldest in the world. If the walls and pitches of Cobham could speak, what a story we would have.

Team: Clive Hudson, Terry Gibson, Chris Howell, Dan Poulter, Fabrice Bollet, Simon Holmes, Shaun Summers, David Gibson/Mark Blunden, David Manson-Bahr, Allan Jones, Charlie Beardmore, Henry Gurney, Pete Swoboda, Rich Lee, Mark Kinirons and Simon Hughes running touch with an injured shoulder.

Tries: Summers x2, Beardmore x2, Gurney  
Cons: Jones

David Manson-Bahr

