

13 March 2002 – UH Cup Final GKT 20 - 43 Imperial Medics

The UH Rugby Cup is the oldest Rugby competition in the world, and the first match in 1875 resulted in a win for Guy's over St Thomas'. 126 years later and for the 116th playing of this competition, GKT took on Imperial Medics (St Mary's, Charing Cross, Westminster) as the holders. The game was played once again at the London Welsh Ground at Richmond, and was sponsored by the Medical Sickness Society. The challengers, Imperial Medics, were well prepared by their coach Dave Rollitt and GKT by their coaches, Steve Farr and David Thomas. GKT had lost a number of more experienced players this season.

The Imperial Medics kicked off into a strong wind which influenced the whole game. The first 20 minutes was dominated by GKT playing with the wind when Tim Price first kicked the penalty and then a delighted newcomer Matthew Morgan scored after an impressive rolling maul. There were ominous signs, in that during this period Guy's failed to secure at least four line outs on their ball, spurned two easy kicks at goal and missed two others. Imperial Medics suddenly burst into the Guy's half at speed and four missed tackles allowed their fast centre to score. Soon afterwards, after a rush ahead, Imperial scored again before Vaughton raced down the field to bring a half-time score of GKT 13, Imperial Medics 12.

The second half was really dominated by Imperial Medics and the wind, and in particular their very fast backs who grew with confidence as time progressed, and scored two tries to take the score to 13-26. The game had been fiercely competitive to this point and as play continued to the Guy's corner, Davis was seen defending himself against two Imperial Medic players. The third, the IM Captain, decided to attempt to take Davis out of the game, running some 15 yards to land an upper cut to the side of his head. He was quite rightly sent off, the first player in living memory to be sent off in a UH Cup Final, and the try scored during this incident was disallowed.

Nevertheless, Imperial then pulled further ahead with a kick ahead with the Guy's defender being pulled back but not noticed by the referee, before Roy Turner brought some respectability to the score with a try converted by Price. In the last few minutes Imperial Medics scored two further tries, the last as Guy's were pressing themselves to score only for Imperial to take the ball the length of the field. The final score certainly flattered Imperial Medics but there was little doubt that their organisation and teamwork made them deserved winners.

Team: D Woodford, P Davies, B Wheeler, C Jack, R Clinton, G Ryan, B Thorpe, P Morgan, M Morgan, T Price (Capt), R Turner, C Smith, A Lambert, A Vaughton, E Behn

Substitutes: R Etok, B Challacombe, A Smedley, J Agunwa, M Lewellyn, N Evans, Vaughton

Scorers: Price (P,C), Behn (J), Vaughton (J), Morgan (T)