

GKT 1's 35 – 20 Imperial College

Guy's entertained the league leaders Imperial College at HOP on the back of 2 straight defeats. Having thrown away a twenty-two point lead against Portsmouth the previous week Guy's were floundering in the relegation zone of the league.

Things didn't seem to be getting any easier with the top team in the league visiting, and questions being asked about certain player's commitment to the club. Despite this, and an equally tempestuous warm-up and team talk, the team threw themselves at Imperial from the start, their pugnacious attitude clearly shocking IC. The enthusiastic and partisan support on the touchline clearly helped, as straight from the off, the quick and mobile Guy's back row of Rob Hone, Chris Abbott and Sam Trowbridge consistently hit the gain line with power and intent, and along with a solid midfield of the returning Rhys Harris and the ever present Theo Malthouse, repelled any forage into Guy's territory. A rejuvenated Hadlington at hooker was everywhere, and Rich Townsend and Rob Ferry were dominant in the lineout. The early injury to Tom Pacey in the front row was countered by the explosive entry onto the field of Mark Halls, who by gaining yards and stealing ball added another dimension to the pack.

Both teams exchanged early penalties but soon Guy's dominance around the park began to tell, with IC seemingly finding it impossible to deal with the composure and assurance that half backs Gary and JK brought to the team. The pace of Lucas Rehnberg and Adam Staten on the wings provided a constant threat also. A rushed defence from the opposition exposed dog-legs in their defensive line, and JK ghosted through the gap. Quick hands from Harris put Malthouse in behind the defence and he ran in the try from the 22. It was clear from then on that Guy's were not going to become complacent and rest on their laurels, with a steal in the line-out from Ferry leading to a pack try in the corner. The tackling became even more ferocious, with Abbott, Hone and Harris particularly impressive.

Gary added another three points with a sweetly struck penalty, and there was still time for Hadlington to dive over the line for another try before half time, following a string of 6 or 7 scrums on the Imperial line, the opposition crumbling under the pressure from the commanding scrummaging of Elias and Halls.

Guy's entered half time with a relatively comfortable lead, but everyone on the team was aware of the necessity to maintain the intensity of the performance. The team was fortunate enough to be able to draw on the experience and talent of substitutes Dave Prowse and Rhys Davies early in the second half. The team continued to defend with passion and desire, and were soon rewarded with a breakaway try, as Rehnberg darted through a couple of tackles before chipping over the last line of defence and gathering for another try.

The intensity of the play slightly wavered in the last 15, and coupled with some mysterious decisions from the referee, this contributed to IC hitting back with 2 tries. However the result was beyond doubt by this point, and Guy's had come away with a famous victory; the season was back on track.

Tries: Malthouse, Hone, Hadlington, Rehnberg.

Cons: Gary x2

Pens: Gary x3

Mike Forsythe