

## **Park House 2<sup>nd</sup> XV 32-23 Guys Hospital 2<sup>nd</sup> XV**

So on a weekend where the club has only one game, there were 14 hardy souls at 12 noon, until Forsythe manned up (feeling very ill) and came along to play. Guys have 15 men. It was another game where Alex 'Deirdre' Brazier manned up and played on the wing as asked by the captain. So this left Oli in the second row with Canadian George and the temporary Saturday captain found himself in the back row the first time in years. As people arrived at Parkhouse, the weather was extremely grim; wet, windy and very cold. The perfect cure for anyone who was struggling from the night before, mentioning no names in particular here.

The game kicked off and Guys did their normal 2<sup>nd</sup> XV thing and decided not to actually play for the first five minutes. Some opportunistic and good forward running saw Parkhouse run in two early scores. Guys woke up and some good pressure in the pack led to Parkhouse conceding a penalty on the 10m line. Forsythe was feeling confident about his 'boot o woe' and nailed the kick. Five minutes later and the same thing happened. Guys were quickly getting back into the game, taking advantage of better fitness in the forwards. Some excellent forward work from Howlett and Chin led to guys' third penalty. The score was then 14-9.

The second half could not have got off to a better start. Again a solid scrum from Guys gave the backs a good platform. Some fantastic hands from 9 through to 13, in the horrible conditions and slippery ball, saw Will Morley cut a fantastic line and it was try time under the posts. Forsythe converted easily from here. It was from the Park House kick off that the biggest shock of the day came. Tom 'maybe I should have a bottle of vodka the night before every game, it makes me fast over 20 metres' Goddard found himself with the ball, evaded one man, then two, then three and his pace was carrying him through on a clean break, alas he could not outpace their full back and was tackled.

Guys conceded a weak penalty in their half, and a good move which involved a very high kick into the goal area. The ball seemed to hang in the air forever, Alex 'McQueen' Gregory seemed to have it safe, but dropped it, only then to be held back before the Park House player dropped on it, try time Park House. Guys replied quickly with Forsythe going over and converting his own try. It seemed like we were back in the game and could only go at Park House more to try and get the winning score. This nearly happened, some powerful forward running from the back row, and some excellent recycling from everyone meant we could go through many a phase and suck the Park House players in. It seemed Guys took a step too far though, conceding to turn over and possession was lost. A quick break away left Deirdre on his own in a 2 on 1 situation, he tackled the first man hard, only for a fantastic offload to send the Park House wing clear through to sprint and score.

Guys did not give in, a massive hit from George from the kick off gave Guys another platform, which led to more phases. The penalty was inevitably conceded from Park House (the referee was extremely hot on players going off their feet at the breakdown, very good to see at this level). The ref,

however, did not reply to everyone's question about the points score(it doesn't matter though, we still got the bonus point). Touch was find, the ensuing line out was a very messy affair(the line outs were always bound to be messy, with no recognised hooker on the field, Oli manned up). Park then put the ball out and it was full time. Everyone sprinted into the changing rooms.

It was a game which was lost, but it was fantastic to see the spirit in a team of 15 people who had all made the effort to represent their club on an extremely wet, windy and cold day. Every player gave their all in the horrendous conditions and everyone played well. The hands in the backs in the slippery conditions were fantastic, the forwards playing a forwards game against a large, Kent pack was also fantastic.

Tries: Will Morley, Mike Forsythe

Conversions: Mike Forsythe (2)

Penalties: Mike Forsythe (2)

Starting XV: Justin Chin, Naveen Palani, Tom Goddard, Oli Howlett, Canadian George, Frazer Barnes, Charlie West, Simon Garrard, Simon Trotter, Will Ball, Alex Brazier, Mike Forsythe, Will Morley, Alex Gregory, Toby Welch.

Man of the match: The team; would be difficult to pick one person out in this game!