

# National Medical Schools 7s, Nottingham

## 15<sup>th</sup> March 2003

**Squad:** Edmond Jack, Alex Burns, Percy, Nick Evans, Andrew Vaughton, Victor, Tom Bevir (c), Jim Martin, Jonny Stavros and Oli Jack

The National Medical Schools 7s tournament in Nottingham is always an early start and this year was no exception with the squad meeting for a scrumptious McDonald's breakfast at 0645 on the Ides of March. Leaping into cars and a van the squad of 10 headed to up the M1 to the Midlands and arrived at the ground with plenty of time to spare, but as we all know things are never that easy. The pitches were ripped up so we were met by a map to a new ground. For 45 minutes the combined map reading powers of Evans, Vaughton, Jonny and the Captain was not enough to make the 1 mile journey across Nottingham so it was left to Percy to sort us out and deliver us to the ground 15 minutes before our first game.

A quick change and brief stretch and it was Bristol in the 1<sup>st</sup> round. A slow start soon developed into flowing 7s and tries a plenty. All the following games were won with confidence and later in the afternoon we were in the semi-final with the up and coming St Georges. This was an incredibly close game with some rather choice tactics used by Georges to create the overlap on the blind side by taking Burns out of the game when the refs back was turned. Come the final whistle we were ahead but only just after winning one of the closest games ever played. We did not think it could get any closer than that, how wrong we were.

The final was against the tournament hosts and we got off to a flying start piling on the points but Nottingham clawed their way back with some good tries and even better touchline conversions. Then a break by GKT that saw a guaranteed try stopped by the ref for a forward pass. Soon after a beautiful chip and chase saw another clean run in but again the whistle denied us the points because of players in front the kicker. We were on the edge and emotions were running high. The ref blew the final whistle and the scores were even! What now? The ref decided on 3 minutes of extra time each way with a football style "golden try" rule. We won the toss and elected to receive but Nottingham's tacticians knew what to do and walloped a long and very high kick which landed between our 5 metre and try line. We got to the ball first but a horde of Nottingham players piled onto the ball to create a 15-a-side style ruck. By the strength of sheer numbers they turned the ball over dived over the line to claim a well earned victory.

We did not bring home the trophy but we played some fantastic 7s and showed great grit and determination right to the end. As always the Nottingham medics organised a great day and night out on the waterfront.

Thanks to all our supporters and a big thank you to Norman Vaughton for his warm hospitality and support.

**TB**