

## **UH Sevens Review 2007**

Following intensive pre-season preparation and on the back of a decent intake of freshers, Guy's arrived at sunny Teddington for the UH 7's competition in good spirits and confident of putting in a solid performance and establishing the club as a serious threat in all competitions for the coming season. Despite assurances from many that they were available, 13 players were all there was to be seen arriving 10 minutes before kick off at the ground, but a favourable draw and good conditions encouraged the two Guy's teams present.

The first game of the day saw Guy's 1's lining up against Bart's 2's. The team was lead by Mike Forsythe in the absence of regular captain Adam Staten, and he had an exceptional group of players at his disposal. The team lining up to start the tournament consisted of the power of Mark Halls, Pete Robinson and Tim Price, coupled with creativity and finishing ability in the forms of Forsythe, Rob Robinson, John Kendall and Pete Gretton. However there was an absence of notable personnel who could inject the team with speed, such as Lucas Rehnberg, Adam Staten and Iain 'Diesel' Wilson. Pace is a crucial ingredient in 7's, and Guy's knew it would take something special to come away with a result.

It soon became clear however with the scintillating breaks from the Robinson brothers and Kendall that we were always going to be in with a chance. Tries from both Robinsons and new boy Kendall saw away the challenge of Bart's with ease, and soon it was George's who were providing the next opposition. The team started patiently, spreading the ball back and forth along the line looking for openings. With clever lines and popping out of contact Guy's crafted opportunity and opportunity and were home and dry by half time. Gretton kept the pressure on with beautifully struck conversions from any angle required, and Kendall and Rob Robinson took their try tallies up to 5 each. The Robinson brothers complemented each other perfectly, Rob's guile and quick feet the perfect foil for Pete's raw power and direct running.

On the adjacent pitch, the second 7 were putting up a strong fight in the much tougher group. Passionately lead by Simon Garrard, who took on the responsibility of captaincy fantastically, the 2's ran in a number of tries, and freshers Marcus Pemberton, Will Ball and Rauri Hadlington able to showcase their talents. The next match for the 1's saw Guy's taking on Bart's 1's in a very one sided contest. Forsythe ran in a hat-trick and Gretton scored his first of the competition. Hadlington appeared for the first time for the first team for Price, and performed exceptionally well, showing he has the hands to go with his all round rugby ability.

The next game saw Guy's face up against RUM's in a hard fought game, but from the off Guy's signalled their intent, with Pete Robinson dumping the catcher

immediately off the kick off. Rob Robinson scored yet another brace and Forsythe and Kendall added two more - Guy's were through to the semi-finals. With the prospect of facing Mary's 1's in the final, Guy's had to keep their focus for the far from easy test of Mary's 2's in the semi finals.



Pete Robinson opened the scoring after skinning his opposite man on the outside, but a couple of missed tackles and loss of concentration lead to Mary's scoring three tries before half time. However the spirit of the time never let up, and an early score soon after the break from Rob Robinson put Guy's back in contention, but Mary's struck back again. Guy's replied in the most effective way possible, Kendall breaking away for another try, and following a Forsythe chip over the top, Robinson ran away to level the scores at 24-24. There was a nervous wait, but following a count back of tries, Guy's were through to the final!

Mary's had been preparing for almost an hour prior to the final, but Guy's were in a relaxed mood and entered the contest in front of the crowd. It was a cagey start, but soon Guy's were furrowing deep into the opposition half. Despite this, it was Mary's who opened the scoring, and they followed this with another try. Hall's responded with a try for Guy's following good work from Gretton, and at half time Guy's were three tries to one down. In the past the team was tended to roll over and capitulate, happy to accept second place, but the belief and desire were strong, and an early try for Rob Robinson put us back into the contest. The

teams then exchanged tries, but then following a break from Hadlington, Robinson rushed through in support and brought Guy's within one score. With our tails up, slick passing put Hall's through on the wing, and with the defence sucked in, the ball was sent wide and Forsythe put Kendall in for the score under the posts. With 3 minutes remaining, Guy's lead by 3 and with desperate defence and covering tackles Guy's held on for the win!

It was a perfect start to the season, and hopefully a sign of things to come. Celebrations were huge, and in typical Guy's fashion. Bring on UH.