

Kent 1 League Fixture at The Ditch 2nd October 2004

Guy's Hospital RFC 24 - 12 Sheppey RFC

Sheppey away, every Kent sides favourite fixture! With a certain amount of trepidation we left the safety of St. Thomas' Street. to venture into deepest darkest Kent. All the players had visited www.sheppeyscum.com and the Sheppey virgins were visibly disturbed at the prospect of going onto the prison laden, limited genomic island. Despite this, we were greeted with fine weather, stark contrast to the hurricanesque storm of last season. With Tiffin making his own way there, and Davis and Rigg enjoying some pre-match golf on the driving range, the whole squad eventually met up with an hour to go before kick-off. The pre-match team talk in our daddy-long leg infested changing room instilled the need to talk our chances when they arose, and maintain above all the solid defensive line. Tackling the big men is the key to unlocking the door to London 4 and that is what we must do.

The game got off to an interesting start for the boys in blue and gold, in particular loose head Ben Wheeler. In the first scrum of the game, the Sheppey captain on blindside flanker spotted the referee on the other side of the scrum. Seizing the opportunity he punched Wheeler twice in the face. Despite the referee not taking any action, it was an incident that was noted by the away side.

In the first half, Guy's were playing into an ever-increasing wind, forcing us to keep the ball in hand and not kick it away. The conditions actually improved our game since it made us concentrate on handling and safe hands. After calming our often hot-headed play in the loose GKTRFC were able to string phases together to really stretch the opposition's defences. Piecing runs by forwards Davis and White-Peart often saw them make ground. The backs did not let the side down with strong running from centres Hone and Turner. Indeed, Turner opened the scoring with a fine run the length of one half. By breaking clean through he was able to score under the posts, enabling Eggleton to convert. The second try, again from Turner was not far away. Fierce rucking by Guy's pack, combined with quick support allowed centres Hone and Turner to combine well, sending Turner once more into the breach. Putting his head down for the wing, he quickly out stripped the fullback, allowing his to again score under the posts. A further two points sent us 14-0 in front.

What followed next was a similar performance to the same fixture last season. Guy's set their stall up, but allowed Sheppey right back into the game. The home forwards were not averse to running hard into our smaller student based side. We found it difficult to defend on the front foot, especially when we were going backwards in the scrums. Sheppey had decided not to go down quietly, and with two tries in return they were most certainly back in the game. Half time saw the score at 14-12.

The second half was much of a stalemate. On 60 mins, Eggleton slotted us 3 points to take us to 17-12. This was within one score of Sheppey so the hard graft had to continue. The attitude of the team was an ever-present source of pride for the captain. All of the players contributed outstandingly, making the tackles when necessary and securing both the ball and territory when required. The hard work paid off when in

with the last kick of the game Kennedy went over the line to score. This was the final nail in the coffin for Sheppey who had played ever so well, always toiling with a gutsy determination. Eggleton rounded off a superb kicking display by converting a difficult 2 points.

Away sides always find it hard when coming to the Ditch but Guy's played with a great deal of pride. The home side were extremely courteous in the bar, and set us up well for a very drunken coach trip back to London.

Three wins out of three, Guy's for the Cup!