

Guys vs Isle of Sheppey

24/01/04

venue: Sheppey RFC

score: 12-10

“This is why you play rugby and if we are going to win the league you need to win matches like this.” (Wright, 2004). So the intrepid Guys team set off for some unknown land somewhere in the south east, with pretty much everything against them. The team which is generally smaller than most loves to play fast, attractive, running rugby and this day can only be described as the antithesis of all of these things. The team turned up at the ground with the sound of Swale fm, blaring out, in near gale force winds. It was pouring with rain, the pitch was waterlogged and you could hardly pass a ball. Not good sings for this team. Sheppey had also won the reverse fixture in the final minutes and were sitting comfortably in mid table, showing that they would be no push over. However as described before this is no ordinary Guys team, as shown by the 300% increase in supporters to watch them play, AT AN AWAY GAME. No longer is it one man and his dog, it was now one stastition, his bird and her brother.

The game kicked off on time, with a South African ref wondering what the hell he was doing here. We had not seen civilisation for about 15mins since visiting the isle and all that had been seen was the beautiful Sheppey picnic park, a field full of cow dung in the middle of no-where, surrounded by fields full of cow dung in the middle of nowhere. Beeuuutiful.

Guys were playing against the conditions in the first half, however the team talk and tactics obviously worked. There was no kicking and the ball was kept in hand at all times. The team consistently battered at the fringes before handing again to Rob Hoe and Roy in the centres to maintain the incessant battering. Pete Gretton must be given great praise for melding the forwards and the backs in such awful conditions and this was recognised by the ref giving him the honour of man of the match amongst a team of heroes.

After about 5mins the ball was released to the backs on their own 10-yard line and Roy Turner did what he does best. Shrugging of the first tackle before pinning his ears back and running the length of the pitch for a try. The kick was not surprisingly unconverted and the score was 5-0. Bosh

The team did not take its foot off the gas and with some excellent work in the forwards especially from Rhys and Joe in the lineout, Guys found themselves in the oppo 22. Rhys managed to pressurise the oppo lineout to such and extent that they gave away a penalty infront of the posts. This was quickly take by Dave Berry who with a deft kick chipped it over the defence for a great solo try. Although if it was not for the wind me thinks it would not have been one. Good use of the conditions. Amazingly the try was converted and this was to prove to be the deciding point of the match. Guys continued to batter the line but to no avail, a great break by Gretton was brought to a halt just short of the line for what should have been a certain try. If only he had seen the ginger tearing up the pitch on his inside. Sam Rigg also was away after dummying from the base of a ruck 5yards from his own line and being scot free for the line only to be brought back for a knock on in the ruck. The final 15mins of the half is probably the most gutsy display of defence I have seen from the Saturday side

with the opposition never more than 5 yards from the line. However inevitably the crossed with the final move of the half to make it 12-5.

What followed can surely never have been seen in Guys history and even had the opposition supporters in amazement. At half time Guys went back into the changing room to change kit, England stylee. Thankyou Cubana. They came out after the half looking refreshed and revitalised except Rob "Fran Cotton" Whyte who seemed to be quite happy with the way her looked.

The second half should have been a breeze with all the conditions in Guys favour, however as shown in the first match and the first half this was not to be the case. Sheppey brought on the subs, especially a new centre who seemed to always make the yards and started to batter the fringes with their own fatties. With the loss of Christian and the tiring pack, they started to make inroads. No longer were they being put on their arse, they were making the extra yard each time. Eventually they crossed the line in front of the posts and only had to kick the goal for the scores to be drawn. However what followed showed Grettons kick in its true light. The Sheppey kicker stepped up a smacked the kick between the posts, however just before reaching them the wind blew the ball back over his head. 12-10 was the score and 12-10 it would remain. Fantastic guys defence and play from Rob Whyte at the base of the scum, saw them through to the end, in a highly entertaining and close match.

By the end of the match not only were the players and ref shattered by battling the conditions but one of the touch line flags just gave up and snapped in half. All the players left the pitch in a sea of mud, however their groundsman promised that the ground would be ready for training on Monday night. Hmm.

A great match played in the right spirit and full credit must be given to Sheppey who were very hospitable and welcoming and enjoyed a few ales in the bar afterwards.

The journey home was helped by drives great attitude to the lash and Harvey's watering can. And the female contingent of the coach learned a new method of humming. Fantastic stato can assure you.

Anyway, great match and great spirit and the match was won and GUYS ARE TOP OF THE LEAGUE.

Stato's prematch prediction:

Its going to be tough, everything is against us, but if last weeks performance is anything to go by we should just scrape through.

Stato's bend:

To the left though only just, so it is going to be close (1/2, 50%)

Ref.'s man of the match:

Pete Gretton for his great marshalling of forwards and backs and for that kick.

Stato's man of the match:

Rob Whyte, did everything that could be asked of a number eight carrying the ball constantly and making the hits. His effort from the back of a tiring pack was awesome.

Moment of the match:

That half time kit change. Awesome

name	tackles made	tackles missed	ball carries	ball drops	bosh	boshed	kicks	kicks Of woe	tries	overall rating
Wheels	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Joe	3	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	7
Johny	10	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	10
Kit	6	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Rhys	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Rob W.	10	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
Christian	7	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	9
Relly	9	-	4	-	1	-	1	-	1	19
Riggles	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pete	3	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	5
Mat W.	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Rob H.	5	1	9	1	6	-	-	-	-	24
Roy	5	1	4	-	1	-	-	-	1	13
Vaughton	4	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Pricey	3	1	6	1	2	1	3	1	-	12
subs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jamie J.	7	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Harvey	6	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Percy	6	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
score	1	-1	1	-1	2	-2	1	-1	3	