

**18/10/2006. University of Surrey 2<sup>nd</sup> XV 12-17 GKT 2<sup>nd</sup> XV.**

This game was a success in many ways. Firstly it was the perfect example of true guy's Jedi spirit and secondly it was a massively improved performance against a worthier opposition from the week before. We arrived late, but this did nothing to dampen our enthusiasm, and although at times we did not make it easy for ourselves, we pulled through and got a deserved win.

We arrived at Surrey late for kick off with the opposition captain not willing to delay kick off by more than ten minutes. Thus we took to the pitch and had a very hurried warm up and a quick squeeze. The opposition had smirks on their faces, it has to be said that not many teams can turn up like this and put in a match winning performance. GKT won the toss and we decided to kick to them. Immediately the pace of the game was set, and it was intense. Surrey hit it up and hit it up and we repelled, then we came back at them.

Once again, as has often been the case, the moves lacked a bit of penetration, and Surrey were finding it easy to defend against our drifting attack. The support play from Guys was excellent and much improved from last week, however the opening try eluded us, somewhat frustratingly, and Surrey began to grasp a foothold in the game. They began to pressure us in the loose and although, slightly against the run of play, their opening try was not really unexpected.

An earlier expected debut should be mentioned here. Ashley loves the bosh, as we all know, however he fell victim to his love and was left in some pain after a heavy hit. He struggled on, but was eventually replaced, Marcus was brought into inside centre allowing fresher Tom to come on as full back. We have since found out that Ashley has torn his medial collateral ligament in his knee and we wish him the best and a quick recovery.

The first half went on, with both teams almost cancelling each other out, however GKT dominated the scrum and the lineout, but were still finding that after good work in those set pieces, the ball would be taken in and lost. It is fair to say that rifts were appearing with the forwards frustrated by the backs inability to breach the Surrey defence and keep the ball. It was inevitable that at half time the rage of Taione was to be seen, much to the fear of both the oppo and our own pack.

We went into half time trailing by seven (Surrey's try was converted), however there were many positives to take from the first half, what was needed was someone to step up and build on that platform.

The second half started well, with GKT piling the pressure on Surrey, forcing some penalties and errors to creep into their game. GKT had penalty after penalty on their line and we scrummaged every one. Eventually a blind side move paid off as Fraser, at 8, offloaded to Trotts who unselfishly fed captain Harry for our opening try and once again his ruin. The try was unconverted so we still trailed, however the belief was there.

Belief is one thing, but it takes more in a game like this to get the try, including a calm attitude, it is fair to say that panic did begin to set in, in some peoples minds. Fortunately this did not happen to fresher Chris. After a lineout from a penalty a deft chip allowed Chris to reclaim the ball and he went over for an excellent and thoroughly deserved try under the posts. It has to be said at this point that Chris had an outstanding game and provided some real class at times to our backline.

We 6 minutes to defend the lead of 5 points, not an easy task, and the aforementioned panic set in. The way that we capitulated in defence was almost unbelievable. A horrific set of circumstances occurred ending with a hacked kick from Surrey bouncing in our try area, and setting Tom Goddard against their number 8, needless to say the number 8 won.

It is here, where we stood on the verge of throwing a game away that the guy's spirit was seen, this time in attack. We attacked the kick off and earned a turnover. We set up for a lineout and then in true fairy tale style on the last play another deft chip set the ball in their try area and Irish Mark finished it off by diving on it. We knew that we had won and all that was left to be done was for us to celebrate and watch Toby fluff the kick.

The game was a success in many ways. There was a much improved attacking performance and the support play was better. The defence was outstanding most of the time, and it is a real pleasure to see some of the hits that Marcus makes. The play in the loose was good from Diggins and Sam alike and the lineout work by all was excellent. There is still room for significant development; but the signs are there that we could be in for an excellent season. We must continue to train hard to get the moves slick and the fitness up, but all is looking good for the forthcoming fixture against Sussex.

Starting team: Tom Goddard, John, Taione, Simon Hill, Sam Gillet, Benjamin Diggins, Sam, Fraser, Simon Trotter, Toby Welch, Ashley, Chris, Harry Gasper(captain), Jamie Hamley, Marcus.

Subs: Simon Garrard, Tim, Josh, Irish Mark, James, Oli Howlett, Tom