

University of Kent 3rd XV vs Guy's Kings & St Thomas' 2nd XV

Kick off: 2.15pm, Wednesday 5th February 2003, University of Kent, Canterbury.

Final Score: UKC III 5 – 69 GKT II

“In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.”

Desiderius Erasmus (1466 – 1536), *Adagia*

The penultimate league fixture of the 2002 – 2003 season saw the all-conquering GKT IIs return to the playing fields of the University of Kent to exorcise some recurrent demons. The previous fixture at this location, against the University's Second team, had been a disappointing affair, with the whole team, and certain players in particular, performing well below par. The Kent Second Team had had their comeuppance at Cobham the previous week, and now it was turn to take our vengeance into deep inside the Kentish campus. A combination of old hands and new faces met at Boland House on the morning of the fixture, only for the coach to arrive forty-five minutes late. When the minibus finally did arrive, the word “IMPACT” emblazoned in bold text on the side of the vehicle did little to assuage the transport worries of the Guy's captain. However, the SAS-standard navigation of the driver delivered the team to their destination safely and in good time, once Andrew Snedden gave the driver direction on how to drive from St Thomas' Street to the Old Kent Road, that is. Upon taking the field, the sight of the UKC inside centre sporting a very dashing pair of speedo swimming trunks gave some indication of the level of resistance GKT could expect – “*I've had these shorts my entire life!*”. However, in spite of some promising first appearances by debutants Olly Fuge, Hasan and Ben Preston, the following 80 minutes saw some of the worst Rugby yet demonstrated by the GKT IIs. Tom Kennedy was clearly not having a good week, when he darted past several opposition players, only to drop the ball on the try-line. Admirably recompensed with eight shots of auto-gin as well as actually grounding the ball on his second attempt, Tom's error was still sadly merely symptomatic of a rather shaky GKT performance. Poor handling, ill-considered positioning and selfish play, *inter alia*, would have cost GKT dearly even with a neutral referee, and were truly inexcusable and unaffordable in the circumstances. Considering that the first place position in the league may well come down to point difference, the 69-5 score line is disappointing to anyone who saw the home game at Cobham. Fortunately, GKT were able to dominate by virtue of not being quite as awful as the opposition, whose play was utterly mournful on occasions. GKT's game was not without its highlights, with a graceful nose-dive by Jonathan Ho securing a debut try (and gin). Newly streamlined Fresher “Side-Show” Olly Fuge was cruelly denied by the somewhat idiosyncratic decision making by the referee. The bizarre proclivities of the referee, familiar to those who ran-out against Kent's 2nd Team at the same ground before Christmas, were to cost GKT dearly, with a penalty memorably awarded against Guy's after a touch-line spectator uttered an expletive within earshot of the prudish ref. There were some excellent periods for GKT nonetheless, with Rob Hone and Spud Blundell notching up four tries apiece. Who can forget Spud, with a glint of anger in his scar-ridden face, giving a potential tackler a hand off, accompanied by a free piece of advice in his usual pithy Northern brogue? Phil Welch was having a good day with the boot, adding eight points to the five he scored in open play to help Guy's secure a greater than fifty per cent conversion rate. The horrendous amount of knock-ons committed

by Guy's, not to mention a series of highly dubious forward-passes called, were largely rendered void by a powerful GKT scrummage, which will rue the absence of Dharms "the Baptist" Barot in the next fixture, after he damaged his A-C joint towards the end of the game. The Kent hospitality was highly enjoyable, and the team must be admired for playing with such continuing enthusiasm after a disastrous season: let's hope that their enthusiasm and spirit last at least until the end of their next and final game, against title challengers UKC II. All that Guy's can do now is play to their utmost against UCL next week, and hope that their points advantage over Kent IIs, currently standing at +85 points, will be sufficient to secure them the Dream, promotion to South East 2A. "You know your places. God be with you all!"

Team:

Gurvir Josan, Jonathan "Fighting Jo Hooker" Ho, Ed "Endurance" Sheppard, Duncan Austin (Capt.), Dharms Barot, Jeremy Nettleton, Iain "Cobby Fresher" Wilson, Toby Nelson, Tim Seng, Ed Jefferies, Tom "Gin me please, put me out of my misery" Kennedy, Rob Hone, Spud Blundell, Olly "Side Show Bob" Fuge, Phil Welch, Hasan, Ben Preston, Andrew Snedden.

Tries:

Rob Hone x 4, Spud Blundell x 4, Phil Welch, Jonathan Ho, Tom Kennedy

Conversions:

Spud x 2, Rob Hone x 1, Phil Welch x 4

Gin:

Full Ginning:

Ben Preston, Jonathan Ho, Tom Kennedy, Spud Blundell, Iain Wilson, "Cheese-grater"

Half Ginnings:

Ed Jefferies, Duncan Austin, Rob Hone

P.S. Get well soon Bradley Tiffin, Tom Bevir, Dharms Barot, Sancos Boland, Gurvir Josan et al, from DA and what's left of the team.

P.P.S. A big "hello there!" to all our fans above the Southwark Tavern.