

# MATCH REPORT



## 14 - 26



And so to the new season as Westcliff U16's . This will be our last season at the current ground before we move just down the road to our brand new clubhouse and fantastic pitches – lets hope it's a memorable one !

Our first League game of the season didn't get much tougher having been drawn to play Thurrock – last years league runners up – albeit at home. The boys however have worked hard in pre season and it would be a good test to see how far we have progressed.

A lovely sunny day greeted us, music was blaring from the changing room and Pitch 1 as well – the balcony was also in full voice and there was plenty of supporters for our opener.

Westcliff started the brighter and were taking the game to the visitors. A solid opening spell with the 2 teams looking evenly matched but the breakthrough came when Baily spotted no one at home and chipped over the top for Charlie Blades to follow up and touch down for the first try of the season. Baily converted. The score should have given us confidence but when we cleared our lines and the ball fell to the FB somehow the 3 Westcliff chasers all missed him and Thurrock were able to recycle the ball and score a try close to the corner – excellent conversion tying the score. A bit of a mid pitch battle ensued but when West were awarded a Penalty near half way a quick tap and pass to Owen saw him burst through and nicely side step the FB for a second score – Baily converting. West should have been further in front and Thurrock only managed to get into our 22 twice.

HT Westcliff 14 Thurrock 7 .

The second half saw an even start but the problems for West were injuries . We lost James and Ben and had to shuffle things around to try and cover – however as we know at this level teams will capitalise on these opportunities and so it was. Thurrock scored an equalising try despite protests that we had grounded the ball before they did and should have been a 5m scrum. Further changes in the forwards and another injury this time Finn and it felt like everything was going against us. Thurrock took the lead with about 10 to go. But as we now know this team do not give up and they battled fantastically to try and get that equaliser – deep in the Thurrock 22 twice but unable to capitalise and just to rub salt into it Thurrock broke through a rather weak looking defensive line to score with the last play of the game.

The scoreline bears no relation to the performance today . West can be proud of their performance – clearly they have improved massively over the summer and we should look forward to more winning than losing days with performances like this.

FT Westcliff 14 Thurrock 26