

MATCH REPORT



17 - 45



Our next League fixture saw us away at Maldon who we have always had extremely close matches with – normally losing narrowly ! Half term is never a great time to organise League matches – Essex RFU please take note ! - and we were a little light on numbers but still managed to send 19 players for this important fixture.

It was a lovely sunny morning which raised my hopes as clearly as last week showed we very much prefer the fair weather games !

We started the match brightly and had plenty of possession and territory and it was no surprise when a large gap in the Maldon defence was exploited for Charlie B to score the first try of the day – Baily converting. My pre match pep talk consisted of how we often start well at Maldon and then let them back into the game with stupid mistakes – DON'T let it happen this week !! I may as well have been talking to myself ! Two tries in 5 minutes saw us behind despite looking the better side. Nevertheless we repeated the first try almost identically with Charlie B going through the middle of the Maldon defence again which showed how this game needed to be played to win – we now had a narrow lead as half time approached – my frustrations were coming to the fore as a long kick from Maldon was allowed to bounce twice before falling into their wingers arms for a run in under the posts. Déjà vu looming !!

Half Time Maldon 17 Westcliff 14

We put all our subs on at half time to get game time and freshen things up for the first 15/20 minutes at least. Some very clear and harsh words from Ziggy at half time too and I hoped his words would have more of an effect than mine- unsurprisingly they did !!

We started the second half well and were looking far more assured and confident despite being behind. Maldon were reduced to 14 for 7 minutes for a tip tackle and this looked to be our chance to exploit the Maldon defence even more. We took the opportunity with both hands. Charlie B scored again for his hat trick with Baily converting and we were back in front. The next score looked crucial and so it turned out to be . It was West that made it and no surprise to hear that Charlie scored again from short distance with Baily converting – we finally had some daylight and although Maldon returned to 15 West were very much in the ascendency and staying strong. More pressure from West and finally some one else managed to score this time Tyrese with Baily converting . Maldon were deflated and looking tired but West just kept applying the pressure and tempo and I think Charlie was slightly miffed that he hadn't scored for 5 minutes so duly bagged his 5th of the day. Not a bad performance . Baily obviously feeling generous put the conversion wide – he would be replaced for the rest of the match on kicking duty .

The forwards were obviously feeling a bit of white line fever as several of them tried several times to score when we were in the 22 and a simple pass to the backs would have surely resulted in more tries. Baily decided enough was enough and uttered some words of advice to the pack at the next scrum about 10 metres out " if you pick it up off the back of the scrum I will kick you off the pitch " - needless to say the ball was moved through the hands !

With time ticking down we found ourselves unusually close to our own 22 and defending the ball - we turned the ball over superbly , broke down the pitch moving the ball from forward to forward and when Baily broke through he looked like he would score only to be caught by the full back just before the line but Dylan had remained in support and duly took the offload and dived over the line . It was a tremendous team try and unlikely to be bettered all season – all the more so that it took place in the final minute.

With Baily relegated from kicking the duty fellyes you know it to Harry Hollington – would today be the day when he would vanquish all the ridicule and torment that props getNo he missed again. Obviously this trend will continue through the season – or at least till he gets one !!

A superb second half performance had given us a well deserved win against good opposition. The forwards were magnificent pretty much all day (white line fever aside) our work at the line out where yet again we won a fair few against the head & the scrum looked good too - the backs were in rampant form – when they are like that it will be difficult for anyone to defend against. Our overall fitness levels and being able to keep playing at high tempo paid real dividends today .

Full Time – Maldon 17 Westcliff 45