

## **Westcliff 39 Sidcup 0**

**Westcliff were able to recall Vandermolen and Bannister as well as Jim and Rob Smith for the visit of Sidcup and made positional changes at scrum half and fullback involving Spivey and Jack Jones. Conditions were bitterly cold with persistent fine drizzle and a stiff breeze but even so were a whole lot more hospitable than the previous weeks visit to Chingford.**

**Westcliff had the advantage of the wind at their backs for the first period and were on the scoreboard inside the opening 2 minutes through livewire half back Spivey who wriggled through a gap and left defenders chasing thin air. Sidcup adopted a pragmatic but effective tight game into the wind and enjoyed a period of territorial advantage and sustained pressure which Westcliff repelled albeit at the expense of a yellow card for an act of petulance by Vandermolen. Their response was to march upfield and add a second try through Jim Smith and they enjoyed a 12-0 lead after the opening quarter. The perceived wisdom was that the wind was worth 20 points but Westcliff were wasteful of the further opportunities they created and it wasn't until the final play of the half that they scored their third try through the hardworking Lane. A 17-0 lead was a good lead but not necessarily decisive given the prevailing conditions and there was much to play for in the second half.**

**The game was effectively won in the opening 10 minutes of the second half with two quickfire trys a second for Jim smith and one from remarkably long range for 1-yard specialist Billy Marrant. Neither was converted into the face of the gale but with 50 minutes on the clock Westcliff enjoyed a decisive 27-0 lead and over the next 15 minutes extended that to 39-0 with further trys from Vandermolen and Bannister the last of these was converted and the game played out to the bumper Christmas crowd who lapped it up despite the bitter cold, wind and rain.**

**It was an excellent response to a below par performance at Chingford and a fitting way to bring the curtain down on league rugby for 2018. Sidcup contributed fully to the game, but we punished their errors and converted the opportunities we created effectively. We left points out there too, but we scored at the right times, after 2 minutes, during a card, right on half time and right after half time. Turning the scoreboard over regularly allowed us to play with freedom and that is when the lads are at their best. The second half of the season in the new year is one that we can attack once rested and refreshed with renewed vigour and which we aim to enjoy to the fullest.**

**J Jones, S Brown, Stol, R Smith, Merrick, Mckeith, Spivey, Weston, B Marrant, Lane, Scogings, Edwards, Vandermolen, Hatton, J Smith REP Bannister, H Marrant, Marsh**