

Canterbury 52 Westcliff 15

Despite the much-improved performance of the previous week, Westcliff had, yet again, to wrestle with the revolving door of fit and available players for the trip to Canterbury. Into the squad for the trip came Lane, Dane, S Reynolds, B Reynolds, Doyle, Webster, Miller and on debut Longhurst and Glen. Nicholls was handed a first start for the club.

The opening exchanges were even with the visitors playing up the slope defending aggressively when required and testing the hosts resolve when opportunity arose. Each side profited from turnover ball to escape cover and run in from deep down the flanks. The hosts who struck first converted successfully to lead 7-5 the Westcliff try having been scored by Bannister. In the last 10 minutes of the half Canterbury asserted themselves and scored two further converted tries Westcliff only reply was a missed penalty attempt and the hosts led 21-5 at the break.

They scored again shortly after the restart, but the next score was again from the Westcliff skipper who converted his own try to make the score 28-12. Westcliff were having a good period and continued to press and forced two penalties within range. The first drifted wide but the second close the gap to 28-15 with 20 minutes to go. However, they were unable to score when pressing hard on the hosts line and coughed up a penalty that allowed Canterbury to clear their lines escape up field and force a decisive try of their own. Westcliff's tiring legs and lack of depth caught up with them and in the final 15 minutes they conceded a further three tries and the game finished 52-15. The hosts a little flattered the visitors visibly frustrated and disappointed.

It was a mixed bag some good moments and some others that lacked in quality and detail. It remains the case that without more consistency in selection both results and performances will fluctuate. Effort and commitment though have been and remain high, in time they will pay off. Next week we host Worthing at The Gables kick off 1400.

Bannister, Hogarth, B Reynolds, Longhurst, Marrant, Whiting, Comber, Lane, Lynch, Binneman, Anderson-Brown, Dane, Nicholls, S Reynolds, Johnson REP Doyle, Smith, Webster, Miller, Baily