

Folkestone RFC 1st XV 8 v's Crowborough RFC 1st XV 20

On a new elevated pitch that was wide open to the ferocious gale force winds that swept across the pitch all afternoon, Crowborough eked out a victory against a disappointing Folkestone side.

Crowborough took the initiative from the kick off, and although camped in the Folkestone half for much of the first 20 minutes, they could not take advantage of the territorial superiority, as the two sides swapped kicks with varying degrees of accuracy .

With their first foray into the Crowborough half the Folkestone backs ran the ball and although the move was easily stopped, Crowborough were judged to be offside at the break down, and against the run of play Folkestone went ahead as the penalty was slotted. 3-0

With some 7 minutes left of the half Crowborough at last put together a move that did not involve a wayward pass or a dropped ball, and from Brooker's wide pass, Walters cut inside making fifteen metres before being stopped. The recycled ball was shipped by Walters to Needs, who held the ball back fractionally for full back Mulherbe to take on the burst. With Greenwood in support he drew his man and as Greenwood in turn committed his opposite number fed inside to Needs to score under the posts. Brooker converted 3-10

With what, worryingly, seems to be characteristic generosity when leading , Crowborough then haemorrhaged five points just before the break, when a wayward clearance kick fell to the Folkestone full back who charged fully fifty metres into the 'Boro 22 before the off load was judged to be deliberately knocked on. Eschewing the three points on offer and anxious to get back on terms , Folkestone put the penalty into touch for a line out on the 'Boro 5 metre line. From the line out the large Folkestone pack drove the maul to the line, and although initially held up, the secondary shove saw the hooker forced over the line for an unconverted try as the whistle went for a half time score of 8-10.

As the second half started, the wind seemed even stronger and several attempted 'Boro clearance kicks were misdirected, and one in particular was picked off by the left wing who was only taken down short of the 'Boro line. When Folkestone ran the ball it appeared the 'Boro back division's normally impeccable alignment, was slightly

askew, leaving half gaps to be exploited, and although the attempted breaks were scragged to the ground, the off load was too often completed maintaining their momentum. However 'Boro weathered the storm, and a giant penalty clearance by Brooker put the ball into touch on the Folkestone 22. From the lineout the ball was fed into the centre where the move was halted. From the ruck, Atkin fed Brooker who threw an outrageous dummy pass that opened up a massive channel that he took full advantage of before feeding Atkin on the inside, who avoided two tackles before going over for the try. The Conversion was missed. 8-15.

Folkestone missed a penalty before Crowborough sealed the match with a well worked try out on the left. From the lineout the reliable Hayes palmed to Atkin, who put out a long pass to Brooker. What appeared to be a momentary misunderstanding in the centre was overcome as full back Warren Mulherbe burst into the line, and supported by brother Mitch, drove deep into the Folkestone half before off loading to Needs. With the 22 in sight, Greenwood provided the final support and within the tramlines rounded the first cover before diving short of the line to avoid the fast approaching cover tackle from the full back. The try went unconverted for a final score of 8-20.

The next league match is against a much improved Bromley side on 24th November at Steel Cross.