

## ALCESTER RFC MATCH REPORTS

Saturday 20th October 2007

### Midlands Division Five West (South)

#### **Alcester 20 Harbury 3**

Alcester recorded a welcome first league win of the season, against a Harbury side that was much changed from the one that won at King's Coughton last season. Alcester dominated the game from the start, and the only frustration for the home side was the fact that they really should have won this game by a much bigger score, with missed chances preventing at least three more Alcester tries.

Alcester started brightly up the slope and went in front inside the opening ten minutes. A well rehearsed training ground move at the front of the home line out, saw hooker Dickie Moore receive the ball back from his own throw and he set the ball well inside the right hand channel, deep inside the Harbury half. The home side moved play to the left and skipper Scott Carmichael, today playing at centre, made a good break towards the Harbury line, before setting his centre partner, Brett Allard free, to open the scoring with his third try in a fortnight. Full back Andy Smith converted, shortly before he sent a second successful kick over, this time from a penalty following an infringement by the visitors.

The home forwards were completely on top and giving their backs many opportunities to run at their opponents and it was not long before a flowing move culminated in a try for fly half Matt Gwynn, after wing Robbie Parker's break towards the line and clever delivery had set his no 10 free. Smith again converted.

With the bright autumn sun shining high and in the faces of the Alcester defence, the home back three were tested under the high ball on a few occasions but responded superbly with several faultless takes under pressure. The visiting half backs kicks downfield were their side's main attacking threat, and following one such kick which landed in field, Harbury claimed a penalty after the home pack killed the ball at a ruck, presenting the visiting kicker with his only chance of the afternoon.

Half time arrive with Alcester 17-3 ahead, although they should have scored at least twice more, when wrong decisions in the final pass meant that they squandered "two on one" situations as the try line beckoned.

Playing down the slope in the second half, Alcester shuffled their pack resting main line out jumper Phil Birks after an excellent return to action following a knee injury in the first half. Andy Spires deputised for him. They also replaced tight head Steve Lunn with player coach Steve Lea, but the changes didn't disrupt the home side's domination of the set phases and they continued to have much the better of possession.

The visitors were offering little in attack, but they were defending resolutely and although the home side created more try scoring chances in the second period, they

had to settle for a solitary further score, which came from another penalty off the faultless boot of Smith.

After this important first win, Alcester now travel to Nuneaton side Manor Park, who are yet to register a league win this season, following their promotion back to this division last year. Despite this record, the King's Coughton men know that trips to the Griff Coton sports ground are amongst the toughest away games of the season and will certainly not be taking their opponents lightly.