

**Saturday November 15<sup>th</sup> 2008**

**Midlands Division Six West South East**

**Alcester 22 Wellesbourne 7**

For the second successive week Alcester recorded a comfortable looking win, this time to move up to second place in the league, despite not being on top form, but in truth this victory was far from comfortable against plucky visitors who had the better of the territory for long periods of the game.

Playing up the slope in the first half Alcester had to withstand some early Bourne pressure. From one visiting attack the telescopic arms of Alcester flanker Mika Pieri were able to intercept a back line move. When the ball ran free he kicked ahead twice before winning the race to loose ball now over the try line, to register the first score of the game.

The early scrappy nature of the game was underlined for the home side with the yellow carding of flanker Aaron Mason, for a number of infringements in the opening stages. Following the latest incident, Wellesbourne had the chance to reduce the deficit from a kickable penalty, from what turned out to be their only one of the game, but their full back dragged the opportunity wide.

Alcester centre Max Biltcliffe made no such mistake from his first penalty opportunity of the game in the early stages of the second half, to extend his side's lead to 8 points just after the break.

With the slope and deceptively stiff breeze at their backs in the second half, Alcester began to gain the ascendancy. Their pack were well on top at the scrum without ever completely dominating, whilst at the line out the visitors had the better of things which meant that possession was equal and hard fought, resulting in both scrum halves receiving scrappy ball back from their packs.

From the restart following Biltcliffe's penalty, the home side launched another attack from which talismanic captain Scott Carmichael, today operating at scrum half, broke several tackles in a powerful run which took him in under the posts. Fly half Ash Newdick converted.

The visitors refused to lie down and one of their backs put a dangerous high kick up which left the Alcester defence flat footed allowing another of the visitors backline to gather and race in for a try that was converted.

Alcester enjoyed the better of the closing stages, and scored with the last move of the game. Flanker Mason rounded off an incisive break which saw the ball move through most of their back line on it's way to the line. Newdick again converted.

In the end this was another good win for the men from King's Coughton, although the victory came at a cost with several players being doubts for next week's game at Redditch, which coupled with the inavailabilities next week does put pressure on the red and blacks selections.

Alcester take a break from league action next week and face their near neighbours in the fourth round of the EDF Junior Vase at the kingfisher's ground. Kick off is 2pm.