

Saturday November 29th 2008

Midlands Division Six West (South East)

Coventry Tech 12 Alcester 37

Alcester cemented their second placed position in the league, with a good win in a replay of the game from early October which Alcester “won” 34-0. The first game ended with passive scrums and Tech exercised their right to replay the game, under league rules at this level. There was nothing passive about this second meeting however, which was a full bloodied and sometimes feisty affair, which is typical of rugby played in many parts of Coventry.

The home side started the game with only fourteen men, and by the time they were up to full strength midway through the half, the game was already beyond them, as Alcester used their greater numbers and superior speed out wide to run in three scores all of which came from breakaways and kicks ahead, as the visitors were forced to soak up some sustained pressure mainly from the direct running of the home pack. They met an Alcester side, however, who were in no mood to let them breach their defence, with skipper Scott Carmichael leading the rear guard effort. He showed his men the way with a thunderous tackle on the biggest player on the pitch, not only dumping Tech’s giant lock forward to the floor, but getting back to his feet to steal possession that set up one of the early Alcester scores.

Left wing Stuart Whitehead opened the scoring, before fly half Ash Newdick won the race to the latest loose ball over the line for the second score. Flanker Mika Pieri added a carbon copy third with Max Biltcliffe converting.

The Cov Tech centre who arrived late to make up their numbers, scored with his first touch after intercepting a stray Alcester pass, before Alcester restored their lead when Biltcliffe rounded off a good move by side stepping the last defender to score and then right wing Ollie Braley dived over in the corner after a pacy finish to another flowing backs move.

Despite being 27-5 ahead at the break, the visitors could and probably should have scored more tries, but they were guilty of risky flat last passes on three occasions all of which were adjudged to have gone forward.

The home side started the second half with renewed belief and threw everything fair and foul at Alcester in the early stages but the visitors stood firm and actually increased their lead fifteen minutes in. Clean line out ball deep inside Tech territory, was moved quickly into midfield by scrum half Robbie Parker, and skipper Carmichael powered his way to the line, despite having three defenders hanging off him by the time he crossed.

Tech narrowed the gap again with a try through their forwards following a solid catch and drive, and a peel from the back of the maul which initially Alcester had managed to halt. The home fly half converted.

By this stage the game had entered its most scrappy phase, with “afters” at most rucks, and some pushing and shoving off the ball involving both packs. After another incident just inside the Tech half, both teams were reduced to fourteen men after the referee lost patience with

both packs and sent one from each to the bin. Ash Newdick slotted over the penalty that followed the incident, which ended up being the final score of the game as the remaining quarter of an hour was scoreless.

Alcester were happy to get this game over and done with and now turn their attention to another away league fixture to Warwickian, on Saturday. Kick off at Hampton Road is 2.15pm.