

Saturday September 6th 2008

Alcester "A" 32 Hewell Vikings 7

The Alcester club continued their pre season preparations with a hard fought win over the plucky prison officers' side, in the sodden conditions at Kings Coughton. With a number of the would be 1st XV players still unavailable, the red and blacks chose to pull out of their scheduled 1st XV pool fixture and play an "A" side against the scheduled 2nd XV opponents.

The generally younger home side enjoyed the better of the early exchanges, playing up the slope and although right wing Mike Badaud had opened the scoring, they were unable to capitalize on their domination of the possession, mainly due to the appalling weather conditions, which made any free flowing rugby difficult.

The visitors pack, featuring former Alcester player, Chris Nelson, were competitive throughout and although they were often on the back foot, particularly at the second phase, they had some good moments in attack themselves, and went ahead midway through the half. Mistakes in the home back line borne out of the conditions, allowed the visitors fly half, and their man of the match, to dive in under the posts, which he got up to convert himself.

Stung by losing the lead, the home side regained the ascendancy and led 10-7 at the break, when 16 year old full back Martin Gurr, scored his maiden senior score for the red and blacks.

Alcester used the full extent of their squad numbers to make changes at half time, and this almost immediately galvanized the home side, allowing one of the replacements, kiwi Ash Newdick to score the first try of the half.

With the visitors pack putting pressure on the home scrum throughout the half, the home side's domination of the line out became their main source of possession. This allowed the back line, who had by now become accustomed to the wet and greasy conditions, to show great hands in running some incisive moves to the try line, culminating in scores for two more replacements, Darren Gwilym and Joe Sears. In between times, Mica Pieri had scored his side's fifth try, following a Robbie Parker break from caught ball at the front of the line out. Gwilym converted the final Alcester try of the afternoon, with most of the pitch under an inch or so of water by the end of the game, thanks to the persistent rain.

With the opening league fixture at Atherstone just a fortnight away, Alcester will be aiming for a first full run out for their 1st XV against opponents to be arranged, next week.