

## ALCESTER RFC MATCH REPORTS

Saturday 6th October 2007

### Midlands Division Five West South

**Keresley 22 Alcester 11**

Alcester's first ever league meeting against Keresley ended in defeat, but only after another tight and hard fought game, in which they more than played their part and one in which they were left rueing missed chances which could have made the result very different.

The visitors started well and took the lead early on thanks to Andy Smith's penalty kick after the hosts had strayed offside at a ruck. Smith was starting at full back this afternoon making way at fly half for the first appearance of the season for Matt Gwynn, both of whom acquitted themselves well throughout the game.

The home side levelled soon after with a penalty of their own following another offside decision, before Alcester stamped their early authority on the game with the opening try. The red and blacks line out was a vastly improved unit on last week's showing and it was from a clean take and ensuing maul that flanker Nick O'Connor was driven over by his pack.

Falling behind seemed to stir the home side into life. They were unlucky not to level the score following a determined break from the left wing through several attempted tackles to the try line, but play was called back as the referee had spotted a foot in touch. Keresley didn't have to wait long to open their try account, however, as their centre dummied his way through the Alcester defence for a smart score.

Having fixed last week's line out problems, it was now the Alcester scrum that was under tremendous pressure this week and the home side were regularly shunting their bigger opponents off the ball. Even so, Alcester still had plenty of possession, and they should have regained the lead in the run up to half time.

Keresley were awarded a line out deep inside their territory after Alcester fly half Matt Gwynn had drilled an intelligent kick into the left wing area. With their full line out under pressure, the home side were forced to shorten their line, but their hooker missed his jumper which allowed Alcester lock Andy Flynn to catch unchallenged at the back and gain a free run to the try line. As he attempted to ground the ball he was held up by two defenders and the chance for the visitors went begging.

Keresley doubled their try count in the early stages of the second half, but Alcester got their tails up and came more into the game. After a long scoreless period in the second half, Smith landed another penalty, before wing Robbie Parker went on one of his typically mazy runs which saw him dance through the home defence from just inside his own half and set off clear for what looked like a second Alcester try. Unfortunately he just got snared in the act of scoring by the home full back, and with his support struggling to keep up with him he was forced to hold on to the ball and concede the penalty at the ruck, which allowed Keresley to clear the danger.

This seemed to sap the remaining belief in the Alcester men, and with the home side now completely on top at the scrum, they scored a third try to kill the game off following a move from the back of the scrum.

After three league games Alcester still remain one of three teams without a point at the foot of the league. They need to wait at least another week before they can move to rectify that position as they are in EDF Junior Vase action next week at Aldridge, another side who have had a difficult start to the season in their league, which is the North of the area equivalent of the division that Alcester play in.