

Newbold 19 v 7 Alcester

A much changed Alcester Colts suffered their first defeat of the season at the weekend against a well organised Newbold team.

The unavailability of several players and some key injuries meant there were first starts of the season for Vash Dasari, Steve Douthewaite, Billy Gray and George Elsby who played out of position at scrum half.

Despite the changes the first half was an even encounter with Alcester dominating up front and the home side playing the better territorial game. In the scrum the Alcester front row unit including Andy Heap and Jack Green took a number of balls against the head. While in the line outs man of the match Ben Hope and second row Jamie Leitch won the lion's share of possession.

But it was a charged down clearance kick from Rich Hartley who'd been asked to switch from his regular Number 8 position to play fly half that led to the first try of the game. The resulting loose ball wasn't cleared up by Alcester and Newbold scooped it up and ran in to score a scrappy try under the posts.

Half time meant more changes for Alcester with number 8 Iain Sime replaced by Ben Smith because of injury and Ian Duggan and Tom Parker entering the fray. And it was soon after the break that Alcester drew level. In a change of tactic from previous games where the Alcester backs have run in a host of tries it was the rampaging Alcester pack that put their team back on level terms. Runs from Smith and Hope, supporting by their impressive back row partner Rich Pulis put them up field and it was Elsby who sniped around the back of the ruck to score his first try of the season. Tom Parker successfully kicked the conversion.

7 all going into the final quarter of the game the result could have gone either way. Half backs Elsby and Hartley did well in their make shift positions but it was the Newbold back line that always looked the more dangerous. And it was wide on the right hand side of the pitch where they scored their second and most controversial try. It appeared to all that the home winger had stepped into touch before crossing over for a try that the referee allowed to stand.

Late substitutions saw Kieran Redford and Rory Kavanagh replace Douthwaite and Leitch and while both made an impact it was Alcester who tired quickest, the defence got ragged allowing Newbold to run in a third try for a clear victory.

Alcester team:

1. Andy Heap
2. Jack Green
3. A. Guest
4. Jamie Leitch (rep: Rory Kavanagh)
5. Vash Dasari
6. Rich Pulis
7. Ben Hope
8. Iain Sime (rep: Ben Smith)
9. George Elsby
10. Rich Hartley
11. Steve Douthewaite (rep: Kieran Redford)
12. Adam Beech (captain)
13. Billy Gray (rep: Ian Duggan)
14. Adam Rendall (rep: Tom Parker)
15. Tom Pedley