

Saturday October 14th 2006 – League

Opposition : Cov Tech (Home)

Alcester recorded a second successive comprehensive home league victory this season, a result which leaves them in third place in the early season league table after this good win against their visitors from South Coventry. They did take their time to grind down their committed opponents, who made the home side work for their win, particularly up front where the contest was very even for nearly an hour.

Starting down the King's Coughton slope, Alcester started brightly and after clean ball was secured by the home pack, the ball was moved swiftly to the left wing for Andy Smith to run in his side's opening score. He composed himself well for his first successful conversion kick at goal.

After their early set back, the visitors settled and they took advantage of Alcester's hesitation with the ball in hand and over eagerness at the ruck situation, to move back within a point of their hosts after two converted penalty kicks at goal.

As Alcester upped their game to regain the superiority there were a couple of flashpoints as tempers flared, and the afternoon's match official, an exchange referee from Bridgwater in Somerset, showed he was in no mood to be messed with by bickering forwards, as he sent Alcester loose head prop Keith Burnett and one of the Tech flankers to the sin bin.

Alcester continued to dominate during the period of reduced numbers, and Smith continued his monopoly of his side's point scoring so far, by landing two successful penalties of his own to re-establish the red and blacks seven point lead, which were the final scores of the half. They did have further opportunities to add to their score, including inside centre Brett Allard's "Ryan Giggs" style dribble with the ball to the try line from just inside the visitors twenty-two, which only faltered when he tried to pick it up to touch down over the line.

Smith also scored the first points of the half with another penalty, before Alcester made two personnel changes which cemented their by now control of the game. Player coach Steve Lea came on in to the tight head berth, and Matt Gwynn made a welcome return to action after two seasons away, to operate for the final half hour at fly half. Gwynn showed his side what they had been missing in his time away, with a skilful and creative performance that opened up the Tech defence time after time in the closing stages, and which should have resulted in a rout rather than the three additional scores it brought.

Skipper Scott Carmichael added Alcester's second try after another period of home domination, before tempers flared again after the Tech open side flanker objected to a Steve Lea challenge. After the melee had settled, the referee went to his pocket for his cards once more, sending Lea to the sin bin, as well as showing the red card to the visiting player.

With numbers reduced Allard added Alcester's third try after another flowing move, before full back Robbie Parker rounded off the try count with a typical run full of speed and strength from just inside his own half. Substitute Darren Gwilym, on for the injured Sam Vernon, converted Parker's try.

A buoyant Alcester side now look forward to next week's visit to Harbury, a side that they are level on points with in the league table.

Result : Alcester 33 – Cov Tech 11