

Saturday 10th December 2006 – Cup

Opposition : Shipston

Alcester moved in to the second round of the county shield after a comfortable home win against a much patched up Shipston side that featured only a smattering of the 1st XV that had lost in a similar fashion in the league at Cleobury Mortimer the day before.

Alcester controlled the game throughout thanks mainly to another dominant display from their pack, the members of which featured prominently on the scoreboard.

Electing to play down the slope with the wind in the first half, the King's Coughton men were two tries up in the opening ten minutes. Tight head Steve Lunn was first to cross the line, crashing over at the back of a rolling maul after Phil Birks had taken the first of numerous clean catches in the line out. Centre Andy Smith brilliantly converted from wide out. Within minutes, and after a period of sustained forward pressure near the Rams line, flanker Matt Bolton picked up at the base of a ruck and dived over under the posts which Smith again converted.

Smith added a penalty midway through the half, before wing Stuart Whitehead crossed for the third try and Lunn doubled his tally from the kick off thanks to some great forward drives down field, and an intelligent switch of play from hooker Dickie Moore at the base of a ruck which found Lunn in space.

Turning around 27-0 ahead and facing a second half up the slope and against the wind, Alcester faced the predictable early pressure from the visitors who used the elements well, but after a missed Shipston penalty and some excellent defence near the home line, Alcester regained the upper and resorted to the play that had served them so well in the first half.

Giant lock Dave Marriott doubled his try scoring count for the season with a smart finish from close range, before the captain himself got in on the act with a fifth score that Smith converted. Alcester had other chances to add to their tally, most notably when left wing Andy Jones missed the rugby equivalent of an open goal when he dropped the ball with a clear run to the line.

Alcester recorded their fourth win to nil of the season and look forward to the draw for the next round of the shield, as well as a return to league action and the visit of leaders Woodrush to King's Coughton next Saturday for a 2.15 pm kick off

Result : Alcester 39 – Shipston 0