



## Squad Report

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| Hurricanes Team Name: Under 11   |                              |
| Festival: East Sussex  |                              |
| Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2011  | Location: East Grinstead RFC |
| Report Author: Ross Sutton   |                              |
| The Hurricanes were:<br><br>Forwards: William Bellingham, Ben Few, Ollie Gibbons, Will Sutton, Harrison Walker & Aaron Ward<br><br>Backs: Rory Acock, Tom Cornwall, Jake Grady, Theo Hall, Harry Clarke, Jay Massey-Taylor, Max Murphy, Podge O'Higgins, Jamie Pryke, Nicholas Sobowale & Mikey Taylor |                              |

### Session/Match/Festival Report

The first thing to say, is why when the final for the last four years has been Brighton Vs Heathfield are we both paired in the same group? With no seeding, no semi-finals and the possibility of one group being significantly stronger than the other, does this make any sense?

Group A consisted of Crowborough, Eastbourne, East Grinstead, Hastings and Seaford and Group B was Brighton, Heathfield, Lewes and Uckfield.

The day did not start well for the Hurricanes when the influential pocket rocket Rory was ruled out of the tournament before it began following a "round ball" injury the day before.

#### **Heathfield 0 v Brighton 20**

With Brighton first up this was always going to be a difficult match with the winners likely to almost guarantee a place in the championship final. Brighton scored two early tries with their fluid backs passing well and finding the gaps in the Hurricanes defence. The third try was scored from a long lineout throw which caught our defence totally by surprise. Three tries down at half time. From the restart Brighton immediately scored their fourth when the kick off was fumbled by two players and the pressing Brighton attack picked up and scored. For the rest of the half, Heathfield played well and although not threatening the Brighton line the tackling and marking of the opposition improved and Brighton could not add to their score. Well done the pack who won every single scrum in this game, although it just goes to show that even if you win ball, if you don't use it well then you are not going to score.

#### **Heathfield 10 v Lewes 0**

We last played Lewes at the Hastings festival when the score was tied at two tries each. The kick off was severely delayed whilst both teams waited for the Hastings ref (our friend) to watch his son finish his game on another pitch! Come on East Grinstead pitch marshalls get your act together!! In contrast to the previous game the large Lewes forwards put our scrum under pressure in the first half.

## Session/Match/Festival Report (Cont)

Despite their possession they too could not use it effectively and the only score in the first half came when a run from Harrison was only half stopped and he got up to proceed to the try line. In what would become a feature of the whole tournament the players when going into contact were staying on their feet and mauling instead of going to ground and setting up quicker ruck ball. A good break from Harry Clarke down the wing nearly added a second try and forward passes on two occasions denied Heathfield as they looked to use their back line. The elusive second try eventually did come when Will Sutton powered over from close range from a penalty move.

### **Heathfield 5 v Uckfield 0**

These sides met a couple of weeks ago at a joint training session, with a close game in terms of tries scored but Heathfield dominating possession and territory. This game was a complete reverse with Uckfield swarming all over us but a resolute defence kept the score deadlocked at half time. The same pattern continued in the second half until a decisive moment when Jamie pressed up quickly on the Uckfield attack and intercepted a pass to run in unopposed from over half way out. Heathfield continued to deny Uckfield and "last play" was called by the ref with us camped on our own line but with the put in at the scrum. Time for Plan A - a set move to win the scrum and kick directly into touch. No, we opted for Plan Z which was win the scrum, mess up the kick, win the ball back and then for our second row forward to kick (rather unconvincingly!) for touch. As the ball just bobbed over the line the referee blew for full time.

### **Bowl Final**

#### **Heathfield 15 v Crowborough 0**

Having finished runners up in the group we would play Crowborough who came runners up to East Grinstead in the other group but managed to beat Eastbourne on the way. This was a much better performance with the players showing more commitment and once they got on top everyone wanting the ball. The first try was scored when a run from Harrison was stopped short and Will Sutton ripped the ball and used his strength to dive low under the defence. The second half saw Will Sutton get his second when he came out of a maul with the ball and showed a touch of pace. As the full back came across, the crowd were expecting a dropped shoulder and smash but instead saw a side step off the left foot to go in under the posts (if there were any). Heathfield added a third and final try when Theo at last got a good pass in some space to weave at pace through the Crowborough defence.

### **Summary**

After a long day, we finished up 3<sup>rd</sup> overall (as Bowl winners) out of 9 teams but probably were the second best team in East Sussex. Brighton put six tries on every team (including East Grinstead in the final) apart from Heathfield. We kept a clean sheet in three out of our four games.

What we must do is look at, admire and learn from how Brighton played. They keep it simple, they pass, they give each other good passes, they work hard, they support each other, they are unselfish, they don't get turned over at the breakdown because they get there early, they mark their opposite number and they don't miss easy tackles. By doing this they take the majority of their chances, are totally clinical and finish teams off early.

The Hurricanes squad have come a long way in the past few weeks so lets all continue to work hard, learn fast, improve and close the (not insurmountable) gap on Brighton.

### **Record**

**Today:** Played 4, Won 3, Drew 0, Lost 1. Tries for 6 & against 4

**Season:** Played 21, Won 9, Drew 4, Lost 8. Tries for 44 & against 29

***Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline, Sportsmanship***