



Squad Report

Hurricanes Team Name: Under 11	
Festival: Thurrock	
Date: 24 th October 2010	Location: Thurrock RFC
Report Author: Ross Sutton	
The Hurricanes were:	
Forwards: William Bellingham, Ollie Gibbons, Will Sutton, Harrison Walker & Aaron Ward	
Backs: Rory Acock, Tom Cornwall, Jake Grady, Theo Hall, Harry Clarke, Alex Fone, Henry King, Jay Massey-Taylor, Lucas Munro, Jamie Pryke & Nicholas Sobowale	

Session/Match/Festival Report

Thurrock is a regular fixture in the Hurricanes calendar, not surprising as we have faired well in previous years, winning it three times in a row against the top teams in Essex. The Hurricanes were drawn in a group consisting of Stanford le Hope, Chelmsford, Eton Manor and Thurrock. On a sunny but chilly morning the only problem for your ace reporter was his eye injury from playing with the round shaped ball the day before. Would his reporting skills survive with only one good eye to look out of? With non availability due to half term holidays and some late drop outs, Heathfield had only five recognised forwards in their squad of sixteen.

Heathfield 10 v Chelmsford 10

The match started badly when from the Chelmsford kick, an unnecessary pass infield was intercepted by their fast approaching backs and they scored from the first play. Chelmsford took a two nil when after several phases of their good rucking, they broke off from a maul close to our line and scored. From the kick off, Jay got the Hurricanes back in the game when some neat passing saw him dive over in the corner for 2-1 at half time. In the second half both Jay and Rory made smart breaks but could not evade the Chelmsford tackles. Heathfield were dominating in the scrums but losing out when the ball was loose on the floor. With time running out, Will Sutton found himself in space and charging towards the Chelmsford line. As the full back came across he dropped his shoulder and ran straight over the tackler to get a deserved equaliser. A tough game to start with the boys doing well to come back from two tries behind.

Heathfield 10 v Eton Manor 10

From the kick off, Eton immediately kicked back and Harry Clarke picked up and made good ground. However Eton took the lead when their strong running fly half weaved through the entire defence to score. Straight away Heathfield answered back when Theo chased down the kick off, tackled his opponent and forced an error. Harrison supporting quickly, in his new pink lid, dived on the ball for one each. The Hurricanes then went behind for the second time as tackles were not made. The riposte was immediate with Jamie scoring as they again kicked back from our kick off. The half time whistle saw the scores even at two each.

Session/Match/Festival Report (Cont)

The second half was fairly even. Henry King caught some great passes out wide and Harrison made some clean breaks. Jay made a big tackle on their dangerous fly half which kept him quiet for the rest of the game. On the last play Heathfield were camped on the Eton line and the pack all piled in. The referee said it was held up and blew for time. At the bottom of the heap of bodies was Ollie who unfortunately had their big forward land on him and hurt his neck. In what proved to be a serious incident an ambulance had to be called and a precautionary visit made to Basildon hospital (Note – good news is the neck is only stiff and sore but a rest from rugby for two weeks).

Heathfield 30 v Thurrock 0

With no other forward replacements, Nicholas had to be called up into the pack to replace Ollie. William B was also suffering from suspected scarlet fever but to his credit took to the field. Harrison nearly opened the scoring in this game but after a confusing call of “leave it” by the referee (meant for the opposition) he hesitated but this did allow the quick thinking Nicholas to step in and score. Jake made it two with one of his now trademark long solo runs. A scrum won against the head then saw Nicholas score his second. Theo set up the fourth after a strong run, quick ruck ball and Harrison to power in down the wing. Luckily the touchline crowd kept him running in a straight line as the pink lid was slipping down over his eyes (he could now see about as much as me). Heathfield were now playing with real confidence and Aaron was setting up a number of plays with his drives down the middle. Jamie added the fifth just before half time when play was switched from one wing to the other. Early in the second half, Heathfield scored their sixth when Harrison popped a pass out to Rory to finish. Danny then asked the inexperienced referee (who we had for all our matches) if the game was going to be stopped due to a six try advantage but Thurrock wanted to play on. Heathfield seemed to take their foot off the pedal at this point and although dominating possession could not add any further tries.

Heathfield 0 v Stanford 5

A win in this game would secure top spot based on tries scored and a draw the runners up place. Heathfield had beaten Stanford in the final last year so knew it would be a tough game and they had a couple of meaty forwards. We put ourselves under pressure from the start by not running the ball straight back at them. A missed tackle saw them score in the corner so Heathfield would have to come from behind again. From the kick off, Theo chased the ball down and the Stanford player fumbled in goal. Theo dived on the ball to score and the ref awarded a try. Incredibly the ref then reversed his decision when two Stanford supporters said their player had touched it down first! Heathfield had one other great scoring opportunity when Nicholas made a decisive break and passed it out wide only for it to be knocked on. The second half was a very scrappy affair. Heathfield had plenty of possession, particularly from ball won at line outs, but could not put together any significant passing moves. On the last play we won our scrum but then lost the ball in the contact. A Stanford player picked the ball up and kicked in to touch to end the game.

Bowl Final

Heathfield 0 v Brentwood 0

From the possibility of winning the group going in to the last game, Heathfield ended up finishing in third place and would have to contest a bowl final against Brentwood. With Ollie in hospital, Jake injured and on his way home down the M25 plus Rory suffering from a hand injury, Heathfield had only thirteen fit players with the forwards having played every minute of the tournament. From the kick off Nicholas gave a good chase which resulted in a penalty. Nicholas took a quick tap and went over the Brentwood line to score. The ref called it back and made us take it again for some unknown reason? With Lucas then having to leave the field injured, the Hurricanes were now down to the bare twelve. In a fairly uneventful game, the match was mainly played in the middle of the pitch with neither team creating any clear cut chances. Both teams put up a great defence and tackled well. The game ended at nil-nil and previous tries scored in the tournament would now decide the winner.

Session/Match/Festival Report (Cont)

Summary

Our record in this festival was not actually bad. We only lost one game but finished up 5th overall (as Bowl winners) out of twelve teams. We took Thurrock apart by half time and they only conceded five tries in their other three games, drawing two of them. We drew with Chelmsford who reached the main final (and then drew this one each with Westcliff only to lose on a tries scored count back). We scored ten tries and only conceded five in five games. The problem was drawing games we could have won.

We have to be more ruthless in taking our opportunities. Most games will now be tight and the difference between a draw and a win could be a single try. We have to find that slight edge.

- We ALL have to start running straight as a first instinct, make some ground and then decide whether to pass, set up a maul or go to ground for a ruck;
- Stay focused. Not passing at the right time, a careless knock on, a loose pass could be the difference between a final place and going home empty handed (except for a bowl!).
- We have to support players making a break. If someone goes on a solo run, don't stand and watch, catch them up as they may well need to offload;
- We saw in this festival how important kick offs have become whether chasing down ours to create a scoring chance or not fumbling kicks to us and put us under immediate pressure. Use this advantage;
- The backs have got to be more disciplined and stay in their own channels so that we can pass out wide or have a defence in place if we lose the ball;
- We need more voices, leaders and encouragement for each other ON the pitch.

However we did suffer from injuries and poor refereeing decisions. The passing has progressed but there is still room for improvement. Although a few were missed, I thought on the whole more players were willing to tackle, so last weeks focus in training must have helped. Well done to those players that necessity meant had to play in a number of positions on the day, particularly Nicholas & Harry C.

It was another long day, why is it the under 11's go home last every time? As I said, we only lost one game but should we have taken home the winners trophy (again)??

Next week – Joint training with Tonbridge Judds (away)

Record

This: Played 5, Won 1, Drew 3, Lost 1. Tries for 10 & against 5
Season: Played 13, Won 5, Drew 4, Lost 4. Tries for 31 & against 18

Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline, Sportsmanship