



# Squad Report

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| Hurricanes Team Name Under 9's   |                           |
| Opposition Haywards Heath, Eastbourne, East Grinstead, Uckfield, Horsham                       |                           |
| Date 31 <sup>st</sup> October  | Location Crawley Festival |
| Report Author Andy Reed  |                           |
| Players Names<br>Theo, Billy, Archie, Freddie, Harrison, Charlie, Luca, Thomas, Sam G, Red Sam |                           |

## Session/Match/Festival Report

Hi All

Another festival another extraordinary day,

The Hurricanes team that went to the Crawley festival was down on numbers and we only had 10 available players. ( and one of them , Charlie , had forgotten his boots ) This meant that all the players were going to have a tough day with very little chance to take rest.

When we arrived at Crawley the sky was grey, the rain was falling and the ground was very soft. We were drawn in a pool with Haywards Heath, East Grinstead Eastbourne and Uckfield. We then found out that Uckfield had failed to make an appearance which meant we would have to wait for over an hour for our first game ☹ not good.

Our first game was up against Eastbourne, ( Luckily Charlie's mum drove his boots up to Crawley) they had some strong runners but our defence was superb and our superior rucking meant we were able to control the ball and ended up with a 3-0 win. Good start.

Our second game was up against a very big Haywards Heath team, I spent some time getting the players to focus on the task ahead and to start quickly as I could see this being our big challenge for the day.

The game turned out to be one of the most amazing games of rugby I have seen. Time and Time again the big Haywards Heath players tried to run through us and each time we tackled them down and then out rucked them to drive them back. At the half time whistle the game was 0-0 and both teams were beginning to feel the pace. Haywards Heath had a big squad in attendance so rotated several players and brought on fresh legs they also complained to the ref about our tactics at the start and we agreed to refrain from playing to the start ball to a player in motion, it did however show that Haywards Heath had lost their confidence and were beginning to worry about the Hurricanes.

## Session/Match/Festival Report (Cont)

The second half started as the first half finished with wave after wave of Haywards Heath attacks, newly invigorated by fresh legs, but the Hurricanes stood firm and slowly we started to drive towards the Haywards Heath line. Our rucking was fantastic and Luca was directing the play at scrum half with great effect. We kept driving and driving and the final play of the game involved Luca taking the ball forward from a ruck and getting within 6 inches of the try line before being stopped and the ball being lost forward.

So we drew 0-0 with Haywards Heath and being Halloween gave them a huge fright 😊. Standing ovations all round and all the players were dead on their feet from their efforts.

Our last pool game was up against East Grinstead and I knew it was going to be difficult for the players to rise again as the last match was such an effort. However they again played some impressive rugby controlling the ball and using their superior rucking skills to run up a 3-0 win.

So we have finished joint top in our pool but dropped to second because of the count back on tries scored. We were unbeaten with no tries conceded, a very impressive record to say the least

We therefore went into the Silver Final against a very mobile and well drilled Horsham team.

### Silver Final

We knew Horsham were going to be a strong side, they were also unbeaten in the tournament and we had to be on our mettle to compete with them.

The games started with a couple of attacks from each side which were repelled, it was however clear that we were much more effective at the breakdown and again our rucking was causing them problems. However one thing I told the team before they went on is that they have to stop Horsham going out wide as they have very fast wingers, and this is exactly what happened we missed a couple of tackles they got around our defence and scored a break away try. This was our first try conceded and you could see the disappointment in the players faces and body language.

However they did stop doing the right things and slowly and surely started to drive deeper and deeper into Horshams half. We finally tied up the game with a huge effort where we drove the Horsham team back over their own line and then put the ball down to score.

Final whistle, the score being 1-1 both teams didn't know how to decide the result and the finally organisers stated that a drawn final results in both teams being given joint winners status, a very fair result.

So we finished the day unbeaten, we had only shipped one try and we had played some fantastic rugby. The conditions were energy sapping but the team gave 110% effort and to see the players hugging each other after the score in the final shows they are forming a great bond.

A truly great day, fantastic rugby, great spirit and true commitment from the players and I took the opportunity to ask all the supporting parents to give the players a huge round of applause in recognition of their performance. Which they did with full support and enthusiasm

The final thing on the day was trying to figure out how I was going to get both Charlie and Archie home without completely trashing my car as they were caked in mud from head to foot, but very happy.

Regards

Andy

Session/Match/Festival Report (Cont)

Session/Match/Festival Report (Cont)