

Saturdays match report from the Aylesbury website.

Aylesbury 2nds slumped to a disappointing 10-14 defeat against a revitalised Beaconsfield side.

Confidence was high at Ostlers field as the second team gathered in the sun. A positive attitude was evident as the new caretaker managers rung the changes and gave a 2nd team the recognition it deserves after such a successful season so far. Aylesbury 2's record speaks for itself having collected commanding wins in their last five matches. Conceding just 20 points since their defeat to league leaders Milton Keynes. In contrast the Beaconsfield side was on a 4 games losing streak, but they had come determined to put in a strong showing in front of a reasonably large home crowd.

Aylesbury started strongly kicking into the wind. The kick off narrowly missed collection by Daniel Cottingham-Boss. Then followed a 15 minute opening period in which Aylesbury must have wondered if there was even a ball on the pitch. Former Wasps apprentice Scrum half Dave Dickson only getting his hands on the ball long enough to kick it away under strong pressure from the Beaconsfield pack. And Richard Symonds, moving from full back to play at 13 made a trademark mazy run from deep. Aylesbury began to get into the game as the Beaconsfield kicker sliced several penalties and free kicks to touch. They were further let down by some terrible line out throws, a flanker having to step up to cover for their absent hooker. Aylesbury's line out on the other hand continued with their excellent form in recent games, Bwerudza rarely put a foot wrong despite constant sledging from the Beaconsfield supporters.

It was from a line out that Aylesbury managed to open the scoring. Burgess picked up a rearward line out throw and stayed strong through several tackles to off load the ball. Hewitt then took off down the flank before been stopped by a crunching tackle. The ball was worked back inside, Beaconsfield killed the ball and Dickson tapped the penalty and was brought down by the last man to set up a ruck 15 meters in front of the posts. Again the Beaconsfield pack were in off their feet and another penalty was awarded. A calm head prevailed for once when the 2's are in such situations and Symonds stepped up to slot the easy penalty, taking his points tally to 89 for the season. Aylesbury were up 3-0.

When in possession of the ball Aylesbury's driving forwards were hindered by high body positions and poor supportive play. Beaconsfield looked to spread the ball wide and showed some impressive hands in the backs. Aylesbury got fortunate a couple of times out wide as the left winger juggled the ball and Matt Hewitt had a good game out of position at wing. He kept the pressure on and made some sniping breaks of his own. With half an hour gone on the clock Aylesbury remained pinned in their own half. Beaconsfield were to be rewarded for their constant pressure and through a simple backs move their lofty outside centre slipped through 5 missed tackles to score under the posts. Beaconsfields kicker, now over his early game jips converted the try.

After the try the Beaconsfield backs showed some slick hands to pass the ball to their swift right winger (Rob Barnes). Twice he was dragged down by Richard Symonds, the only player able to keep pace with him. An outburst from the open side flanker Tom White-Jones, from which he narrowly avoided a yellow card, finally gave the Ostlers field men the fire they needed to take the game to Beaconsfield. Burgess, Leggett and Hewitt hooked up again on the right flank to threaten the home sides line. The drive was pulled down just short of the line and the driving rucks could not squeeze Aylesbury the extra yards they needed. After been turned over and kicked to touch the half finished 7-3 to the home side.

Some tough words were needed at half time and Aylesbury took to the field determined to take home the win they had expected. However Beaconsfield scored early, a well worked move from their skilled fly half released the fast right winger. With text book supportive play from the Beaconsfield back line and two missed tackles they realised a huge gain down Aylesbury's left wing. The ball was played back inside and the tall inside centre slipped 4

missed tackles through Aylesbury's rapidly retreating defence to scored a try the mirror image of their first. The kick left Aylesbury trailing 14-3.

From the kick off Aylesbury finally showed the type of play that has kept them high in the league this season. With Dale Collins considerable beef added to the pack Aylesbury took the advantage up front. Taz Smewing, out of position at inside centre to cover for the injured Thomas Roche, showed the kind of running which explains he has hospitalised so many players this season! He crashed through the Beaconsfield back line time and again but thanks to some brave covering tackling and some unpunished killing of the ball the Beaconsfield back row managed to stall the attacks. Aylesbury had them pinned in their own 22 for much of the second half. But with the whole back line playing out of position it was all too often that the flustered Aylesbury kicked possession aimlessly away.

If there is ever someone to step up and put a ball over the line it is Damien Leggett and he did exactly that in the dying minutes of time. Following some clinical ground work from Scotty Farlem and the authoritative Paul Ballard, Hewitt shot a good pass out to the backs. It was slickly off loaded to Leggett who used his remarkable turn of pace to power over the line for the 9th time this season. Dale Collins kicked the conversion to set up a tense final 5 minutes at 14-10 to Beaconsfield.

Beaconsfield's big forwards were tired and they elected to kick for position against the fired up Aylesbury. Aylesbury threw everything they could into the final minutes finally running from deep and keeping the ball in hand through the backs. Team Captain Jez Harrison, on for a cameo in the final minutes released Symonds down the wing. Richard could not gather his grubber kick but Burgess and Bwerduza worked hard to turn the ball over. Again Beaconsfield were pinged for an infringement at the ruck and this set up a penalty for the last play of the game. Aylesbury had to keep the ball in hand and their big second rows, Farlem and Ballard drove the ball into the Beaconsfield 22. Eventually the ball was spun out to the backs but with a kick that was symbolic of the whole second half, possession was softly handed back to the home side and the whistle went for time.

There was frustration and disappointment in the changing rooms after such a rare poor performance for the 2nds but Beaconsfield should be applauded for their better decision making and deserved to win the game. Aylesbury will have to pick themselves up for a tough test at home against Banbury on the 1st of March.