

Senior Colts – Match Report Sunday 28 October 2007

Wirral 24 – Newcastle 22

Another fine, sunny Sunday with light winds saw an excellent game of rugby between 2 well matched sides. Wirral started positively when Newcastle's kick-off did not go 10yds, Wirral spun it wide from the scrum, Jack Bimpson made a strong, straight run down his wing. Wirral failed to maintain the pressure, however, as Newcastle were awarded a succession of penalties taking play back to the Wirral 22.

After a good start, both teams tried to capitalise on their possession and establish some dominance. Both packs supplied quality ball and both sets of backs ran and linked well; neither side able to dominate. The dead-lock was broken after 22 minutes when Wirral fumbled a high kick, Newcastle pounced on the loose ball and passed it wide for their right wing to score in the corner, unconverted for a 0 - 5 lead.

Wirral turned over the ball from the re-start kick, the backs handled quickly sending Jack Bimpson on another strong run, to be stopped short of the line and passing to ground. Again, Wirral were indecisive under the clearance kick and allowed the Newcastle chasers to recover the ball, handle slickly and score their second try, also unconverted, 0 – 10.

Newcastle further extended their lead, against the run of play, when their backs were provided with a clean ball from a line-out where Wirral offered no opposition. The stand-off ran straight and handled well to send the inside centre over just to the right of the posts. The try was converted, 0 – 17.

Despite the points deficit, Wirral's forwards continued to work hard against the heavy, mobile Newcastle pack and provided a good supply of quality possession. Alex Clyne and Mark Roberts were impressive around the park and turned over several ruck-balls; with Curtis Fields and Sam Ricketts supporting at the break-downs. The Newcastle defence were very quick to step up to the Wirral back-line and frustrated Wirral's attacks, their only lapse when Paul Sherlock caught a long throw-in and was tackled by Newcastle's 10. Danny Jones passed quick ruck-ball to Sam Broadbent who exploited the gap to run in Wirral's first try. His conversion fell just short, half time score 5 – 17.

Wirral's half-time substitutions and position changes, the introduction of Danny Beamish in the forwards and Ollie Stewart in the backs, brought more thrust and direction to Wirral's attack. Soon after the re-start, Newcastle fumbled a catch and the loose ball bounced kindly for Paul Sherlock who ran at the defence. Several phases of 'chaos' followed, tying-in the Newcastle defenders. Eventually the ball spun wide to Scott Dennis, right wing, who scored in the corner. Sam Broadbent pulled the conversion in front of the posts, 10 – 17.

The next ten minutes saw end-to-end, side-to-side rugby, both teams winning and running their fair share of possession. Wirral eventually levelled the score when Paul Sherlock took a line-out catch well inside Newcastle's 22. Alex Clyne rolled off the driving maul and took three defenders with him over the try line. Sam Broadbent landed the conversion, 17 – 17.

Newcastle's final score came from another good line-out catch and drive. Several phases moved play up to the Wirral line and their outside centre crossed for a try, unconverted, 17 – 22.

Inspired by the sniff of (another) comeback, and determined to expose their coaches and supporters to even more stress, Wirral put together another good line-out catch by Paul Sherlock. Danny Beamish made an impressive drive from the maul and off-loaded to Jack Bimpson who crashed over for a try. Sam Broadbent converted to put the home team 2 points ahead, 24 – 22.

Wirral then ran down the clock with some conservative play and cool-headed defence when needed.

Final score 24 – 22.