



## 1 XV LAST MATCH REPORT

6 February 2010

### Back to back wins

Castleford 1XV 10 v Sheffield 6

**Despite being reduced to fourteen men for the final half hour, Castleford dug deep defensively to record an excellent Yorkshire One victory in this top-of-the-table clash against in-form, second-place Sheffield.**

The visitors had won the away fixture with the final play of the game and Castleford were relishing the opportunity to redress the balance, so the scene was set for a titanic battle of strength at Willowbridge Lane.

Indeed, Castleford had the chance to take an early lead but winger, Dale Turner hit the upright with the penalty attempt. Sheffield took advantage of the miss and drove downfield from the restart. They were rewarded with a penalty which outside half, Donal Collins, converted to give the visitors the lead.

Sheffield soon added a second Collins penalty to go into the second half with a deserved 6-point lead.

Chris Willett's half-time talk soon paid dividends and a positive start to the second half signalled that the fight-back was not long in coming.

Throughout the game the visitors had targeted Lee Land with high kicks but the winger was equal to the challenge, confidently collecting the ball and beating his opposite number with ease to gain valuable metres.

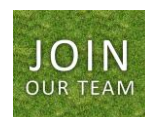
From one such take, the ball was moved infield forming an attacking maul. Drives from prop, Stephen Johnson and Willett powered forward before the ball was swung inside to John Bramham. The centre went on a defence-splitting run from thirty five metres out before passing to full-back, Craig Jeffels, who charged over for his tenth try of the season at the side of the posts. Outside half, Carl Paterson slotted the conversion as Castleford edged in front.

With half an hour remaining, Castleford were reduced to fourteen when second rower, Dave Reed was red-carded for stamping. The Castleford pack made deep inroads from the restart and as the referee signalled the penalty, Paterson steadied and landed the drop goal to stretch the lead.

Sheffield then tested both the home side resolve and their defensive qualities for the final quarter as they tried to promote their one-man advantage. Jeffels made an excellent last-ditch try saving tackle and the Castleford eight withstood the onslaught defending seven five-metre scrums in the final five minutes. Johnson and Willett showed their experience with some excellent counter rucking that resulted in turn-over ball in the dying moments as Castleford secured the points to restore their promotion potential.

This was an all-round team effort with backs, Land, Bramham, Jeffels and Steven Hayward outstanding defensively, in a game that was truly reflective of a top of Yorkshire One clash. Bottom-of-the-table, Yarnbury are next Saturday's visitors as Castleford seek to make it three wins in a row.

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## 2 XV LAST MATCH REPORT

6 February 2010

### Pressure of Local Derby Knot Enough to Unsettle Cougars

#### Castleford Cougars 33 v Knottingley 0

**Castleford returned to league rugby for the first time since 28th November 2009 and despite a spirited performance from local neighbours Knottingley they were simply too strong for their opponents.**

Castleford started the day in second place with 3 games in hand over leaders West Park Leeds and knew that they could not afford anything less than a 100% effort in order to maintain their challenge for top spot and promotion.

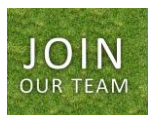
Castleford started the game very sluggishly and it was obvious that they needed to get their second wind very quickly. Knottingley, on the other hand, started the game very strongly and had the better of the early exchanges. Castleford's usual style was disrupted by strong fringe defence and the Knottingley pack turned over ball after ball as the Castleford forwards failed to get to the pace of the game.

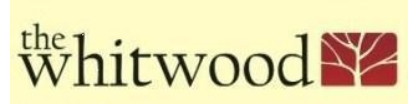
As the half progressed Knottingley grew in confidence and got over the Castleford line twice, only to be thwarted by some strong last ditch defence. This sprung Castleford into life and good kicking from stand-off, Ian Mattison, put them on the attack. Castleford disrupted the Knottingley line-out and stole a ball on their opponent's quarter line. Good recycling at the breakdown from flanker, Graham Pearson, saw the ball worked wide quickly. Centre, Danny Price, spotted a gap behind the defence and delivered a measured chip to the corner for winger, Luke Kenyon, to chase. Kenyon outpaced his opposite number to touch down in the corner. Mattison goaled from the touchline to make it 7 nil at half time.

The half time team talk demanded much more from the Castleford players and this was evident as they started the second stanza with increased enthusiasm and structure. From the kick off a good take from number eight, Richard Davies, saw the pack take control. Strong running from Paul Connell, Chris Reavely and Andy Allen enabled Castleford to gain a foothold in the Knottingley half. Quick ball from scrum-half, Lee Hinchcliffe, was the catalyst for the back line to make use of their superior pace and skill and the ball was spread wide for centre, Gareth Grant-Mills to beat 2 men before feeding Luke Kenyon. Kenyon stepped inside the full back and for his second try. Mattison pushed the touchline conversion inches wide.

Knottingley restarted and Chris Reavely rose to take a difficult catch. He beat the first defender and found himself in space with 60 yards to go. He used every bit of his pace and awareness to beat the full back and hold off the cover defence to score under the posts. This was the try of the game and testament to his effort and commitment all

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afternoon. Mattison goaled and Castleford led 19 nil. Castleford were now in control but Knottingley continued to test them in both attack and defence and showed their mettle despite being on the wrong end of the scoreboard.

Castleford's 4th try was again manufactured out of good forward continuity with their back row starting to dominate. Quick hands from the three quarters created a 2 on 1 and Price released the ball at the right time to send Kenyon over for his hat trick try under the posts. Mattison converted and the result was now clear with Castleford commanding a 26 nil lead.

Richard Davies put the icing on the cake and crowned an excellent individual performance with a try which Mattison converted to give Castleford a 33 nil victory.

Castleford fought hard for their win and Knottingley were excellent opponents who certainly do not deserve their position at the bottom of the table. Best for Castleford were Richard Davies, Ian Mattison, hat trick hero Luke Kenyon and man of the match Chris Reavely who delivered a polished performance along with a note perfect rendition of 'I got a feeling.'

### 3 XV LAST MATCH REPORT

**Saturday 23 January 2010**

#### **Double trouble for Sheffield**

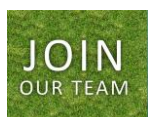
**Sheffield 3rd XV 3 v Castleford 3rd XV 45**

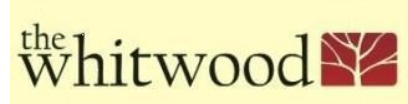
**Cas thirds recorded a double over Sheffield with a superb performance as once again their pack destroyed their opponents' eight with a powerful display, enabling their backs to cut loose with pace and precision.**

The first try came after sustained pressure in the Sheffield 22 led to the ball being fed to Phil Rule who barged over from 15 metres with Lee Kerry adding the extras and Cas led 7-0. Sheffield then had their best spell of the game and were rewarded with a penalty which brought them to 7-3 but that was as good as it got for them as Cas tore into them at the restart and scrum half Sal Battensby fed centre Dave Lamb who swept in for a try with Kerry again converting to make it 14-3. Before half time Cas scored again this time Lamb's centre partner John Senior scored after good work from the pack and quick hands from half backs Battensby and Kerry put him in at the corner the conversion was missed but Cas led 19-3 at the break. The second half was one way traffic as the big Cas front five crushed their opponents with props Adi Oldroyd and Mick Hubby leading the way with crunching tackles and powerful surges with ball in hand. From one more destroyed Sheffield scrum the backs passed along the line and winger Duncan Bullock raced away to score from 40 metres the conversion was successful. More pressure from Cas saw second row Mark Fisher break from a ruck to feed Lee Kerry he handed on to Full back James Smith and he sprinted away to score at the side of the posts. The pain was not over for Sheffield as Cas piled on more misery with Senior claiming his second try beating 3 defenders on his way to the try line and saving the best for last was back rower Danny Adamson who gathered the restart brushed off 2 defenders threw an outrageous dummy to find himself on a 50 metre sprint to the line which involved a crunching hand off to the Sheffield full back who had sprinted back gamely as his dispirited teammates stood and watched.

Special mention goes out to water carrier Harry Stevenson who kept the Cas players well served throughout the game.

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Best for Cas were Sal Battensby 3 points, Jeff Holinshead 2 points with Mick Huby and Adi Oldroyd 1 point each.

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