

1 XV LAST MATCH REPORT

1 May 2010

Semi heartache

Bridlington 12 v Castleford 1XV 11

In a tense encounter at Queensgate, Castleford were unfortunate in their attempt to reach the Yorkshire Shield Final for the first time in eleven years.

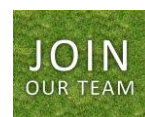
Playing with a cold win at their backs Castleford tested the home side but the game developed into an evenly matched arm wrestle with neither side coming close to registering a try. It was Bridlington who gained first blood with a penalty from stand-off Muru. Castleford hit back strongly and following strong forward work from Chris Willet, Gareth Burns and Joe South, stand-off Mikey Hayward dropped an excellent goal to regain parity. The Castleford pack began to get the upper hand towards the end of the first half and Ian Matterson took his side into half time with a narrow lead with a well taken penalty.

The lead was short lived however, when Muru struck his second penalty at the beginning of the second half. The Castleford pack took hold of the game and with immense power hammered the Bridlington line with a sequence of 5 metre scrums putting the home side under tremendous pressure. In spite of Willett and Burns both getting over the try line no tries were awarded and with the home scrum in disarray no penalty tries were forthcoming. Bridlington relieved the pressure from charging down an attempted drop goal and Castleford found themselves racing back to prevent a breakaway try. Centre John Bramham made an outstanding cover tackle to prevent a certain score. However with some inevitability Bridlington were awarded a penalty and Muru duly took advantage to give his team a 9-6 lead. This was extended to 12-6 from another penalty. The score was not reflecting the game with Castleford dominating territory and possession but Bridlington making their odd excursion into Castleford territory tell.

However, the visitors hit back strongly and following a break from Martin Dye well supported by the quicksilver Mikey Hayward the ball was swung out for Gaz Burns to scamper over in the corner. Mattison's attempted conversion shaved the upright to leave the home side with the narrowest of leads. It was now all Castleford but the home side held on to take them through to the Final very much against the run of play.



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2 XV LAST MATCH REPORT

27 March 2010

Cougars tower over Heath

Castleford Cougars 65 v Heath 0.

Castleford Cougars returned to winning ways with a comprehensive display that completely overwhelmed their opponent's Heath.

With the cancellation of the 3rd team fixture Captain Chris Reavley picked a formidable 20 man squad. Castleford started the stronger with early breaks from back row forward James Baldwin indicating Castleford's intentions and it wasn't long before the first eleven tries were scored.

After Niam Waterland secured good line out ball the pack drove forward, assisted by new signing Man Mountain Paul Barretto to bulldoze his way through for his debut try.

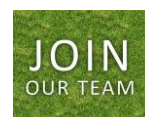
The Cas forwards were dominant which allowed half backs Graeme Eadie and Dale Turner to unleash the awesome and strongest backline of the season. It was Turner himself however who stepped through three defenders for a great individual try. Further Cas dominance followed with centres Steve Hayward and Gareth Grant Mills wreaking havoc, drawing defenders and creating gaps for Winger Chris Brown to score a superb try at the corner. This extended Castleford's lead to 17 – 0. Jake Fisher was unlucky to have a try disallowed for a marginally forward pass.

Halftime time brought Five changes, bringing in experienced forwards Andy Oldroyd in the front row, John Lloyd and Mick Adamson into the back row, Dave Pursglove came onto the wing and long awaited first Cougars appearance for highly rated centre John Senior.

Cas hit top gear straight away and after two minutes Skipper Chris Reavley picking up at the back of a scrum and breaking through several defenders before offloading to scrum half Eadie to romp home under the posts. The forwards now turned the screw with back rows Adamson and Lloyd spearheading several drives leading to a scrum five yards from the Heath try line. Once again Reavley playing in his favoured Number eight position picked up once again broke through a tackle and crashed over for his first try of the game.

Heath were unable to make any impression on the game which reduced them to clearance kicks to prevent a drubbing. However from one such kick debutant Jimmy Smith who was at the heart of all Castleford back line attacks and instrumental in several tries linked with the back line, again set up John Senior to power through two defenders to score with his first touch of the ball. Castleford were now playing outstanding rugby with winger Pursglove splitting the defence and racing 60 yards before feeding Reavley to finish off the move with his second try of the game.

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The highlight of the game then followed as Hooker Alex Bremer gathered a loose ball on his own try line broke through the Heath defensive line and set off on a barnstorming run, with the home ground and team mates roaring him on he went 90 yards before showing great awareness to offload to Turner to score his 2nd of the game. Heath at this point ran out of ideas, even the inclusion of 'you can't buy experience' Gary Fisher couldn't prevent the wave after wave of attacks.

Dave Pursglove was next to register dancing his way through a bemused defence. Further attacks initiated by Full back Jimmy Smith lead to Eadie registering his second try of the day. Castleford finished their scoring with a quick tap from Turner which led to Luke Lita, who had came on as Castleford's last substitute minutes earlier, barging his way through in the corner from 40 yards out.

In what was probably the best performance from Castleford all season, it is hard to pick out individuals as every player played well and did their part in securing the much needed win.

However Jimmy Smith was involved in all Castleford attacks, Dale Turner, Man of the Match, controlled his backs and the game all day. Skipper Chris Reavley and Graeme Eadie were the pick of the bunch.

Credit must also be given to the third team players who came into the squad and fitted into the team seamlessly.

3 XV LAST MATCH REPORT

10 April 2010

Title at last

Castleford 3rd XV 36 Halifax Dukes 3

Castleford thirds clinched the Yorkshire 4 merit table with a comprehensive win over a committed Dukes side who never gave up in a game where they were completely out gunned from the start.

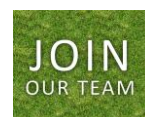
It was once again the big Cas pack that laid down a marker early on as they drove their opponents off their own feed at a scrum and from the resulting possession outside half Sal Battensby sped through a gap 20 metres out to score under the posts, but John Senior struck the post with the conversion and Cas led 5-0.

Senior did not need long to make up for that mistake as he rounded four defenders to go in at the corner for a try which he could not convert and worse was to follow for the Dukes as flanker Phil Rule crossed quickly after the restart for another try which again went unconverted.

Halifax then had their best spell of the game and applied pressure on the Cas line and only super defence from full back James Smith kept them out but when skipper Gary Fisher played the ball on the floor illegally the Dukes chose to kick an easy penalty which left the score at 15-3 with 30 minutes of the first half gone.

Cas stepped up a gear and after a good line out win from Chris Reavley flanker Phil Rule burst through two would be tacklers and off loaded to the supporting second rower Mark Fisher and from 35 metres he stepped passed three defenders and powered his way to the line for a superb score which was converted by Senior to make it 22-3.

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Halifax were still reeling from this and hoping to hold out till half time but Cas went for the kill and this time centre Dave Lamb showed power and pace to split the Halifax defence to score at the side of the posts Senior added the conversion and Cas led at the break 29-3. Cas made wholesale changes at half time and this disrupted their flow and it took 25 minutes before they scored again as John Senior scorched in for his 26th try of the campaign Nathan Fisher added the conversion.

Halifax never gave up and ended the game on the front foot and only committed defence from Cas kept their line intact with replacement prop Stu Grace to the fore with his uncompromising tackling and second rower Niam Waterland snapping up any loose ball on the fringes.

Everyone involved with the third team would like to extend their thanks to fixture secretary Dave Price and the rest of the committee for their support throughout the season in which the clubs third string has lifted the Yorkshire Merit Table 4 shield for the first time.