L 10 - 51 + Dev Sqd - W 24 -29 Reps Attd

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Match Report – Bishop's Stortford –v- Wymondham, 4th December 2011

U13 'A' Team – Bishop's Stortford 51, Wymondham 10

The next challenge for the Wymondham 'A' team was a specially arranged fixture against one of the leading clubs in the Home Counties – Bishop's Stortford.

The purpose of this excursion was to play a team that really stretched the players and their opposition did not disappoint! The Wymondham team really needed to be at maximum strength against this quality side but a late flurry of injuries resulted in the temporary loss of three key players (plus the long-term injury of Henry Burton). This resulted many boys playing in different positions and left them feeling more than a little disconcerted about what they were about to face!

The game got off to a flying start with the opposition quickly showing why they were rated so highly. They dominated scrummages and rucks with some hefty forwards who showed strength and aggression. Wymondham fought back hard but frequently struggled to secure possession for re-cycling to the backs. Bishop's Stortford liked to play fast ball across their back line and a combination of efficient rucking and quick hands across their backs was impressive. One set piece move involved a loop tactic to generate an overlap and it proved highly effective with several tries being scored along the wing.

Wymondham fought back hard in the second half with Joe Milligan, Dominic Smith and Jobe Skelton all making determined efforts to gain yardage. One passage of play showed the true form of Wymondham with the ball moving from Dominic Smith and through to the quick hands of Joe Milligan to Lewis Jennings who scored both tries of the day for Wymondham. Some big tackles were made by players such as Dominic Smith and Daniel Bainbridge but too many were equally missed due to the speed, agility and aggression of the opposition. However, it was in the rucks that Wymondham was found most wanting where they needed to show more aggression and believe in their ability to drive over and through opposition players to secure the ball.

This was always going to be a tough game of rugby against a team with some players who were bigger than their parents and probably shaved every morning! In reality, Bishop's Stortford provided the Wymondham team with an instructive lesson in what needs to be improved if they are to reach the very top levels of youth club rugby. A return fixture with a full strength and an 'on-form' Wymondham 'A' team would be a very interesting game to watch indeed.

Two tries were scored in total neither of which was converted.

Tries: Lewis Jennings (2)

Man of the Match – Lewis Jennings

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U13 Development Team – Bishop's Stortford 24, Wymondham 29

With several players moving up due to injuries we started this fixture with players kindly loaned from Bishop's Stortford at flanker, both centres and both wings. It was only the second minute of the game when, after some excellent rucking and driving from the forwards , that one of the on loan centres was scampering up the pitch on a 70m break to within touching distance of the try line when he was tackled from behind and knocked the ball forward over the line! However, now we were at the right end of the pitch we took the scrum against the head and after sustained driving and rucking Jordan W crashed over to score, which was then converted.

Bishop's Stortford then came back into the game with strong running backs and missed tackles in the midfield led to a score which was converted. With poor positioning from the kick off with, all Wymondham players standing in the centre of the field with the kicker, who then kicked to the touchline allowed the Stortford players to run wide outstripping the covering defence to score. Annoyingly, we repeated our error from the re-start and Stortford scored again leaving us 19-7 down at half time.

Oliver came on for Nathan and the 5 loan players were all rotated to give a much changed line up for the second half. With a few "encouraging words" at half time the forwards played with much more aggression and purpose delivering good possession in every ruck. We now dominated the tight scrum with Dom taking ball against the head so successfully our opposition declined to scummage back when a re-start kick didn't go 10m! With a pick up from the back of one such scrum Oliver was tap tackled a meter from the line but managed to stretch out an arm to score, then converted to make it 19-14. The forwards were really stepping it up now with great driving runs from Bertie and Jordon W, who both had a cracking game, punching holes in the Stortford defence, matched with penetrating runs from deep by Jordon M as Stortford kicked long in an attempt to clear their lines. It was from one pick up and drive that Bertie smashed through two would be tacklers to run in from the 22 to score, 19-19!

More driving forward play followed from the re-start resulting in the on loan lock Josh to go over for our 4th try and get our noses back in front at 24-19. Stortford then came back at us with good back play resulting in their left wing going over in the corner, 24-24. With hardly time for the re-start we thought that would be it, but re-start we did gaining back possession from good rucking allowing the forwards to go driving up the field once more for Louis Bishop to crash over with players hanging off him, for his first try for the club in the last move of the game, for a hard fought24-29 win.

Our thanks go to our very sporting hosts, Bishop’s Stortford, for loaning us quality players to make an evenly matched game where our commitment, effort and enthusiasm delivered us a well deserved win. Jordon Melton was chosen as man of the match and presented with a club tie from the Stortford coach. Well done boys!

Tries: Jordon Williams, Oliver Whipp, Bertie Bull, Josh (On Loan), Louis Bishop, conversions 2.