



## Villagers Bow to League Leaders

Puddletown 2<sup>nd</sup> XV 0 Fordingbridge 2<sup>nd</sup> XV 64

by Geoff Puryer

Fordingbridge arrived at Greenfields for this final game of the Dorset & Wilts Division 3 season knowing that only a heavy defeat by the Villagers could prevent them from winning the league.

From the off the Hampshire side showed that they were in no mood to risk this happening, and despite the early exchanges being evenly contested, by the end of the first quarter the visitors had run in three tries, two of which were converted.

Puddletown were competing well enough in the set plays, and with the forwards testing the visiting defence on several occasions were perhaps unfortunate not to have got some reward for the time spent camped in their opponents' twenty-two.

But Fordingbridge showed why they are top of the league, defending strongly, then consistently providing quick ball for their backs to attack with speed and confidence, and by half time three more well taken scores had enable them to build up a forty point advantage.

The second period saw both teams starting to use their pool of replacements, and with fresh legs on both sides, some good open rugby continued to be played. The Villagers were still creating chances, with wing Matt Isaacs twice going close, but once again it was the visitors' ability to move the ball at speed which repeatedly enabled them to outrun the home defence and add a further twenty-four points by the time the final whistle went.

After the match skipper Kevin Voss led the congratulations for the new Division 3 South champions, saying "They are a very well-drilled side with lots of pace and confidence, and fully deserve their title. However I'm pleased with the way we played today, we showed a lot of spirit and ability, and that bodes well for next season".

Kevin went on to thank all of the players who have turned out for the seconds throughout this season before finally announcing "My man of the match today is Mark Thomson, for his outstanding last ditch tackling", although some suggested that this citation was, by that time, as much about Tommo's trusted ability to stand on a chair and drink a pint in

competitive circumstances. He did not disappoint!

## Puddletown 2<sup>nd</sup> XV

Starting line-up: 1. Nigel Arthur 2. Dan Durdle 3. Matt Williams 4. Peter Gordon 5. Ian Vincent 6. Jim Talbot 7. Paul Langdon 8. Ed Malpas 9. Chris Holding 10. Kevin Voss (capt.) 11. Chris Thomson 12. Barry Dovell 13. Nigel Smith 14. Luke Barwick 15. Mark Thomson.

Replacements: (all used) Tom Foot, Josh Hiscock, Dave Holah, Matt Isaacs, Andy Kelloway, Andy McIntyre, Roly Park, Dave Phillips, Scott Price, Ray Stephens, Dan Udell, Tom Yeatman.

## And finally, the quote of the day

Young Harry Foot, watching both squads warming up before kick-off, casually remarked:

“ Fordingbridge look younger than we do, *and* thinner!”