



## *Warminster 71 Puddletown 3*

by Geoff Puryer 30/01/10

With more than half of the Villagers' first choice players unavailable, this Dorset & Wilts Division 1 clash away to mid-table Warminster was always going to be a question of damage limitation, but in the end the home side's comfortable win only told half the story, and Puddletown's makeshift side can take great pride in the way they contested the whole eighty minutes.

That spirit was best summed up during the final quarter of the game when, despite being well beaten at that stage, the Villagers' pack still managed to find the energy to pin their opponents back in their own 22 for an extended period, forcing a succession of penalties. Electing to scrummage each time they twice drove the Warminster pack over their own try line and on both occasions number-eight Ed Malpas appeared to ground the ball, only for an unsighted referee to have no option but to give the home side the benefit of the doubt.

A consolation try at that stage would have been some reward for the Puddletown pack which, despite having a decidedly unfamiliar line-up, nevertheless matched Warminster's experienced forwards for the whole game, with the front row of Jon Wilson, Tim Yeatman and Rich Green looking particularly impressive in the set pieces.

Scrum-half Ray Stephens, making only his second appearance of the season, once again showed all of his experience behind his pack, and the ever improving Tom Yeatman at fly half worked tirelessly trying to find the gaps and set up his centres. In the end though it was the Villagers' lack of mobility around the park that was their undoing, and each time the home backs got the ball in space they seemed able to outrun the visiting defensive line with relative ease, scoring a total of ten tries all from open play.

Puddletown's solitary score came from a Dan Udell penalty mid-way through the second half.

After the game coach Ian Ring, who himself came out of retirement to play blind-side flanker, said: "Clearly we were well beaten, but the game certainly wasn't as one sided as the score suggests, and given the circumstances I think we gave a good account of ourselves".

"Despite being turned over we still kept playing with spirit and belief. The last ten minutes when we had them on the rack exemplified that, and its just a pity that we couldn't have finished with a score".

*Puddletown 1<sup>st</sup> XV:*

1. Jon Wilson 2. Tim Yeatman 3. Rich Green 4. Peter Gordon 5. Jim Talbot  
6. Ian Ring 7. Rob Franks 8. Ed Malpas 9. Ray Stephens 10. Tom Yeatman  
11. Matt Isaac 12. Dan Udell (capt) 13. Nigel Smith 14. Chris Thomson  
15. Mark Thomson

Replacements:       None

*Scorers:*

Tries:               None  
Conversions:       None  
Penalties:         Dan Udell (1)

*Dorset Piddle Brewery Man of the Match:       Jon Wilson*

*Next Match:*

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Dorset & Wilts Div.1 South - Salisbury 2nds v Puddletown - kick-off: 2:30 pm