



Weymouth 45 Puddletown 6

by Geoff Puryer 05/12/09

A try each side of the break changed the course of this entertaining and hard fought local derby after the Villagers had surprised the home supporters with a spirited first half performance which belied their lowly league position.

As expected the game started at a fast pace and Weymouth were first to get inside their opponents' twenty-two, but wasted the opportunity to take the lead when Tim Peplow missed a relatively straightforward penalty.

Puddletown's immediate reply was to play their way back up-field and, after repeatedly going through the phases, they forced the home side into giving away a penalty for hands in the ruck. Skipper Dan Udell stepped up to slot home the kick and give the visitors the lead.

The hosts tried to counter attack but despite plenty of possession were making too many errors, and the Villagers, showing the better control, were soon within striking distance of the line again. The pressure told once more forcing another handling offence, and Udell gratefully added another three points.

As the half drew to a close Weymouth finally began to find some momentum and the visitors' resolute defence, led by some excellent tackling from the likes of James Perrett and Scott Price, was finally breached. Firstly Peplow scored with a penalty right under the posts, then full-back Dave Allan took an inside pass to finish off a good break down the left wing. Peplow added the extras to put a rather relieved home side 10-6 ahead at the interval.

Puddletown desperately needed a quick response to counter this set-back but instead it was Weymouth who struck again straight from the kick-off, with loose-head prop Tim Comben driving over from close range following a ruck on the five-metre line. Once again Peplow added the conversion.

From that point on the Villagers found themselves coming under more and more pressure from the home pack, particularly after losing prop Jim Talbot to a neck injury, and whilst Price, having a fine all-round game at scrum half, continued to harry and disrupt his opposite number, he could do nothing about the now dominant Weymouth back row.

Their pick-and-go breaks from the base of the scrum repeatedly breached the Puddletown midfield and, in the final thirty minutes, set up the moves which led to a further four tries, all converted by Peplow, to take the score well out of reach of the luckless Villagers.

After the game coaching co-ordinator Toby Musgrove commented: "Weymouth deserved the victory; they worked out where our weak spots were and targeted them more and more effectively as the game went on".

"But our performance in the first half proved that we can be as competitive as any team in the league, and we will build on that this week in preparation for our trips to Wimborne next Saturday, then to Salisbury the week after".

Captain Dan Udell added: "A big thank you to all the players out there today. They did the club proud particularly in the first half, and there's no doubt in my mind that if we can get more numbers out training each week then we can start performing like that for the whole eighty minutes each game".

Puddletown 1st XV:

1. Jon Wilson 2. Tim Yeatman 3. Jim Talbot 4. Paul Chidley 5. Matt Symes
6. Toby Boatswain 7. Martin Spicer 8. James Perrett 9. Scott Price 10. Tom Yeatman
11. Gareth Smith 12. Dan Udell (capt) 13. Mike Ball 14. Matt Isaac 15. Mark Thomson

Replacements: 16. Matt Williams (for Jim Talbot - 50 mins) 17. Rob Franks (for Matt Symes - 60 mins) Not used: 18. Nigel Smith 19. Toby Musgrove

Scorers:

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| Tries: | None |
| Conversions: | None |
| Penalties: | Dan Udell (2) |

Dorset Piddle Brewery Man of the Match: Scott Price

Next Game:

Dorset & Wilts Division 1 South, Saturday 12th December, kick off 2:00pm

Wimborne 2nd XV v Puddletown 1st XV