

Fareham Heathens vs Alresford

Match Report

4th November 2017

Under an overcast sky, ARFC kicked off and with the wind in our faces immediately knocked on. From FH's scrum, their pressure kept coming, and despite conceding another penalty, we were holding our own. Very quickly it was obviously going to be a physical test. FH are a big side. Just as ARFC start regrouping and gaining some self-belief that we also are a strong unit, led by the incredible power house of Tom Rodwell, we then switched off and allowed FH to break and score in the corner. **5-0**

From the restart back came FH and it took a fantastic tackle by Ryan Cooper to keep this match alive. However, with ARFC defending for our lives, in the 14th minute, the constant pressure told and FH broke through to touch down. **10 – 0** Converted **12 - 0**.

As seems a pattern with us we then decide to wake up. Too many times this season we seem to react to situations and not be proactive. React we did, and for the next 5 minutes ARFC started to dominate. Any threat they created Ted's immaculate kicking to touch dealt with any threat. On 20 minutes Muzzer steals from their line out, the ball finds Ryan who punctures a hole in the FH defense and releases Ollie to score. **12 - 5**.

The ever reliable Ted, even in these difficult conditions slotted to reduce the deficit to 5 points. **12 – 7**

With the belief and confidence returning to our veins and remembering that we are a very good side, ARFC started to take the game to FH. This was illustrated when, from under our posts, after a rare attack by FH, James Airey brilliantly broke, put Charlie through and put ARFC back on FH's 22. From the resulting scrum, our power house of forwards saw Shem go over. **12 – 12**

Just as we seem to be on the up it takes a fantastic tackle by Ted to stop FH scoring again. After 28 mins we are on the back foot again and this time Ryan nullifies an FH attack. For whatever reason we found ourselves almost hanging on and in the 31st minute FH scored. **17 – 12**

Again back came ARFC, and after threatening their line and dominating possession, our achilles heel came back to haunt us. With ARFC pressing, FH regained possession, and with everyone deciding not to tackle low, FH added another try.

Half Time: 22 – 12

The break was overshadowed by a serious looking injury to James A, and whilst our coach was attending James, and without Cain, it was left to our captain Ollie to address the boys.

The beginning the second half was almost a repeat of the end of the first half. ARFC starting so strongly and then again allowing FH to pick up the pieces and run straight through us to extend their lead. **27 – 12**

With relief and cheers, James regains his feet and gingerly, with support comes over to join the away support. In the 52nd minute, with ARFC really pressing Ollie attacks and passes to the ever growing confident Ryan who was thwarted just short. Minutes later, the ARFC pack allow Ethan to run at their defense but again just fell short.

With Tom Rodwell so fired up, there was a belief we could get something out of this match. For the next 10 minutes it was all ARFC, Rob Walls and others absolutely fired up. But in the 77th minute our ghosts came back to haunt us. With ARFC pressing, one mistake and FH run the length of the pitch to put the game out of reach. With the try converted.

Full Time: Fareham Heathens 34 - 17 ARFC

The effort and commitment of ARFC cannot be faulted. The desire is infectious but we do need to start really believing we belong on that pitch. Next week, we go again and let's take the game to them.

Team:

Rob Walls, Shem Abrahams, Dan Waite, Tom Rodwell, Rob Travaskis, Pete(Billy wil look after my dogs) Rogers,Alex Jones, Sam Murrell, Captain Ollie Ledsham, Connall Cook, Ethan Green, Charlie, James Airey, Ryan Cooper, Ted Heppelstall - Replacements.. Jack Meakins, Michael Kernsey, Tom Brown