

Alresford vs Ellingham & Ringwood

17th February 2018

Match Report

On the back of 3 defeats, Alresford travelled to E+R determined to restore our pride. With a strong starting XV, hopes were positive, but always with more than a hint of trepidation.

ARFC started proceedings, in cold but thankfully dry sunny conditions. Tom A bursts forward, Billy Lovegrove supports, Connall breaks again and a great offload to Alex (Guns) touches down. **5-0** and Ted converts. **7-0**

From the restart back come E+R, with only AJ keeping them out with some desperate defence. With Alresford resuming dominance, we concede a penalty in their 22 and E+R run the length of the pitch only for this time Ethan to clear our lines. In the 6th minute Alresford kick away, only for E+R to catch cleanly, run through attempted tackles and score. **7-5**

In the 12th minute ARFC find themselves in front of the posts due to enormous pressure and awarded a penalty which Ted kicks to the corner. The all match straight throwing from Shem and clean catching by Pete, force E+R into desperate defence. For the next few minutes the match ebbed between ARFC really threatening and E+R also posing a massive breakaway threat. On 20 minutes Ryan threw himself to make a fantastic try saving tackle. However, with Alresford pressing, E+R kick clear and Ryan in desperate defence arrives high and late! Yellow.

E+R started racking up the pressure and the numerical advantage and so it told. In the 23rd minute E+R seemed to slip their way through to our line and score. This was converted. **7-12**

Kato came on for Ethan, but before we had regrouped, E+R came through us, I must say, to easily again to extend their lead to 10 points. **7-17**

To the frustration to all from ARFC, it seemed bloody obvious what E+R wanted to do. The same kick aimed at their same quick winger, saw him run in try number 3. **7-22**

With Ryan back on and numbers even once more, and Ricky on for AJ, we seemed to be settling and getting to half time. However in the 36th minute ARFC concede a penalty and E+R kick to further extend their lead. **7-25**

Suddenly it seemed, the boys came to life, and for the remainder of the half battered E+R to inches from their line. Credit to E+R, their defence was impressive.

HALF TIME: ALRESFORD 7 - 25 ELLINGHAM+RINGWOOD

From the restart, Alresford seemed reborn and a sense of long missing self-belief returning. 7 minutes into the half and E+R haven't managed to leave their half due to ARFC's dominance. With the pressure mounting and spectators beginning to wonder if we can turn

pressure into points, a brilliantly clever pass by Ted puts Ricky over to score. With the try converted by Ted, our tails and belief was on the up. **14-25**

On 50 minutes, our achilles heel came back to bite us. From their first sustained attack, E+R breezed through us to score, which was kicked. **14-32**

From the restart, we do what do. Suddenly again we looked threatening, and with ARFC returning to basic rugby, power over for Muzzer to score. **19-32**

Again, we keep the pressure right on them, and with Ted finding every touch and our forwards not backing away from any confrontation or challenge, the reward came in the 63rd minute, with the massive help of Tom and Billy saw Hancock touch down. **24-32**

With E+R's discipline failing and seeing two yellows, which ironically maybe hurt us more as the scrums went uncontested, ARFC's pressure, as was E+R's defence incredibly impressive. This was an amazing game of rugby between two very matched sides. With, I think 5 minutes to go, (lots of lost balls and interesting E+R injuries), a ARFC throw in was won 5 metres out and ARFC push over, but unfortunately, really push over, nearly ending up in the car park! Back we came and with a minute remaining, ARFC got what was so deserved by this side, scoring from another power drive from our enduring pack, which Ted converts. **31-32**.

The ref blows.

FINAL SCORE: ARFC 31 – Ellingham & Ringwood

Today's starts:

Rob Walls, Shem Abrahams, Tom Andrews, Billy Lovegrove, Pete Rogers, Chris Hancock, James Houghton, Sam Murrell, Ted Hepplestall, Connal Cook, Ethan Green, Ryan Cooper, Alex(Guns), James Airey, Alex Jones - Kato, Ian Stuart, Ricky Timson.

Boys, sorry for any surnames missed or misspelt, but thank you for really showing up today. A fantastic match and in the second half you made all of us that travelled extremely proud. No one likes losing, but we will always take performances like this that leaves everything on the pitch.

Thank you for standing up for Alresford Rugby Club today and we'll see what Fareham make of us next time.

Man of the Match – Pete Rogers