

Match Report - Saturday 22 September 2007
London 2 North
Staines RFC 28 Thurrock RFC 7

On this glorious September day, Staines RFC were full of confidence in approaching this third league game, unbeaten in the league to date the players coming of the back of a good training week were looking to extend this unbeaten run.

The side was looking strong with captain Jamie Sanders and player backs coach Andy Regan available after last week's absence. There was late disruption when Leonard Liebenberg was forced to withdraw due to a family bereavement, the players and all at Staines are thinking of him at this difficult time.

Staines snatched the early initiative and through some quality forward dominance were rewarded with a penalty some 30 metres out which was converted by stand off Andy Regan. The Staines forwards were now in full control at the set scrum which allowed the back row of Sanders, Norman and Silvera taking the ball over the gain line, which allowed the backs to benefit from the quick ball, which resulted in Bullet "Scheepers" to waltz in for a try under the sticks, which was converted by Ragan. On the 22 minute Staines were awarded another penalty for Thurrock's hand in the "cookie pot", Ragan was there to punish them with a fine display of kicking.

This all looked too easy for the mighty Staines, as all was going their way. Some fine lineout jumping by Thorley gave quick of the top ball to stand in half back Dave Knills, which enabled him to get an eager backline running. With all the possession things started to get loose and sloppy, Thurrock at this stage put together their better play and with some fine driving mauls were awarded a penalty try which put the score at 16 - 7 at the interval.

Thurrock commenced the second half with a much gutsier performance and tested out the Staines defence, but try as they may for fifteen minutes, the Staines team would not give up the line easy and patience proved to be a great virtue, this solid defence took the stuffing out of the visitors and Staines took the game from their own line to within a shout of the opposition line. A move between big Rony Bachour and 17 year old Mickey Wilmott broke down with a knock on. The dominance continued and replacement Jonathon Turner recently transferred from Havant scored an opportunist try which Regan converted. Head coach Eddy Jones who was masterminding events for the side made some tactical changes. The home side picked up the tempo and some fine handling skills by Gammage and Andy Turner found gaps in a porous Thurrock defence. Full back Tony Willis joined the attack line who linked on numerous occasions with hooker Stephan Myburgh to cause the visitors numerous problems. Although the game lacked continuity there was some excellent inter play with Junior Harrison and Giles Walker and wing three-quarter Wilmott who on his debut performance scored a try which made his parents as proud as punch.

Staines have much work ahead of them to keep their unbeaten run continuing and next week they travel to Chingford who have a much better points difference, this is a massive game for both sides which could have a bearing in the future outcome of the league.