

JERSE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



Jersey Colts v Andover RFC 27/11/11

As the Jersey Colts went into the game as league leaders they were heavily favoured to keep on the winning trail. However before the match it was abundantly clear that Andover must have called in all favours and got all past colts players back from university. They certainly did not present a team languishing at the bottom of the league and perhaps having difficulty fielding a team. Andover had a big front row. They were predominantly aged 18 & 19 compared to the thirteen 16/17 year old on the Jersey team.

Andover kicked off with Jersey facing into the brilliant sunshine. Perhaps dealing with the realisation that the team they were expecting to play were not the team they were faced with Jersey were caught on the back foot.

Whilst the first quarter was definitely not a one sided affair Jersey were clearly on the defensive a well timed kick to touch by Cochrane, a good run by Burroughs, some calm control by Hubert and a nice interception by Mayo all negated an early Andover try. However this period and others throughout the first half saw Jersey concede far too many needless penalties.

Andover took a kick caught by Burroughs who ran straight back at and through the Andover defence passed to Dawson who ran in the try. Good work by both, Perkins stepped up to take the conversion and slotted it between the posts 7-0 to Jersey.

Despite the size difference the scrum was a pretty even affair Seedhouse moved into role of hooker for this game and availed himself well. Also playing out of normal position Lowe moved to prop with Banks. Cochrane a wily scrum half did well to disrupt and win ball. Captain Howgate controlled the team and what was a firey affair at times, well.

The referee awarded a penalty to Andover for a high tackle which they kicked into touch to gain ground. The lineout on the Jersey five yard line was won by Andover. A surge by the Andover forwards forced Jersey to mount the first of two massive defences of their try line. During which Jersey gave away a penalty. Andover stranglely elected to go for the posts and missed.

Just before half time Jersey conceded a penalty, then foolishly conceded another for indiscipline. Despite a strong defence by Andover utilised the ground gained to force a try. Half time score 7-5 to Jersey.

The half time talk was short and clear. Coach Elphinstone focused on the team getting to the lose ball quicker and hit the opposing forwards much harder with the emphasis on every tackle counting. Howgate complimented the advice by telling the team to get the ball out of the ruck and out to the backs quicker. The concensus being that Jersey were needlessly putting themselves under pressure by not getting to the break down in numbers and quick enough.

2nd Half

Levesley came on for the second half and seemed to inject more pace and increase the attacking threat from Jersey. Equally impressive as always were Hubert & Burroughs both quick thinking, tactically aware, fast paced and able to influence the game and make territory. Perkins who was making his debut out on the wing in this year Hampshire League proved a very versatile choice putting in some strong defensive tackling and kicking well. He had an excellent individual run which resulted in a try disallowed the referee indicating a forward pass.

Jersey won a scrum which led to the ball being fed through the backs to Mayo who evaded several tackles to run the ball into the corner and score Jerseys second try.

A brief lapse meant that Jersey were not quick enough into the ruck and maul. Andover were simply able to get more numbers in a lot quicker and secure the ball more efficiently. Jersey forwards did hold their own, notably holding up a try on the line. Rob Bisson put in a particularly notable effort both in attack and defence. However with less than five minutes left on the clock Andover scored a second try bring the score to 12-10 and the possibility of an upset remaining.

Jersey could have taken the easy option caught the ball from the restart and simply maintained possession. It was clear that this is not what they were going to do and ultimately not what they did. Having caught the ball they ran it straight at the Andover line. The speed at which Jersey made ground and a fine display of handling saw Levesley bearing down on the Andover try line. Levesley's slick off load to Gollop saw him cross the line to score the third and final try for Jersey. Final score 12 –17 Jersey

Andover provided some tough opposition and a hard game which is just what we needed. After some easy wins this was just what the Jersey team needed to get them back on level ground. The age difference between the Andover and Jersey teams puts this win into perspective in terms of ability.

Summing up the match the Jersey Academy Hampshire County co-ordinator Marcus Cochrane said 'this was a difficult, and at times frustrating, match against a much older and bigger side. It was a game that Jersey would probably have lost a couple of seasons ago but they now have the belief and work ethic to win these types of tough matches. A very good result.'

The Colts Team remain grateful for the continued support of Bedell

Jersey Colts next Hampshire League match is on Sunday 11 December, which hopefully will be played on home turf at St Peters.

Jersey Colts Team: George Banks, Tom Seedhouse, JackLowe, Robert Bisson, Matt Hefford, Alex Szerela, Oliver Bale, Edward Howgate, Harry Cochrane, Charles Hubert, Jack Burroughs, Dom Mayo, Zac Taylor, Nick Dawson, Martin Perkins, Harrison Gollop, Myles Wood-McGrath. Lead Coach Ashley Elphinston, Coach Graham Howgate, Manager Alan Williamson.