



## Guy's Hospital Penguins & Sandbaggers

### Jersey Vets Super 10s

5-6th October 2019



On a damp, squally Friday afternoon on the first Friday in October, the penguins once again made pilgrimage to the usually sunny Balliwick of Jersey with high hopes of regaining the title that was snatched a year earlier after losing a controversial semi final against the RAF. Setting up a forward position in the premier Portuguese restaurant in St Helier, the first squad members to arrive took rest and libations as the flock gradually waddled to their rendezvous. A typically jovial but fast paced potation ensued and by early morning on Saturday, the brood were ready for the gustatory delights of the Merton Hotel.

Due to a depleted Penguin army for this 2019 island occupation, we were joined on tour by the Sandbaggers – a touch beach rugby team based in Poole who boast several Guys alumni and thankfully for the Penguins, some rapid backs. Our first game saw a slightly jittery performance for this new fusion team, but Guys ran out 17-7 winners against Jersey Green Dogs – another barbarian side. Three tries from Goff, Knott and Rosier saw off the Jersey team and set the campaign off with a win.



Our second game of the day against the French side “Les Senateurs” was notable for their touchline medics – squirting a 50ml syringe of pastis during faux injuries, and the referees generosity with the score line. After a dominant first half with Guys scoring twice through

Adam Fityan and Ugo Ekeowa, the French rallied to a second half come back also scoring twice. The referee was quite certain that Guys had converted three tries, and mindful of the respect that all good referees deserve this decision was accepted with good grace and a pool winning third game was on the cards against Osset.

For this third game the Yorkshire outfit's results suggested that they may have the edge over the Penguins, but as is so often the case, the form book was wrong. This third and final Saturday game saw the zenith of our endeavours for the day with flowing rugby leading to 40 points through the hands and pace of Andy Vaughton, Ugo, Shane and Jos - with the icing on the cake provided by His Holiness the President Ben Challacombe. With the pool conquered, drinks flowed and gins were forthcoming for all debutants (thank you Sandbaggers) and all Presidents on tour – a new and welcome tradition.



Sunday Morning saw a dishevelled and bleary eyed colony of dance floor weary Penguins take to the field for our quarter final against the Old Freemans. Contrary to appearances a spring appeared in the step of many of the more fleet of foot Penguins and 50 points to nil was the final score. Due to the frenetic pace of try scoring through the game it would be hard to name scorers, but the result was to set up a semi-final with Henley Vultures – twice previous winners of the tournament.

Guys opened well with some committed forward play from the front row of Chris Sherwood, Gordon Denslow and Ed Sheppard, backed up with the mercurial



airborne talents of Ben Thorpe and (sandbagger) Tim. The back line ran hard and true and by half time three well worked tries saw the lead opened up to 19 points to 7. Clearly Henley weren't beaten and they opened the second half with aggressive forward carries and penetrating lines from an enormous centre quickly regaining the lead. Sadly by the end of



the game, Henley stretched their lead to 9 and the game ended with Henley scoring 5 tries to Guys 3, ending our tournament hopes for this year. Of note Henley eventually won the tournament making them the team to beat next year.

The weekend was another great success for the Penguins, playing enjoyable competitive rugby and establishing a new link with the Sandbaggers, whose rugby, singing

and drinking spiced nicely with our own. We look forward to welcoming a Throng of Penguins and Sandbaggers alike on 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2019 when the Fergus Memorial Cup will be played at Honor Oak Park.

Ed Sheppard - Penguins Captain



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