

## Midlands Premier Division

Newport                      45pts                      v                      Longton                      0pts

Newport continued their fine start to the season with a comprehensive victory over a largely disappointing Longton who were held at bay by an aggressive home defence, the Staffordshire outfit failing to threaten at any stage during the game, not even mustering a shot at goal for their eighty minutes of endeavour.

Longton won the toss and chose to head down the slope with a decent wind at their backs in the hope they could exert some territorial advantage that they could turn into points but Newport were in the ascendency from the off. Some good phases saw Will Roach held up over the line after a bullocking run that shook off several tacklers but from the ensuing five metre scrum Ash Paterson scampered over. Regular kicker Liam Holder was nursing a slight knee injury so Paterson was assigned conversion duties but he could not tack on the extras to his own try.

Nine minutes in Newport broke left from their own twenty two, some neat inter-passing between last week's hat trick hero Jason Francis and Monty Maule resulting in the latter holding off several defenders to touch down, Paterson successful this time with the conversion to make it 12-0.

Two minutes later with Longton enjoying what was really their first meaningful touch of the ball, Henry Vaka intercepted sixty metres out and went in under the posts for Paterson to convert and extend the advantage to 19-0.

It was still Newport exerting all the pressure and from a five metre scrum they were awarded a seven point penalty try when the Longton scrum imploded under front row pressure exerted by the highly impressive Jordan Grass, skipper Tom Cowell and Jack Wells augmented by Newport's powerful back five.

It was 26-0 with twenty one minutes played when Longton player/coach Scott Rawlings, Ex-Fylde and Sale, was despatched to the sin-bin for offering some unwanted advice to match referee Sarah Toll who lost patience with the burly centre. With Paterson suffering from a knock Tom Cookson entered the fray to make his debut but Newport could not add to their score with the visitors down to fourteen. The next points weren't far away though, a penalty to the corner giving Newport the opportunity to execute a well-worked catch and drive try finished off by Roach.

Just before the interval a big hit by Cowell created turnover ball but Rhys Morgan was adjudged to have made a double movement in scoring what would have been Newport's sixth try of the half and so it remained 31-0 at the break with Newport not quite having reached the performance levels of the previous week but convincing nevertheless.

So could Longton rally their troops for the second period or would they capitulate? It appeared that it would be the latter when Chris Perry collected the re-start, the ball being quickly moved left to Holder who shot through the gap to feed Francis who finished in style with Paterson, who had recovered and returned, adding the conversion to extend the lead to 38-0.

Any potential threat from the visitors was repelled by an audacious and resolute Newport defence, Francis producing a couple of typical big hits to disrupt things. Wells and Roach were withdrawn allowing Jon Evans and Mike Venn to enter proceedings but the game was becoming scrappy and Newport somewhat drawn into an unstructured free-for-all. They would have to wait until the sixty first minute for their next score, the pack again getting the shove on from a five metre scrum, Kirk Robinson breaking from the base to crash over, Paterson converting to make it 45-0.

The last fifteen minutes were not pretty and most were relieved to hear Miss Toll's whistle to signal the end of an encounter that had become fractious and disjointed.

Nevertheless, another outstanding result that sees Newport maintain their position at the top of the Midlands Premier Division, one of only four clubs who remain unbeaten after just two rounds of games.

Next up is a trip to Newbold-on-Avon next Saturday for what will inevitably be a tough encounter, Newport having a number of things to work on if they are to prevail.

Team: Holder, Archer, Perry, Vaka, Francis, Maule, Paterson, Robinson, Morgan, Buckley, Roach, Goulson, Wells, Cowell (Captain) Grass  
Bench: Evans, Venn, Cookson

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