

Pre-Season Friendly

Northwich 12pts v Newport 35pts

After the Dudley Kingswinford withdrawal from the first of the planned pre-season friendlies Newport were forced to wait a further two weeks before travelling up to Northwich to finally get their first real hit-out of the new campaign.

With the holiday and wedding season still in full swing both teams were short of personnel so squads of 22 and 20 respectively faced up to 4 sets of 20 minutes with unlimited rolling substitutions.

It soon became apparent that Newport had the advantage up front dominating for long periods and denying their opposition any meaningful possession. Playing up the slight slope and into a stiff breeze Newport had numerous chances to open their account but were somewhat wasteful with needless off-loads and a level of rustiness only to be expected with the first League game still 3 weeks away. They did, however, strike first when Monty Maule danced his way under the posts with Ash Paterson converting for 0-7.

Newport again pressed immediately from the start of the second quarter with impressive debutant and No8 Oli Buckley forcing his way over from a 5 metre scrum, Paterson again adding the extras to make it 0-14. Northwich were defending manfully and were clearly up against it before producing a turnover on their own twenty two and breaking the first tackle. Scott McKenzie did ever so well to chase down and tackle the Northwich man just short of the line but he managed to slip the ball to the support runner who went in for a long range converted try that brought it back to 7-14 at half time.

Newport were soon exerting more forward pressure but the home side's off the cuff style of rugby was causing the visitors one or two problems, a neat chip over the onrushing defence was re-gathered and the support was there in numbers, some neat inter-passing between the group producing another long range but excellent try. The conversion failed but the gap had now been narrowed to just the two points.

Newport were at their best in the final quarter and produced three converted tries without reply. Firstly a long raking kick from Maule was run back on the counter but Rhys Morgan, another debutant to impress, produced one of a number of impressive turnovers on the day. Will Roach was put through the gap and he made great headway before being held short, slipping the ball inside to Paterson who dotted down and converted his own try for 12-21.

Rune Nordvang then did well to get over in the corner but was adjudged to have been held up by an unsighted referee. Not to be denied the Newport eight shunted forward to give Buckley his second try converted by Paterson to stretch the lead to 12-28.

A Newport penalty to the home 22 saw a well executed catch and drive make good ground before Maule was able to work a gap for McKenzie to hit the line at a great angle and add a fifth converted try to end the scoring at 12-35.

Head Coach Bob Adams can be pleased with his side's first outing whilst admitting there was much to work on before next week's encounter with North Wales champions Pwllheli, a FREE open day to the Club for Sponsors and public alike but please note Kick Off is at 2pm

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