

PLUMPTON LOCAL DERBY TRIAL GAME

Abridged

Plumpton Rugby Club welcomed Ditchling to the Racecourse for the first time in three years, re-introducing a derby fixture that spans over forty years. The trial game allowed Plumpton to blood six ex-Plumpton college players as well as welcome back a number of past players to the side.

The end score of 26-12 perhaps tells the story of the trial game, Ditchling looked threatening across the park and will do well as favorites for Sussex 2 “ashai” East league, but Plumpton pace and skills across the park made the difference and showed why they finished so strongly in the higher leagues last season.

Men of the Match: Try Scorer Dan Franks and Steve Cropper. Plumpton face a Lewes combination side at the weekend. Kick off 3pm at the racecourse.

Full

Plumpton Rugby Club welcomed Ditchling to the racecourse after a three year break, renewing an old local Derby that has spanned over forty years.

Ditchling have seen good fortune over the past season and now find themselves in Sussex 2 East. Plumpton have consistently punched their weight in the higher leagues but this fixture provided an opportunity to blood a number of new players from Plumpton College and introduce a number of old faces back to the club as well as try out their new “Climacool” dri-fit Shirts, sponsored by local pubs The Fountain Inn, Plumpton and the Cock Inn Wivelsfield and TSG The Structure Group.

Sussex RFU Referees did a sterling job to find not only a ref so early into the season but also send a senior Sussex referee to run through the revised ELV rules for both sides before the game.

The game started at a fast pace, with acting Club Coach Rhys Beale smashing through the wing defence to dive over for the first try with only 5 minutes gone. It was just as impressive to see Ditchling recover strongly and take the game to Plumpton and level up the game thereafter.

For the next ten minutes Ditchling provided Plumpton plenty of defensive practice, however converted number 8, Simon Elston was able to restore the lead taking on an overlap created by a youthful Plumpton backline.

Ditchling matched Plumpton in the forwards, with prop Steve Cropper and Firefighter 2nd row Martin Taylor providing a physical match to the larger Ditchling forwards. It was the forwards who secured ball for centre Dan Franks to crash over from a set back move 15 yards out, taking 3 players out with a series of side steps, even taking a major blow to the face, bloodied but already setting a target for try of the season.

Ditchling were now down to 14 men through injury, Plumpton Captain Lewis Beale offered to play for Ditchling who immediately return to the Plumpton try line, with a powerful run from the Ditchling 2nd row cutting through the plums defence.

It was perhaps only to be expected however, that Plumpton did not take long to reply. With 2 minutes left Rhys Beale again cut a decisive line to run unopposed under the stick to seal the 26-12 win in a well needed warm up trail with local rivals Ditchling.

Plumpton wish Ditchling every success this season and look forward to them competing with Newick and themselves in future derby, probably at higher leagues if Ditchling continue their progress.

Men of the Match: Blooded Try Scorer Dan Franks and Steve Cropper. Plumpton face a Lewes combination side at the weekend. Kick off 3pm at the racecourse. Plumpton RFC are looking for a Club Coach. If you have experience in coaching a progressive rugby team, Plumpton RFC would be pleased to hear from you.