

## **National RFU U17 Competition Midlands Division Quarter Final**

### **Newbold U17 10 Kettering U17 15**

After a tremendous league campaign before Christmas, this match in the last 32 of the National RFU U17 Plate Competition saw Newbold take on Kettering RFC, as Warwickshire's representative. The team yet again showed their massive fighting spirit by coming back to 10-10 from 0-10, the half-time score. These boys do it time and time again, rattling the bones of favoured opposition, making a name for themselves and the club across the County and the Midlands. On the day it wasn't to be. The conditions suited a man-for-man bigger Kettering pack and, bogged down playing against a stiff breeze, Newbold conceded an early try to a charge down, then another to a catch and drive.

Like madmen they charged back at Kettering after the break. The forwards, with DP, Rob G, Paddy and Alfie particularly prominent, generated the necessary pressure which led to a penalty – despatched sweetly by Dan O'Brien. With the backs doing everything they could feeding on scraps due to the difficult handling conditions, the supporting play and rucking and some excellent scrummaging gave an excellent foundation and the momentum which, combined with an incisive run from Edgy, was rewarded by a converted try (Paddy Anderson with Danno converting) with ten minutes to go. Now level on points, but knowing that try count was against them in the event of a draw, Newbold continued to storm all over Kettering – whose defence, excellent throughout the match, just managed to hold out as their line was battered. Newbold conceded an intercept try on the last play of the game whilst gamely throwing caution to the wind for the win.

This squad of young men, many of who have been with the club since U13 level, have been fabulous all season and have grown individually and as a team. They've shown what a bit of dedication - balanced with having a good time – can do. A great foundation for the players themselves, and for the club, in the seasons to come. There's still plenty of rugby to go though, and the 60-strong 'Rolf Harris' rugby tour to the South Coast over Easter. "D'ya know what it is yet?"

### **Rugby Lions & Edina RFC U17 10 Newbold U17 44**

This was a comprehensive win for Newbold in an enjoyable game against the combined Lions and touring side Edina RFC from Minneapolis. The Edina players, though a little raw, showed great potential and played with huge enthusiasm and were well worthy of their couple of second half scores. Newbold moved the ball well from the start and Guy Shaw finished well to get the scoreboard ticking, followed soon after by Josh Rogers, converted by Dan O'Brien. Josh Rogers then slotted a penalty. George Noel raced in for his first ever try, which capped another good game from him. Karl Fisher converted. Fraser Morris scored a beauty in the right corner, and Jordi Edgington matched it with one in the left corner. Isaac Spencer powered over for Newbold's seventh try which Josh Rogers then converted into a 7-pointer. Next up, the Divisional Quarter Final.

## Newbold U17 12 Broadstreet U17 15

Another fabulous morning's rugby at Parkfield Road. On a gluepot pit, Newbold took on league favourites Broadstreet, with the league title at stake. Newbold were dominant in the scrum and lineout, but really struggled to penetrate Broadstreet's rock solid defence. Perhaps playing too indirectly, Newbold retained possession for long periods, but were soon 10-0 down (try, conversion, penalty) after a couple of basic errors. Broadstreet play a real pressure game, with their backs and big back row up very quickly. Despite this, Newbold broke the stranglehold and scored a great team try through Simon Webber on the right wing, Dan O'Brien converting. With their tails now well and truly up, the 'Bold then scored a cracker when Robbie Bunn harried, hacked, chased and sprinted to touch down wide out on the left. With just 10 minutes to hold on, Newbold were 12-10 up. The coaches and supporters braced themselves for their usual dose of Sunday morning agony. Broadstreet had the final say with an excellent score from their impressive centre to kill of Newbold's title hopes. But Newbold can satisfy themselves with having won 8 of their 10 league matches, and have qualified for the National U17 Championships in the new year. What a ride it's been. Well done you boys!!!

## Newbold U17's 15 Nuneaton U17's 15

A feisty affair between these two sides, both of whom were short of players due to representative commitments. Newbold looked strong early on and sent in Simon Webber for a try after some really good recycling of the ball. Dan O'Brien rifled over a 45 metre penalty to make the score 8-0 at half time. Nuns came back strongly after the break and scored a penalty and converted try of their own to lead 10-8. It was then Newbold's turn to put on the style and - yes you guessed it - Simon Webber crossed again for a converted try to give Newbold a 15-10 lead. They couldn't hold on though and conceded a try at the death, which Nuns failed to convert. Special mentions to Joe Partridge and Guy on debut and to Karl Fisher for covering every blade of grass on the pitch.

## Newbold U17 3 Wolverhampton U17 39

Newbold, weakened with the absence of their Rugby & District representative contingent, were beaten fair and square by one of the very best sides in the Midlands. Even at full strength though, Newbold would have struggled to contain this machine-like outfit, who had a fella who was the size of Nick Easter, had the pace of Shane Williams and had a hand-off like a ram-rod, at number 8. Their tries came at a steady pace, Newbold's only score coming from Danno's boot early in the game. Newbold did have periods in Wolves 22, but squandered their scoring chances through poor execution. The backs were too flat, too slow and too reserved on the day. Forgetting how to tackle didn't help either. However this scratch side stuck together under intense physical pressure, and for that, the morning wasn't wasted. Paddy Anderson, DP and the returning George Noel deserve a mention for their solid contributions.

## Old Newtonians U17's 5 Newbold U17's 32

Newbold struggled to get going in this match and looked rusty after such a long lay off. They were the better side however, and managed to put the flying Simon Webber in for the first score in the corner. Rob Green then notched his score midway through the first half. A really competitive spell followed, in which ON's scored their try. Whilst ON's weren't particularly brilliant, they were (very) big, competitive and very disruptive. Newbold soon learnt that nothing comes without a bit of graft. Livewire Josh Rogers scored next for Newbold, DP and Tom Harris worked like Trojans against two men-mountains in ON's front row, and this laid the foundations for more tries from Nath, Danno and Dan Lenton. Good enough for now, but there's work to do in the build up to Midlands Division rugby in February.