

International 'Round-Robin' in Cardiff, South Wales
APOLOGIES TO THE RECENT NEW PLAYERS FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THEM ON THIS PRE-ARRANGED TOUR

Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th March [Away](#) Fixture - meet at 0615am at Moss Farm

Match Report for Last Sunday's Game - Sunday 18th March - [Home](#) Fixture
(sent to Northwich Guardian)



Northwich U13's 26 versus 22 Macclesfield U13's



Gale force winds could not spoil an extremely close encounter between two of the most improved teams in Cheshire. Each side scored four tries with just the slim margin of two extra conversions giving Northwich their sixth straight win with tries scored by Jack Vandersteen (2), Chris Sheppard and Luke Murray (summary for local paper).

Lessons were learnt from a recent cold day on the Wirral: Macclesfield were the team that spent an extra thirty minutes on a cold and windy pre-match practice ground whilst the boisterous Northwich penguins warmed up their vocal cords in room 3; it was Macclesfield with the short sleeved shirts; and it was Northwich with that started the game in the right frame of mind. Northwich were quick to capitalise from the extremely strong wind blowing in the faces of their visitors, and after his third surge, Luke Murray ran half the length of the pitch to score under the posts to leave Chris Sheppard with an easy conversion. Macclesfield soon showed good movement, and on many occasions the excellent

standoff took the blind side option, and it was on one of these runs that he made room for his winger to score in the corner. The conversion was missed. This however, led to Northwich's best spell of the match, which resulted in tries from Chris Sheppard and Jack Vandersteen, both being converted one by Chris Sheppard and one from Sam Jones. As the weather deteriorated with the introduction of horizontal sleet 'sand-blasting' the Macclesfield XV the referee decided to cut the first half short, with Northwich leading 21-5. With Sam Clayton limping off and others frozen by the cold, Northwich decided to field all five of their substitutes at once for the second half, this included Tom Finney, yet another Hartford High School debutant. Obviously the wind was now working to Macclesfield's advantage and early into the half the visitors scored another unconverted try was scored in the corner. With the game threatening to change shape the Northwich forwards started to gain control of both the set and tight plays, and gradually the balance of territorial play extended to the windward end of the pitch. A clever Will Mitchell lineout throw on the Macclesfield five-metre



line was caught by Jack Vandersteen who forced his way over the line to score his second try of the match.

With five minutes remaining, any previous discipline shown by the Northwich backs disintegrated, and the visiting stand-off was allowed the freedom of the 'Farm', and rapidly closed the gap with a try and a 'major-assist', and although he converted one of the two tries, there was not enough time for his team to win the game. However, given one last Macclesfield play, Northwich's six game winning streak could have definitely been under threat.

Northwich yet again demonstrated strength in character. The forwards were strong, with some excellent rucking and team-work. Everyone still wants to know what pre-match coloured smarties Baden Powell consumed as he gave his best performance in a Northwich shirt, with true aggression and fitness ... well done to the 'Lord'. The backs were keen and enacted some promising passing



and running moves, but they were unable to deal with either, the excellent Macclesfield stand-off or the No. 8 ... but this will prove to be a good thing as the remedy will be easy to administer by the coaches at Wednesday night's pre-tour training session.

This week's RBS man-of-the-match goes to Will Mitchell who obviously enjoyed last week's Cheshire training day, and was benchmark in the rucks, as well as being superb in his overall tackling and support play. A huge 'pat-on-the-back' for Will, and another big 'well done' to the Northwich team who overcame a hard anticipated challenge from a large Macclesfield squad. As a postscript there will be late injury tests done on Chris Sheppard (nose-job) and Sam Clayton (leg-amputation) prior to next week's international 'round-robin' in Cardiff.

Northwich Team including substitutes (all used): Forwards - Sam Oakes, Will Mitchell, Mike Gough, Mike Collier, Jack Vandersteen, Alex Dickenson, Sam Clayton, Simon Dale, Jamie Hall, Baden Powell and Ryan Simpson; Backs - Tom Finney, Sam Jones, Chris Sheppard, Luke Murray, Josh Hall, Ryan Kitt, Tom Sheridan, Michael Chubb and Tom Foulkes



This week's photographs supplied by Jane Cafferky

Mid- week Training

The next evening session will be on Wednesday 21st March. Please meet at the club (Moss Farm) for 6.30pm. Training will be finished no later than 8.00pm.

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 21 st March	Training - meet 1830pm at Moss Farm
Saturday 24 th March	<u>Cardiff Tour</u> meet at Moss Farm at 0615am leaving 0630am SHARP!
Sunday 25 th March	<u>Cardiff Tour</u> drop back at Moss Farm at 1900pm (approximately!)
Wednesday 28 th March	Training - meet 1830pm at Moss Farm
Sunday 1 st April	<u>Home</u> Fixture to <u>Congleton U13's</u> - meet at Moss Farm at 1000am
Wednesday 4 th April	Training - meet 1830pm at Moss Farm
Sunday 8 th April	Easter Sunday - <u>No Game and No Training</u>
Wednesday 11 th April	Easter Week - <u>No Training</u>
Sunday 15 th April	<u>Away</u> Fixture to <u>Sandbach U13's</u> - meet at Sandbach Rugby Club at 1000am