

NORTH WALSHAM 11 – COLCHESTER 42

Colchester served up a feast of sumptuous fifteen man running rugby to win away against a combative North Walsham side and record their fourth consecutive victory of the season.



Colchester prop Joe McMillan links with his backs to maintain an attack in the win against North Walsham

North Walsham showed skills learned in the National Leagues, their forwards rucking and mauling to a high standard, but fear of Colchester's backs restricted the host's play to limited forward and centre drives that earned a single try but failed to hold their visitor's more adventurous play.

Assuredly building plays through several phases, Colchester's backs did cause North Walsham problems but the Colchester forwards also proved themselves a force to be reckoned with. Skipper Matt Adamson took repeated strikes against the head using the sound scrum provided by props Joe McMillan and James Balfour. Locks Liam Pickett and Lee Soper pilfered the North Walsham lineout whilst the speed of Colchester back row Dan Whiteman, Ollie Pickett and Matt Morgan trumped their host's physicality, Morgan racing to a brace of tries in a man of the match performance.

Colchester made five changes from the team that started the previous week due to injury and player unavailability. Concerns about the untried half back pairing of James Gee and Jono Crisp were answered by Crisp's early break to set up full back David Philp's try within four minutes.

In reply North Walsham's pack rumbled slowly forward, Colchester conceding a penalty that Henry Dewing converted. Colchester responded in kind as North Walsham's scrambled defence was penalised for offside, Damien Brambley converting two penalties.



Reliance on forwards proved costly as a North Walsham lineout on halfway was overthrown, Morgan pinching the ball and sprinting through gaps left by the host's backs, aligned for attack not defence, to touchdown wide right.

The next two scores epitomised the differing styles of play. North Walsham's pack rumbled their way slowly forward until amongst a heap of bodies skipper Andy Tibbatts grounded the ball for a try.

Colchester replied with a series of expansive forward and back drives, centre James Denham's reverse pass enabling Morgan to switch the attack angle and wrong foot the home defence to zip under the posts for his second try, Brambley converting for the 8 – 23 halftime lead.

Left - Lee Soper's clean lineout win from Matt Adamson's throw

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The second half saw Colchester dominate play and the scoreboard despite being temporarily reduced to fourteen and then thirteen men by referee Peter Coulthard's yellow carding Irvine and Denham for obstruction.



Damien Brambley leads his kick and chase attack



Jon Vine switches behind James Denham to power in for his first try

Dewing converted one penalty but North Walsham could not turn their temporary two man numerical advantage into any more points.

Bucking expectations, it was Colchester who scored two tries when reduced to fourteen. Ball in hand quick passing turned defence into attack, Jon Vine cutting inside from the wing and breaking tackles for Colchester's fourth bonus point try, Brambley converting. Colchester continued to attack, a quick tap penalty by Whiteman catching North Walsham off guard for Vine to run in his second try wide left.

Irvine's creative runs continued to draw North Walsham's defenders, one move creating the gap Brambley cut through to link with Vine whose powerful finish earned his third try of the afternoon. Brambley's conversion bounced in off the upright to seal the win.



Colchester forwards support Dan Whiteman's quick penalty break that led to Jon Vines' second try

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Andy Tibbatts	Tries	David Philps, Matthew Morgan (2) Jon Vine (3)
	Conversions	Damien Brambley (3)
Henry Dewing (2)	Penalties	Damien Brambley (2)