

CHINGFORD 11 – COLCHESTER 33

Colchester exorcised their demons from two recent defeats with a five try bonus point victory away at Chingford to remain at the top of the league, equal on points but third on points scored difference. This proved to be a proverbial game of two halves, Chingford opening an eleven point lead before Colchester stormed back to score an unanswered thirty-three points.



Ollie Pickett rises to claim hooker Charlie Thorogood's throw

Colchester's forwards played a vital role. Props Joe McMillan and James Balfour combined with flanker-turned-hooker Charlie Thorogood, locks Elliot Castle and Liam Pickett, to dominate the Chingford scrum. Flankers Ollie Pickett, Dan Whiteman and replacement Carl Jeffs mounted regular attacks, No. 8 and lock Matt Morgan establishing an attacking rapport with scrumhalf Lewis Groves.

Replacement Pat Duffy made a successful cameo appearance in the front row during McMillan's sin-binning whilst Liam Pickett gave a man of the match performance with his tackling, lineout and support play.

Uncertain passing and movement early on suggested a Colchester hangover from the last two losses and playing into the fierce wind confounded Colchester's kicking in the first half.

Chingford worked hard to disrupt Colchester's lions share of possession of the first twenty five minutes, their rush defence wrapping up the visitors' ball carriers to prevent early release of the ball. Chingford conceded seven penalties to Colchester's two in this period so it was surprising when Colchester prop Joe McMillan was sin-binned for bringing down a maul.

Using their man advantage, Chingford kicked the penalty to touch, their forwards lineout catch and series of pick and go drives ending with flanker Dave Brown touching down for the only score of the first half.



Callum Irvine tries to crack the Chingford defence after a lineout win



James Crozier keeps his eye on the ball in a Chingford attack

Halftime: Chingford 5 – Colchester 0

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Chingford extended their lead early in the second half as flyhalf Dan Portwood added two kicks after Colchester were penalised twice in front of their own posts, first for handling and then for going off their feet in a ruck.



James Crozier takes Jon Vine's pass heading for his first try

Falling eleven points behind focused Colchester. The Colchester forwards upped their game, winning all the scrums.

From a scrum turnover near the Chingford line, wing-turned-flyhalf Damien Brambley kicked wide left where wing Dave Philp crossed for Colchester's first try on fifty five minutes.

The score released the tension that had shadowed Colchester's early play and they now attacked with zest and assurance. Skipper Calum Irvine fielded a Chingford clearance kick and ran at the Chingford defence, centre Jon Vine battered his way forward before passing to fullback James Crozier whose powerful run took him over the line for a try, Brambley converting to give Colchester the lead 11-12.

Continued Colchester pressure forced a hasty clearance kick, Groves fielding and cutting through the Chingford chasers to link with Whiteman who carried a defender over the line for a try Brambley converted.

The bonus point fourth try was a gem. Ollie Pickett picked up from a retreating Chingford scrum, Vine's run and quick pass to Irvine followed with a superbly timed pass to Crozier joining the line at speed to burst through a mesmerized Chingford defence for his second try, Brambley adding the conversion.



Skipper Callum Irvine breaks en route to setting up Lewis Groves' try

With seconds remaining, Chingford's restart kick was quickly recycled by the Colchester forwards; Irvine breached the home defence, linking with the supporting Groves who sprinted in from forty yards for the fifth try, Brambley's conversion ending the game.

CHINGFORD	11 - 33	COLCHESTER
Dave Brown	Tries	Dave Philp, James Crozier (2) Dan Whiteman, Lewis Groves
0	Conversions	Damien Brambley (4)
Dan Portwood (2)	Penalties	0