

## COLCHESTER 36 – OLD COLFEIANS 13



*Skipper Callum Irvine leads the attack in the table topping win over Old Colfeians at Mill Road*

Colchester worked hard for this victory that returned them to top London North One, the fourth try bonus point opening a narrow lead over Thurrock as Letchworth drop out of contention having had five points deducted for fielding an illegible player.

A minutes silence was observed before the game in remembrance of the Armistice and those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Lewisham's Old Colfeians mounted a determined defence, their forwards and fast paced backs testing the Colchester defence. Colchester dominated possession and position for most of the game, scoring five tries to two. three in the final quarter.

The Colchester pack battled to assert themselves over the well organised Colfeians forwards. Scrums and lineouts were even but the Colchester forwards dominated loose play, defending resolutely and wrapping up the pick-and-go charges favoured by the visitors. Flanker Carl Jeffs worked tirelessly in a man of the match performance.

The first half was a game of attrition as both teams probed for weaknesses, a missed Colchester penalty kick the only scoring chance of the first half hour. Colchester edged possession and position but repeated runs from Irvine, centre Adam Cook, wings Jon Vine and Damien Brambley were held up by the organised Colfeians defence.

Colchester built the pressure, forward drives seeing desperate Colfeian's defence conceding penalties. Colchester skipper Calum Irvine's quickly tapped and ran one to race over for the first try on 35 minutes, Brambley adding the touchline conversion for the 7 – 0 halftime lead.



*Dan Whiteman supports Adam Cook in attack*



*Damien Brambley kicks for touch as Jon Vine chases*

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*James Balfour tidies up at the lineout in the victory over Lewisham's Old Colfeians at Mill Road*

Colchester enjoyed the second half restart. Flyhalf Chris Wither's pinpoint kick-off was retrieved by the Colchester forwards, the ball quickly recycled where Irvine broke to set up another forward drive culminating in lock Liam Pickett crashing over for a try.

Colchester relaxed, allowing Colfeians into the game. Offside at a ruck gifted the visitors a penalty they kicked to touch, the lineout catch and drive ending with lock Adam Hodgkiss' touchdown. Another offside penalty was kicked by centre Ed Livett before a break by centre Robert Bennet led to some skilful passing at speed down the right wing for a fine try by fullback Andrew Howard for the lead 12 - 13.

The shock of falling behind galvanised Colchester. Brambley restored the lead after Colfeians' pack was penalised as Colchester drove them back. Colchester attacked again, Cook making a half break and his strength to stand up in the tackle enabling an offload to the supporting Ollie Pickett whose speed took him through a gap in the Colfeians defence for a try Brambley converted.

A strong scrum was the platform for the next Colchester attack, scrumhalf Groves' accurate mispass to Irvine running at speed to bisect the visitors defence, draw the last defender before passing to the ever present Dan Whiteman to race over for the bonus point fourth try, Brambley adding the conversion.

Colfeians attacked, but a series of midfield rucks saw the Colchester forwards drive them back, Ollie Pickett pouncing on loose ball to counter, quick ball enabling Irvine to slice through the retreating defence for a score under the posts to ease Brambley's conversion.

Colchester pressed again but referee Jonathan De Mendonca wielded yellow cards against Jon Vine and hooker Matt Adamson to reduce Colchester to thirteen men for the final couple of minutes but the score remained unchanged.

<b>COLCHESTER</b>	<b>36 - 13</b>	<b>OLD COLFEIANS</b>
Calum Irvine (2) Liam Pickett Dan Whiteman Ollie Pickett	<i>Tries</i>	Adam Hodgkiss Andrew Howard
Damien Brambley (4)	<i>Conversions</i>	0
Damien Brambley (1)	<i>Penalty Kicks</i>	Ed Livett (1)