

# high - and Colts lead way



Dan Hanniford successfully converts Aaron Hanson's second try

WIVELISCOMBE Colts arrived at Ipswich RFC on Sunday 12th March for their quarter-final match in the National Plate Competition with high hopes.

They had previously travelled over 1,500 miles to Keynsham, Redruth, Wadebridge and London Saracens. Everyone knew this was to be another competitive encounter and it was uplifting to see the strong support on the sidelines that had made the long journey.

Having won the toss and taken advantage of the slight wind in the first half, Wiveliscombe started well.

From the forwards pressure they forced a lineout close to the Ipswich try line, the throw in was well secured and the forwards drove over the Ipswich line and Rob Dibble claimed the first score. Dan Hanniford was unlucky with his conversion attempt. Opts - 5pts.

Ipswich restarted and showed what they were made of as they continually launched their big prop who often required two or more defenders to deal with him.

The pressure was maintained and eventually Ipswich made the most of this by stretching the Wiveliscombe defence and scoring a fine try from an overlap. This was converted. 7pts - 5pts.

The pattern of the game was now being established and Wivey had the upper hand as they again launched a drive deep into the Ipswich half.

From this possession the ball was quickly moved out to the backs where Tom Colley created a gap and crossed the try line as desperate defenders tried to stop him. The referee however decided it was not a try as the ball had been spilled on the ground.

The disappointment was short lived as from the resulting five metre scrum, Rob Hill charged down the clearance kick and winger Aaron Hanson was first to react as he collected the spinning loose ball and dived over for the second try. Dan Hanniford confidently kicked the conversion. 7pts - 12pts.

Ipswich again showed their resolve from the restart, and it was a resolute Wiveliscombe defence which dealt with the onslaught from the opposition's big forwards.

The ball was eventually turned over and Dan Hanniford, who was now using his kicking game to good effect, pushed Ipswich back into

their 22.

Another good lineout saw Wivey spread the ball wide to Tom Colley who again sliced through the flat-footed Ipswich defence to score under the posts. Dan Hanniford again confidently kicked the conversion and Wivey led 19-7 at half time.

Ipswich made changes and threw everything at Wiveliscombe from the restart, but the defence was magnificent and with Dan Hanniford and Rob Hill kicking well to clear their lines, the frantic pressure seemed to ease.

Wiveliscombe slowly made their way into the Ipswich half and after 57 minutes an error resulted in a penalty, which Dan Hanniford slotted over to make it 22-7.

This made life difficult for Ipswich, who knew they now required three scores to win, but they were not about to concede defeat by any means.

Wave after wave of attacks were dealt with by the Wivey defence, but with five minutes remaining

Ipswich got their reward with an unconverted try. 12pts - 22pts.

As the clock ticked away, Rob Stone the coach introduced some of the substitutes to see out the game and it was good to hear the final whistle and know Wiveliscombe had made it through to the semi finals.

This game was very tough and nail biting stuff for the Wiveliscombe crowd who gave great encouragement from the sidelines.

The celebrations after the game were made even better by some entertaining hosts. The next day saw Wiveliscombe drawn away for the sixth time, and we will be travelling to Worcester Wanderers for the semi-final fixture.

The club would like to thank all the supporters and sponsors of Wiveliscombe RFC, who have shown such great interest and contributed so much to make this possible, it has shown what true community spirit exists in this town.

Les Lloyd 01984 624715

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