



# LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

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## Lancashire U20 Match Report

Date of Match: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2017

Venue: Chesterfield Panthers RUFC

Result: **NLD (Notts/Lincs/Derbys) U20 8 Lancashire U20 57**

Lancashire U20 started their season with an impressive and emphatic win over hosts NLD at Chesterfield Panthers RUFC on a brisk Sunday afternoon. The trip over the Peaks didn't seem to faze the Red Rose boys as the much needed warm-up went well on a pretty good playing surface.

The home side boasting an enlarged squad set things running in the 9<sup>th</sup> minute when Lancashire were penalised for holding on in the tackle. The resultant penalty from the NLD kicker found its way over the bar and Lancashire looked to mount a response after going 3-0 down.

The sizeable crowd weren't waiting for long, some strong forward carries by No.8 Hallam Chapman (Sedgley Park & MMU), Matt Garrod (Fylde) and fellow Lock Nick Ashcroft (KGS & Fylde) setup a good attacking platform. Loose Head Prop Alex Preston (Kirkby Lonsdale) took the ball on before it was quickly recycled for Chapman to dot down for the opening try, Flyhalf Will Hunt (Preston Grasshoppers) added the extra two points to extend a lead that Lancashire were not to lose. Hunt added a penalty on 19 minutes and then a flowing sequence of play allowed the dangerous Lancashire Backs to run and Tom Carleton (KGS & Fylde) finished with aplomb in the corner, Hunt landing an excellent conversion from the Right Hand touchline, 17-3 to Lancashire with 24 minutes played. Six minutes later again with the Lancashire pack in the ascendancy a set miss move in the centres allowed Jake Foster (Fylde) space to run and score a try which went unconverted, half-time 22-3 to the visitors.

Both sides began to empty their benches, and whilst this seemed to have little or no effect on the Lancashire game plan it clearly hindered the hosts who looked disjointed and unable to find any consistency. However Lancashire continued to press and two tries arrived fairly quickly with the Full Back Carleton showing that fast feet and an eye for the try-line seems to be genetic as he raced in for his second try on 47 mins, replacement Flyhalf James Robins (Firwood Waterloo) knocked over the conversion and then added another conversion 3 minutes later when Skipper Ben Gregory (Fylde) touched down after a set-piece Lineout was driven over the NLD line.



After 58 minutes with the Lancashire pack still rampaging around with Ashcroft particularly impressive quick thinking from replacement Scrum Half Andy Hulme (Preston Grasshoppers & Loughborough Uni.) led to Winger Jonathan Roberts (Firwood Waterloo) brushing his opposite number aside to score and again Robins landed the conversion. NLD came back to register an unconverted try but the “champagne moment” of the game came on 73 minutes when a break in midfield drove deep into the NLD 22, Hooker Tom Egerton (Sale FC) on for Skipper Gregory took the ball some ten metres from the line broke a tackle drew the last two defenders and then popped an outrageous back of hand over the top pass to the waiting Hulme who went under the posts unopposed. With a minute and half left on the clock the Lancashire Forwards again dominant it was fitting the final score of the day came from Back Rower Toby Harrison (Fylde).

Whilst pleased with the performance Head Coach Martin Scott still feels the squad can still do more but he credits the result to some great Team work from all 24 players who got on the pitch.

Team Manager Howard Hughes also agreed “The lads kept to the tempo and consistency we expect, even after changing 9 players in the second half we didn’t let up. We now need to carry that forward in to our opening County U20 Shield game with Staffordshire on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February.