



Bournemouth RFC

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Season 2009/2010

The English Clubs Rugby Union Championship

National 3 South-West

Taunton v Bournemouth Lions

Saturday 23 January 2010, KO 2.30 p.m. at Hyde Park, Taunton!

Result: Taunton 34/5t3cp v 27/4t2cp Bournemouth. **Half-time:** 20/3tcp-8/tp.

Referee: Phil Watters; Gloucestershire Society.

Touch Judge: Steve Buffery; Bournemouth.

Bournemouth Team: 15: Karim Lynch; 14: Adam Higgins; 13: James Payne/t; 12: Domenick Davies (Ashley James 76); 11: Rory Hearson/t; 10: Simon McFarlane/2cp; 9: Scott Chislett/t; 1: Tim Wareham/t; 2: Frazer Wilford (Riad Lynch 45); 3: Alan Manning (c); 4: Tim Collier; 5: Will Brooks; 6: Tim Seward; 7: Damian Le Roux (Iain Crombie 'blood' 35); 8: Harry Stevenson.

Debuts: Tim Collier, Ashley James.

Coaches: David Dunn, Junior Paramore.

Sports Therapist: Ellette Lemprière.

Scorers: Tries 4: Hearson (28), Chislett (46), Payne (68), Wareham (74). Conversions 2: Simon McFarlane (46 68). Penalties 1: Simon McFarlane (16).

Milestones: Scott Chislett passes 200 (202) points in all matches. Tim Wareham starts his 50th game in the league. Rory Hearson passes 50 (52) points in the league.

Taunton Team: 15: Matt Ayres/tc; 14: Charlie Walker-Blair/2t; 13: Christian Gervais; 12: Simon Martin; 11: Gavin Hancock/t; 10: Jon Martin/cp; 9: Matt Newman/t; 1: Alec Chase; 2: Glenn Cooper; 3: Chris Phillips; 4: Ross Ward; 5: Marshall Cormack; 6: Dan Johnson; 7: Steve Dyer; 8: Nick Burnett (c).

Substitutes: Jon Gatford; 17: Phil Hogarth; 18: Sam Saunders/c.

Yellow Cards: Nick Burnett (30), Alec Chase (49), Chris Phillips (61).

Scoring Sequence: 3m: 0-5 Newman/9/t; 15m: 0-10 Walker-Blair/14/t; 16m: 3-10 McFarlane/10/p; 28m: 8-10 Hearson/14/t; 32m: 8-17 Walker-Blair/14/t, Martin/10/c; 39m: 8-20 Martin/10/p; 40m: Half-time 8/tp-20/3tcp; 43m: 8-27 Ayres/15/t, Ayres/15/c; 46m: 15-27 Chislett/9/t, McFarlane/10/c; 63m: 15-34 Hancock/11/t, Saunders/R12/c; 68m: 22-34 Payne/13/t, McFarlane/10/c; 74m: 27-34 Wareham/6/t; 80m: Full Time 27/4t2cp-34/5t3cp.

League Points: Taunton 5 (4 league points plus 1 try-scoring bonus point), Bournemouth 2 (1 try-scoring bonus point and 1 losing bonus point).

League Positions: Bournemouth drop from 5th to 6th. Taunton remain top.

Weather: Dull and gloomy at first but brightening later. No wind and mild.

Ground: Underfoot was heavy after the vast amounts of rain to have befallen this emerald isle of ours.

Kick-off: Bournemouth (Simon McFarlane) kicked off from left to right as viewed from the stand and to his left.

Facing a heavy defeat from the evidence of the first fifteen minutes or so Bournemouth played with determination and conviction to contain a side that showed plenty of evidence as to why they had won the first sixteen matches; strong well-organized forwards and quick strong-running backs. It was the most ominous of starts with the Bournemouth forwards being driven back from a line-out on their own 22-metre line for scrum-half Matt Newman to take advantage of the phalanx in front of him to score a try after just three minutes. Bournemouth had a lucky let-off five minutes later when, under severe pressure, they conceded a penalty in front of the posts and were grateful that fly-half Jon Martin, with remarkable accuracy, hit the right-hand post for the ball to bounce clear enabling fly-half Simon McFarlane with some enterprise to chip the attacking line. This was fielded by full-back Matt Ayres who

chipped the ball in turn only for right wing Rory Hearson to knock the ball on for a Taunton scrum on the half-way line. At least Bournemouth had seen off that initial danger. However Taunton were not to be denied and demonstrating their dangerous running and enterprise, Martin, using what had already become a familiar tactic, chipped the Bournemouth line and brilliantly regathering the ball put his right wing Charlie Walker-Blair clear who showed some embarrassing pace to score wide of the right-hand post with the Bournemouth defence reduced to preventing him from getting any closer to the posts. However that paid off and Martin missed his third kick and Bournemouth were very grateful for that. Taunton were penalized at the restart and McFarlane kicked a fine goal to get the scoreboard going for Bournemouth after that torrid quarter of an hour. Lock Will Brooks fielded the restart but the ball was kicked and Bournemouth found their defence severely tested when Taunton ran it back at them with Walker-Blair proving very hard to contain. New boy Tim Collier was penalized for coming in at the side as Bournemouth fought desperately for that crucial 'turnover' ball on the 22-metre line. Martin, perhaps uncertain about his kicking, eschewed the chance to kick for goal and instead sought the sanctuary of an attacking line-out on the Bournemouth 5-metre line down his right. Stretched though they might have been, Bournemouth could at least defend a line-out however dangerously close to their own line it might be. And so it proved. Taunton drove for the line but the maul collapsed for Taunton to be given the put-in on the 5-metre line. Taunton drove the scrum back only for Bournemouth to be penalized for collapsing the scrum. The possibility of a penalty try loomed large! However, creaking though it was under the immense Taunton pressure, the Bournemouth scrum held firm enough for No 8 Nick Burnett to be forced to pick up and drive for the line. He ran into one of his own players and lo and behold Bournemouth found the haven of their own put-in while this gale raged about them. The ball came out rather untidily and it was inside centre Domenick Davies who picked up in his own 'dead ball' area. He managed to run left to break out and feed fly-half Simon McFarlane who kicked for touch. However he failed to find it but Bournemouth in chasing down managed to hack the ball on and chase it down to force a line-out on the Taunton 22-metre. Taunton were subsequently penalized for being offside as Bournemouth drove the ball but, from the 22-metre line, McFarlane, in for the injured Mike Pope, pushed the ball wide. Taunton took a quick drop out trying to catch Bournemouth off balance but rather spoilt things by kicking the ball 'straight out'. Bournemouth drove off the line-out with captain Alan Manning and scrum-half Scott Chislett featuring as the forwards maintained excellent ball retention, a control they were to demonstrate through out the afternoon despite the pressure they were under, and were awarded with a 5-metre scrum when they were held up short of the line. The ball was swung wide with wing Rory Hearson coming in of his flank before being swung back right where Collier was waiting in the wings to drive for the line. Taunton's efforts, however, to prevent the big second row man from scoring fell foul of referee Phil Watters. When Chislett, taking a 'quick one', failed to get over Watters brought play back for another penalty. McFarlane this time found touch to his right on the Taunton 5-metre line. The ball was swung quickly left before coming back right and a wide miss pass found Hearson who was over in the corner for a well-deserved try. McFarlane pulled his effort left to leave the score after almost thirty minutes at what was now a manageable 8-10 despite Taunton's best efforts. Taunton were penalized for pulling the maul down after Collier fielded the restart and McFarlane found touch to his right on the Taunton 10-metre line. Although make-shift blindside flanker Tim Seward caught the ball in customary fashion at the back, the ball was 'lost' and Walker-Blair was given another chance to scorch the damp turf. He was stopped and Chislett, also covering back, was able to kick and chase down the ball forcing Taunton to side foot the ball into touch for a Bournemouth line-out on the Taunton 22-metre line. Another excellent attacking line-out but if you don't throw the ball in straight I am afraid you are obliged to give up the hard-won advantage. And didn't Taunton rub salt into the wounds with a fantastic break by Newman from the base of the scrum which saw the scrum-half run forty or metres down the blindside to unselfishly, or perhaps he had run out of puff, pass outside to Walker-Blair to by-pass the last of the defence and allow the winger to run in for a score that certainly excited the home crowd but was received rather less enthusiastically by the Bournemouth supporters.

The winger got it close enough for Martin to break his duck and Taunton to stretch their lead to 17-8. This was already into time added on for stoppage but Watters was to play another 13 minutes. Bournemouth had by now found their feet and through a combination of forward drives off the line-outs and attacks through their threes sought for that vital break though. But a poor pass to feet here and an 'off the ball incident there' saw the opportunities come to nought. With the home crowd looking for Taunton to kick the ball dead to end the half and make sure of their spoils so far, the players had other ideas and another rampaging attack through the forwards and the backs saw Bournemouth back in the all too familiar position of having to defend desperately which brought the reward of a penalty on the Bournemouth 22-metre line. Martin was obviously warming to his task of kicking for goal and he extended his side's lead by three points with the last act of the half.

Into the second half, it didn't take long for Taunton to increase their advantage. After an extended period of Chinese diplomacy, full-back Matt Ayres rebuffed a Bournemouth attack, which broke down when at last someone was seen running with the ball, by a deft chip and regather to score wide-out. Then with a 'don't bother Jon' he kicked the conversion himself and Taunton lead by an increasingly formidable 19 points at 27-8 just three minutes into the half. McFarlane then added to Bournemouth's woes by not kicking the restart ten metres for a Taunton scrum back on the half-way line. The forwards recovered the situation by winning the ball and then were given a bonus as Watters marched the protesting Taunton forwards back ten metres. McFarlane made up for his earlier mishap by finding an excellent touch to his right on the Taunton 22-metre line. An increasingly confident pack of forwards, demonstrating the excellent aforesaid ball retention pushed the division leaders back and forced the infringement. The always excellent and alert Chislett grabbed the ball and was through in a flash to score half-way out on the left. McFarlane made sure that earlier score was nullified with an excellent kick which sailed through the posts with some panache. Very satisfying for a player who had been pressed into service with very little preparation, especially for a game of this nature. So it was 15-27 then! Not impossible!

Perhaps it reflected the pressure Taunton were feeling with both props being yellow carded, the second a couple of minutes after the first miscreant had been restored which meant Taunton had twenty minutes almost contiguously with just fourteen men. This was on top of the ten minutes they had lost when captain Nick Burnett was yellow carded late in the first half. Nonetheless Taunton remained dangerous in all phases of the game with Bournemouth doing well to keep the flying threes out with last-ditch efforts. Centre James Payne spotted a gap and was through deep into the Taunton 22-metre but never quite got clear and Taunton won the ball. They kicked long and a length-of-the-pitch run saw Taunton left winger Gavin Hancock desperately unlucky not to score but Hearson in a lung-bursting chase did enough to disrupt the final touchdown and Bournemouth had a scrum instead of conceding a fatal score. This saw loosehead prop Alec Chase restored which resulted in a renewed Taunton thrust putting their opposite numbers under some pressure. After the first scrum was reset, Bournemouth established enough of a platform for McFarlane to be able to clear right. Taunton drove powerfully off the line-out but Bournemouth stood firm so much so that tight-head prop Chris Phillips was shown the third yellow card of the afternoon and he was obliged to watch for ten minutes. Meanwhile McFarlane gratefully cleared to the half-way line. Yet again Taunton showed how dangerous they were when from another defensive position after Bournemouth had worked deep into enemy territory, there was another great break out resulting in left wing Gavin Hancock scoring and substitute Sam Saunders, on for inside centre Simon Martin, adding the two extra points. Taunton were three scores clear at 34-15 with just under a quarter of the game to play. However in this last quarter with Taunton, having been down to fourteen men for half of the half, began to tire but their backs remained dangerous and always looking to breakdown the Bournemouth defence. It stood strong and left wing Adam Higgins was very brave in a front-on tackle to halt the progress of his opposite number Walker-Blair. With any penalty, Bournemouth took it quickly trying to keep Taunton off balance and their enterprise was rewarded when Taunton were penalized ten metres out and McFarlane found full-back Karin Lynch coming into the line to take out a couple of

defenders before getting the ball to Payne who was through to spot the ball near to the right-hand post unopposed. McFarlane added the two points to make the score 22-34 with more than ten minutes to go. The Taunton crowd began to get a little anxious as it was realized that the visitors' fitness was holding out despite the attrition of the previous hour or more. What was more their discipline didn't crack and their exemplary ball retention frustrated any would-be Taunton effort. The crowd's anxiety increased with Taunton feeling the pressure, when having been penalized, were marched back ten metres for 'chatting' to take Bournemouth deep into their half. Taunton nonetheless rescued the situation when they won a scrum but as they went left, Hearson managed to snatch a Taunton pass out of the air with an athletic jump only to be held up just short of the line. However the 7th Cavalry galloped over the hill to the rescue and with a final heave and a shove from his fellow forwards LH Prop Tim Wareham was able to burrow his way over for one of his rare tries. McFarlane's anti-climatic failed kick meant Bournemouth still needed two scores to win but they had at least secured a try-scoring bonus point and as things stood a losing-score bonus point as well but there was a very usable six minutes still to go. Would Bournemouth be able to do it? Well we know the answer to that by now but it was Taunton who almost took away that losing-bonus point with another Newman chip down the short side for Walker-Blair to chase but there was a knock-on and Watters brought proceedings to an end.

We cannot be complacent about a loss but in the circumstances Bournemouth's spirit and no mean skill could have carried the day. They played with tremendous sustained determination, particularly in the second half when they out scored Taunton but might have 'gone under' after that inauspicious start. Youngsters like Harry Stevenson, a callow under-17 languidly enjoying success in the South-West cup only two seasons ago, grows in stature with every game. His second half performance was a revelation. The performance, especially away from home, will give all the players immense confidence in their own abilities and that they can cope despite the absence of some notable names. It just reinforces the point that it is a team game!

I would also like to thank Taunton for their generous hospitality. We had a great day out and I am sure the two teams put on a spectacle their generous sponsors would have enjoyed and able to feel that their support was well directed.