

Nuneaton News

with thanks to

Nuns edge Bournemouth victory

NUNEATON RFC turned over a gritty and determined Bournemouth side in the first of their pre-season matches at a sun-soaked Liberty Way on Saturday.

Mike Umaga's side last played Bournemouth in the first match of last season, and came away from Chapel Gate with a meagre five-point victory and it was clear from the kick off that the Dorset side had not travelled up with a gentle run out in mind.

With coach Umaga away on international coaching duty in Europe, the Nuns fielded an eclectic mix of players including trialists, new signings and a healthy bunch of last season's promotion winning side.

The Nuns took the lead nine minutes into the first half, Huw Thomas wrong-footing the visitors; defence to slip a perfectly-timed pass to full-back Ben Gilbert for the first try.

Bournemouth broke through on 15 minutes, Ben Kiora grabbing the converted try before stretching the lead further less than a minute later with a second converted try.

The visitor's third converted try stretched their lead to a healthy 21-5 inside the first quarter but the Nuns struck back on the half hour, winger Ross Bayston claiming the try, with Thomas adding the extra two to cut the deficit to 12-21.

Almost a complete team change at half time saw Nuns run out with what looked immediately like a much stronger unit and the changes paid off within six minutes when a terrific turn of pace from fullback Sam Wood left the visitors defence for dead.

Wood slipped the final pass to Aaron Takarangi just inches from the line for the try, with Dan Poulton adding the conversion to put Nuns within two points.

The increase in second-half forwards power was evident when the Liberty Way side rolled a maul over from a lineout deep in the visitors 22, Andy Daish emerging from the bottom of the pile to claim the unconverted try and seal the victory.

Nuns face another stiff test next week at Liberty Way with the return of ex-National Three local rivals Loughborough Students.