

## 5/1/08 Yorkshire League Division 4 **Old Otlensians 17 vs Garforth 3**

Garforth put in a decent performance on Saturday in a cold and blustery game at Otley, but came away with no league points, but plenty of respect from the league's best rugby side and current Yorkshire Silver Trophy holders Old Otlensians.

Playing with the wind to their backs in the first half, Garforth completely dominated the half with 'Ensians barely getting into the Garforth half in the opening 40 minutes. Some great running from winger Lee Dawson and tactical kicks to the corners by Andy Hayward and full back James Tinsdale kept the pressure on the home side whilst the Garforth pack was able to make ground in the tight mauls and close to the ruck on a regular basis. With the wind blowing a gale Garforth turned down several opportunities to kick for goal after a string of penalties from the home side, justified by the Garforth pressure. However the home side defence was very strong and on several occasions managed to hold the player and ball up over the try line or block the attacks just yards from the line. What little possession 'Ensians did retain they used well running the ball out of their 22 on a number of occasions and showing their speed and ambition to play rugby. The half came to a close scoreless and leaving The Mighty Forth regretting a number of lost opportunities.

Garforth expected a blitz of attacks from the home side in the second half and within only 5 minutes a clever cross field kick from the fly half found the big 'Ensians lock in space to cross the line for a try in the corner. The conversion was missed but a 5-0 lead had opened up. The home side continued to press with the strong wind on their backs, however like the home side in the 1st half Garforth's defence was strong and on balance their forwards were able to secure more possession in the 2nd half than the home side could in the 1st half. A second try was scored out wide by the home side despite Garforth's protest that the ball was never grounded and the player entered touch before crossing the line. Playing into the wind Garforth had to now press forward with the strong running of Captain Adi Horwell to make ground as well as the continuing elusive running of Dawson from wide out. Thanks to these runs Garforth managed a long period of pressure close to the 'Ensians try line, something the home side failed to do in the 1st half into the wind. However once again the defence was good, despite some persistent infringements, and Garforth could only leave with 3 points from a penalty to take the scores within a converted try.

Garforth were forced to make two substitutions mid way through the half with Dawson leaving the field after a thumb in the eye left him with double vision and Chris Nevison suffering with a back injury. Replacements Steve Hayward and Alex Gomerson kept up the pressure with some very strong running of their own and strong defence. 'Ensians soon added a 3rd try close to the line which was converted and a further injury to hooker Terry Newton, saw Guy Hawkridge enter the front row but left Garforth without any substitutions remaining and in the cold conditions further injuries seemed likely, with captain Horwell suffering from calf spasms and a number of other players exhausted following a tough game.

The final 10 minutes remained a close encounter with neither team coming close to scoring. The Mighty Forth can be proud of their dedication against one of the top teams in the league but will need to be more ruthless in attack if they are going to make a top 4 finish in Yorkshire 4. Next league action is at home to 3rd placed Bramley Phoenix on 19th January at Garforth Community College .