



London Italian RFC Match Report

London Italian RFC 1st XV vs Old Streetonians 1st XV

Final Score 3 – 13 (HT: 3 – 3)

Lorenzo Belpassi Pen (1)

After a brief but thorough warmup, a teamtalk and planning some tactics, we took the field ready for our very first game. Straight from the kick off, we had a good clean catch and set off a maul travelling up the field. This was a sign of things to come, as the first half was dominated by our pack. We won scrum after scrum, many against the head, with Old Streetonians unable to cope with the pressure and skill of our tight 5, especially the front row, who time and time again got the better initial shove, got under their men, and nullified the oppositions drive.



With our pack setting such a stable and offensive platform, the backs were unleashed, playing some very fluid rugby. Defence was rock solid, there were extremely few if any missed tackles in the first half gaining turnovers and keeping possession. We scored an early penalty, bringing the score to 3-0, but due to lack of discipline, they equalised before half time.

Kicking off the second half, Madders' boot was immediately followed by an enormous hit from Paolo, setting the tone yet again. The defence was once again solid, the rucking effective, and the backs fluid, but discipline got the better of us once once more. Penalties were given away unnecessarily, giving Old Streetonians both possession and field position.

Two tries in quick succession were let in through quick ball and us not being back in position quick enough, though neither was converted. Everytime the backs got the ball they carved lines into Old Street, with crashballs from the inside centre, and brilliant pace from our back three and outside centre. Seb at 15 had some fantastic runs, but due to lack of support was isolated often, giving us slow ball. Unluckily, we lost a prop, Stefano, to an elbow injury, and we were demoted to uncontested scrums, countering our fantastic pack and slowing possession. From then on, it was a game of attrition, rather than "champagne rugby".

Mickey Fiori joined the game when Stefano left and had a fantastic game at stand in number 8, tirelessly making tackle after tackle. Riccardo A made some good breaks when on the pitch and some excellent tackles. The backrow as a unit functioned like they had been playing together for years, not mere hours, with big hits and charging runs put in by them all. Lorenzo led the scrum and lineout by example, his workrate was outstanding. The lineout was shakey at times, but when it went right, it was like a well oiled machine.

In all, this was a very close match. We outplayed Old Streetonians in many areas, but their cohesion as a team, and the well drilled nature of their set plays made it a very tight game. Having never played together as a full XV before, the lack of cutting edge and knowledge of our own team did hurt us, we had scoring opportunities, but just lacked the final decisive pass. With a team consisting of battle hardened regular players to debutants, we can hold our heads high that we played so well, and had we have kept our heads at times, I believe that the scoreline would have been much closer, if not a win for us.



Tim Medici and Marco Attanasio



London Italians RFC 1st XV vs. Old Streetonians 1st XV 17/11/07

Back Row (Left to Right): Riccardo Bernasconi, Stefano Ancora, Sebastiano Oddi, Paolo Ancora, Matt Sinden, Davide Magagna, Stefano Nocera, Adam Sinden, Sandro Attanasio, Luca Belpassi.

Front Row: Renzo Belpassi (C), Marco Attanasio, John Maddalena, Edoardo Giglio, Mickey Fiori, Giuseppe Briamonte, Tim Medici, Riccardo Attanasio.

Thanks to The Winston Group and John Losi for the kit sponsorship.

Next Fixture 24/11/2007 KO: 2pm vs. Barnet RFC @ Barnet Rugby Club

Map

<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&tab=wl&q=barnet%20elizabethans%20rfc>