

# THE MUSKERRY U14 NEWS

5th Nov 2011, South Munster U14 League

Muskerry 27 Highfield 22

## Salman leaps to secure last minute victory

This was Muskerry's first outing in the newly inaugurated U14 league. A number of friendly games had yielded mixed results, the most recent being a defeat the hands of Midleton on the previous Saturday so there was pressure on the boys to get their campaign off to a winning start. With many of squad in school with the Highfield players there were also bragging rights at stake as well as league points. Muskerry had a squad of 23 to pick from providing selection headaches for Sean & Aidan especially when it came to the back row and wing positions.

Playing on the main pitch, (thanks Ger!) on a perfect morning for rugby, Muskerry opened brightly with Peadar O'Callaghan tackling well at No. 8 and Cian Riordan a lively presence at scrum half. Ciaran O'Connor at out half was used the slight wind to good effect to gain territory and a kick to the wing was hacked through by Jack Harrington and then touched down by the chasing Craig Bennet for the opening score. Muskerry continued to pile on pressure and the game was being played for the most part in the Highfield half. In the latter stages some good handling saw Jack Harrington break on the wing and he left a trail of opposition players in his wake to touch down for try number two.

Then in the dying moments of the half Peadar O'Callaghan picked from the base of a scrum to touch down in the corner and leave Muskerry with what seemed like a commanding lead at the break

### H-T Muskerry 15 Highfield 0

Whether it was complacency or the effect of the many substitutions or a combination of both, but Muskerry were not at the races in the first 15 minutes of this half. Highfield played like a different team after an early try gave them momentum, and then followed up with another after a plethora of missed tackles on the part of Muskerry. The second try was converted to leave the score at 15-12. Muskerry were struggling to find their rhythm at this stage and were under pressure across the park. Then a piece of magic from the backs: Jack Harrington gathered a ball in his own half and set off on a mazy run towards the Highfield line. As the defenders closed in on him he found the supporting Michael O'Connell who touched down to cap a fine move. 20 -12 to Muskerry, game over perhaps?

Highfield had other ideas and a period of sustained pressure led to the concession by Muskerry of yet another converted try to leave the score at 20- 19. Highfield now had the scent of victory in their nostrils and following some scrambled defence Muskerry conceded a

penalty for offside which was converted to leave the score at 22-20 with only minutes on the clock. Muskerry were not going to give up the cause yet and an attacking movement led to a penalty for the boys in blue. Decision time: try to kick the penalty or keep the ball in hand and unlock the tiring Highfield defence? The crowd held their collective breaths as the Muskerry captain chose to tap and go and attack the Highfield line. The ball went through hands before it found its way to winger Salman Yurol who wriggled his way over the line for his first ever competitive try. The last action was the conversion which was slotted home by Ciaran O'Connor to leave the score at 27-22 to Muskerry and sparked great celebration amongst the players. Our thanks to Highfield for their part in an exciting game which was played in a great spirit. All 23 of the Muskerry lads made a contribution and can be proud of their efforts.

**Muskerry squad:** Craig Bennet, Gordon Desmond, Barry Fitzpatrick, Ian Flannery, Patrick Healy, Jack Harrington, Odhran Heelan, Ryan Hegarty, Luke Horgan, Jared Murphy-Sheehan, Robert O'Callaghan, Peadar O'Callaghan, Adam O'Connell, Michael O'Connell, Ciarán O'Connor, Luke O'Connor, Ryan O'Neill, Martin O'Reilly, Michael O'Sullivan Greene, Cian Riordan, Alec Roche, Liam Weafer, Salman Yurol