

THE MUSKERRY U13 NEWS

Sunday February 6th

Muskerry 31 Bandon 5

Muskerry master mud and rain to record fine win

After a number of weeks when ice was the problem the challenge from the elements in Ballyanly on Sunday was driving wind and rain which tested both teams to the full in what proved to be an entertaining contest. Muskerry had a panel of 20 to choose from, welcoming back Jared Murphy Sheehan (injury) and Barry Fitzpatrick (illness). Bandon travelled with a depleted squad and we 'loaned' them 2 players to ensure a 15 a-side contest. The home team won the toss and elected to play with the wind which was sweeping diagonally across the field. The first ten minutes saw a series of scrums in the Bandon 22 before the play finally began to loosen up and the backs got their hands on the ball.



Muskerry drew first blood when Bandon failed to tidy up possession on their own line and the vigilant Peadar O'Callaghan pounced on a loose ball for a try. Buoyed up by this score Muskerry began a period of dominance in which they showed excellent handling skills in the difficult conditions.

This culminated in no 8 Cormac Dennehy getting over for try number two. If Muskerry thought it was going to be all one way traffic Bandon had other ideas: they attacked against the wind and came close to scoring on a few occasions. Then a turning point: Bandon failed to ground a good scoring opportunity and the ball was kicked down field by the home defence. Patrick Healy brilliantly chased down the kick and secured possession long enough for the cavalry to arrive and Ciarán O'Connor picked the ball and broke down the sideline for a great score. Now Muskerry were really in the driving seat. Before the half ended more indecision in the Bandon defence allowed Ciaran to secure a fourth try

Half-Time: Muskerry 24- Bandon 0

For the second half Muskerry were playing into the wind and knew they would have their work cut out to contain Bandon. Would this be a game of two halves? In the forwards second row Robert O'Callaghan was leading from the front with great assistance from Liam Weafer and the irrepressible Gordon Desmond. In the backs Craig Bennet was having a big game while our wealth of riches in the wing position was being reflected by great performances from Patrick Healy and Cian Riordan.



As the wind swirled and the rain pelted down both sides did their utmost to play open rugby. The benefit of Wednesday's tackling drill was evident as Bandon men were knocked like nine pins.

Bandon pulled a try back to close the gap midway through the half but Muskerry had the last say when captain Cormac Dennehy broke through and touched down under the posts. Another good result where training ground work paid a dividend. A rematch against Bandon is due in a few weeks and one suspects they will be a tough nut to crack on their home patch.

Final Score: Muskerry 31 (P O'Callaghan 1 try, C Dennehy 2 tries, C. O'Connor 2 tries, M Hayes 3 cons) **Bandon 5**

Muskerry Squad: Craig Bennet, Cormac Dennehy, Gordon Desmond, Barry Fitzpatrick, Ian Flannery, Matthew Hayes, Patrick Healy, Ryan Hegarty, Jared Murphy-Sheehan, Robert O'Callaghan, Peadar O'Callaghan, Michael O'Connell, Adam O'Connell, Ciaran O'Connor, Martin O'Reilly, Shane O'Riordan, Michael O'Sullivan-Greene, Cian Riordan, John Sheehan, Liam Weafer.



N.B. Our thanks to Chris Corcoran for opening up the shop to sell much appreciated hot drinks for the hardy spectators.

Aidan