****WASHINGTON RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



Statler & Waldorf Game report

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| Competition: | PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY | |
| Teams: | Washington 1sts | Billingham 3rd |
| Date: | 30 August 2025, 15:00 KO | |
| Venue: | Washington Hub, Northern Area Playing Fields, | |
| Match Official: | Tony Rutherford, Level 7 - Durham County Rugby Football Union Referees’ Society. | |
| Result: | 19 | 26 |

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| **No.** | **NAME & SURNAME [Apologies if your name is missing off the list]** | **SCORERS** | | | | **JUDICIARY** | |
| **Tries** | **Conv.** | **Penalty** | **Drops** | **Yellow** | **Red** |
| 1 | Ollie 0’Conner |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | James England |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Alix Hume |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | David Lowerie |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Michael Reilly |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Dean Ryan | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Liam Higgins |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Steven Talbot |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| 9 | George Alley (Capt.) | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Mathew Clark |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Max Brown |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | John Pope |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Jay Cunningham | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Andre Marrah |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Ian Veti Brookes |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Kevin Lamb |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | Michael Bishop |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | Ashley Hume |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | Andrew Carr |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | Darren Mason |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | John Cocker |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | David Addison |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | Liam Nicholson |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24 | Joshua Hardy |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25 | Ben Emmerson |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | Joshua Carter |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27 | Peter Hardy |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 28 | Owen Dobson |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Penalty Tries** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Shirt numbers on the player list may not reflect the number shirt on the field.  Apologies for any names missed off the players list. | | | | | | | |

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| Scoring Sequence | | |  |
| Minute | Player [team number, player name, or opposition]: | [T, C, P, DG, PT] | Score |
| 15 | Billingham | T & C | 0 – 7 |
| 24 | Billingham | T & C | 0 – 14 |
| 32 | Jay Cunningham | T | 5 - 14 |
| 36 | George Alley | T | 10 – 14 |
| 36 | Mathew Clark | C | 12 – 14 |
| 46 | Dean Ryan | T | 17 – 14 |
| 46 | Mathew Clark | C | 19 – 14 |
| 60 | Billingham | T | 19 – 19 |
| 76 | Billingham | T & C | 19 – 26 |
| Timings are approximate. | | | |

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| **Weather Conditions:**  Game started dry with occasional light showers throughout the game. Wind gusting at times.  **Noteworthy Information:**  Head Coach Andrew Stephenson, Forwards Coach Graham Brennan and Dir. of Rugby David Addison.  Referee arrived late at the venue, and as a consequence the game kicked off 15 minutes late.  **Game Summary:**  With this being a pre-season friendly match. Players will be substituted throughout the game. Giving everyone a chance to have game time minutes, and the chance for the coaching team to evaluate players in a match situation.  **First Half;**  Kick off was 15 mins late due to late arrival of referee.  First line out on 2mins in Billingham 22. Billingham not straight which led to the first scrum of the game.  Billingham awarded penalty for Washington off feet. Penalty not making touch, caught by Andre Marrah who ran the ball back into Billingham half.  A lot of to-and-fro in the first 15 minutes. Billingham kicking to gain ground, and Washington catching well and running ball back.  Another good run back by Andre Marrah led to a Billingham line out when he was tackled into touch.  15 mins John Pope with a very close attempted interception (knock on), led to a scrum for Billingham.  On 16 mins Billingham broke out of there 22 and scored a try (conversion good). [ 0 – 7]  On 22 minutes the referee had cause to speak to both captains regarding conduct on the pitch.  Billingham line out won by Washington, led to a Washington penalty for a high tackle.  23 minutes yellow card to Steven Talbot.  Billingham scored another try on 25 mins. With conversion good. Another break-out try against the run of play. [0 -14].  Good work by Washington in the scrum led to a penalty which Washington kicked into Billingham 22. From the line out Billingham off side at the loose and another penalty to Washington.  Try by Jay Cunningham on 32 minutes provided a timely boost for Washington. Conversion missed. [5 – 14]. This try was the result of good ball retention, good ground gained and good team cohesion.  33 mins saw Steve Talbot return to the field, after 10 mins in sin bin.  36 mins try by George Alley (conversion good) was the result of more good ball retention and a quick eye by George seeing the opportunity. [12 – 14].  Good first half by Washington with some strong scrums and good catching and running the ball back on Billingham kicking. Maybe a little lost at times in the line out.  Half time score 12 – 14.  **Second Half;**  A high tackle by Billingham led to an early penalty for Washington. Long kick to touch for a Washington line out. Billingham won line out, but in the resultant loose Washington held up the ball carrier. Washington scrum in front of the posts.  4 mins try by Dean Ryan (conversion good by Mathew Clark) [19 – 14].  On 13 mins Billingham won a scrum for a knock on, ball kicked to touch for a Washington line out. Billingham spoil and win the ball, however Washington gets a turnover in the loose. This resulted in a Billingham penalty for holding on.  On 18 mins Billingham win a penalty for holding on. Washington further panelised for back chat to the referee, taking Washington back 10 yards.  21 minutes Billingham win ball on Washington scrum which leads to a Billingham try (conversion missed) [19 – 19].  26 minutes referee gives a final warning to Washington for back chat to referee.  30 mins Penalty for Billingham on Washington 22 quickly taken, a croc roll by Billingham leads to a penalty for Washington. Good kick to touch for Washington line out. Line out won by Billingham. Penalty for Billingham for offside.  34 mins Washington scrum won by Billingham, led to a Billingham try (conversion good) [19 – 26].  The game petered out with both teams showing-tired legs, having given their all.  FINAL SCORE Washington 19 – 26 Billingham.  **Notes;**  Great effort shown by all the team, with good cohesion and backing up each other much in evidence. Good defence on opposition kicking, mention to Andre Marrah for good hands and good vision when running the ball back. There was good form in the scrum, with some powerful drives. Poor discipline at times cost Washington ground and gave Billingham scoring chances. Washington had most possession and good pod work made good ground beyond the gain line. Some good turnovers in the loose/tackle gained good possession.  A well-rounded performance by all of the team.  Mention for Darren Mason, who I believe did not get onto the field today.  **Comment from Dave Addison [Director of Rugby].**  “Great to see the lads go toe-to-toe with good opposition. Thought we played well in patches and showed good patience at times. We got caught out at key times in key areas and it’s given us plenty to work on. Can't wait to get started with the season proper after our pre-season work. We look forward to welcoming Seaton Carew next week.”  **Comment from Andy Stephenson [Head Coach].**  Saturday saw Washington RFC play their final pre-season fixture against a strong Billingham 3rd team, providing the perfect opportunity to showcase the progress made after eight weeks of hard work, commitment, and dedication throughout preseason training.  With an impressive 28 players declaring themselves available, competition for places was fierce, and the squad went into the game full of confidence and determination. Adding a little extra spice to the occasion was the recent history between the two sides, following their clash in the cup final just four months ago.  Billingham, already a league above and bolstered by several 2nd team players, named a strong side, but Washington matched them physically and tactically from the outset. The game proved to be a hard-fought contest, with both teams’ displaying excellent defensive organisation and attacking intent. Every score was earned through relentless possession-based pressure, and neither side was willing to give an inch.  As the game entered the final five minutes, the result still hung in the balance, with both teams pushing hard for the decisive breakthrough. In the end, Billingham edged it, but Washington’s performance was outstanding and a real statement ahead of the new season.  The coaching team were full of praise for the squad’s effort, attitude, and execution — but with so many players stepping up, team selection for the opening league fixtures now presents a welcome headache.  Washington RFC can take huge confidence from this performance, knowing that the hard work of preseason has put them in a strong position to start the season with momentum and belief.  HC - Andy  **Yours Statler and Waldorf**:    **THE TWO OLD FOGIES** |