

# Rugby



<b>COLTS 'A'</b>				
<b>PLAYING RECORD</b>	<b>P8</b>	<b>W5</b>	<b>D0</b>	<b>L3</b>
	<b>PTS</b>	<b>F 198</b>		<b>A 59</b>

The boys enjoyed a very successful rugby terms which contained 5 thumping victories and 3 agonisingly close defeats. The team had to cope with a number of disruptions including waterlogged pitches, snowbound opposition, dislocated shoulders, sore necks and amputated thumbs!

The boys trained hard and made the most of the wonderful opportunity to develop their rugby skills at Vinehall. As the season progressed the Colts rucking and mauling skills improved immeasurably leading to far more possession retained, turnovers gained and good quality ball for forwards and back alike. This led to 3 impressive victories in January.

The season started at St Andrews. Straight from the kickoff the boys took control of the game. Edward Mannion scored in the left hand corner then Freddie Stork scored on the right. Both conversions were missed however. Our talented backs continued to make decisive runs on an individual basis, but failed to retain possession due to lack of support. In the second half we paid for our lack of team work. We let in 2 tries, both of which were converted.

Our next match was at home V Dulwich. The backs were able to run freely with good passing moves. A comfortable win was recorded with tries from Alec Coombes (2), Rory Cramp, Max Desoutter and George Spedding. Against St Ronans were recorded an impressive score of 47-0 Seven tries were scored by 6 different backs including Peter Dunn and Michael Green.

Our toughest fixture was away to Holmewood House. we won the toss and elected to pay uphill. The significant slope of the pitch soon became a deciding factor in the scrum and at rucks, where forwards spent most of the time going backwards! Having conceded a try, we soon got back on level terms after strong running from Alec Coombes and Edward Mannion scoring in the corner on the left wing. We conceded 2 further tries (1 unluckily) in the first half, due to the home

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team's forward pressure. In the second half we used the slope to our advantage. Holmewood failed to get near our try line. We kept good quality possession throughout. After sustained pressure and good handling by our backs, Freddie Stork scored on the right wing. We had ample opportunities to level the scores from great field positions, but too often kept the ball in the center of the pitch rather than passing it out wide. Final score 21-14.

In the New Year we lost a very forgettable match against Marlborough House. Key players were unavailable, our forwards were unconvincing and the team generally were heavily penalised by their referee.

Fixtures were cancelled due to the bad weather and training became almost impossible. (I still cannot work out how some of our boys are unable to do cross country, but can play 40 minutes of rugby.) However, the forwards trained very hard and increased their effectiveness enormously. As a direct result we beat St Andrews 33-7 at home, with Rory Cramp scoring 3 powerful, driving tries. The whole pack were superb at retaining ball possession and forcing turnover ball in the ruck and at the scrummage. Alec Coombes was particularly effective in defence in the tackle.

Our forwards, led by Tabius Maltman and included Peter Stollery, Curtis Sugar and Michael Green, won the following fixture against Heathfield. Great cohesiveness and quick handing led to Rory Cramp scoring our first 4 tries. Special mention should also be made of our backs who were passing the ball around at a pace. Freddie Stork sneaked in from close range following a scrum. Alec Coombes added a final try after a typically strong run. Final score 40-5.

Our momentum continued through into the last game against Ashdown House. Our pack dominated the opposition. Our backs defended relentlessly and attacked at pace showing great passing and handing skills. Special mentions go to Greg Moorley as full back and Finbar Dexter at right wing. First half tries were scored by Mannion, Stork and Coombes. The match had to be stopped at 21-0 due to an injury to Tabius Maltman, who came off worse for wear having taken on the whole Ashdown pack single handed.

Last mention goes to Max Desoutter for his 24 conversions over the season. I would like to thank Mr Butler for his contributions to team training on Friday and for his support and advice in general.