



# ROUND 1

## Match Reports

16 May 2009

### Eagles Vs Uni-Norths

At Nicholls



#### FIRST GRADE

First grade started their season on a disappointing note.

The match was barely 5 minutes old when 2 Owls players were given yellow and red cards respectively for foul play. Brendan O'Neill was also yellow carded. Eagles clearly dominated in every aspect of the match. The Eagles were dominant at the set pieces taking 5 opposition feeds in the scrum and also stealing 5 opposition throws in the lineout. Defensively the Eagles were impressive and were well on top with several hits on the opposition forcing turn overs. Matt Hawke who was impressive in the initial exchanges was struck in the head and suffered a broken jaw and was forced from the field in the 17<sup>th</sup> minute despite his efforts to shake off the sting.

The score was 15-3 when the teams ran out for the second half with tries to Connachie & King. The second half began as the first ended with the Eagles well in control until a lack of discipline and complacency crept into the Eagles psyche. Poor handling, poor decision making, simple missed tackles and basic errors crept into play with the final result being a last second drop goal to steel a come from behind and a massive upset victory for the Owls 18-15.

In truth the Eagles did all they could to lose the game rather than an inspired victory to a 14 man Owls team. A very tough lesson learnt for all.

#### COLTS

The weather conditions were testing for the first round of the competition with a strong wind blowing across the ground with a slight advantage going to the team running from the "Hall end of the ground". The Uni/North's side were expected to be strong opponents to the young Eagles. The young Eagles had this advantage for the first half. Play started well with Needsy leading the charge and a try was just missed in the corner. The game then settled down to a hard grind with neither side able to get any points on the board for the first 20 minutes. The Eagles front row was continually taking the ball up and testing the Uni/Norths side. Kai Leonard was giving full support to his mates in taking the ball up to the opposition. A lack of discipline by the young Eagles taking away much of the advantage gained. Uni/Norths went into half time with the points advantage.

The second half saw the Eagles side improve in play and discipline. This included a great run by Needsy which enabled him to get the ball down under the "black spot" so making an easier conversion under the difficult kicking conditions. The boys were on the board. Unfortunately they were unable to further build on this score.

**3-Sam Needs                    2-James Gregory                    1-Kai Leonard**

<b>Result</b>	Eagles	7
	Uni/Norths	38

#### RESERVE GRADE

The opening round of the competition proper proved to be a hard day at the office for reserve grade. Uni ran with the wind in the first half keeping us in our own quarter for much of the opening period. Ten minutes in and under constant offensive pressure the defence finally broke and allowed U/N's in for the first of four tries for the first half.

Down 19-0 and 30minutes gone Eagles struck back with a try to new recruit Kurt Mulcahy. It appeared Kurt enjoyed this opportunity to have the ball-in-hand, for after receiving the ball on the left touch line, he chose not to use the direct route (55 metres) to the try line but instead toured other areas of picturesque Nicholls oval eventually touching down right side of the goal posts. Maintenance will be done to repair the scratch marks from the turf during the week.

After trailing 24-5 at half time Eagles were first to put points on the board in the second half. A well controlled 5 metre scrum drove the U/N's pack over there line for No.8 Steve Jones to claim the try. Unfortunately U/N's put two more tries on the score sheet which thwarted any chance of an Eagles come back.

The continued strong performance of the pack in the set pieces is encouraging and will set a good foundation for the team in up coming games.

**3-Steve Jones            2-Chris Connolly            1-Leigh Weston.**  
**Result** Eagles            10  
          Uni/Norths        36

### **3RD GRADE - Eagles T3**

We welcomed the start of the 2009 competition on Saturday, when we played the Uni-North Owls at home base Nicholls Oval. A long time ago when I coached kids at footy, I always started by asking the question " How do you win a game of football?", and my answer was by scoring more points than the opposition. I then asked " How do you score more points?", and the answer was with the football. This was evident in this weeks game against Uni-Norths, as we would have had about thirty percent of possession during the whole game.

With the wind at their back in the first half we were hammered by the young and well drilled Owls side, as everything they did came off and they took us apart by running in 4 tries with 2 conversions, to lead 24 nil at the half time break. The Eagles T3 found the going tough and only added to our woes with poor defence, aided by poor ball retention with dropped or lost ball, and the number of penalties given away, gave the Owls a heap of possession. With the wind at our backs in the second half things improved some, however the lack of possession still enabled the Owls run in a further two tries to win the game 39 nil. Things were also against us in the scrums as we were continually pushed off the ball, or the scrum was screwed by the Owls pack giving them the ball back. All players and support staff were stunned by the result, after a good pre season start, it hit us hard, however in this our first game of the season we certainly came up against a very good side. We now have to forget this result, as there is many more games to go yet, boys keep your heads up and support coach Carey by getting to training, and I am sure we can improve greatly on this result.

**3-Jason Brian            2-Peter Judge            1-Leigh Hancock**  
**Result** Eagles            0  
          Uni-Norths        39 (6 tries, 2 conversions)

### **4TH GRADE - Eagles T4**

T4 started off their 2009 campaign with a well deserved win over Uni North Owls. The forwards dominated from the whistle, making every hit a hard one and continuously turning over loose ball. They were also just as effective in attack stealing meters through strong running and good support play. It wasn't long before Robbie O'Conner split U/N's backline to cross for the first 5 pointer. In a typical Eagles versus Owls match it was a real tug o' war in the mid field, with Josh Shea breaking tackles every time he touched the ball. The piggies continued the rumble forward led by Kegs McGrath who had a strong game all around the park. T4 were relentless in their drive forward through strong runs by Rob Reardon, Lee O'Sullivan and Brendan Jackobasic to again allow Robbie O'Conner to break through U/N's midfield for a double. U/N's were able to hit back with a try of their own. Though their celebration was short lived with the Eagles returning fire showing excellent phase play before Tim McGrath burrowed over for our third.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> half saw several changes thanks to a strong turn out for T4 and the boys continued their dominance at the break-down, blowing away any Uni player near the ruck. Foul play saw U/N's reduced to 14 men and the Eagles capitalised with Nick Piras crossing in the corner. The try was superbly followed up by a Mark Ruffy conversion from touch, against a typical strong Nicholls breeze. With the wind at their backs the Eagles kept U/N's locked in their half for most of the second half and the unrelenting pressure caused an overlap on the blindside which Nick Edwards capitalised on touching down for another Eagles try.

It was a successful round one for T4, hopefully the start to a good season. We hope all the boys who turned up on Saturday and others who are interested will be there week in week out, as we know we could take the title this year.

**Result** Eagles            31            Tries: R O'Conner 2, T McGrath, N Piras, N Edwards. Conversions: Ruffy 3  
          Uni/Norths        5

- 3 - Tim McGrath** - Strong ball running and great at the breakdown
- 2 - Robbie O'Conner** - Two great tries through evasive running and quick thinking
- 1 - Brendan Jackobasic** - Controlled the game well and solid in defence