

The Swan

February 2018 Edition

Match Centre

The festive season came and went, and our first fixture of the year was a walk over as Maidstone unfortunately could not field a team.

So Swanley returned from a four-week festive break to take on a Beccehamians third string in a friendly. It looked business as usual when a strained Becs defence gave in to a Stuart Tate try in the corner. But when the second half started and Swanley were second to nearly every breakdown. Beccehamians seemed to have sorted their set piece problems. Swanley were a far cry from their usual clinical self. They will need to rediscover their cutting edge by next week when facing Tunbridge Wells, who will be a much sterner opposition. Final score 7-14 to Beccehamians.

Tunbridge Wells away was a sodden affair. Wet, cold and waterlogged.



Mud, mud, glorious mud

For the first 10 minutes it was end to end stuff with both teams showing good attacking play and entertaining the crowd. Swans displayed good defensive covering tackles, however could not finish off their own moves when carrying out attacks in the opposition's 22. Eventually the tries came from Toby crashing over the line for Swans first try in the 14th minute, not converted (0-5). From the restart despite being dragged down by 3 players and bouncing his head off the post George scored.

When asked by the coach if he was okay, George politely reminded the coach the post protectors are there for a reason! Further tries from George and Guy gave us a comfortable half time lead of 22-0.

Right from the off in the second half, Swans piled the pressure on and within 5 minutes they were awarded a penalty 10m from the posts. Stu directed the pack to spread left to suck in and divert their defenders and, as instructed by his Captain Sean O'Reilly, he tapped the ball and went himself ducking under the tackles of 2 hefty forwards to score his try. Tunbridge stepped up the ante and in the 58th minute were rewarded with a well worked try. From the kick off Swans managed to win the ball and after 10 phases of play, with great offloads and supporting runs, the final pass reached Toby who barreled over the line for his second try. Not converted (5-32). Within 5 minutes Tunbridge scored their second try by taking a quick throw in, catching the Swanley defence unorganised and off guard. Not converted (10-32). No sooner had Tunbridge scored their try, The Swans replied with their own which was started off by James Yates coming in as a forward in to a ruck. Having no idea what patting his backside meant, he tapped it anyway, then running off the side of the breakdown he was surprised by the 3 supporting forwards following him. With a well-timed pass to Sean who hit the right angle to sprint in for The Swans final try. Not converted (10-37). Alas Tunbridge had the final say with well worked moves by their forwards and backs, managing to score in the 72nd minute. The final minutes of the game saw Swanley dominate. All credit to both sides for an entertaining game, played with great spirit in appalling conditions.

Final score 15-37 – a good win.

Next up – New Ash Green away and a bad day at the office. Swanley had the hill and the elements against them in the first half however came out guns blazing right from the off charging uphill with good interlinking play.



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Sean on the charge

Swans played at a high tempo keeping the moving and in ball in play and were rewarded a penalty which was taken quickly, and the ball found its way to Dave Lawrence to crash over in the right-hand corner in the 6th minute. Sadly, this was it for the swans in the first half as they never seemed to get the ball and when they did, lost it too easily in contact which was NAGs strength throughout the game. NAGs had a simple game plan and smashed up the sides of the break down and with poor tackling by the swans scored tries in the 11th, 19th, 23rd and 40th minutes, closing the half out 24-5. To swans credit, they dominated the scrums and line out however failed to retain the ball. At the turn around Swans had the wind and rain as well as the slope on their side however took too long to use it to their advantage. Swans did pile the pressure on NAGs and were camped in their 22 for 20 minutes when James Whitlock bulldozed over the line dragging three of the opposition with him in the 63rd minute, kick missed 24-10. From the restart swans scored possibly the best try ever. The ball was caught cleanly by Stuart Tate who then broke through the first defence line to off load the ball to George Oliver who drew a number of defenders and popped the ball to Dave Lawrence and then the pair of them kept interpassing to each other carving their way down the pitch where George finally scored his try in the 64th minute. Unfortunately, it was not until the last minute of the game when Swans made a break down the left wing and the final pass reaching the hands of Tom Jones-Harvey for him to run in his first try ever try for Swanley RFC. Final score 24-20 to NAGs

Full match reports are available at:

<http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/swanleyrfc/>

February Fixtures

Sat 10, 14:30 – Greenwich - Away - Cup

Sat 17, 14:30 – Vigo - Away - League

Sat 24, 14:30 – Gillingham – Home - League

League Table

	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
1	Sevenoaks IV	15	13	0	2	512	137	375	55
2	Edenbridge I	16	12	0	4	540	256	284	54
3	Swanley I	15	12	0	3	450	232	218	52
4	Sheppey II	16	11	0	5	487	313	174	51
5	Gillingham II	16	11	0	5	450	265	185	48
6	Old Gravesendians II	16	10	0	6	303	267	36	46
7	Gravesend IV	17	10	0	7	473	380	93	45
8	New Ash Green II	16	5	1	10	242	427	-185	30
9	Vigo III	15	5	0	10	259	412	-153	28
10	Aylesford III	16	2	0	14	190	513	-323	21
11	Maidstone III	16	2	1	13	220	561	-341	19
12	Tunbridge Wells IV	16	1	0	15	176	539	-363	18

Swanley slip to third but with the all important game in hand. However Sevenoaks have strengthened their lead by continuing their winning run. Edenbridge and Sheppy are still a threat to our position with some tough matches ahead.

Club News & Events

Youth

We are pleased to announce the appointment of a youth section manager for the club. Lorraine comes to us with a depth of experience gained by through a similar role at Westcombe Park.

Time for Fun!

The annual Oval Ball – and our first of course – will be held as follows:

- 12th May 2018
- Alexandra Suite – Swanley

So if you fancy coming along to a night of celebration why not contact our social secretary Nicola; social@swanleyrfc.co.uk

It's a black-tie affair, dinner and dance with club awards.

Tickets are £35 per person.

We'd love to see you there.



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