



(ESTD 1995)

Essex Div 3 CHAMPIONS 03/04  
EC5 CHAMPIONS 96/97. EC4S CHAMPIONS 98/99.  
Runners-up 97/98 and 00/01

Press Release – 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2004

### ***Millwall 1's suffer shock loss but Llamas show promise***

Millwall's first fifteen began the season with a shock loss to Basildon in a friendly on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September, losing 65-14 but their second team, the Llamas managed a 45-0 thrashing of Old Street in a sweet and sour day for the Isle of Dogs club.

With the scheduled match against Ravens in the first round of the Powergen Junior Vase called off by the opposition, Millwall firsts matched up against Basildon on their home ground with vastly different faces from last season.

Although boosted by strong performances from man of the match prop Martin Ward and new comers Jason Evans and Rudi Groenwald, Millwall were unable to compete with the well-drilled back line of Basildon.

While the away side was denied possession for most of the match, they managed to cross the line twice through Chris Dickinson and Captain Brian Lindsay. Louis Newton and Rudi Groenwald converted the tries respectively.

The match marked winger Martin Cooper's 100<sup>th</sup> game for Millwall and stand in team manager Karl Harris also earned his 50<sup>th</sup> cap in the disappointing loss.

Despite the loss, Mr Harris remained positive.

"While we showed none of last seasons continuity, there was definitely a lot to take out of the game".

"There were some very good performances from new players and the match also highlighted some deficiencies that we need to work on in the next few weeks"

"In my opinion we played about 50 minutes of very good Millwall rugby and all the boys defended like Trojans however when the opposition has so much possession, it's not long before cracks begin to appear in the defensive line."

There were still some smiling faces after the match however when the team learned that their 2<sup>nd</sup> team cousins had upset Old Street on their home ground, with a 45 points to nil victory.

Seven tries came with ease in a free flowing game as Millwall's backline showed plenty of flair in general open play while their forwards were actively looking for offloads in the tackle.

All of Millwall's big men got around the park well with Rhodri Gabe and Mike Costin usually first to the breakdown giving the backs plenty of quality time and space.

Seasoned campaigner Terrence White, who normally appears in the halves, scored two tries from the unfamiliar position of backrow and almost crossed for a third before being pulled up by the referee.



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Other try scorers were new boys Bennie van der Westhuizen, Dom Sutherland, Rhodri Gabe, Leon Alexis and Eben Beetge. Dom Sutherland slotted 5 conversions.

Team manager Kevin Doherty was more than pleased with the result.

“You couldn’t ask for a better way to start to the season.”

“All the boys played their hearts out, enjoyed every minute and I dare say there will be a lot of pressure on first team players on that performance”.

Millwall’s 1<sup>st</sup> team has a chance to get their campaign back on track next week against Burnham while the Llamas take on Brocklians in an away match. Millwall’s third team kick start their season with a friendly away to neighbours East London RFC.

**Note to editors:**

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