

Match Report

Australian Schools **28** defeated by England U18s **30**

Heywood Road, Sale, England

Sunday 13 December 2009

The Australian Schoolboys have suffered a heartbreaking 30-28 loss in the dying stages of their tour match against England Under 18 at Sale Rugby Club in Sale on Sunday. The tourists played their best rugby of the tour but England fought back through a late try to Mark Jennings to claim the entertaining encounter where the lead changed throughout the match.

Rohan Saifoloi put the tourists in the lead in the 3rd minute with a penalty kick. Five minutes later the English had an opportunity to equalise but failed to get it over the bar. After some exciting attacking rugby for the next ten minutes, it was the English side who managed to score where the English scrum-half took a quick throw-in, giving lock Dominic Barrow time and space to gather the ball and dive over for the first try of the game after 18 minutes and five minutes made a successful penalty kick taking the score of 3 – 8.

The remainder of the half became a penalty kicking duel between the two five-eighths with some great passages of attacking rugby from both teams with the lead changing twice. Rohan Saifoloi took two successful penalty kicks in the 25th and 28th minutes putting Australia back in the lead 9 – 8. George Ford for England regained the lead in the 30th minute putting the score to 9 – 11. Liam Gill crossed the English line but was disallowed the try – but from the resulting scrum, Jordan Tuapou successfully crossed the English line and Rohan Saifoloi converted as the half-time siren sounded giving the tourists the lead 16 – 11.

The second-half was a frenetic nip-and-tuck affair to the final whistle. Soon after the restart England were awarded a penalty try for a deliberate knock on right on their line and with the conversion the score was back in the home side's favour 16 - 18. Five minutes blistering rugby from Australia saw dynamic winger Kimami Sitauti finally score out wide in the 42nd minute after some outstanding work at the breakdown by flanker Liam Gill. With a conversion by Rohan Saifoloi Australia regained lead for the fourth time in the game 23 – 18.

In the 50th minute England found a small gap next to the ruck close to the Australian line to firstly equalise and then retake the lead with the conversion 23 – 25.

In the 60th minute, from his own half fullback Jacob Woodhouse weaved his way through the English defence, only to be tackled on the opposition 22 metre line. From a quick clean out at the ruck from Liam Gill and others the ball passed through the hands of the Australian back line with Kimami Sitauti scoring out wide to claim his second try and taking lead back for the fifth time of the match. Rohan Saifoloi's conversion attempt bounced away off the upright leaving the score 28 – 25.

The final minutes had both teams playing as if it was the start of the match, but it was England who in the 65th minute crossed to take back lead with a try by Tommy Bell 28 – 30. England survived several Australian forays into their half, but managed to repel all efforts of the now exhausted Australians.

Australian Schoolboys coach Rob Nowlan said he was proud of his side's gritty performance against a classy England outfit.

"It is a tragic loss for our boys but that's the way it goes," Nowlan said.

"You've got to be able to close games out and unfortunately we weren't able to do that.

"All credit to England, they played really well.

Australia (15-1): Jacob Woodhouse, Chris Feuai, Tom Kingston, Tyson Frizell, Kimami Sitauti, Rohan Saifoloi (V-Capt), Ruka Hanlon, Jordan Tuapou (capt), Liam Gill (tour captain), Jack De Guingand, Angus Hamilton, Luke Jones, Paul Alo-Emile, Hugh Roach, Scott Sio. Res: Jack Kimmince, Ross Marais, Joe Welch, Curtis Browning, Matt Ika, Matt Lukis, Kyle Godwin, Joel Faulkner.

Replacements: Jack Kimmince (QLD), Ross Marais (QLD), Joe Welch (NSW), Curtis Browning (QLD), Matt Ika (QLD), Matt Lukis (QLD), Kyle Godwin (WA), Joel Faulkner (QLD).

England Under 18s: (15 – 1) Ben Ransom (Saracens); Chris Elder (London Wasps), Elliott Daly (London Wasps), Jamie Elliott (Northampton Saints), Marland Yarde (London Irish); George Ford (Leicester Tigers), Dan Robson (Gloucester); Matt Kvesic (Worcester Warriors), Chris Walker (Leeds Carnegie), Billy Vunipola (London Wasps), Dominic Barrow (Leeds Carnegie), Sam Twomey (Harlequins), Kyle Sinckler (Harlequins), Koree Britton (Exeter Chiefs), Nick Auterac (Saracens).

Replacements: Nathan Morris (Newcastle Falcons), Ant Brennan (London Wasps), Luke Cowan-Dickie (Exeter Chiefs), Will Skuse (Bryanston & Bath), Sam Northcote-Green (London Wasps), Joel Hodgson (Newcastle Falcons), Mark Jennings (Sale Sharks), Tommy Bell (Sale Sharks).

Australia 28 Tuapou, Sitauti 2 tries, Saifoloi 2 con, 3 Pen **England U18 30** Barrow, Hodgson, Bell tries, Pen try, Ford 2 con 2 pen)

Referee: D Bodilly (Wales)