



The Bluesletter

Wednesday 11 April 2018

Note from the Editor

If you have anything to pass on to our Bluesletter subscribers ensure I get the details by Tuesday 1200hrs and I will endeavor to get that information into Wednesdays' issue.

D2 - Norfolk Blues 13 Schuylkill River 20



This weekend the Blues hosted Schuylkill River, the game moved from the grass of Lafayette Park to the turf of Norfolk Collegiate due to the inclement weather and again named a full XV and bench for the fixture, great news and just rewards for the guys who train week in/week out. From the KO it was evident that SR have a different mentality to rugby than the Blues, a very abrasive team

who play a narrow or even a 10 man game. In the pack the Blues were giving away a lot of weight and that, coupled with the incessant rain, set the tone for a hit and miss functioning set-piece. The conditions were more beneficial to the visitors and their pick and go and hard running forwards put the Blues on the back foot and within the first quarter SR were up 0 - 10. The Blues had to work hard on winning possession and were guilty of turning over the ball too easily through knock-ons or aimless kicking, but on the stroke of half time **Beau Brodtmann** kicked a penalty to go into the break 3 - 10 down. The message at half-time was to be more aggressive both with the ball and without it. Our defense was passive at best, missing a lot of one on one tackles and making it easy for SR to make ground; we also needed to keep hold of the ball in attack and carry it with a bit of venom.

For the first 20 minutes the Blues were a different team, some big carries all over, great clearing out at the ruck and we were now on the front foot and were rewarded with a try from **Aaron Leeth** scoring following a 50metre run, converted by **Beau**, 10 - 10. The set-piece was difficult to say the least and to be fair the weather was tough, but so were many of the calls at the throw-in, this provided SR with bags of turnover ball to clear their lines. On 25minutes the Blues won a penalty, SR offside, and **Beau** knocked it over to put us up 13 - 10. Unfortunately we couldn't add any more points and reverted back to the mistakes of the first half, not holding onto our ball and timid defence. In the last 10minutes we conceded two poor scores through some absent tackling to go down 13 - 20 at the final whistle.

Man of the match went to **Brian Nichols** with honourable mentions to **Beau Brodtmann** and **Mic Minichiello**.

It's a bye week this week, but plenty to work on in preparation for Rocky Gorge in two weeks and the play-offs at the end of April.

Final Score: Norfolk Blues 13 Schuylkill River 20

Tries: Leeth Con: Brodtmann 1 (from 1) Pens: Brodtmann 2 (from 2)

Yellow Card: None Red Card: None

D1 - Norfolk Blues 69 Schuylkill River 19

The Blues started the game off with a bang, making big inroads with strong carrying, quick rucks and getting the ball wide whenever they could. The Blues were playing with the whole package, carrying the work from the training field into the game; we played with pace and accuracy and soon scored through **Matt Ball**. SR were made to work very hard at the contact area and soon lost two players through injury, the Blues were trucking it up all over the park. Skipper, **Eric Hagen**, went over following some great work by the pack with **Jake Humphrey** converting. The Blues were dominant at scrum time and the mauling from lineout was very effective, choking the life out of the SR defence. The scores came thick and fast through **Jimmy Smith**, **Justin Menke** (following his review of Law 8), **Doc Irej** and **Eric** bagging his brace. SR scored two first half tries themselves as the Blues became guilty of a bit of showboating and getting away from the ethic that had set the scene for a great start; do the basics right, do your job and work hard!

At the break the Blues were 40 – 12 up, the message to all being “more of the same”, width, pace and “positive” aggression.

Within minutes of the restart **Jeff Jefferson** was sent for a timeout for receipt of a haymaker! The perp’ got his yellow so for the next 10minutes both teams were down to 14. The Blues resumed normal service and **Kevin Marley** went over following some great interplay between forwards and backs, making it a clean sweep for the front row! **Matt Ball** converting. The Blues made some changes in personnel and the end result was the same, SR couldn’t live with the accuracy of our play; it was only when we dropped our standards they got back into the game. **Ben McDougall** was next to score following some great work and blatant “score avoidance” by **Matt Holsopple** following his destructive run! **Eric** went over for his third, **Fuzzy Wagner** went in from close range following a scrum on the 5metre and **Justin** scored another for his brace. SR dissapointingly scored with the last passage of play, but the Blues ran out worthy winners 69 – 19.

Considering the conditions it wasn’t far off a complete performance; some set-piece dominance from the pack and great use of the ball by the backs and a steely display in the contact area by all. We played with a hunger and accuracy and made improvements all over, building on the wins over Pittsburg and Baltimore in the recent weeks.

Man of the Match went to **Eric Hagen** with very honorable mentions for **Matt Ball**, **Dutch Jones**, **Matt Holsopple** and **Chas Muller**.

The Blues visit Pittsburg next weekend with the final matrix game versus Rocky Gorge at Lafayette the week after.

Even with the rain, it was great to see so many spectators at the game, with both the HS team and the Old Boys well represented, thank you!

Final Score: Norfolk Blues 69 Schuylkill River 19

Tries: Ball, Hagen (three), Smith, Menke (two), Irej, Marley, McDougall and Wagner

Cons: Humphrey 5 (from 6), Ball 2 (from 50 Pens: None

Yellow Card: Jeff Jefferson Red Card: None



High School Rugby:

The 2018 High School Boys went down 27 – 17 against Richmond in a game, literally, of two halves. In the second period the Blues played some great rugby and with just 13 men on the field!

It was great to see the boys out supporting the Men XV's this weekend, well done boys!

Youth Rugby Clinic:

The Youth Clinic should run this weekend prior to the HS home game versus Newport News and again next weekend prior to the Rock Gorge double header. If you know of someone who wants to start to play the game, please pass on the details to them, the more players the better.

Blues Fixtures/Results for 2017/18 Season:

Date	Home		Away		D1B
09-Sep-17	Norfolk Blues	43	Potomac Exiles	10	W FF
16-Sep-17	Schuylkill River	28	Norfolk Blues	29	W 15 - 41
23-Sep-17	Washington Irish	18	Norfolk Blues	31	No
30-Sep-17	Norfolk Blues	X	Raleigh	X	L 22 - 50
14-Oct-17	Baltimore-Chesapeake	5	Norfolk Blues	45	L 37 - 17
21-Oct-17	Norfolk Blues	48	Washington Irish	44	No
04-Nov-17	Rocky Gorge	21	Norfolk Blues	17	L 47 - 21
11-Nov-17	Potomac Exiles	17	Norfolk Blues	35	W 26 - 54
03-Mar-18	Naval Academy	41	Norfolk Blues	0	L 51 - 10
10-Mar-18	Norfolk Blues	38	Buffalo	25	W 33 - 17
17-Mar-18	Norfolk Blues	36	Pittsburgh	12	W 39 - 34
24-Mar-18	Norfolk Blues	76	Baltimore-Chesapeake	15	W 57 - 24
07-Apr-18	Norfolk Blues	69	Schuylkill River	19	L 13 - 20
14-Apr-18	Pittsburgh		Norfolk Blues		No
21-Apr-18	Norfolk Blues		Rocky Gorge		Yes
28-Apr-18	MAC D1 Play-off - opponent TBD				Home
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05-May-18	MAC D1 Championship			Moven Park, Leesburg	
19/20 May 18	USA Eastern Regionals			Fortress Obetz OH	
02/03 Jun 18	USA Rugby Championships			Glendale CO	

Start sorting your calendar now! If you are unavailable, let the selectors/coach know in plenty of time

Blues HS Fixtures/Results for 2017/18 Season:

Date	Home		Away	
10-Mar-18	Vienna	32	Norfolk Blues	37
17-Mar-18	Fort Hunt	97	Norfolk Blues	0
24-Mar-18	Richmond Strikers		Norfolk Blues	
14-Apr-18	Norfolk Blues		Newport News	
28-Apr-18	Benedictine College Prep		Norfolk Blues	
05-May-18	Springfield-West End		Norfolk Blues	

The Blues Vision

“As a premier Rugby Football Club in the United States of America, the Norfolk City Blues will promote a sustainable brand as a cornerstone of East Coast rugby based on a winning tradition for all ages”.