

Ath frozen out by Penguins



FLYING PENGUIN: Even with a Penguin on his back Ollie Peck still manages to score



DIVING OVER: Scott Grant scores

CENTENARY MATCH

BEDFORD ATH 41
INTERNATIONAL PENGUINS XV 57

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RUGBY fans were treated to a try fest as Bedford Athletic celebrated 100 years of existence yesterday afternoon.

The Ath capped off a splendid centenary year by scoring the first and the last of the 18 tries, but unfortunately the Penguins proved to be a little too strong for the hosts on the day.

Mouritz Botha switched back to being an Ath boy for the day and he seemed to thoroughly enjoy going head-to-head with several Blues team mates who made up half of the Penguins starting line-up.

The crowd didn't have to wait long for the first try of the day and it came in the third minute courtesy of Ath's inside centre Phil Elphick who linked up marvellously with half back pairing Ollie Peck and Ashley Tapper - who then converted.

From there the Penguins took charge running in three tries through Toramy Turner, Jack Wrigglesworth and Craig Joiner, Turner converting just one.

Ath responded with a converted try when flanker Scott Grant powered his way over. Joiner had popped him the ball but the Penguins kept ahead

through the first of two tries by Jimmy Graham just two minutes later which was converted.

The hosts wouldn't lie down though and lively scrum half Peck added a try in the 31st minute.

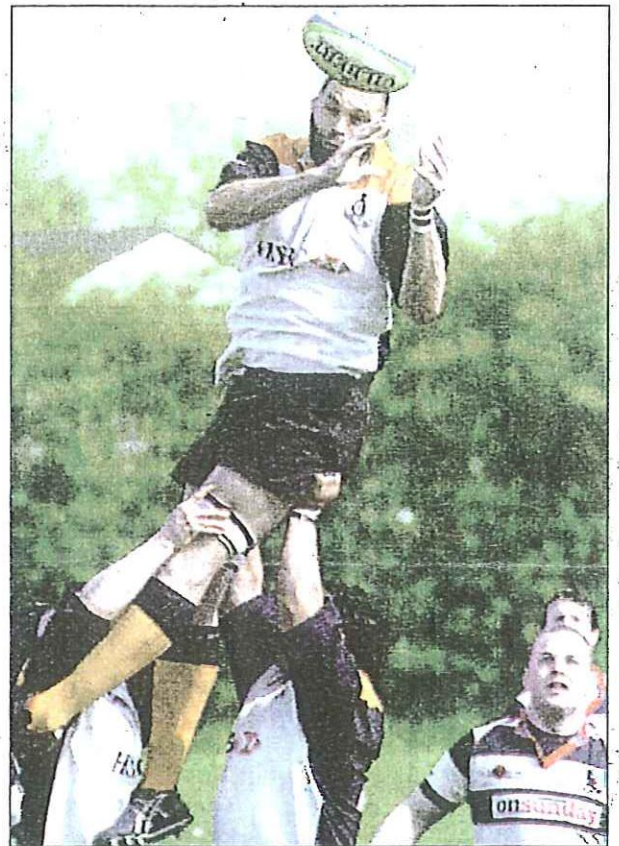
Then the Penguins really stretched their legs running in five tries either side of half time without reply. Luton's Harry Peck got the ball rolling before Marc Comb, Matt Allen, Graham and then Comb again all scored with Turner converting three of them.

At 19-55 the Ath looked out of it, but they never gave in and in the 57th minute hooker Ollie Wills went over to score with John MacDonough responding immediately for the Penguins.

Botha capped off a good display with a converted try of his own before Roman Piotrowski touched down for the guests to make it 31-67.

The Ath finished on a high though running in two fine tries in the final five minutes. The superb Elphick scored a second when the Ath's forwards dazzled their opposites with a series of pick-and-go rucks, the centre scooping in the ball at the end to touch down in the corner.

As the 80 minutes ran out at Putnoe Woods the Ath completed an entertaining game with the final try courtesy of Grant who took in the ball following a quick tap penalty and dived through two Penguins to score and round off a splendid day of rugby.



P-P-P-PICK UP A PENGUIN: Line out action