

Match Report - Georgia Gardner

Sussex CB Women vs Kent CB Women

Sunday 7th May at Brighton RFC

Score: Sussex 15 Kent 27

On Sunday 7th May, the highly anticipated match between Kent Women and Sussex Women took place at Brighton RFC. The stage was set for a thrilling encounter with a 2pm kick off time and a light coastal breeze. The match saw many first-time debuts for Kent, with several teams from across the county playing for their county for the first time.

The game got off to a great start for Kent, with Beth Ryan (number 6) stealing the first line out jump. Alisha Coulson (number 12) scored the first try of the match just seven minutes in, giving Kent an early lead of 5-0. It was clear from the outset that Kent's fitness and determination would be a dominant force in the game.

Sarah Miller (number 7) made some crucial try-saving tackles to prevent Sussex from breaking through. However, 20 minutes into the game, Sussex managed to score a classic try through the hands, with number 13 securing five points in the corner. Kent's captain, Caroline Jordan (number 8), quickly responded with a tap and go on the 22, resulting in Rhiannon Powell (number 11) scoring in her first debut. Bex Goodwin's (number 1) strength solidified Kent's domination, scoring another try and leaving Kent in the lead at 15-5. However, just before half-time, Sussex managed to score another try, bringing the score to 15-10 in Kent's favour.

As the sun swept over Brighton's picturesque rugby ground, it was clear that fitness and mentality would be crucial in the second half. Rhiannon (number 11) raced up the wing with a clear overlap, off-loading to fullback Mal Burniston, who ran a pristine support line resulting in a tremendous try beneath the posts. Alisha (number 12) converted the try, bringing the score to 22-10 in Kent's favour.

Jessica Pettafor (number 14) relentlessly defended her wing, challenging the Sussex side with her pace and stopping several players from breaking the line. Kent's domination of the scrums was also a key factor in their success. However, Sussex managed to score another try, bringing the score to 22-15 to Kent.

Yet, with her fierce determination and hand-off skills, Alisha (12) scored yet again, bringing the score up to 27-15. For the first game of the campaign, it was an absolute success for all those involved, and Kent were able to secure the win, leaving the final score at 27-15.

Coaches Andy Miller (Forwards) and Pete Macalister (Backs) can rest reassured that Kent have much more to give in the next game. The Forward of the Match was awarded to the unstoppable Sarah Miller (7) who was absolutely everywhere around the park. Back of the Match was awarded to Jess Pettafor (14) for her try-saving tackles and constant gain line breaks.

Congratulations to everybody involved, the players, the supporters, the coaches, and of course, manager Katie Gent who has worked incredibly hard behind the scenes for this campaign to go ahead.

Next week, the team will be back at Aylesford RFC, where Kent will take on Essex. Kick off 3pm.