

Rugby Union Around the Grounds – Saturday 15 May

1st XV:

The Round 3 match up with a confident Villanova shaped as a critical game for the season. The home ground advantage would be something that Villanova would exploit as they attempted to upset Ashgrove. An emphatic 50 – 15 victory was an outstanding response by a side improving each round. Villanova tried hard but had no answer for a relentless attack that found holes through the middle and space out wide. A feature of the game was the support play through the middle with the front row of Gould, Wilson-Hodge and Harper proving a formidable force around the ruck. Backed up by direct, hard running from Rasleigh (12), Dudgeon (13) and Tasman (14) the flow of points was matched in both halves. Gavin (4) had a barnstorming game and was well supported by Valentine (8) from the back of the scrum. Ludwick had a dynamic game and was heavily involved from the wing. A hallmark of the victory was the energy and pace of play the team generated when the ball was in play. Positive attacking rugby was a reward for the hard yards and solid preparation put in leading up to the game.

3rd XV

With three forwards unable to play the thirds bench did well to step up. Improved rucking allowed our backs to run and we had some reward from kicks. Best on ground Sam Cheetham. 2 points Jackson Munn and 1 point James O'Connor. Improved games from Carl Martin, Lachy Butler and Isaac Gay. Defence on our line needs work. MCA victory 29-19.

4th XV:

Boys are well into their rhythm now, with another defensive shut out the highlight. Strong hitting by the forwards together with pilfer activity from the likes of Henry Howse made it difficult for Villa to put anything together. Only the dreaded double whistle allowed them near our line. We need to be better at recognising and handling that. Credit again to Jim McCall where, with our line under siege, we see him again saving the donuts with his dark turnover.

In attack credit goes to the halves Angus Brown and Hugh McCann for the opening progressions and shifts allowing the backs to cut them up wide. 8 tries in all to the backs, with 2 for the forwards. Alex Marshall showing some quality attacking skills from fullback for his double.

In big personal efforts, no better hard running than Eli Nichols – bagging three tries, work required for every one of them. Referee sparring though not so good; team will revisit at training.

Line out was our best to date in both execution and tactical reads; unfortunately, we copped some tough calls – and our management of this is a bit of a work on for this week. Special note on that 12-man mob lineout, looked promising but unfortunately Ollie King lost his feet in our maul push; double knots in the shoelaces next week, and we'll be better.

In wrapping, great to see two new try scorers on the board – with Ryan Watts crashing over on a scrum set piece, and then Andreas Roska opening his account by storming over in the final minute. Looked like Andreas was going to finish the day in style with a conversion of his own try, but chose instead to aim 20m to the left of the posts. Work On.

5th XV

The Ashgrove 5ths cast a lonely sight on the Indooroopilly fields on Saturday, the only Blue and Gold to be seen for miles around. Outnumbered and behind enemy lines the boys went through their pregame rituals. ATC scored in the 15th minute and converted. But it was this try that would wake the sleeping giant.

Ashgrove quickly responded 3 minutes later through Zac Brown who has looked dangerous crossing the advantage line all season. The lads began to 'dig in' what was to become an arm wrestle of back and forth. ATC scored again in the 23rd minute in broken play. The boys were again on their heels, but each time ATC scored Ashgrove seemed to lift and steel their resolve.

Cooper Hafiz crashed over just before half time to leave the scores at 12-10 Ashgrove, separated only by a conversion. Ashgrove rallied in the second half playing a far more disciplined and organised game. Tom Stephens who was cleared to play minutes before the whistle led the hungry piggies as he does from the front whilst James West directed his troops around the paddock with his usual effective success. Ethan Willman crossed 10 minutes into the second half in a set backline move. Tom Gibson also crossed not long after taking most of the wind out of a depleted ATC sail.

The Fighting Fifths continue to improve at every fixture and are learning and growing as a group. Yet to be properly tested, with some strong matches still ahead in the draw, only time will tell if their undefeated record will remain intact. This humble supporter hopes so.

The boys sang their team song loudly to the long faces of the ATC crowd and players.

6th XV:

The 6th XV had a bad day out against the Villanova 5th's, getting beaten at the breakdown regularly and having little continuity when we actually held onto the ball. Plenty to work on this week as we prepare to play Padua 5ths in our round 4 fixture. Miles Kilpatrick was a stand out on the wing with his aggressive tackling and new addition Tom Perrin played well whilst he was on the field. This week at training will focus on our physicality at the breakdown and some combinations within the team that haven't yet clicked. Whilst we all seem to be enjoying yourselves, hopefully some wins in upcoming games will add to this as we seek improvement in all aspects of our rugby.

8th XV:

In another typical, bruising and hard-fought local derby, the players provided a free-flowing entertaining spectacle for the early morning crowd. Both teams showed frequent flashes of skill with players run off their feet in a see-sawing game. Eventually, the 8ths began to assert their dominance and with the referee's final whistle, had achieved a 6 try to 1 victory.

Try scorers: Alex Elliot, Lachlan O'Neil, Ethan Tallis, Jackson Tallis, Finn De Nino and Cale Innes. Harry Dyer converted 4 tries.

9th XV:

After a draw against the 6ths, the mighty 9ths were eager to take on their biggest rivals in the 8ths early on Saturday morning. What looked to be a very even contest early on, was soon put to bed by the 8ths after they ran in try after try to win 38-7. Nick Ryan with the only try for the 9ths whilst Harry Groves impressed with many damaging run

10A:

Each week the boys continue to improve at different aspects of the game and with their ability to control the match. Our defence was solid once again with Villanova only crossing our line once after some poor errors gave them easy field position. Jack Andrews managed the team very well at #10 in the first half, while Ned Rosenbrock and Bailey Caplick were the usual workhorses of the team. Gino Gagliardi and Zane Seeto had some moments of brilliance with great input from the wing with Zane's sideline conversion on a muddy field a big highlight. Man of the Match goes to Ned Rosenbrock. A big week coming up for the boys.

10B:

While Zander Knoetze was setting up his camping tent, the remaining 10B's had a dominate display against Villanova, even though they left 20-30 points out there, though handing errors. The piggies laid a great platform with Luka Manahan and Sean Browne continuously bending the line and creating fast ball for our backs to play off. Ollie Lee was everywhere doing the hard grinding work. Hamish McEarchen was outstanding on debut for the 10B's and will look to continue his good form leading into the Padua game. Highlight of the game was Sam "The Butcher" Brassington, had an outstanding defensive read, blindsiding the opposing 13 and cut him in half creating a turnover in the process.

10D:

The mighty 10D's put in a gutsy effort to topple a strong SPC 10B's team. They struggled to connect as a team at the start but once raring and 5 points down the boys started to lift. Defence was outstanding and the forward ball running from both forwards and backs proved too good for the SPC side. All in all we come out victorious never stepping off the throttle coming away with 6 different try scorers in what was a great team performance and a great show of true ticker in the MCA jersey. Well done boys. Score: 36-5

10E:

They were up 12-0 at half, and we were well and truly in it. We got 2 yellows in second half because of high tackles which opened the flood gates. We played great in the first half but we lacked any firepower in the backs, with the loss of Chris who had been very valuable. We're showing good signs here and there but we can't perform for a full game.

9A:

In what was probably their least accurate performance of the season to date, the 9A's had a clear victory over a plucky Villanova by 33 – 10. Uncharacteristic errors meant that the Ashgrove side seemed to be continually handing over possession around the half-way mark and thus putting themselves under pressure. When the side did maintain possession in the attacking half they invariably scored. Joel Drew scored two scintillating tries where he flirted with the touchline but through strength & speed, he managed to dot the ball down twice. Taavi Upchurch carried the ball strongly through the middle and made extra metres due to good footwork. Lachie McCall was like a cattle dog as he barked orders at the back of the pack and tried to keep the momentum going and the attitude positive. During the week the forwards practiced their driving maul on the "sled", which was recently repaired by Mr Byrne. And perhaps a highlight for some was the 30-metre driving maul from a lineout

which resulted in a fantastic 5 pointer. While the boys were disappointed at the end of the game with their performance, it should be remembered that they still managed to control their frustrations and win comprehensively. Positive signs for the weeks ahead.

9B:

On the back of a bye week there was all the reason for the boys not to be ready for the game, this proved not to be the case right from the kick-off. The forwards established a strong platform against an unknown Villa side, our powerful forwards in the likes of Sean Bright, Jai Jarro, Will Anderson and Pedro Hoffman be strong at the breakdown, allowing for clean ball to the backs. Captain Nate Roberts and Matt Gibson lead the team around the park well and provided strong ball for the outside backs with Remi Versace and Dan Goddard crossing for multiple tries.

Pat Jewell, James Mulchay and Adam Burnell were strong in their carries and made a number of pivotal line-breaks. Lachlan Dale and Lachie Manning were the beneficiaries of some skilful ball- work from Gibson and Harper however their direct play and ability to take space was one the reasons why we scored so many points, Jake Benson and Jacob Harper were strong defensively with Benno provided good service in the line-outs and Harper not only ball-playing nicely but making a number of bone-crunching tackles.

Overall a strong performance from the boys eventually winning 55-0. Points are fantastic but it was their ability to hold out the team which impressed me the most. Plenty of room to improve however a great result for the college.

9E:

A terrific team effort for the boys. Iona was physical early but our boys showed resilience and matched their intensity. Skipper Alex Aplet and Tyrell Wolmby led the way scoring two tries each while Tom Reck ensured we were going up in 7s, converting with the boot frequently.

8A:

Ashgrove 58 (10 tries; 4 conv.) defeated VILLA 5 (1 try)

A very focussed warm-up saw the team well prepared for the clash. Despite this, another slow, undisciplined start to the game saw us concede a try to Villa to be down 5 nil after 5 minutes. It took a few more minutes, but the boys found their form, worked back into the structure that works on our strengths, and hit back with a try of our own.

Once again the forward pack dominated set-play – particularly the scrum, taking 2 tight heads this week. The lineout is working well, but both areas still have improvements to be made. The backs found their rhythm and once again found space out wide to get in behind the defensive line. Good support and running at space provided plenty of scoring opportunities, with some brilliant off loads resulting in tries on at least 2 occasions.

Strong running Elliot Aldridge racked up a hat trick of tries amongst the ten scored by the team. In addition to his line kicking, flanker James Milner provided some penetrating runs as well as successfully stealing Villa's line out ball on numerous occasions.

In the midfield, and out wide, Sean Green and Xavier Howard both created numerous breaks, with excellent footwork and impressive acceleration.

All in all, an improved performance by the team, especially in the 2nd half. The boys know we can't have a slow start against Padua this week, and are committed to keep improving each week. An important game that will be a true test of our Marist 8A character.

8D:

The boys had a hard game against Padua. The boys showed improvement in their sliding defense and one on one tackles which lead to keeping the Padua side to nil while only playing with 14 players. With the lack of players, the boys were able to finish the game with a great win of 34 to 0.

7A:

A game that was played in the correct spirit saw MCA's 7A team take on Villa on the McMahan Oval.

The Villa boys came out with a very high intensity and it was matched by the Marist players. Villa scored quickly in the far corner and the scored stayed that way until just before half time when Villa went in again. Marist fought hard and reined the lead back in through an intercept by Pat Travers. It was the last time that the Marist team could get over the line going down eventual losers 29-7.

Special mention to Jonah Wilde who, as always puts in 100%. Also, Pat Travers and Jed Cole who played well above their weight were tireless around the field.

7B:

Much anticipation surrounded this week's encounter v Villanova College.

For many of the team this was their first opportunity to play Rugby for MCA on McMahan. A memorable occasion. The sheds were made ready, the team assembled, inspirational Captain **Max Russo** delivered his pre match address and led the boys down the race exploding on to McMahan. The scene was set.

Defending the Barracks end of McMahan and with first use, the ball was spread wide to the right moving crisply through the hands of the backline to finally hit the chest of flying winger **Rhyan Pears**. Rhyan ran some 70 metres outpacing the entire opposition to score un-touched under the posts. The crowd erupted! The start we wanted. Fortunately, **Rhyan's father** was in attendance and humbly shared in the moment. Apparently Rhyan's blinding speed is genetic!

Astute kicker **Ben Sinclair** converted and MCA led 7 nil. Villanova, although shocked, rebounded and scored soon thereafter. Steadily Villa gained the ascendancy by completely dominating the breakdown and with efficient use of the ball in the execution of basic Rugby skills-draw/pass. An impressive team deserving of victory.

Special mention: Jude Dearling (Vice Captain and Half-Back)-his performance was special. Intelligent and courageous. Boys, follow Jude's lead-you can do it.

Time to take the **Leap of Faith!**

Thank you; Isaac Mc Donell for acting as Team Manager-Your continued commitment to MCA Rugby is recognised and appreciated.

We now reset: see you on Thursday at training.

7C:

The tight unit that has become the 7C's recorded another fine win against some determined opposition from Villanova. The forwards began the game by establishing a real dominance over the Villa pack and providing the platform for 2 converted tries – to **Oscar Tully** – our pocket rocket captain and **Harry Franklin** – the Mr reliable of the team. The vigour and energy shown by the team at the breakdown continues to impress and hopefully the boys realise the benefit of all those contact drills we do at training!

Villanova were able to get two tries in the last 10 minutes or so of the game through some rare displays of ill-discipline by the Ashgrove boys. The boys were on the receiving end of some questionable play by the opposition but this must be the job of the referee to deal with – the best reply is points on the board.

Henry Waters continues to be a real workhorse of the team – get on his shoulder boys ready for that pass! Special mention must go to our loose forwards, **Albie Betteridge**, **George Haling** and **Fletcher Murray** who play with such intelligence and focus each game. Fletcher's quick thinking enabled the team's third try – seemingly fashioning a gem from all the chaos.

Luke Speedy and **Oscar Tully** continue to provide a vital link to our backline and Luke continues to be a most reliable converter of tries – 100% on Saturday! **Luke Walker** is as always, a most reliable pair of hands at the back of the team – what a talented and focused young man!

James Milasis' defence on Saturday was outstanding as usual.

George Johnson and **Aurelius Ferdinands**, when square and determined, really give the team great momentum.

Harry Prole is a real treasure to have in the team because of his level-headed and mature execution of all that is required of him.

The one area the team must focus on till the end of the season is passing and looking for support. At least 5-6 tries were left begging on Saturday because of passes not given or being ill-directed. A team that wins so much ball at the breakdown must believe that they can improve in this simple but vital skill.

Thanks again to all our wonderful support from the parents and carers who make sure the boys turn out so well each Saturday.

7D:

The Marist 7D's suffered a tough loss against a strong Villanova side going down 4 tries to 1. It was a slow start for the boys having to defend for the majority of the first half. It was an impressive effort to only have let in 3 tries against barnstorming forwards and elusive backs. Although they were down by 3 tries, the boys did not give up in the second half, holding their own and even scoring a sensational try of their own through a blind side run off the

back of the scrum by Toby McCormack. There are promising signs for a successful remainder of the season.

7E:

Boys played really well against a tough opponent, after a slow start with a lot of defence, kicking to space with Blake Whitman and good chasing allowed some pressure to be converted at the end of the first half. After the break the boys played with a lot more aggression with Pat Bach and James McGuire leading the forwards with hard running. Good defence by Jack Pye and a strong run up the sideline by Jude Atkinson put the boys right back in the game. A try to Liam Shay was a good end to a good game.

6B:

The 6B's came up against a physical and skilful Villanova side who managed to sneak away with a 10 – 0 victory over our boys. In a game that was tightly contested, the boys continued to work their way toward the try line, only to be agonisingly turned away again and again. With great resolve, the B's did not drop their heads as their never die attitude was clear throughout the entire match. Each week the team continues to improve, as a second win for the season looks right around the corner. Player of the match – Sam Russo

5B:

The boys put in a fantastic effort and the game went down to the wire. Both teams were well drilled and some silky Marist attack as well as some individual efforts from Tom Casey kept us in the game. The team should be proud of the effort.