**Lisburn Rugby**

Lisburn Return To Winning Ways

Lisburn 20 - Grosvenor 16

The Smiley Monroe sponsored Lisburn 1st XV returned to winning ways at Blaris last Saturday with an excellent victory over Grosvenor who had beaten them comphrensively on their own ground on the Saturday before Christmas. There was doubt as to whether the fixture would be played at all because of the snow covered pitches but thanks to a tremendous effort by players, coaches and the Under 18s, the main pitch was cleared and marked by kick off time.

This was a game dominated by the two packs and for all of the first quarter there was little in it with just a penalty apiece to show from their efforts with Chris Knox for Lisburn and Peter Davison for Grosvenor getting the points. The Grosvenor backline were looking good when they got go forward ball and on thirty minutes winger Johnston showed the Lisburn defence a clean pair of heels to scamper over in the corner for a well taken try. Davison again converted with a great kick to put the visitors into a 3-10 lead. The same player extended that lead to 3-13 just on halftime with another penalty and once again it looked as if Lisburn were going to be on the wrong end of the scoreline.

Nevertheless, Lisburn had been playing with a new found confidence of late and having got a number of their injured personnel back into the team, the second half showed a huge improvement. The scrum started to turn the screw on Grosvenor and within ten minutes the margin was reduced to 8-13 from a well executed pushover try. All of the game was now being played inside the visitor’s 22 metre line and with the Lisburn pack camped there and winning plenty of ball from the set pieces and rucks it was inevitable that a further score would come. This it did in the shape of a penalty try after referee Chris Russell had lost patience with the Grosvenor defence’s persistent infringements. Full back Chris Knox converted to put Lisburn into a 15-13 lead.

This setback seemed to waken Grosvenor up again and a Davison penalty from in front of the posts gave them back the lead at 15-16 with just ten minutes left to play. The Lisburn forwards were still going well and none more so than Pete Graham, Chris O’Brien and Mark Gilkinson, urged on by their Captain Matt Edgar. However, the Lisburn backs were being marshalled well all game by half backs Nicky Craig and Ross Edgar until the latter’s input was ended with an unfortunate injury. Austin Irwin moved in from the centre and was replaced by sub Ryan Hill. In a rampaging final play, Lisburn got the winning try from Ryan Hill after the Lisburn pack had once again put Grosvenor under pressure. This win will give Lisburn great heart for the remaining fixtures as they try to claw their way out of the crowded relegation zone. This game was sponsored by Loftus Properties Ltd and the pre-match lunch was held in memory of the late Brian Stevenson, a long time member of the club. ‘Stevie’ would have approved of the result.