

This game carried more weight than would be immediately recognised as the winners would remain in contention in the top half of C1 and the losers would stay in the bottom five where thoughts of relegation would begin to emerge. Carrick started off with great energy and enthusiasm and looked a well organised outfit but the home defence held firm and gradually grew into the game. There were raised eyebrows when the referee awarded a penalty to Grosvenor inside the Carrick 10 metre line and the decision to go for goal seemed questionable. What do we know as Adam Skelton blasted the ball high between the uprights for a 3-0 lead to the home side. Carrick were beginning to get on the wrong side of the referee and when they illegally whipped the scrum round another penalty was awarded to Grosvenor in a similar place to the first one. Adam Skelton proved that his first shot was no fluke as he bisected the posts again with a lot to spare, 6-0 to Grosvenor.

Carrick were a little shocked by the physicality of the home side and when a speculative clearance kick failed to find touch, good hands put the ball into Cameron Knell's hands, he outstripped the defence to score a 70 metre counter attack try out wide on the right. Adam Skelton slotted over the difficult conversion to give Grosvenor a 13-0 lead. To compound their problems, a high tackle on Jordan Brown resulted in a yellow card for the Carrick centre . Almost immediately they wandered offside and Adam Skelton hit his fourth successful kick to increase the lead to 16-0. At this stage, Grosvenor lost the services of LHP Mark Rainey with James McMaster replacing him. Grosvenor were fortunate not to get a yellow card as a high tackle under our posts was spotted. Carrick opted for the scrum and an intricate move between their NO 8, SH and FB , resulted in the latter crashing over for a try, which was converted, leaving the score at 16-7 to Grosvenor. This try at such a crucial stage of the game may have given Carrick hope for a comeback second half.

This looked possible as the home side started to infringe and Carrick pressed harder. However, the visitors were unable to turn this pressure into points and as Grosvenor learned how to control the ball better, Carrick were chasing the game. Another yellow card was shown to their NO7, when he tackled a player off the ball. This effectively ruined the game as a contest as Adam Skelton maintained his 100% kicking record as he slotted over the resultant penalty. Despite losing Matthew Elliott, Grosvenor were able to see the game out on the attack. Win 19-7.

This was a physical encounter and credit to both defences in keeping the try count to a bare minimum. Mark Cartmill and Andrew Kelly played well up front as did Ben Davies. Jordan Brown continues to improve each game and is a real prospect but MOM must go to Adam Skelton, whose impeccable goalkicking was the main difference between the teams.