

CBS Canterbury Div 1 - New Brighton Too Big and Too Fast for Promising Students

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New Brighton's 38-3 win against University at Ilam Fields in the second-round of the CBS Canterbury Cup on Saturday was an example of how important size and experience are in senior rugby.

Ahead 28-3 at the break thanks to four blistering tries, the Seasiders were too big and strong for a promising University team that will only get better.

This was almost, as the cliché goes, a game of two halves: New Brighton's domination in the first half made it inevitable, however, that the visitors would be the first holders of the Dick Hockley Memorial Trophy.

Yet University (thanks to a calming half-time speech by their coach Steve Surrige) rallied in the second half and up until almost the end of the match was competing stride for stride with New Brighton.

New Brighton was able to dominate because of the size of their pack and their ability to maintain possession.

Forwards Jarrod Ward (until he retired injured), Evan Seymour, Mitch Alcock and Aaron McCoy were quite outstanding, producing a platform for their backs to attack. Second-five Jamyn Keats was particularly strong out wide, finishing an almost end-to-end try.

University showed (especially in the first 10 minutes and in the second half) that they will be competitive this season. With eight first-timers in their side, their development will be closely watched.

Flanker Tyler Hammond and number eight Sam Toulmin were particularly prominent, while full-back Sam Sherlaw was very good from full-back.

For the Seasiders it was another good performance in patches, although not for the full 80 minutes. Last week they were strong in the second 40 against High School Old Boys, while this week they slowed down in the second 40.

New Brighton co-coach John Seque says that it is inevitable that at this time of the season teams won't put in the complete performance.

"We are obviously looking for the full 80 minute-performance, but in general we were happy with the way we played today. We are trying to put in place a particular game-plan and that is obviously going to take some time."

There is a lot to like about this New Brighton side. They seem to have a good spirit within their group, while they also seem to have great depth. Evan Seymour has been a good addition. They appear to have placed great emphasis on their goal-kicking.

University coach Steve Surrige says that his side was beaten at the ruck in the first half and that meant they were unable to "get their hands on the pill". He is however encouraged by certain aspects of their game, especially the pressure they put on the New Brighton lineout.

This weekend New Brighton takes on Christchurch in the match of the round at Rawhiti, while University has the bye.