

Dartmouth Avoids Upset at Harvard

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Dartmouth beat Harvard 31-21 Saturday in Cambridge, Mass. The Big Green controlled the first meeting between these teams in Hanover, NH three weeks previous with a 60-0 victory, but the Crimson showed that they were much improved in an exciting match.

Dartmouth had the run of play early in the game, controlling field position and forcing Harvard to play out of its own half. Following a Harvard turnover, Dartmouth showed excellent transition play with freshman flyhalf Parker Gilbert releasing sophomore All-American Madison Hughes down the sideline, and Hughes dished off to junior wing Kevin Clark for the score between the posts. Hughes' conversion was successful, putting Dartmouth up 7-0 early in the first half.

Dartmouth quickly struck again after junior flanker Neil Greene blocked a kick as Harvard attempted to exit its own zone. Hughes put in the try off the turnover, pushing Dartmouth's lead to 12-0. Sophomore Peter Savarese struck next after running a great crash line off the first receiver, trundling in from 10 meters out. The conversion was good and Dartmouth finished the half with a 19-0 lead.

In the second half, Dartmouth found early success but was unable to sustain its scoring as the

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Harvard pack began to take control of the game. Clark started off the scoring with a try in the corner. Hughes' conversion was good and Dartmouth appeared to be in control with a 26-0 lead.

But the Crimson hung tough and were able to control much of the possession following the try with strong forwards play and productive runs off the back of the ruck. Dartmouth contributed to the Crimson success with poor tackling and impatient penalties. Harvard was able to put in three tries from its forward pack as the second half wore on. All the conversions were successful, and Dartmouth's lead was whittled down to five with 10 minutes remaining. But eventually the Big Green found a hole in the Harvard defense as junior lock Ned Kingsley busted through the line for a try from 20 meters out. The kick was unsuccessful, and the Big Green escaped Cambridge with a 31-21 victory.

Captain Michael Burbank was disappointed with the team's performance saying, "We all need to elevate our play. We came out unenthusiastically and without much fire." Burbank pointed out stalwart performances from Hughes and Savarese as positives on the day and emphasized the importance of the Yale game this coming weekend as an opportunity to improve.

Next Saturday Dartmouth Rugby takes on Yale at home on Brophy Field at 1 PM.