Canada's under 20 men's team has beaten Zimbabwe at the Junior World Rugby Trophy in Tbilisi, Georgia, scoring an eight try 49-23 victory to claim third place in Pool B.

The match, played in scorching conditions of 35 C - saw a lethargic first half effort by the Candians, who were adrift 8-7 at the half. Alberta's Jeff Hassler scored the only Canadian try of the first half and had two on the day - his second straight two try effort after he scored a pair in the 30-15 loss to Japan on Saturday.

Despite the big victory, first year coach for the U20's Mike Shelley freely admitted the opening forty minutes of rugby was not up to standard.

"It was the worst first half of rugby I have seen us play," he said after the game. "We were giving (Zimbabwe) possession. We did get one break away try in the first half but we just couldn't keep hold of the ball in the first half."

But at the break Shelley hit the reset button and got the team back on task - with one adjustment being the return to some basic approaches to possession and engagement against the opposition.

"We decided to tighten up the game in the second half," Shelley explained. "We didn't force any elaborate passing movements - just play some direct, over the gain line rugby."

In the second frame tries from Hassler, Michael Fuailefau, Cam Pierce, Captain Tyler Ardron, Lucien Nel and prop Brandon Tennant saw the Canadians pull away with the big victory.

The match was scoreless until the half hour mark when Hassler hit for his first try of the day. Andrew Ferguson converted the score - to make the score 7-0.

Zimbabwe wing Justin Coles dotted down just before the half - and coupled with a Sean Linfield penalty kick Zimbabwe took a slim 8-7 lead into the break.

In the second half it took Canada just six minutes to get Okotok's Hassler across for his brace. With the Andrew Ferguson extras - Canada took back the lead 14-11.

Going to his bench helped with some fresh legs as well, but it was the effort of 19 year old Jeff Hassler that really has him excited.

"He scored two tries today, but he probably had about twenty-five big runs," said Shelley of the exciting University of Saskatchewan Huskies running back. "He's like a fast paced winger playing like an extra forward as well. He just carries it up and carries it up.

"(Jeff) very rarely makes any errors. He is still pretty raw on the rugby front but it is a pleasure to have someone like him in the team."

Zimbabwe scrum-half Charles JiJi got his team back in front in a minute later scoring a try - but the conversion was missed - Zimbabwe 16 - Canada 14.

At 56 minutes Victoria centre Michael Fuailefau solved the stingy Zimbabwe defense - giving Canada a lead it would not relinquish for the remainder of the contest. Carlin Hamstra kicked the conversion and Canada held a five point lead 21-16.

At the one hour mark second row Cam Pierce of Kelowna touched down - extending the Canadian lead to 28-16 with the Hamstra conversion.

Three minutes later Zimbabwe's JiJi continued to pressure Canada, crossing for his second of the half - to bring the score to 28-23 with fifteen minutes left.

Team Captain Tyler Adron then got his second try in two games - driving across in the 68th minute. With the Hamstra conversion Canada held a comfortable 35-23 lead.

Replacement scrum-half Lucien Nel put another try aross in the 72nd minute as the strong Canadian effort began to stress the defensive structure of the Zimbabweans as the score ballooned to 42-23.

Quebec's front row phenom Brandon Tennant got on the scoresheet late in the game with his first international try to round out the Canadian scoring at 49-23.

Canada lost its opening two matches of the tournament to Georgia, (38-9) and Japan, (30-15) and now play Russia - third place finisher in Pool A - on Saturday for the fifth place play-off at the tournament.

Other matches on the day saw Uruguay beat the USA 33-5 and Samoa take down the Russians 50-14. In the match to decide top spot in Pool B - Japan got by the host Georgians 29-14, finishing the round robin portion of the tournament undefeated at 3-0. Japan plays Samoa to crow the tournament champions on Saturday as well.

Canada: 49 (7)
Tries: Jeff Hassler (2), Michael Fuailefau, Cam Pierce, Tyler Ardron, Lucien Nel, Brandon Tennant,
Conversions: Andrew Ferguson (2), Carlin Hamstra (5)

Russia: 23 (8)
Tries: Justin Coles, Charles JiJi (2),
Penalties: Sean Linfield
Conversions: Tommy Nelson (2)

The Canadian U20 men's team is supported in part by the funding efforts of the Canadian Rugby Foundation. If you would like to help support young rugby players in their development consider donating to the CRF - visit www.canadianrugbyfoundation.ca .

Canada team vs Zimbabwe
1. Scott Macleod - Cowichan RFC (Cowichan, BC)
2. Andrew Cho - Calgary Saracens RFC /University of Calgary (Calgary, AB)
3. Graeme Mahar - Balmy Beach RFC / University of Guelph (Toronto, ON)
4. John Humphries Castaway Wanderers / Western University (Victoria, BC)
5. Cameron Pierce - Kelowna Crows / University of Victoria (Kelowna, BC)
6. Evan Olmstead - Capilano RFC (West Vancouver, BC)
7. Matt Kelly - Toronto Scottish RFC / Queen's University (Toronto, ON)
8. Tyler Ardron - Brantford RFC / McMaster University (Brantford, ON)
9. Andrew Ferguson - Oakville Crusaders RFC /McMaster University (Oakville, ON)
10. Carlin Hamstra - Cowichan RFC / University of British Columbia (Cowichan, BC)
11. Jeff Hassler - Foothills Lions RFC /University of Saskatchewan (Calgary, AB)
12. Patrick Parfrey - Swilers RFC / Memorial University of Newfoundland (St. John's, NFLD)
13. Michael Fuailefau - Castaway Wanderers RFC / University of Victoria (Victoria, BC)
14. Kurtis Appeldoorn - Abbotsford RFC / University of Fraser Valley (Abbottsford, BC)
15. Patrick Kay Cowichan RFC (Cowichan, BC)

Replacements
16. Casey Cavers - Cowichan RFC / University of Victoria (Cowichan, BC)
17. Jordan Power - Dogs RFC / Memorial University of Newfoundland (St. John's, NFLD)
18. Brandon Tennant - Montreal Irish, (Montreal, PQ) for Mahar (52 Mins)
19. Cameron Stones Ajax Wanderers RFC / McMaster University (Ajax, ON) for Humphries (52 mins)
20. Dustin Dobravsky - Shawnigan Lake School /University of Victoria (Regina, SK) for Pierce (69 mins)

21. Lucien Nel - Cowichan RFC / University of Victoria (Cowichan, BC) for Ferguson (48 mins)
22. Dylan Mundy Oshawa Vikings RFC / Brock University (Oshawa, ON) for Appeldoorn (73 mins)

Coach Mike Shelley
Manager Des Lynch
Graeme Moffat. Assistant coach
Andy Evans. S & C coach/ Video Analyst
Mike Cook. Therapist
Alastair Poulson. Team Doctor