

Lomas Open Up the Floodgates, Retain Palmer Cup

By Stefan Schulson

Vancouver, B.C. - In what can only be described as a one-sided affair, the Meralomas traveled to Burnaby Lake and proceeded to take all three games from the Lakers by a cumulative 179-20 score, retaining the Palmer Cup for the 8th straight year.

The third division match opened the day, and the Lomas' Delta Force got things off on the right foot with a 26-20 victory, by far the closest game of the day. It was in the first division game that the points began to pile up. The Lomas flew out of the gates with center Mike Oketch touching down for the first of his two tries of the game less than 10 minutes into the proceedings. After that, the points were scored seemingly at will. The score at the half stood at 45-0, and the second frame offered no respite for the beleaguered Laker's defense as the Lomas added another 45 points to their total, for a final score of 90-0. Try scorers included Oketch (2), Derek Townsend (2), Albert Dunford (2), Markus Keinhorst (2), Zack Wittenburg (2), Dave Stephen, Bryan Tyrer, and Mark Farrally.

In the premier game, the Lomas toyed with the Lakers for the first half, going into the break with a 14-0 lead on tries from scrumhalf Colin Brown, and prop Rhodri Hanmer, before unleashing an offensive outburst in the second half. The Lomas' backline combinations were simply too much for the Burnaby defense to withstand, as the visitors ran in 49 points to close out the game 63-0, and put an emphatic stamp on the Lomas' efforts for the day. Try scorers included Brown (4), Hanmer, Mike Oketch (2), Sam Jenkins, and Luke Dineley, while fullback Mike Hall was good on all nine conversion attempts.

Next up for the Meralomas is a top-of-the-table tilt against James Bay at MacDonald Park on April 10, the first meeting between the two storied clubs since last season's Rounsefell Cup final.

The Meralomas premier women, looking to maintain their hold on top spot in the league standings, journeyed to Gordon Head to take on Velox. From the opening kickoff, it was evident that the hosts were hungry for a win on their home turf (or sand rather), and dominated play through the first half. Hard hitting and an intense physicality characterized play, and the Lomas were continually forced to over-commit at the breakdowns in an attempt to counter the strong play of the Velox forwards.

The Lomas withstood the challenge laid down by Velox, and in the second half battled back into the game with some strong set piece work and good open field play. It was the strength of the Lomas' bench that made the difference in the end as fresh reserves bolstered the attack and led the black and orange to victory, with replacement flanker Ciara Malone scoring the go-ahead try in the 24-15 victory. A standout performance from Hannah Cavallin on both the offensive and defensive fronts led the way for the Lomas.

The Meralomas now have two weeks off before taking on United on April 17th.