

A cloud followed by silver for Old Glynionians

Old Glynionians are the new holders of the Papa Johns Community Cup Counties 3 South Shield, having overcome Cranleigh in a thrilling 22-21 victory on Sunday 12th May.

After an emotional minute's silence was held in honour of former Old Glynionians player **Ben Rollinson**, who sadly died aged just 42 last Friday, Glyn started with a fire in their belly and scored two early tries to take a 10-0 lead within the first 20 minutes, but the next 60 minutes would not be as straightforward.

Cranleigh responded with two converted scores to lead 10-14 and appeared to be heading towards half-time full of confidence, but OGs captain Tim Laughton-Scott crashed over the whitewash in the last play of the half to restore the Epsom & Ewell-based side's lead.

With temperatures rising to an annual peak of 25c down at Shaftesbury Park in Bristol, home of the Bristol Bears Women, and just a point separating the teams at 15-14, everything was set for an exhausting second 40.

Five minutes into the second half, Man of the Match Michael Hume showed speed, power and calm to break through the Cranleigh defence and juggle a back-and-fourth pass with his fellow centre before dotting down to extend Old Glynionians' lead. The try was converted by fly-half Sam Smith to make the score 22-14.

And that kick that would prove the difference between glory and gut-wrenching defeat, as 35 minutes of gruelling Glyn defence was finally broken by Cranleigh who got over the line to make it 22-21. But as the Crane's conversion sailed through the sticks, the full-time whistle was blown. The match would end 22-21 in favour of the Old Glynionians.

The 2024 Papa Johns Community Cup Counties 3 South Shield now sits alongside three Surrey Bowls (2008, '09, '12) in the Old Glynionians trophy cabinet.

James McFarlane, Chairman of Old Glynionians RFC, said: "Firstly, huge credit has to go to Cranleigh. They have given us one of the hardest-fought games I can ever remember. The one-point winning margin is a fair representation of how tight the game was and how well-matched the sides were, so they should also be proud of their performance.

"Winning this competition is hugely satisfying. There are so many people that have been mucking in both on and off the pitch for so many years, and now it all feels worth it."

Tim Laughton-Scott, Captain of Old Glynionians RFC, said: "We really had to dig deep out there to win this, so it feels like a very sweet victory. We knew we could do it, but when the score flipped against us in the first half, it tested our belief for sure. We stuck to our game, fought bravely on what was an exhausting day under the sun, and just about came away on top.

"I never expected to be picking up silverware in my first season as captain, but the support from the players and the backroom staff has been great. It's a big win for everyone involved."

James Kennedy-Myers, Head Coach of Old Glynionians RFC, said: "I didn't play but I'm still exhausted! To win our first trophy in over decade and to do it less than 48 hours after the devastating loss of a former player stirs up so many emotions. Rollo [Ben Rollinson] was a great friend of mine, and this win will be well and truly dedicated to him.

"I'm thrilled with the squad that we have, probably our strongest ever, and look forward to defending our crown next season."

Image: Old Glynionians lift the Papa Johns Community Cup. credit Lisa Banning/Old Glynionians