



Caps Split with Lomas on Four Games: 2 Wins, 1 Tie, 1 Loss

by Craig Slay
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One questions the state of rugby in BC when the Lomas play a home game at what was once a Green Fortress at Balaclava Park. The sidelines at Connaught had quite a few players from another club watch the Capilanos/Meralomas as they thought it better to watch a game than to play a game. Yet I was pleased to meet a shining light in the day when I was talking to a non rugby player who watched NBC's massive 7's production and thought that rugby will be taking off in a big way now it is in the Olympics and the powerful media machine of the USA is getting behind it. Hopefully if it does take off, we in BC are on the plane and go for the ride.

Third Division

Today is one of those great days where the sun shines and the Capilano club gets to have all its teams play head to head with our cross town rivals the Meralomas. The day started off up the hill at Balaclava with the strong third teams. I think the Meralomas had roughly 25 players and the Caps slightly more. What was great to see was the amount of youth both sides had and that every player got a game. Many of the Meraloma players had gone on tour with the clubs youth tour to the UK in the summer a thing all clubs do too little of. The Meralomas opted to sub everyone at the half on mass while the Caps feed them into the games in twos and threes throughout. Like many third division games there were moments of absolute brilliance and other moments where Curly, Moe and Larry wouldn't look out of place. Both teams have some great players that will find their way up in the ranks sooner than later. The game was close for much of the match but in the second half the Caps started to up the speed of the game and ended up taking an entertaining match 27-0

Women's Premier

I only managed to see the last five minutes which had the Capilano ladies on their back foot defending a 15-8 lead with no time left on the clock. The Meralomas on the attack and with the help of a few well timed penalties against the Caps the Meralomas managed to cross the line on the very last play of the game and tie the score at 15 apiece.

First Division

Historically speaking in the lower mainland it is these two teams that finish one and two in the standing s over the last decade and like every other season when these players ran out on the field you knew it was going to be a great match. Within the first two minutes big Andrew Dory off a ruck rambled in from twenty meters to put the Caps up 7-0. Sometime later Sanford lined up extremely wide off a breakdown and when the ball got to him the space was there for him to run over and add to the Caps score 12-0. The Meralomas turned it on and clawed back and used some outstanding rucks and mauls to take it back to the Caps and take the lead 13-12. This game went back and forth and although there were mistakes by both sides there was also some very good rugby as one would expect from the top two teams in this division. Final score was 22-13 Capilanos.

Premier

The Caps made a couple of changes from the Burnaby game and it was a welcoming sight to see Brady Carpenter take the field for the Premiers. These two teams seemed by and large to be pretty even throughout the game. The Caps started off on attack and got to the goal line but couldn't punch it over. Unlike when the Meralomas got to the Capilano goal line the Loma scrum did a textbook six man pick and go which the Caps shallow defense couldn't stop and the Lomas went up on the score board 7-0. The Capilanos came back and pounded at the Meraloma goal line again and again but still the Lomas wall held up. It was a great show as the Caps tried one way, then another but no matter which angle they ran, which route they took the Meraloma defense was there to meet them. The Caps bounced a kick off the uprights and the Lomas made one which put the score at 10-0 but still anyone's game. The TSN turning point was midway in the second half when inside the Meraloma twenty in front of the posts the Capilanos did what looked like a great dummy run with a crash from the fullback. The fullback broke through untouched and was just touching it down when the ref blew the whistle for obstruction. Was it obstruction? I guess if the ref says it was, it was, but no player was touched, and the play looked good from where I stood. What a difference ten seconds

makes however! Almost like a magic show, out of nowhere quicker than light, Justin Mensah Coker was at the ref's feet, ball in hand, tapped the ball and fed the ball to ex Rowing Club Alex Ackerly who ran untouched 85 meters for a try. From what might have been 10-7 to 17-0 all in the span of ten seconds. The Caps had one more attempt when wing Randy Buchamer was freed up on a two on one down the side but was ruled to have stepped out of bounds on his way to what looked like a sure try. Final score 17-0 for the Lomas.

The Caps have been in every game they lost so far this half and coach Tom Larish is very proud of his teams and thinks that they are playing better every week and are unlucky to be sitting where they are. The Premier side fielded 13 players who grew up on the North Shore of Vancouver today and almost all have come up from the junior sides which speak volumes about the development of the club.

Next week the Caps travel to the Cowichan Valley.