BERKELEY - Sophomore Eakalafi Okusi scored three of California's 13 tries in his Witter Rugby Field debut Wednesday night along with a lineup of almost exclusively frosh-sophs who contributed to an 81-0 win over Santa Clara in the first match played on the Golden Bears' home pitch in 33 months.

Cal was stout on defense with its fourth shutout of the season. Other try scorers for the Bears included freshmen Patrick Barrientes and Russell Webb, and sophomore Nicklas Boyer with two apiece. Boyer was 6-10 on conversions and Barrientes connected on two out of three.

While the official reopening of Witter Rugby Field will certainly get its due on Saturday, Wednesday night was poignant in its own right as the entire lineup for the Golden Bears - starting with third-year junior match-day captain Carl Hendrickson, 10 sophomores and four freshmen - played their first career matches on the home pitch for the oldest sport at the University.

"It was a huge honor to lead the team out onto the field and play the first game at Witter Rugby Field in more than two years," said Hendrickson. "It's great seeing the fans come out even though it was a rainy night."

The field, flooded by TV-grade lights on a damp but still evening, glittered with its permanent kicking nets and towering goalposts, and the fans who enjoyed the match from the south bleachers and cheered their Bears loudly.

Okusi, who scored all three of his tries in the second half before yielding to a replacement, said that while the team is united in its joyful return to Strawberry Canyon, "There's a lot of competition on this team and that's a good thing. We all want to come out and play our guts out in front of these fans."

The Bears (5-0) celebrate the official reopening of Witter Rugby Field on Saturday, January. 26, with the battle for the Scrum Axe vs. Stanford at 2 p.m.

Cal 81
Tries: Webb 2, Boyer 2, Barrientes 2, Calnero, Grass, Okusi 3, Walsh
Convs: Boyer 6, Barrientes 2