

Cal Thrashes Cal Poly

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Berkeley, Calif. - Led by five tries from winger Anthony Lombardo and 29 total points from fullback Jake Anderson, the Golden Bears ran their record to 9-0 with a 112-7 win over Cal Poly on Witter Rugby Field Saturday afternoon.

After a missed penalty attempt from 28 meters by Cal Poly wing Jake Gersh in the first half, the Mustangs (4-1) notched the first try of the season by the opposition on Witter Rugby Field when prop Eric Parsons scored in the 54th minute, followed by Max Tacket's conversion. But those seven points were no threat in the face of 18 tries combined with stout defense by California (9-0/1-0) that prevented the visitors from putting together any sustained momentum.

"I was really happy with our hustle, whether chasing down tackles or in moments of broken play," said Anderson. "It's a really good sign and great to see. But I didn't strike the ball very well today and it's going to be a lot different when I only get a few opportunities." Anderson was 7-14 kicking before yielding that responsibility to flyhalf Andre Coquillard, who was 4-4.

Anderson also had a hat trick to account for the rest of his total while Danny Barrett and Josh Tucker both scored twice. Six other Rugby Bears found the try zone on a sparkling day in Strawberry Canyon.

Lombardo called Saturday's performance by the home team "the next step that we needed to take. Each week is a building process. We have to get better and prove it every week."

Comparing Saturday's blowout victory to the 22-20 defeat suffered by the Bears against Cal Poly last February in San Luis Obispo, head coach Jack Clark said, "I don't think a season-to-season comparison is all that helpful. Last season, the Mustangs asked to play our reserves and we honored that request. It was a close match and they won. Today, they played a Cal first team."

The reserve-grade match between the Bears and Cal Polytechnic also resulted in a win for the home team by a score of 133-0.

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Next up for Cal will be the opening leg of the "World Cup" series against the University of British Columbia on Saturday, Feb. 16, at 1 pm on Witter Rugby Field. Begun in 1921 with a trophy from the Vancouver World newspaper to the winner of the two-match, home-and-home competition, the "World Cup" has seen the Bears emerge as the winner 13 of the past 15 years, including a current streak of six straight.

Last year on Treasure Island, four penalty kicks from UBC's Carlin Hamstra against two kicked by Cal's Alex Aronson had the visitors up, 12-6, before Bears back rower Danny Barrett found the try zone in the 74th minute and Aronson's go-ahead conversion earned Cal a 13-12 win and one-point series lead.

A major goal for the Bears in the coming week of training is likely to be the elimination of errors that would give any extra chances to the always opportunistic T-Birds, and game film from Saturday's match against Cal Poly will surely shine light on room for improvement.

"From time to time we were awfully good, then there were other times we were ordinary," coach Clark said of the afternoon's efforts. "When we play fast and skillfully, we look pretty good. We've been working hard at it."