

St Senans battle to very end against league leaders

St Senans RFC 10 Tralee RFC 14

St Senans came within inches of taking a well deserved victory against league leaders Tralee. Despite St Senans being encamped on the Tralee try line for the final 5 minutes of the match, with the visitors conceding numerous penalties including one that saw a player sin binned, they could not cross the line for a winning score.

St Senans started the game in a positive mood and soon pushed Tralee back inside their own twenty two but could not find a scoring move as Tralee's defence held tight. When the visitors counter attacked it was the turn of St Senans defence to show their determination to keep their line secure. On 15 minutes St Senans counter attacked and were rewarded on this occasion with a penalty, Declan Collins struck the ball well to open the scoring for the home side 3-0.

The visitors rallied from this set back and pushed St Senans back deep into their own territory, after some dogged defending by the home side Tralee eventually moved the ball out wide to run in a well worked try. The wide angle proved too difficult for the kicker to add extra points but left the visitors leading 3-5.

Showing great character St Senans kept their composure and mounted a number of driving attacks deep into Tralee territory, on 35 minutes they believed they had succeeded in scoring a drive over try only to be disappointed when the ref declared the ball had been held up. Tralee took control from the scrum, but they were soon pushed back by Senans who drove Stephen Ryan over the line for a well deserved try, once again Declan Collins struck the ball well to add the extra 2 points for the conversion giving the home side a 10-5 lead.

Tralee ran at St Senans from the restart and won a penalty which when converted reduced their deficit to 10-8 at the half time interval

Tralee started the second half in determined mood and after just 5 minutes were rewarded with a penalty which they converted to give them a 10-11 lead. Despite some very good attacking play St Senans could not add to their score, missing a penalty conversion after 23 minutes.

A determined Tralee defence held off further attacks from St Senans before extending their lead on 33 minutes with a converted penalty taking them into a 10-14 lead.

The final minutes of the game saw St Senans push Tralee within feet of their try line, the pressure mounted by the home side forced the visitors to concede penalty after penalty and also saw one of their players sin binned. At this stage St Senans might have expected the referee to take control and award them a penalty try but no such decision was made and when Tralee cleared into touch he blew the final whistle. Although disappointed at not having taken the victory St Senans were pleased to have taken the league leaders so close.

St Senans Team

Pa Ryan, Ger Hall, Tony O'Brien, Mike Lyons, Jack Jones, Dermot Fitzgerald, Aaron Skerritt (C), Stephen Ryan, Darragh McCoy, Darren Guerin, David Dunne, Chris Sloan, Fran Duggan, Shane Thompstone, Declan Collins.

Replacements: John Paul Elsley, Dave Lee, Aidan O'Callaghan, Jake Egan, Barry Murphy.

Social Note: The club will hold their annual "Night at the Dogs" in Limerick race track on Sat 13th Feb. Tickets are available from any committee member and cost just €12, this price covers entry to the dogs, return bus from Shannon Knights and entry into a draw to win TWO tickets for the Ireland v Wales match in Croke Park on March 13th PLUS €500 cash.

The club looks forward to your support of this event.

Malcolm Simpson

P.R.O.

St Senans R.F.C.