

# Match Report: Round 15

Kiama Rugby Union Club pushed reigning premiers Shoalhaven all the way to the final whistle on Saturday eventually going down 24-19 in an extremely spirited display on the back of an amazing performance by breakaway Stephen Emmett. Sending the ball wide right from the opening kick off, Kiama's backs looked in top form against the much vaunted Shoalhaven backline with Chris Weir and Michael Quinn slicing through a number of holes. In the forwards Andrew Saulter was again industrious around the breakdown however it was Stephen Emmett who not only crossed for the first Kiama try but led the away team around the paddock in one of the most complete performances by a Kiama player for many years. Emmett not only made several breaks of his own, his support play led to several other and his combination with Mitchell Lark was put to good use, providing much clean ball for the halves. Down by 12 at half time Kiama hit back in the second half with Chris Weir cutting through the Shoalhaven defence to score a marvellous try before Mitchell Payne, who was one of Kiama's best all day, used his nous to cross for another, which he duly converted. Injuries continued to pester the Kiama coaching staff with several players forced off with serious ailments however the back up players continued to do the job and with five minutes to go and all the momentum Kiama looked assured of scoring the final try to set up a memorable victory. Despite a good all round team effort time got away from the visitors with Shoalies running out 24-19 victors in a high quality match.

Second grade needed a victory to secure a top five finish and after running out to a 12-0 lead in the first half, things were looking good. Stephen Woollet was playing well in the tight while the halves combination of Clint Paget and Matt Archer were controlling the midfield. Indiscipline, a failing at the set piece and a number of dropped balls cost Kiama in the second half with Shoalies drawing level with five minutes to go. Kiama had the opportunity to score again late in the half however a turnover ball offered the Shoalhaven winger an opportunity to run 40 metres to score and despite clearly knocking the ball on before being bundled into touch the try was awarded. Shoalhaven winning 17-12. Kiama now has to win their next two matches to make the semis.

Third grade had a new look line up after several injuries forced a number of shuffles to the backline. Despite this Kiama looked good early, crossing for two tries in a tight first half. James Tronc continued his strong work up front while Nathan Barr and Dylan O'Brien were again solid in the midfield. Injuries and poor handling cruelled Kiama in the second half and despite periods of spirited play Kiama went down 34-12.

Kiama first grade play their final game of the year this week as they take on Engadine at home.