



## Match Reports Sunday 9/10/2023

### A-side at Northeastern

*Fairfield 59 – Northeastern 7*

Entering our second week together, the team was fired up to prove themselves to their critics after an unconvincing win against Fordham. The theme of the week was “The Herd is Stronger than the Pack” which continues to stem from the theme for the season “One Team...One Club...One Herd!” The team’s performance in Boston was a physical, dominant, and unified display of “all gas, no break” on defense (Coach Cappello) and “thriving in chaos” on attack (Coach Griswold). Despite the torrential downpours, the set piece showed their “strength together” (Coach Sheridan) as lineout success and scrum success were both above 80%.

The day before the game, D3 coaches Enrique Pesantez and John Minogue ’22 encouraged the boys that being put under pressure is what makes it fun. Specifically, Minogue offered the players a choice: be the “elephant” and let excuses distract you, or be the “rider” and take control of your mind to achieve your goals. Needless to say, the message rang through as all 23 players made positive contributions against a historically talented and well-coached Northeastern squad.

Fairfield dominated possession from the opening kickoff. We spent 10+ minutes in Northeastern’s red zone, and despite many pleas from Coach Austin Ryan to take points, Team Captain **Chris Giunta ’25** and his mates wanted tries. Sure enough, Fly-half **Henry Novicki ’26** broke through the lines and scored.

Credit to Northeastern for an immediate response by recovering their kickoff and scoring pretty quickly. However, Fairfield seemed unphased and it was as if they made the unanimous decision that, that would be the only score of the day they allow. Sure enough, it was!

**Giunta ’25** and **Novicki ’26** scored 2 tries each, joined by their backline teammates **Patrick McHale ’27**, **Shane Baffa ’25**, and **Kevin Splan ’25**. Massive credit to **Rob Betsais ’25**, unit lead for the set pieces, and his fellow forwards for giving the backline stable platform and clean, quick, front-foot ball the entire game.

**Giunta '25** ended the game with 29 points, missing only 1 goal kick! Man of the Match was **Henry Novicki '26** for his dynamic play at 10; creative cross-field kicks, unrelenting pressure on attack, and elusive carries.

### **B-side at Northeastern**

*Fairfield 43 – Northeastern 0*

“One team...One Club...One Herd!” We treat our entire depth chart the same way. This side continuously pressure the A-side during training, lifts, and as people. No one embodies this commitment, integrity, or grit more than B-side captain **Ryan Hoffman '24**. Step for step with **Hoffman '24** is Flanker **Jack Garrity '26**, who turned in a Man of the Match performance with his physical carries, suffocating defense, and sheer determination.

Flyhalf **Ian Thomson '27** and lock **Luke Coetzee '27** showcased the chemistry they've built as teammates at Georgetown Prep; **Thomson '27** attacking the line and **Coetzee '27** running great support lines. **Thomson '27** was also near perfect off the kicking tee despite the conditions.

Massive credit to this side for maintaining their composure and discipline against a Northeastern B-side that lacked experience or depth. Our players conducted themselves as professionals as they began to run away with the game. Speaking of running, **Malachi Robinson '27** easily logged a broken tackle against every player on Northeastern B's roster!

Special thanks to all the parents who braved the weather to support the boys. And, thanks to the parents who provided post-game meals their sons and their teammates. Onto Nazareth!

*Match Reports submitted by Austin Ryan, Director of Rugby/Head Coach, Men's Rugby*