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St Andrew's snatch honours in epic K-Day showdown

Chivere crosses for last-minute winning try against Kingswood

Neale Emslie

In a finish which could not have been more frenetic, St Andrew's snatched victory from the jaws of defeat when Asante Chivere crossed for the winning try in the final minute of their King Price Derby Series rugby clash with Kingswood at City Lords in Makhanda on Saturday.

Though the conversion was missed, the final whistle went straight afterwards for a 25-22 result, returning the bragging rights to St Andrew's after last year's 22-22 draw.

The visitors trailed Kingswood by two points for most of the last quarter of the match after the home side took the lead for the first time in the 49th minute with a try by left wing Kevin Barnes.

That score by Barnes nearly ended in dismay for Kingswood when he was close to being tackled into touch as he executed an extravagant dive over the tryline.

But the referee ruled that the try was good and though Praise Matsila missed the conversion, Kingswood had edged ahead 22-20.

TRYING HARD: Kingswood centre Matthew Paxton dives over to score a try during the K-Day first team rugby match against St Andrew's in Makhanda on Saturday

From there it was a typical K-Day derby, full of passion and commitment by both sides as they fought to secure the victory.

St Andrew's had a penalty in the 65th minute, but the normally dependable Will Stevens pulled it just wide.

However, the Andreans stayed in the hunt and in a brilliant period of control and precision in the last few minutes they worked their way deep into Kingswood territory through a number of phases.

As the home side players worked furiously to defend their line, eventually a skip pass to the right gave Chivere enough space to step past the cover defence to slam the ball down over the whitewash for a memorable, matchwinning try.

Earlier, St Andrew's had shown their willingness to run the ball and they took their chances to lead 17-7 at half-time.

Hooker Amo Habi scored their first try after the forwards created momentum up front and later No 8 Josh van Zyl went over from a line-out move when they outwitted the Kingswood defence and he charged though a gap at the back.

Stevens added a penalty and two conversions in the first half.

Kingswood showed enterprise when they took a quick tap and this eventually resulted in prop Junior Ndlazi bashing his way over, with Praise Matsila adding the conversion.

Four minutes after the break, Kingswood created one of their best moves in the match when wing James Mackenzie sent an inside pass to Matthew Paxton, who beat a few defenders and showed a burst of speed to score a superb try, converted by Matsila (17-14).

BRAGGING RIGHTS: St Andrew's wing Asante Chivere prepares to dive over the line for the match-winning try against Kingswood in their King Price Derby Series schools rugby match in Makhanda on Saturday Picture: ZINTLE MJALI

After Stevens and Matsila swapped penalties (20-17), Barnes went over for the Kingswood's third try to put the spectators on the edge of their seats for the rest of the match.

But eventually it was the blue jersey of St Andrew's that had the most reason to celebrate after the final whistle. — *Additional reporting by SuperSportschools.com*

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