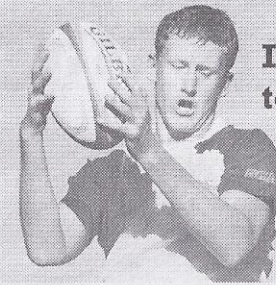


sports



I always believe we're going to win.

Geoff Tomlinson
Men's rugby coach

Nail-biting victory for Thunder

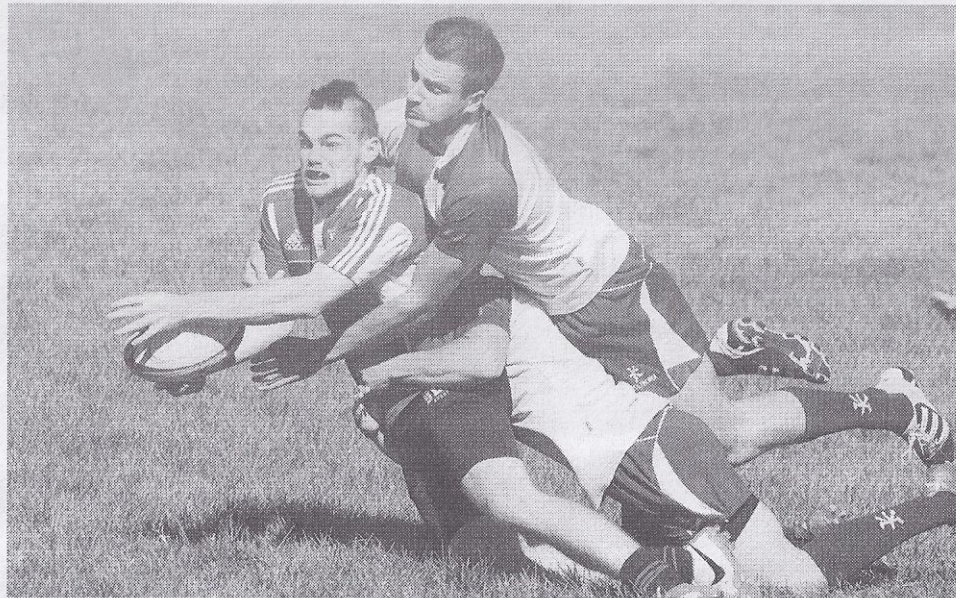
ANDREW DIRIENZO

A late push by Algonquin's men's rugby team saw them score two tries and two conversions within the final 10 minutes to give them the comeback victory against St. Lawrence College.

The game did not start well for the Thunder as the Vikings scored a try early in the first half to take a quick 7-0 lead. The men weren't fazed, though, as they came right back just a few minutes later to tie things up.

"It really showed our character," said number 8, Dan Burley. "It showed that what we do in practice we can do in a game."

The teams traded tries at the mid-point of the first half, but it was a late try and a conversion by the Vikings which gave them a 19-12 lead going



ANDREW DIRIENZO PHOTO

Full back Cale Meesters makes the tackle on a St. Lawrence forward. Meesters added a try in the Thunder's thrilling season opening win against the Vikings.

into halftime.

Throughout the first half, many of the Thunder players expressed their frustration

with the officiating. Head coach Geoff Tomlinson wasn't making any excuses, though.

"Never blame the ref," he

said. "You control yourself out on the pitch. The referee sees the game differently from where we see it, and he can

only call what he sees."

Another quick Vikings try early in the second half seemed as though it would be the dagger in the heart of the Thunder. That was not the case, however.

A Thunder try and subsequent conversion just a couple of minutes later brought them back to within one try and minutes later they knotted up the score at 26-26.

Tomlinson said his team's heart was a major part in coming back. "Heart, leadership and unity," he said. "We have a lot of skill, but rugby is not just a game of skill.

"If you don't care about winning and if you don't care about your being there for your teammates then it doesn't matter how much skill you have. You have to care about the team."

"We really pressed hard,

started coming up on the line and making our tackles," said Burley.

While Tomlinson was impressed with his team's effort in coming back, he still saw some room for improvement.

"In the middle 40 they lacked cohesion and they weren't really putting in a solid effort," he said, adding the players weren't giving it their all and that it was "a leadership issue."

Burley said the real turning point was when the game-tying try was scored. "We got pretty amped after that," he said.

Even though the deficit was as much as 14 points at one point, Burley said quitting was never in the minds of the players or the coach.

"We have faith in everybody and everyone knew we could come back and win," he said.