

Brown Men's Rugby

Weekly Match Report

Saturday, September 23, 2023
Marvel Field, Brown University
Providence, RI

Brown v. Syracuse University – First XV

Scoring Summary		Brown	Syracuse
First Half			
15 min	Brown Try (Tito Edjua '27)	5	
27 min	Brown Try (Max O'Donahue '25)	5	
	Conversion (Raphael Lansonneur '25)	2	
First Half		12	0
Second Half			
64 min	Brown Try (Matt Mitchell '24)	5	
Second Half		5	0
Final Score:		17	0

In the first poor weather match of the season, with 5 starters and other usual First XV rostered players unavailable, the Bears gutted out a hard-fought 17-0 victory over a physical Syracuse University side, who came in ranked #20 in the country among NCR D1 teams by the Goff Rugby Report. Special recognition is deserved by the forwards who dominated their opposites at most set pieces, during a game that had very many set pieces, in adverse conditions, without a single substitution among the pack all match long.

The opening minutes of the match were characterized by sloppy play all around as the teams adjusted to each other and the wet conditions. This resulted in several early infractions and Syracuse having the first opportunity to score, opting for an attempt at goal from a penalty over 40M away which missed. Still, the Orange kept Brown under consistent pressure, but the Brown defence was able to withstand the threat. Then, the Brown scrum really started to kick in to gear and the Bears were able to leverage success at that set piece into territory gains from penalties as well as an attacking platform. In the 15th minute, on the 2nd phase off a lineout which resulted from a scrum penalty, Max O'Donahue '25 stepped back inside into a gap past 2 drifting defenders, with Tito Edjua '27 following in support, Max drew the last defender and got the ball to Tito, who was able to get around the edge, leaping into the try zone at the corner flag, dotting the ball down for the first match's first score. The O'Donahue offensive wasn't done, though. During the 27th minute, Will Sinfield 'G24, in his first start for Brown, saw a mismatch on the short-side of a ruck and wrapped around to attack a disorganized Syracuse defence with Max who was able to nudge a perfectly weighted grubber between and behind two scrambling defenders, off the outside of his boot. Chasing the bouncing ball on marshy terrain, O'Donahue gave it a boot past one more defender to get it clear and was able to recover the ball and dive on it in goal for a try. Raphael Lansonneur '25 converted this one to make the score 12-0 for Brown. Credit to Syracuse, who responded to the 2-score deficit by raising the physicality of play and continuing to challenge the Bears attack on muddy Marvel. For more than 35 minutes both sides battled in scoreless play and Brown was able to maintain the upper hand in the territory battle, avoiding playing in their own end for any long period of time, and the Bears defence seized multiple opportunities to win back possession. As play progressed into the last 20-minutes of the match, the Brown forwards continued to grind down their counterparts at set pieces, and Brown was awarded a penalty when the Syracuse #11 joined a withering maul defence from a lineout which had travelled about 15M, nearing the 5M line, #11 sacked the maul and earned a yellow card. With Syracuse down a player, the Bears wisely opted for a scrum, driving it over the goal line for an easy try at the back of the scrum

for 8-man Matt Mitchell '24. Syracuse gained momentum during the next 10 minutes, keeping possession of the ball, and sustaining attack in the Brown end of the field, doing their best to get on the scoreboard – to no avail. The ball went dead on a blocked kick by Brown deep in Syracuse territory as Brown tried to win possession back and get a few more points before the expiration. Concluding a week that presented the Bears with numerous challenges, the performance against Syracuse was a showcase of what this team is capable of when the obstacles start to stack up in front of them. Relying confidently on their strengths and committing to an enthusiastic defensive mindset that will serve them well later in the season, and as the stakes get higher.

Brown Squad:

1. Omar Al-Jendari '24
2. Joe Al-Hasso '25
3. Asa Rosenmeier '27
4. Oliver Bieling '25
5. Tony Zhao '26
6. Rowe Stodolnic '27
7. Kaspar Pitblado '26
8. Matt Mitchell '24
9. Dylan Lewis '24
10. Will Sinfield 'G24
11. Milo O'Donahue '26
12. Max O'Donahue '25– Alex Halpin 'G24 @ 34min
13. Tito Edjua '27
14. Aaron Mertzels '25
15. Raphael Lansonneur '25

Referee: Geoff Tancredi

Brown v. Syracuse University - Second XV

Scoring Summary		Brown	RW/PRFC
First Half			
8 min	Brown Try (Theo Romero '27)	5	
	Conversion (Ben Shirley '27)	2	
15 min	Brown Try (Ben Shirley '27)	5	
	Conversion (Ben Shirley '27)	2	
24 min	Brown Try (Max McCord '27)	5	
	Conversion (Ben Shirley '27)	2	
First Half		21	0
36 min	Brown Try (Garrett Mann '26)	5	
	Conversion (Ben Shirley '27)	2	
44 min	Brown Try (Garrett Mann '26)	5	
53 min	Brown Try (Mike Lau '27)	5	
	Conversion (Ben Shirley '27)	2	
55 min	Brown Try (Kenyon Graham '25)	5	
	Conversion (Kenyon Graham '25)	2	
57 min	Brown Try (Kenyon Graham '25)	5	
Second Half		31	0
Final Score:		52	0

The Brown B's were eager to get on the field following a rugged performance by the firsts. They were not going to allow the chilly rain and boggy conditions to prevent them from putting up the dominant, high-scoring type

of performance, we've seen from this side each week so far this season. Freshman Theo Romero opened the scoring, carving up the defense with a dynamic carry from about 45M out. Later, flyhalf Ben Shirley, usually a savvy distributor, fooled the drifting defense with a keep-and-carry, taking the ball in himself from 20M. In the last few minutes of the first half, at a lineout on the 5M line, the forwards nearly brought a maul over the line for a score when their first back-line defender joined the maul and created a massive gap. Recognizing the opportunity, scrumhalf George Randall got the ball out to flyhalf Ben Shirley and Shirley put away fellow freshman Max McCord for the try. Ben added his 3rd conversion of the half to make the score 21-0, but the B's were just getting rolling. In the early minutes of the second half, B-side try-scoring leader Garrett Mann forced his way over the line with a pick-and-go, and Ben added another conversion; 28-0 for Brown. Ten minutes later, Brown was sniffing around the goal line again and Garrett was of course ready to do what he does, backing himself on a quick tap penalty on the 5M to score on a trademark powerful carry. The score was 33-0 and then the B's really started buzzing, scoring 19 more points in the final 7 minutes of the match. Freshman Malcolm Grant took a long, speeding carry down the wide channel nearly over the line setting up his freshly bandaged classmate back on from a blood sub, "Iron" Mike Lau in support who finished for the try. Ben Shirley added his fifth and final conversion, going 5/7 on the day in very difficult conditions. Kenyon "Just Ken" Graham extended his scoring streak in the usual eye-popping fashion, contributing 12 points on 2 tries and his own conversion in the match's last few minutes. First, working off Theo on a counterattack from over 60M away, then finding the edge from a defensive turnover, and beating the opposition with his next-level speed. Relentless defensive pressure and willingness to do the dirty work all game long on muddy Marvel kept the Syracuse seconds off the scoreboard, and the final score for this match came out in favor of the Bears, 52-0 in just 60 minutes of play.

Brown squad:

1. Julian Hooten '24
2. Garrett Mann '26
3. Michael Citarella '27 – Chris Wai '25 @ 34min – Mike Citarella @42min
4. Carlos Ponce de Leon '25
5. Mike Lau '27 – Mike Citarella '27 @ 34min – Mike Lau @ 42min
6. Chris Wai '25 – Vinh Legros '26 @ 30min – Jake Ehrenkranz '24 @ 34min – Chris Wai '25 @ 42min
7. Jack Forgione '25
8. Jack Elliott '25
9. George Randall '27 – Josh White '27 @ 30min
10. Ben Shirley '27
11. Kenyon Graham '25
12. Jake Ehrenkranz '24 – Alex Halpin 'G24 @ 30min
13. Theo Romero '27
14. Max McCord '27 – Malcolm Grant '27 @ 30min
15. Freddie O'Donahue '26 – George Randall '27 @ 30min

Referee: Geoff Tancredi

Brown's next game will kick off on Saturday, September 30th at 11:00am. Brown will host Nazareth College at Marvel field.