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Rugby fans celebrate outside Maddens Ale House. Photo by Fiona Anderson

Local Team Wins!

By Sue Holliday

Well done Martin and your team. England is proud of you. Yes, I am talking about the English Rugby team who raised everybody's spirits and made us proud to be English, when they lifted the Rugby World Cup in Australia on Saturday 22 November. It will be a date most people will remember; England has not held a field sport world trophy since 1966. In a way it was won in a similar manner, extra time and down to the wire.

The tension in Maddens was electric; some people could not look and others were biting their nails. At full time some people had to go outside to get fresh air. They walked out to a very quiet High Road with hardly any traffic – most people must have been glued to their television sets.

Back inside for extra time the tension was even greater. Kieran and Margaret Madden kindly provided food but hardly anybody could eat. Seconds before the final whistle Jonny scored that wonderful drop goal. Then the place just erupted with everybody on their

feet shouting and screaming. Very shortly after that the champagne bottles popped to the strains of "We are the champions," the singing lasting for some time.

One lone Australian, and brave supporter, was also in attendance. A visitor to East Finchley, the previous night he'd seen that Maddens was screening the match. He did mention that as he walked in he was rather put off by the sea of white shirts. However – this is where Rugby differs from Football – he shook people's hands and said well done. He also put up with a lot of banter from some of the regulars, but it was

all handled in a friendly and sporting manner. Long may that attitude last; may Rugby never have the problems that Football does. He stayed for some time after the final whistle and I think he left feeling he had made some new friends.

We would like to say thank you to Keiran and Margaret for their hospitality and extended hours during this very special World Cup. Also a special thank you to Angie for all the sleep she has missed by opening the pub early.

Stop press: Maddens has won second prize in the Barnet in Bloom competition.

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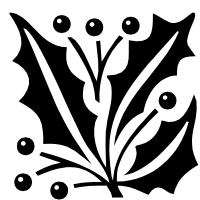
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