



## Match Report

13 October

Away

Harlow 4

Lost 5:17



### Team

#### *Starting Line-up*

- 1) Rik Relph 2) Dan Jerred 3) Steve Waight
- 4) Brian Smith 5) James Jerred
- 6) Chris 'Glove' Milne 7) Ren Pesci 8) Daniel Leith
- 9) Rolando Pesci 10) Stuart Faben
- 11) Josh Coughlan 12) Jack Cowley 13) Ben Powell 14) Peter Waples
- 15) John Bateson

#### *Replacements*

- 16) Chris Leith for Brian Smith
  - 17) Nick Skipworth for James Jerred
  - 18) Dave Steward for John Bateson
  - 19) Harry Cowley for Jack Cowley
  - 20) Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy for Harry Cowley
- Richard Cowley

### Report

It was a sunny day with a gentle wind that wasn't going to play any part in this game. The Renegades squad of 21 plus me, Flora, arrived in good time and established themselves in their luxurious surroundings. There were some difficulties as only 15 shirts had found their way to Harlow and Ren was struggling to coordinate his dressing. However having eventually found his right sock on his foot, but under his shin pad the team found themselves on the long trip to the pitch.

It was indeed a long way but no matter how close to the posts you got they appeared small, there was a business opportunity missed here as I'm sure we could've sold them our old posts!

Renegades spent the first ten minutes deep in their own half soaking up sustained pressure from the powerful Harlow pack. It became obvious that they had decided this is where they would win the game, they were able to retain possession with some certainty and some judicious use of the blindside fringes unsighted by the referee. His generous use of the whistle certainly seemed to turn the flow of the tide towards Harlow who were unable to turn penalties into points.

The Renegades backs although not getting much possession did look potent however and after a period of air tennis a scrum was awarded to the 'Gades on the half way line. The resulting blindside back row move and interplay between the backs was pure poetry. John Bateson surged into the line, Ben Powell proved that he could pass and Peter was given the opportunity to prove he could finish, scoring what was a fantastic try to put the first points on the board. In the absence of Baz and Darey Fabio was elected kicker. It was to be his first and last kick from the tee, which given the lack of lift not worrying the crossbar is probably a relief.

Both teams then went at it hammer and tongs, not willing to give any quarter. The Renegades scrum and lineout was strong, Harlow actually looked less intimidating. Fabio was able to cross the Harlow line following a scrum, however the try was disallowed for a dubious double movement.

A period of good kicking by the Harlow backs kept Renegades pinned back and a lineout was eventually awarded on the 22. Harlow moved the ball very unimpressively all the way across the pitch without crossing the gain line, the Renegades defence was solid but unable to gain possession or put Harlow into touch. Harlow moved the ball back across the pitch and found space and the winger was able to cross the line wide to score. The referee blew his whistle for half time following the missed conversion with the score 5 each and everything to play for.

Having given his all Brian was replaced at half time. Both teams wanted this game that was clear to see, however the balance of opportunity seemed to be tipping Harlow's way. Lifted by vociferous support their determination became clear, Renegades were able to match this although it was by great individual performances rather than a solid team game. By now the physical battle was taking its toll with players taking knocks and gaps appearing in defence.

Daniel Leith, Glove, Ren, Rolando and our centres were all able to break the gain line on several occasions. However the ball didn't always go to hand and Harlow scrambled their defence sufficiently to deny any Renegades score. Following a period of broken play the ball was out wide and held up by the Harlow centre long enough for their winger to fly past and weave his way to the line. It was a well taken try and the resulting kick put Harlow 12-5 in the lead.

There followed a period of frustration then for Renegades pushing at the Harlow line, being repelled and also threatened with the breakout. Somehow Harlow frequently popped up with the ball in the most unlikely circumstances, something had to blow and it was Daniel Leith closely followed by the referees whistle and the gentle breeze on a yellow card!

The pack worked hard but Harlow exploited the extra man enabling their winger to score again out wide. This was to be the final score of the match, despite a late rally by Renegades which should have seen Josh score Harlow held on to their 17-5 win as Renegades picked up more injuries than

points! Harry replaced the injured Jack and was then subsequently replaced as the curse of the twelve shirt struck again.

Harlow's joy was visible, but their relief and respect was also palpable. It had been a good game of rugby with some good performances. Peter was fantastic under the high ball and ran some great lines. Ben showed he'd listened to the comments of the previous weeks. Both Pescis fought for every ball possible. Rik put in the full 80 minutes against a good opposition, which isn't easy at 86.

You can't help thinking the return match will be crucial. Let's make sure we play as a team to win it, so as Rolando said, "Training is vital!"

### Scores

Tries: Peter Waples



Glove who not only felt like shit but looked like it too, yet with lungs full of phlegm he was everywhere!



Daniel Leith – for his yellow card



*Report by Chris Beddows - The man on the sideline with an iPhone and a charming smile*