



Match Report

December 3

Away Cambridge 3

Lost 11-32



Team

Starting Line-up

- 1) Tom 'Old Tom' Wykes
- 2) Ren Pesci
- 3) Tom 'BFT' Powell
- 4) Dave Steward
- 5) Adam 'Speedy' Richards
- 6) Tom 'New Tom' Procter
- 7) Ollie Witt
- 8) Stuart 'Fabio' Faben
- 9) Toby Mephram
- 10) Andrew 'Baz' Mackay
- 11) Gav Reid
- 12) Tom 'Strong Tom' Heathcote
- 13) Josh Scupham
- 14) Will Blackwell
- 15) Rhys Stevens

Replacements

- 16) John 'JB' Bateson
- 17) Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy

Report

It was always going to be a big challenge. Cambridge were going to be determined to avenge the 71-0 victory the Renegades enjoyed at our last visit to Volac Park. There was little doubt that the team warming up was a crack unit and they were drilling like their lives depended on it.

Renegades got off to a dream start with Will Blackwell going over for a try near the left touchline after a couple of minutes. The conversion attempt was tantalisingly close, coming back off the upright, 5-0.

Renegades kept up the attack and after a few forays into the Cambridge 22, were awarded a kickable penalty, Baz didn't hesitate to slot the Kick, 8-0.

Shortly after, another venture into the Cambridge 22 was reversed in fine style by the Cambridge scrum half who broke clear and ran $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the pitch before being collared. He offloaded scrappily but it was good enough and Cambridge scored under the posts. The conversion was good, 8-7.

There was a long period of both teams making ground and losing it again but Cambridge seemed to be gaining the upper hand (albeit only slightly). Eventually, they scored again near the right touchline but the conversion never looked threatening, 8-12. That's how the score stayed until half time.

The half-time tale was all about smashing Cambridge off the ball hard and winning the breakdown. The mood was upbeat and the feeling was that the game was there for the taking if we upped our game by 10%.

However, early in the second half, Old Tom went in for a tackle and ended up sitting on the ground for a long time while play continued until Cambridge were awarded a penalty. Unfortunately, Tom sustained a very nasty cut to his head which was bleeding torrentially. He had to go off and in fact had to go to A&E where he was attended to by Jeff Mercer, another Renegade of old. Because of Tom going off, Renegades asked that scrums should be uncontested. This was agreed.

Play restarted with the Cambridge penalty which was slotted comfortably 8-15. JB went on and was on the pitch for a few seconds when the Cambridge coach became agitated and drew the referee's attention to the rule that if a team cannot replace a front row player and wish to go uncontested, they must continue with only 14 players. JB came off again – probably the shortest appearance in a Renegade shirt ever! This was a turning point in the game.

There followed wave after wave of Cambridge attack. Eventually, they scored a lovely try in the left-hand corner but the conversion was missed, 11-20. A few minutes later, they got a penalty and put the ball in the corner, from which they built a very effective driving maul to score near the left touchline again. The conversion missed again, 11-25.

Renegades managed a few forays into the Cambridge half but were beaten back each time. As full time approached, Cambridge scored again under the posts. This time the conversion was good, 11-32. As the cold wind blew colder and the light began to fade, that's how it stayed.

It was a good game played in a good spirit. The better team won, but the score line was a harsh reflection on a brave Renegades performance.

Scores

Tries: Will Blackwell

Penalties: Andrew 'Baz' Mackay (2)



Ollie Witt for smashing the opposition at every opportunity



No doughnuts.

Match report by Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy

Photographs by Peter Haigh





