

Renegades Rugby



Match Report

Mar 2

Away Hadleigh

Won 43-36



Team

Starting Lineup

- 1) Michael Goode 2) Ren Pesci 3) Tom 'BFT' Powell
4) Aaron Stevens 5) Adam 'Speedie' Richards
6) Stuart 'Fabio' Faben 7) Ollie Witt 8) Harry 'H-Bomb' Mills
9) Dan 'Stockers' Stockbridge 10) Andrew 'Baz' MacKay
11) Callum Wilkins 12) Jack Weatherly 13) Tom 'Tucker' Heathcote 14) Tobi Rayner
15) Ross Catchpole

Replacements

- 16) Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy 17) Jack Mills 18) John 'JB' Bateson 19) Chris 'Psycho' Edwards

Report

Once upon a time in a land far far away ... Renegades assembled to meet Hadleigh for the first time. It was a much-anticipated fixture and for once, Renegades had a strong squad and a few spares. The pitch looked good but with a pronounced slope and both pitch and sidelines were dogged by many holes – the local rabbits are a bit of a problem apparently. The Hadleigh players were friendly but then they all disappeared to warm up somewhere out of sight leaving Renegades the full pitch for their warm up. They appeared just before kickoff and elected to play with the slope and the wind in the first half.

Hadleigh kicked off and the early minutes of the game were spent with the two teams trying to get a measure of each other. The ball changed hands several times before Hadleigh dinked the ball through the Renegades line on the right side of the pitch. They were stopped on the line and the ball cleared for a lineout. They won the lineout and fed the ball out through the hands and camped on the Renegades line to the left of the posts. They piled on the pressure and inevitably battered their way over the line to open their account. The conversion missed, 0-5.

Renegades resumed and won the ball back from Hadleigh. A nice through the hands gave the ball to Ross who charged over in the left corner to equal the scores. The conversion missed, 5-5. Hadleigh re-started and Renegades began to advance up the hill again. Unfortunately, the ball was spilled and Hadleigh capitalised on the mistake and charged through to score just to the left of the posts. This time the conversion was good, 5-12.

Hadleigh's tails were up and they kept the pressure on maximum. A clever dink through was closed down by Ross but they came back from the resulting 22 drop out and scored again to the right of the posts. The conversion missed, 5-17.

Callum had to come off for a few minutes to get a shoulder injury seen to, allowing Billbob on for a cameo appearance. Renegades fed the ball through the hands to Harry who backed himself and ran half the length of the field to score in the left corner. The difficult conversion missed, 10-17.

The last 10 minutes of the first half saw Hadleigh run in another two converted tries, 10-31. The half time whistle was greeted with relief by Renegades. That score was a big hill to climb for the second half. Surprisingly, the mood among the squad was not as down-beat as the score line might have suggested. There was a determination to recover and a recognition that the slope and wind should be exploited ruthlessly to achieve the recovery. One change with Jack Mills going in to the second row for Speedie.

The second half opened in just the manner that Renegades needed. A flow through the hands came to Callum who deftly stepped back inside to outwit his defender. He had the speed and power to keep going and he scored under the posts. The simple conversion was slotted by Baz, 17-31.

From the restart, the ball came to Baz who hoofed it in the direction of the left corner. He managed to catch up with the Hadleigh player who caught the ball and forced a penalty from him. It was a long penalty attempt, but with a trailing wind and the slope in his favour, Baz made the three points look easy, 20-31.

A few minutes later, a Baz kick in the same direction was caught by Ross and Ross, Tucker and Harry shifted the ball between them while barrelling towards the Hadleigh line. It was Tucker who got the touch down. Baz added the afters, 27-31. The desired recovery was looking on the cards. Confidence had returned to Renegades and the scent of victory was in the air.

Another penalty in the Hadleigh half saw Baz cut the deficit to a single point, 30-31. Hadleigh were rattled to see their comfortable lead whittled away and were beginning to tire from the stress of running up the hill only to be pinned back in their own 22 repeatedly. Renegades exploited the tiredness and piled on the pressure. A nice move through the hands came to Jack Weatherly who was not going to be stopped. Baz did the honours and Renegades were in the lead, 37-31!

Shortly afterwards a Hadleigh player was given a yellow card for a high tackle. The Hadleigh supporters thought the card was harsh and they probably had a point. The resulting penalty was slotted by Baz and the lead was beginning to look comfortable.

However, Hadleigh had other ideas and they dug deep to take the attack back to Renegades. Callum was given a yellow card for a deliberate knock on (which seemed harsh but may have been a balancer for the Hadleigh yellow). Hadleigh put the ball in the corner and from the ensuing lineout they managed to score. The conversion missed, 40-36. The game was wide open again and Hadleigh had found some reserves of energy. The tension was palpable. Ollie raised the tension when his attempted catch knocked on and gave Hadleigh a scrum inside the Renegades 22. Fortunately, Renegades managed to defend well, and the game moved back to the Hadleigh half.

A penalty gave Baz the opportunity to add three points which he took with style, 43-36. Seven points the difference. Could Hadleigh steal a draw in the closing seconds? They piled on the pressure and moved towards the Renegades line. They lost the ball and Baz kicked clear. He was hit with a late tackle and the referee administered a yellow card to the tackler and the final whistle. It was over!

The second half was one of the best performances of any Renegades team ever. To make such a recovery against quality opposition like Hadleigh was a tremendous achievement. Rolando was struggling to hold back tears of joy and pride as Renegades discussed the performance; he just about managed to keep his Gascoigne eyes under control.

Scores

Tries: Ross Catchpole, Harry Mills, Callum Wilkins, Tom 'Tucker' Heathcote, Jack Weatherly

Conversions: Andrew 'Baz' MacKay (3)

Penalties: Andrew 'Baz' MacKay (4)



Andrew 'Baz' MacKay – for his excellent boot, great moving of the ball and impressive tackling



Ollie Witt for making us all nervous after his knock on towards the end of the game gave Hadleigh a chance to come back

Match report by Eddie Murphy

Pictures by Peter Haigh (for the full set of pictures see [Peter's Flickr Page](#))





