



## Match Report

Nov 30

Away St Albans

Lost 14-19



### Team

#### Starting Lineup

- 1) Michael Goode 2) Callum 'Wilko' Wilkins 3) Josh Cox
- 4) Aaron Stevens 5) Jack 'Chinese' Mills
- 6) Craig Simpson 7) Ryan Cox 8) Tom 'BFT' Powell
- 9) Dan 'Stockers' Stockbridge 10) Andrew 'Baz' MacKay
- 11) Ross Catchpole 12) Harry 'H-Bomb' Mills 13) Ben Powell 14) Geoff Kirby
- 15) Ollie Witt

#### Replacements

- 16) Tobi Rayner 17) Ryan 'Shep' Shepperd 18) Jake Sweet 19) Stuart 'Fabio' Faben

### Report

The much-anticipated fixture against St Albans in the National Junior Vase competition had arrived. It was a beautiful, crisp sunny day as most of the team and supporters gathered at CVC to take a coach to the venue. There was an atmosphere of excitement. The previous round game against Writtle Wanderers had been a demanding contest and Renegades anticipated a stiff reception from St Albans.

There was a long and well-disciplined warm up before the kickoff at 2:30. There was good support from the sideline from the many players who were available but unable to be picked because of the limited squad (only four subs) and others who made the long journey to cheer on the side.

St Albans kicked off and it became clear that an afternoon of serious heavy lifting was in store for the players. St Albans attacked, and they came at Renegades in waves. The pressure was relentless, but the defence was good, although St Albans did approach the Renegades line on a number of occasions. Eventually, the tidal force was too great and they crossed the line but were held up. They came again from the 5m scrum and this time the pressure worked and St Albans were over for a converted try 0-7.

Renegades responded to the setback in the most positive way. The kickoff was high and hanging and the catcher for St Albans fumbled the ball forward. However, Craig was on top of him and won the ball so no scrum was needed. The ball went through the hands across to the left of the pitch, getting

closer and closer to the St Albans line. Big Mike got the ball and pirouetted over the line with St Albans players flying everywhere. Baz slotted the conversion, 7-7.

The exchange of tries really opened the game up and both sides attacked and defended for some time. Ross was forced off with a leg injury and was replaced by Tobi. An attack from Renegades saw Geoff carry the ball well into the St Albans 22 before being felled. The ball found BFT and spotting a gap he powered over the line for a second Renegades try. Baz added the two extra, 14-7.

St Albans responded by increasing their intensity and attacked in waves again. As the interval approached, they closed in on the Renegades line in the left corner. Criag took one for the team in the form of a yellow card for a high tackle and the resulting scrum drove Renegades back over their own line. It was a straightforward matter for their eight to pick the ball and go over for their second try. The conversion missed, 14-12. A short while later, the referee blew for half time.

Shep came on for Callum at half time. The early minutes of the second half saw a strong series of attacks from Renegades. Good attacking moves were made only to fail with a dropped ball at a crucial moment. Shep had to come off after getting a finger in his eye so Callum came back on.

The early minutes of the second half set the tone for the rest of the game. Renegades attacked and attacked but the St Albans defence held. As the game entered its final 15 minutes, St Albans moved out of their half and began to threaten the Renegades line. They got closer and after several attempts, they bashed over to score their third try which was successfully converted, 14-19.

Losing the lead increased the Renegades intensity in attack. However, it didn't increase the effectiveness, and despite playing some lovely attacking rugby, Renegades failed to recover the score and the final whistle blew leaving Renegades out of the Junior National Vase competition.

Despite the disappointing result, it was a very intense hard-fought game where both sides gave it everything they had. St Albans had almost complete dominance of the scrum but the Renegades lineout was superior. The teams were well matched, and the final result could have gone either way. We wish St Albans all the best on their path to Twickenham.

### Scores

Tries: Michael Goode, Tom 'BFT' Powell

Conversions: Andrew 'Baz' MacKay (2)



Ollie Witt for a good shift at 15.



Craig Simpson for getting a yellow card and choosing Scotland over Renegades.

*Match report by Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy*

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





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