



Match Report

Mar 26

Away North Walsham 2

Lost 54-45



Team

Starting Lineup

- 1) Michael 'Big Mike' Goode 2) Ryan 'Shep' Sheppard 3) Jack 'Chinese' Mills
4) Aaron Stevens 5) Chris 'Machine' Machen
6) Elliot 'Elbow' Roberts 7) Tom 'Proccy' Procter 8) Tom 'BFT' Powell
9) Dougie Ellis 10) Dan 'Stockers' Stockbridge
11) Michael Did-Dell 12) Harry Mills 13) Tom 'Tucker' Heathcote 14) Geoff Kirby
15) Matt Turner

Replacements

- 16) Ollie 'Mad Dog' Witt

Report

The weather was absolutely beautiful as Renegades gathered at North Walsham's ground following the fierce drubbing from Walsham the previous week. Numbers were not great and key players like Baz and Ross were unavailable because of the injuries they sustained. Nonetheless sixteen players warmed up with Ollie having to pull out just before kickoff with a damaged hamstring. So, no spares; no injuries allowed!

Walsham kicked off and dominated the play for the first few minutes. Renegades settled down and began to get back into the game. However, after 10 minutes, Walsham scored under the Renegades' posts. The conversion was simple, 7-0. This was followed a couple of minutes later by a break down the left wing by the Walsham 11 to score. The less-straightforward conversion nevertheless sailed between the posts, 14-0. At that time, it felt like we were facing another deluge of Walsham tries.

However, the players had other ideas and upped the pressure, advancing into the Walsham half. A penalty took the Renegades lineout close to the Walsham line. The ball came to Elbow, and he cut through the Walsham line to score. Stockers slotted the conversion, 14-7.

Renegades maintained the pressure and camped in the Walsham half. A maul gained a lot of ground and during the advance the ball was lost and won back. When the ball came out of the maul, Stockers passed to Proccy who cut through to score. Stockers again added the extras, 14-14.

Renegades kept the pressure up. A penalty saw Renegades get a lineout inside the Walsham half. The lineout set up a maul which walked all the way to the Walden Line where Shep touched down. Unfortunately, the conversion missed, 14-19. Renegades were in the lead. A repeat of the previous game looked unlikely.

Walden turned on the pressure themselves. A penalty which would have put them in a nice attacking position was kept in play by Geoff. Walsham came back again and another penalty to the corner found touch. The Renegades defence held, and the attack was driven back. However, it wasn't long before the Walsham 14 launched a screaming run along the left wing before cutting back to touch down under the posts. The conversion was never in doubt, 21-19.

As half time approached, Renegades went on the attack again. They advanced to the Walsham Line and made several attempts to bash over before Walsham won the ball and kicked clear. However, Renegades came back and BFT got the ball, and nobody was going to stop him. Stockers converted, 21-26. The whistle went for half time.

Walsham kicked off the second half and applied increased pressure from the start. After a few minutes, this pressure was rewarded with a try to the left of the posts. The conversion was straightforward, 28-26.

A while later, a Walsham player head-butted Harry who fortunately was not seriously hurt by the attack. The Walsham player got a red card for his trouble. Walsham seemed undaunted by being a man down and went on to get another breakaway try which was easily converted, 35-26.

Renegades came back to attack and a clearance kick by Walsham was taken back to the location of the kicker because they had taken the ball back into their 22. The lineout was won, and the ball came to Proccy who attempted a kick through. However, the ball bounced off the back of one of the Walsham players and Proccy picked it up again and charged towards the Walsham line scoring in the left corner. Stockers slotted the very challenging conversion, 35-33.

This was followed in quick order by two Walsham tries, the first of which was also converted. The first was a breakaway try which touched down under the posts. The second was a blind side attack from a scrum inside their own half which set up their 14 to barrel along the right wing to score in the corner.

The restart from the second of these tries went deep and the ball was passed from one to another under their posts. Elbow had followed the kick with speed and determination and managed to ambush the player, release and go for the ball. The defending player held on and conceded the penalty. Renegades opted for a 5m scrum and Doug passed the ball to Harry running one of his magical lines. He crashed over. The conversion just pulled to the left and wide, 47-38.

Walsham went on the attack and advanced into the Renegades half. A perfectly executed cross-field kick saw their winger run the ball in close to the posts, 54-38. As the final whistle approached, Renegades went on the attack again. Another scrum under the Walsham posts saw Harry get the ball again at speed. However, he was taken around the neck resulting in another penalty. The ball found Big Mike who scored. Stockers added the conversion, 54-45.

The final whistle blew shortly afterwards. It was a hugely entertaining game of rugby, eagerly contested by both sides throughout. From a Renegades perspective, a win would have been better, but that game was one where every player came off the field with heads held high, knowing that they could not have done any more. It's certainly a game to remember.

Special thanks to John Pritchard, longstanding stalwart of Cambridge Rugby Club who lives near Walsham who came to watch the game and brought his camera resulting in the pictures use in this report.



Elbow for a tremendous all-round performance.



Doughnut free day.

Scores

Tries: Eliot 'Elbow' Roberts, Tom 'Proccy' Procter (2), Ryan 'Shep' Sheppard, Tom 'BFT' Powell, Harry Mills, Michael Goode

Conversions: Dan Stockbridge (5)

Match report by Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy

Pictures by John Pritchard.





