

# Renegades Rugby



## Match Report

Apr 1

Home Royston

Lost 29-31



### Team

#### Starting Lineup

- 1) George Collett 2) Callum 'Wilko' Wilkins 3) Tom 'BFT' Powell
- 4) Nic Maneiro 5) Jack 'Chinese' Mills
- 6) Fraser 'Spongebob' Johnson 7) Ollie Witt 8) Aaron Stevens
- 9) Dan Stockbridge 10) Tom 'Proccy' Procter
- 11) Josh 'Slugz' Vail 12) Harry Mills 13) Ben Powell 14) Tom 'Tucker' Heathcote
- 15) Matt Green

#### Replacements

- 16) Michael 'Big Mike' Goode 17) Joe Paddison

### Report

Well, it came as a bit of a surprise to most of us, but having thought we had finished the season, we were reminded that we had elected to participate in the Papa John's Cup and were drawn against Royston. The players were up to play and so it was game on approximately a month and a half since the 95-0 defeat from Wisbech.

The weather was disappointingly cold and dull for the first of April, but with the welcome return of Matt Green and a visit from Ben Powell helped to ensure that Renegades fielded a strong team to face the visitors.

Royston's kickoff went straight out, and the first scrum of the game saw Renegades establish scrum dominance that lasted the whole game. The two teams attacked and probed but Renegades seemed to have the upper hand. Eventually, 12 minutes in, a scrum in the Royston 22 saw Aaron pick the ball from the back of the scrum and advance, then feeding Harry who came screaming through and was unstoppable. Stockers made short work of the conversion, 7-0.

There followed a long period of toing and froing with both teams attacking and defending well. Notable events in this time included a lovely rip by Harry in the Royston 22, a superb territory grabbing kick by Stockers after a high tackle on Matt Green and a great break through the middle by Callum who made many yards.

As the interval approached, Renegades were awarded a penalty inside the Royston 22. A petulant kicking away of the ball by a Royston player gave 10m to Renegades. A quick tap and a long pass to



BFT saw him power over the line. Stockers added the extras, 14-0. That's how it remained until half time.

Half time changes saw Big Mike come on in the front row with BFT moving to the back row, relieving Jack. Joe came on for Fraser who had a great first half with some good carries.

Renegades started the second half in optimistic mood, but Royston had no intention of letting the game slip. The kickoff went to the Royston 8, who ran  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the length of the pitch to score under the posts. The conversion was a formality, 14-7.

A couple of minutes later, it looked like Royston were going to do it again, but a heroic charge back and tackle from Proccy stopped them just short of the line and a short time later, Proccy relieved the pressure with a kick to touch outside the Renegades 22.

Another period of sustained Royston pressure resulted in a try well to the right of the posts. The conversion was good, 14-14. A little time later, Royston attempted a penalty kick a couple of metres inside the Renegades half. The kick misfired and the ball barely achieved the height to cross the bar at its highest point. Nic came off with Jack going back in in the second row.

Renegades went on the offensive and eventually a well-worked move saw Harry crash over in the right corner. The challenging conversion was well struck, but into the wind went right of the posts, 19-14.

A while later, a brilliant break from Matt Green saw him cut through Royston and power up the pitch from the Renegades half well into the Royston 22. He was stopped short of the line but in the ensuing scramble, Harry came very close to scoring again in the right corner. Royston eventually relieved the pressure but were penalised for rolling after a tackle right in front of their posts inside their 22. Stockers doesn't miss from those opportunities, 22-14.

A couple of minutes later, the Royston outside centre made a brilliant break and cut through Renegades from his own half to score under the posts and the conversion was good, 22-21. Shortly afterward, he very nearly did it again, were it not for another brilliant defensive charge back by Proccy. Sadly, the buggers came back again and scored a converted try in the right corner, 22-28. There was very little time left and that might have sealed the matter.

Inspired by losing the lead, Renegades went on the offensive and applied huge pressure on Royston. Several waves were repelled before a penalty inside the Royston 22, saw Proccy make yards before offloading to Ben P who powered over the line. Huge pressure on Stockers to convert to regain the lead. Dan rose to the occasion and slotted the kick, 29-28. Word was the restart would be the last play.

Royston kicked and Aaron went for the ball but was beaten to it by a determined Royston attack. Having captured the ball, Royston held on to it determinedly and attacked with vigour. The clock ticked and eventually, the referee's arm indicated an advantage to Royston. The advantage did not materialise, so the ref took the play back to the point of infringement. Royston, sensibly, opted for the kick and converted the penalty, 29-31. That was it. The visitors won the day.



It was gut-wrenching to have that last try overturned by a penalty. It was a great game to watch and exciting to the final seconds. But how much nicer to look back to that game as the last game of the season rather than the 94-7 defeat at Wisbech six weeks previously. Well played Royston. At least we pulverised them in the beers on chairs!

Finally, it is essential to recognise the great service done to Renegades by BFT in his long stint as Captain. He has led from the front and has that impressive balance of being demanding and encouraging and knowing which incentive is the best to apply, and that is the trademark of great leaders. Thank you, Tom and we hope you continue playing as much as parenthood allows.



BFT for a sterling performance in his last game as captain.



Aaron for failing to catch the ball on the final kickoff and giving away the penalty that let Royston win the game.

### Scores

Tries: Harry Mills (2), Tom 'BFT' Powell, Ben Powell

Conversion: Dan Stockbridge (3)

Penalty: Dan Stockbridge

*Match Report by Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy*