

Renegades Rugby



Match Report

Jan 17

Home Saffron Walden 2

Lost 35-36



Team

Starting Lineup

- 1) Geoff Kirby 2) Matt 'Faiersy' Faiers 3) Dan Procter
4) Cameron Witheridge-Pearce 5) Richard 'BTW' Fickling
6) Kez Duxbury 7) Ollie Witt 8) Lewis Pannett
9) Max Burton 10) Tom 'BFT' Powell!
11) Michael 'Dids' Did-Dell 12) Jake Smith 13) Barney Baker 14) Dan Phillips
15) Nathan Williamson

Replacements

- 16) Nic Mainiero 17) Ryan Cox

Report

It was a relatively mild and sunny day as the teams gathered for the first game of 2026. Saffron Walden came mob handed but even Renegades had the luxury of a couple on the bench. It was great to have Ollie Witt on for his first game this season and we welcomed Dan Procter to the Renegades fold, a welcome he repaid in fine style.

Early pressure from Walden was held out initially by Renegades but they came back for a second bite and crashed over in the right corner. The conversion missed, 0-5. Renegades went on the offensive and got deep into the Walden 22 before being cleared back by a penalty. A lineout then went awry, and a Walden back got the ball and gassed the defence on the outside to touch down under the sticks. The conversion was butchered, 0-10. This was followed in quick order by another Walden try under the sticks. This time the conversion was good, 0-17. It was beginning to feel like it might be a long afternoon.

Walden had another threatening looking break, but Lewis saved the day with a try saving tackle. Renegades went on the offensive again and some really beautiful flowing rugby saw Renegades advance deep into the Walden 22. Serious pressure was administered and Dan Procter crashed over for a try in his debut game! Max slotted the conversion, 7-17.



This was followed in short order by another strong attacking move featuring a cracking solo run by Geoff which took Renegades deep into the Walden 22. A penalty was taken by BFT, and he crashed over the line to score. Max again slotted the conversion, 14-17. That put a different complexion on things!

Walden had a response though and managed one of their breakaway tries which was converted, 14-24. As half time approached, Renegades were building an attack again and were looking threatening. Walden were happy to kick the ball out to relieve the pressure and the referee blew for half time.

Renegades restarted and Ollie chased down the ball and grabbed it from the hands of a Walden player. He then battered his way towards the line. He was felled inside the Walden 22, but the ball was recycled well and a series of attacking passes saw Geoff over under the sticks. Max added the extras, 21-24.

Ryan Cox and Cameron on for Richard BTW and Ollie. A while later, Geoff went for one of his trademark strong runs from his own half well into the Walden 22, smashing all before him. Support managed to keep up with him, and the ball was recycled well and fed to a charging Fairisy who was not going to be stopped. Max added the conversion, 28-24.

A few minutes later, Walden were advancing again. Their 12 dummied and made yards through a gap before offloading to their 15 who pinned his ears back and scored just to the left of the posts. The conversion missed, 28-29. Ollie came back on for Kez and went to 10 with BFT returning to the more familiar front row position.

Renegades advanced and got a penalty which was a kickable opportunity to re-take the lead. Instead, they tapped and went. A ruck formed close to the Walden line and Max, sniped to the side to score. He then converted his own try, 35-29. Another Renegades advance was thwarted when Ollie got a yellow card for a high tackle.

Walden were able to take advantage of the extra man and went wide around the Renegades defence and scored to the left of the posts. This time, the conversion attempt was good, and they snatched the lead back, 35-36.

Renegades managed a last gasp attempt to retaliate and managed to get a kickable(ish) penalty. Max struck the ball well, but it was just off. Walden breathed a sigh of relief. The referee called last play. Then he awarded Walden a penalty. They closed out the game by tapping and kicking out.

That was a game of rugby! It was a phenomenal display of heart from Renegades to come back into the game after going 0-17 down. The game could have been won but what mattered to everyone was the performance. I have never seen such elation among a losing post-game huddle.



Ollie Witt for a barnstorming return to Rugby.



Max Burton for a butchered box kick (harsh for someone who scored 17 points).

Scores

Tries: Dan Procter, Tom 'BFT' Powell, Geoff Kirby, Matt 'Fairsey' Fairs, Max Burton

Conversions: Max Burton (5)

Match Report by Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy with considerable input from Stockers's online commentary