

Renegades Rugby



Match Report

Nov 27

Away Shelford 3

Won 0-55



Team

Starting Lineup

- 1) Michael Goode
- 2) Callum 'Wilko' Wilkins
- 3) Ryan Duff
- 4) Aaron Stevens
- 5) Chris 'Machine' Machen
- 6) Jack 'Chinese' Mills
- 7) Ollie 'Mad Dog' Witt
- 8) Ryan 'Shep' Sheppard
- 9) Dan 'Stockers' Stockbridge
- 10) Andrew 'Baz' MacKay
- 11) Dougie Ellis
- 12) Harry Mills
- 13) Tom 'Proccy' Procter
- 14) Geoff Kirby
- 15) Ross Catchpole

Replacements

- 16) Adam Lane
- 17) Ren Pesci
- 18) Rolando Pesci

Report

The Renegades had to endure a bitterly cold and wet Davey field when they arrived for their crunch match against an unpredictable Shelford side. The Gades haven't lost an away fixture in this first phase local league in three years and would need to ensure that run extended beyond Saturday if they are to have any hopes of gaining promotion to the second phase.

There were a number of players unavailable for selection this week, but none more impactful than the gutless withdrawal of team captain BFT who allowed a sniffle to keep him rooted to his armchair in the warm at home.

This meant a shuffle in the pack and with Rolando looking to add bulk to counter a traditionally powerful Shelford scrum, Duff, Big Mike and Wilko were selected to provide the brawn in the front row. In second row the familiar figure of Aaron was joined by the most unfamiliar of figures... the lord and saviour himself, Machine, fresh from his morning shopping spree at Sports Direct, he had kit. Boots that were too small and a gum shield seemingly made up of razor blades. But nevertheless, he was BACK in the engine room.

This meant Chinese moved to blindside flanker and Shep and Ollie completed a very well-balanced back row.

With an absence of a recognisable left winger, Dougie filled the shirt and made way for stockers at scrum half. The usual 10-12 partnership of Baz and Harry Mills was complimented by Proccy wearing the 13 shirt. Geoff and Ross completing the back division.

The bench was made up of Adam Lane, Ren Pesci & Rolando Pesci. It was half-expected that we'd see Joe Pesci kicking about on the sidelines - we were that thin on numbers.

Baz kicked us off. With the wind now sweeping straight across the pitch and causing havoc, Renegades set up camp in the Shelford 22, where they were rewarded with a penalty after just a couple of minutes. Baz rifled low and hard through the wind to put us 0-3 up.

The Mad Dog caught the restart and went on a devastating jinking run down the middle of the field, only to be stopped in his tracks by the Shelford Number 8. This type of marauding run would become a theme of the game as Shelford looked helpless to defend against our big ball carriers.

The Gades scrum was carrying on from where it left off last week against St Ives - dominating. And the dominance was soon to reap its reward as a defensive Shelford scrum 10m out from their own line was marched back. Their scrum half did well to shovel the ball to the fly half who lashed a kick downfield into the grateful arms of Catchpole waiting on halfway. With acres of time and space he cantered through the holes in the Shelford defence, untouched, to score near the posts. Conversion was on the money. 0-10.

Gades exit was smooth and efficient throughout the game with Baz making light work of the swirling wind and using the sledgehammer to punch us upfield.

Gades next try came from one such kick. As Baz cleared the lines from deep in our 22 up to halfway, the covering winger and fullback were unable to deal with the bobbling ball, allowing Ross to hack through and use great footballing skills to dribble half the field. The ball eventually sitting up into his lap for a walk over near the corner. A tricky conversion was missed. 0-15.

Unlike the weather, the Renegades were settled now. The game plan was being executed perfectly and the big 8 were making their presence felt all around the park, turning balls over with ease at the breakdown. The Shelford players seemed genuinely frightened to contest any ruck with the ferocity shown by our boys.

The lineout was a mess all day due to the conditions, but it was the set piece from which we scored our next - ball was overthrown and plucked out of the air by Aaron who looked like he was going to run in the 15m to score himself before being dragged down about 5m out. Supported, as ever, by the Machine who cleared out half the village at the ruck, the ball came quick and Stockers fired to Baz who had, who else, but Harry Mills steaming in on a crash line to go in under the sticks. It was like watching a Takeshi's Castle contestant run through one of those tracing paper doors. That takes the Renegades talisman to 10 tries in 8 games this season and more importantly, continues the run of scoring in every game he's played. Some player! Conversion was slotted 0-22.

The Renegades were on top in every facet of the game and that was optimised by the next score. Some incredibly big hits and ferocious turnover work by Shep and Machine meant the Gades could counter, and the ball was sent sharply through the back line out to Ross who sprinted clear from our



own 10m and in under the sticks to complete his hat trick and to secure a bonus point. Even with the wind, my nan could have made the conversion, and it turns out, so could Baz. 0-29.

And that's where it paused, for half time.

A quick huddle to keep warm and the team talk from the Gaffer was positive. Highlighting the need now to keep a clean sheet. There were no changes to personnel.

You'd be forgiven for thinking the Shelford boys wanted to just call it quits there and head in for a warm bath and a pint of Guinness. They were beaten men, but after dragging some unwilling supporters on to play for them, they ambled out to the halfway to resume.

The game restarted with a shanked/fizzed grubber from their 10, seemingly looking to get the ball out of play as quickly as possible to negate anymore damage.

Shortly into the second period Renegades extended the lead. Some powerful running from Proccy moved us down the park and with quick recycled ball deep inside their 22, Ollie jinked, wriggled and stretched out to slam the ball onto the whitewash to make it 0-34. Challenging conversion held up in the wind.

The referee now started to go into "fair play" mode and tried to level the game up as best he could. But it was to no avail. Despite being penalised for a couple of infringements that simply didn't exist, Renegades were once again on the front foot. Mad Dog broke the defence and stormed downfield. He was unable to go the full length, and the ball made its way out to Ross, who, much like Herpes, was impossible to get rid of all day. The pest went in for his 4th of the day. Greedy. Nobody saw the conversion, but Ref advised it was good. 0-41.

The game felt like it was petering out briefly, until more moments of Gades genius.

A phenomenal turnover by Baz on the ground in the breakdown on our own 22 presented the ball for Stockers who sent a chip over and Proccy continued to fly hack it down field. Eventually the ball was regathered and after beating one or two covering players and with the try line at his mercy he spilled forward. Gades we're quick to react and pretend like nothing happened. The ref was miles back and hadn't spotted so we played on. The ball was still playable, and it seemed like an eternity while the lads looked around and waited for literally anyone to pass to except Ross. Unfortunately, he was the only option, once again, scoring the Gades 7th of the day and his 5th. Conversion simple. 0-48.

As the crowd chanted "We want 50!" (And by crowd, I mean Tucker on WhatsApp)

Renegades upped the tempo once more. Gades won yet another penalty at the breakdown and Baz took a quick tap, looked left and sublime hands through the three-quarters put Dougie into space and he finished well, motoring into the corner from about 20m out. Nobody on the planet was making that conversion. 0-53.

Some resolute defending was required for the final quarter of an hour and with the Referee determined to have an impact, we were given two yellows in quick succession. Adam Lane (with hunger and fire in his eyes) and Ren (looking dead behind the eyes) came on for their respective



cameos at some point. One final defensive effort on our own tryline stopped their Number 8 just centimetres short. The ball was yet again, ripped and turned over and Renegades cleared downfield.

That was to be it, and the referee blew for full time to secure Renegades biggest ever margin of victory against Shelford and the first clean sheet against them since October 5th 2013 (against a Shelford IV side - winning 32-0).

It was as an impressive performance as you're likely to see and one that should breed confidence as we head in to the final four games of this phase.



Nobody from Shelford stuck around after the game to conduct post-match rituals but there were too many contenders for Man of The Match to give it to just one, anyway. Notable mentions, Ollie, Aaron, Machine, Shep, Baz & Ross.



Dick of the day belonged to Proccy for fumbling on the tryline. Or perhaps Ollie Witt for a sandpit pass to Dougie in space.

Either way...

BFT doesn't get back in this team.

We. Go. Again.

Scores

Tries: Ross Catchpole (5), Harry Mills, Illie 'Mad Dog' Witt, Dougie Ellis

Penalties:

Conversions: Andrew 'Baz' MacKay

Match report by Dan 'Stockers' Stockbridge

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





