



Match Report

Sep 9

Away Royston

Lost 64-24



Team

Starting Lineup

- 1) Michael 'Big Mike' Goode
- 2) George Collett
- 3) Geoff Kirby
- 4) Tom 'BFT' Powell
- 5) Fraser 'Spongebob' Johnson
- 6) Matt 'Fairersey' Faiers
- 7) Ollie 'Mad Dog' Witt
- 8) Dan Philips
- 9) Doug Ellis
- 10) Dan 'Stockers' Stockbridge
- 11) Josh 'Slugz' Vail
- 12) Harry Mills
- 13) Tom 'Tucker' Heathcote
- 14) Michael 'Dids' Did-Dell
- 15) Ross Catchpole

Replacements

- 16) Nic Maneiro and many Royston players who filled in when some Renegades were forced off through injury.

Report

To say the weather was unseasonably hot for mid-September would be somewhat of an understatement. It was boiling, with the temperature expected to rise to 33 Celsius over the course of the afternoon. The Royston pitch is very picturesquely located on Royston heath surrounded by hills and a golf course. It has absolutely no shade and the grass was parched and the ground hard. Lots of hydration precautions were in place to minimise the dangers of playing in such extreme heat. The game was played in four 20-minute quarters with a short water break halfway through each quarter.

The first 10 minutes saw both sides attack and defend well. Shortly after the first water break, Royston were attacking and Slugz got penalised for being off his feet as he jackaled the ball (it looked to many of us like a harsh decision). Royston tapped and went and were repelled once but came back again and opened their account with a try to the right of the posts. The conversion was good, 7-0.

A short time later, Royston got a penalty and advanced up to the Renegades 22. They won the lineout and set up an impressive driving maul that advanced unstopably to the Renegades try line. They touched down but the challenging conversion eluded them 12-0. Shortly after that, Fraser was forced off having taken a severe blow to his head. He was replaced by a Royston player.

Royston attacked again, this time with a breakaway try which did include at least one forward pass but the referee didn't spot it. The simple conversion was slotted easily, 19-0. Shortly afterwards, Dids was forced off with a damaged hamstring and was replaced by another Royston player. Another Royston converted try followed, 26-0. It was feeling like it was going to be a very long afternoon. However, as half time approached, Renegades managed to string some good play together to get deep into the Royston half. BFT broke through the Royston defence and rampaged towards the try line only to be chopped short of the line. However, he managed a nice pop to Dan Phillips who scored. The conversion missed, 26-5. There was still a big hill to climb but the score lifted the team as they went into the interval.

During the interval Nic arrived as he had said he would and was able to relieve one of the Royston players. The third quarter was not so entertaining for the Renegades as Royston ran in four more tries, two of them converted, 45-5. However, the restart from the fourth was booted back by a Royston player, who managed to hit one of his teammates making him offside. Stockers put the ball in the right corner from the ensuing penalty. Ollie took the lineout and passed to Doug and the ball went through hands to Harry who popped to Ross who screamed over the line to score close to the left corner. Stockers made a fine job of the challenging conversion, 45-12.

Only a few minutes later, a good attack by Renegades saw Dan Phillips attack and break through before offloading to BFT who powered over the line again. Stockers converted, 45-19. After a water break a knock on gave Royston a scrum. This time Renegades drove the Royston scrum back and captured the ball. It spun through hands across the pitch and then Royston were penalised and yellow carded for another high tackle. The penalty was tapped, and the ball given to Geoff who accelerated in a way that no prop has ever done before and crashed through the Royston line and tracked back across the pitch to score well to the right of the posts. Stockers drop kicked conversion attempt missed, 45-24.

Alas, that was the end of the purple patch where Renegades scored three tries for no Royston response. Royston decided to find their rhythm again and ran over another three tries (two converted), the last one being a well-executed cross field kick to their winger, 64-24. During this period, Renegades nearly had a response except Geoff dropped the ball short of the line.

It was a brutal afternoon for playing rugby. Royston were well drilled and were definitely the better team. Credit to Renegades for pulling themselves back from the brink and enjoying a renaissance in the second half. We look forward to meeting Roston again in the Cambridgeshire Intermediate Cup.



Dan Phillips for a great shift in difficult circumstances and a good try.



Geoff for dropping the ball just short of the Royston line.

Scores

Tries: Tom 'BFT' Powell (2), Ross Catchpole, Geoff Kirby



Conversion: Dan Stockbridge (2)

Match Report by Eddie 'Billbob' Murphy

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





