

## Breaching The Banks of Burton

When the Legion left the field of battle in November having lost to Burton away on the banks of the Trent, Manger Lowbridge vowed to avenge the defeat on the return to Forton Road. Having seen the squad improve leaps and bounds over the months since The Burton defeat, it was clear to see the Legion were in a better place than before.

Having selected a side capable of toppling most oppositions on their day, Lowbridge was frothing at the prospect of taking on the Marston men from the Trent, however like any well oiled machine there are always the odd hiccups. With regular loose head Matt Pardesi deciding to travel the globe to play our beloved sport in the out back of Australia Nick the Greek (NTG) stepped into loose head forming a new front row of Kendall and Upsher. However the man from Cannock Chase Upsher was AWOL on the biggest game for the Legion this season. Upsher has been known to do this before when he went for 1 pint with his brother which turned into a 3 day session and he woke up naked, with a bicycle pump between his thighs on a canal barge in Sussex, one can only hope he is ok. With a panic stricken Lowbridge pacing away, a phone call to a very hungover Richard Biggin allowed the Legion to start the day with a full front row and the Lad put in a great shift even bagging himself ten minutes rest in between.

Despite the adverse weather conditions in the week running up to the game, the pitch looked remarkably good. Good job Neil Furniss. As it was Ladies day Maxine Gamble treated the boys to a tunnel formed by herself and fellow ladies spurring on the boys for the start of the match, Lowbridge was seen wrestling Henry Holmes to the pitch as he was transfixed by some of the women's wonderful ....dresses.

The game kicked off and within minutes it was clear to see that the Legion were up for this. After 5 minutes of play Burton had not once put together a phase of plays and were looking dumbfounded at how the men from Newport were all over them like a bad rash. The Scrum was working exceptionally well with an engine room of NTG, Kendall, Biggin, Woodhouse and Skipper Styles, the salad dodgers of the park were throwing their oversized weight around magnificently. A penalty for holding on allowed Fly Half Mayer to kick Newport into the corner for a five metre line out. The catch and drive was successful and when a certain score looked possible Burton turned this one over. Racing up the field they went, as a team putting in some good passes to send a few Legion defenders into despair. Burton were first to score when their pacy left winger showed a clean set of heels to go round the usually solid Francis and twist out of a last ditch attempt from Lucas to score under the posts. 0-7.

With the Legion now realising they were in a game and Burton had the ability to score out of nothing, it kick started a few engines to fire up and take the game to them. On the 22minute mark, Lucas caught a high ball in his 22 to weave his way past 4 Burton men and race into the opponents half faster than a Kenyan chicken. A beautiful offload to Pugh meant the wheat and grain specialist from Lilleshall was almost sent clear, however a good cover tackle meant when Dave hit the ground the ball was unfortunately knocked on. But with the advantage at the set piece and the Legion 8 pushed the Trent men off the ball.

Quick ball from Potts sent the barrel Thomas charging into 4 Burton tacklers, a few pick and goes dragged the Legion closer to the try line before Woodhouse stretched those long levers he calls arms to put the ball under the posts and send the crowd and fan club wild with elation. Francis converting 7-7. Game on.

Pulling the strings for Burton was their impressive Fly Half who ran the show away at their place earlier in the season. He spotted an opening on the left when the cover player was NTG. A well executed kick saw their winger lick his lips and sprint like a jack Russell towards the ball. Now NTG put in one hell of a shift Ladies and

Gents but pace is something this 23 stone man lacks. So it was no surprise to see the Burton winger and score in the corner to extend their lead despite Nicks best efforts to chase it like a cake in Jaspers. 7-14.

Just before H/T Biggin, still wondering where he was from being out until 4am at harper the previous evening decided to think having 10 minutes rest would be beneficial for him and decided to tackle somebody higher than a door frame in the Woodhouse home. Bates, Thompson and the returning Rodeo traveler Josh Rhodes came into the fray. The Legion in the 2nd half were outstanding. Almost starving the Burton side of possession for the entire half, it wasn't until a constant barrage of pressure within their 5 metre line saw a penalty try awarded for the Legion. 14-14.

With Burton on the ropes the Legion were attacking full steam ahead. Jack Pennells and Alex Mayer were having splendid games at 10 and 12, both were creating space and running harder lines than a elephant during mating season. With both men showing no fear and feeling no pain on there particular colour hair it was Mayer that dodged and weaved his way through a number of defenders before scoring a try to put the Legion in the lead for the first time in the afternoon. 21-14.

Then came the moment of the match. Luke Kendall has committed himself to the Mick Collins Kings Head fund over the course of the season and of course it has sacrificed his spot in the back row of the first team, and his waistline. However the health and safety officer has been a shining light in the front row role of the Legion. His performances have been 2nd to none and even Kendall knew the importance of this weeks game, so instead of his usual 7 pints and bottle of merlot on a Friday night. He drove to the pub just to be on the safe side. On 71 minutes with the game all but won, kendall was passed a ball on the opponents 22, the rotund blonde haired lover from Stratford burst out of 2 tackles before sprinting away to score down in the left hand corner for wild celebrations from the Squad, Manager and Crowd. Like a whale with alopecia it just didn't quite look right. 28-14 francis converting from the touch line.

The game concluded cueing celebrations from the Legion, fireworks were set off and hugs exchanged. It was a true rugby performance with both sides going for it, credit to the referee who at the age of 17 marshalled 30 men well with the respect he deserves. On a day when the entire squad played well it's hard to pick a MOM, Kendall and Alex Morrison on the flank were particularly good and worked tirelessly all afternoon. In the backs Mayer, Francis, Thomas and Pennells made good yards each time. But this weeks men of the match as you couldn't pull them apart goes to NTG and Jake Lucas, both were outstanding.

The machine rolls on  
Viva le Legion

Report Jose Lowbrinio

NTG, Kendall, Biggin, Styles, Woodhouse, Holmes, Morrison, Pugh  
Potts, Mayer, Dingo, Pistol, Pennells, Francis, Lucas  
Bates, CJ, Buttery, Rhodes, Thompson