

Walsall v Newport
27-29

Back With A Bang

The legion travelled to the depths of Walsall this Saturday for the first of their league fixtures this season. Over the off season a lot of hard work went in from appointed manager Mark Lowbridge, Captain Nobby Stiles, Vice Captain Michelle Woodhouse and dogsbody Pistol Peter Thomas. All four musketeers raised sponsorship for 22 new match day shirts, shorts and socks which looked incredible and gave the lads an extra incentive to get out of bed to play a game of rugby on a Saturday. The squad was also boosted by a few resigning over the summer. Front row forward Chris Upsher returned from his native Willenhall with an extra 2 kids, council house and adidas tracksuit to sign for the Beloved Legion. Also traveller Jack Keyzor made a return to English soil having spent 12 months upside down cuddling kolas and having a shrimp on the bbq every Tuesday night to take up a spot in the very competitive legion back row.

The Legion is designed for players unlucky enough to miss out on 1st team selection to interact with players wanting to play competitive social rugby on a Saturday in the West Midlands reserve League. Having been relegated from the top flight last season it was clear the legion set out to regain their place within the heavens of 2nd team rugby. Tricky Dickie Harris was keen to make an impression in the game pushing for a place in the first team back row, As was Luke Kendall. Vc Woodhouse who has just been granted the greatest present known to man in the form of baby girl Olivia Jane developed sniffles Saturday and unfortunately couldn't take a place on the bench however Dave Pugh was picked up of the combine to come and play a game in sunny Walsall.

The game kicked off and harboured fugitive Henry Holmes made one hell of a tackle straight of the kick off inspiring the Legion for ten minutes of relented pressure on the home side. However the late arrival due to heavy traffic on the motorway, meant the Legion were sluggish with ball in hand and errors were creeping in. Perhaps a lack of warm up time was due to this and rustiness from the off season. Walsall were very organised in defence and made a number of good tackles before their fly half with a bionic boot pegged the legion back into their half numerous times. Against the run of play Walsall scored a good counter move by racing away to score under the posts for the first points of the game. Conversation made 7-0.

Next was both bizarre and quite frankly schoolboyish, a high ball from the opposite fly half saw winger Andy Whieldon should have gone to specsavers moment and lost the ball in the air allowing it to bounce, letting the Walsall winger to race onto the loose ball and sprint clear for a try under the posts. At the this point Manager Lowbridge was pulling his hair out as clearly Newport were the more talented side but could not tie a boot lace together let alone a phase of plays. Another penalty to Walsall saw the score leap to 17-0.

Step up Pistol Thomas the fly half had been tremendous in defence not letting a single soul through his channel. He then took the game by the scruff of the neck and almost side stepped his way through Walsall's defence to score before being brought down just before the 22. Obviously those extra jasper doughnuts you have been sneaking in were working Pete. A penalty was awarded to Newport and the deduction to kick for the corner was rewarded with a push over try orchestrated by 21 stone loose head Nick the Greek allowing Upsher to score. Another penalty was conceded by the Newport team on the stroke of half time meaning the half time score was 20-5.

Words of keep the ball in hand when support was not there and work harder to reach the man on the break rang through the Legion. Injuries and illness to Kendall and George Crowe meant Pugh came on at scrum half, Keyzor went to 6 and 70s porn star Pardesi took the tight head role. Strong running from the evergreen Simon Holland, Noberto Stiles and hacksaw Keyzor meant Newport were gaining the yards they needed. It was off a break by Harris Mountford who raced through a near 12 would be tacklers before offloading to the charging bull Pardesi to score a crucial try for the legion. 20-10.

This score set the men in maroon and white alight, charging up the battlefield like a platoon of soldiers in the Vietcong. Champagne rugby was played by Newport within a 20 minute period. Richard harris was outstanding and involved in everything, Keyzor decided to bulldoze the entire team, and Holmes talked the shirt of the wingers back. Literally!!! A line out once again saw a catch and drive meaning half French/Canadian Gregory barged through the defence before Upsher popped up to score another for the afternoon. 20-17.

From the restart Keyzor offloaded to Styles who offloaded to harris who offloaded to Holland, who crashed it forward before being recycled to Whieldon who bounced 1,2,3,4 defenders and popped to the on rushing Stiles to score under the posts. 20-24. Premature celebrations from Lowbridge (story of his life) saw him eat his words as Walsall were not done yet. Their hard running 13 who had been a menace all game decided to run through a gap wider than a Katie Price dental examination to score with 3 minutes remaining. 27-24.

Full credit to every man from the Forton Road not one gave up all afternoon when the backs were against the wall, somehow fullback Marcus Chandler burrowed his way under the line like a ferret in a rabbit hole. Kicking off elated celebration from the sidelines of 3 people.
Final score 27-29.

This was a great first win under the belts of the Legion a lot to work on but great to experience a game of high quality and entertaining rugby. Mentions this week to go captain Styles, Holmes, Harris, Thomas and Mountford. But this weeks MOM went to substitute Jack Keyzor the man is like a wrecking ball.

On rolls the machine

Viva Le Legion

Report Mark James Lowbridge III

Team: Upsher, Dakin, Gregory, Holmes, Howells, Kendall, Harris, Styles ©
Crowe, Thomas, Whieldon, Holland, Mountford, Brazendale, Chandler
Reps: Sanjay, Keyzor, Pugh