



In Touch



Ledbury sealed their home 30-27 win with a penalty from just short of the halfway line in the dying seconds of the game and Ludlow can have no cause for complaint. Teacher, Jack Hughes, had kicked intelligently all game to keep his side in the fight and thoroughly deserved the accolades from his team mates as the kick just cleared the bar and the final whistle blew. In contrast Ludlow's kicking had often been wide of the mark and frequently led to a productive Ledbury counter attack, their backs taking every opportunity to swing the ball wide. Ludlow also left several points on the field from missed conversions.

It had all started so well with Ludlow scoring a lovely try through an inside pass to scrum half Rhys Perkins to go in under the posts. It looked promising, particularly as Ludlow were playing up the slope. But intelligent kicking and some good running and passing meant much of the first half was played on the lower slopes of the pitch with Ludlow defending like mad. Inevitably the pressure told and half time found Ludlow 17-7 down with tries coming through the Ledbury backs and a penalty. Ludlow reverted to their strengths after the turnaround and this time kept Ledbury on the lower slopes for long periods. The big boys, Josh Jukes, Ben Black and Jamie Durban were used to good effect before sending the ball wide to Jack Davies to score.

Josh Jukes lurking on the wing was the next to run in to even the scores and then another from Jack Davies after a quick tap penalty. Ledbury were once again pinned in their half and a clever lineout move saw Owen Jones move the score out to 27-17 in Ludlow's favour and away win looked in the bag even though every score had been limited to five pointers.



*Ledbury v Ludlow
Photos courtesy of Trevor Patchett*



Cue a bunch of silly mistakes, players colliding in midair because no one called “my ball”, kicks failing to reach touch, or worse still going to players in a position to pull an attack together. Ledbury capitalised with a try, once again converted and then foiled a foolish attempt to run the ball from Ludlow’s own try line which led to a penalty and the scores were even with a couple of minutes to go. Cue another penalty five yards short of halfway and up steps Jack Hughes to seal Ledbury’s second home victory of the season.

We did at least score two bonus points but come the end of the season I suspect the ones we left on the pitch may well prove important. So, Ludlow drop to fourth in the league and Ledbury elevate themselves to ninth. Jack Davies was Ludlow Brewery Man of the Match.

As a spectator I am in the habit of prowling the touch line following the path of the ball. It’s good because you often bump into people you haven’t seen in a while but also a little bit like skipping from channel to channel on the radio. Little sound bites of conversation reach your ears. Saturday was no exception. First an interchange about veteran DJ Johnnie Walker, hanging up his headphones for the last time, then a snippet about Morris dancing, another about the perils of falling from a stallion at high speed, the relative merits of plastic reinforced mesh for overspill parking, the merits of a gradual wind down before early retirement and, from a mum, why she hates watching her son play rugby in case he gets hurt.

A few of those probably require greater insight. Our host, Ledbury President Roger Bateson got to know Johnnie Walker many years ago when he compiled the hit charts for his show. He’d written an email in to Johnnie’s last ever Sounds of the Seventies show in the hope of jogging a few memories for the DJ. The fall from a stallion was the true tale told first hand of how back row Arthur Nias fell from a horse he was exercising and ended up in hospital being stitched up only an hour or so before the game was due to start. Dressed in a white bedsheet he told this to an audience of nuns, one six foot six and bearded, the other short and displaying a worrying amount of bum cleavage. Arthur made the team bus along with a super turnout of second team players along to watch the match and suitably attired for Halloween festivities later.

The Morris man is Gareth, husband of our hard-working secretary Kelly, who was employed almost until kick off changing the match card to reflect Arthur’s absence. Regular readers will recall that Arthur had been Ludlow Brewery Man of the Match last week, so a big hole for coach, Thomas Tench, to plug. Gareth had been to a meeting of his Morris side (Leominster Morris) where I am told topics for discussion always involve rugby, cider making and beer drinking. What’s not to like?

I had the good fortune to meet another of our hosts Dick Mason a few years ago when he asked to see the reinforced plastic we use for year round parking on Hosyers. Since then, Ledbury have done something similar in an area of their ground which is prone to winter flooding and he was keen to thank us for our advice and to ask after one of his old playing contemporaries, Gerry Acton, who was away shooting on Saturday. The other snatches of conversation were all pretty self-explanatory, but all interspersed with the customary running ref’s commentary from Jukesy! To be fair, he’s usually right.

So, we move on to November 9, Chairman’s Day at The Linney and a home game against Cheltenham while the Seconds are also at home to Bromsgrove Thirds. Both 2.15pm kick off.



Off the pitch Malcolm Weaver will be putting on a team quiz at the club on November 29 at 7pm. Teams of up to six people are required and entry is £20 per team. It should be a cracking night, and possibly an occasion for sampling our sponsor, Ludlow Brewery's, new lager Latitude, which Gary has enabled us to sell at an amazing £4 a pint, cheaper by far than any other lager in our pumps.

A Christmas Party Night is also now open for bookings on Saturday 14th December – open to all and we recommend booking soon to avoid disappointment (see more details below).

Just a reminder about purchasing a brick – for just £25 you can be part of the clubhouse bar with funds going towards an electronic scoreboard. This is a challenge set by our Chairman, Lynn Davies. Details in the advert below.



See you soon.

Andy Wright
President Ludlow Rugby Club