

Brandywine took to the pitch on Saturday with more than just an undefeated season on the line. The A side was looking to wash away the bitter taste from last year's debacle with Lancaster; a hard fought win on the pitch that was later taken away by a protest on paper. With the pride of our Club at stake, anything less than a valiant effort would not suffice. If more proof was needed as to the importance of this game, all one had to do was listen to Captain Joe Cassidy before the match. His story of his young son and the trials he went through to play last year's game set an emotional fire around the pre-game huddle. He carefully chose his words, depicting every raw emotion he felt after our success on the field, and the sick feeling many shared the following Monday when the win was taken away. If you were near, you knew then that this game was more than just for first place.

BRFC had chances early to step on the throat of their opponents with two long breaks through the middle by John Convery. Brandywine received a penalty kick that went wide right, but still continued to press on in the Lancaster end of the field. The attack on the Lancaster try zone was ferocious and relentless. Wayne DiMarco finally pushed the ball over the line for the first score of the game putting Brandywine up 5-0.

The exuberance would not last long as Brandywine committed a turnover 5 meters from the oppositions try line. The ball was scooped up by one of the Roses who darted the length of the field for the game tying score. It didn't take long for BRFC to respond as Dave Wilson received a nice set up pass and scored his first try of the game. Tim Sheridan would add the conversion and the score would favor Brandywine once again 12-5. Lancaster has never been a team to lie down and they proved such scoring again on a long break through the middle tying the game up before half time.

Support would be the theme of the 2nd half. Brandywine wore down a much smaller Lancaster pack. Whether it was a line out, scrum, or open field support, Brandywine dominated and seemed to have a player there to off load the ball or drive past the tackler. Early in the half, Tim Sheridan connected on Penalty Points to give Brandywine the 15-12 advantage. In a game where no lead was secure, Dave Wilson struck again making the score 20-12. At this point, it seemed you could see the hammer getting ready to drop on the Roses. After a battle of field position, Matt Stauffer broke a run down the right side of the field off loading to John Grace, who would emphatically drive that final nail in the coffin with a try giving Brandywine a 25-12 cushion.

Experience and poise were on Lancaster's side as they would score again due to another Brandywine mishap cutting the lead to six points. However, that is as close as they would get. The whistle to end the game blew, sending the fans on the BRFC side into a frenzy. Finally, Brandywine had redemption for the fiasco from last fall.

Tim Sheridan again demonstrated his kicking prowess booting the ball out of the Brandywine end numerous times winning the field position game. Tim started as hooker, played flanker, and finally went back to fly half, all in one season. If you think this man lacked commitment, he had a two inch gash in his forehead at the end of the game. There's nothing like seeing a fired up Timmy with blood dripping down his face ready to fight for Brandywine Rugby. Dan Karabin and Steve McCusker were outstanding in line outs. Jump after jump these boys came down with almost every ball, and a few of Lancaster's. Reserve players like Dave Wilson, Dave Bardwell and Joe Myers stepped

up and stepped in when needed; making it seem like the team didn't miss a beat. As Captain Owen Gardner stated at the end of the game, this was a total team effort. From the guys who have been to every practice, to the guys who start A side, every player had a piece in Saturday's win.

The past four years, Lancaster Roses Rugby has sat on top of the Division II MARFU standings. They have dominated every team with hard hitting, textbook tackling, and a slow pace game that worked to their strength. On this day, Brandywine would take that away from them. Their dominance is over. Ours is just beginning!

Congratulations Brandywine on your 8-0 season!!!

**Thank you to all of the fans, Old Boys, and family that have supported BRFC all season long. Your hours of travel, emotion, and heartfelt appreciation for our club and players never go unnoticed.

Man of the Match:

Stats

1st Half

-BRFC

Penalty Kick (Sheridan) Unsuccessful

0-0

-Sub

John McDevitt – out (injury)

Dave Wilson –in

-BRFC

Try –Wayne DiMarco

Conversion (Sheridan) Unsuccessful

5-0

-Lancaster

Try

Conversion Unsuccessful

5-5

-BRFC

Try-Dave Wilson

Conversion (Sheridan) Successful

12-5

-Lancaster
Try
Conversion Successful
12-12

2nd Half

Sub
Chris Pellegrino – out
Joe Myers- in

-BRFC
Penalty Points (Sheridan) Successful
15-12

-BRFC
Try - Dave Wilson
Conversion (Sheridan) Unsuccessful
20-12

-BRFC
Try- John Grace (off load from Stauffer)
Conversion (Sheridan) Unsuccessful
25-12

-Sub
Chris Vely – out
Mike Mingioni- in

-Lancaster
Try
Conversion Successful
25-19

Final BRFC 25 - Lancaster 19

*Two Lancaster players received yellow cards and were sent to the Sin Bin for 10 minutes each.

B Side

Brandywine B side would take to the daunting task of winning their match against a very strong and big Lancaster team. Lancaster would score twice in the first half with two breaks through the middle of the pitch. The Roses seemed taken aback in the second half when the Brandywine B's stepped up their game and starting making hard hits. Brandywine would cut the lead to just 5 on Nate Starr's first try of the game. However, that would be the only score Brandywine would get as they would fall to the Roses in the end. First year player Tim Wertz was a wrecking ball throwing his body into tackles and veteran Brad Webber hit like he was an every Saturday player. Rob Sanderson did a great job with leadership while being the scrum half. Rob went down on many balls that could have been turnovers for BRFC. Kevin Marsten played out of position moving to flanker after an injury to eight man Mike Mingioni. Brandywine would like to thank all of the Old Boys who made the trip to Lancaster and booted up for the B game.