



16th October 2023



In Touch

I went to Marseilles for the World Cup quarter finals expecting to see some great rugby and wasn't disappointed, but I hardly expected the best try of the weekend to be provided courtesy of Ludlow! Yes, Ludlow went to Hereford and scored another away win over the Wyesiders, this time 33-28 and taking us to a solid fifth in the league table just above Hereford. That I saw the try of the weekend, involving five of our players in a glorious interchange of passing between forwards and backs is thanks to our Veo video camera which automatically records games for training purposes. By the wonders of technology, it was shared with me in Marseilles. I rather hope it's been shared with a wider audience as a contender for try of the week.



Photos courtesy of Trevor Patchett

Coach, Mikey Jones, described it as an amazing performance from the lads. "All 18 deserved man of the match but Hereford chose Jack Davies as our Ludlow Brewery man of the match. Our skill set and maturity in attack won us the game with some great team tries scored."



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“It’s a big achievement to go and win at Hereford, but to do it two seasons in a row shows how good this team is becoming. Onwards and upwards!”

This weekend it’s Ladies Day and Ludlow entertain Worcester at The Linney KO 3pm. Worcester are currently below us in the league having won only one game since the start of the season, but as Ludlow have shown, form can change very quickly. The Ladies Day lunch is completely sold out but we are looking for a big crowd to support and so have laid on Origin Pizza pitch side to keep you fortified from 2pm -7pm. You won’t even need to go home before England’s semi-final is shown on the big screens in the clubhouse.

Ludlow seconds lost 14-68 at home to Newcastle, but those who were there tell me that the game was closer than the score would suggest. On Saturday they travel to play Leek seconds. We wish them luck.

England Rugby Travel took over a beautiful stone building with marble floors in the centre of Marseilles for our At Home reception prior to the Wales Argentina game. Scott Quinnell, Matt Dawson, Ben Kay and Will Greenwood, were our hosts and very good they were, if wrong about the outcome of the game!

We were bussed then to the Stade de Marseille, the home of Ligue One side Olympique de Marseille, and a very impressive place. Getting there and the food and drink were all well-organised but football supporters must have bigger bladders than rugby supporters. All the toilets were on the ground floor and meant walking down a narrow staircase. That staircase was jammed solid at halftime with the result that several hundred people missed the early part of the second half in both matches. My wife was impressed that there were plenty of Ladies toilets and no queue!

Many of you will have seen the fracas involving a couple of so-called England fans in Lord Nelson hats. It happened just behind us, was over in seconds and was dealt with very quickly and very efficiently by the French security guards. Everywhere we went we had a fantastic welcome from the French and there was great camaraderie among all the nations present although it was surprise that the stadium wasn’t full for either quarter final.

The one thing I took away with me was how far behind we, as a nation, have fallen in the rush to switch to electric transport. Aix en Provence, where we stayed, and which I would highly recommend to anyone planning a French holiday for next year, has a very sophisticated public transport system of electric and hybrid buses ranging in size from something akin to a milk float to coaches that can accommodate 50 or 60. We stayed on the outskirts and used one of these buses every day for £1.30 a trip into town or back. They ran to time, the drivers were helpful and the customers, to a man and woman politely thanked the drivers as they got on and off. Every other vehicle seemed to be electric and the electric scooters which proliferate are tolerated both on and off the road.



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The council's fleet of vehicles which kept the town immaculate were also mostly electric. It was lovely too to see the streets lined with photos, not of the big names in World Rugby, but of the boys and girls who play rugby in the clubs of Provence. This was about a family friendly game and there were lots of youngsters in the stadium.

What did surprise me talking among the England supporters were how few of them have any kind of link to their local clubs. They love watching England play rugby and follow them all round the world but never think to get involved with their own local team. That a bit of a failure on our behalf and a project for our Twickenham friends to take on.

By the way I've just spent a week in shorts and T shirt, sitting outside comfortably until 10pm and now as I write this back in Ludlow it's bloody freezing and back to jeans and a jersey.

Hope to see you on Saturday.

See you soon,

Andy Wright

President Ludlow Rugby Club