

## Law, Brakeley Impact Famed Varsity Match

Written by Pat Clifton

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Oxford's Jason Law and Cambridge's Nate Brakeley started and played the full 80 minutes of Thursday's Varsity Match at Twickenham, won 26-19 by Oxford.

Law, formerly of Cal, earned his second Blue in the match (and is now 2-0 in the hallowed rivalry) while Dartmouth alum Brakeley made his Varsity Match debut.

Cambridge led 16-6 at halftime, but some impressive breaks by Oxford fullback Sam Egerton swung the momentum in the Blues' direction in the second stanza.

Law had a hand in Oxford's second of three second-half tries. They had the ball deep in Cambridge's end, and Law took the final crash ball to commit the Light Blues' defense before Oxford sent it wide to exploit an overlap for a try.

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The conversion missed, Cambridge clung to a 19-16 lead, until Egerton made a clean break through the heart of Cambridge's defense and offloaded for a try. That conversion was made, giving Oxford its first lead, 23-19, with about 10 minutes to play.

Cambridge went back on the offensive for what seemed like the first time in the entire second half, and wound up with a lineout near the attacking 22.

Brakeley fielded the throw in and was at the front of an impressive maul that methodically drove to within inches of the go-ahead try before being thwarted. Oxford's defense then stymied the possession with great backline pressure and Oxford nearly scored going 90 meters the other direction.

A game saving tackle from Cambridge's fullback slowed Oxford, and Brakeley was one of the first forwards to arrive in support, helping end the threat of a try. Oxford ended up slotting a penalty on the possession, but Cambridge remained within a converted try of them at 26-19.

Oxford retained possession on the restart, and all they had to do was milk two minutes off the clock and find touch. But Brakeley managed to rip the ball from Oxford hands on a pick-and-drive to give Cambridge one more chance. The Light Blues spun the ball from left to right, and back, but couldn't find a hole and eventually lost the ball into touch to end the game.

In all, Law and Brakeley had similar games. Neither made jaw-dropping big hits or long runs, but both were solid in the lineout and very active in the breakdown.