

ENGLAND RATINGS

- MIKE BROWN** 7/10
Solid as ever under the high ball and dangerous on the burst.
- ANTHONY WATSON** 7
Tenacious effort when he did get the ball, which was not enough.
- BRAD BARRITT** 6
Tackle bravery never in question but creativity not his forte.
- SAM BURGESS** 7
Did nothing wrong, carried well, boshing anyone in his path.
- JONNY MAY** 6
Well-taken 'goal-hanger' try but faded as the game wore on.
- OWEN FARRELL** ★ 8
Superb game which justified selection over George Ford.
- BEN YOUNGS** 7
Superb snipe-laden first half but forced off with injury.
- JOE MARLER** 7
Great scrummaging effort and carried well in the loose.
- TOM YOUNGS** 6
Steadied after early line-out throwing woes and battled hard.
- DAN COLE** 7
Gallant front-row effort and always available for a big carry.
- GEOFF PARLING** 7
Coupled line-out stability with a fine night's work in the loose.
- COURTNEY LAWES** 6
Off injured at half-time for Joe Launchbury – and badly missed.
- TOM WOOD** 6
Tackled like a demon but this wasn't his best game.
- CHRIS ROBSHAW** 7
Gutted with last-ditch penalty call but otherwise superb.
- BILLY VUNIPOLA** 7
One of his best games. Made the hard yards until his injury.
- SUBSTITUTES**
Webber 6, Mako Vunipola 6, Launchbury 6, Ford 6, Brookes 6, Wigglesworth 6, Haskell 7

BIG-MATCH DEBRIEF

BY RICHARD HOOKHAM

Captain carrying the can ignores a Biggar picture

THE majority of pre-World Cup preview guides had this down as the 'group of death'.

And in the wreckage of Saturday's defeat to Wales at Twickenham, it's easy to see why.

England's bid to keep their hopes alive in Pool A now rest on an almighty showdown with Australia next weekend after blowing it big time in south-west London.

England should not have lost and they know it. But that takes nothing away from a superb effort from Warren Gatland's side who kept themselves in touch with the unerring kicking accuracy of Dan Biggar and the driving passion of skipper Sam Warburton, whose warrior pack simply refused to go away, like a bad case of the flu.

Wales trailed 16-9 at the break and two more Owen Farrell penalties put England on easy street ten minutes into the second half.

But growing indiscipline kept the visitors in touch as Biggar kept finding his target before the key moment when scrum-half Gareth Davies crossed and Biggar converted to level it up.

When the Welsh fly-half walloped a penalty from halfway, England's players froze as their worst nightmare became reality.

Chris Robshaw opted to go for broke with a line-out and drive, instead of asking Owen Farrell to attempt a last-ditch penalty. The gamble failed but don't lay all of this on the captain's shoulders.

He was let down by too many of his team-mates gifting Wales easy pickings, and needless penalties.

It is a lesson they must learn quickly or Australia will have them for breakfast.



GET CREATIVE ALONG WITH BATTERING SAM

SAM BURGESS did nothing wrong – running into the Welsh line with gusto – but his pairing with Brad Barritt is a work in progress.

England must beat Australia next Saturday and more creativity, rather than a route-one battering-ram approach, might be needed.

Henry Slade is a creative option but it may be a gamble too far. So is a Farrell/Burgess (pictured) pairing and George Ford back at No.10 on the cards?

REWARD FOR CANNY COACH
WALES had no right to win but the way they pulled it out of the fire, despite their dreadful luck with injuries, is testament to their tremendous spirit and canny leadership

under coach Warren Gatland. In theory, that growing crocked list still makes them outsiders, but their self-belief and comradeship could take them further than many had expected.

WALES RATINGS

- LIAM WILLIAMS** 7/10
Getting into his stride in second half until another injury victim.
- GEORGE NORTH** 7
Took a while to get into it but a big go-to ball-carrying option.
- SCOTT WILLIAMS** 7
Another fine display before suffering horrible knee injury.
- JAMIE ROBERTS** 7
Solid display but came out all-square in Burgess showdown.
- HALLAM AMOS** 7
Fine effort ended after suffering a nasty shoulder injury.
- DAN BIGGAR** ★ 9
Man-of-the-match performance with stunning 23-point haul.
- GARETH DAVIES** 8
Lovely try and fine distribution, despite pack often on back foot.
- GETHIN JENKINS** 6
Scrummaging legend found himself under a lot of pressure.
- SCOTT BALDWIN** 7
A few off-target throws but produced some telling tackles.
- TOMAS FRANCIS** 6
Struggled in the scrum but otherwise not a bad effort.
- BRADLEY DAVIES** 7
A superb eye-catching burst and solid work in the line-out.
- ALUN WYN JONES** 7
Couldn't dominate in line-out but was relentless in the loose.
- DAN LYDIATE** 6
Lacked his usual influence but typical gutsy defensive work.
- TAULUPE FALETAU** 8
Grew in stature as the game wore on. A giant performance.
- SAM WARBURTON** 8
A true captain's effort. A lion in the loose and never gave up.
- SUBSTITUTES**
Lee 7, Owens 6, Cuthbert 6, Lloyd Williams 6, Priestland 7, Chateris 6, Tipuric 6



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