

Rugby – Stewarts-Melville FP v Hillhead/Jordanhill, RBS Premier 2, 22 October 2011



On paper, there appeared to be a yawning gulf between Saturday's two protagonists, Edinburgh's Stewarts-Melville and Glasgow's Hillhead/Jordanhill, Stew-Mel being unbeaten and Hillhead having only won two of their eight matches so far in the RBS Premier 2 division. In the end Stew-Mel ran out winners in a fairly evenly contested match at Inverleith – 60-40 according to the referee after the match. Stew-Mel had most of the play for the first 10 minutes, but a line-out error in the 22 saw Hillhead opening the scoring through their scrum half, Haddon McPherson – and everyone's Man-of-the-Match, apart from whoever decides these matters – with a well worked try after 10 minutes. A missed penalty a couple of minutes later from Hillhead had Stew-Mel on the attack with a break down the left and a superb offload from Borthwick put their No. 11 over for the try. A successful conversion took the score to 7-5 in favour of the home side.

Almost straight from the kick-off full-back Hayden Lingard initiated the next attack from deep inside his own half, taking the ball well inside the Hillhead 22 and after a quick exchange of passes just short of the line, Lingard dived over the line for Stew-Mel's second. Their No. 10 stepped up for the conversion and Stew-Mel were 14 points to 10 ahead. Hillhead went straight back on the attack after the kick-off and managed to work the ball into Stew-Mel's 22 where McPherson got his hands on the ball and broke through the defence for his second try. With 25 minutes gone and four tries scored it looked like a busy day for the score board operator and, after a short period of shared possession where

only Stew-Mel came close, with a minute to go Richard Borthwick gathered the ball inside the Hillhead 10 metre line and raced down the right-hand touch-line to score the home side's third try in the corner (pictured). With the conversion being missed, Stewarts-Melville went into the break 19 points to 10 ahead.

The second half could only be a bit of an anti-climax after that and while both teams played good open, running rugby only (only!) three tries were scored. two from Stewarts Melville's Brown and Patterson and a superb try from Hillhead from their own 22, which saw a break up the left leaving Butler to score with a mildly protested touch-down. So, a final score of 29-18 to Stewarts-Melville leaves them at the top of the Premier 2 table, unbeaten and guaranteed a play off spot for the chance at Premier 1 rugby next season.

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