

Rugby – Murrayfield Wanderers v RHC Cougars, RBS Premier 1, 13 November 2011



Murrayfield Wanderers fielded eight of the current Scotland squad in their starting line-up, including the whole front row, so they were looking good for a decent result against Barnton's RHC Cougars. RHC opened the scoring after a few minutes with a penalty from Scotland scrum-half, Louise Dalgleish.

The Wandies put their first points on the board a few minutes later, with a penalty from Scotland's Lisa Martin. Katy Green followed this up with the first try of the match less than two minutes later. With another Martin penalty to their name, Wandies were 11-3 ahead when they were put under pressure on their try line by some good RHC forward play. The ball came out of a ruck under the posts and a pass out to the right from Dalgliesh was brought back to the left leaving Murrayfield wrong footed and Dawn McPherson forced her way through the tackle of Hex to touch down for RHC's first – and only – try of the match.

Another try for Murrayfield from No. 13 Laura Steven stretched the lead to 16-8, which is where it stood at half-time. At some point near the end of the half, the home side managed to find yet another International on their subs bench, bringing on Megan Gaffney as an injury replacement.

RHC were able to take the game to the home side during the half and a couple of kicks through the defence saw Murrayfield having to make a couple of hurried touch-downs in their own area, so it was looking good for a fairly even second period.

It wasn't to be though, as Murrayfield upped their game in the second half and ran in a further 5 tries, although only two were converted, to RHC's single penalty. Prop Suzanne Hex scored two of her own, a short range dive-over, which she followed up 5 minutes later with a run in from near half way. Murrayfield ran out eventual winners 45 points to 11 and showed why they are Scotland's top women's team, unbeaten in the 2011-12 season, so far.

Of interest was the fact that two of the Wandies players had also made their, successful, debut in a Scotland jersey against The Netherlands the previous weekend. Megan Gaffney, who made her way through the age-group teams, playing at Under-18, Under-20 and Scotland A.

Half-Swedish, Sarah Sexton (pictured) is the other debutee, and she has played for Swedish 3-time Championship winning team, Gothenburg Ladies. Sarah qualifies for the National team through her Stranraer-born, Scottish Dad.

Report and Photo – John Preece

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