

Rugby – Edinburgh Rugby v Aironi RaboDirect PR012 2 December 2011

✘ Seven tries from a rampant Edinburgh side saw off Italian visitors Aironi in a tremendous display of attacking and, on occasion, defending rugby. It took just under 10 minutes for David Denton to open the scoring following a penetrating run by Nick de Luca. Laidlaw made up for an earlier penalty miss by converting his kick and Edinburgh were 7-0 ahead. Just over five minutes later, another fantastic run from de Luca left serial Man-of-the-Match, Tim Visser, with the ball and a man to beat. Duly despatched the big Dutchman slid over in the corner for his first of three tries on the night. Not having touched down, he then trotted over to dot down under the posts. Unfortunately, the officials didn't see it that way, leaving Laidlaw with a difficult kick from near the touch-line. No problem – 14-0.

Barely two minutes later, Visser again crossed the line, crashing through two defenders and, with a dive from the five metre line, sliding in to the right of the posts. Another Laidlaw conversion and Edinburgh were 21 points to the good after 17 minutes.

With their tails up and Aironi rocking, the attack continued. Another certain Visser try was prevented by the Italian full back Ruggero Trevisan collecting the ball off Visser's toes to carry back over his own line. Another 'try' by Lee Jones three minutes after this was ruled a forward pass by match referee, John Lacey (IRFU). From the resultant scrum, Aironi moved the ball up the field and penetrated the Edinburgh 22 at last. A charged down Laidlaw clearance left second-row George Biagi with the ball and an almost clear route to the line. 21-5 to Edinburgh and still 15 minutes to go.

Collecting the restart ball from Patterson, Lee Jones had one of his upfield gallops, breaking at least two tackles before passing the ball to Sean Cox. A superb offload out of a tackle left the ball in the hands of de Luca and Edinburgh had secured their fourth try and a bonus point before half-time. In between all this, Laidlaw had managed to slot home a penalty, the awarding of which, earned the visitors scrum-half, Tito Tebaldi, a yellow.

The final six or seven minutes of the half, however, belonged to Aironi and they encamped themselves in the Edinburgh five-metre area, but a superb display of defence from the 14-man hosts (yellow for Denton) held them out to close off the half 31-5 ahead.

The second-half was more of the same. Edinburgh attacking and Aironi defending – most of the time. Three tries went over. Visser, for his hat-trick (pictured), after six minutes, Lee Jones after 13 – collecting a wonderfully weighted kick from Phil Godman to fall over the goal line – and a third from replacement scrum-half Chris Leck with 10 minutes to go. With 50 points on the board, Edinburgh maybe took their foot of the gas a touch for the final 10, and continuous pressure on the Edinburgh line was eventually awarded with a score for 'The Herons' in the dying minutes from Filippo Ferrarini. Final score, 50-10 to Edinburgh.

A healthy – for Edinburgh – crowd of 4400 were witness to a very convincing win for the hosts against a side who defeated them in Italy earlier in the season, and a confidence-booster for their Round 3 Heineken Cup match in Cardiff against the Blues next week-end. Next home match is the return fixture against the Blues on the 16th December at 8:00pm.

Photo and Report – John Preece

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