

EuroHockey Indoor Club Trophy, Day 3



On the third and final day of the EuroHockey Indoor Tournament at Edinburgh Napier University's [EN]GAGE sports arena, Inverleith were still in with a chance of promotion to the top division. They had to win both their games, but playing against top European sides at any sport is never easy.

This was demonstrated in their first match against Ukrainian full-timers, HC Kolos-Sekvoia Vinnitsa. The Ukrainian side looked under a bit of pressure at times, and in spite of being pulled back twice, finished the first half 3-2 ahead. In the second half, they stepped up a gear and had Inverleith on the back foot for a while, and, in spite of five missed penalty corner chances and a missed penalty flick from the Edinburgh side, they kept their shape, didn't panic and eventually ran out winners 5-2. With Racing Club de Bruxelles beating AD Lousada from Portugal in their match, Inverleith were up to play a dead rubber in the final match of the day against Lille, who were to finish the weekend winners of the overall and gaining promotion from the second tier.

The match against Lille went well for Inverleith and, although a goal down after a couple of minutes – goal keeper Allan Dick saving a penalty a few seconds before – Inverleith were 4-1 up at the interval. The second half started well for Scots, with a goal in the first minute, but then they seemed to lose their way somewhat. The French side pulled three goals back and although they couldn't quite get the equaliser, stopped the Inverleith side from extending their lead.

So no promotion this time around for Inverleith Hockey Club,

but the event was a great success and a triumph of fairly short notice organisation for John Bell and his team of helpers and volunteers on the day. The whole weekend ran like clockwork – having the telly people there might have helped a little to keep to the timetable – putting some larger, professional events in the shade. Lille cleaned up most of the top awards, winning the tournament overall and gaining that vital promotion. Their goalkeeper, Marc Regnault (pictured) won the Best GK cup and Mikael Kempf came away with the cup for best player. Racing Club de Bruxelles' Tom Boon was the highest scorer with what seemed like millions of goals – the announcer must have had “Goal for Tom Boon!” on a loop. Bruxelles also finished second overall, with Inverleith in third place.

Overall Results for the tournament can be found at <http://www.eurohockey.org/>

The one low note of the weekend was the Day 3 match between Bruxelles and Lousada. With the score at 4-3 for the Belgian side, and both having achieved their points requirement, the teams then spent a large part of the second half batting the ball across the back of the court. After the crowd got a bit bored – to say the least – the referees called the captains over to try and resolve the situation and ‘entertain’, but as neither side had anything to gain and were breaking no rules, they carried on to the final hooter.

If that was the match you happened to catch being broadcast, then it really wasn't a great advert for what is a very fast, very skillful and exciting sport.

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