

Women's Hockey – Scotland v South Africa



Women's Hockey 2 June 2012

Scotland and South Africa played their fifth and final test at Titwood, in Glasgow, on Saturday, Scotland having lost the previous three matches, with the first one drawn. Before the anthems there was a presentation to two of South Africa's long serving players. Shelley Russell and Tarryn Bright, who were presented with bouquets by South African team officials to mark the occasion of their 150th and 200th Tests, respectively. The hosts fared better in the first half than reported previously and were awarded a penalty corner a few minutes in which was unfortunately fired wide. The visitors came back with an attack of their own and had their first shot on goal stopped on the line before another was saved by goalie, Amy Gibson. Scots pressure on the South African goal saw the defence scrambling to clear before another South African foray upfield saw the ball in the back of the Scots' net with 15 minutes on the clock, Marsha Marescia being the scorer. Five minutes later and the visitors were two up, this time from No. 23 Bernadette Costin, who netted a poor Scottish clearance.

Scotland drew a goal back five minutes later, on the back of a run through the centre of the defence by Nikki Kidd. A simple through ball to Sarah Robertson and Scotland were on the scoreboard. In the dying minutes of the half, Scotland had a chance to draw level but Sam Judge failed to strike the ball cleanly and the visitors' keeper made an easy save. The second half was very much a repeat of the first, the 'tedium' of end-to-end, fast, skilful hockey being broken at one point by the carding of South Africa's Pietie Coetzee for persistent fouling. The final 10 minutes, however were to prove Scotland's undoing as the fitness of the visitors shone through and two swift goals from Kate Woods and Marsha Marescia took the score out to 4-1 in favour of the higher ranking team.

Overall, Scotland may have lost four of the five matches, with one drawn, but they weren't completely outclassed by any means and, considering that four of their top players are in the UK Olympic squad, the others stepped up to the plate and performed very well.

Photo and Report – John Preece

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