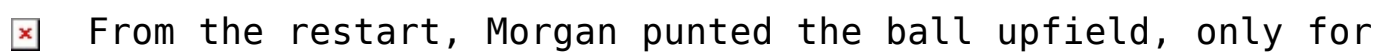


# Edinburgh v Ospreys, RaboDirect PR012, 23rd November 2012



Just over 3,000 spectators braved the, initially, miserable weather to see Edinburgh playing their home game of the season. With the 'stars' away on International duty, it fell to the, marginally, lesser lights of the home side to take on an Ospreys team fairly brimming with 'names'.

Apart from a couple of upfield forays from either side, the visitors coming closest to an opening try, the first quarter of the match closed with the score at 3-3 from penalties from Matthew Morgan for the Ospreys after 15 minutes, followed up by one from Gregor Hunter on the 22 minute mark. For the next 10 minutes, however, Edinburgh had to endure an onslaught from the Welsh team as attack after attack fought to get over the line, only last minute, desperate tackling from the home team keeping them out. A bit too desperate eventually, as another penalty award gave Morgan the chance to take the Ospreys into a three point lead.

 From the restart, Morgan punted the ball upfield, only for Edinburgh to keep the ball in play and launch upfield with a series of penetrating runs from their big men. Recycling from a ruck on the left, the ball was quickly swung out to the other wing. Centre, Dougie Fife, took the ball down the line, only to run into full back, Richard Fussel, who thought he had done enough to snuff out the attack on the 22, but a superb offload (pictured) to the following up, Richie Rees, took out three players. Rees carried the ball another 15 metres nearer the line before his offload landed with Willem Nell. The South

African front-row then had a clear run in to dive over the line for Edinburgh's only try on the night. Hunter missed the kick to leave the score at 8-6 to Edinburgh, with five minutes until the break. Unfortunately, the Ospreys took this as a challenge to their current Champions' status and immediately launched themselves upfield. Edinburgh managed to hold out the pounding their line was under, but, eventually the visitors went out to the left and Morgan found a gap in the defence, which he took well to dive over for a well-worked try. He scored with his own conversion and the half ended with the Ospreys 13-8 ahead.

The second half was to prove a dominant one for the Edinburgh side with two Ospreys' men suffering yellows for continued ruck and scrum infringements. With Hunter's penalty kicking boot working superbly, the home side pulled the lead out to 20-13. With Fife and Sep Visser, younger brother of Tim, both putting the Ospreys' line under increasing pressure, it was only a matter of time before one of them crossed the line. Unfortunately, it was from a forward pass but, the play went back for a penalty kick which Hunter struck wide. Edinburgh continued their hammering at the door and were rewarded almost on the full-time whistle with another scrum penalty. A bit of pressure on Hunter for this one as a successful kick would leave the Welsh side 10 points down, and without a losing bonus point. Hunter held his nerve, for probably his easiest, positional wise, kick of the evening to slot the ball home with the final play of the night to leave a jubilant home team with a well deserved 23-13 victory.

Edinburgh have now pulled themselves up to seventh place in the table – for now – with a tremendous performance on the night from their 'one-and-a-halfth' string side and indicating that, after a shakey start to the season, maybe Michael

Bradley's men are starting to turn things around. All will be revealed in a fortnight as the third and fourth round matches in the Heineken Cup take place against French super team, Racing Metro 92. It was against them last year that what was probably the game of the season – at any level – took place at Murrayfield with Edinburgh overcoming a 20 points deficit at one point, to run out winners in the the 48-47 thriller. Of course, 'all might be revealed..' at the next RaboDirect match against Connacht next week...

Report and photos – John Preece

Web – <http://www.photoboxgallery.com/jlp-photography>