

Edinburgh v Leinster 4

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Four converted tries and a penalty from Leinster were more than sufficient to see off an Edinburgh side which played better than previous weeks, but still had no real answer to the current Heineken Cup Champions.

Leinster had Edinburgh on the back foot from the start and only the boot of Dougie Fife kept the Irishmen away from the try line. In fact, it was the home side who took the lead after 18 minutes from a Greg Laidlaw penalty, only for Jonathan Sexton to pull the visitors level three minutes later.

Edinburgh were holding their own in the midfield battle, although both sides were making a few errors, until, with just over five minutes to go in the half, David Denton was adjudged by the referee to have come into a tryline maul from the Leinster side and Edinburgh were then dealt a double whammy. Not only was Denton sent to the sin-bin for ten minutes, but his crime was considered sufficiently heinous for the referee to, rather harshly, award a penalty try under the posts. Sexton couldn't miss and the Leinster men were 10-3 up. Three minutes later they were over the line again, this time a little more legitimately (it could be claimed). Taking advantage of Edinburgh's narrowed defence, the ball was swung quickly out left and Gordon Darcy neatly avoided any tackles to score Leinster's second try, which Sexton converted to take them 17-3 ahead. A penalty on the stroke of half time allowed Edinburgh to claw back three points to go into the break 17-6 down.

☒ Holding out until Denton returned, the home side then had two of their men 'retired hurt' within minutes of each other. Stuart McInally and Tim Visser were both laid low with head injuries, which required them to be assisted, looking decidedly second-hand, from the field. With the subs on, the home side were in the driving seat for a few minutes, and managed to manoeuvre Peirs Francis into a position where he could, successfully, have a drop at goal.

Another sustained period of possession and pressure from the visitors saw them break away through Shane Jennings. A neat double-dummy, saw him past the defence and a short pass out to Sean O'Brien left him with a clear run in. Again Sexton stuck the ball between the post and it was 24-9 to Leinster.

With the hosts putting in a sustained period of good, attacking play, Leinster's Jamie Heaslip was 'forced' to kill the ball in a ruck five metres out. Laidlaw choose to go for the corner, which turned out to be the second best choice. The ball was overthrown into the lineout and the visitors were let loose once more. And it was the same old story. Try, Conversion. 31-9 with just over ten minutes left.

It was left to Willem Nel to show the backs the way to the line. Receiving the ball on the 22, a couple of dummies, a side-step and a crashed-through No. 9 later, he crossed the line to score Edinburgh's only try of the match. Laidlaw scored with the conversion and the final score stood at 31-16 to Leinster.

Another league defeat for the Capital's team, and, with Glasgow currently lying second in the table to Edinburgh's ninth, things can't be too happy at Murrayfield.

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