

# The Edinburgh Reporter's Weekly Sports Round-up



This week The Edinburgh Reporter looks at the contrasting fortunes of Hibs and Hearts, and also another dismal spell for Edinburgh Rugby. There was disappointment for the City of Edinburgh Basketball team, and Hutchison Vale Boys' Club. Congratulations go to Edinburgh Capitals for a fine victory over Sheffield Steelers and Edinburgh curler Jennifer Dodds, who is part of the Scotland Juniors team, who did well at the world championships in Russia.

## **Rugby by John Preece**

The week started badly for Edinburgh with centre Nick de Luca being handed a 13 week suspension for a dangerous 'tip tackle' during the loss against Llanelli Scarlets. This means that the player will be out of action, in all competitions, until the 26 May 2013. Unlike football, a rugby suspension is across the board and not specific to the league or cup in which the player has been 'convicted'. This can sometimes mean a rugby ban, in those weeks when the player's team do not have a match, do not count towards the ban.

And the week ended badly for Edinburgh as well with that defeat to the Scarlets, going down 14-13, in spite of leading 10-8 at half time. Try of the match went to Edinburgh, though, with a superbly worked score involving two 'dummy runners' taking the attention of the defence, which left Dougie Fife with a clear run in to the line. Once again, however, mistakes and ill-discipline, including a yellow for Fife, left the Edinburgh men chasing the game. Unusually, the visitors came in for some sympathy from the commentators on BBC Wales – a notoriously one-sided bunch – for some of the 'unusual'

decisions by the Italian referee.

The club side of things was unusually quiet this weekend with only one RBS Premiership match played between Boroughmuir and Heriots at Meggetland, 'Muir losing out to the odd point in a close 23-22 match. Murrayfield were defeated in Championship League B 39-29 at home to Biggar and, finally, in the RBS Cup, yet another close result went the way of the 'out of towners' when Dundee beat Currie 30-29 at Malleny Park to secure a semi-final place

## **Football**

Hearts travelled to Paisley on Wednesday for a dress rehearsal for the forthcoming League Cup Final, but returned empty handed after Paul McGowan converted an early penalty and Graham Carey scored with a 30 yard strike just before half time to secure the three points.

The following day the club announced the departure of manager John McGlynn by 'mutual consent.' A spokesman said:- "The over-riding factor in this decision was the long-term well-being of Heart of Midlothian Football Club. When John came to the club, Hearts were embarking on a transitional phase in the club's history. He began that important period of change and it is now imperative we find the right man to take the transition forward."

McGlynn admitted his sadness at leaving what he described as a 'dream job'. "I was very grateful to be given the chance to become the Hearts manager, as it was my dream job. It is unfortunate that things didn't turn out the way I wanted them to and I am gutted about that. I don't think I could have done any more but the league table doesn't lie and I know it is a results-driven business."

Coach Gary Locke and player development manager Darren Murray will take charge of the team on an interim basis, and started with a narrow defeat at home to Motherwell. Michael Higdon

opened the scoring for the Steelmen in the third minute and a Dylan McGowan own goal five minutes later gave Hearts a mountain to climb. John Sutton gave the Gorgie faithful in the 11048 crowd some home with a close range header in the 58<sup>th</sup> minute, but Motherwell were able to see the game out without further scoring.

There was some good news for Hearts' fans however as three promising youngster have signed contract extensions. Scott Robinson and Billy King have signed new two year deals, tying them to the club until the summer of 2015 whilst Brad McKay has signed a one year deal after a successful loan spell with Stenhousemuir.

Last Wednesday, Hibs came from behind to take a point against Kilmarnock at Easter Road. Pat Fenlon's men went one down thanks to a Sammy Clingan goal, but Ryan McGivern equalised with seven minutes remaining. Jude Winchester put Killie ahead in the next passage of play; however Leigh Griffiths scored a deserved equaliser in the dying minutes to retain a place in the top six.

On Friday, the club unveiled their 'Forever Green' 2013/14 Season ticket membership campaign which includes an eleven month interest free payment plan.

On Sunday a fantastic performance from Leigh Griffiths earned Hibs a place in the Scottish Cup Semi Final Draw after scoring a hat-trick and making the other in the 4-2 victory over Kilmarnock at Rugby Park. Kilmarnock twice came from behind before two late Griffiths' goals sealed the victory. The draw for the semi-finals takes place at Hampden on Monday lunchtime.



In the Kings Cup, Edinburgh City lost 3-1 to Stirling University in a belated first round tie, whilst Craigroyston

lost 1-2 to Leith Athletic after extra time, Tynecastle beat Heriot Watt University 1-0 at Riccarton, and Civil Service Strollers beat Selkirk 1-0 in Muirhouse, in the second round. Elsewhere a Kevin Motion goal after 15 minutes was enough to secure victory over Edinburgh University at Peffermill.

Lothian Thistle Hutchison Vale lost 1-6 to Vale of Leithen in the Central Taxis Premier Division

## **Women's Football**

10 players from Hibernian Ladies have been selected to represent Scotland at the prestigious La Manga Ten Nations Tournament and Cyprus Women's Cup.

Shannon Lynn, Joelle Murray and Frankie Brown have been called-up into the senior side for the Cyprus Women's Cup, and will face England, Italy and New Zealand at this year's tournament, which runs from 6-13 March in Nicosia, Larnaca and Paralimni.

The Cyprus Women's Cup, organised by Scotland, England and The Netherlands in partnership with Cyprus Tourism Organisation and Erinor Tours, is established as an important event in the women's football calendar.

Youngsters Hannah Reid, Liz Arnott, Siobhan Hunter, Kirsty Smith, Rachel Walkingshaw, Caroline Weir and Clare Williamson have all been selected by Scotland Under-19s for the tournament in La Manga from 5-12 March.

The young Scots will face England, Iceland and Italy as part of their final preparations for the UEFA Women's U19 Championship Elite Round in April – which will be hosted in Scotland.

TV presented Kirsty Gallagher has become Patron of Hibernian Ladies, to the delight of her Hibs daft father Bernard, the former Ryder Cup captain.

## **✘ Schoolboy Football**

Ironically, in a week where Oldco Rangers received a token punishment for paying millions of pounds to players without disclosing details to the SFA, Hutchison Vale FC were ejected from both the national and South East region cups by the Scottish Youth Football Association (SYFA) after a keyboard "slip" led to one of their players being registered incorrectly. The player was accidentally registered for the 2011-12 season, instead of the current one, when details for the 15-year-old were submitted online.

The famous boys club have been responsible for bringing through numerous players into the senior ranks, including Leigh Griffiths, Darren Fletcher, Kenny Miller, Kevin Harper and Gary Caldwell.

## **Athletics**

Former Tynecastle High School pupil Emma Nuttall (Edinburgh AC) has soared to the top of the UK women's high jump rankings for 2013 after winning the Canada West indoor title with a leap of 1.85 metres in Regina, Saskatchewan, beating her previous indoor best of 1.83m set whilst winning the 2011 Scottish indoor title.

She is currently studying history at Trinity Western University in Vancouver where she is coached by the former Scottish national coach Laurier Primeau.

## **Ice Hockey**

Edinburgh Capitals announced that Slovakian player-coach Richard Hartmann has signed an extension to his current deal that will keep him at the club until the end of their 2013-14 Elite League ice hockey campaign.

Hartmann joined the Caps in 2011 having made over 600 appearances during a 17 year career in his native Slovakia as

well as North America and Germany.

On Saturday the Caps travelled to Sheffield and returned with a victory, beating the Steelers 3-2 after a penalty shootout. The Steelers took an early lead but the Capitals hit back with goals from Peter Holecko and Richard Hartmann, before the Yorkshire side equalised in the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute. Curtis Leinwebber scored the decisive penalty to grab victory.

Despite a good performance against Nottingham Panthers at Murrayfield on Sunday, the Caps were unable to repeat their success of the previous night, losing 6-1, with Marcis Zembers scoring the only goal.

## **Basketball**

The Scottish Men's Basketball League title went to the wire with a 'winners take all' battle at a packed Portobello High School on Friday night. Unfortunately however last years' champions Edinburgh Kings lost 73-60 after a tremendous second half fightback by Falkirk Fury who clinched the title for only the second time in their history. The teams were level 51-51 with four minutes left but Walter Lubeight sealed the match for Fury with four free throws.

Elsewhere, Boroughmuir Blaze beat Stirling Knights 79-48 at the Craggs.

In the Women's League, City of Edinburgh Kool Kats lost 64-68 to Polonia Phoenix at Portobello High School, leaving them third in the table with 28 points from 16 games.

## **Curling**

Edinburgh curler Jennifer Dodds is on target for next weekend's final after helping Scotland to three victories in the World Junior Championships in Sochi, Russia.

Dodds, along with Lauren Gray, Abi Brown and Lockerbie skip

Hannah Fleming, who studies at Edinburgh Napier University, beat the USA 9-7, Russia 7-4 and Canada 3-1 to top the group table with three wins out of three.

## **Volleyball**

In the Schelde Sports Men's National League Division One, City of Edinburgh beat City of Glasgow Ragazzi 3-1 in Glasgow, 25-20 19-25 14-25 and 21-25.

Edinburgh Jets lost 3-1 away to Kilmarnock Blaze 21-25 25-12 25-23 and 25-23.

In Division Two East, City of Edinburgh II beat Beacon 3-1 – 25-20 22-25 25-23 26-24

In the Schelde Sports Women's National League Division One, Edinburgh Jets lost 3-1 away to Troon Team Ayrshire 25-22 19-25 25-20 and 25-22