

The Edinburgh Reporter's Weekly Sports Roundup



This week, The Edinburgh Reporter looks at one of the most controversial decisions ever made in an Edinburgh derby, which denied Hibs the three SPL points, and send best wishes to Hearts for next week's Scottish Communities League Cup Final. Congratulations go to Hibs star Leigh Griffiths who was named SPL Player of the Month, and also the Edinburgh Capitals for a superb 3-2 win over Belfast Giants.

Commiserations are due to Spartans and Lothian Thistle Hutchison Vale who both fell at the semi-final stage of the Southern Challenge Cup, and also to Jennifer Dodds and her Scots' curling team-mates who narrowly lost in the final of the World Junior Curling Championships in Sochi Russia. Rugby match reports can be found on the Reporter's website.

Football

Hearts got the week off to a good start, beating St Johnstone 2-0 with goals from Ryan Stevenson and John Sutton to leapfrog St Mirren and move up to tenth in the SPL.

On Friday, the troubled club launched season ticket sales for 2013/14 today with a promise to supporters that prices will remain fixed during three sales phases.

Children under 12 can purchase a season ticket from £50, with under-18s from £155, student and pensioner concessions from £180 and full adult prices starting at £280 for the entire season. Existing season ticket holders wishing to renew must do so before April 29, to guarantee their seat.

Across the city, Hibs launched a ground breaking lottery which

gives supporters a chance to win an astonishing £18.2m. The idea for the initiative came from the supporters' group 'Let's Work Together' and will see a percentage of the money raised given to manager Pat Fenlon to be used for player recruitment.

On form Leigh Griffiths was named SPL Player of the Month, following his hat-trick against Kilmarnock last weekend. After picking up the award, Griffiths said: "It's always nice to get recognition and I would like to dedicate the award to our supporters, who have stuck with us throughout the season. I'm enjoying my football right now and hopefully that's showing in my performances. I love playing for Hibs and scoring goals, so I couldn't be any happier. Hopefully we can build on our current form and I can play my part in helping Hibs to win as many matches as possible – starting with Sunday's Edinburgh Derby against Hearts."

A panel of Scottish football experts chose the award winners from a shortlist which included the top three fans' nominations from Clydesdale Bank's football website.

Sunday's Edinburgh derby ended in a goalless draw, although the game produced one of the most controversial decisions ever made in the fixture. With fifteen minutes remaining, Leigh Griffiths struck a sensational 40 yard free kick, which bounced off the underside of the crossbar and landed three feet behind the line before spinning back out and being headed clear by Andy Webster. Astonishingly, neither the referee Euan Norris nor his 'assistant' spotted the 'goal' and a corner was awarded to the fury of the Hibs supporters.

The point means that Hibs remain in 6th position, six points ahead of Hearts who leapfrog next week's Scottish Communities League Cup Final opponents St Mirren into 10th.

Last Tuesday, Craigroyston beat Gala Fairydean 1-0 away from home in the Central Taxis East of Scotland First Division, and the following night Spartans travelled to Gretna and returned

with a point after a goalless draw to remain top of the Central Taxis East of Scotland Premier Division.

On Saturday, Spartans lost 2-1 to Whitehill Welfare at Ainslie Park in the semi-final of the Scottish Challenge Cup.

Two first half headers from Welfare's Willie Kidd gave the Rosewell side a deserved lead going into the break, and the visitors held onto the lead until the 85th minute when substitute John Ferguson gave Spartans some hope, but Whitehill were able to hold out for the victory despite a late surge.

Malt and Hops Man of the Match was Gary Cennerazzo.

Elsewhere Lothian Thistle Hutchison Vale lost 2-1 to Dalbeattie at Saughton Enclosure in the Scottish Challenge Cup Semi Finals.

In the Central Taxis Premier Division Edinburgh University drew 1-1 with Stirling University, whilst in the First Division, Craigroyston beat Duns 2-0 and Leith Athletic lost 5-1 to Berwick Rangers Reserves at Ainslie Park. The results leave Leith 5th and Craigroyston 6th in the table.

Women's Football

Hibs Frankie Brown played in Scotland's 4-4 draw with England in the Cyprus Cup at the GSZ Stadium in Larnaca, whilst teammates Shannon Lynn and Joelle Murray had to be content with a place on the bench.

Scotland led through a ninth-minute Lisa Evans goal, before Ellen White's 40th-minute equaliser. Toni Duggan gave England as fortunate half time lead just before the break.

Scotland hit back with two goals in the opening eight minutes of the second period, through Striker Jane Ross and player-of-the-match Kim Little.

Once again England equalised through Rachel Williams and took the lead with substitute Kelly Smith scoring four minutes later.

The Scots produced a grandstand finish and Little to set up Mitchell to earn a deserved point.

After the game, Scotland coach Anna Signeul said: "After starting so well and controlling the first half it was disappointing to go behind on a couple occasions.

"But the performance overall was good. Kim Little was fantastic, but I was pleased with the whole team – it was a very together performance."

Scotland: Gemma Fay, Rhonda Jones, Eilish McSorley, Jennifer Beattie, Frankie Brown, Leanne Crichton, Joanne Love, Megan Sneddon, Lisa Evans, Jane Ross, Kim Little. Substitutes: Shannon Lynn, Hayley Lauder, Suzanne Grant, Leanne Ross, Emma Mitchell, Suzanne Malone, Joelle Murray, Nicola Docherty.

Badminton

Edinburgh-born Robert □Blair, the 31-year-old former World Championship silver medallist and Malaysia's Bin Shen Tan had a shock win in the men's doubles at the Yonex All England Open in Birmingham, battling through the qualifying event and in the first round main draw tie they came from behind to defeat Indonesia's Alvent Yulianto Charndra and Markus Kido 17-21,21-19, 21-18.

The pair however were unfortunate to lose to unseeded Japanese pair of Hiroyuki Endo and Kenichi Havakawa after a great start, taking the opening game 21-7. The Asian pair hit back to take the second game 21-13 and, from 8-all in the third, ran away to win the decider 21-14

Ice Hockey

❌ Congratulations to the Edinburgh Capitals who beat Belfast Giants 3-2 at Murrayfield Ice Rink on Sunday night. Brent Patry gave the home side the lead, and Rene Jarolin added a second before half time. A third Caps goal was disallowed by referee Wilson as it was deemed to have went in after he'd blown his whistle to stop play. Martin Cingel made it 3-0 but the Giants fought back, scoring two late goals before the final whistle. The Caps wore their pink shirts to show their support for the breast cancer charity.

Curling

Edinburgh's Jennifer Dodds and her Scotland team-mates skipped by Lockerbie's Hannah Fleming, made it eight wins out of eight by beating Switzerland 7-2 before unstuck losing 8-6 to Sayaka Yoshimura's Japanese rink in their final group match of the World Junior Curling Championships in Sochi, Russia.

The Scots unfortunately lost the final 6-5 to a strong Russian team after an extra round.

Scottish skip Fleming was gracious in defeat, saying: "We just weren't firing as well in the final as we have been. But you've got to hand it to Russia because they played well. But I'm really disappointed because we just didn't show up in the final."

❌ **Speedway**

Edinburgh Monarchs' Theo Pijper took six points, in a Ben Fund Bonanza meeting at Berwick on Saturday night. Pijper took a point in the first heat from Cameron Woodward, and was unlucky when heat 7 was stopped with a warning issued to Lemon, after he had made the gate. In the rerun he finished second to Vissing but ahead of Richie Worrall and Lemon. He took a third ahead of Wright in heat 13, then in what looked a fairly easy heat 19 he lay third initially but added a lucky point when Kozza Smith fell.

Mads Korneliussen was the outstanding rider in the qualifying races with four comfortable wins. Hans Andersen also went direct to the final with 10 points, while Danny King (10), Claus Vissing (9), Richie Worrall (9) and Chris Harris (8) made the semi.

The Monarchs announced that admission prices for the 2013 will remain the same as 2012 with all fans having the opportunity to pay less by pre-booking tickets on line.

The cost of tickets for the new season will be:

Pre-booked

Adults: £14, Seniors and Students £11, Children 12 to 18: £4, Children under 12: £1

Pay at the gate

Adults: £16 Seniors and Students: £13, Children 12 to 18: £6, Children under 12: £2 For everyone other than adults, proof will be required for eligibility for lower prices.

Basketball

In the Scottish Senior Women's League, Polonia Phoenix beat Clark Eriksson Fury 62-38 at Gracemount High School on Thursday then followed that up with a 70-46 win over Pentland Star at the Craggs on Sunday. City of Edinburgh Kool Kats travelled to the Mariner Centre and beat Clark Eriksson Fury 74-45.

Snooker

Corstorphine's Ross Vallance defeated Musselburgh teenager Ross Muir 3-1 in the quarter final of the East of Scotland Snooker Tournament at the Bert Demarco Matchroom at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange. He will meet Bonnyrigg's Mike Leslie in the semi-final who beat Edinburgh's David Greig.

In the other semi-final, Corstorphine's Keith Chalmers, will meet Penicuik's Michael Gallacher.

Volleyball

In the Schelde Sports Men's National League Division One, City of Edinburgh beat Glasgow Mets 3-2 whilst Edinburgh Jets beat Dundee 3-0.

In the Schelde Sports Women's National League Division One, City of Edinburgh beat NUVOC 3-0 whilst Edinburgh Jets travelled to North Lancashire and returned with a 3-0 victory.

In the Schelde Sports Men's National League Division Two, Edinburgh Jets II travelled to Tayside and beat Dundee 3-0.

In the Schelde Sports Women's National League Division Two, Edinburgh Jets II beat Dundee 3-0

In the Schelde Sports Men's National League Division Two East, City of Edinburgh II beat NUVOC 3-0.

Rugby

Edinburgh's woes seemingly continue with the news that Head coach, Michael Bradley and Assistant coach, Neil Back have both had their tenures at Edinburgh Rugby drawn to an early close after agreeing terms with the management. Scotland assistant coaches Stevie Scott and Duncan Hodge were both appointed as interim coaches until the end of the season. This news was followed by the announcement that Welsh scrum half, Richie Rees, was also to depart for pastures new with the Newport Gwent Dragons. As they are below Edinburgh in the Rabo league, is it a case of out of the frying pan...? Well, no. Rees agreed amicable terms to allow Edinburgh to increase the opportunities for Scottish scrum halves.

On the club scene, there was only one match of note, with Edinburgh Accies beating Stirling County at home, 13-10.

The Scotland U20s were soundly beaten in Inverness 47-17 by their Welsh counterparts. The young Scots were under the cosh

from the start of the match and, although leading briefly following a 15th minute try, they were always playing catch-up rugby. Even two sinned-binned Welshmen couldn't aid the home side and it was a rather easy victory for the visitors. Usually, if matches are watched on Welsh language channel S4C, there appears, from the commentary, to be only one side on the pitch. Sadly, with this game, that proved to be the case.

The senior Scotland players at Murrayfield were up for a three-in-a-row win 'situation' which they didn't manage to achieve. In a kick-fest of a match, only relieved by the Welsh try, the visitors outkicked the home side to win 28-18. The always fantastic atmosphere at Murrayfield when the Welsh come to town was a bit subdued afterwards following a disappointing game, which, neither team looked like running away with.

Scotland's women went down 13-0 to Wales in at a snowy Scotstoun on Sunday. Playing their best rugby this season, the hosts still couldn't cross the whitewash despite a strong first half. Wales were 3-0 up at half time and were being held by the Scots until eight minutes from time when two quick tries gave the visitors the clear victory.

And for the rest of The Edinburgh Reporter rugby coverage you will have [to read this article here](#) to find out what John Preece thought of the international fixture against Wales.