

Rugby – Melrose Sevens



2013 Aberdeen Asset Management Melrose Sevens

A great day's seven-a-side rugby was on offer on Saturday at the [Melrose Sevens](#) and, as usual, a great day was to be had. With no Southern hemisphere teams making the trip this year, it fell to Europe to supply the 'class acts' with Saracens, Worcester and Clermon Auvergne all entering teams. In addition, India had entered a development team with an eye on next year's Commonwealth games. In all, 24 teams went into the draw, including all six of Edinburgh's major clubs, with only Heriots making it through in the draw to the second round, the other five teams having to go through preliminary first round matches.



First up in the Edinburgh batch were Currie and Boroughmuir. With this draw, at least one Edinburgh side were going to suffer a very short involvement in the tournament. And that dubious 'honour' went to Currie as 'Muir went through in a convincing 22-5 victory. Stewarts-Melville were next in line against Gala and the Borders side did the business with an even more convincing 33-7 win. Two down four to go. It was then Watsonians turn to keep Edinburgh's heads up and this they did, again convincingly, 26-5 against Glasgow Hawks.

So far so good. Edinburgh Accies then had a potential banana skin match against Howe-of-Fife, a team three divisions below in the grand scheme of things, and a banana skin it nearly proved to be. 19-14 ahead, Accies just managed to hold out in the dying seconds to take the win.

So that took care of Round 1.

Boroughmuir had the first go with a mouth watering match-up with English Premiership side, Worcester Warriors. And they pushed the visitors all the way with some superb play, but just failed to take the match, going down 22-21 to the Pro side. Watsonians had won through to meet host side, Melrose, and in another close match, Melrose eventually won that one, 24-19. The final Edinburgh involvement in Round 2 was down to Heriots, who had fellow Premier Division side Edinburgh Accies to face. This one wasn't so close. and the Goldenacre men ran out, relatively, easy 31-7 victors and went on to face Saracens as the only Edinburgh representatives in the Quarter-finals.

And the Quarter-finals is where local involvement ceased. Saracens, having disposed of Peebles – and who thought that would ever be announced as a fixture – outscored Heriots 31-10 to face Aberdeen in the Semi finals.

The four Semi-finalist were Ayr – who beat Worcester 33-17 in the Quarter's – were up against French Super-team, Clermont Avergne, and the aforementioned Aberdeen and Saracens. As, probably, expected, the matches went the way of the respective Professional teams with Ayr losing out 22-12 and Aberdeen giving Saracens more than a bit of a fright in their 24-19 defeat.

Which left the Final. Clermont v Saracens. A fitting match-up in the final round of the oldest seven's tournament in the World. And what a match it turned out to be. With Saracens taking an early 12-0 lead in first two minutes of the first half, it was looking like a none-event, but Clermont were only warming up it seemed. Scoring three unanswered tries of their own, the half time score stood at 17-12 to the French team.

Saracens soon gained possession in the second half and pushed Clermont back, eventually coming up with the equalising try, which was answered almost immediately by the men in yellow, who scored a controversial touch down. With no TMO available

it was down to the official in the goal area to award the try. A close look on the BBC's big screen, however, appeared to show that the ball was grounded on the dead-ball line, but the decision had been made and the score stood. In a hopeless display of drop kicking from both teams, the kick was once again missed and the score was 22-17 to Clermont. The last couple of minutes were edge of the seat stuff, with Clermont trying to hold on and Saracens trying to catch up. However, a final minute attack saw Saracens upfield and engineering a bit of space, which saw them over the line for the try (pictured). A collective holding of breath for the kick saw a hush descend, and it seemed to work as the final touch of the ball saw it through the posts to give Saracens the win with a very close run 24-22 victory.

What a fitting way to end the 123rd running of this tournament, which goes from strength to strength each year, with bigger sponsors allowing the addition of 'bigger' teams, but not at the expense of the likes of Peebles and Howe-of-Fife. It's also fairly certain that Melrose will be 'tidying' up for a few days to come!

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