

International Women's Hockey – Scotland v South Africa



After a well fought 3-2 victory on Friday, Scotland slumped to a 4-1 defeat on Saturday against the South African women. So how would they fair on Sunday?

Not so well, as it turned out...

Both sides had (very) early chances but it was the visitors who struck first after only four minutes of play with a goal from open play by Kelly Madsen, to take a 1-0 lead. More pressure from the South Africans saw a couple of good saves from Scotland's goalie, Amy Gibson, but they couldn't be kept out for long. A 14th minute penalty corner from Pietie Coetzee found the net for their second. An almost continuous onslaught on the Scottish goal was relieved on a couple of occasions when some fine Scottish attacking play was denied any reward by Sanani Mangisa in the South African goal. Meantime, at the other end, Gibson pulled out another couple of miracle saves to keep the score at 2-0.

Another goal from a penalty corner, this time by a low shot from Tarryn Bright, took the South Africa into a 3-0 lead on the 24 minute mark and that gave the visitors an all but unassailable lead. In the final minute of play, Coetzee scored with another 'penalty-corner-drag-flick' combination to take, what they thought was, a 4-0 lead into the break, but, in the dying seconds, the Scots won a penalty corner of their own. As they were setting up, the half time hooter went, which, in hockey, means that the play must be completed, but the attacking side can flood the opponents area with the whole team. This Scotland did, but they weren't needed as Nikki Kidd scored with a drag-flick through the defence and into the

South African net. 4-1 the half time score.



The second half started strongly for the visitors, with Gibson again performing heroics in the Scotland goal. However, whatever it was team coach, Gordon Shepherd, had said at the break then kicked in and the rest of the half was much more evenly balanced. Both sides had chances, with Mangisa in the South African goal having to match Gibson on a couple of occasions, but it was Scotland who converted first. A penalty corner award was fired out to Vikki Bunce who feinted with her drag-flick and turned the ball back to Holly Cram just inside the baseline. Cram, who must have just been able to see both posts from where she was, hammered the ball past Mangisa to score the Scot's second goal of the game. 4-2 with just under 15 minutes left.

The visitors then turned up the heat and, with Scotland only managing to sneak over halfway a couple of times, it fell to Bright to score her second to take the final score to 5-2 to South Africa.

A much improved second half performance from Scotland had them take on the South Africans on a much more even footing, but the first half had 'done for them' and there was no way back from the three goal deficit they had managed to accrue. 2-1 to South Africa in the series, with the final match on Tuesday evening, can Scotland draw level?

(Report compiled from match day notes by Keri Preece – Thank you to her!)

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