

The Edinburgh Reporter's Weekly Sports Roundup



Photograph by [John Preece](#)

Once again, the big talking point is the future of Hearts, with speculation rife that the club will enter administration in the near future.

Congratulations go to Hutchison Vale who beat a strong Celtic / Rangers Select 6-5 in a tremendous game at Saughton Enclosure, and to Edinburgh Scotwaste Monarchs for a fantastic away win over Somerset Rebels.

We also look forward to Brodies Champions of Tennis which will take place in Stockbridge this week.

Rugby by John Preece

After a humiliating defeat to Samoa last weekend – humiliating because they were terrible, not because it was Samoa – Scotland faced South Africa in the four-way Summer Tournament and put in a performance that they can be rightly proud of. Ahead 14-6 after two tries from Matt Scott and Alex Dunbar and the boot of Laidlaw, it fell apart a bit when Jim Hamilton was yellow carded for ‘pushing’ one of the South Africans – admittedly, in the face. The Springboks went into a maul from the lineout and were awarded a penalty try for it being pulled down. A few minutes later they were over again for a more conventional try and thus taking the score to 20-17. They followed up this with a Steyn penalty and another try to run out 30-17 winners.

Overall though a vastly improved performance from Scotland. The ran hard, tackled hard and generally played hard, to the

point where South Africa appeared to have no answer. But for that yellow card...

The Under-20s had a torrid time in their World Cup in France. Defeats to Argentina and Wales and a three point win against Samoa – their first – left them in the 9th-12th play-offs against the USA, to be played on the 18th June.

Finally, Edinburgh made their third big signing of the pre-season. Big, in that Jack Cuthbert is 6ft 5in and 15st 11lbs, but also big in that he has been playing regular first team Rugby at Bath in the English Premiership, keeping England wing Nick Abendanon on the bench, and has a Scotland Senior cap to his name to add to his several age-group awards.

SPL Football

The future of Hearts remains unclear after they were unable to pay HMRC £100,000 due for unpaid PAYE tax money.

On Friday the troubled club were also banned from registering new players after a number of the employees of the club were not paid on time.

The SPL said in a statement: “The Scottish Premier League has been informed by Heart of Midlothian FC that the club has failed to pay a number of its players on time today. This is a Remuneration Default in terms of the SPL Rules and the Club is therefore subject to an automatic transfer embargo while that Remuneration Default continues.

“The actions also indicate a potential breach of SPL rule A6.21 and a disciplinary hearing will be convened in due course.”

The club owned up to the extent of their financial problems just 24 hours after the administrator of Ukio Bankas, who are owed £15million by the Tynecastle club, said he has “no reason or desire to harm Hearts” after a court in Lithuania upheld a

decision to liquidate the bank.

Media reports suggest that the club are likely to go into administration on 24 June when non playing staff are due to be paid.

On Friday night, a meeting organised by the Foundation of Hearts was held at Tynecastle to discuss a possible bid to buy the club.

Across the city, Hibs' midfielder Gary Deegan has confirmed that he will be leaving the club in search of first team football whilst former Manchester United and Rangers player Jimmy Nicholl has been appointed as assistant manager. The 56 year old won 73 caps with Northern Ireland and has managed Raith Rovers to a League Cup win as well as Millwall and Cowdenbeath. He was no2 to Kenny Shiels at Kilmarnock last year when they won the League Cup.

Manager Pat Fenlon told the club website: "I am delighted to have such an experienced coach as my assistant. Jimmy has a deep knowledge of the game and Scottish football in particular and he will be a great asset to the club. He is particularly good in the development of young players and this is an important factor for the club."

Nichol said: "When Pat spoke of his plans for the club, it was an easy decision for me. I am delighted to be his assistant and hope to contribute to the on-going development and success of one of Scotland's leading clubs."

The squad return to pre-season training this week and a friendly match has been arranged against a Gibraltar XI on 3 July kick off 8pm. The match will take place at the 5000 capacity Victoria Park stadium. A second game has been arranged for Saturday 6 July at the Vila Real de Santo Antonio just over the Portuguese border on the east side of the Algarve.

Women's Football

Scotland lost 3-0 to a strong Germany side in Esson, in front of 9237 spectators. Hibs' full back Frankie Brown started the game, whilst team-mates Caroline Weir and Joelle Murray came on from the bench.

Wolfsburg's Champions League winning midfielder Lena Goessling opened the scoring in the 34th minute, and it looked as if Germany would go in at the break with that narrow lead, until Bad Neuenahr striker Celia Okoyino Da Mbabi struck twice in a minute to stretch the lead.

Germany made four changes at the break, while Scotland introduced Eilish McSorley and Emily Thomson.

The Germans put Scotland under real pressure in the second period, but Anna Signeul's side held on to keep the score-line respectable.

Weir was unlucky not to pull one back near the end, but her deflected close range effort was well saved by the keeper.

Scotland: Fay (Cpt), Lauder (Murray, 85), Beattie, Brown, L Ross (McSorley, 46), Love (Weir, 73), Sneddon, Crichton (Thomson, 46), Evans (Mitchell, 64), Little, J Ross (Malone, 89)

Charity Football

Former Hibs and Hearts stars took part in the Festival of Football at the Ross Bandstand at Princes Street Gardens on Sunday.



Gordon Hunter, Mickey Weir and Keith Wright, who all appeared in the 1991 Skol League Cup winning team, represented Hibs, whilst Henry Smith, Scott Crabbe and Jimmy Sandison represented Hearts in a 'Select' side who played three games,

against Sykes, Network Rail and a Dad's side.

Before the game, former Hibs legend Gordon Hunter told the Edinburgh Reporter: "We played yesterday against Leith Athletic, (winning 5-3) although Keith (Wright) didn't last long due to a hamstringing problem, but he is here today. We usually play about seven charity games during the summer which is a great chance to catch up with my old team-mates as we never seem to see each other apart from these games. Keith and Mickey (Weir) are my best pals so it's great to be playing alongside them again. Today, the money raised goes to the Homeless World Cup which is a great cause, and yesterday was for CLASP, but every little helps. Actually the charities are doing us a favour as it lets us get out there keeping fit."

On Sunday, Hutchison Vale beat a Celtic/Rangers select team 6-5 to win the Craig Gowans' Memorial Trophy at Saughton Enclosure.

Speedway

The Scotwaste Monarchs pulled off one of their best-ever away victories on Tuesday, beating Somerset Rebels 46-4, coming from 8 points down to win in a last heat decider, another amazing win by Craig Cook.

On Friday however, the Monarchs were disappointed to lose the first leg of their KO Cup quarter final to Newcastle by 44-45.

A number of players suffered injuries including Jozsef Tabaka who hit a fence in heat 14. He was badly shaken and unlikely to ride for the remainder of the weekend (he was due in Hungary on Saturday).

Theo Pijper was struggling with the pain from his broken ribs, and Max Fricke was in some pain after a fall.

Hockey

Scotland's women had six International matches lined up against Ireland and South Africa in the lead up to the European Championships later this year. First up were two matches against Ireland at the beginning of the week. The first match was a fairly even affair, although Scotland were probably the better team in the second half, and with the scoreline at 2-1 in favour of the home side with a couple of minutes to play, Ireland broke down the left to score the equaliser and steal the draw.

Match two, which was arranged at the last minute due to South Africa having visa problems, was dominated by the Scots. 2-1 ahead at half time, the Scottish women were pulled level by an equaliser from the Irish, but two quick goals saw the home side past the post 4-2 for a well deserved win.

Friday saw the first of four matches against the South Africans, which went against all expectations. Leading the World's 11th best team 2-0 at half time, a goal exchange saw the score 3-1 before a late equaliser following a period of sustained pressure left the visitors trailing by a single goal at the final hooter.

A first half hat-trick from South African super-woman, Pietie Coetzee, left the Scots with a mountain to climb in Saturday's match. 3-1 down at half time, Scotland upped the pressure with some fine attacking play but couldn't convert, leaving the visitors to net another to take the match 4-1.

Meanwhile, the men's team played Wales in a double-header and came away with a 2-1 win. With all the goals coming in the first half, the second was relegated to mere end-to-end action, with both sides coming close – Wales having four successive penalty corners – but failing in their quest for further goals.

Sunday's matches again saw mixed fortunes for the teams. The men were first up and, having weathered a bit of an onslaught

in the first few minutes took over the match, and dominated play. Leading 2-1 at the break, the second half was all Scotland, with Wales barely able to get out of their half and a further two goals gave the win to Scotland 4 goals to 1.

The women, on the other hand, had a torrid time as South Africa got into their stride. Another inspired performance by Amy Gibson in goal 'restricted' the visitors to a 4-1 lead at half time, Scotland's goal coming from Nikki Kidd. South Africa continued to pile on the pressure in the second half, pulling out another series of fine saves from Gibson, but it was Scotland who scored first. Vikki Bunce cleverly disguised her drag flick at a penalty corner, passing the ball to Holly Cram out wide, who cracked the shot into the back of the net. At 4-2, Scotland had the opportunity to come back into the match, but South Africa got back on script and finished the match off with a second goal from Tarryn Bright. 5-2 to South Africa, and 2-1 up in the series, it's, almost, all to play for in the final match on Tuesday night at Peffermill

Tennis

Brodies Champions of Tennis tournament will take place at the home of Edinburgh Accies in Portgower Place, Stockbridge between Thursday and Sunday.

The ATP Champions Tour event brings together many of the greatest tennis players in history for nostalgic, competitive and entertaining tournaments in cities all around the world. To be eligible to compete on the ATP Champions Tour, players must have been either a World No. 1 during their competitive playing careers, a Grand Slam singles finalist, or a singles player in a victorious Davis Cup team; and they should have retired from the ATP circuit.

The timetable is as follows although all times are approximate.

Thursday Afternoon (First match 1400) Rusedski v Philippoussis

and Ferreira v Pernfors

Evening (First Match 1900) Henman v Ivanisevic and
Rusedski/Moya v Enqvist/Pernfors

Friday 21 June (First match 1400) Henman v Enqvist and
Ferreira/Philippoussis v Ivanisevic/Pernfors

1900 Rusedski v Moya and McEnroe/Henman v
Ferreira/Philippoussis

Saturday 22 June (1400) McEnroe v Pernfors, Moya v
Philippoussis. Enqvist v Ivanisevic

Sunday 23 June 3 v 4 (1030)

McEnroe v Ferreira (1300)

Brodies Champions of Tennis Final (1430)