


Rugby – Edinburgh v Scarlets

Scarlets take the win in a, frankly awful, fourth round RaboDirect match at Murrayfield.



Llanelli Scarlets brought a bunch of fairly vocal supporters with them to Murrayfield to face Edinburgh in a fourth round match-up in the RaboDirect PRO12 league. With both teams only having one win apiece – and only one point separating them before kick-off – neither team could really afford to lose. And for the first 30 odd minutes, it looked as if not losing was the priority. Neither team seemed to be trying particularly hard to break through defences, and a lot – A LOT – of ball was kicked away upfield, with nobody seeming keen on giving chase. First exciting moment of the match was served up by the Scarlet's No. 4, Jake Ball, seeing yellow, which gave Edinburgh the extra man in attack, but all they could come up with after five minutes of play was a penalty on the 29 minute mark, which Harry Leonard slotted home to give the hosts a narrow 3-0 lead. The lead didn't last too long, however, as Rhys Priestland had an unsuccessful drop kick attempt at goal inside the Edinburgh half, but the referee was playing advantage so he took play back for a penalty, which Priestland stuck between the posts to draw the sides level. 

Three minutes later the Scarlets were on the score board again, a bit of running into players by Edinburgh was followed by a swift foray up the park by the Scarlets. Swinging the ball, out to the right, giving Nick Reynolds the fairly simple task of bursting through the last man to score the first try of the match. Priestland scored the difficult kick and the visitors were 10-3 ahead with just a couple of minutes left to the break. It was a couple of minutes that Edinburgh managed to use wisely and another penalty award saw Leonard scoring with his second penalty of the night to take the teams into

half time with the score standing at 10-6 to the Scarlets.

The second half started well for Edinburgh, and following the kick-off return, stand out Edinburgh player, Greg Tonks (pictured top), put in another powerful run deep into the Scarlets defence, breaking a couple of tackles on the way, and then passing the ball infield to new man, Jack Cuthbert, who battered his way further up the park to get play into the visitors 22. Foul play at the ensuing ruck saw the Scarlets John Barclay off the field for 10 minutes with a yellow, giving Leonard his first chance of the second half to score points, Kick over, points scored, 10-9 to the visitors, 37 minutes left.

It was to be 37 minutes, during which, the home side seemed to fall apart. Errors and penalties saw the eventual carding of Willem Nel for persistent fouling at the scrum, but even before that the Scarlets scored their second try – still with 14 men on the field – this time from Jordan Williams, who broke through to score near the left touchline. Priestland failed with the boot, so the score remained at 15-9. Priestland (pictured right) missed the penalty awarded following Nel's yellow, but in spite of a couple of failed attacks from the home side, the visitors remained in charge until, with less than 10 minutes left, a kick through from Priestland was dealt with fairly badly by Edinburgh and an attempted clearance was charged down metres short of the line. All the Scarlets backs had to do was charge through and fall on the ball. Captain, Jon Davies claimed the honours and with Priestland scoring the conversion, the game was all but over. Edinburgh did manage to conjure up a 'nearly score' with seconds left, but the Cuthbert and – another new boy – Michael Tait combination could only manage to flatten the corner flag.

And that was it. Game over, job done, four points in the bag for Llanelli Scarlets. The league tables hadn't yet been published as this went to press, but there is little reason

to doubt that Edinburgh retain their twelfth place in the table courtesy of an inferior points difference in comparison to their near table holder-uppers, Zebre. Four games and three defeats brings to mind Frankie Howard's side-kick, Senna the sooth-sayer (ask your parents) cry of 'Woe, woe and thrice woe...'. It's not looking hopeful it can stay at thrice.

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