Rugby — Edinburgh v Leinster

A very wet and windy Murrayfield played host to the Round 10 match in the 2013-14 RaboDirect PRO12 season between Edinburgh and Leinster. The current champions were clear favourites to win, but with Edinburgh's defeat of Worcester the previous week, the home side was brimming with confidence.

With the wind and rain swirling around the stadium, Edinburgh started the better of the two, forcing Leinster into a couple of clearing kicks before a drive up the middle into the visitors' 22 came to a halt when the ball was spilt by Denton. This gave Leinster a bit of a breather and they gradually worked their way up the pitch and their hard work was rewarded with a penalty in the Edinburgh half. Ian Madigan slotted the kick home to put the visitors 3-0 ahead.

After the restart, Edinburgh were straight back on the attack and, although Leinster gained a bit of possession, the home side were not under too much pressure. The breakthrough came around the half hour mark, when Ollie Atkins wrenched himself free of a tackle and carried the play up to the visitors' 22. A quick recycle had Leinster on the back foot and a series of pick-and-drives from the pack took them to within a few metres of the line. A pass out from the foot of a ruck from Laidlaw missed out Jack Cuthbert and landed with the winger, Dougie Fife. With blood leaking from a head injury, Fife then had a short, clear run to the line to slide in for the opening try of the match, to put the hosts 5-3 in the lead. Greg Laidlaw missed the kick in the blustery conditions so the home side retained the narrow, two point, lead.

With Fife off to have his head sewn back together, Edinburgh were on the offensive again and, following a line out from a sliced Leinster clearance, formed a rolling maul which came up

short of the line. Another set of pick-and-drives close in lead to a penalty, which Laidlaw kicked to take the home side five points clear. The half finished a few minutes later with a knock on, while Edinburgh were, again, within a couple of metres of the Leinster line.

An early penalty from Madigan in the second half brought Leinster another three points, which took the Irishmen to within a try score of the home side. The next 30 minutes or so of the match were fairly even, and, although the weather had improved somewhat, neither side could make much headway. Until, with around 12 minutes to go, a kick over the defence from Laidlaw had Cornell du Preez running through to gather. Unfortunately, Jimmy Gopperth was first to the ball, but was forced to carry the ball out and over the side line. With a line out on the five metre line, it looked like a good position for Edinburgh, but the drive eventually ground to a halt with an infringement giving Leinster a penalty and a chance to clear their lines. However, a penalty award to Edinburgh on the 73 minute mark, gave Laidlaw a chance to restore the half time gap, which he did, to take the score to 11-6.

The last few minutes of the match were to prove a nail biting affair for the home support as Leinster hammered away at the Edinburgh line, constantly changing the angle of attack. But, a knock on with around a minute left, gave the hosts a chance to run the time down and take a very hard fought, and well deserved, win which lifted them up to sixth in the table, nine points behind Glasgow.

A good win for Edinburgh over one of the top European teams – and off the back of their Heineken Cup away win at Gloucester – bodes well for the near future, but it's certain that, with a coach as experienced as Alan Solomons, feet will be nailed firmly to the ground with the Boxing Day Glasgow

match on the near horizon.

A mention should be made to the ground staff at Murrayfield who have worked tirelessly, sometimes six days a week, for a few months to overcome the problems with the pitch, which, although still a bit 'loose', is gradually coming up to scratch. Hats off to them.

Images from the match will appear [here](#) over the next couple of days