

Men's Hockey FIH 4-Nations Tournament

Argentina and England draw, while Belgium triumph over Scotland



The first two matches of the FIH 4-Nations Hockey Tournament took place at the new Glasgow National Hockey Centre (in Glasgow...). The four men's teams taking part are Scotland, England, Belgium and Argentina. The tournament is being used as preparation for the Men's World Cup as well as a tester for the hockey at the Commonwealth Games.



First match on was England v Argentina and given their relative World rankings – fourth and eleventh respectively – it looked like a win might be on the cards for England. Three minutes in and the match appeared to be going to form as England's No. 11, Alistair Brogdon opened their account with a neat flick past the Argentine goalie. However, as the match progressed, Argentina came more into their game, exhibiting a touch of flair missing from their English counterparts and, 24 minutes in, they were rewarded with an equaliser from No 24, Manuel Brunet, who took advantage of a mix up in defence and crashed the ball past the keeper.

England also started the second half the stronger of the two teams and scored their second in the 47th minute from a penalty corner. Vivaldi in the Argentine goal saved the initial drag-flick from England's Jackson, but No 14, Mark Gleghorne picked up the rebound and stuck it into the back of the net for the 2-1 lead. And then, seven minutes later, came

what must be contender for goal of the tournament – already! Argentina's No 26, Augustin Mazzilli picked up the ball deep in his own half and set off, dribbling, flicking and scooping the ball past and through the English defence. Nearing the 'D', he first went to the outside, then cut back into the inside and into the area where he calmly scooped the ball on his reverse side into the net past the diving Pinner. With neither side able to break down the other's defence the rest of the match played out to a 2-2 draw.



The second match on the night, between Scotland and Belgium, was played under lights and in an increasing amount of rain. With Belgium fifth and Scotland 24th in the World, this looked like a stroll for the visiting team. Right from the start the pressed Scotland back and only allowed a few balls through for Scotland to get in behind, but it looked as if everything was well under control. At least, it did until the seventh minute. No 13, Kenny Bain, picked the ball up outside the 'D' and, avoiding the attentions of Vincent Vanash in goal, he took the ball round the keeper, and opened the scoring for the Scots. This certainly woke up the Belgians and from here on they started to dominate the match, pushing Scotland back whenever the home side were in possession and creating a great deal of difficulty when they had the ball. They drew level in the 20th minute from No. 32, Tanguy Cosyns, who deflected a strike on goal into the net on his reverse side. Two minutes later, they had their second from a Tom Boon – in his 150th International appearance – penalty stroke, awarded for a foot stop on the Scottish goal line.

A minute into the second half was all it took for the visitors' to come close to a third, but heroic work from Scotland's Gavin Sommerville – saving a shot on target from a penalty corner then knocking the follow up drag flick from

Boon over the bar – kept the Scots in touch. But it was only for a few minutes as another penalty corner was netted by No 25, Loick Luypaert for Belgium's third. Ten minutes later after sustained pressure, they had their fourth goal of the match when Boon tapped home a Stockbroek cross. Stockbroek almost scored one of his own two minutes later but Somerville was alive to the shot and saved from point=blank range. Now the Belgian side went into cruise mode and did just enough to keep the Scot's on their toes, but five minutes from time, it went a bit awry. Winning a penalty corner, the strike from Bain was neatly deflected into the goal by team Captain, Chris Grassick to pull a goal back (top image).. And they found the back of the net again in the final minute of play when No 30, Gary Cameron stuck the ball in the net from close range to bring the final score to 4-3 to Belgium. The score, however, flattered the Scots to a fair degree, with the overall impression being that had the visitors wanted to, they could have upped the ante quite a bit in the final period of the game and perhaps scored another couple. Fair play to Scotland, though, as they never gave up and when in possession, were always looking to get upfield and into 'enemy' territory, but Somerville in goal, probably stopped the Belgians from scoring, at least, four or five more.

Scotland's men play England on the Saturday and the women get underway on Sunday. Full details of the fixtures can be found on the [Scottish Hockey](#) website.

Images from the matches will, eventually, find their way to [here](#), but it's a busy week ahead.....