


Rugby – Watsonians v Selkirk

Seven try 'Sonians sees off Borders' challenge.



After two successive defeats by Borders' teams, Watsonians faced their third side in a row as Selkirk travelled up to Myreside for their fifth round match in Division 1 of the BT National Leagues. And it was to prove a long trip back for the visitors as, despite putting up a spirited resistance, Kelso went down 44-12.

An early lead for Watsonians from a Ross Aitken penalty was soon wiped out as Kelso battled up the field and, within a minute, had scored the opening try of the match through centre, Gregg Minto. With the conversion missed, it was 5-3 to Kelso. Just less than 10 minutes later, however, Watsonians came back with a try of their own. A lineout from a penalty was gathered in and hooker, Jake Kerr, slipped round the tail and barrelled through for the try. Another successful kick from Aitken stretched the lead out to 10-5.


A short period of possession from Kelso moved the ball into 'Sonians' half, but a knock on gave the advantage back to the home side. An advantage they took well as the ball was moved swiftly upfield, and a won lineout, had the ball quickly across from right to left, where a neat inside ball from wing, Scott McKean, to scrum half – and recent Scotland U20 graduate – Reiss Cullen who took a couple of the opposition with him to score Watsonians' third try. What was then to prove a nightmare day with the boot for Aitken, failed to increase the score past 15-5 with  just over a quarter of the match played.

A few minutes later, the home side had their third try of the half. Chasing his own kick, full-back, Rory Steele, sliced through the Kelso defence and made ground down the left wing. A despairing tackle from a Kelso defender dragged the Watsonians back into touch, but not before he had released the ball into home side hands. Another quick move across the field left No. 14, Julien Hyarder with one man to beat for his first of a


brace on the day. A bit of 'afters' saw the ref have a wee word but nothing came of it. Hyarder then kicked the conversion to take the lead out further to 22-5.

A swift riposte from the visitors was called for to, at least, keep them in with a fighting chance and, another five minutes saw their reply. Keeping a hold of the ball and quickly recycling from a succession of rucks, saw Minto through a gaping hole in the 'Sonians' defence for his second try. A successful conversion from Andrew Skeen brought the score to 22-12 to Watsonians.

They then came back, yet again, with the bonus point fourth try within a minute of the restart. A lineout win around the 22 had the forwards form a maul, which inexorably rolled and heaved its way up to, and over the Kelso line. All prop, Martin Christie then had to do was fall down with the ball to score the try. With the stiff breeze making the kicker's job a bit dodgy, the score remained at 27-12.

Once again, the visitors shown a bit of fight, and held onto the ball for a period of time. However, an early push from the pack in a scrum in their own half, gave a free kick to the home side. A bit of quick thinking and a quick tap, left Cullen (Watsonians Man-of-the-Match) with a straight run in to score his second try of the match under the posts. With Aitken now relegated to non-kicker, the conversion was scored by Hyarder to leave the score at the break, 34-12. 

The second half was to prove much less eventful. Kelso secured long periods of possession and came close to crossing the line on two occasions, but a fumble and a try saving tackle, which knocked the ball clear, prevented them from adding to their points, Watsonians, on the other hand, scored a further two tries to take a fine win, 44-12.

The first of these came just after 10 minutes of play. Winning the ball just inside the Kelso half, flanker, Niall Dennis broke through several tackles to touch down for 'Sonians sixth try and another five points. The kick was missed so 37-12 was the scoreline. The second came soon the  match went to non-contested scrums following an injury to a Kelso prop. The ball was passed out to Steele on the wing by Hyardet to release

the full back u the line, but with the cover coming over, he just managed to get a kick away. As the ball bounced about in space, No 8 Ally Miller followed up and, kicking the ball through, touched down between the posts for the seventh Watsonians try of the afternoon. With a successful kick, the score now stood at 44-12, which went on to be the final score of the match.

A fine win from the Myreside men hauled them up from sixth to fourth in the table, but nine points behind leaders, GHA, with 15.

Images from the match will appear [here](#) over the next few days.