

# Rugby – Edinburgh Rugby v Bordeaux

*Edinburgh brush Bordeaux aside on their way to a quarter-final place*



It was winner take all at BT Murrayfield as Edinburgh welcomed French Top 14 side, Bordeaux-Begles for the final match in the group stages of the European Rugby Challenge Cup. With the teams separated by a single point, it was all to play for with Lyon out of the running and London Welsh left at the start.

Edinburgh were straight out of the blocks and put the Begles defence under immediate pressure. The host had already shown their hand in the scrum where they pushed Bordeaux all over the place, winning several penalties on the way. The first of these was after six minutes of play and Sam Hidalgo-Clyne scored the first of his 28 points to put Edinburgh 3-0 ahead.

The home side were very much the dominant team for the first 20 odd minutes and even managed to squander the best chance of the opening quarter when Dougie Fife broke through the defence, passed inside to David Denton who then threw a final pass out to Hidalgo-Clyne steaming up the wing. Unfortunately the ball fell just short and Bordeaux managed to get it away.

It was then Bordeaux's turn to have a bit of possession and a sustained attack on the home defence saw them come away with a penalty from Lionel Beauxis to even the score at 3-3 after 23 minutes. However, Edinburgh got straight back on track with the job in hand and took all of five minutes to push the French side back into their own 22. Mauling lineout ball up the the opposition five-metre line, Hidalgo-Clyne took advantage of the cover given by the pack and skipped round the outside to dive over for the first try of the match. He failed

to convert, so the score stayed at 8-3.

With Edinburgh continuing to dominate the set-piece, another two Hidalgo-Clyne penalties – the first of which was matched by Beauxis – the score at the break stood at 14-3 to the home side.

The second half was to prove a much more even game with Bordeaux exerting more pressure on the Edinburgh defence and scoring two tries in the process. In spite of this, however, Edinburgh retained their stranglehold on the scoreboard and three tries, backed up by Hidalgo-Clyne's boot kept the match well beyond the French team's grasp.



The first points came via a 42nd minute penalty which saw the score up to 17-6, but Bordeaux stepped up and retained possession for a period of time. The hosts managed to absorb the push on their defence and, gradually, forced the visitors back into their own half. A break up to the by Greg Tonks pulled in a couple of defenders, but support came in the shape of Hamish Watson and Alistair Dickenson. A quick recycle saw Dickenson in open space and heading for the line. Five metres out, he was stopped by the Bordeaux full back, Baptiste Serin. Support was on hand, though, and Matt Scott piled in, collected the loose ball and dived over next to the posts for the try. The referee choose to go 'upstairs' for a bit of assistance, but confirmation was given and, with Hidalgo-Clyne adding to his personal tally with the kick, Edinburgh were 24-6 ahead.

Bordeaux, by this time had not only overcome most of their scrum woes, but were coming more into the game as a whole and straight from the restart were up in Edinburgh's faces, forcing Phil Burleigh to clear to touch. Winning their lineout, some fine passing had the visitors back up into the host's 22 and threatening the line. A neat reverse pass made a

bit of space for stand-off replacement, Pierre Bernard to put a deft grubber in behind the defence for Serin to run onto and touch down under the posts. Bernard then converted to bring Bordeaux up to within 11 points at 24-13. ❌

In a fine example of 'Anything you can do...' Edinburgh got straight back on the horse and straight back on the attack. Turning the ball over from the visitors possession, Burleigh then gave it straight back. However, he then collected Serin's clearance and returned the ball to the French 22. A couple of recycles later and Tim Visser was handed the ball and he was off, up through the middle. Inside five metres, he was stopped by three defenders, but, once again, support was on hand. Roddy Grant ran into a brick wall, but he got the ball off to Willem Nel who dived over from two metres out to touch down. Once again, the ref went to the TMO and, after a great deliberation, the third try was awarded. Hidalgo-Clyne, once again, knocked over the kick to restore Edinburgh's lead at 31-13. Once again the swings and round-a-bout's of the match came into play and Bordeaux spent a considerable period of time on the attack. Defence prevailed, however and, weathering the storm, Edinburgh were soon back inside the visitors' 22. A bit of juggling between Hidalgo-Clyne and Watson set up a ruck a metre or so out from the line and, once again, Hidalgo-Clyne's quick thinking had him pick the ball from the pile up and dive over. A third TMO decision was called for – at which point the ref came in for a bit of derisory booing – and the fourth, and bonus point try was in the bag. Hidalgo-Clyne then scored the conversion to put Edinburgh well clear, 38-13 to the good, his own points tally up to an impressive 28 and another Man-of-the-Match award for his mantelpiece.

With less than five minutes to play, Bordeaux conjured up another try – and another TMO consultation – with a very good passing move which ended with another kick stabbed through which Bernard dived on to score. He then scored with the kick to make the final score 38-20 to Edinburgh, complete with

bonus point and quarter -final place where they will join Gloucester, Newport Gwent Dragons and Exeter Chiefs. The remaining places will be settled once Saturday and Sundays fixtures are done and dusted.

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