

Rugby – Scotland v Wales, Women's RBS Six Nations


Five-try Italy hand out third defeat to fighting Scots. ❌

Despite dominating large parts of the match, Scotland could only score a try and a penalty at Broadwood against Italy on Sunday. A fair part of the game was played deep in the Italian half and the Scots came close to scoring on several occasions. However, despite turning in a better performance than they had against Wales, errors and turn-overs were to cost them dear.

They made a good start and took the ball into the opposition half, but a couple of lineout wins had Italy into the 22 and attacking the line. Quick ball from a ruck on the right for scrum half, Sara Barattin, put wing, Maria Magatti through a hole in the defence for the first try after six minutes. Veronica Schiavon lined the kick up, but the howling gale that was blowing through the gap in the stands – and which was to prove a point loser for Scotland – forced her into a drop kick. The successful conversion meant that Italy took an early lead by 7-0.

The next Italian score came off the back of another couple of errors. Scotland were retaining possession, albeit in their own half, when Lisa Martin missed a penalty kick to touch. The visitors then turned over the ball inside the Scots' half and set up the move which led to the next try. Once again, quick ball from Barattin caught the defence on the hop and full back, Manuela Furlan, skipped around the tackle from her opposing full back, Chloe Rollie, and dotted down under the posts. Schiavon then knocked over the kick, from the tee this time, to put Italy 14 points ahead with just over 15 minutes of the match played.


It was then Italy's turn to be on the receiving end. Turning over the ball from the restart, Scotland got the game moving

in the right direction and put pressure on the Italian defence. Prop, Lisa Robertson – who was to prove a handful for the opposition all afternoon (below) – carried the ball upfield for a fair distance before she was relieved of possession, allowing clearance to be made. Unfortunately, Scotland lost their lineout, but soon retrieved the ball and drove far up the pitch through the backs. Both sides then gained and lost the ball over the next few minutes before Italy infringed about 30 metres out, giving Scotland a crack at goal. Nuala Deans stepped up and, as she had done against Wales, bisected the posts for Scotland's opening score. 

It wasn't too long before Italy, in the shape of Magatti with her second try, were on the score board again. And again, it was lost lineout ball which proved to be the home side's undoing. This time, though, Schiavon missed, so it remained a 19-3 game.

With the match entering the final few minutes of the half, Scotland were, once again, knocking on the door of the Italian defence. First Robertson got to within centimetres of scoring from a scrum, but was pulled up short. Then the backs got in on the act and, swinging the ball wide to wing, Abi Evans, the Scots had created an overlap on the left. Unfortunately, Evans didn't believe in herself and pulled up rather than taking on the defender just six or seven metres out from the line. She held on in the tackle and the subsequent penalty gave the referee, Helen O'Reilly, an excuse to blow up for half time with the score at 19-3.


The second half gave Scotland's team and supporters great hope for a comeback as they dominated the possession and territory, but burst their supporters' bubble as they managed to give Italy two run away tries. The home side played some of their best rugby in the first 10 minutes of the half. Yes, there were a couple of errors, but the running and passing game, coupled with the forward rucking and mauling play, forced a

penalty out in front – along with a yellow card for Italy's Flavia Severin – but Deans had to watch her attempt at goal drift wide courtesy of the aforementioned gale. 

But, the heads didn't go down and, from the restart, Scotland once again fired all they had at the opposition defence. Robertson had another go at the line, dragging bodies along with her, but she then politely declined to step on a defender and that hesitation slowed her down, allowing the Italians to wrestle her to the ground. Italy then won the ball back, but from the clearance kick, Scotland were straight back in their faces.

Until just before the 20 minute mark, at least. Once again battering away at the opposition, and seeing a second Italian carded – this time No. 6, Michela Este – the ball was lost and Italy's backs stormed upfield. Catching the defence looking the wrong way, Schiavon slipped through and scored Italy's fourth try of the game. She scored the kick as well, and the resultant 26-3 score line left too big a gap to be closed.

That didn't stop Scotland trying, though. They quickly recovered the ball from the restart, and ran at Italy from all angles. Stand-off, Lisa Martin (above), was particularly threatening and she found several gaps in the Italian defence from both passing and running. With less than 10 minutes to go, Italy knocked on from a lineout and Scotland had a scrum five metres out from the line. The scrums had been a fairly even contest over the match, but this one was a 'must win'. Melrose's Lana Skeldon hooked the ball back cleanly and with Jade Konkell picking up from the back, there was only one thing on the cards.

Brushing aside two defenders (top), Konkell made the short sprint to the line to score Scotland's first try of the 2015 tournament. However, the ecstatic team and crowd were soon  brought back to earth as the gale force wind took Martin's

conversion attempt centimetres wide, so the score had to stay at 26-8. BUT WE'D SCORED A TRY! (Sorry, but it right in front of my lens (see right) – JP)

Italy weren't going to take that lying down, however, and with a couple of minutes left, they ran in their fifth try, Magatti dotting down for her hat-trick, and the 31-8 final score – just beating the final whistle and the torrential hail storm.

That final score didn't in any way reflect the run of play. Scotland played their best rugby for a long time, dominating the second half and, but for the bad start and the odd slip-up here and there, could have – possibly, maybe, perhaps – made it the first win since their 10-8 defeat of France at Lasswade on 6th February 2009. Not that anyone's counting!

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