


Rugby – Edinburgh v Zebre, Guinness PR012

Edinburgh dominate Zebre for a fine win



Five tries and sixth place in the PR012 – though that may be temporary – for Edinburgh on Friday night gave Alan Solomons' team a boost for their upcoming European Final against Gloucester on 1st May. The result also did their chance of qualifying for next year's European Championship no harm at all. The match also saw the second, slightly more extended, return to play of Cornell Du Preez following his successful recovery from, what might have been, a career ending injury to his ankle.

However, it was Zebre who had the first chance at points in the match, but Gonzalo Garcia's kick went nowhere near. Edinburgh then pushed upfield and scored their first try in the ninth minute from 15 metres out. Ben Toolis did his usual lineout job and the forwards set up a maul with Roddy Grant in charge of the ball. They then rolled the Italian pack back over their line for Grant to drop down for the try. Sam Hidalgo-Clyne kicked a successful conversion to put the home side into a 7-0 lead.

The match then started to go the way of Edinburgh, with the visitors always on the back foot and defending desperately. A variety of kicking and running plays – tempered by a catalogue of reset scrums – eventually lead to the next score, a penalty from Hidalgo-Clyne on the 20 minute mark. 


The next Edinburgh score came in the 27th minute. A break down the left by Tim Visser and Andries Strauss put pressure on the defence and lead to Sam Beard being tackled off the ball. The

penalty to touch then gave the home side a lineout on the five metre line. Once again lineout ball set up Edinburgh for the attack, but this time they went through the backs. The ball outran the defenders across the pitch and left Dougie Fife with an overlap and a simple run in for the 27th minute try. With Hidalgo-Clyne's kick the score was now up to 17-0.

Another penalty in the 31st minute took the score to 20-0, but despite Edinburgh's best efforts – and a second yellow, this time for wing, Giuolio Toniolatti for tackling Visser in the air – that was how the half ended.

The Italian outfit enjoyed a brief period of possession at the start of the second half, but much like the first, the hosts were soon back up to speed and running at the defence from all angles

Another Zebre yellow gave Edinburgh the chance to gain ground and another accurate kick put them five metres out from the line. Once again, Toolis showed his superiority in the lineout and brought the ball down. A quick bit of sleight of hand had everyone looking the wrong way and Mike Coman with the ball. He whipped it out to Ross Ford, still out on the touchline. He then had nothing better to do than charge over for the third try. Hidalgo-Clyne's kick went awry, but Edinburgh were now 25-0 ahead with about 52 minutes on the clock.

With 55 minutes on the clock, Edinburgh had their fourth try. In a repeat of the first, the pack piled over the line with Grant in tow and the try was scored. Hidalgo-Clyne scored the points this time for a 32-0 score line. 

With the score and the bonus point, the match was over, but Edinburgh kept churning out the pressure. The back division were more involved in the last 20 minutes, but with Zebre's defence holding out, it wasn't until a couple of minutes from time that the home side added to their tally. And, as per

script, it was another forward's try from a line out, this time 'converted hooker playing back at flanker', Stuart McInally getting over the whitewash for a final score line of 37-0.

Despite the score and Edinburgh's dominance, it wasn't the most entertaining of matches with far too many reset scrums and penalties. Zebre, for their part, seemed to have given up on the season to some extent and their three yellows did nothing to help matter along.

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