

Rugby – Edinburgh v Leinster, Guinness PR012

Hoyland bags a brace at Meggetland.



Damien Hoyland, playing on the ground where he learned his trade, got his and Edinburgh's 2015 Guinness PR012 season off to a flyer at Meggetland on Friday night with two second half tries to give Edinburgh the win in their opening match of the league.

With both sides missing players on International duty and BT Murrayfield 'under construction' for the Foo Fighters' concert, the rugby circus decamped to Meggetland for the match up with Leinster to get the 2015 campaign up and running.

The first half was a fairly torrid affair with neither team able to gain a decent enough foothold to break down the opposition defence.

Isa Nacewa gave Leinster the lead with an 18th minute penalty for 3-0 and nearly followed it up in the 25th minute with another from near halfway. However, it was the home side who were next on the score board as, less than a minute after Nacewa's miss, scrum half Nathan Fowles, slotted home their first points to bring the scores level at 3-3.

Fowles then missed with a long-range effort just on half time to leave the sides level going into the break.

And break it did, as the heavens opened and sent the crowd scurrying for shelter as the players came out for the second half. Edinburgh appeared to deal with the conditions better than their Irish counterparts and another miss from Fowles, at least, meant that Edinburgh would get the ball back.




Using the possession well, the home pack rucked and mauled their way to the right-hand corner and crossed the line, with the ball bouncing loose from a possible touch down. The TMO was duly consulted and ruled against, but Edinburgh were now deep in opposition territory and weren't going anywhere.

Forcing play the other way, the forwards once again played a major part, getting the ball to the line allowing Fowles to slip a pass the Hoyland for the winger to cross in the left corner. Fowles missed the kick, but Edinburgh were now in an 8-3 lead.

Which, a couple of minutes later, became an 8-6 lead as a bit of foul play gave Nacewa a kick at goal from in front of the posts which the full back knocked over to narrow the gap to 8-6.

The next 10 minutes or so were fairly even, but with less than 10 minutes left, Jack Cuthbert stepped up for a long range effort, which, once again, opened up the gap in favour of the home side. 11-6 now the score.

Once again, though, the post-score give-away came to the fore and Nacewa, less than a minute later, scored his third penalty of the night for 11-9.

The last five minutes were dominated by Edinburgh and, with a couple of minutes left, a penalty award for offside was, to the delight of the crowd, kicked to touch for the line out. The home side pack did their job and managed to pull the opposition over to the left of the pitch, leaving an almost half pitch overlap on the right. 

With Sean Kennedy now scrum half, a couple of recycles had the ball near the posts and nearer the line. Kennedy dug the ball out and slung a huge pass out to his right and Hoyland was on hand to finish off with a huge diving lunge over the line.

Job done and, after Cuthbert missed the kick, the referee blew up for full time and ended a match which was fairly scrappy at times, but which gave the home side a fine start to their season.

Images from the match will appear here over the next few days.