

Rugby – Heriots v Boroughmuir, BT Premiership.

Five-try Heriots take five points at Goldenacre.



By all accounts, Heriots had been playing well below par in the run up to Saturday's local derby with Boroughmuir at a very wet Goldenacre, but were still clinging on to third place in the BT Premiership table. Boroughmuir, for their part, were down in eighth, possibly finding life back in the top division a wee touch on the hard side.

Despite the gap, it was the visiting side that had the best of the opening play, keeping the lid on Heriots' attack and causing a few concerns with their own.

But it was the home side that opened the scoring just after the 10 minute mark. A big tackle by Heriots' No 8, Jack Turley on opposing full back, Craig Marshall, forced the player into a rushed offload, the ball was gathered and moved out to wing, John Rae, who raced down the wing to dot down for the opener. The eternal Graham Wilson then stepped up and scored the conversion for 7-0 to Heriots.

From the restart, 'Muir came back into the game and had Heriots pinned back deep in their 22 for long periods, but a combination of good defence and a greasy ball prevented a score for the visitors.

The strength of the home side soon told and, with just under 30 minutes of play, they were inside 'Muir's 22, scrumming away on the five metre line. The ball was moved about, but going backwards so the referee pulled play back for a penalty advantage which Wilson knocked over to add three to the points for a 10-0 lead.

Then, it was a clearing kick straight to touch brought Heriots a line out near halfway which lead to the second try. Clean ball off the top ended up with centre, Cameron Ferguson who blazed through the defence, into the

22 and gave a lovely clean pass to put 13, Max Learmonth in for the try, taking the opposition's wing, Otolea Katoa, over in the slide to the line. Wilson failed to add the extras, but Heriots took the 15-0 lead into the break.



With the sun trying to make an appearance, the second half started where the first had left off, with Heriots on the attack and Boroughmuir defending manfully. A couple of handling errors gave the visitors a bit of respite and then it went a bit awry for the home side. Less than five minutes in and Heriots were suddenly down to 13 having lost two player in quick succession to yellow for blatant foul play. This gave 'Muir the opportunity to get some points on the table, but they seemed to struggle to breaking through and eventually a string of scrum penalties – why no penalty try, ref? – came up trumps as the pack pushed the weakened Heriots scrum over their line, No. 8, Callum Reid getting the score. With stand-off Dougie Steel scoring the conversion, Boroughmuir were making their way back into the game at 18-7.

Or, at least, they were for all of two minutes when a penalty from Wilson, awarded for offside as 13-man Heriots launched into 15-man Boroughmuir in their own 22 stretched the lead out a bit to 18-7.

Once back up to full strength, Heriots began to exert a strangle hold on the match and the final 15 minutes, or so, saw them add three tries to their tally.

The first of these came from a scrum in front of the posts. As the Heriots pack pushed over the ball, No 6, Ian Wilson picked up and fought his way over for his try, Wilson adding the extras for 25-7.

The second came almost immediately from the restart. Kicked in behind the defence, the ball was chased down by wing, Charlie Simpson who used his feet to good effect to get the ball into the visiting goal area. He was pushed over the line by Katoa, but managed to get hands on the ball for the score. The officials had a short discussion – Out of play? Penalty try? Who knows? – before awarding the score. 30-0 for Heriots.



The final try came just before the end. A string of rucks was finally finished off by sub, Murray McCallum who was barrelled over the line by two of his close friends. Semple missed the kick, but, at 35-7, the game was – as it had been for some time – in the bag.

A head injury to one of the 'Muir backs, sustained in a collision with McCallum, stopped play just before the end and the referee, in consultation with the two captains, blew up early to cap a fine performance by the Myreside squad.

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