

# Rugby – Heriots v Melrose, BT Charity Shield Match

*Six-try Melrose take BT Charity Shield in Edinburgh.*



Heriots hosted Borders side Melrose at Goldenacre for the pre-2016-17 season BT Charity Shield match under leaden skies on Friday evening. In its third year, the Shield is contested between the League and Cup winners, but, as Heriots had won both, League runners-up Melrose took to the field to provide some meaningful opposition. Mention should be made of this year's referee, Mike Adamson who is a recent returnee from Rio where he officiated during the Olympic Sevens tournament.

The first 20 minutes or so were fairly even, but Melrose gradually began to exert some dominance and had almost scored about 15 minutes in, but the ball was lost forward just short of the line.

The first try came in 21 minutes when debutant and former Stew-Mel wing, Ross McCann, broke clear before passing to Murdo McAndrew, the scrum-half crashing over near the posts for the opener. No. 13, George Taylor, then converted for a 7-0 lead.

Melrose then dominated the next period of play and, although Heriots made a couple of incursions, scored their second try in the 31<sup>st</sup> minute. The Neil Irvine-Hess score completed a move which saw several 'nearly' breaks for the visitors. A long kick was fumbled in the wet by the Heriots full-back, and a kick-through was then successfully chased over by Hess to take the score out – with the kick missed – to 12-0.

Just over five minutes later, Melrose scored again. Hess collected a loose ball from a Heriots attack and a couple of

passes found McCann with a clear run deep into the opposition 22. He was half-tackled, but got the ball away, centre Taylor piled over for the third try and 17-0.



Heriots managed more of the play in the final minutes – which saw their scrum-half cross the line, but being held up, the subsequent penalty being launched out to the right which prop, Michael Liness just failed to collect – and, using their dominant scrum, won a series of penalties in the five metre zone. They scored their only try of the match just before the break, Callum Marshall burrowing over from the rear of the try line pile-up, with No.10, Alex Hagart adding the extras. 17-7 for Melrose at half time.

Melrose returned to dominate play in the second half, going on to score another three tries, Heriots failing to add to their single score of the first half.

Scored on the 53 minute mark, Melrose's fourth try came after another extended period of pressure on the Heriots defence, the Borders men working their way up to the line with Jason Baggott breaking through a tackle to touch down. The kick was again missed, but it was 22-7 to the Melrose side, with Heriots not looking to be anywhere near their last season form.

The fifth came up following an Irvine-Hess break down the left which nearly saw the score, but a couple of ruck recycles then lead to Ruairidh Knott barging over near the posts. Baggott scored the conversion to put the match beyond reach at 29-7.

In the final 20-odd minutes Heriots started to come back into the match, but whether that was them coming into form or Melrose slacking off slightly was simply academic as the visitors scored a 70<sup>th</sup> minute try via Ian Moody, converted by Baggott for 36-7



The final few minutes were spent in the Melrose half with Heriots trying gamely to add to their try, but the match eventually finished – in virtual darkness – with Melrose the, more than worthy, winners of the BT Charity Shield and Heriots wondering who had pick-pocketed their 2015-16 form.

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