

Club Rugby – Watsonians v Boroughmuir, BT Premiership

Watsonians hang to win by a single point.



Boroughmuir wandered round the corner from Meggetland to face a Watsonians side who had won their first two fixtures following their return to the top division and spotted a familiar name or two on the team sheet. Vili Fihaki (Edinburgh Rugby) was at six – but wearing 22 as the ‘6’ shirt was too small and Sean Kennedy (Edinburgh Rugby) was down as the scrum half sub for Reiss Cullen. A few of the Edinburgh side were also spotted wandering around the ground doing their best to remain discreet.

Despite early home pressure, it was the visiting team who were first on the scoreboard with a breakaway try in the right corner for wing, Grant McConnell, with No. 10, Chris Laidlaw, slotting home the conversion from the far touch line.

Boroughmuir then seized the initiative and, following a period of possession, they advanced into the ‘Sonians half and won a penalty, which McConnell kicked for 10-0, with around 15 minutes played.

Watsonians now came back into the match and proceeded to advance upfield keeping the ball moving and using their stronger scrum to win ball.

Their first try came from a period of pressure inside the ‘Muir five-metre zone as the home side rucked, mauled and scrummed their way to the line. The third penalty scrum in a row scrum resulted in No. 8, Euan Dods ending up with the ball at his feet as the pack destroyed the opposition once again, leaving Dods the simple task of dropping on the ball for the score. No. 15, Andrew Chalmers then scored the conversion to make the score 10-7.

The next period of play was fairly evenly matched – apart from the short

scuffle in the centre – with both sides having and losing possession until, with about five minutes to the break, Boroughmuir opened up the gap once again with a McConnell penalty from the 22. 13-7 was now the score and it remained that way until half time.

Kennedy entered the fray at the start of the second half and, immediately the Edinburgh scrum half appeared to make a difference as, within three minutes of the restart, Watsonians scored their second try. A good box-kick from Kennedy put the ball deep into the opposition half where the home side soon regained possession, mauled about 20 metres up field and, eventually, put wing Mark Bertram through for the try. Chalmers scored his second attempt of the day to put Watsonians in the lead 14-13.



With the game beginning to away in favour of the home side, the visitors were finding it difficult to exit their own half. Once again, they found themselves scrumming on their own line and, although they held out, a yellow for their 8, Matthew Tweddle, put them under greater pressure.

This all told as play swung along the line and a series of probing runs pulled the defence in, before the ball was flung wide and centre, but wearing 10 – it's a long, involved story... – DJ Innes went over in the left corner for the third home try and 19-13.

Ten minutes later, they scored again. Fihaki was proving his worth with big runs, bowling over defenders and making ground almost every time he had the ball. The most telling was in the 69th minute as he, again pulled in the defence near the line. A series of rucks then lead to Kennedy scoring the bonus point try, the scrum half feigning a pass off the back of a ruck before diving over to score himself. With Chalmers adding the extras, it was 26 13 with 10 minutes to go – job done!. Or so might have been thought...

The final 10 minutes of the match were all Boroughmuir. With three minutes to go, sub, Ross Dunbar scored a try near the posts, which McConnell converted for 26-20. Watsonians by this time had a man in the bin, followed by another giving hope to the visitors, which came up

trumps with the final play of the match.



Somehow, the depleted home side kept 'Muir at bay for, what seemed like, ages, but in the end, numbers told and the ball outran the defence allowing full back, Dougie Steele to go over in the left corner. As McConnell stepped up for the kick, it was 26-25, so it was all or nothing. And, as the ball struck the upright and rebounded into the field of play, it was to be nothing. Watsonians had managed to hold onto the lead by the skin of their teeth and walked away with a try bonus point win to secure their second place in the BT Premiership on their return from the, relative, wilderness of the National Leagues.

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