

Field hockey – Scotland lead then concede four



Willie Marshall, played part in Scotland's shock opener against India in London.
Picture Nigel Duncan Media

World Hockey League: Scotland 1, India 4 (from Lee Valley, London)

Chris Grassick netted the opening goal for minnows Scotland against high-flying India in London and the Blue Sticks dreamed.

The skipper struck from close in after his Surbiton team-mate Willie Marshall drove into the India half and fired the ball forward.

Dutch-based Kenny Bain robbed an India defender near the by-line and fired an inch-perfect cross through the Indian defence finding Edinburgh-born Grassick, a former Inverleith player, unmarked at the back post. Time six minutes.

Scotland, beaten 6-2 and 4-0 in back-to-back Commonwealth Games clashes in 2014 and 2010 respectively and ranked No 23 in the world, held that lead until half-time.

That was thanks to solid defence and two quality saves from goalkeeper Tommy Alexander.

Fans at the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre felt a huge upset was on the cards.

But that ten minute break proved crucial. India, ranked No 6 in the world, came out firing and claimed four goals in a devastating 11-minute, third quarter blitz.

Ramandeep started the goal rush in the first minute firing home from the top of the circle and he doubled his tally three minutes later after leaving Russell Anderson for dead.

Akashdeep claimed No 3 with a superb deflection six minutes after that and Harmanpreet fired the ball into the roof of the net from a penalty corner two minutes later.

Overall, India proved their class with 25 circle penetrations against Scotland's six.

They enjoyed 60 per cent of the possession against Scotland's 40 percent and fired ten shots on goal against one from the Blue Sticks.

Now Scotland must regroup ahead of the second Pool B clash, this time against The Netherlands, the world's No 4 side, on Saturday (18.00).