

Rugby – Watsonians v Stirling County, BT Premiership

Watsonians show Edinburgh how it should be done at Myreside



Watsonians welcomed Stirling County to Myreside on Saturday for their first home match of the 2017-18 season and went on to win an nine-try thriller which put the previous night's game to shame.

Stirling were under pressure in the half straight from the kick-off, but, despite the home side dominating proceedings, the visitors were first on the score board. Recycled ball was moved quickly across through 'Sonian hands from the left wing, but loose pass from the centre found Stirling's wing, Ross Curie, and he was off, sprinting from just inside his own half to dive over on the left of the posts with just two minutes on the clock. No. 15, Jonny Hope, converting for 7-0.

While Stirling were doing well through their forwards, the backs couldn't convert their territorial gains allowing Watsonians to clear up easily enough.

The equalising try came via wing Jamie Farndale, who gathered a loose kick inside his own half and then outran the defence to scythe diagonally across the field to slide in for the home side's first try. Full back, then kicked the conversion to draw the side equal at 7-7.

On the front foot now, it was only four minutes before the home side were on the score board again, this time from a ruck situation on the left side of the field. The ball was recycled two or three times, keeping the defence's attention tied in allowing flanker, James Miller, to dive through the bodies for the try. Chalmers was, once again – indeed only one kick was

missed all game by either kicker – accurate for a 14-7 lead.

With the half hour clocking up, Stirling found themselves encamped on the home try line and a good five minutes was spent in a continual series of reset and penalised scrums, with the away pack having the their home opposition on the retreat. Eventually the patience of the referee failed and he awarded Stirling a well deserved penalty try for 14-14.



Just before the game broke for half time, Watsonians scored their third try of the match. An attacking kick crossed the sideline just short of the corner giving the home side the chance to challenge the defensive line out five metres from the Stirling line. They won the ball and a couple of close-in rucks later, lock, Craig Borthwick, battered his way over for the lead. Chalmers converted once again for the lead going into half time.

It didn't take County too long to draw level after the sides returned with the whole side involved on progressing the ball into 'Sonians five metre zone. They went to the sidelines for a penalty and from the maul set-up, prop, Grant Holburn was driven over and came out with the ball for the try. Hope then continued the fine kicking performance to convert for the equaliser at 21-21.

As the hour mark approached, Watsonians were deep into Stirling's 22 and putting on a fine display of running and handling. As they worked to close in on the line, a deliberate offside infringement by one of the Stirling backs saw him carded and Chalmers having an easy kick for the lead once again.

As the match entered the final 10 minutes, Watsonians were, again dominating the match, forcing Stirling to kick clear, then running the ball straight back, Eventually, the pressure

told and the home side ran in two identikit tries down the left wing, one from sub, Rory Hutton for the bonus point and the fifth from Farndale for the winger's second. Both were converted by Chalmers and the home side were out of sight at 38-21.



Stirling scored their bonus point try a short time from the final whistle through the pack's persistence again, but Hope missed the only unsuccessful kick all day, leaving the final score at 38-26 for Watsonians.

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