

Rugby League – Edinburgh Eagles v Jarrow Vikings, North-East RL Cup

Eagles hammer Vikings in their march to Semi-final spot.



The Edinburgh Eagles welcomed Jarrow Vikings on Saturday to the Jack Kane Centre for their NE Cup tie and, while the promised 'Yellow' weather warning for rain and thunder did not materialise, the Eagles, playing for the first time this season in their yellow kit, gave out a warning of their own to the remaining teams in the cup as they ran out winners in their toughest competitive game of the season so far.

The home side kicked off up the slope and early exchanges saw defences on top and plenty of aggression as both sides sought to establish physical supremacy. It was Jarrow who scored first on the 11th minute as they forced their way over the try line to take the lead for what proved to be the only time in the game.

The visitors sought to build on their lead but strong Eagles defence continued to keep them at bay allowing the home side to build pressure of their own, using the forwards to take the ball through the middle channels before spreading it wide in the later tackles. This tactic eventually paid dividends as the hard running Nick Hanmer was able to take the ball on the right edge to continue his try scoring form and touch down for Edinburgh's first try of the afternoon in the 26th minute to level the score at 4-4. Now the Eagles were able to settle into their rhythm forcing a goal line drop out in the 31st minute from which Jonny Quinn was able to score from close range in the resulting set of six.



The desire of both teams to dominate the opposition physically finally boiled over shortly afterwards and saw punches being thrown and a player from both sides sent to the sin bin for their part in the altercation. Eagles were awarded a penalty which directly led to Mikey Mair scoring his first try of the afternoon on 37 minutes which Fergus Simpson was able to convert to give Eagles a comfortable looking 14-4 lead just before the break. A dogged Jarrow however reduced the deficit on the stroke of half time when they went over for their own converted try, giving a score of 14-10 at the mid way point.

The second half saw the Vikings kick off and on 45 minutes they thought they had scored a try to level it up but the referee adjudged a double-movement. From the penalty, Eagles took full advantage racing down the field for Mair to get his second of the afternoon under the posts which Simpson converted.

It was looking good for the Eagles now and both sides continued to play with controlled aggression but the hosts were able to take advantage of coming down the slight slope, and scored another try on 55 minutes following a typical cross field passing play that stretched the Jarrow defence. Full back Clayton Woods, who is clearly starting to enjoy playing in this position, the scorer this time.

The visitors weren't finished, however, and passed up a glorious chance to get back into the match when they knocked on with the try line beckoning however it didn't put them off as they managed the next try to bring the scores back to 24-16. Jarrow's resistance was finally broken on 65 minutes when the fleet-footed Simpson used his speed and agility to evade tacklers, breaking out of his own half, to score the try of the game and extend Eagles lead to 28-16.



While the Vikings didn't throw in the towel, they could not turn the tide as first, captain, Lewis Clarke, got the try his play throughout the entire game merited, under the posts, followed by Craig Robertson on his return to the Eagles side, touching down against a tired-looking Vikings side. Both tries were converted by Simpson to make the final score 40-16 to the Eagles.

Craig Robertson was awarded Man of the Match by the visitors coaching staff.

Following the final whistle, coach Barry McGuffog said; "Firstly, I want to thank the lads from Jarrow for making the trip. It was a real tough game which I'm sure almost everyone of the 40-50 people watching will have thoroughly enjoyed. The game had everything you could want in a game, strong defence, big tackles, tries and a bit of biff! It was a bit niggly and scrappy at times but we were pretty well disciplined and I think we were good value for the win. We just need to work our percentage plays and value the ball a bit more, earn the right to play the exciting stuff by doing the hard stuff first. We've probably shocked a few people today but there's a bit of a buzz in the group at the minute and the self-belief and confidence of the lads is growing week on week so we'll now look to take that into the Strathmore league game next weekend."

Match report courtesy of Edinburgh Eagles' Andrew McPhail

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