

# Grand Finals day at The National Hockey Centre

Grand Finals day at the Glasgow National Hockey Centre involved both the men's and women's leagues and the matches were to decide a variety of league positions, as well as promotion, relegation and, for the National 1 sides, European qualification. With three Edinburgh, one Dundee and one Fife side in contention, East Scotland interest was high.

The first match on was between Glasgow University and Erskine Stewarts Melville. Right from the off it was obvious that Glasgow were the superior side as they dominated play in the first half.



Glasgow were just too good on the day.

However, a lack of scoring chances meant that the half time score remained even at 0-0. The second half continued in much

of the same vein, with ESM spending most of their time on defence.

Glasgow scored their first goal after four minutes to open up, what might have been an avalanche, but took another 10 minutes for their second. They then followed this up with a third after 30 minutes.

ESM pulled one back just before time, but Glasgow finished off the match with a fourth just on the final hooter to keep their National League 1 place.

Second match on was the men's equivalent between Watsonians and Dunfermline Carnegie. And, like previously, the match was dominated by one team. This time around it was the Edinburgh side who were on top for most of the match.



Watsonians pressurised the Carnegie goal all game  
Watsonians first goal went in after 10 minutes for 1-0, but Carnegie, for their part, were increasingly fractious as their opponents continued to take the game to them and cause them

all sorts of defensive issues.

15 minutes into the second half, Watsonians scored their second with a screamer of a reverse strike, before following up with a third eight minutes later to take the match and remain in the top division.

Third match of the day was between Western Wildcats and Clydesdale Western in the Women's National League 1 and would decide a place in European Club hockey for the 2019-20 season.

This was a fairly evenly matched contest until the 24th minute when Wildcats scored the first goal. Clydesdale fought back, but Western's defence kept them at bay.



Wildcats claimed their first ever EuroHockey qualification. As the match progressed, Western looked more and more dangerous and they scored their second from a penalty corner just before the 10 minute mark.

Clydesdale did have their chances, but overall never looked

like taking the match, which went the way of Western at 2-0, who also qualified for European hockey for the first time.

The final match was for the men's National League 1 title and that, all important, European qualification place, and was between Grove Menzieshill and Grange.

Right from the off, it was clear that Grange were the superior side. Grove just couldn't find their feet and lost an early goal to the Edinburgh side after just four minutes.



Grove see another ball launched into their area  
As the match progressed, Grove came got into their stride, but both defences neutralised most of the attacking play, but Grange managed a second goal from open play around the 25 minute mark.

Three minutes into the second half and it was 3-0 as Grange launched up the pitch from the off and forced the ball home past the Grove keeper.

As the match was clearly going the way of Grange, Grove chose to replace their keeper with a kicking back with about 10 minutes to go. This gave them the extra outfield player, but a clear break saw the fourth goal home along with the title and that European place for Edinburgh's Grange.

A sunny day in Glasgow, but with a cold wind, kept the spectators wrapped up, but, overall, it was a fine day for Scottish Hockey as the League campaigns close and the Cup matches await in a few weeks.

Images from the matches will appear here over the next few days.