

Rugby League – Edinburgh Eagles v Durham Demons,

Edinburgh Eagles kicked off their 2019 North East Rugby League campaign with a home match against the Durham Demons in a game where the result was in the balance until late in the second half. Having never met before, the two teams knew little of each other aside from their preceding achievements, the Eagles being 2018 NERL Cup finalists and the Demons the 2018 NERL Shield winners, so predicting the outcome was a tough task.

Although this was officially the first league fixture, at times it looked more like a pre-season game, with both teams making frequent handling errors, and the Eagles in particular conceding a number of penalties for infringements around the ruck.



Things got a bit 'tasty' at times.

Despite the lack of real quality in the first forty, both teams registered two tries and successful conversions giving a half time score of 12-12 . First over the line for the Eagles was hooker Jonny Quinn who went in from close range, and he was followed by debutant forward, Craig Quigley, who powered over from ten metres. The returning George Nixon added both goals with successful conversions.

For the spectators, the highlight of a scrappy first period was the mêlée that ensued following a late challenge from a Durham defender as the Eagles broke down field. When order was restored, the referee issued a yellow card to one player from each team and that was the end of that.

The second half started well for the Demons as they raced into a 12-point lead, exploiting some defensive errors and frailties in the home side. Edinburgh dug deep though and clawed their way back in to the game with tries from George Lees, a second, poacher's effort, from Quinn and one on debut for Matt Hart. Nixon successful with the boot on two occasions which gave the hosts a 28-24 lead going in to the final twenty minutes.



Demons had a god start to the second half.

At this point, something for the Eagles finally clicked and they started to follow the game plan coach Craig Robertson had set out. Keeping things simple with the ball and defending in numbers, the belief in themselves emerged. With scores from Mikey Mair plus arguably try of the game from Clarke, with Nixon conversioning two, the Eagles had put daylight between themselves and the visitors with time running out.

When the final whistle went, both teams could take positives and negatives from the game and both coaches will have plenty to think about. Final score Edinburgh Eagles 40-24 Durham Demons.



Scoring under pressure...

On the result, Robertson said; "Obviously I'm happy to get the win but I'm less happy with the performance. We only really played for the last quarter and fair play to Durham, they gave us a real game for sixty minutes. When we went 28-24 up the boys finally started to play some decent rugby. We'll take the positives from the game and hopefully work on some of the negatives this week at training before the Catterick game next week."

Edinburgh Eagles would like to thank Durham Demons for making the trip and wish them all the best for the rest of the season.

Report courtesy of [Edinburgh Eagles](#).

Images courtesy of [Jax MacKenzie Photography](#)