

# Rugby -Edinburgh v Connacht, United Rugby Championship

Once upon a time in the olden days, Connacht were looked upon as the whipping boys of, what was, the Celtic League. Always difficult to beat at home on the West coast of Ireland, they tended to be easier to beat away.

Over the past few years, this has no longer been the case as they have signed a raft of very good players from home and abroad, so Friday night's game in Edinburgh, against a home side with a number of debutants and appearance-limited players, had all the makings of a cracker.

And a 'cracker' it turned out to be, just not that which the visitors had hoped for.



Jack Carty opened the scoring for Connacht © 2022 J.L. Preece  
However, for the first 20 minutes or so, Edinburgh were under the cosh as Connacht peppered their defence with a number of penetrating moves, aided by some handling issues from the hosts (*"He's no' in your team!"* was heard from a spectator behind – JLP) getting in close a few times, but having to settle for an 11th minute penalty from Jack Carty for 0-3 a couple of minutes after Edinburgh's Mesu Kunavula was carded for a daft high tackle.

The next 10 minutes or so were fairly even, but the home side, still a man short, could make little impact and, once again, handling errors compounded their lack of progress.

With Kunavula back on the field and numbers even, Edinburgh had a little more of the play, but it was Connacht who scored the points.



Followed in a few minutes later by Peter Sullivan for a 0-8 lead. © 2022 J.L. Preece

They used the ball well to spread the home defence across the pitch, tying in bodies to create a space down the right. The final pass to No. 14, Peter Sullivan, gave the wing a short dash to the line, but he had to battle through Edinburgh James Lang to scramble over for the try and 0-8 after 24 minutes.

Then, something seemed to 'click' in the Edinburgh mindset and they reapplied themselves with three, Emiliano Boffelli converted, tries before the break.

The first was off the back of a stolen lineout. The ball was sent infield, then immediately switched with Blair Kinghorn providing the ball for Boffelli to score in the corner for 7-8.



Henry Immelman scored in the 'same corner' in both halves © 2022 J.L. Preece

Five minutes later, the second – the announcer commenting that “You wait all night for a try and then two come along at once” – was scored by full back – and eventual ‘Player-of-the-Match’ – Henry Immelman, with a carbon copy – minus the lineout steal – after some fine handling from the back division.

The third was down the pack. A line out on the right was won by Edinburgh who then set up a rolling maul, which, once it got rolling, proved impossible to stop, Dave Cherry coming up with the ball on his 50th appearance for the club.

At the break, the sides went in at 21-8, with the visitors, probably, wondering where it had all gone...

Less than two minutes into the second half, it continued to go wrong for Connacht as the home side scored their fourth, and bonus point try of the night.



Ramiro Moyano scored Edinburgh's fifth try © 2022 J.L. Preece  
The lead up involved a break and a bit of interplay between Kinghorn and Ben Muncaster, with the flanker first receiving, then providing, the ball for Kinghorn to dive over for 26-8. Boffelli then converted for 28-8.

Connacht were now looking like a well beaten side and, despite gaining some ground, weren't able to make it stick, so had to get back on the defensive.

Kinghorn was, again, involved the fifth try when he was put through, before handing the ball to No. 11, Ramiro Moyano who dived over near the posts. With Boffelli's conversion, it was 35-8 after 52 minutes.



Emiliano Boffelli scored 7 conversions from 7 attempts as well as a try © 2022 J.L. Preece  
And they kept on coming.

The final period of the match saw Edinburgh run in another three tries, one each from Immelman, Glen Young and Ben Vellacott, with Chris Dean (top image) – playing for the first time at the stadium – providing the final pass for Vellacott's try.

With Boffelli's conversions, the final score of 56-8 looked all the more impressive considering how many first-choice players were missing, either injured or on International duty.

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