

EuroHockey League success for Grange Hockey Club in Ranking Cup

Martin Shepherdson, Grange's team manager, saluted his men who beat former Austrian champions, Post SV, 3-0 in Terrassa, Spain, to claim seventh place in the eight-team EuroHockey League Ranking Cup.

It is the Edinburgh club's maiden victory in the tough event featuring some Europe's best teams and world-class players.

A double from Albert Rowling, one from a penalty stroke in 15 minutes and the second a penalty corner after 38 minutes, and a third on 49 minutes from schoolboy Peter Caughey, hooking the ball home from close range, secured the welcome win.

The Scots lifted their sticks aloft to celebrate at the final whistle, in marked contrast to Saturday when many slumped to the floor after letting slip an early goal in the dramatic final stages against Hampstead & Westminster, English champions in 2019.

The result was achieved minus Scotland's top striker this season, Fraser Heigh, who broke a thumb in the third quarter of the game against Hampstead & Westminster.

Shepherdson said: "We are obviously delighted and we again put in a tremendous effort. We got what we deserved. We are proud to have won our first game in the new format."

David Forrester, one of Scotland's international goalkeepers, said: "It was a fantastic performance by everyone, especially given Fraser's (Heigh) injury.

"We knew that if we put our best foot forward they we had a chance of winning. It's a very proud moment for the team."

Earlier, Grange, digging deep into their energy resources playing their third game in four days in this testing tournament, took the game to their opponents in the early stages.

The pressure told when the Austrian side's experienced skipper, Ben Stanzl, bundled into the back of a Grange forward in the D. Goalkeeper Jacob Kastner guessed correctly, diving to his right, but the speed of Rowling's penalty stroke beat him.

That forced the Vienna-based combine to break out of their defensive mindset and they earned a penalty corner late on in the second quarter but Grange goalkeeper Forrester, considered by commentators to be one of the best netminders in the tournament, gloved the ball to safety and keep Grange ahead 1-0 at the half-time break.

Grange, captained by Alan Johnston (pictured – white shirt – in a recent domestic game by **Nigel Duncan**) stuck to their game plan and continued to press forward. They were rewarded with a penalty corner and Rowling took the chance to make it 2-0.

Then, minutes later, teenager Caughey drove from inside his own half to feed Scottish international Duncan Riddell inside the opposition D, but his effort was smothered by the desperate Austrian defence.

Caughey was then to make a significant mark on the history-making game as the Scots secured victory with a third, scored close in by the teenager, after the ball ran loose in the Austrian goalmouth. There was no way back for the Austrian side after that as Grange shut up shop, eating up the minutes until the final whistle.