

# **Edinburgh University men slip in title race but their women's side coasted to comfortable win**

**Andrew Lobb deflected the ball home following a defence-splitting pass from former Great Britain squad player Dan Coultas as Watsonians earned a 2-2 draw against men's Premiership title hopefuls Edinburgh University in a high tempo clash at Peffermill.**

The goal was thoroughly deserved after a hard-working Watsonians performance against a student side who have been among the front-runners in the 12-strong league so far this season.

Watsonians certainly took the game to the opposition, pinning them back in their own half in the opening stages, but it was the university side who snatched the opener against the run of play, player/coach Hamish Imrie latching onto the ball up on the left edge of the D. He picked his spot and rolled the ball into the net through traffic, giving the opposition goalkeeper no chance.

Coultas is an acknowledged danger man at set-piece situations and he levelled early in the second quarter, slotting low from

a penalty corner but Tom Cahalin claimed a controversial second for the students late in the same session, Coultas making his point to the referee, feeling that there had been an infringement earlier in the move.

Watsonians continued to drive forward in a fast-flowing game and Coultas one again popped up on the left-wing. He sent the ball into the D and Lobb was in the right place at the right time to deflect the ball home into the net from near the penalty spot. A fist pump from Coultas followed.

Watsonians skipper Tom Swarbrick said: "They (Edinburgh University) are a really good team and we set out to try and control the pace of the game as they play at such a high pace. We achieved that.

"I would agree that they scored against the run of play in the first quarter, but we had had a lot of pressure and we showed a good level of control, something we have not previously had in games against the top three.

"We were disappointed to concede the first goal, Hamish was left free on the edge of the D and you can't do that, but our reaction to that was really positive.

"There was no negativity at all and we built on our first quarter performance during the rest of the game. We were a bit leggy in the final quarter, but they play good opposition in their student league and they are really fit."

He added: "We were saying at the end of the game that this is the first time we have given ourselves an opportunity to compete in the final quarter against a team in the top four. We want to do that more often.

"We had three schoolboys in our team today and were missing four regular players so that result is really positive for us and what we need to do is to find consistency, game to game."

Alex Wilson, a member of the university side, said they were disappointed to draw and he felt the student side did not perform to their usual high level.

Edinburgh University women, however, celebrated a 5-0 victory over a doggedly-determined and hard-working Hillhead side also at Peffermill, the Glasgow combine sticking admirably to their task against one of the contenders for the title.

They kept the score to 1-0 at the break, putting up a determined barrier against the eager students who powered forward at every opportunity and whose ranks included several Scotland internationals, but Hillhead lost late goals, something to be expected.

Credit also goes to the student side coached by Sam Judge. They scored five good goals, arguably saving one of the best to late-on, former Scotland international Amy Brodie picking the ball up deep on the left, then showing some fine hands and stickwork to advance along the goal-line before sending the ball across the D. Unmarked Sophie Hinds, a recent debutant at Scotland level, did the rest.

She fired an unstoppable shot low into the net and this fine goal was followed by another scored after a flowing move, Brodie providing the finishing touch.

Louise Campbell, Katie Robertson and Georgia Jones also netted in the comfortable win but the students did survive a late scare when their goalkeeper was forced to make a vital save to preserve her clean sheet.

The Hillhead goalkeeper deserves praise for several saves to keep the scoreline down.

PICTURE: Hamish Imrie scoring the opening goal at Peffermill against Watsonians *by Nigel Duncan*