

Grange and Edinburgh win but Watsonians defeated

Men's Premiership: Grange 8, Inverleith 2; Watsonians 1, Western Wildcats 5; Edinburgh University 2, Clydedale 1.

Grange cruised to a comprehensive 8-2 win over Capital rivals Inverleith at Fettes to stay in pole position in the men's Premiership after securing a 4-0 lead after the first quarter which they totally dominated.

Inverleith, to their credit, fought their way back to 5-2 but Steve Grubb's side's speed, precision and hard-running, particularly from Scottish international players Gordon Amour and Duncan Riddell, proved decisive.

Calum Lothian missed the game with a tweaked hamstring but Aidan McQuade played his first game in three months and Martin Shepherdson, Grange's team manager, said it was a good workout ahead of back-to-back games against arch rivals, Western Wildcats.

Grange used the game to give a number of fringe players some game time as we come to the business end of the season.

Shepherdson said: "We were very good in the first quarter and moved the ball well. We were finding a lot of space then, perhaps, we relaxed a little too much, and if there is any fault from today, we did not keep the intensity high enough which is always difficult against a decent side, which they (Inverleith) are.

“The guys are disappointed that we allowed them back into the game a little bit but this was comfortable and we were the better side.”

The lesson learned, said the manager, was that Grange must keep the intensity high but he added: “This was our second game of the weekend and it is always difficult to maintain intensity with back-to-back games, but we have a good squad of 18 players.

“However, this is the business end of the season and we have two games against Western, one in the cup and the other in the league, and that could define our season. Our guys are fit but we need to be at this stage of the season.”

Joe Waterston took only three minutes to net Grange’s opener in their first real attack. The ball fizzed across from the right and Waterston made no mistake.

No 2 arrived from Albert Rowling following a short corner award and Riddell scored No 3 from open play after 12 minutes and Dylan Bean completed the scoring two minutes after that giving the goalkeeper no chance with a rasping shot from the top of the D.

The goals kept on coming and Waterston made it 5-0, firing into the roof of the net, before Inverleith replied. Goals from evergreen Derek Salmond, who celebrates his 40th birthday next January, following a slick move and up-and-coming striker Charlie Jack netted from a penalty corner, after 31 and 33 minutes, reduced the deficit.

And Inverleith had another chance soon after which they failed to convert and Grange made them pay with their sixth early in the third quarter following a darting raid when Jacob Tweedie made it 6-2 after 39 minutes.

Then, No 7 arrived seven minutes later from Bean after a driving run from impressive Riddell, who never stopped

running, and Jacob Tweedie finished the scoring in the dying seconds through traffic. Grange won 3-0 at Clydesdale on Saturday.

Edinburgh University also completed a maximum point weekend with a narrow 2-1 victory over Clydesdale at Peffermill to add to their 4-0 win over Watsonians at Peffermill on Saturday. Hamish imrie's men led 2-0 with five minutes to go but conceded late to the men from the West of Scotland.

Robbie Croll broke the deadlock with a penalty corner goal and Tom Cahalin fired home a volley, described as "amazing" by the coach, from the top of the D. Imrie said: "Good result which guarantees us third spot in the table."

Watsonians coach Dan Coultas finished the weekend frustrated after losing 5-1 to title-challenging Western Wildcats, who are second in the table, in the Capital on Sunday after their 4-0 defeat to The University of Edinburgh at Peffermill on Saturday, but he argued that the scoreline against Western was much closer than it would appear.

The former Great Britain international said that the squad were much-improved from 24-hours earlier and that inconsistency has dogged Watsonians this season.

So has the club's lack of a clinical touch in front of goal. Ben Scott netted late on, deflecting the ball home after a penalty corner, and Coultas said: "It was really disappointing not to get anything from the weekend, but I was more disappointed on Saturday than I was on Sunday when we played really well.

"On Sunday we played how we need to play to turn ourselves from a top five team into a top four or top three team. We created more chances than Western but they were clinical, particularly from corners, scoring three out of four, and we need to get like that."

PICTURE: Goal No 8 from Grange in Sunday's men's Premiership clash with Inverleith at Fettes **by Nigel Duncan** and full gallery of pictures from the game on Nigel Duncan portal on Facebook