

Grange win but rivals Western signal intentions

Grange opened the defence of the men's Scottish Hockey Premiership with a 3-1 victory over Dundee Wanderers at Fettes, but Western Wildcats signalled their intentions on the opening day of the domestic campaign.

Stevie Grubb, Grange's coach, said: "We had a slow day in front of goal. Our build-up play was, at times, very good but the combinations up-front took time to settle into the game. The second-half saw us gain control and dominate possession."

Dundee Wanderers arrived with a plan and made life difficult, said Grubb, who added: "They made a few opportunities for themselves and we have a few things to work on at training, but we definitely have strong platform to build on."

Western travelled along the M8 to The Mary Erskine School and came away with a 6-2 win against Inverleith thanks to doubles from Fraser Moran and Cammy Moran and singles from Luc Hermsen and Jack McKenzie.

Experienced goalkeeper, Gavin Sommerville, said they created a lot of chances in the first-half and added: "We were quite comfortably on top, but a combination of wasted opportunities and excellent goalkeeping kept the score to 3-0 going into the break."

“Quarter three continued in a similar vein with Western adding two more goals but both teams tired in the fourth quarter and it was a frenetic period characterised by more space to play in.

“Cammy Moran finished an excellent flowing move for Western before Inverleith scored twice in quick succession, the first an excellent strike from the top of the D by Charlie Jack.”

He added: “We are pleased to get the season off to a winning start and it is a much-changed team that starts the season compared to the one that finished the last.

“It’s been brilliant to see our young players developing and stepping up to the task and we look forward to welcoming more players back over the coming weeks to bring us to full strength.”

Uddingston, under new coach Tom Hyndman, a club stalwart, lost 1-0 at Clydesdale.

In the women’s Premiership, Lexie McMillan made a real impression on her debut for Uddingston, the teenager, who is just starting university, netting twice.

She has already made her mark at under-age international level for Scotland and her first goal here came after two minutes.

The teenager netted again later, scoring Uddingston’s third, and her double goals helped the Lanarkshire side to an encouraging 5-3 win at Gordonians.

There were some anxious moments for new head coach Gareth Ikin (pictured right with other Uddingston coaches, Anna McWilliams, Tom Hyndman and Simone Upman) as the Aberdeen team, 4-1 down at one stage, battled back to 4-3 with just over seven minutes remaining.

Elsewhere, The University v Glasgow University and the University of St Andrews v Hillhead fixtures were both

postponed and Grange thrashed Inverleith 6-0 and Western Wildcats beat Glasgow rivals GHK 2-0.

Under-strength Watsonians edged rivals Clydesdale Western 2-1 with goals from Scottish international Sarah Jamieson in the first quarter and Ailsa Small at the end of quarter three.

Anna Hoolaghan pulled one back for the home side with a corner deflection in the last few minutes and Keith Smith, Watsonians coach, admitted his side were "a bit nervy".

It was, he added, a scrappy first half but the Edinburgh side were more composed in the second and he said: "The game should probably have been out of sight by the time they scored as we had three or four big chances that we couldn't convert.

"I'm happy with the points especially as we were missing eight of the squad through injury and unavailability."