

Razor-sharp Miller denies eager students

The University of Edinburgh powered to a 6-0 victory over Erskine Stewart's Melville (ESM) at Peffermill, but the scoreline does not do opposition goalkeeper Callum Miller justice as he pulled off a series of stops to deny the quicksilver students who were unrelenting.

Hamish Imrie's men dominated possession, territory and penalty corners, and, overall, Alex Wilson claimed a double with Sam Hunt, Keir Robb, Tom Cowan and player/coach Imrie adding to the total.

ESM are, however, in development stage and fielded two debutants, both 15-years-of-age, in Greig Laidlaw and Will Kelly, both pupils at the school, and joint coach Steve McCurry, argued that the squad has improved from last season when they achieved their target of retaining their status in the Scottish Premiership.

The progressive club are committed to bleeding raw, fresh talent from a pool of young players and McCurry confirmed that a few of his regular players unfortunately had to miss Saturday's game for various reasons.

The absentees included new Aussie forward Dan Moulins who

picked up an injury in Thursday's training session and is now in crutches. Moulins arrived recently and has played only three games and the ambitious club but he is now in crutches and ESM bosses hope that it is not an anterior cruciate ligament tear which would be a massive blow.

ESM are desperately anxious to consolidate their position in the highest echelon of club play north of the Border and to move up the table.

McCurry, who is in joint charge with former Grange player, Andrew Brogdon, conceded that his men have played better this season than they did on Saturday, but the hard-running students are proving a match for most in the Scottish Premiership.

Imrie's men play in green shirts and they like locusts, never allowing the opposition any breathing space, crowding the player with the ball and always looking to move the ball forward at real pace.

Some of their passing, particularly from Scottish international Imrie, now sporting a distinctive white headband, was a joy to watch, splitting open the opposition in a nano second.

Edinburgh opened the scoring from their first penalty corner early in the game and a quick break down the left wing soon after produced No 2 with goalkeeper Andrew Taylor a spectator with much of the play in the opposition end.

The students' fifth penalty corner early in the second quarter was rewarded with a third but ESM dug in and solid defending saw them keep the eager students at bay until the early part of the third quarter when they netted again.

With 47 seconds left in the session they added to the total, again quick ball opening up the ESM rearguard as their dominance continued and Imrie felt so secure that Taylor was

removed and the back-up installed in the final session giving him valuable competitive pitch time.

ESM forced their solitary penalty corner opportunity mid-way through quarter four but the green tied was relentless, they kept on coming and another lightning break from inside their own half ended with goal No 6, finished off after a dart down the right and a cross ball to an unmarked defender on the far post. Miller had no chance.

Robb, Edinburgh's skipper, said this result was an ideal tonic after their midweek defeat by Nottingham in the British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) league at Peffermill, a major disappointment.

He acknowledged that their game plan was to start well – they did – and attack at speed and also to bear down on the opposition in all areas of the pitch, basically squeezing the life out of their rivals. They also wanted to play their own game and they certainly did due to their work-rate and commitment.

Elsewhere, champions Grange won 3-1 at Grove Menzieshill and Inverleith drew 4-4 at home to Clydesdale while Western Wildcats beat Dundee Wanderers 5-1 and Watsonians came from 1-0 down to edge Uddingston 3-2.



Keir Robb on the attack v ESM at Peffermill. Picture by ***Nigel Duncan***



Another attack thwarted by ESM. Picture by ***Nigel Duncan***



