

Comfortable win for injury-hit Grange

Under-strength Grange wrapped up three points to open their defence of the men's hockey Premiership with a comfortable 3-0 home victory over newly-promoted Dunfermline Carnegie, but the Fife side grew into the game after going behind early.

Dylan Bean sent the Edinburgh side on their way with a goal from a penalty corner in the opening minutes and newly-recruited Aussie, Ola Marshall, added a second after 26 minutes from close in despite the attention of Carnegie goalkeeper Lewis McGuinness, who was all over the Grange player like a rash.

Captain Alan Johnston then added a third following a break down the left and from an acute angle just after half-time to underline the home side's superiority with particularly David Nairn and also Gordon Amore prominent in midfield for the home side.

Admittedly, Carnegie were dominated for large spells of the game at Fettes College, but the men in red stuck to their task and Michael Ross worked tirelessly in the engine room, endeavouring to push the visitors forward.

And, when Grange broke through, the excellent McGuinness, who

has already been noted by Scotland selectors at under-age level, stood up well, producing several telling saves during the game.

It was one-way traffic early on as Carnegie adapted to life at the top of Scottish domestic hockey, but they worked hard against a Grange side featuring five players making their debut and with eight players unavailable for various reasons including family, work and injury.

Martin Shepherdson, Grange's team manager, said that they knew their play would not be as fluid as normal due to the absentees, but he added: "The players dominated the match, hardly allowing Dunfermline a chance.

"The domination did not lead to enough goals, but we were happy that the team will continue to develop over the next few weeks and improve as we get more practice together."

Grange's injury list remains "severe" with at least two players out until Christmas, but Shepherdson added: "We have good depth and I am looking forward to seeing our new players fully bed in. I know we will get better."

Grange are third after the opening skirmishes and, elsewhere, Uddingston beat Inverleith 7-1 to be second and Watsonians move to the top of the table when they also scored seven without any reply at home to Dundee Wanderers while Western Wildcats beat Grove Menzieshill 2-0 in Glasgow. Wildcats are fourth.

Rob Harwood, Wildcats captain, said they produced a dominant display but they failed to convert any of their 12-plus corners and Grove's goalkeeper, had a "brilliant game".

He added: "Lots of debutants today and with so much quality in the squad the results will come."

Hillhead drew 5-5 with Clydesdale and the University of

Edinburgh edged Capital rivals, Erskine Stewart's Melville,
3-2