

Edinburgh keep themselves in the 'race for eight'

Edinburgh 31 Connacht 21

Edinburgh have defeated Connacht at the Dexcom Stadium in Galway to keep their playoff chances alive.

They still face a tough challenge back at the Hive against Ulster next week, who are also fighting for a playoff spot. They will have to bring everything they've got next week for one final push of the regular season.

A troublesome start by Connacht during lineouts gave Edinburgh repeated chances from the corner. After a fearfully passive lineout defence from Connacht and strong carries. Price fizzed the ball across to newly named British and Irish lion, Pierre Schoemann, who crashed in from two metres out.

In a rare occurrence Ali Price was penalised for taking too long when trying to box kick. Edinburgh managed to escape by the skin of their teeth, however, after Connacht were denied a try due to obstruction by Sean Jansen.

Less than five minutes later Edinburgh spotted some space on the blindside. This was followed by a perfectly delayed pass from the increasingly impressive youngster, Jack Brown, to Hamish Watson. The experienced back row strode his way down the pitch giving fullback Cordero the slip to finish in the corner for a second score after only twenty-five minutes.

Edinburgh really found their feet in the closing twenty minutes of the first half. With multiple breaks coming from

returning key man Goosen and Darcy Graham who had something to prove after missing out on lions selection this week.

It was a strong finish to the first half for Edinburgh as they showed their ability in defence. This combined with many unforced errors by Connacht allowed Edinburgh to stay in control.

HT: CONNACHT 0 – 14 EDINBURGH

Connacht appeared to be reignited after the break as they made their way up to halfway with ferocity. Shayne Bolton stepped in at scrum half making a terrific break which found him chopped down deep in the Edinburgh twenty-two. Two phases and some quick hands got the ball to winger Treacy who had an easy run in, bringing Connacht back in to the game.

It was game on as Connacht pulled off an accurate set piece following a lineout. Two phases and Ben Murphy fixed Javan Sebastian to pop it to Treacy who was free and clear to score his second try.

Mosese Tuipulotu, brother of another lions debutant Sione, one of Edinburgh's big ball carriers was driven off on a stretcher with what appeared to be a serious knee injury.

Edinburgh's confidence was not dented though as a powerful driving maul took them to just a few metres away. Ashman then peeled off but was stopped just short, Muncaster then smashed over on the following phase.

The Referee penalised Edinburgh for their spacing at the lineout and Connacht didn't wait around taking the quick tap. Working their way left they eventually came back looping the ball over Jack brown to Bolton who went over in the corner – it was all level once more with the momentum unsettled.

For a moment Edinburgh seemed to be in a bit of heat again as Connacht came knocking multiple times. Some excellent

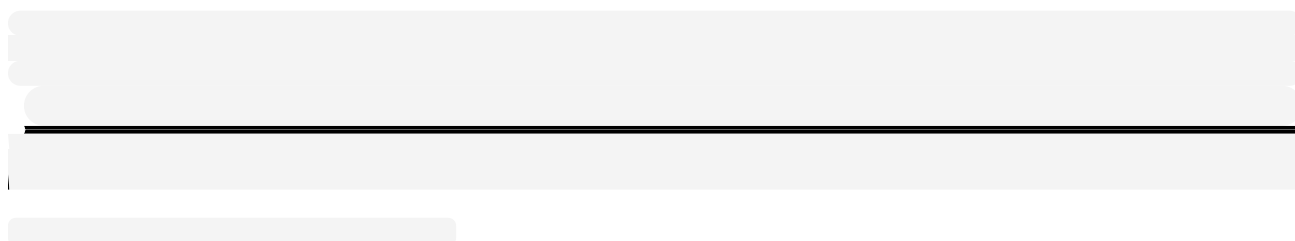
defending from Venter and a subsequent penalty for Edinburgh shut down the home sides hopes.

Shortly after out of nowhere replacement scrum half Charlie Shiel shocked Dexcom stadium. He spotted a gap and ran 70m, beating two defenders and regaining the lead.

The final points of the game and the cherry on top was added by Ben Healy as he kicked a penalty for a further three points.



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FT: CONNACHT 21 – 31 EDINBURGH

Yellow cards:

Edinburgh –

Connacht –

Scoring sequence (Edinburgh first): 7-0, 14-0, HT, 14-7, 14-14, 21-14, 21-21, 28-21, 31-21, FT

MOTM: Ross Thompson

Teams:

Edinburgh – P.Schoemann, E.Ashman(P.Harrison 66"), D.Rae(J.Sebastian 49"), M.Sykes(G.Young 71"), S.Skinner, B.Muncaster(L.Mcconnell 73"), H.Watson, M.Bradbury, A.Price(C.Shiel 67"), R.Thompson(B.Healy 71"), J.Brown, M.Tuipulotu(F.Thomson), M.Currie, D.Graham, W.Goosen

Connacht – D.Buckley(P.Doooley 62"), D.Heffernan(D.Tiernay-Martin 62"), F.Bealham(J.Aungier 63"), J.Murphy(, D.Murray(O.Dowling 53") C.Prendergast, C.Oliver, S.Jansen(P.Boyle 53"), B.Murphy(C.Blade 66"), J.Hanrahan, F.Treacy, B.Aki, H.Gavin(D.Hawkshaw 40"), S.Bolton, S.Cordero