

EDINBURGH

VS BENETTON TREVISO

SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER, 5.15PM

BKT UNITED RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP



150 



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DOUGLAS STRUTH WELCOME

Good evening, and welcome back to DAM Health Stadium for tonight's clash against Benetton Treviso.

Every game in the BKT United Rugby Championship is important, however tonight's fixture has the added incentive of being the first against our rivals in the Scottish x Italian Shield.

We managed to claim the inaugural shield last season, however I'm sure our opponents from Treviso will be desperate to wrestle the silverware from us this year. The Lions also arrive in impressive fettle, having won three of their opening four matches, featuring big home wins against Glasgow and Scarlets.

The visitors will be in town with a couple of familiar faces, with club centurion Sam Hidalgo-Clyde and recent defence coach Calum MacRae both now based with the Italian side. Welcome back gents!

Last week's loss against the Emirates Lions was a tough one to take, however we go again for the next challenge tonight. While the result was difficult, I was in awe of the support for the team coming from the terraces. The noise at DAM Health Stadium seems to have kicked up another gear somehow, and I know the boys will thrive off that same atmosphere again tonight.



The big talking point around the team this week has been Duhan van der Merwe's return to the capital. I'd first like to send my thoughts to all those impacted at Worcester and to all players, staff and supporters affected by today's sad news.

Duhan is a phenomenal athlete, and will add an extra layer of competition and international quality to our back line. He's an exciting addition to the side, and I'm sure he'll relish the fast track at the DAM, with the brand of rugby appealing to all of his strengths.

It's been great to see the energy around the club and fan base after his arrival - it's wonderful to have him home. I think the only person who won't be happy that he's back is Tim Visser... that try record might be under threat now!

The focus really has been on our wingmen this week, with Darcy Graham taking headlines as our first Scottish Building Society Player of the Month. The Hawick flyer has been in scintillating form, scoring six tries in the opening four rounds of the competition. The stats he is racking up are startling at times, but it's his attitude that always impresses - no matter the size of the gap, he's going to try and get through.

The prospect of seeing Darcy, Duhan and Boffelli line up in the back three is mouth watering; I can't wait to see how the three work together tonight!

Let's make this game one to remember, I can't wait to hear you all at the top of your voices again tonight!

Douglas Struth
Edinburgh Rugby Managing Director
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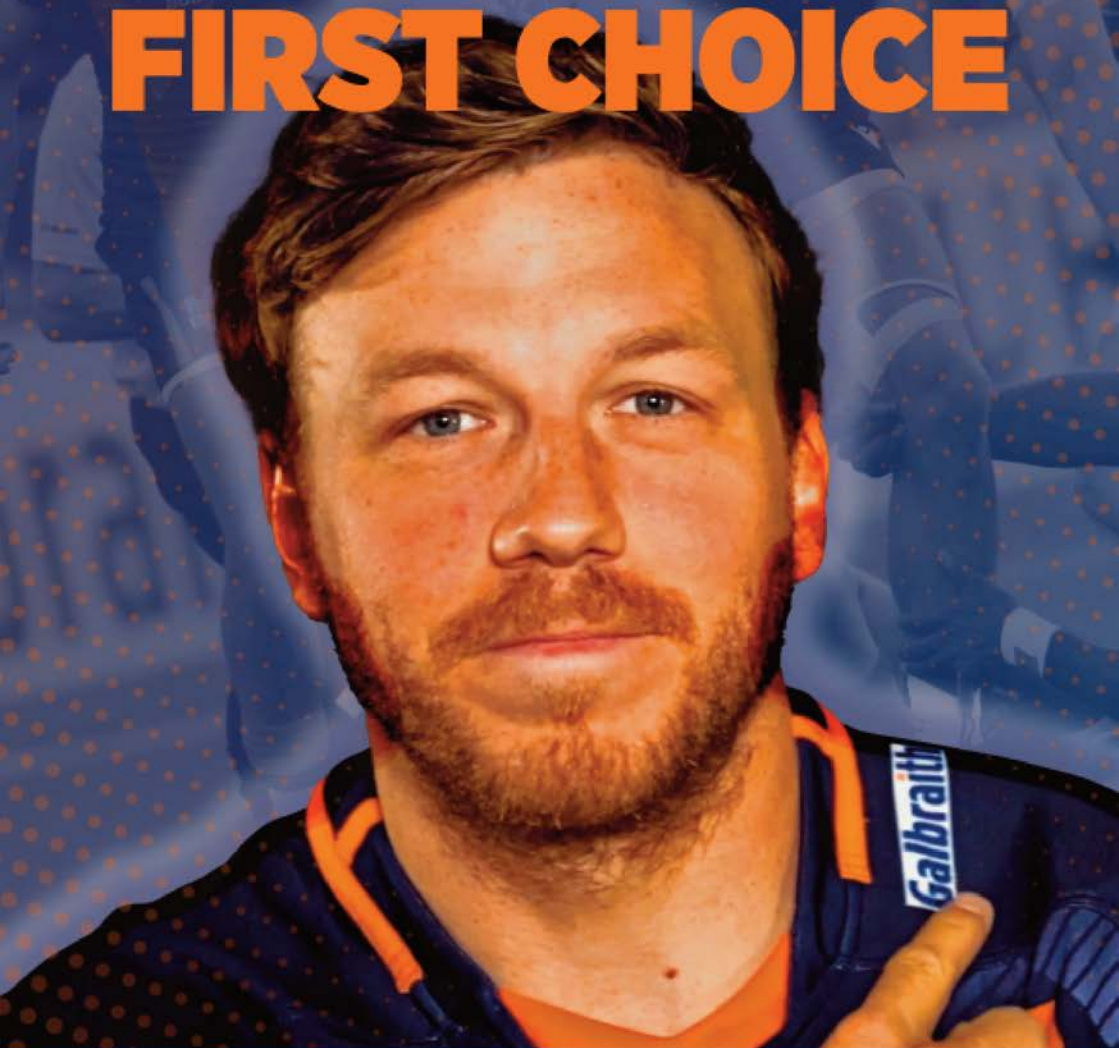


Professor Frank Joseph
Director of Medicine, DAM Health

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15

EDOARDO PADOVANI

DARCY GRAHAM

14

MATTIA BELLINI

MARK BENNETT

13

TOMAS MENONCELLO

JAMES LANG

12

MARCO ZANON

DUHAN VAN DER MERWE

11

RATUVA TAVUYARA

BLAIR KINGHORN

10

TOMAS ALBORNOZ

HENRY PYRGOS

9

SAM HIDALGO-CLYNE

PIERRE SCHOEMAN

1

THOMAS GALLO

DAVE CHERRY

2

GIANMARCO LUCCHESI

WP NEL

3

NAHUEL TETAZ CHAPARRO

SAM SKINNER

4

MARCO LAZZARONI (C)

GRANT GILCHRIST (C)

5

CARL WEGNER

NICK HAINING

6

BRAAM STEYN

LUKE CROSBIE

7

TOA HALAFIHI

VILIAME MATA

8

HENRY TIME-STOWERS

16. ADAM MCBURNEY 17. BOAN VENTER

18. LUAN DE BRUIN 19. JAMIE HODGSON

20. BEN MUNCASTER 21. CHARLIE SHIEL

22. CHARLIE SAVALA 23. CHRIS DEAN

16. MANUEL ARROYO 17. FEDERICO ZANI

18. TIZIANO PASQUALI 19. NICOLA PIANTELLA

20. ALLESANDRO IZEKOR 21. MANFREDI ALBANESE

22. FILIPPO DRAGO 23. DEWI PASSARELLA



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Edinburgh Rugby
Player of the Month
September 2022

Galbraith

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GRAHAM: I'M REALLY ENJOYING MY RUGBY

Winger Darcy Graham may be top try-scorer in the BKT URC with six on the season far, but the Hawick speedster is keeping his feet firmly on the ground as Edinburgh Rugby prepare to host Benetton at DAM Health Stadium

Graham was this week voted Scottish Building Society Player of the Month and will be looking to score in his third straight home fixture as Italian side Benetton visit the Scottish capital in a crucial Scottish x Italian Shield match-up.

“Yeah, it’s not been too bad a start,” said Graham. “I’m enjoying playing, getting my hands on the ball nice and early at the start of the season and building that confidence.

“I think since the start of the season a lot has come my way – I’ve got a lot of easy tries and I’ve been a bit lucky. It’s just the way it goes sometimes and I’m on a good run just now.

“I just do my own thing. I never think too much – I just get the ball and run. I think rugby for me is such a simple game. I don’t try and overcomplicate it: just get the ball and run.



“I just get the ball and use my feet, beat the bigger defenders. That’s the players I’m going out to look for – the bigger boys!”

With Graham in such a rich vein of form, the winger can now expect extra attention from opposition defences as they try to keep him at bay.

But Graham now has additional back-three support in the form of new recruit Duhan van der Merwe, who joins a unit that already features the likes of Emiliano Boffelli, Henry Immelman, Wes Goosen and Damien Hoyland.

“It’s crazy. Our back three is absolutely ridiculous right now,” continued Graham. “I’ve got my big brother back now! It’s nice to have Duhi back, he’s a quality operator. He’s here for a few more years now so it’s nice to have him back in the squad.

“We’ve not seen Wes yet – he’s had a tough start to the season picking up a couple of niggles which have kept him out longer than we thought. But he’s a quality operator as well.

“He’s fit and he’s back training with us now. Mike’s going to have a tough job picking the team – it’s going to be very hard, so I’ll leave that to him.”



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MOVE BACK HOME A NO-BRAINER

British and Irish Lions star Duhan van der Merwe has described his move back to the Scottish capital as a ‘no-brainer’ as the winger this week linked up with the squad after putting pen to paper on a new multi-year deal with the club.

Van der Merwe – who scored 32 tries in 67 appearances for Edinburgh after joining from Montpellier in 2017 before moving to Worcester in 2021 – has returned to familiar surroundings and now gears up to win his place back on the capital wing ahead of Saturday’s crucial BKT URC match-up with Benetton at DAM Health Stadium.

“I really enjoyed my time at Worcester but when the opportunity came up to Edinburgh it was a no-brainer,” said Van der Merwe.

“There was no guarantee I would be able to come back to Edinburgh but with Mike [Blair] being interested it was a no-brainer.

“I didn’t even want to look elsewhere. When I knew Edinburgh were interested, I said to my agent that is where I want to go. Mike has brought me in, and I am very grateful for that.”



A devastating strike runner and lethal finisher, Van der Merwe's returns brings an added spark to a back-three unit who've already found success this season.

Fellow winger Darcy Graham has tallied an impressive six tries in four appearances, while Emiliano Boffelli returned from international duty and looked every bit the Los Pumas star when he pulled on the Edinburgh jersey against Emirates Lions on Friday night.

"The depth in our back three is frightening," continued Van der Merwe. "The depth we have is a joke. The competition is just going to make me a better player."

"If you start on a Saturday and have a seven out of ten game, you will be on the bench next weekend. That is what I love about the competition we have going on in the squad. It is exciting times."

"Boffelli is really good and everybody else has their difference skills set. We saw how good Boffelli was in the summer and how good he is under the high ball."

"Darcy has brilliant feet, and he is playing the best I have ever seen him play. My mate Henry Immelman; I played with him at Montpellier and he is a bit of a freak. He loves running over people, I could speak about Damo too, so many other guys – it is good to have that competition in the squad."

Alongside a plethora of attacking threats in the back-three, Van der Merwe joins a team with a different playing style and philosophy than he was perhaps used to under the previous coaching team.

The 6ft 4in, 105kg runner will be expected to hunt for the ball and move from his wing when the capital side are in possession, and it's a style of attack that excites the Scotland cap.

"I have been watching Edinburgh for a long time now and playing under Mike Blair is really exciting," added Van der Merwe.

"As a winger, I am potentially looking to get more ball and that really excites me as I love attacking.

The way they have been playing is just great, and great for me, which is why I can't wait to be back out here at DAM Health Stadium."

With 32 tries, Van der Merwe is already up there with Edinburgh try-scoring scoring greats like Simon Webster and more recently, Blair Kinghorn [33] – however, there is now one man in his sights as he resumes his career in the Scottish capital.

"I like to think I am the same player. I wanted to test myself going to a new club like Worcester, but I am buzzing to be back and hopefully I can score a couple of tries and give Tim Visser a go for his record."

With 69 tries in Edinburgh colours, Visser's record is still a long way off, but with a strike rate as impressive as Van der Merwe's, not many would bet against 'Van the Man.'





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PLAYER TRY TRACKS

Lee-Roy Atalifo	Four String Love	Rosie Sagaitu
Nick Auterac	Surfing Bird	The Trashmen
Mark Bennett	You're Welcome	Dwayne Johnson
Jack Blain	Saturday Night (radio mix)	Whigfield
Emiliano Boffelli	Quevedo (Tries)	Bizarrap
	Pepas (Kicks)	Farruko
Connor Boyle	Batman Theme Song	Neil Hefti & his Orchestra and Chorus
Dave Cherry	Boys are back in town	Thin Lizzy
Harrison Courtney	Bohemian Rhapsody	Queen
Luke Crosbie	B.O.T.A (Baddest of them all)	Eliza Ross, Interplanetary Criminal
Matt Currie	Samba de Janeiro	Bellini
Luan De Bruin	Paradise City	Guns N Roses
Chris Dean	Born to be Wild	Bruce Springsteen
Grant Gilchrist	Rocking all over the World	Status Quo
Wes Goosen	The Greatest	SIX60
Darcy Graham	Yabba Dabba Doo / CanCan	[Custom]
Nick Haining	Live it Up	Mental as Anything
Jamie Hodgson	Underdog	Kasabian
Bruce Houston	Right Here, Right Now	Fatboy Slim
Damien Hoyland	Walking on the Waves	Skippinish
Cammy Hutchison	Toxic	Britney Spears
Henry Immelman	WWE: Stone Cold Steve Austin	Jim Johnston
Jamie Jack	Can't Stop	Red Hot Chilli Peppers
Blair Kinghorn	Teach me how to Dougie	Cali Swag District
James Lang	Edamame	bbno\$
Bill Mata	Ukulele	Blad P2a ft. Khazin
Adam McBurney	Tell Me Ma	Sham Rock
Stuart McNally	Don't Stop me Now	Queen
Ben Muncaster	Crazy Frog	Axel F
WP Nel	Umfaan	Far East movement
Pierce Phillips	Man I feel like a woman	Shania Twain
Henry Pyrgos	Light it Up	Major Lazer
Jamie Ritchie	Edge of Seventeen	Stevie Nicks
Charlie Savala	Down Under	Men at Work
Pierre Schoeman	The Greatest Show	The Greatest Showman Ensemble
Charlie Shiel	Yes Sir I Can Boogie	Baccara
Sam Skinner	California Dreamin'	The Mamas & the Papas
Marshall Sykes	Candy Shop	50 Cent
Duhan van der Merwe	TBC	
Jaco van der Walt	Seven Nation Army	White Stripes
Ben Vellacott	Can't be Touched	Roy Jones
Boan Venter	WWE: The Game (Triple H)	Jim Johnston
Hamish Watson	This is the One	Stone Roses
Angus Williams	Back in Black	ACDC
Glen Young	We like to Party	Vengaboys



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PRESS PASS

WITH
SAM SKINNER



ON PREPPING FOR BENETTON, AND STRENGTH OF THE LEAGUE

"The coaches have been good this week, They have shown their frustrations with where we went wrong, but they have also shown what we can do when we get it right. We have played really well in flashes – there have been some great moments against the Bulls and the Stormers.

"It's about doing that consistently. Easier said than done obviously, but they have said 'These are our strengths so let's play to them'. That will be the goal this weekend, for sure.

"The Italian teams are really strong, We go away against Zebre after this and that will also be a tough fixture. Away at Cardiff is also a tough fixture.

"Being honest, there used to be a perception of this league that you would have the odd game where you could pick up five points at home, rotate your squad. That's just not the case any more, which is brilliant.

"The league is extremely strong and the South African teams have added that level of punch to it as well. And it makes it a really brutal, ruthless league, which is great - it's what you want to be part of, what you want to play in.

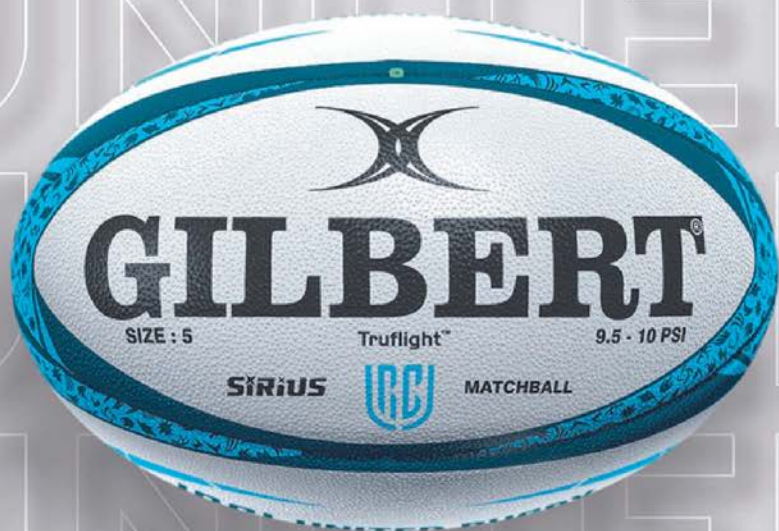
"But it means that we aren't just going to rock up and take a five-point bonus win at home necessarily. Hopefully we will get that, but we have to make sure we turn up emotionally."



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COMMUNITY FOCUS

LASSWADE RFC



Last week our fab p5-7 squad came to the Lions game, a great bunch of boys & girls who love rugby, turn up every week no matter what they weather. We are all extremely proud of them.

Lasswade RFC are based at Hawthornden just outside Bonnyrigg and have players from all over the Midlothian area. It is a very family orientated club with strong roots in the local communities and most of the coaches you see tonight have sons and daughters playing at their representative level for the club.

P5 team has grown in the last year since the return to rugby after COVID into a formidable unit with a great desire to play rugby. Like so many of their age group they have had a long break to their start to playing the game but they have come back to it super enthusiastic and enjoy everything about playing and taking part.....

They especially enjoy tackling so will be looking out for Jamie Ritchie, Hamish Watson and Pierre Schoeman although there are a couple of nippy backs who will be looking to Darcy, Charlie Shiel and Mark Bennett for their inspiration.

As there is no strong single school base for the boys they have developed a team spirit and camaraderie based on playing for Lasswade Rugby Club which is bound up with their own unique pre-match team building rituals which include rolling down grass banks and having multiple player pile ons rather than passing drills or warm ups as such.....much to their coach Richard's bemusement at times!!

Their goal for this season is to keep developing their game and most of all having fun while doing it

The Lasswade P6 team is made up of 10 boys from various towns across Midlothian - Bonnyrigg, Gorebridge, Newtongrange and Roslin.

Despite being small in number and in stature, the team love tackling and they're now also starting to understand the benefits of making passes rather than going themselves all the time.

Lasswade P7's are an exciting and dynamic team that work really well together in both attack and defence. In attack they love strong carrying and fast rucks to compress the defence and get that ball passed out wide into the space they have created to score tries that would leave the national team in shock.

In defence they love to burst out of the line, make dominant tackles and force the opposing team into mistakes that they can score from. They are a force to be reckoned with! Everyone single one of them want to pull on the Lasswade jersey and will represent Edinburgh & Scotland in the future, keep your eyes peeled!

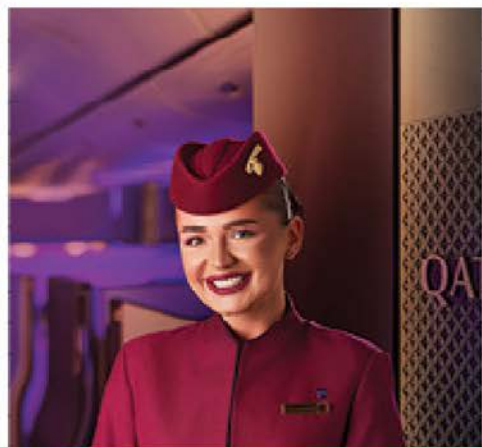


Rugby has been a great way to bring the local community together after Covid-19, getting the family's involved & the kids out training has been amazing to watch. Having something for the kids to call their own, to help promote fitness, family & a sense of belonging.

We have a lot of fantastic games planned for the kids & some great tournaments to attend, we are working towards our own tournament in May where we will say goodbye to our cracking p7s.



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