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TAYLOR'S VERSION

Edinburgh vs Emirates Lions
Saturday 28 October, 5pm
Hive Stadium



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GOING PLACES TOGETHER

— *Welcome*

Douglas Struth

Good evening, and welcome
to HIVE Stadium for
tonight's BKT URC clash
against the Emirates Lions.



It feels like it has been a very long time since we've been at home for a match night, so i'm delighted to be able to welcome you all here tonight!

It has also been great to welcome Senior Coach Sean Everitt to the club, who joined in the summer.

After what feels like the longest pre-season ever, it was brilliant to return to competitive action with a win against the Dragons at Rodney Parade.

It was by no means a perfect performance, however winning on the road is a great start to Sean's tenure as Senior Coach.

The team have spoken about showing physicality, hard work and resilience in their performances, which they showed on Saturday - and will need to show it again tonight as they face the stern challenge of the Emirates Lions.

The club from Johannesburg boast a number of exciting young players, and will look to build on a promising performance against the Stormers last week.

Rodney Parade was a first chance to see some of our new signings in action, with Ben Healy getting player of the match for a stellar outing, with Javan Sebastian and Tom Dodd making significant contributions in the pack.



Tonight we will potentially see Ewan Ashman have his first taste of action for the capital from the bench.

Ewan is one of a number of players who represented us on the world stage, playing for Scotland, Argentina, and Fiji. While Scotland didn't progress through the group stages, we are still immensely proud of the performances of our players.

It's always brilliant to see our players represent their countries, and the last couple of months was no different.

Across the other groups, it was amazing to see Bill Mata playing a key role in some historic wins for Fiji, with the island nation making the quarter-final stage for the first time.

Emiliano Boffelli has also been excelling, soaring through the French sky and knocking over penalties from 50 metres, in a way we have become accustomed to, as Argentina made it to the semi-finals.

While we've been watching our stars on the biggest stage, we've also been spending time visiting our community clubs and young stars of the future.



Our players visited 15 clubs as part of the OurBurgh Summer Sessions initiative, while we also hosted two open training sessions held in St Andrews and Galashiels.

It has been fantastic to connect more with our grassroots clubs - they're the lifeblood of what makes rugby tick, and the work of our community team continues to play an important role in what we're about as a club.

Back to tonight, I hope you enjoy the match, and another great atmosphere at Hive Stadium!

Douglas Struth, Managing Director



76 TEAMS 5 NATIONS 1 CHAMPION





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TEAM LINEUPS

EDINBURGH

100 Blair Kinghorn 15

Ross McCann 14

Mark Bennett 13

Matt Currie 12

Wes Goosen 11

Ben Healy 10

Ben Vellacott (C) 9

Boan Venter 1

Dave Cherry 2

Javan Sebastian 3

Glen Young 4

100 Grant Gilchrist 5

Luke Crosbie 6

100 Hamish Watson 7

100 Viliame Mata 8

EMIRATES LIONS

Quan Horn

Richard Kriel

Henco van Wyk

Marius Louw (C)

Edwill van der Merwe

Jordan Hendrikse

Sanele Nohamba

Corne Fourie

Pf Botha

Ruan Dreyer

Ruben Schoeman

Darrien-Lane Landsberg

Emmanuel Tshituka

Ruan Venter

Francke Horn

16. Ewan Ashman 17. Robin Hislop

18. WP Nel 100 19. Marshall Sykes

20. Connor Boyle 21. Charlie Shiel

22. Cammy Scott 23. Chris Dean 100

16. Jaco Visagie 17. Morgan Naude

18. Asenathi Ntlabakanye

19. Willem Alberts 20. Hanru Sirgel

21. Morne van der Berg

22. Rynhardt Jonke 23. Andries Coetzee



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BEN HEALY

NO.10



BEN HEALY

STARTER FOR 10

17 points on debut, and a player of the match medal, and a tough win on the road. Debuts don't get much better than last week for new fly-half Ben Healy.

Having arrived in the capital last Monday, it was a quick turnaround to start on Saturday, but that wasn't an issue for the Scotland international 10, although there is work to be done.

"It will probably take a little bit of time", said Healy, "We're not there yet, I wouldn't say, but we're getting there. It's been quick in terms of how I've settled in - the lads have made it very easy.



"In terms of game plan, at the weekend it was quite straightforward what we wanted to do, and same again going forward on this weekend.

"So there hasn't been too much for me to do, but I wouldn't say I'll fully fit in for a number of weeks, to be honest, in terms of being exactly crystal clear on what we need to do.

"But then again we don't want to peak at this time of year either, do we? It's looking good at the moment."



“Names took a little while to tick off, yeah. I suppose towards the end of the week I started to get everyone. But that’s part of the job of being a 10, being assertive.

“The biggest thing is that the guys around you have confidence in what you’re doing - so you can’t really give off any shades of doubt or any shades that you might be one or two steps behind in terms of what the club or the team is trying to do.

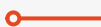
“So [it’s about] trying to paint the picture that I know what’s going on and I have a clear understanding of how we want to play and what I want the men around me to do. So that’s what I was trying to do.”

Edinburgh managed a gritty comeback win against the Dragons, and while it wasn’t pretty, it was an important win to start the season.

“Yeah, it’s important to get those wins when things aren’t necessarily going your way or you’re making a few mistakes here and there. I think it’s a really good sign in the team to come away from there with a win. I lost the last time I played there, so I was really happy to come away with the win.

“There’s nothing like a game to get you settled in. Everyone wants game time and it’s a critical part to progress individually and as a team as well, to get game time under your belt.”

Pulling the strings from stand-off can take time, adapting to a new team and players. An added challenge being learning new names of teammates.



“I’ve spoken to all the coaches, mainly probably Sean and Bob [Chrystie]: Sean more with our overall game plan and Bob on our attack in terms of what exactly we want going forward. I’ve chatted to Sean about the adjustments he wants to make based on where Edinburgh has been over the past number of years.

“If I can add to that, brilliant. But I think it’s probably more of a holistic approach. We want to have a complete game. The way the URC and Europe have gone, with the teams that are there, you have to have a complete game. You can’t really have an Achilles’ heel.

“I wouldn’t say it’s been one thing that he’s focused on, it’s more us trying to be as complete as possible. But like I said, it won’t come straight away. You want to be peaking towards the end of the year. We’re building those steps at the moment.”

With 17 points and a 100% record from the tee, Healy’s kicking prowess has come under praise. For Healy, all credit goes to his coaches.

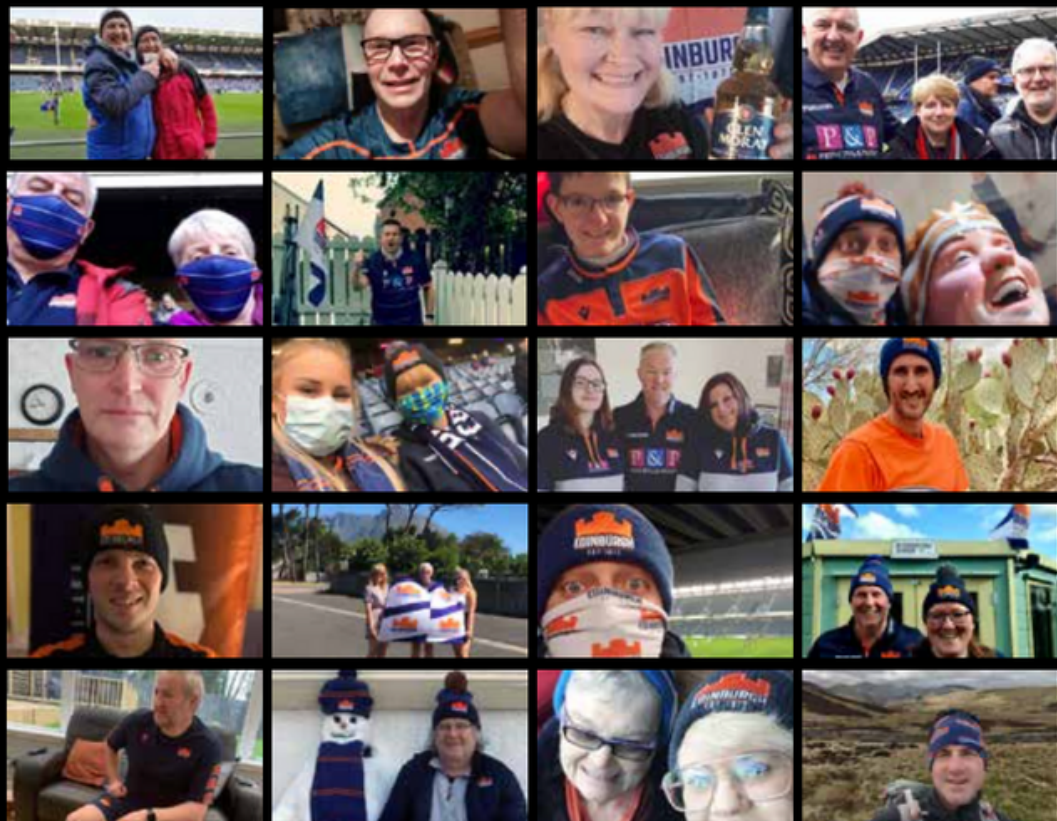
“I’d credit a lot of the coaches I’ve had. I came from a club where I had a really good skills coach, Pat Whelan. He’s worked with a number of good kickers - I had him for about ten years, to be honest. So I credit him - he taught me the basics really young and taught me the value of ‘the more time you put in, the more you get out’. I would probably have to give credit to him and a few more coaches along the way.”



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Opposition Preview

Emirates Lions

The Emirates Lions, originally the Golden Lions, are a club steeped in history and tradition, with more than a smattering of success since their formation in 1889.

Playing their home fixtures at the iconic Emirates Airlink Park (Ellis Park), the Lions have gone on to claim 11 Currie Cup titles, reached a Super Rugby title,

whilst also producing a long list of Springbok legends including Jaque Fourie and Bryan Habana.

The Lions' iconic colours of red, white, black and gold have a strong Scottish connection, with the union adopting the famous Kilmarnock Rugby strip of white top with red hoop as a Kilmarnock member, Alex Frew, captained them when they beat The British Isles touring team in 1903.



Last Time Out

The Joburg side has a 100% record against Edinburgh in the BKT URC, claiming two tight wins since 2021/22. Last time out the Lions toppled the capital men with a gut-wrenching last-minute penalty from Gianni Lombard claiming the win for the visitors.

A topsy-turvy affair, it looked throughout like Edinburgh would pull away to win, however scores from Bill Mata, Darcy Graham and Ben Muncaster were all cancelled out with the Lions showing a never-say-die attitude to stay in the tie.

Key Players

The Lions boast several exciting future stars and will arrive in the capital with a young squad full of potential.

Henco van Wyk is one such player, with the young centre already familiar to the capital faithful having scored in last season's fixture. A balanced and hard runner, the Junior Springbok Player of the Year in 2021 has been gathering attention for standout performances in the BKT URC.

There is further stardust in the backs; winger Edwill van der Merwe has gas to spare, while scrum-half Sanele Nohamba isn't lacking in creativity and dogged resolve. As well as pace, the Lions can call on the grunt of Marius Louw – the experienced campaigner equally adept in the centres and back row.

Up front, the visitors have hard hitters aplenty, in particular with upcoming back rowers Emmanuel Tshituka and Ruan Venter; the latter gaining notoriety for his abrasive battle against Hamish Watson last time out.

“

There's never a good time to get the Lions. They're a bunch of youngsters who are really keen to impress.

Sean Everitt



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Umair Mohammed

EDINBURGH RUGBY

FIRST TEAM SQUAD



Ewan Ashman



Mark Bennett



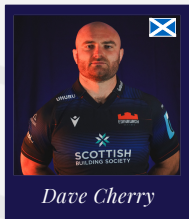
Emiliano Boffelli



Connor Boyle



Jamie Campbell



Dave Cherry



Luke Crosbie



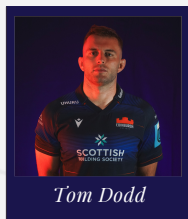
Matt Currie



Chris Dean



Luan de Bruin



Tom Dodd



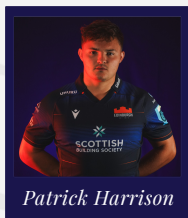
Grant Gilchrist



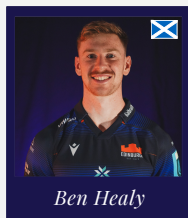
Wes Goosen



Darcy Graham



Patrick Harrison



Ben Healy



Jake Henry



Robin Hislop



Jamie Hodgson



Mikey Jones



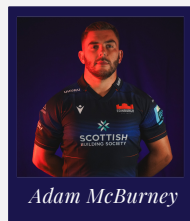
Blair Kinghorn



James Lang



Viliame Mata



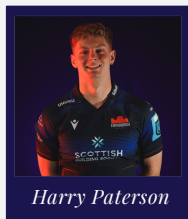
Adam McBurney



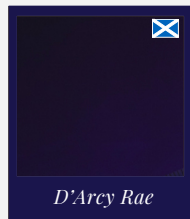
Ben Muncaster



WP Nel



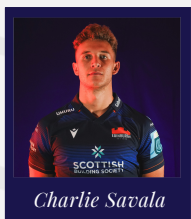
Harry Paterson



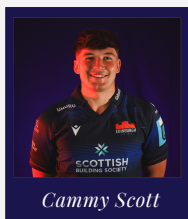
D'Arcy Rae



Jamie Ritchie



Charlie Savala



Cammy Scott



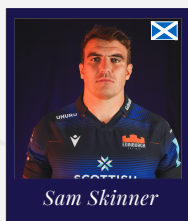
Pierre Schoeman



Javan Sebastian



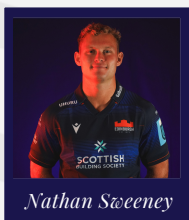
Charlie Shiel



Sam Skinner



Scott Steele



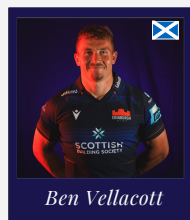
Nathan Sweeney



Marshall Sykes



Duhan VDM



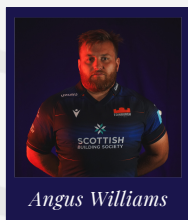
Ben Vellacott



Boan Venter



Hamish Watson



Angus Williams



Glen Young

EDINBURGH RUGBY ACADEMY 2022/23

Robbie Deans (Loosehead Prop)

Harri Morris (Hooker)

Jerry Blyth-Lafferty (Hooker)

Ollie Blyth-Lafferty (Tighthead Prop)

Euan McVie (Lock)

Tom Currie (Flanker)

Liam McConnell (Flanker)

Freddie Douglas (Flanker)

Ollie Duncan (Number Eight)

Finlay Burgess (Scrum-half)

Hector Patterson (Scrum-half)

Isaac Coates (Fly-Half)

Jack Hocking (Centre)

Finn Douglas (Wing)

Jack Brown (Full-Back)



PLAYER TRY TRACKS

EWAN ASHMAN	Into the Valley	Skids
MARK BENNETT	You're Welcome	Dwayne Johnson
EMILIANO BOFFELLI	Quevedo (Tries)	Bizarrap
	Pepas (Kicks)	Farruko
CONNOR BOYLE	Funky Town	Lipps Inc
JAMIE CAMPBELL	Love Tonight - Edit	Shouse
DAVE CHERRY	Boys are Back in Town	Thin Lizzy
LUKE CROSBIE	B.O.T.A	Eliza Ross, Interplanetary Criminal
MATT CURRIE	Samba de Janeiro	Bellini
LUAN DE BRUIN	Holding out for a Hero	Bonnie Tyler
CHRIS DEAN	Born to Run	Bruce Springsteen
TOM DODD	Crazy	Gnarls Barkley
MITCH EADIE	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>
JORDAN EDMUNDS	Radioactive	Imagine Dragons
GRANT GILCHRIST	Rocking All Over the World	Status Quo
WES GOOSEN	I Gotta Feeling	Black Eyed Peas
DARCY GRAHAM	Yabba Dabba Doo / CanCan	[Custom]
PADDY HARRISON	Country Roads	John Denver
BEN HEALY	Heaven is a Place on Earth	Belinda Carlisle
JAKE HENRY	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>
BOMBER HISLOP	Levels	Avicii
JAMIE HODGSON	Underdog	Kasabian
MIKEY JONES	Gold Dust	DJ Fresh
BLAIR KINGHORN	Teach me how to Dougie	Cali Swag District
JAMES LANG	Hound Dog	Elvis Presley

PLAYER TRY TRACKS

BILL MATA	Ukulele	Blad P2a ft. Khazin
ADAM MCBURNEY	Tell Me Ma	Sham Rock
ROSS MCCANN	The Snake	Al Wilson
BEN MUNCASTER	Crazy Frog	Axel F
CAM NEILD	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>
WP NEL	Umfaan	Klipwerf Orkes
HARRY PATERSON	Duel of the Fates	John Williams
JAMIE RITCHIE	Edge of Seventeen	Stevie Nicks
CHARLIE SAVALA	Down Under	Men at Work
PIERRE SCHOEMAN	The Greatest Show	The Greatest Showman Ensemble
CAMMY SCOTT	Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You	Frankie Valli
JAVAN SEBASTIAN	Many Men – Album Version	50 Cent
CHARLIE SHIEL	Yes Sir, I Can Boogie	Baccara
SAM SKINNER	California Dreamin'	The Mamas & The Papas
SCOTT STEELE	Bounce	Calvin Harris
NATHAN SWEENEY	Hey Baby	DJ Otzi
TIM SWIEL	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>
MARSHALL SYKES	Candy Shop	50 Cent
DUHAN VD MERWE	L'Amour Toujours	Gigi D'Agostino
BEN VELLACOTT	Without Me	Eminem
BOAN VENTER	WWE: The Game	Jim Johnston
HAMISH WATSON	This is the One	Stone Roses
ANGUS WILLIAMS	Back in Black	AC/DC
GLEN YOUNG	We Like to Party	Vengaboys

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MAIN STAND

STAIR 5

STAIR 1-4



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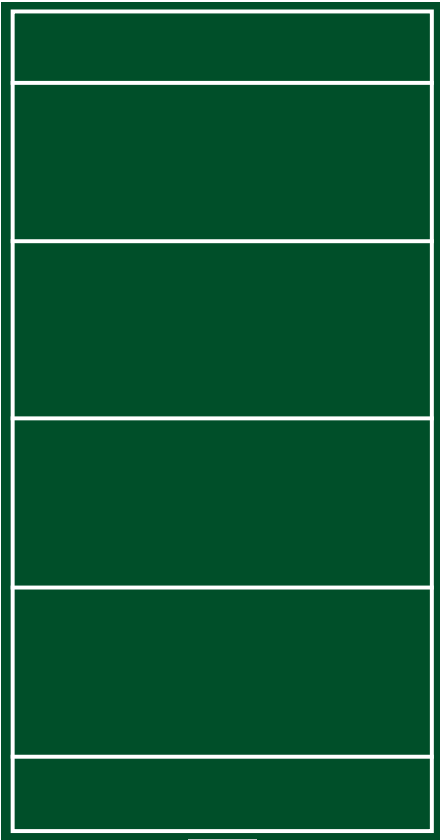


STAIR 27-32



RIVERSIDE STAND

TERRACE F / G / H



MURRAYFIELD STAND

STAIR 14-16



TERRACE C

TERRACE D

TERRACE E

STAIR 17-19

LOTHIAN STAND

STAIR 20-23

STAIR 24-26



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PRESS PASS

SEAN EVERITT

On returning players

It's great to have the guys back. They bring a lot of experience, especially after being at the World Cup, and they are happy to be back. They are comfortable in the environment and they will be in contention for the weekend.

On Dragons

It was an ugly win but we'll take that because we haven't won in a year. The last time that Edinburgh won away was October 2022 so we are very happy with that. Obviously, we aren't too happy with the performance

Statistically, we did everything required to win the game but our execution let us down. We will give the players some reprimand because it was our first game with lots of new players, so it was never going to be a perfect performance

The pleasing thing was that we showed resilience and we stuck to our plan to get the win. The first twenty minutes was an area that let us down but we improved as the game progressed. The guys remained calm and that's why we were able to pull through.

“We’re really excited to get back to Hive Stadium after opening the Championship on the road and it will be brilliant to be back in front of the Edinburgh supporters – they really do provide us with an energy and a spark.”



On Ben Vellacott's captaincy

It's not easy in your first game when you're under the pump away from home and we can't deny that. I thought he handled the situation really well, he stayed composed and handled the task really well. He stayed on the field for the full game and Charlie Shiel didn't get on, not because he's a bad player, but because we needed Ben's leadership.

On Ben Healy

He kicks very well and he got 11 out of 11 against Romania at the World Cup. That's one of the reasons why he bought him back to Edinburgh, but he's also a quality player. He managed the game really well on Saturday in difficult conditions. The line speed that the Dragons brought on Saturday was hard for us to handle and Ben really helped us with his kicking.



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— *Quick Hits*

Mark Bennett

We've had a long pre-season and we've worked on our game sense and what we are trying to achieve by playing in the right areas, which is something that cost us at times last year because we over-played a bit.

So, we're trying to play in the right areas, and give ourselves ways into the game through that. And by doing that on Saturday, we applied enough pressure that we could go three-six-nine, and then we took that try when we got that opportunity.



There have been some changes. Sean is quite stat driven, which I really like because you can't hide from stats. You see the numbers that are there and he backs everything up on why we want to do things, so he's very very clear on his thinking behind how we want to play the game, and I know, personally, I like knowing the theory behind what we are doing which gives us real clarity on what we're trying to achieve..

Gilchrist and Vellacott named co-captains

Scotland international lock Grant Gilchrist was this week confirmed as co-captain for the 2023/24 season, alongside the previously announced Ben Vellacott

Gilchrist will share the role with scrum-half Ben Vellacott – named co-captain last month – with the duo set to lead the team together for the first time tomorrow evening.

Gilchrist – who linked up with capital squad earlier this week following the conclusion of the Rugby World Cup – is one of Edinburgh Rugby's most experienced players, having already co-captained the club in four separate seasons (16/17, 20/21, 21/22, 22/23), with the upcoming 2023/24 campaign his fifth in a leadership role, after coming through the ranks at Alloa Rugby Club and Stirling County.





Gilchrist said: “It’s such a huge honour to be named co-captain for the season ahead alongside Ben.

“It’s no secret how much this club and everyone associated with it means to me, having been a massive part of my life for so long.

“We have a brilliant squad of players, coaches and off-field staff who are all desperate to bring success to the club and make our supporters proud.

“I can’t wait to get back on the pitch with the boys at Hive Stadium on Saturday night!”

— *Last time out*

17 Dragons

22 Edinburgh



Edinburgh fought back from a 14-point deficit to beat Dragons 17-22 in the opening round of games in the 2023-24 BKT United Rugby Championship season.



Early tries from Sio Tomkinson and Corey Baldwin gave the Welsh region the perfect start at Rodney Parade.

But the boot of eventual BKT URC Player of the Match Ben Healy kept Edinburgh in the game, and Ben Vellacott's try 15 minutes from time set up a grandstand finish.

And Healy had the final say, kicking two late penalties to seal victory.

The Dragons were searching for a win on the opening day of the season for the first time since 2013, as head coach Dai Flanagan spoke of his desire to turn Rodney Parade into a "fortress" ahead of the game.

The Welsh region were ahead within two minutes, Sio Tomkinson scoring under the posts after Angus O'Brien's offload released Jared Rosser.

Cai Evans – who joined the Dragons from the Ospreys in July – added the conversion to score his first points for the region.

The early try set a fervent atmosphere, and backed by the crowd the Dragons were almost in for a second try when O'Brien's cross-field kick found Rosser, but Tomkinson could not gather the offload.

The second try came after 17 minutes, the Dragons worked the ball down to the five-metre line before another O'Brien cross-field kick found Corey Baldwin in acres of space to score.

Edinburgh grew into the game as the first half minutes ticked by, but twice after getting into the Dragons' 22 they were thwarted by Ollie Griffiths on his 100th appearance for the Welsh region.

The visitors were finally on the scoreboard just before the half hour mark, Ben Healy with the penalty from just outside the Dragons' 22 after the hosts were penalised for not rolling away.

Edinburgh continued to dominate possession and territory, but the Dragons defence showed a level of resilience it has been lacking on a consistent basis in recent years.

And against the run of play the hosts thought they had a third try of the game when Tomkinson picked up a bobbled



pass, but referee Eoghan Cross deemed the ball to have been knocked on by a Dragons hand.

Healy's second penalty of the game just after the restart reduced the Dragons' lead, but Evans' first penalty of the game minutes later restored their 11-point lead.

Scotland international Healy slotted over his third penalty of the game before finding a gap in the Dragons defence and offloading to captain Ben Vellacott for Edinburgh's first try of the game.

Healy added the conversion to make it a one-point game with quarter of an hour left to play at Rodney Parade.

Healy had the last laugh in south Wales, slotting over two late penalties to give Edinburgh a first lead in the game and the win.

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