



Edinburgh Rugby vs Vodacom Bulls  
Friday 17 November, 7.35pm  
Hive Stadium



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— *Welcome*

# Douglas Struth

Good evening, and welcome  
to HIVE Stadium for  
tonight's BKT URC clash  
against the Vodacom Bulls



Tonight we welcome the league leaders for the second week in a row, this time the table toppers being the men from Pretoria.

The Vodacom Bulls are renowned for being one of the most physical and abrasive club sides in world rugby - and it's a reputation that is well warranted.

We've faced them twice, and both games have been hugely physical encounters, the home side winning on each occasion. It'll be a match where we'll need to display all of our resilience, as we did last week against Connacht.

The result last weekend was one that will live long in the memory, coming out on top in a thriller at Hive Stadium.

With Connacht equalising with a few minutes on the clock, it would have been easy to accept a draw - however we showed immense resilience and held our nerve to take the win via a last minute Ben Healy drop goal.

The noise in the stadium was one of the loudest we've seen since moving into our new home; a moment of sheer jubilation at Hive Stadium.

It was a sign of the support that our fans give us each week, helping to get us over the line, screaming at the top of your voices to support the players.



It was an amazing moment, and we're hoping that as team we can repay your support with more moments like that through the season.

As well as celebrating a win at Hive Stadium, we were also able to celebrate the unity of rugby with the Scottish Building Society Inclusive tournament.

The event saw five inclusive teams from around Scotland compete, as well as having a lap of honour at half-time during the Connacht match.

A huge shoutout goes to Ruaridh Pye, our community manager, who played a massive role in pulling the event together.

A notable headline this week has been the arrival of Ali Price on loan in the capital. The chance to sign an experienced Scotland international, and British & Irish Lion, was one that was an easy decision to make.

Ali is a player with great vision and understanding of the game, and those qualities will only rub off on our scrum-halves.

His arrival breeds competition for places, which is only a good thing for us as we compete in both the BKT United Rugby Championship and EPCR Challenge Cup.

Talking of players with experience and understanding of the game, it is brilliant to welcome Jamie Ritchie back into the fold having recovered from an injury sustained at the World Cup.

Jamie starts tonight - with Ali set to debut from the bench - and will be looking to keep the lively Bulls back-row quiet!

I hope you enjoy the match, and another great atmosphere at Hive Stadium!  
Enjoy the game!



*Douglas Struth, Managing Director*



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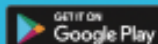
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# TEAM LINEUPS

## EDINBURGH

*100 Blair Kinghorn* 15

*Wes Goosen* 14

*Mark Bennett* 13

*James Lang* 12

*Duhan van der Merwe* 11

*Ben Healy* 10

*Ben Vellacott (CC)* 9

*100 Pierre Schoeman* 1

*Ewan Ashman* 2

*WP Nel* 3

*Glen Young* 4

*100 Grant Gilchrist (CC)* 5

*Jamie Ritchie* 6

*Connor Boyle* 7

*100 Viliame Mata* 8

*16. Dave Cherry 17. Boan Venter*

*18. Javan Sebastian 19. Marshall Sykes*

*20. Tom Dodd 21. Ali Price*

*22. Cammy Scott 23. Chris Dean 100*

## CONNACHT

*Devon Williams*

*Sebastian de Klerk*

*Stedman Gans*

*David Kriel*

*Sergeal Petersen*

*Johan Goosen*

*Embrose Papier*

*Gerhard Steenekamp*

*Johan Grobbelaar*

*Wilco Louw*

*Ruan Vermaak*

*Ruan Nortje*

*Marcell Coetzee (C)*

*Elrigh Louw*

*Cameron Hanekom*

*16. Jan Hendrick Wessels*

*17. Simphixwe Matanzima 18. Mornay Smith*

*19. Reinhardt Ludwig 20. Nizaam Carr*

*21. Keagen Johannes 22. Jaco van der Walt*

*23. Cyle Brink*



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# DUHAN VDM

## BUZZING TO BE BACK

*Star winger Duhan van der Merwe chats ahead of Friday night's unmissable BKT United Rugby Championship clash against Vodacom Bulls.*

"To be honest, I was buzzing to come back after the World Cup. Initially, at the time when we lost against Ireland, I wasn't in a great place and felt like I needed some time off. Physically, I felt very good; mentally, it was quite tough.

"I had a phone call with Sean and said, 'look, is there any chance I can get some extra time off?' and he managed to give me an extra week off.



"I'm very grateful for that and I feel really refreshed and ready to go for the season."

Duhan's stock rose after his World Try of the Year, winning the award for his stunning effort against England in the 2023 Guinness Six Nations:

"I look back at it and I still can't quite believe that I managed to score that. Everyone's been saying, 'congrats, congrats'.

"All I can say is. 'yeah, mate, it's all luck!' I'll take it and I'm very happy with the award. I was watching it on my phone, Rugby Pass had a line."



“He is at the Bulls. In junior rugby i played for the Bulls as well. I know a couple of their players and he is over here so i am really looking forward to it.

“A couple of years ago when Edinburgh played Sale Sharks he was at Sale Sharks in the Champions Cup, so 1-0 to me.

“He has scored a few tries, typical hooker tries off a maul but he is enjoying it and if we play against each other it will be quite exciting.

“Hopefully he doesn’t come down my channel and hopefully I don’t go down his channel, but if we have to get stuck into each other it is what it is.

The giant winger is rapidly climbing the all-time scoring charts for Scotland, currently sat in 6th with 21, although three behind Darcy Graham who is second.

“Yeah, Gregor announced the team against Romania and my name was not in it. I just looked over and Darcy was sitting there with a smile on his face.

“I thought he could get four or five and I think he got four. He is well ahead of me now.

*“I will have to score a few now for Scotland if selected in the Six Nations to get ahead of him but that is going to be tough because at the moment he is in form, unfortunately he is injured just now, but what a player he is.”*

Duhan isn’t the only professional rugby player in the van der Merwe family, with Akker now with tonight’s visitors, the Bulls.





“They came up on Saturday morning after they played Cardiff so i saw him after the game and a couple of their boys came to our game but I think he left after 60 mins as it was too cold!

“I took him to Renaissance to play golf on Sunday. Jaco is with the team and i saw him as well, but Henry [Immelman] isn’t.

“They have won two out of three of their away games and are top of the table which is really good but so were Connacht, so this is another big challenge for us at the weekend playing against the Bulls.

“They are big physical men and we have to stop them and beat them.”

Duhan has this week been able to link up with Lions and Scotland team-mate Ali Price, who came in for his first training session at the club on Monday morning.

“It is good having Ali. He joined us this morning. He brings a lot of experience and playing with him over the past couple of years i know what he brings.

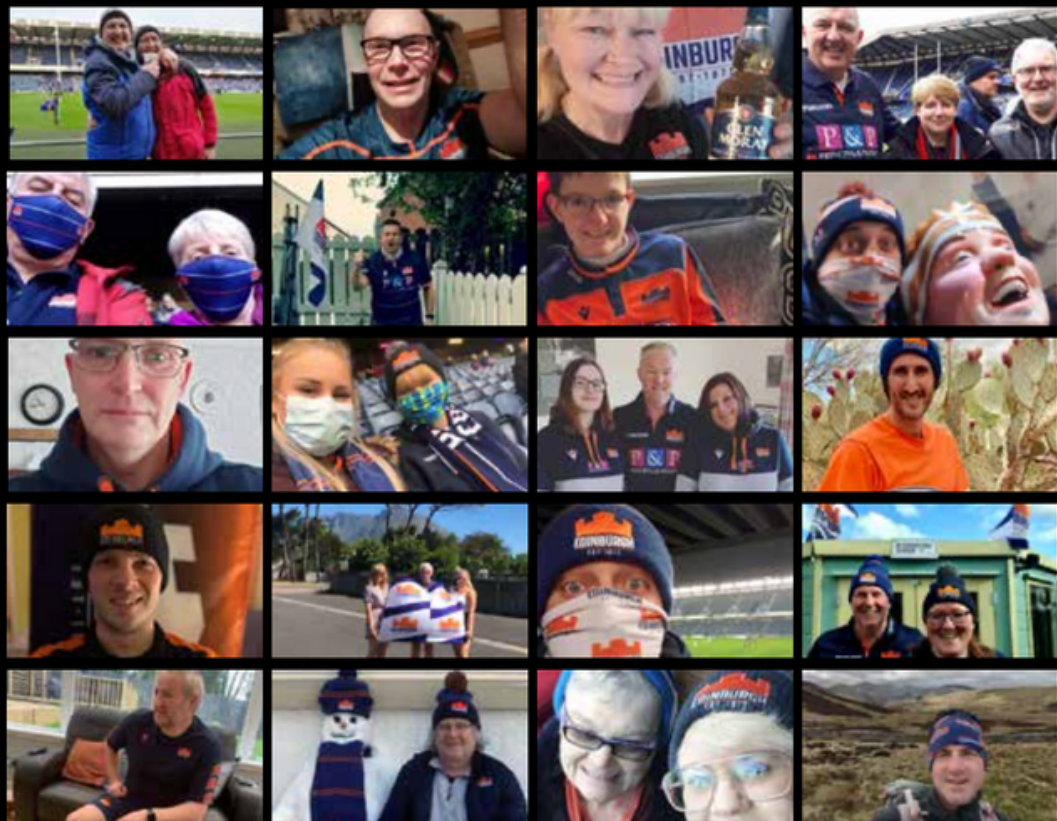
“He tries to get me into the game as much as possible, always tells me to stay busy which I quite like. Me being a left winger and him having a left boot really helps so I am looking forward to how it goes.”



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## Opposition Preview

# VODACOM BULLS

*Edinburgh play host to table-toppers Vodacom Bulls, with the men from Pretoria having won three from four matches in their BKT United Rugby Championship campaign.*

Hailing from Loftus-Versfeld, the Bulls are one of South Africa's most successful club sides, winning four Super Rugby titles, and making one URC Grand Final to date.

The side find their origins as the Northern Transvaal Rugby union opting to breakaway from the Transvaal Rugby Union with the sole purpose of establishing themselves as a competitive rugby union in South Africa.

The Barberton Daisy was adopted as the NTRU's emblem while light blue was the colour that would become synonymous with the club.

The club is also synonymous with producing behemoth forwards, battling with ferocity and physicality that few sides can match.



## Key Players

Physicality is the watch word with the Bulls, boasting a plethora of giant units throughout the squad - and plenty of springboks to boot.

Wilco Louw made the move to Pretoria over the summer, alongside Duhan's brother Akker van der Merwe, both making the move from the English Premiership.

Co-captains Ruan Nortje and Marcell Coetzee offer world-class muscle in the pack, with up-and-coming youngsters Elrigh Louw and Cameron Hanekom providing spark in the back row.

There are a couple of familiar faces in the Bulls squad, with Jaco van der Walt and Henry Immelman having swapped Hive Stadium for Loftus over the summer. Immelman hasn't travelled with the squad, however van der Walt could be called to action on Saturday.

With lightning backs Cornal Hendricks, Lionel Mapoe, and David Kriel, the Bulls aren't just about physicality, and can hurt teams with electric pace and skill.

## Last Time Out

Edinburgh were edged out by the Bulls in a thriller at Loftus Versfeld, losing 33-31 despite a stunning Darcy Graham hat-trick.

The capital men were hit with the worst possible start, with Blair Kinghorn withdrawing through illness, before stand-in van der Walt was withdrawn with concussion after five minutes.

This left Charlie Savala - who wasn't expecting to play - pulling the strings. The young stand-off came close to inspiring a famous win, however a last minute penalty from Morne Steyn had the final word, denying a famous win on the road.

“

*You know exactly what they're going to build with. They'll bring that power game.*

---

*Stevie Lawrie*



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# EDINBURGH RUGBY

## FIRST TEAM SQUAD



*Ewan Ashman*



*Mark Bennett*



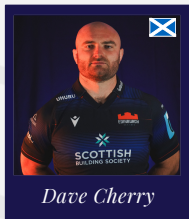
*Emiliano Boffelli*



*Connor Boyle*



*Jamie Campbell*



*Dave Cherry*



*Luke Crosbie*



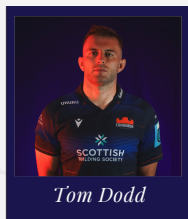
*Matt Currie*



*Chris Dean*



*Luan de Bruin*



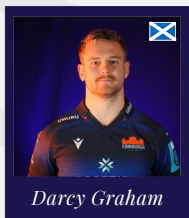
*Tom Dodd*



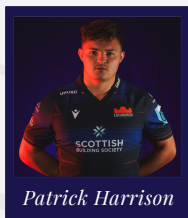
*Grant Gilchrist*



*Wes Goosen*



*Darcy Graham*



*Patrick Harrison*



*Ben Healy*



*Jake Henry*



*Robin Hislop*



*Jamie Hodgson*

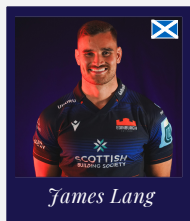


*Mikey Jones*





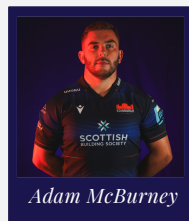
*Blair Kinghorn*



*James Lang*



*Viliame Mata*



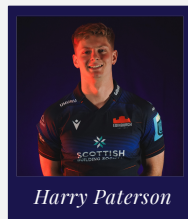
*Adam McBurney*



*Ben Muncaster*



*WP Nel*



*Harry Paterson*



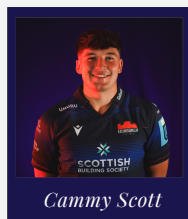
*Ali Price*



*D'Arcy Rae*



*Jamie Ritchie*



*Cammy Scott*



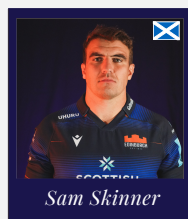
*Pierre Schoeman*



*Javan Sebastian*



*Charlie Shiel*



*Sam Skinner*



*Scott Steele*



*Nathan Sweeney*



*Marshall Sykes*



*Duhan VDM*



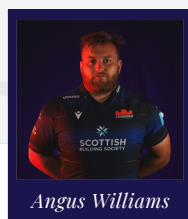
*Ben Vellacott*



*Boan Venter*



*Hamish Watson*



*Angus Williams*



*Glen Young*

# EDINBURGH RUGBY

## ACADEMY 2022/23

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*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

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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
ALI PRICE	Believe	Cher
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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STAIR 1-4



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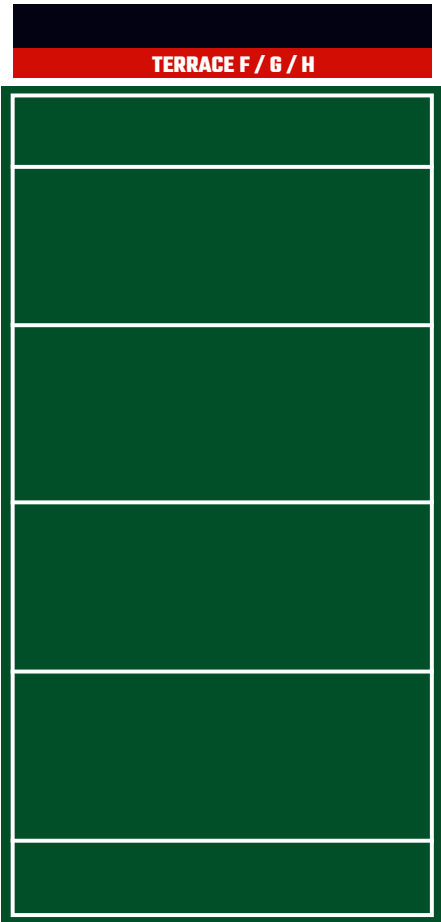


STAIR 27-32



RIVERSIDE STAND

TERRACE F / G / H



TERRACE B

TERRACE A

MURRAYFIELD STAND

STAIR 14-16



TERRACE C

TERRACE D

TERRACE E



STAIR 24-26



LOTHIAN STAND

STAIR 20-23

STAIR 17-19

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*P. Petroianu*



# PRESS PASS

## STEVIE LAWRIE

### *On Ali Price*

“Ali started training today. I didn’t know much of him [beforehand] other than how well he can play against us. He’s come in today, we met him on Friday as a coaching group, he’s hit the ground running. He’s really good with his detail, and the boys are excited to have him.

“He’s certainly somebody that’s going to bring a lot of quality and a good bit of competition as well. It’s an area where we want to grow our quality, and if we can have competition in our squad that’s only going to be great for everybody.”

### *On injuries*

“The nature of the game is always attritional, so we’re going to lose guys, but that creates opportunities. And when you get an opportunity you’ve got to seize it. Selection every week is tough, the discussions are tough, but the competition in the squad is strong and that builds resilience as well. We showed a resilient edge at the weekend to get the win, and I think the competition builds resilience as well, because sometimes you don’t get selected. That’s learning.”



*“We’re excited about the challenge, really excited to get out there, have another game at the Hive and bring the energy we did at the weekend, and look to get better because it wasn’t a perfect performance.”*



### *On the Bulls*

“They’ll be a massive challenge physically. You know exactly what they’re going to build with. They’ll bring that power game. I think they’ve gone back to that a little bit more this season.

“Wilco Louw has made a difference in terms of how they’ve scrummaged but we’ve also had some positive scrummaging displays, so that’s going to be a key area.

“I think also, the battle of the gainline. They’re a momentum-based team and we need to make sure that we’re physically appropriate in that area, for want of a better phrase.

### *On taking Sean to Tynecastle*

“He wants to go. The S&C department and I went to the derby and Hearts blew it. We sent him a photo from behind the ultras and he said is that an invite-only thing? So he was annoyed he didn’t get invited, so he’ll get invited to the next one.

“Or I could do what I did with Gareth Baber and take him to the Tony Macaroni to watch Livingston play. I’ve taken him [Sean] to Myreside.”



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— *Quick Hits*

# *Bill Mata*

I'm happy to be back in Edinburgh after the World Cup. Not so much with the weather, but yeah, happy to be back!

To be honest it's probably the best Fiji group I've ever joined, ever since I made my debut in 2017. It's a special group.

The try against England was special but I can't remember doing it. I was processing everything at once: it was just ball in my hand, I tried to have a look, I threw it down then I was in.

We mentioned it in the Fiji team - making it to the quarter-finals, the play-off, that's something big for the future of Fiji rugby.



Getting recognised and being part of the top eight, that's a big achievement. It's different playing for your country - you go all out. England is a big team. They've been there, they've done it. It's just us: we need to step up.

I was away when they announced that Sean was the new senior coach, so coming in on the first week I didn't know what to expect. But after a few weeks with Sean he's just made everything simple: it's easy to play rugby now compared to a few other years coming back to a new coach.

# Everitt proud of 'great win'

*Senior Coach Sean Everitt was left feeling proud of his side's resilience as Edinburgh Rugby battled to claim a last-gasp victory against Connacht at Hive Stadium on Saturday night.*

With the game tied-up at 22-22, the capital side worked the ball into Connacht territory where Ben Healy was able to chip over a no-nonsense drop-goal to take all four points with the clock in red.

"I'm delighted with the win," said Everitt. "We were outstanding tonight defensively despite leaking the three tries. The group needs to understand that they need to exit well after scoring points and that's not something that we did well tonight.

"All three tries were conceded after we failed to get out of our half after kick-off. But in saying that, the guys were really resilient and I'm very proud of the boys.







Everitt continued: “I think it’s just a great win for us, because this team now believe they can win in tight situations against top teams.”

Replacement Ben Vellacott was named BKT United Rugby Championship Player of the Match on the night – just reward for a hugely influential 39-minute cameo from the bench that saw the scrum-half score one, assist one and set-up Healy for the match-winning drop-goal.

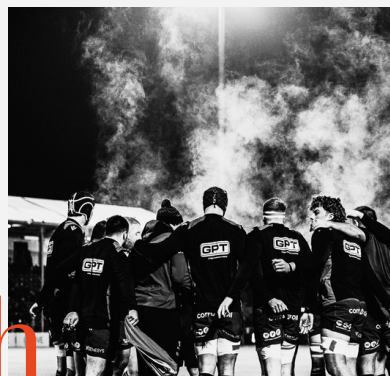
On Vellacott’s contribution, Everitt said: “Ben was made captain for a reason – he leads by example. Coming onto the field as a substitute and pulling that off says something about the confidence that he brings to the team.

“He was just outstanding tonight in every department, so I’m very happy for him. Unfortunately he missed last week – I think he wanted to prove a point tonight. And with Ali Price arriving there’s great competition for the No 9 jersey now.”

— *Last time out*

# 25 Edinburgh

## 22 Connacht



*Ben Healy's drop-goal with the final play of the game gave Edinburgh a thrilling win that ends Connacht's 100% record at the start of the United Rugby Championship.*

Wes Goosen's early try and Ben Vellacott's after the break put Edinburgh in control.

But Connacht replied through Tiernan O'Halloran and Joe Joyce – and, although Mark Bennett touched down for the hosts, Cian Prendergast's try had the scores level with only two minutes left only for Healy to strike gold.

Edinburgh, who move up to seventh in the table with Connacht down to fourth, started with determination to put behind them their late capitulation away to Leinster last week.

Charlie Shiel and Bennett combined before the former released wing Goosen outside him to score in the corner, with Healy adding the extras from out wide.

Kinghorn gathered a long punt, released Duhan van der Merwe who a couple of opponents in his wake as he raced down the wing before releasing Vellacott to cross near the posts with the scrum-half's first touch off the bench, with Healy adding the easy conversion.

Connacht came from 17 points down to beat Ulster last week and it looked like they might stage another comeback when full-back O'Halloran crashed over after a maul on the home try line.

Carty's conversion reduced the arrears to four points and looked like it might prove a turning point, but the gap stretched almost immediately when the 14 men were presented with a penalty that Healy slotted with ease.

Connacht did make their man advantage count, though, and it was Joyce's turn to make an impact as a replacement when the lock held off two challenges to power over the line.

A quick tap by Vellacott caught Connacht unawares as they wondered whether Edinburgh might settle for a penalty in front of the posts and the scrum-half's sweeping pass set up Bennett for Edinburgh's third try.

Connacht were not finished yet. Prendergast went over after the visitors laid assault on the Edinburgh try line and, when JJ Hanrahan converted to level with two minutes remaining, it looked a draw had been rescued.

However, Edinburgh went straight up the other end and, with a penalty in the bank should their attack falter, Healy's boot sent Hive Stadium into raptures.





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