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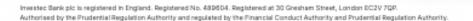
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Welcome

Douglas Struth

Good evening, and welcome to HIVE Stadium for tonight's EPCR Challenge Cup clash against Gloucester.

Happy new year to you all! It's brilliant to welcome our fans back for the first men's game of 2024 - with a sellout for this evening's game against the famous Cherry and Whites.

The appetite for rugby in the capital is as high as it has ever been, especially after the amazing weekend we had before the new year.

While we didn't reclaim the 1872 Cup, it was a amazing to beat our rivals Glasgow Warriors in front of a record crowd at Scottish Gas Murrayfield - completing an intercity double as our women's side won their first ever match 28-12 in front of 1,900+ fans at Hive Stadium.

It was an historic day for the club, and one that will live long in the memory.

The noise from the 37,904 fans in the stadium when Duhan van der Merwe was charging clear for our match winning try was spine tingling, and a try worthy of being seen by the record attendance for a Scottish rugby club fixture.

It has also been great to see the enthusiasm surrounding our newly formed women's team, from fans and the team alike. Having a women's side has been momentous for this club, and while they lost out in their second match against the Wolfhounds at the weekend, it was amazing to see 900 fans cheering them on in the first game of the new year.



Best of luck to the team as they face Brython Thunder at Parc Y Scarlets tomorrow afternoon.

After a stellar December, Wes Goosen picked up the Scottish Building Society Player of the Month award. After a difficult first campaign in the capital after multiple injuries, Wes has been able to string together a run of performances - becoming one of our most consistent players.

A massive thank you to main club partner Scottish Building Society, who once again will donate £500 to the player of the month's cause of choice. Wes has chosen to donate the money to Corstorphine Cougars - the club he represented at Club Appreciation Night back in November.

Another player who has had tough luck with injuries lately is Sam Skinner, so it's brilliant to see him back in the starting line-up for tonight's game, having recently penned a new two-year contract extension to stay at the club.



Away from the rugby pitch, we have been able to announce our new partnership with the University of Edinburgh - who will be on an on-kit partner. The partnership extends across multiple facets of the club and is a big step towards uniting Edinburgh Rugby with our wider city. It's an exciting relationship, and i'm looking forward to seeing how it will blossom in time to come!

Back to tonight, we have another massive EPCR Challenge Cup clash ahead of us. It's game that should excite, and will be an amazing atmosphere with a packed out Hive Stadium!

Enjoy the game.

Douglas Struth, Managing Director

EPCR Welcome

Dominic

McKay

A warm welcome to this Round 3 match in the 2023/24 EPCR Challenge Cup and a Happy New Year to all as we reach the business end of the tournament's pool stage.

We have seen a wonderful start to our 2023/24 season, including hugely positive commercial developments in which we have welcomed Investec, the leading international bank and wealth manager, as an official tournament partner in a landmark agreement which complements their title partnership of the Investec Champions Cup, and Georgia Rugby Marketing Hub joining as an official partner of both the EPCR Challenge Cup and the Investec Champions Cup.

The competition on the pitch now further intensifies with places in the knockout stage at stake.

The top four clubs in each pool are guaranteed qualification, with an added incentive of home venue advantage in the Round of 16 for the clubs finishing first and second in their respective pools, as well as the two highest-ranked third-placed clubs.

And to make the quest for silverware even more demanding, the four clubs which finish fifth in each of the Investec Champions Cup pools will qualify for the Round of 16 of the EPCR Challenge Cup.

Everything is to play for.



So, after more compelling action this month, we'll have a clearer idea of the pathway to the showpiece Finals weekend at London's state-of-the-art Tottenham Hotspur Stadium on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 May, for which over 45,000 tickets have already been sold.

We are delighted to be joined on the journey to London by our official partners, Investec, DHL, IHG Hotels & Resorts and Georgia Rugby Marketing Hub, by our official supporters, Tissot, Gilbert and Kappa, and also by our official airline partner in South Africa, Qatar Airways.

Viaplay in the UK and Ireland, beIN SPORTS and France Télévisions in France, as well as SuperSport in South Africa, continue to provide cutting edge broadcast coverage, while S4C in Wales, and FloRugby in the USA and Canada, are showcasing the matches to more viewers than ever across the world.

We hope that you enjoy the match today and take this opportunity to send our best wishes to you, the fans, your club's players and staff, and of course to our match officials, as we anticipate the celebrations and the occasional heartache that comes when qualification for the EPCR Challenge Cup knockout stage is on the line!

Yours in Rugby, Dominic McKay EPCR Chairman



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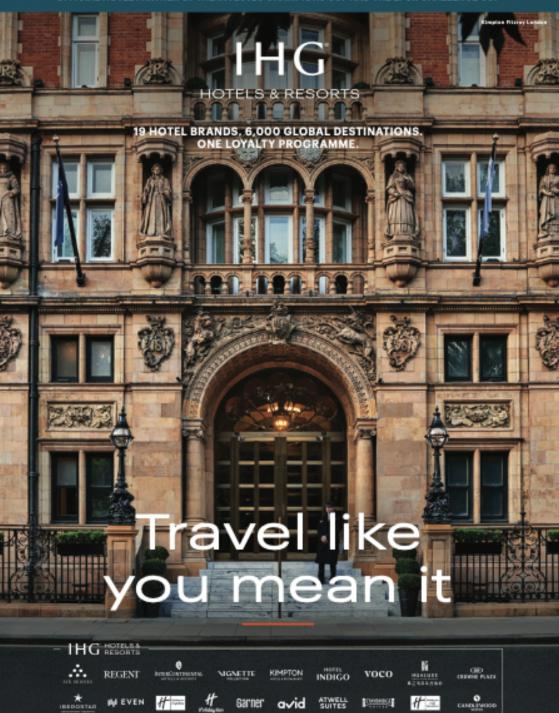
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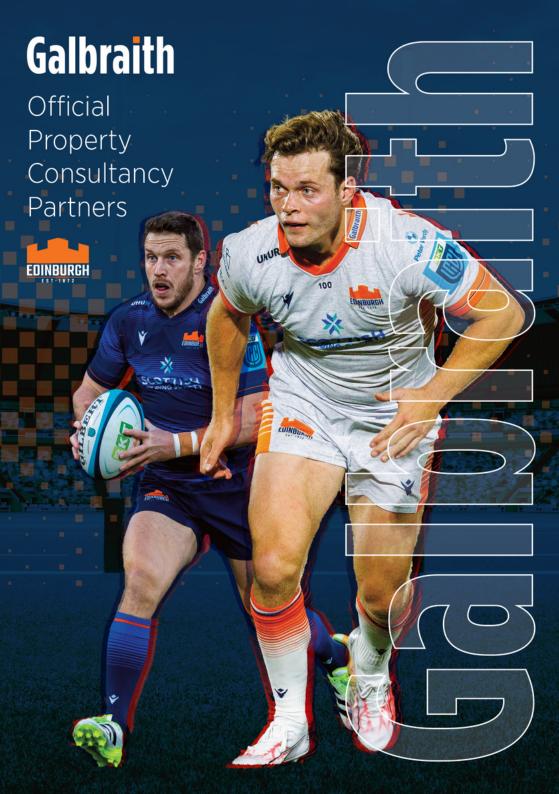
Emiliano Boffelli	15	Louis Rees-Zammit
Darcy Graham	14	Jonny May
Mark Bennett	13	Chris Harris
Matt Currie	12	Seb Atkinson
Wes Goosen	11	Ollie Thorley
Ben Healy	10	Adam Hastings
Ali Price	9	Caolan Englefield
100 Pierre Schoeman	1	Jamal Ford-Robinson
Dave Cherry	2	Seb Blake
100WP Nel	3	Kirill Gotovtsev
Sam Skinner	4	Freddie Clarke
100 Grant Gilchrist (C)	5	Matias Alemanno
Glen Young	6	Fack Clement
100 Hamish Watson	7	Lewis Ludlow (C)

16. Dave Cherry 17. Robin Hislop 18. Angus Williams 19. Marshall Sykes 20. Tom Dodd 21. Ben Vellacott 22. James Lang 23. Harry Paterson

100 Viliame Mata

16. George McGuigan 17. Harry Elrington 18. Fraser Balmain 19. Cam Jordan 20. Ruan Ackermann 21. Stephen Varney 22. Max Llewellyn 23. Lloyd Evans

Zach Mercer





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NO.11



GOOSEN

THE MAN IN FORM

After injury concerns saw Wes Goosen endure a tough first season in the capital, the kiwi has bounced back, earning nominations every month of the season in the player of the month awards, before finally winning the trophy for a stellar December.

IGoosen has been one of the capital side's most consistent and impressive performers this campaign, with December the third month in-a-row Goosen has been nominated for the Scottish Building Society sponsored award. It's third time lucky for Goosen who claimed the majority of over 2000 public votes – a fine reward for his rich vein of form in the capital back-three.

On picking up the award, Goosen said: "I'm absolutely delighted. From where I am this season – compared to last – there has been quite a big difference.



"Me and my partner made it a bit of a goal to try and win Player of the Month at least once this season. I've been nominated three times, so to finally win one is awesome.



He continued: "I'm loving playing my rugby at the moment. I'm having a lot of fun out there and there are a lot of smiles. It's a hugely competitive back-three, we've got a lot of big names there, and I'm pretty fortunate to be playing some good footy at the moment."

Goosen's chase back and try-saving tackle against Ulster at the start of the month epitomised his never-say-die attitude while the winger crossed the whitewash in both European fixtures against Clermont and Castres Olympique.





and momentum going on. I'm really enjoying rugby and the group's amazing. It's so easy to play good rugby when you've got a team like this, so I'm enjoying it."

Surrounded by international stars has seen Goosen largely go under the radar, often being labelled as one of the club's 'underrated' players. It's a tag that doesn't bother the former Hurricanes flyer.

"I think it kind of comes from back home, it's kind of the same, I got called underrated too. I quite like it, when people look at you and underrate you. It feels like you've always got something to prove. If people underrate you, you can always beat the expectations."

Back home, Goosen became used to playing alongside superstars such as Ardie Savea and TJ Perenara.

Goosen played full-back in both festive derbies against Glasgow Warriors where he showcased his versatility with back-to-back impressive performances in the number 15 jersey.

Main Club Partner Scottish Building Society continue to donate £500 to each winner's chosen charity or cause, with Goosen selecting local side Corstorphine Cougars minis section as the recipient of the prize money.

Goosen added: "Corstorphine Cougars were extremely kind to me earlier this season, lending me a pair of socks for our annual Club Appreciation Night, so I just wanted to take the time to give back and say thanks for their brilliant support.

"This is my little thank you for supporting me then. Hopefully their minis section can put the £500 generously donated by Scottish Building Society to good use, and put it towards new kit or equipment for the kids to use this year."

Having missed chunks of last season through injury, Goosen is enjoying being back playing consistent rugby.

"It's what I pride myself on, being consistent and having that back is good. I'm stress-free about injuries, and I feel like I've got good consistency



"I was actually telling my old man the other day - I left the Hurricanes with Julien Savea, and I come here and got Duhan, Boff, and Blair [Kinghorn] when he was here. I look at it like a luxury, playing with such good high quality players. Everyone pushes each other and everyone brings the best out of each other."

Gloucester arrive in the capital in a tricky run of form, however with a line-up packed with international talent they'll be no easy task.

For Goosen, it's about concentrating on what Edinburgh can do.

"It's like 90% on ourselves, but they've had an unlucky run. The losses have been very close games and on Sunday they were unlucky to lose again. They're there or thereabouts. We've just got to focus on ourselves and try to take away that little hope at the start."





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EDINBURGH LOSE OUT TO WOLFHOUNDS

The Wolfhounds came out on top in the second round of the Celtic Challenge, putting in a clinical display to beat a spirited Edinburgh Rugby side.

The experienced Irish outfit showed their class to come away with a 27-17 win infront of 903 fans at Hive Stadium, with the driving maul in particular causing problems for the capital club.

It was the home side that came out the blocks firing, registering a stunning try to open the

scoring. Scotland internationalist Emma Orr – making her debut – combined beautifully with fellow centre Briar McNamara to score. The inside centre burst through a hole in the defence, before offloading to the onrushing Orr to dot down under the posts.

The Wolfhounds responded quickly however, with the driving maul starting to do its work. The forwards combined perfectly, with hooker Sarah Delaney applying the finishing touch. The visitors quickly made it two tries, with a period of sustained pressure eventually being finished off by winger Natasja Behan.



Edinburgh Team:

15. Rachel Philipps 14. Hannah Walker

13. Emma Orr 12. Briar McNamara 11. Cieron Bell 10. Sarah Denholm CAPTAIN 9. Jenny Maxwell 1. Panashe Muzambe 2. Nicola Haynes

- 3. Molly Poolman 4. Fiona McIntosh
- 5. Natasha Logan 6. Gemma Bell
- 7. Alex Stewart VICE-CAPTAIN 8. Merryn Gunderson

Replacements

16. Millie Whitehouse 17. Poppy Fletcher

18. Katie Lindsay 19. Adelle Ferrie 20. Freya Walker 21. Leia Brebner-Holden 22. Nicole Marlow 23. Nicole Flynn Edinburgh came close to hitting back, with McNamara once again breaking through, however Orr was unable to regather the pass for a carbon copy score. The wolfhounds made the error count, going up the field before scoring another maul try to finish the first half on top – back row Aoife Wafer finishing on this occasion.

The Wolfhounds started the second half in perfect fashion, with number eight Brittany Hogan scoring off the back of another successful lineout attack. The irish side put their foot down even further, with Wafer scoring from close range for her second try of the match to put the result beyond doubt.

This didn't stop Edinburgh from giving everything they had, twice going close to scoring through Fiona Davidson and Nicole Flynn, both adjudged to have not scored by the officials.

The home side eventually got a deserved score, with Cieron Bell chanelling her inner Duhan van der Merwe to power through the Wolfhounds defence to score in the corner. With the clock in the red, and the result decided, Edinburgh continued to attack infront of a big home crowd. Emma Orr finished the game as she started it, scoring a brilliant individual score to bring the score line closer.



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EDINBURGH RUGBY FIRST TEAM SQUAD









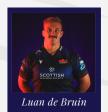


























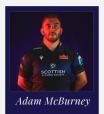


























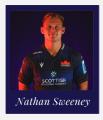


























EDINBURGH RUGBY ACADEMY 2022/23

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)

Fack 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 tbc tbc

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

IAKE HENRY tbc tbc

BOMBER HISLOP Levels Avicii

JAMIE HODGSON Underdog Kasabian

MIKEY JONES Gold Dust DJ Fresh

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 tbc tbc

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

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SAM SKINNER California Dreamin' The Mamas & The Papas

SCOTT STEELE Bounce Calvin Harris

NATHAN SWEENEY Hey Baby DJ Otzi

TIM SWIEL tbc tbc

MARSHALL SYKES Candy Shop 50 Cent

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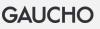
























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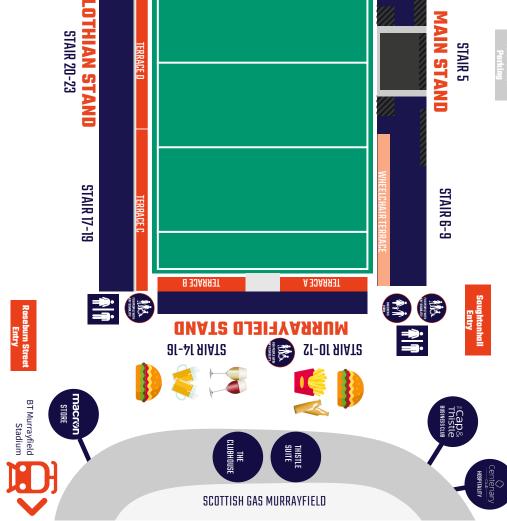
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EPCR CHALLENGE — CUP —





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STAIR 24-26



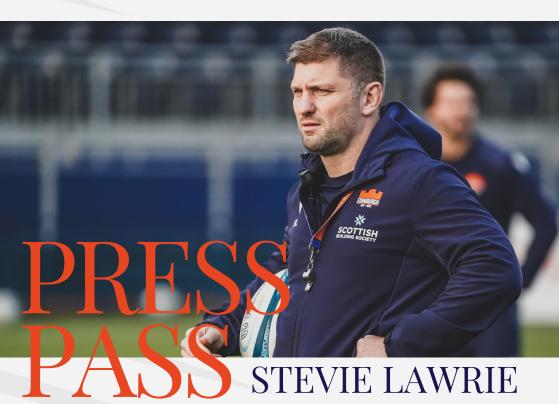
STAIR 1-4











On feeling the benefits of a week off

"It was 11 games on the bounce so it was nice for guys who have never had this week off before.

"Sean [Everitt] has just spoken to them. Often when you come back after a week off your first session is not the best, but the guys have trained really well.

"So hopefully they feel refreshed and now it's important that we see the benefits of that time off."

On Gloucester

"They've been right in it. We know how good Clermont are, and that was a fantastic win.

"The games that they've lost have been narrow losses. We know that with the coaches they've got, their pack is something that we'll have to make sure we contest with, and they've got a bit of a threat in their back line as well with guys like Louis Rees-Zammit and Jonny May. There's a lot of quality there."

"It's going to be tough against a good Gloucester side but we're excited to be back at Hive Stadium."





On a sell out crowd

"When Hearts are winning Tynecastle is full and when Hibs are winning their ground is more full than it normally is.

"If we can keep that momentum going into what is a massive game this weekend. Our win against Castres and the other results have blown the group wide open and it's important we keep the momentum going.

"It's going to be tough against a good Gloucester side but we're excited to be back at Hive Stadium.

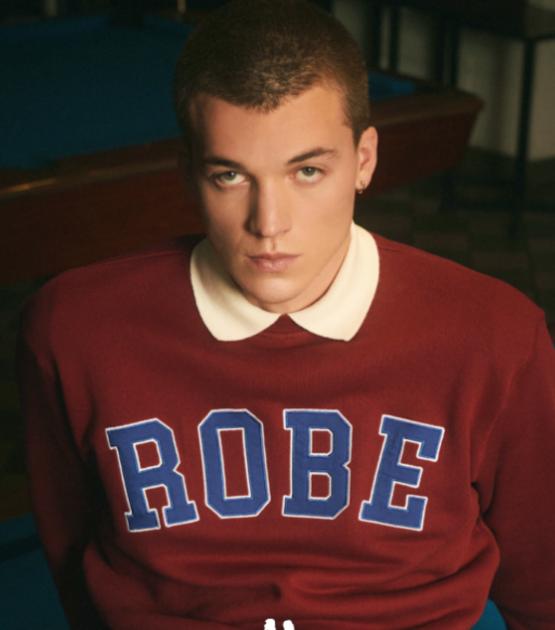
"That 1872 Cup crowd... it was a special day. To have the main stand full [at Hive Stadium] for the women's game and then a record crowd of 37,000-plus at Scottish Gas Murrayfield was magic."

On the first half of the season

"Both Mike Todd and myself went away – I went to Bordeaux, he went to Bath for the whole week. So we've actually used the time to do a little bit of inseason learning, which is always good.

"We've looked at a couple of areas that we want to build on. At this stage of the season you're not changing anything, you just want to get better at the foundations that you've put in place.

"We're pleased that we've won the games that we've won. But we've got a clear target of where we want to be at the end of the season."





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– Quick Hits Sam Skinner

I started training a couple of weeks ago and, in theory, I was fit for selection for the second of the two Glasgow games, but I wasn't running around like a professional athlete – in terms of the mechanics, rather than fitness. But this week I'm running around feeling like I can really apply myself, which is a great feeling, because it's been a challenging period.

I feel back to my normal self, to be honest. Got the body MOT'd properly and we're ready to go again, which is amazing. It feels great to be training with the lads and being able to apply myself 100 per cent.

The last time I played was the Romania game. I was due to play



in the Dragons game, but I pulled up in the warm-up and it's been a really bizarre period. But these things happen.

It was my knee. I carried it through the World Cup a little bit, then I came back, feeling good, but it just blew up in training. I won't bore you with the details as it was a bit of a complicated one, but we finally got there in the end.

We've laid a really good foundation for our season, and it's maybe not a must-win but this is us starting the second half of our season and it's massive. A big game for us.

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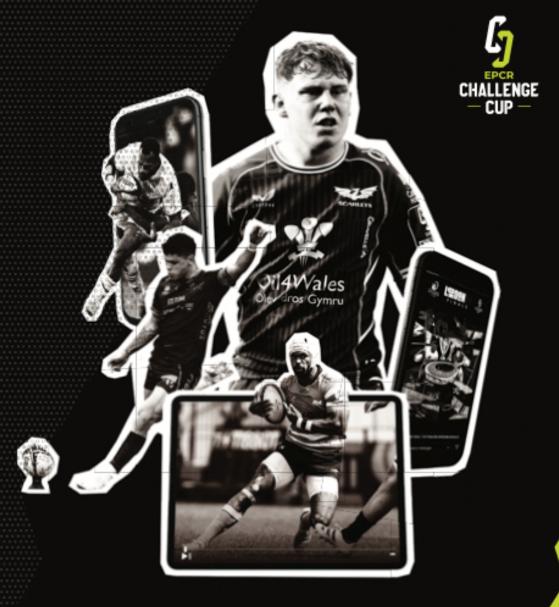




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– Last time out

19 Edinburgh14 Glasgow



Edinburgh gained a measure of revenge for last week's defeat at Scotstoun by snatching a late 19-14 victory over Glasgow Warriors in the BKT United Rugby Championship thanks to a late Duhan van der Merwe try.

But there was some compensation for the Warriors who lifted the 1872 Cup after winning on aggregate.

Trailing 22-12 from the first leg eight days earlier, the home team needed to win by 13 points or more at Murrayfield to lift the silverware.

The capital side never managed to pull away however, playing in front of record crowd for a Scottish club rugby fixture, with 37, 904 in attendance at Scottish Gas Murrayfield.

After beginning with a high-tempo attack in which Tom Jordan came close to breaking through, Glasgow took an early lead when Edinburgh offended and the penalty was sent to touch deep inside the home 22.

Johnny Matthews, always a potent threat from such situations, finished off from the lineout maul. Edinburgh hit back thanks initially to Darcy Graham. The winger tapped and ran with a penalty, getting close to the Warriors goal line. Then, when play went left, Mark Bennett floated a superb pass to his fellow centre Matt Currie, who dived to score in the left corner.

Ten minutes into the second half, a Healy penalty, awarded for a ruck offence, put his team ahead for the first time.

But it did not take long for Glasgow to regain the lead thanks to Stafford McDowall, who powered past three defenders before stretching out to reach the line.

Horne added the two points to put his team 14-8 ahead but with quarter of an hour left Healy halved the deficit with his second penalty of the day.

Then, inside the final 10 minutes, Darcy Graham robbed Glasgow of the ball inside his own 22 and broke before passing to van der Merwe.

The winger just had the stamina to reach the line before the defence closed him down, putting his team 16-14 ahead.

Healy's conversion attempt missed but with time running out he made it 19-14 with another penalty to secure the win for the home team.





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