

EDINBURGH

E D I N B U R G H R U G B Y V S
A V I R O N B A Y O N N A I S

Friday 13 December 2024, 8pm kick-off

*Managing director's welcome
Duhan van der Merwe feature / Press Pass*



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— OUT OF THE ORDINARY



DOUGLAS STRUTH WELCOME



Good evening and welcome to Hive Stadium as we welcome Aviron Bayonnais for Round 2 of the EPCR Challenge Cup.

There's always a different feeling around the place when we're hosting our first European match of the season, it has a special place in the rugby calendar, welcoming opponents from far and wide joining us under the lights at Hive Stadium.

Last season we enjoyed an incredibly competitive match against Bayonne, eventually running out winners in the round of 16 of last year's competition. The men from the Basque country have been in great form this season, so it should be another cracker.

It has been a big week for news around the club this week. First, we are thrilled to announce the squad for our women's team for the upcoming Celtic Challenge, marking another important step forward for Edinburgh Rugby as we continue to grow and develop our women's team. The team have shown incredible progress and passion, and we cannot wait to see them in action again.

I'd also like to welcome squad members Alex Stewart and Hannah Walker, who will be presenting the match ball pre-match tonight.

They kickstart their tournament against Glasgow Warriors at Hive Stadium next Friday night, and I'd urge our fans to get out there and support them against our rivals from down the M8!

*Edinburgh Rugby vs Aviron Bayonnais
EPCR Challenge Cup*

DOUGLAS STRUTHWELCOME



A particular nod to Liam McConnell, Robert Carmichael, and Conor McAlpine, who all made their debuts for the club last week. We witnessed some gutsy performances from our new faces, and their energy and determination brought a fresh vibrancy to the team. It's an exciting time for Edinburgh Rugby as we continue to nurture the next generation of talent, and these debutants represent the bright future of the club.

If tonight's match doesn't fully satisfy your rugby watching itch, a number of our younger players will be representing emerging Scotland tomorrow evening at Hive Stadium. It's an exciting opportunity for our younger players to show what they can do, with tickets still available via the Scottish Rugby website.

Back to tonight, I hope you enjoy tonight's match, with some rugby to warm you up as the colder nights draw in!

Thanks for your continued support.

*Douglas Struth,
Managing Director*

We've had exciting news with our recruitment, as Duhan van der Merwe has put pen to paper on a new contract with the club. The explosive winger has been an integral part of our squad, and we're delighted that he will continue to call Edinburgh home for the coming seasons. Duhan's power and pace on the wing make him a key figure in our attacking line-up, and his commitment to the club is a huge boost for our current and future ambitions.

Alongside re-signing Duhan we have also retained the services of young centre Matt Currie, who we believe has the potential to be one of the best midfield players in Scotland. An exciting prospect with full international honours under his belt, it's brilliant to be able to keep hold of one of our hottest properties.

It's great to welcome Duhan back to the starting lineup for tonight's match, although it was enjoyable to see our younger players battling well against Gloucester at Kingsholm last weekend.





DOM MCKAY

EPCR WELCOME

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2024/25 PCR Challenge Cup. This season promises to be one of the most thrilling yet, and we are excited to embark on this journey with our clubs, partners, broadcasters, and most importantly, the fans who make this competition so thrilling.

The EPCR Challenge Cup continues to break new ground. Last season was historic when we saw the Hollywoodbets Sharks become the first South African Club to win an EPCR title, and I've no doubt this season will be filled with more unforgettable matches. 18 clubs from England, France, Georgia, Ireland, Italy, Scotland, South Africa, and Wales will battle it out, and the road to the 2025 Finals will be a showcase of passion, skill, and drama. We are particularly thrilled that this season's grand final will take place in the heart of Welsh rugby, at the magnificent Principality Stadium in Cardiff on Friday May 23 – a perfect stage for what we know will be a truly memorable conclusion to the season.

We are delighted to be on this journey with our official partners, Investec, DHL, Georgia Tourism, OMODA | JAECOO, Tissot, Gilbert, Macron and Qatar Airways. Their contributions help elevate this competition to the world-class level we all expect, and we look forward to another exciting season together. We are also thrilled to welcome Premier Sports to the EPCR family as our new UK and Ireland broadcaster partner.

Their involvement will ensure even more fans can enjoy the action through their coverage of two Challenge Cup pool matches per round, two Challenge Cup Round of 16 games, and all matches in the quarter-finals, semi-finals and Final.

A special thanks also goes to our broadcasters – RTÉ, beIN SPORTS, France Télévisions, SuperSport, S4C, and FloRugby – for bringing the action into the homes of rugby fans across the globe. Your coverage plays an essential role in connecting our fans with the tournament and in sharing these unforgettable moments with the world.

We have also recently launched our new digital platform EPCR TV, which will provide fans with unparalleled access to the best of international club rugby with innovative tailor-made viewing options and global reach.

To the players who make everything possible, to the staff of the competing clubs, to the match officials, to the fans, to the media and to all our stakeholders, we wish everyone a memorable EPCR Challenge Cup season.

*yours in rugby, Dominic McKay
EPCR Chairman*



EPCR
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TEAM LINEUPS

EDINBURGH RUGBY vs AVIRON BAYONNAIS

<i>Wes Goosen</i>	15.	<i>Cheikh Tiberghien</i>
<i>Darcy Graham</i>	14.	<i>Aurelien Callandret</i>
<i>Matt Currie</i>	13.	<i>Arnaud Erbinartegaray</i>
<i>Moses Tuipulotu</i>	12.	<i>Guillaume Martocq</i>
<i>Duhan van der Merwe</i>	11.	<i>Tom Spring</i>
<i>Ross Thompson</i>	10.	<i>Camille Lopez (C)</i>
<i>Ali Price</i>	9.	<i>Baptiste Germain</i>

<i>Pierre Schoeman</i>	1.	<i>Andy Bordelai</i>
<i>Ewan Ashman</i>	2.	<i>Lucas Martin</i>
<i>Paul Hill</i>	3.	<i>Pascal Cotet</i>
<i>Marshall Sykes</i>	4.	<i>Denis Marchois</i>
<i>Grant Gilchrist (C)</i>	5.	<i>Veikoso Poloniati</i>
<i>Jamie Ritchie</i>	6.	<i>Esteban Capilla</i>
<i>Luke Crosbie</i>	7.	<i>Baptiste Heguy</i>
<i>Magnus Bradbury</i>	8.	<i>Rodrigo Bruni</i>

*16. Dave Cherry 17. Boan Venter
18. Javan Sebastian 19. Sam Skinner
20. Tom Dodd 21. Charlie Shiel
22. Ben Healy 23. James Lang*

*16. T. van Jaarsveld 17. Swan Cormenler
18. Pieter Scholtz 19. Remi Bourdeau
20. Noa Traversler 21. Maxime Machenaud
22. Joris Segonds 23. Nadir Megdoud*



DUHAN VAN DER MERWE

Here to stay

Edinburgh were able to announce the exciting news that world-class winger Duhan van der Merwe has extended terms with the capital club.

The deal will see one of world rugby's most exciting and dangerous attacking threats remain in the Scottish capital until Rugby World Cup 2027 at least.

Van der Merwe's extension is a major coup for the capital club, fending off interest from teams worldwide, with Scotland's current top try-scorer delighted to be staying at a club that has 'become his home.'

On re-signing, Van der Merwe said: "I'm delighted to commit my future to Edinburgh Rugby. This club and city are my home."



My wife and I love it here and I'm incredibly proud to represent the city and our supporters.

"I'd be lying if I said other clubs didn't express interest, but Edinburgh is home for me, and my connection to the club and our supporters were a massive driver in my decision to re-sign.

"I joined Edinburgh as a boy and the club has made me into the player I am today. I'm eager to continue writing my story here. I owe it to the club and the fans to give my all in the years to come."

Van der Merwe puts pen-to-paper ahead of a run of massive games for the capital outfit.

Edinburgh face Bayonne in Round 2 of the EPCR Challenge Cup this Friday night before back-to-back 1872 Cup derbies against Glasgow Warriors, with the deciding leg – already the fastest selling 1872 Cup clash in club history – taking place at Scottish Gas Murrayfield on Saturday 28 December (kick-off 3pm).

Van der Merwe is a true big game player and so often shines brightest in the 1872 Cup derbies where a famous brace of intercepted scores secured a famous intercity win back in December 2018.

Van der Merwe backed that up a 90m winner in last year's decisive derby, with Van der Merwe on track to make his 100th appearance in the opening leg of the 1872 Cup at Hampden Park.

He continued: "It will be a privilege to reach 100 appearances for such a historic club.

"Playing in the 1872 Cup is always special and I can't wait to represent this team when we return to Scottish Gas Murrayfield for the deciding leg later this month."

The winger has been a key figure for Edinburgh since joining the club from Montpellier in 2017. After notching up 10 tries in his debut season, Van der Merwe quickly became a fan favourite, known for his electric pace, powerful running and ability to score spectacular tries.



With 45 tries in 98 appearances so far, Van der Merwe is closing in on Edinburgh's all-time try-scoring record of 69 set by Tim Visser, establishing himself as one of the most prolific try-scorers in BKT United Rugby Championship history.

Van der Merwe's impact extends beyond the club level. He has been a key player for Scotland since he made a try-scoring international debut in the home win against Georgia in October 2020.

Van der Merwe's blistering form then brought about a 2021 British & Irish Lions call-up, during which he had the distinction of starting in all three Test matches.

The winger continued to make history during the recent summer tour to The Americas when he crossed the whitewash for his 28th Scotland try to become Scotland's record try-scorer. Van der Merwe grabbed his 30th Scotland score in the recent Autumn Nations Series victory over Australia to remain one try ahead of clubmate Darcy Graham [29] on the all-time list.

Edinburgh Rugby Head Coach Sean Everitt added: "We are absolutely thrilled to secure Duhan's long-term future at the club. He is a world-class talent who brings so much to the team. His ability to break tackles, score tries and create opportunities for others is invaluable.

"Duhan's experience will also be vital in mentoring our young back-three players. He's someone that our academy players look up to and I've got no doubt he will be able share the skills and x-factor he has developed over time to those players that will pull on the Edinburgh jersey soon.

He continued: "Retaining a player of Duhan's calibre is a testament to the club's ambition as well as the environment we've created at Edinburgh Rugby.

"His impact as a player is undeniable and we're excited to have him continue his journey with us. His commitment to the club is a significant boost for the team and our supporters ahead of a big run of fixtures for the club."

Here to stay



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CELTIC CHALLENGE

EDINBURGH SQUAD NAMED FOR 2024/25



This week we announced the women's squad for the 2024/25 Celtic Challenge – which kicks off against rivals Glasgow Warriors next week under the Friday night lights at Hive Stadium (20 December, kick-off 7.35pm).

Head Coach Claire Cruikshank confirmed the final 30-player group, which sees familiar faces return for the side's second campaign in the Celtic Challenge.

Scotland internationalist and last season's Player of the Season Alex Stewart returns to the capital squad, the back-row set to feature for Corstorphine Cougars in this weekend's Arnold Clark Premiership final.

Other returning faces include Aila Ronald (hooker), Molly Poolman (tighthead), Natasha Logan (lock) and Merryn Gunderson (back-row), all of whom were been involved in Scotland women's squads since last season's Celtic Challenge.

Additionally, Hannah Walker returns to action in the back-three, having been handed the Scotland U20 captaincy during the summer.

On the finalised squad, Cruikshank said: "The anticipation is starting to build for this season's Celtic Challenge and I'm delighted to be able to announce our finalised squad.

"It's great to have some familiar faces return to the side and there are other exciting talents coming into the squad who will get a first taste of action at this level."



Forwards

Adelle Ferrie (Corstorphine Cougars)
Aila Ronald (University of Edinburgh)*
Alex Stewart (Corstorphine Cougars)*
Alison Wilson (Heriots)
Caroline Bullock (University of Edinburgh)
Charlotte Russell (Watsonians)
Chloe Brown (Stirling County)
Faye Sutherland (Corstorphine Cougars)
Georgia Young (Watsonians)
Hannah McMahon (University of Edinburgh)
Karis Craig (Watsonians)*
Megan Riach (Garioch)
Merryn Gunderson (Corstorphine Cougars)*
Millie Capaldi (Heriots)
Molly Poolman (Watsonians)*
Natasha Logan (University of Edinburgh)*
Samaanther Taganekurukuru (Stirling County)
Talei Tawake (Watsonians)*

Backs

Ami Conchie (Watsonians)
April McKenzie (Watsonians)
Dawn Lawrie (Watsonians)
Emily Love (Corstorphine Cougars)
Giselle Chicot (Watsonians)
Hannah Ramsay (University of Edinburgh)*
Hannah Walker (University of Edinburgh)*
Holly McIntyre (University of Edinburgh)*
Lisa Brown (University of Edinburgh)*
Lucy MacRae (University of Edinburgh)*
Pip Benson (Corstorphine Cougars)
Rhea Clarke (University of Edinburgh)*

*Scottish Rugby Women's Academy Players



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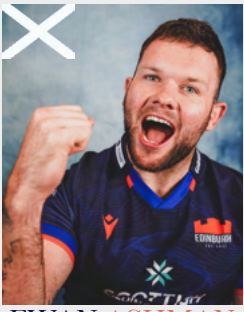


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EDINBURGH RUGBY FIRST TEAM SQUAD 24/25



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MARK BENNETT



EMILIANO BOFFELLI



CONNOR BOYLE



MAGNUS BRADBURY



ROB CARMICHAEL



DAVE CHERRY



LUKE CROSBIE



MATT CURRIE



TOM DODD



GRANT GILCHRIST



WES GOOSEN



DARCY GRAHAM



PADDY HARRISON



BEN HEALY



PAUL HILL



ROBIN HISLOP



JAMIE HODGSON



MIKEY JONES



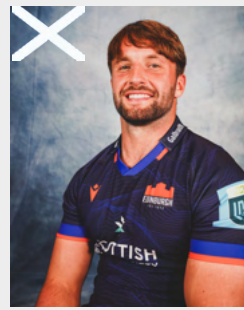
JAMES LANG



ROSS MCCANN



LIAM MCCONNELL



BEN MUNCASTER



HARRY PATERSON



ALI PRICE



D'ARCY RAE



JAMIE RITCHIE



PIERRE SCHOEMAN



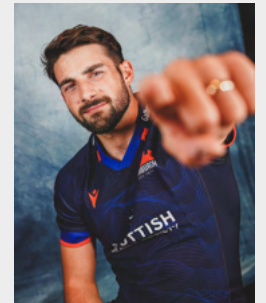
MATT SCOTT



CAMMY SCOTT



JAVAN SEBASTIAN



CHARLIE SHIEL



SAM SKINNER



NATHAN SWEENEY



MARSHALL SYKES



ROSS THOMPSON



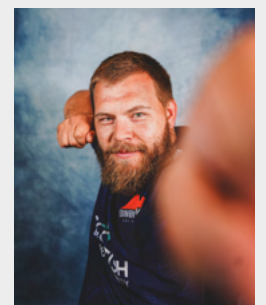
MOSESE TUIPULOTU



DUHAN VAN DER MERWE



BEN VELLACOTT



BOAN VENTER



HAMISH WATSON



ANGUS WILLIAMS



GLEN YOUNG



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Georgia

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SCAN TO SHOP



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Nairn Moncrieff

Hamish MacArthur

Jerry Blyth-Lafferty (hooker)

Hamish MacArthur (scrum-half)

Ollie Blyth-Lafferty (tighthead prop)

Conor McAlpine (scrum-half)

Jack Brown (full-back)

Euan McVie (lock)

Isaac Coates (fly-half)

Nairn Moncrieff (winger)

Tom Currie (back-row)

Harri Morris (hooker)

Freddy Douglas (back-row)

Hector Patterson (scrum-half)

Ollie Duncan (back-row)

Mac Rutherford (lock)

Jack Hocking (full-back)

Jamie Stewart (loosehead prop)

Mikey Jones (loosehead prop)

Findlay Thomson (centre)

Sam Leweni (centre)

Lewis Wells (winger)

Christian Lindsay (lock)

Ross Wolfenden (fly-half)

“With a larger group, we have a fantastic opportunity to nurture these young players and prepare them for the challenges of professional rugby.” – Head Coach Sean Everitt

EDINBURGH RUGBY

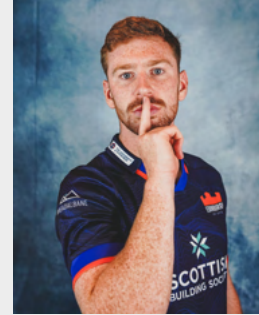
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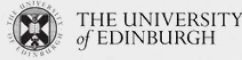
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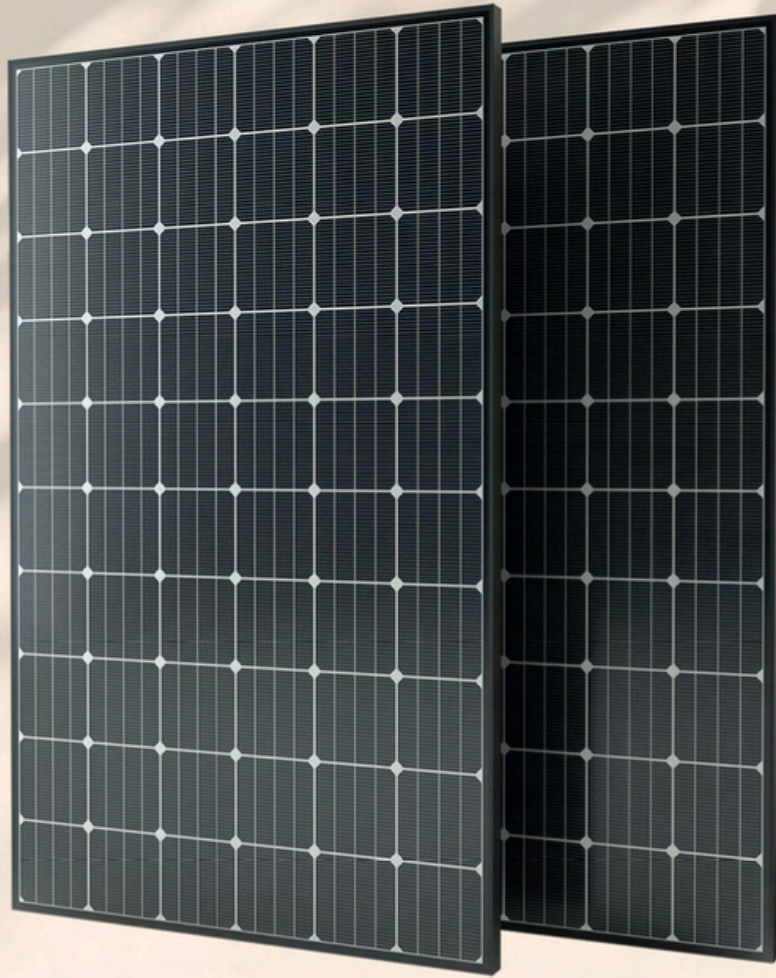
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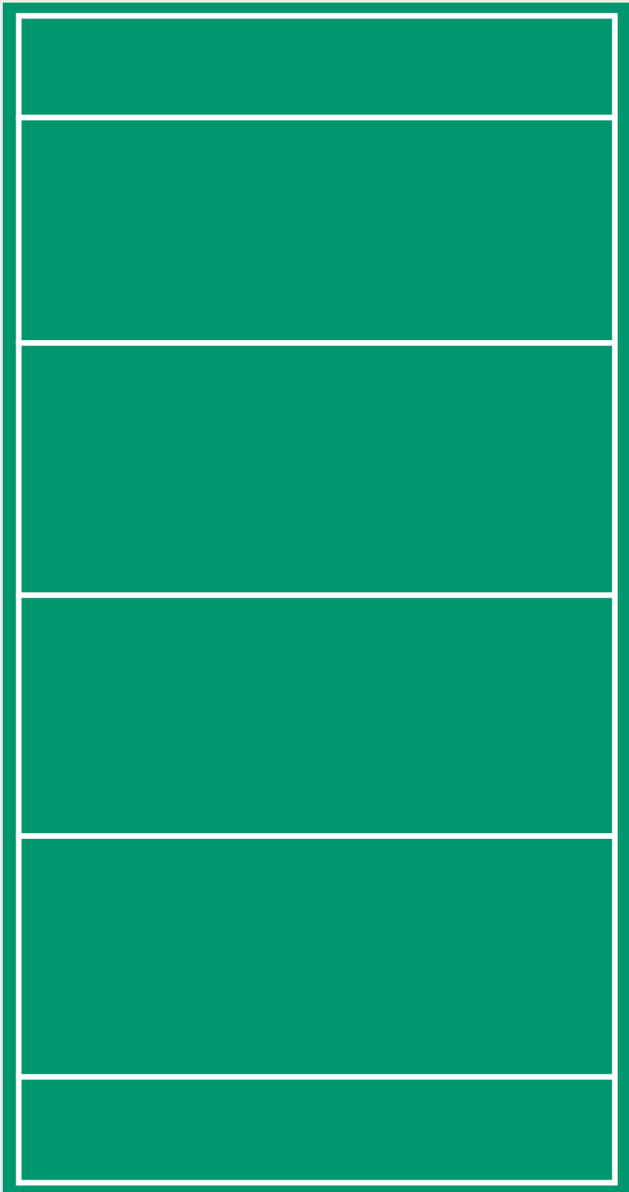
PLAYER TRY TRACKS

EWAN ASHMAN	INTO THE VALLEY	SKIDS
MARK BENNETT	YOU'RE WELCOME	DWAYNE JOHNSON
EMILIANO BOFFELLI	TRY - QUEVEDO: BZRP MUSIC SESSION KICK - PEPAS	TRY - BIZARRE, QUEVEDO KICK - FARRUKO
CONNOR BOYLE	FUNKY TOWN	LIPPS INC
MAGNUS BRADBURY	DELILAH (PULL ME OUT OF THIS)	FRED AGAIN.
ROB CARMICHAEL	BLITZKRIEG BOP	THE RAMONES
DAVE CHERRY	FIREBALL	PITBULL
LUKE CROSBIE	THE SPARK	KABIN CREW, LISDOONVARNA CREW
MATT CURRIE	SAMBA DE JANEIRO	BELLINI
TOM DODD	CRAZY	GNARLS BARKLEY
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
PAUL HILL	WWE: HERE COMES THE MONEY	WWE + JIM JOHNSTON
ROBIN HISLOP	LEVELS	AVICII
JAMIE HODGSON	UNDERDOG	KASABIAN
MIKEY JONES	GOLD DUST	DJ FRESH
JAMES LANG	BACKBONE	STORMZY
ROSS MCCANN	YOUR LOVE	THE OUTFIELD
LIAM MCCONNELL	CHELSEA DAGGER	THE FRATELLIS
HARRI MORRIS	5, 6, 7, 8	STEPS
BEN MUNCASTER	GIMME GIMME GIMME	ABBA
HARRY PATERSON	DUEL OF THE FATES	JOHN WILLIAMS
ALI PRICE	BELIEVE	CHER
D'ARCY RAE	SABOTAGE	BEASTIE BOYS
JAMIE RITCHIE	SEVEN NATION ARMY	WHITE STRIPES
PIERRE SCHOEMAN	THE GREATEST SHOW	THE GREATEST SHOWMAN ENSEMBLE
CAMMY SCOTT	CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF OF YOU	FRANKIE VALLI
MATT SCOTT	JUMP	VAN HALEN
JAVAN SEBASTIAN	MANY MEN	50 CENT
CHARLIE SHIEL	YES SIR I CAN BOOGIE	BACCARA
SAM SKINNER	CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'	THE MAMAS & THE PAPAS
NATHAN SWEENEY	HEY BABY	DJ OTZI
MARSHALL SYKES	A LITTLE LESS CONVERSATION	ELVIS PRESLEY JUNKIE XL EDIT
ROSS THOMPSON	FREE BIRD	MOONLIGHT
MOSESE TUIPULOTU	FLEX (OOH, OOH OOH)	RICH HOMIE QUAN
DUHAN VAN DER MERWE	L'AMOUR TOUJOURS	GIGI D'AGOSTINO
BEN VELLACOTT	HOUDINI	EMINEM
BOAN VENTER	LIVING ON A PRAYER	BON JOVI
HAMISH WATSON	THIS IS THE ONE	STONE ROSES
ANGUS WILLIAMS	BACK IN BLACK	ACDC
GLEN YOUNG	WE LIKE TO PARTY	VENGABOYS

STAIR 27-32

RIVERSIDE STAND

TERRACE F / G / H



TERRACE B

TERRACE A

MURRAYFIELD STAND

STAIR 14-16

STAIR 10-12



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STAIR 5

MAIN STAND

STAIR 6-9

WHEELCHAIR TERRACE

Saughtonhall Entry



STAIR 24-26



LOTHIAN STAND

STAIR 20-23

STAIR 17-19

TERRACE E

TERRACE D

TERRACE C



Roseburn Street Entry



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PRESS PASS SEAN EVERITT



“We’ve got another two big games post the EPCR as well and we’d like to build momentum and consistency in our selection”

Head Coach Sean Everitt is expecting a fierce European clash when Bayonne visit the Scottish capital this Friday night in Round 2 of the EPCR Challenge Cup.

The capital side go into the match-up – which is a repeat of last season’s EPCR Round of 16 encounter – off the back of a tough opening match in Gloucester which saw Edinburgh take home a losing-bonus point.

Sean Everitt’s side will be keen to get back to winning ways at home having picked up bonus-point victories in their last three matches at Hive Stadium.

“We expect Bayonne to be full strength,” said Everitt. “If they’ve set out to say that this is a competition they want to win, and they feel that they can, then I would expect them to bring the best team.”

“Bayonne come into Friday night’s clash having beaten Scarlets 17-16 in Round 1. The Basque side have been impressive at home in the French Top 14 – beating Toulouse, Stade Francais and La Rochelle – but have struggled on the road so far this campaign. Everitt continued: “Bayonne have recruited really well this year. You know, Manu Tuilagi is one of the big signings that they’ve made. And they rely on him to get going forward.

“Simply put, you’re playing against teams that you don’t normally play against”



“They’ve made it clear that they wanted an improvement this year, and they wanted to give EPCR a good go – they saw that as an opportunity for them. They’re sitting fifth in the top 14. And they’re a much-improved team, as I said earlier. They are a big challenge for us. With the X Factor players that they have, particularly in the back three. So, we’re going to have to be fully switched on to be able to win this one.”

With a number of the club’s Scotland internationalists missing out on last weekend’s tight defeat at Kingsholm due to rest protocol, Everitt is looking forward to getting some of those stars back in the mix at home.

“We’re going to rotate in certain positions where we’re able to. We are welcoming the Scottish internationals back from a break last week and thoroughly deserved. We’d like to get them into the mix this weekend.



“We’ve got another two big games post the EPCR as well and we’d like to build momentum and consistency in our selection.”

For Everitt, European rugby is always a special occasion with the opportunity for players to take on opposition and styles of rugby they have never faced before.

“Simply put, you’re playing against teams that you don’t normally play against,” continued Everitt. “We did play Gloucester in a friendly. Other than that, we wouldn’t play against Gloucester.

“We don’t often get an opportunity to play against the Top 14 teams and particularly a team like Bayonne, who we played against last year, they’ve made big improvements and they’re sitting fifth in the French Top 14.

“So it’s going to be a good game and one that everyone’s looking forward to.”

“They’ve made it clear that they wanted an improvement this year, and they wanted to give EPCR a good go – they saw that as an opportunity for them”

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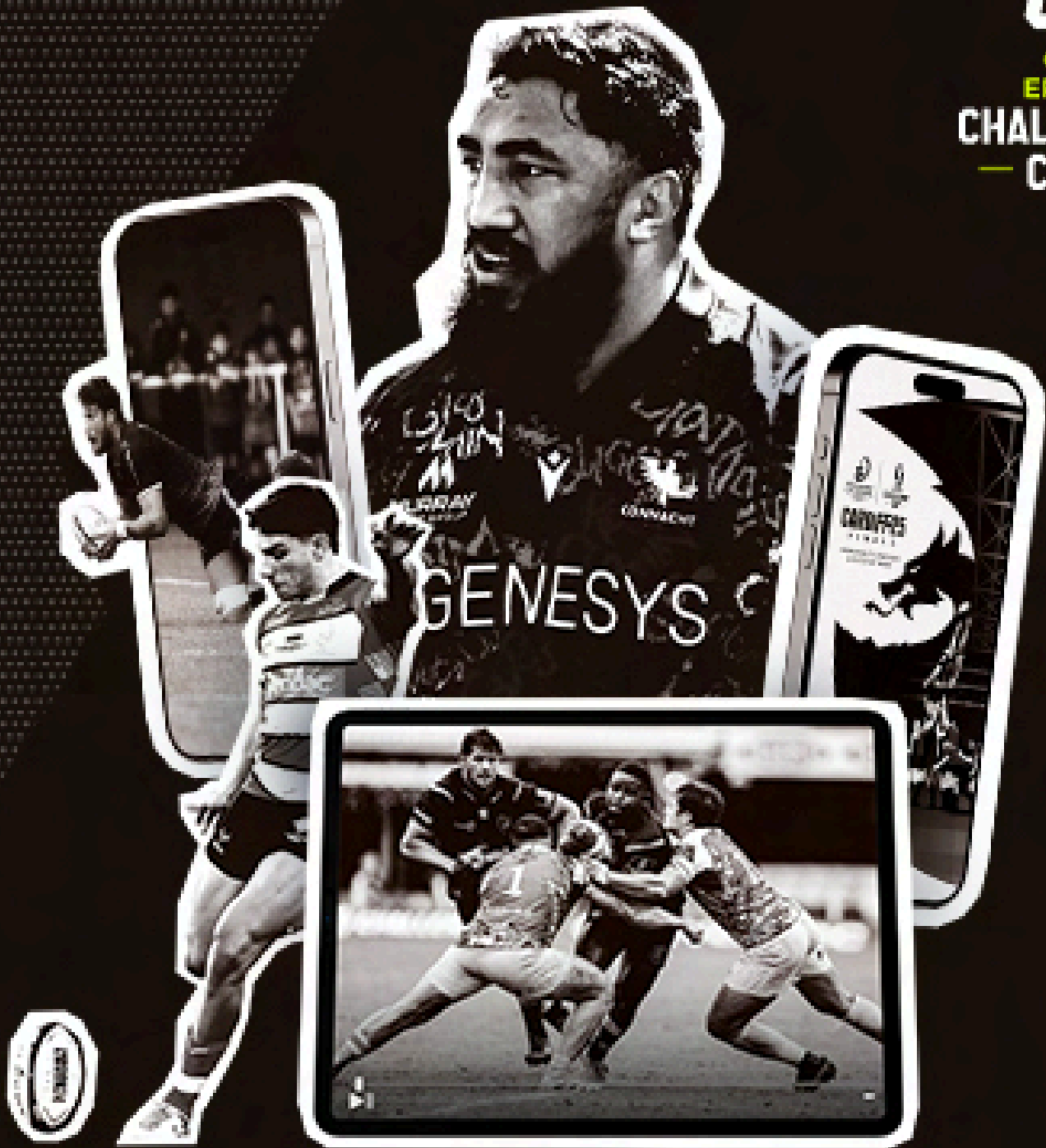
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EDINBURGH 50 - 33 BENETTON RUGBY

Edinburgh survived a second-half scare to claim a 50-33 bonus-point win over Benetton and move up to seventh in the BKT United Rugby Championship table.

The capital side were utterly dominant in the first half, scoring tries through Duhan van der Merwe, Ben Muncaster, Paul Hill and a double from Magnus Bradbury to lead 35-0 at the break.

Benetton mounted a strong second-half comeback, with two tries from Augustin Creevy and one for Paolo Odogwu, and although Ali Price crossed for the hosts, Alessandro Isekor and Malaki Fekitoa scores ensured a nervy finish.

Muncaster grabbed his second try late on and Ben Healy kicked a penalty to ensure Edinburgh held on for the deserved win.

The game was barely a minute old when a slick backs move put Edinburgh full-back Wes Goosen through a gap and he fed Van der Merwe to race home for the try.

The second was not long in coming. From a messy line-out on the 22, Muncaster gathered the loose ball, powered through several tackles and stretched for the line to score.



Bradbury crossed for his second moments later as Edinburgh wrapped up the bonus point before the 25-minute mark.

Prop Hill then pounced on a loose ball to charge home for a try in the final play of the first half to round off a one-sided opening 40 in blustery conditions.

With the strong winds behind them, Benetton finally showed some signs of life early in the second half – Odogwu and substitute Creevy crossing in quick succession to check the home side’s momentum.

What looked like a fleeting show of defiance threatened to become something more when Creevy ploughed over again to make it 35-19.

Edinburgh restored some order when Darcy Graham skipped his way through and popped a pass off the deck for Price to score.

Benetton kept coming though, propelled forward by the wind, and flanker Izekor forced himself over to bring his side back within two scores.

Fekitoa then went over for the Italians’ fifth try and it was game on at Hive Stadium.

The capital side showed great character to close out the match however, with Muncaster going over from close range for his second try and Healy splitting the posts off the tee to secure a 50-point victory.

Edinburgh team: W Goosen; D Graham, M Currie, M Tuipulotu, D van der Merwe (R McCann 73); R Thompson (B Healy 68), A Price (B Vellacott 62); P Schoeman (B Venter 62), E Ashman (P Harrison 56), P Hill (D Rae 62), M Sykes (S Skinner 67), G Gilchrist (capt), J Ritchie, B Muncaster, M Bradbury (F Douglas 64).

Tries: Van der Merwe, Muncaster 2. Bradbury 2, Hill, Price;. Cons: Thompson 5, Healy; Pen: Healy.



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