

## Selkirk v Currie Chieftians 22.10.22

Ending the first half of the season with a 3<sup>rd</sup> vs 4<sup>th</sup> place fight off was always going to boost excitement for this game as Selkirk hosted Currie.

Selkirk looked to put the pressure on the Edinburgh side early on with a well worked move resulting in Josh Welsh running down the touchline to then be stripped 10m away from the try line. Welsh then made up for this as he crossed the whitewash after a number of rumbling carries which gave the backs a go forward platform and Welsh was happy to finish off. Aaron McColm slotted the conversion giving the home side an early lead, 7 – 0.

Currie needed to get themselves started and this was aided when a long 50-22 kick was put in giving them possession in a good attacking area but a knock on in the lineout halted this attack and allowed to Selkirk to clear their lines. The next lineout then went as planned as they gathered the ball and got their maul set up. As the maul crept into the Selkirk's 22 and closer to the try line it was DJ Innes that crashed over the line after Paddy Boyer smuggled the ball to him, unfortunately Adam Hall was unable to give his team maximum points making the scoreboard read 7-5.

As Selkirk kicked off for the restart, Andrew Grant-Suttie was on the wrong side of some friendly fire as he caught his team-mates shoulder during a tackle and had to leave to pitch for medical treatment.

A home side penalty saw Currie have an attacking line out on the 5m line but Selkirk defended the maul and forced the visiting side backwards. Currie then changed tactics and attacked towards the midfield of the pitch but Ryan Godsmark was on hand to win a turnover for the Souters so they could ease the pressure.



With both sides failing to build any momentum through handling errors and swapping possession amongst them it was Aaron McColm who hot footed it through the defence driving his side deep into the opposition's half. An offside penalty from the defence handed another opportunity to McColm who gladly split the uprights and taking back the lead, 10 – 5. However, Currie hit straight back from the restart when they regathered the ball from a

kick and spotting a gap left by the chasing Ryan Cottrell, took off down the far touch line. Some quick phases and patience resulted in Gregor Nelson dotting down under the posts giving Hall an easy kick which he successfully converted and stealing the lead from the home side, 10 – 12.

It wasn't long until the 3<sup>rd</sup> try came for the Edinburgh based team when the backs worked together and Cammy Meager strolled over with Hall adding the extras.

Selkirk had to find a way to stall this growing in confidence Currie side and to do that they went back to keeping the ball in tight and hitting it up. They worked their way up the pitch through a mix of hard carries and ill-discipline from the visiting side. An attacking scrum just shy of the opposition's 22m gave the home side a good attacking opportunity. Andrew McColm picked the ball from the base of the scrum and made a run towards the try line but was taken down illegally by a high tackle from Rhys Davies resulted in Davies being sent to the sin bin for ten minutes. Unfortunately, McColm (Aaron) was unable to close the gap on the scoreboard as the kick drifted past the upright which meant the half time score remained 10 – 19.



McColm was then given the chance at the start of the second half to make up for the miss with another kick to the posts which he banged through the uprights, clawing three points back for his team, 13 – 19. Every coach tells their team that the points aren't secure until you gather the restart and clear your lines, and this is exactly what Selkirk failed to do, giving a penalty away straight away and allowing Currie to cancel out the previous Selkirk score, 13 – 22.

Currie seemed to be finding their shape and some quick thinking from Paddy Boyer at a penalty drove his side in to the Selkirk half. A patient build up and a number of phases led to Selkirk's James Bett being caught offside and earning him a yellow card. Seeing a chance to stretch their lead, Currie opted for the scrum against what had been a dominant Selkirk pack. The scrum was steady and gave them clean ball to play with but after a number of phases the ball was stripped by Bruce Riddell and Josh Welsh cleared the lines. The ball fell in to the waiting arms of Charlie Brett who rampaged through the oncoming defence, fed James

McCaig who in turn fed DJ Innes giving him his second try of the day and another successful conversion from Hall, stretching the lead to 13 – 29.

Selkirk needed to get a grasp of the game and getting an attacking lineout just five metres from the try line was the boost they were looking for. As the forward pack did what they do best and rumbled towards the try line, recycling the ball, inching ever closer to the whitewash, the ball was whipped away by Godsmark to McColm who stepped off his right foot and dived over. Converting his own try and closing the gap 20 –29.

Entering into the final quarter, Currie wanted to keep Selkirk on the back foot with some interlinking between the forwards and backs. After winning a penalty for Selkirk being offside, they looked to pile on the pressure and went for the lineout five meters from the try line. Unfortunately, they weren't able to secure the ball and after knocking it on and giving the home side possession and another scrum which, they had been dominant in all game, it was almost a given that Selkirk would win a penalty to enable them to clear their lines and this was exactly what happened.

It was Selkirk's turn however to fumble at the lineout and Currie took advantage of this as their back line split the home side centres apart and stormed in to the Selkirk 22m before knocking the ball on. Another good scrum from the Souters saw Godsmark get the ball away and through the hands of the backs for Jack Hamilton to clear to touch. However, the referee David Young mistakenly deemed the ball to have been passed back in to the 22m by Godsmark and therefore kicked directly into touch illegally handing possession and good territory back to Currie. Taking advantage of having ball in hand, Currie started battering the defence, edging ever closer to then knock the ball on.

After a bout of some kicking tennis, it was Currie who took the initiative and found a gap in the back line to drive forward once again but a dubious offload landed in Jack Hamilton's hands who popped the ball off the Godsmark to clear. A kick back from Currie was gathered in by McColm who cleared for touch, pushing the defending team back to the ten-metre line. As time ticked away, a nice soft pass from Ross Nixon to Josh Welsh saw him crashing into defence pushing them further back in to their own half. Selkirk were keen to get something out of this game and they thought they had that chance when they were awarded a penalty. Though, this was reversed due to Luke Pettie being seen to retaliate to a questionable tackle and the possibility of getting anything from the game was shattered, ending the game 20 –29.



Photos courtesy of Grant Kinghorn