

### Selkirk v Hawick 29.10.22

With Selkirk being the only team that Hawick hasn't beaten this season so far it was inevitable that the visitors were looking for revenge. The crowds packed in to Philiphaugh to what would not be the most entertaining of games, but a battle of defences and it was the Greens who were the victors.

Selkirk started with great energy as they kicked off and a joint tackle by **Josh Welsh** and **Monroe Job** as Hawick gathered the ball forcing an early mistake. However, with a knock on at the lineout followed by a penalty at the scrum, Hawick were able to easily clear their lines. Securing their own lineout and setting up a maul, which Selkirk defended well, meant that **Kyle Brunton** could push his team forward and kicked into Selkirk's 22m, where **Matt Reid** collected the ball, passed to **Ryan Cottrell** gathering pace down the stand side touch line but with the defence coming across, he chipped the ball forward which then bobbled into touch. Hawick were unable to secure this ball and **James Bett** gathered and set it up. Selkirk looked to squeeze Hawick back into their 22 when **Craig Jackson** kicked the ball through the defence, but Hawick's **Ronan McKean** was happy to return the favour and kick it straight back pushing the home side back into their own half.

A dummy throw at the lineout by Selkirk gave Hawick the chance to show their dominance when they opted for the scrum. It was a steady platform for Hawick to work off but a turnover by **Ross Nixon** in the tackle which **Zenon Szwagrzak** collected and popped to **Aaron McColm** who cleared the lines to awaiting **Kirk Ford**. Some kicking tennis then started until **Jackson** ended it with a kick into touch at the halfway line. After securing ball at the lineout, it went out to the backs where **Andrew Mitchell** was unable to hold on to the pass and knocked it on to Selkirk's **Andrew Cochrane** who had **James Head** rampaging on his shoulder, but he too was unable to hold on to the ball handing possession back to the Greens.



Another scrum which Hawick would have felt comfortable with, but Selkirk had other ideas and looked to disrupt as much as possible. As the ball eventually made its way out of the scrum, **Ross Nixon** was on hand once again with a well-timed tackle and turnover allowing his forwards to put together some phases. As the defence were getting drawn in, a grubber

kick by **Nixon** for his teammates to chase but a late tackle by **Jae Linton** gave the home side much needed territory.

The Souters' were building up the phases and getting some go forward ball until **Welsh** was unable to hold to a pass from his centre partner **Jackson** which **Kirk Ford** happily cleared to touch. Another successful lineout for Selkirk saw **Head** gather the ball and get the maul set up, which has been a dominant force for the home side in previous games. A break off the maul by **Szwagrzak** was thwarted by a high tackle from **Nicky Little** which dislodged the ball and Hawick cleared once again.



It seemed that it didn't matter what Selkirk threw at them, Hawick were able to defend, and this was once again shown when the boys in blue fumbled another ball, giving **Kyle Brunton** an opportunity to ease the pressure. **James Head** threw his body on the line and charged the kick but required a moment to regather himself before joining his teammates.

After a sequence of phases and knock ons by both teams but after winning the ball back at scrum time, Jackson ran hard into a green wall but a quick ruck saw **Szwagrzak** carry then pass to **Ryan Cottrell** who once again found some space behind the defensive line with a chip kick but a dubious change of direction by the Hawick winger slowed **Cottrell's** chase allowing Hawick to clear. **Connor Sutherland** won lineout ball for the Greens which was shipped out to **Callum Renwick** who was storming down the midfield, the ball was recycled quickly and **Brunton** cleverly turned the oncoming defence with a sly grubber kick which **Lewis Ferguson** won the foot race to dot the ball over the try line. **Ford** was unable to convert leaving the scoreboard at 0 – 5.

With ten minutes left in the first half, the Philiphaugh side were desperate to get some points on the board and it looked as though that would happen when a clever dink through by **Matt Reid** allowed **Cottrell** to show his pace and chase but **Ronan McKean** managed to beat him to it and ground the ball giving the Hawick a chance to clear their lines. Selkirk started to build some momentum through some attacking phases but another handling error stalled proceedings and ended their half frustrated.

Half time score 0 – 5

As the second half kicked off, the home support was hoping for a rejuvenated side, but it was not to be as it was Hawick to draw blood first when **McKean** intercepted an offload and used his sprint training from the summer to cross the whitewash in the corner stretching his team's lead to 0 – 10.

There was more of 'you have the ball, no you have the ball' as possession swapped between the teams regularly but when **Sutherland** dropped the ball and Selkirk's **Nixon** was the first to pounce things seemed to heat up. From this, **Nixon** popped the ball to **McColm** who offloaded to **Luke Pettie** who then passed out the back to **Jackson** who threw a long pass out for **Reid** who grubber kicked it in to the in-goal area and **Lachlan Ferguson** was more than happy to dive on it in the corner. Conversion was unsuccessful but the score board now read 5 – 10.



**Reid** wasn't able to follow on from this moment of brilliance as he unfortunately dropped the ball from a kick giving the visiting side easy territory on the 22. A sequence of scrums ensued which saw **Bruce Riddell** come to the field alongside the returning **Szwagrzak**. As Selkirk steadied the flow of the Green Machine and, in fact, look to get some go forward of their own in the scrum, referee **Finlay Brown** deemed Selkirk to be boring in and award Hawick the penalty. From which **Linton** was happy to do what he does best and bounce off some defenders and set the ball up for **Brunton** to offload to **Mitchell** who put **Ford** into the gap to score the teams third try. He also converted his own try, the score now read 5 – 17.



A frustrated Selkirk managed to regather the ball from the restart and **Szwagrzak** crashed up in the midfield followed by a hard run from **Scott McClymont**. With some quick rucks **Welsh** managed to make a half break and inject some pace into his side, quick recycle of the ball and offload to **Head** to **McColm** who then made a half break for himself but a pop pass from **Welsh** to **Reid** was off target and allowed Hawick to clear their lines. Hawick were caught offside after some hard runs and quick rucks, and this allowed **Reid** to close the gap and slot the penalty, 8 – 17.



It was Hawick's turn to play some rugby in the oppositions half and with **Linton** repelling the defenders until he hit the brick wall of **James Head**, they recycled the ball and Hawick's new kid on the block **Ethan Reilly** managed to get his hands on the ball but there was a knock on in the ruck.

Another lineout on the halfway line, saw **Job** secured possession and tapped down to **Hamilton** who got the ball out **McColm** then **McClymont** who crashed it up in the midfield.

Another quick turnaround saw **Nixon** get the ball, step of his left foot through the Hawick defence but **Job** was unable to hold on to the offload.

One more opportunity fell to Selkirk as **Welsh** found a chink in the Hawick armour and made a break but was unable to join up with his support. The home side retained the ball well and managed to work their way closer to the try line and with a pick and go from **Pettie** halted on the line by Hawick, **Hamilton** took an opportunistic chance and chipped the ball over the defence line in the hope that either **Reid** or **Ferguson** could gather it in but this was not to be and instead **McKean** was the one take hold of the ball and dot it down ending Selkirk's final attack and Hawick the chance to clear their lines once more and end the match, 8 – 17.

Photos by Grant Kinghorn