

Selkirk v Musselburgh 03.12.22

As every game did round the country the players and crowd took part in a minute's applause in memory of Doddie Weir and the inspiration he has and will continue to be to so many people.



Selkirk started as they would have hoped with a quick try by Callum Anderson who was on the end of some good interlinking between the forwards and backs. Unfortunately, Aaron McColm was unable to convert.



The home side look to build on the good start and with a ball out the back to McColm from James Bett who found Josh Welsh on his shoulder then out to his centre partner Ben Pickles running in to the visiting half. A penalty for Musselburgh putting hands in the ruck gave the Souters a chance to extend their lead but the kick fell short although not all was lost as Musselburgh were unable to clear their lines efficiently and Selkirk had an attacking lineout on the 5m line. The Souter's were able to secure lineout ball and get their maul set up which was defended well. Some hard hits by the forwards in the midfield forced yet another penalty from the Edinburgh side in which Selkirk opted for the lineout. Secure ball and maul set up but again this was defended well. James Head was stopped just shy of the try-line which then allowed Bruce Riddell to pick and dive over the line and McColm was able to split the uprights stretching his team's lead, 12 – 0.

A good amount of possession saw Selkirk build some phases and a convincing dummy run by Head allowed Ryan Cottrell to gain extra metres down the pitch and offload to McColm. A penalty for a high tackle meant that Selkirk could push further into Musselburgh's half. Getting their maul set up once again tying in the defence then some interlinking play but another high tackle led to Musselburgh getting a warning from referee Michael Todd for the number of penalties. McColm stepped up and slotted another three points making the scoreboard read 15 – 0.

Musselburgh barely had their hands on the ball but when they did, they made the most of it. A well-executed lineout into a maul where Craig Owenson was at the back when it eventually rumbled over the line. Danny Owenson converted giving the team maximum points, 15 – 7.

It wasn't long until the Stoneyhill men doubled their points tally when James Ferguson crossed the whitewash when he gathered a long pass from Paul Cunningham which was deemed to be flat by the referee.

Selkirk seemed to be able to work up the field well and it looked promising when Ben Pickles stepped against the grain but proceedings were brought to halt as James Head had to get medical treatment for a head knock and proceeded to leave the field. Another charge from the Souters saw some desperate defence from Musselburgh which ended in Callum Champion being sent to the bin. A quick tap and charge from Russell Anderson who was stopped just short of the try-line. The ball then made its way out to the backs where McColm found Hamilton, tipped it on to Welsh who lobbed a pass to Ferguson but this was intercepted by Musselburgh and they were able to clear their lines.



As the half time break loomed, it was Burgh boys that looked to be ending on a high. Securing the ball at a lineout and getting it along the backline from one touchline to the other. A missed tackle allowed Michael Badenhorst to storm down the pitch deep into the Selkirk's half with Rory Watt in support but a last ditch tap tackle by Monroe Job was just enough to stop Watt in his tracks. It was their turn to muscle up and batter the line and whilst McColm lay next to the ruck injured, Neil McNairn snuck under the defence giving his team the lead at half time, 15 – 21 as Owenson successfully converted.

The Stoneyhill men started the second half as they finished the first and they gathered the ball from a kick and slipped past Ryan Cottrell. A loose pass meant they lost ground but a steam rolling run down the far side and a penalty for not rolling at the ruck gave them a chance to push on towards the try-line. Another lineout secured and maul set up but defended well meant that Musselburgh changed tactic and started making some hard hits allowing scrum half Finn Duraj bag the bonus point try.

The hosts were now 26-15 down and needed to get a grip on the game. A switch play by Ethan McVicker to Scott McClymont with Ryan Cottrell running a good support line and popped the ball to Riddell who continued the charge. Although errors were creeping into the home side as more loose passes saw the ball roll in to touch.

A deftly chip kick by McVicar which was knocked on by Sandy Watt but this was changed to a penalty for Musselburgh as Monroe Job was penalised for unsportsmanship and Anderson was sent to bin as he was seen to have escalated the situation.



Musselburgh were finding their groove and were on the attack again from a kick but a terrific tackle by Callum Turnbull forced them in to touch but another penalty for not rolling allowed Owenson so stretch the lead to 15 – 29.

There was some ill-discipline from both sides and when Selkirk got a lineout on the attacking 5m line this was an opportunity to get momentum going again. Good maul set up from the lineout and the forward pack fronted up and got the drive going forward and when the pile landed over the line it was Riddell who was at the bottom of the pack and scoring his second try of the day, closing the gap 20 – 29.

The crowd hoped this was the start of a comeback when Hamilton executed a pinpoint crossfield kick to Cottrell storming down the stand side touchline but was dragged into touch.

However, it was not long before the visitors increased the gap to 20 – 32 when Selkirk were penalised once again at the ruck. The home side was desperate to get something out of the game when McClymont broke away but was brought down short of the line. Max Outram was next to be sent to the touchline for ten minutes as he played the ball on the ground. Creeping towards the line with some close contact hits from the forwards the game ended

when referee Michael Todd judged McVicar to have knocked the ball on but it was in fact a sneaky boot from a Musselburgh player that caused this, final score 20 – 32.