

Selkirk v Currie 02.09.23

CURRIE Chieftains made their class tell against an under-prepared Selkirk, running in seven tries to begin their season with a bonus-point victory.

“We knew Selkirk would come out the blocks at us,” Currie coach **Ally Donaldson** said. “I don’t think they had the smoothest build-up to this game, but we knew they’d be physical, kick well and make life really difficult.

“We didn’t help ourselves at times and managed to solve some of the problems. We’re delighted to come away with five points but we definitely have a lot of improving to do going forward.”



A glorious late summer day in Selkirk played host to a cracker of a season opener and it was the hosts who had the absolute dream start. Full-back **Callum Anderson** capitalised on an aimless clearing kick to weave his way into the 22, then the Selkirk pack ground their way forward through the phases, with tighthead prop **Zenon Szwagrzak** using his impressive power to burrow to the line for the opening score. **Cameron Easson** converted.



Currie steadily gained the ascendancy after that, and the mounting pressure eventually proved too great and **Chris Anderson** managed to dart over under the posts after a spell of dominant possession. **Charlie Brett** converted.

Another scoring chance for the Chieftains was soon created by a magnificent steal from new man Sam Cardosi, but in the end **Ryan Daley** just failed to find replacement **Kody McGovern**, who had looked ideally placed to score on the left wing. That second try was only delayed, however, and it came when McGovern had the speed to get past four Selkirk defenders before popping inside to the onrushing **Cammy Gray**, who dived over to give the visitors a half-time lead.

DJ Innes extended Currie's advantage with the first score of the second half, but Selkirk hit back with a try from captain **Scott McClymont** after good work by Anderson. The momentum was with the home side – all the more so when Currie's Will Inglis was sinbinned after a rampaging maul was pulled to the floor. But just as Selkirk seemed sure to score again, **Sam Cardossi** gave Currie a reprieve with an excellent turnover.



The Chieftains then hit back, livewire scrum-half **Cam Lessels** weaving his way through a gap and getting his team on the front foot. **Ali Bain** called it back to the blindside and despite the coaches pleading for the ball to be spun wide, he delivered a handy show and go, combined with a burst of power and he was out in open country. Bain found McGovern, who was rewarded with a try of his own.

The relentless Currie pressure continued, and a set move stemming from an Innes turnover saw **Matt O'Neill** release his centre Gray, who cantered over for an easy try.

Selkirk were not finished, and after another handy turnover from kick-off they found themselves deep in Currie territory. The forwards kept it tight for several phases before the ball was spun wide, Anderson turned creator and found his fly-half **Easson**, who galloped in to give his team hope.



But then Currie began to turn the screw as the home side tired. **Ollie Blyth-Lafferty** found it far too easy to demonstrate his impressive power and thunder over for his team's sixth try of the day, and then **Rhys Davies** added a seventh after diving on a loose ball following a charge down.

"This being only our second real game, there were certainly more positives than negatives," new Selkirk coach **Gordon Henderson** insisted. "We scored some really good tries, the set piece could be better, but we caused Currie problems by securing good territory and putting pressure on them. It's a step forward from last week and I think we will put in an 80-minute performance against Hawks next weekend after a good week of training.

"We want to survive in the Premiership and the guys are hungry. Pushing for play-offs by next year is one of our goals. We will look to improve every week in what will be a tough year."

Teams -

Selkirk: C Anderson; C Findlater, J Welsh, A Grant-Suttie, B Cullen; C Easson, Aaron McColm; L Pettie, B Riddell, Z Szwagrzak, A Cochrane, D Nichol, J Turnbull, S McClymont, Andrew McColm. **Substitutes:** F Easson, J Milliband, C Turnbull, J Beveridge, F Malin.

Currie Chieftains: C Brett; R Daley, DJ Innes, C Gray, I Sim,;M O'Neil, C Lessels; C Anderson, R Vucago, G Carson, C West, W Inglis, A McCallum, S Cardosi, R Davies. **Substitutes:** T Jeffrey, O Blyth-Lafferty, A Bain, K Steel, K McGovern.

Report by The Offside Line
Photos by David Nichol