

## **Biggar Ladies 19 West of Scotland Ladies 12.**

A bare scoreline that tells nothing of an afternoon of courage and commitment, of teamwork and passion.

It is always a hard battle at Hartree Mills with the two clubs usually well-matched. Rachael Millar, Ellen Forsyth and Rachel Morrison were missing from the West line-up but the Campbells, Anna and Ciera, resumed their partnership at lock. The former would have an outstanding eighty minutes, deservedly being named West's "Player of the Match". Rowan Todd and Kim Toland returned on the wings with Laura Martin back at inside centre.

At openside was Millie Jackson who had played so promisingly in the opening game of the season against Oban Lorne. Her return would last but fifteen seconds. In the first tackle of the match she sustained an injury that meant her departure from the game. She was replaced by the versatile Caitlin Reilly. Remarkably, after the game restarted with a scrum, the home side would lose a player to injury. The ball was swept wide in the backs to left wing Victoria Haddow. Haddow took the ball into contact and received a head knock. Her physio's assessment saw her, too, retire from the action. The physios' work for the afternoon was by no means over. Next to retire from the fray was Biggar loosehead prop Poppy Clarkson.

It was the mid-point of the half before the scoreboard operator was called into action. It was Biggar who went ahead, centre Emelia Knights' making the break that took her clear of the West cover defence. This score remained the difference between the sides until with only eight minutes left until the interval, West got their first points. Excellent work by the pack took them into the home 22. From a ruck fifteen metres out, scrum half Katie Wilson picked up to avoid her opposite number and skip over. Alexa Smith's conversion gave her side a 7-5 lead at the interval. Just after that try, West loosehead Natasha Burge, in such try-scoring form recently, was the next to have her afternoon cut short when sustaining injury in making a superb tackle on Biggar's speedy full back, Geraldine Kimm. Ashley Blair was the replacement.

The second half began as the first half, West lost a player in the opening minute. Left wing Kim Toland left to be replaced by Tia Stevenson-Cook. West's hopes took a further blow ten minutes later when Kimm used her pace to full advantage to extend her side's lead. She took the conversion herself and was successful. Alexandra Phillips on the Biggar right wing had showed throughout that she, too, was fast across the ground. She went clear to touch down and leave Kimm with an easy kick in front of goal.

West quickly retaliated to show they were not out of it with Ciera Campbell forcing her way over after a concerted forward drive. West dominated the remainder of the match but the home defence held firm. The referee's whistle for no side did seem rather early.

Next Sunday, West Ladies travel to Fort Matilda to face Greenock Wanderers Ladies. Kick-off is two o'clock.

West of Scotland Ladies: Amber Johnston; Rowan Toadd, Jade Scott, Laura Martin,  
Kim Toland; Alexa Smith, Katie Wilson; Natasha Burge,  
Alice Masson, Vanessa Reid-Phelps; Anna Campbell,  
Ciera Campbell; Louise Wilson, Millie Jackson, Rosie Broadhurst.  
Replacements: Ashley Blair, Rebecca Schaschke, Megan Scullion, Lauren Stuart,  
Caitlin Reilly, Tia Stevenson-Cook.