

## West 27-32 Murrayfield Wanderers

A game played in unusually clement September weather this was a bit of a Jekyll and Hyde performance from the West team. What seemed a routine home victory at half time was turned round in the second half when some of the West tackles seemed to be optional. To be fair their error count was better than last week but still enough to be of concern.

The visitors put West under pressure from the kick off with this pressure finally resulting in a penalty for Murrayfield Wanderers out wide. This kick was missed by their stand-off Lachlan Lee. Getting let off the hook like this seemed to put some wind in the West sails and a good break by West backs Drew Reddie and Calum Booth up the left wing was only stopped by what was adjudged to be a high tackle.



The West scrum in a good attacking position on the Murrayfield Wanderers 5m line was spoiled by the pass out being dropped. The resulting Murrayfield Wanderers scrum saw them work their way back up the park and West were again on defensive duties. A good break out by the Murrayfield Wanderers No 8 Fraser Cowe was stopped illegally 14m out and the resulting penalty was duly slotted by Lee to start the scoreboard ticking. They added further to the scoreboard shortly after when a dropped ball gave Murrayfield Wanderers a scrum on the West 22 which was slickly passed out to their right wing Peter Walker who touched down.

With this converted the score was 0 – 10. This was when Hyde took over from Jekyll. West centres Blair Smith and Calum Booth made good ground down the left wing gaining a penalty which was put to touch. The resulting driving maul crossed the Murrayfield Wanderers line with Scott Cochrane touching down. Conversion missed but a similar driving maul shortly after saw prop Dan York touch down. This time full back Rory Cuthbertson converted to take West into the lead at 12 – 10. From yet another penalty West were pinning the visitors onto their line and another driving maul pulled in the defence and a slick inside pass to Drew Reddie saw him ground the ball near the posts. Duly converted to take the half time score to a more comfortable 19 -10.

West continued the second half with good intent and added to their score with a penalty but then the Jekyll returned. Poor tackling saw Murrayfield Wanderers pile up on the West line and eventually grounding. The conversion was missed but a further break by their centre Calum Marshall resulted in another try, duly converted to even the score at 22 all. Into the final quarter and the West support heaved a sigh of relief when a mistake by Murrayfield Wanderers in their own 5m saw the ball bounce back over the own line then quickly pounced on the West's Scott Cochrane.

This was the win and a bonus point as well. But, as they say, it is not over till the fat lady sings – not that I am

describing any of the front row as fat ladies – and anyhow I am told they can't sing!



Murrayfield Wanderers upped their game and West were back on defensive duties. Not very effectively as a pile up on the West line saw the ball passed out to the wing for an unconverted try and the scoreboard was again level at 27 all. To be honest this would have been a fair result with two fairly evenly matched sides but it was not to be.

With a front row injury for Murrayfield Wanderers, who had run out of replacements, the game went to uncontested scrums. West did make a sustained attack on the Murrayfield Wanderers line but to no avail. Instead it was from a Murrayfield Wanderers scrum on halfway in the dying moments of the game that the Murrayfield Wanderers backs seemed to float through the exhausted West backs defence to score in the corner.

The conversion was missed and the final score was West 27, Murrayfield Wanderers 32.

A disappointment for West but signs of progress if a more consistent performance can be found. This Saturday sees them travel up to Strathmore for a 3pm kick off.

**West team:** 1. Dan York, 2 Dylan Dawson, 3. Andrew Love, 4. Scott Cochrane, 5. Calum Morrison, 6. Tom Smith, 7. Max Bowie, 8. Craig McCall, 9. Jamie Carruth, 10. Andrew Little, 11. Dylan Matthews, 12. Blair Smith, 13 Calum Booth, 14. Drew Readie, 15. Rory Cuthbertson.

**Subs** 16. Peter Rhodes, 17. Sean Hendry, 18. Ronan McLaren, 19. Fraser Brand