

Hopeful Signs for West

West of Scotland 12 Boroughmuir 23.

West of Scotland's disappointing start to the season continued on Saturday with defeat to Boroughmuir at Burnbrae. As at Preston Lodge last week, coach Trevor Carmichael could take positives from the game. Callum McCormack returned on the left wing, his first outing of the season. Experienced loose-head prop Andrew Love made his first league appearance after sustaining injury in a pre-season game. He got forty minutes under his belt. Stand-off Dru Nicholson played the final thirty minutes, his first appearance in a West shirt in almost a year.

On a warm, sunny afternoon, the visitors dominated the opening exchanges but West created the first chance of the game. Nicky Sutcliffe's long pass to McCormack released the



winger into the Boroughmuir half. Sutcliffe supported before feeding full back Lewis Howick. He was halted ten metres from the visitors' line. It was, though, the Edinburgh side who would go ahead after five minutes. A penalty under the home posts was tapped with No 8 Greg Alexander picking up at the back of the ruck to power over. Calum Anderson converted.

Boroughmuir extended their lead with a simple score from the training ground. Clean line-out ball ten metres out saw openside Liam Habib peel and go through a wide gap to score. Stand-off Anderson was again accurate with the

boot. This after the Edinburgh men had decided to kick to touch rather than at goal after West were penalised.

Fourteen points behind, it was West who would be on top for the rest of the first half. They created a number of scoring opportunities but would take only one of them. After three successive scrums in the Boroughmuir 22, the pack drove to the try line before the ball went right for Howick to come into the line and score in the right corner. The gap was down to nine points but an Anderson penalty extended his side's lead to twelve at half-time. Boroughmuir's three scores had all come after West had conceded a penalty.

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Into the second half, West continued to fall foul of the referee. Anderson was twice more successful from the tee. In the early part of the game, Boroughmuir had kicked every penalty to touch, now they were kicking for goal. West trailed 5-23 despite having their opponents on the back foot. They finally gained some reward with a try from Adam Dunford. Grady Slater, the No 8 was outstanding throughout and a deserved Man of the Match, broke into the Boroughmuir 22 but was held up almost on the line. West recycled before the visitors infringed. From the tapped penalty, the West pack drove into resolute defence. The dam was eventually breached with lock Adam Dunford getting the touch down. Nicholson converted.



The home side remained on top until the end but were unable to further reduce the gap. They certainly deserved at least a losing bonus point for their efforts. Next Saturday, West make the short journey to Hughenden to face Hillhead-Jordanhill. Kick-off is three o'clock.

West of Scotland: Lewis Howick; Jack McCallum, Nicky Sutcliffe, Rory Cuthbertson, Callum McCormack; Owen Hourston, Callum Rutherford; Hamish Clark, Connor Moran-Smith, Andrew Love; Scott Cochrane, Adam Dunford; Max Bowie, Donald Morrison, Grady Slater.

Replacements: Angus Cameron, Adeeb Talghari, Callum Godber, Dru Nicholson.