

West Back on the Victory Trail.

A dominant second half performance by West of Scotland in which they scored six tries saw them gain a try bonus point win over Strathmore by 52-5. The highlight of the win was a hat-trick in seven minutes by left wing Aaron Purewai.

Conditions were perfect for rugby as West kicked off. The first two minutes of the game were spent in the Strathmore 22 but twice a knock-on denied West the lead. They continued to press and after ten minutes, they got the try their forwards play deserved. Skipper Scott Cochrane collected an overthrown visitors' line-out. He made ground before setting up the ruck. Grady Lawrence took



possession and went over to put his side ahead. Dru Nicholson converted. A few minutes later, Callum McCormack scored in the corner after good breaks by Lawrence and his centre partner Iestyn Humphreys.

West continued to press but unforced errors and a high penalty count stopped them adding to their score. The visitors had contributed little as an attacking force but ten minutes before the interval, the home side's old failing of missed tackles saw full back Euan Duguid bring his side back into the game and a half-time score of 12-5.

From the restart, Cochrane made a powerful break into the Strathmore half. Jamie Carruth supported and kicked into the right corner. The visitors took possession from the line-out and cleared their lines. They would be defending for most of the half. Within three minutes they were down to fourteen men after flanker Ewan Maguire was penalised in front of his posts for a high tackle on Carruth. Maguire received a yellow card and West seven points when Cochrane went over from the ruck, Nicholson again converting.

Six minutes into the half, Purewai, who looked dangerous every time he got the ball, scored the first of his three tries. Nicholson was the provider with a precise crossfield kick. Purewai stepped round his opposite number and went under the posts. Nicholson got his reward with another two points. The winger's second try came five minutes later after great work by his fellow backs. The ball went through the hands before Rory Cuthbertson drew his man and sent Purewai in with a perfectly timed pass. The hat-trick came from



Strathmore's only real attack of the half. Good defence by West on their own line forced their opponents into a speculative long pass. The West winger took it almost on his own line before running the length of the park to score. Nicholson's fine form with the boot continued.

West scored twice more in the last six minutes, both tries converted by Nicholson. Lawrence was the grateful recipient as Strathmore lost possession in their own 22 before Cuthbertson rounded things off in the last minute, collecting a lovely pop-up pass from Nicholson to score under the posts.

The coaching staff will be happy with their charges response to the heavy defeat at Howe of Fife last week but they will have still concerns about the number of unforced errors and penalties conceded in a game in which they did not come under a great deal of pressure. Plenty to work on before travelling to face Greenock Wanderers next week.