

West Ladies too strong for Wanderers.

Greenock Wanderers Ladies 25 West of Scotland Ladies 36.

After six minutes on a typical wet Greenock afternoon, West of Scotland Ladies trailed by fourteen points. The outlook for West looked as bleak as the weather. For the remainder of the afternoon, though, West looked like their old selves. They played some excellent rugby against opponents who will be difficult to beat at Fort Matilda this season.

Wanderers' No 8 Lesley Cadenhead, who carried well all game, blasted her way over after only four minutes. Elisha Hope converted the try. The right wing had played the round ball game with Greenock Morton. Her second success from the tee came two minutes later after scrum half Hannah Docherty had crossed from close range. Fourteen points down and the early loss of experienced lock Louise Wilson left West with a lot to do. No 8 Rosie Broadhurst moved into the second row with Bex Francis coming on to play at No 8 for the first time. She would make an excellent job of it.

It was another player from the versatile category who would bring West back into the contest. Caitlin Reilly, who has filled the openside flanker position already this season, was in her more preferred role of scrum half. It was from there she finished off a good drive by the pack. Wanderers, though, replied almost immediately with the pace of left wing Danielle Malloy taking her clear. At the mid-point of the half, West were back to being two scores behind. Two tries just past the half hour mark closed the gap to two points. Rebecca Schaschke's first score in West colours was quickly followed by another first time try, in this case by someone who has been around the club a bit longer, Lindsey Smith. The former coach was making her first start in the absence of Ashley Blair. Smith would have an excellent game, a deserved "Player of the Match". Alexa Smith's successful conversion of her namesake's score would make it Greenock Wanderers Ladies 19 West of Scotland Ladies 17 at half-time.

A Hope penalty almost immediately on the restart did not disturb the West thought pattern. A typical Jade Scott try, the centre breaking aside Wanderers tackles to power over, drew West level. Almost immediately, replacement Kim Toland broke free on the left to go round the home defence, Smith again successful with the kick. Another Hope penalty narrowed West's lead to four points but more or less from the kick-off, prop Smith cleared a path to record her second score of the game. Rowan Todd took over the kicking duties to extend her side's lead. There were still fifteen minutes left to play, with West attacking for most of the time. Neither side could add to their tally and West, in the end, ran out comfortable winners.

West of Scotland: Amber Johnston; Rowan Todd, Jade Scott, Laura Martin, Rachael Millar; Alexa Smith, Caitlin Reilly; Vanessa Reid-Phelps, Alice Masson, Lindsey Smith; Louise Wilson, Ciera Campbell; Megan Scullion, Rachel Morrison, Rosie Broadhurst.

Replacements: Lauren Stuart, Niamh Farrell Lewer, Rebecca Schaschke, Rebecca Francis, Kim Toland, Ellen Forsyth.

