

Disappointing West.

Cartha Queen's Park 54 West of Scotland 41.

It was a bizarre game at Dumbreck. West of Scotland turned in a very poor performance, error-strewn, but still scored seven tries. The hosts crossed the West line on nine occasions. Entertaining for the neutrals, soul-destroying for the coaches.

The conditions did suggest a day for good rugby. The pitch was soft on top but firm underneath. Overhead conditions were fine with only a gentle crosswind as West kicked off. Cartha's opening try in the third minute set the pattern for the afternoon as scrum half Dante Alessandri broke weak West tackles to go under the posts. Graeme Docherty converted. West quickly replied, skipper Scott Cochrane stealing a Cartha line-out to drive over. The hosts were soon ahead again, stand off Jacob Anderson picking up from a ruck to go over almost unchallenged in the corner. Docherty slotted an excellent conversion from the left touchline. Right wing Matthew Brown was next to cross for the home side after quick ball from a scrum fifteen metres out from the West line. Docherty was successful again from the tee.

It was vital West got the next score. They did, with a penalty try after the pack drove over from a five metres scrum, Cartha loose-head Cameron Rennie receiving a yellow card. Intelligent play by scrum half Callum Rutherford led to Martin Wallace narrowing the gap further. Docherty took a mark, kicked long and chased. Rutherford gathered possession and kicked into the space left by Docherty. The bounce was perfect for Wallace to collect and go over in the corner.

With fifteen minutes left in the first half, West trailed by only four points. In that remaining period, Cartha would score three tries to take the game away from their opponents. It began with a West clearance kick being charged down. Cartha gathered the loose ball and Declan Goldie scored in the corner. Five minutes later, Alessandri got his second try after good work by his forwards. The pack quickly repeated their effort with replacement Peter Vint touching down. On the interval, Docherty slotted a penalty goal after West, not for the first time, were penalised for a high tackle. Cartha led 39-22 at the interval.

Cartha soon increased their lead on the restart. Alessandri's pass to Brown saw the wing run in unopposed from halfway. West did respond through Wallace after Cochrane's pick-up at the back of the scrum but Cartha were quickly back to score through blindside Miller Stewart after a forward drive. The Dumbreck men moved further ahead when again poor West defence allowed Sean MacNicol in. Five minutes remained and in that time, West clawed back nineteen points. Outside centre Nicky Sutcliffe crossed after a good drive by the pack. Cochrane, the outstanding player afield, powered in from twenty-five metres. He converted his own try with a drop goal. There was just time for Callum McCormack to get his name on the scoresheet after West took quick lineout ball and went through the hands. The whistle for no side blew after Owen Hourston added the extras.

A hugely disappointing performance by the Burnbrae side with plenty for coach Trevor Carmichael and the players to work on in training this week. Howe of Fife will be the visitors to Burnbrae on Saturday. Games now kick-off at two o'clock.