

Vital Win for West

West of Scotland 20 Allan Glen's 15

That cliché of all sporting clichés, “a game of two halves”, was never more apposite than at Burnbrae on Saturday. After a first half totally dominated by Allan Glen's, most West of Scotland followers would happily have settled for one point. A remarkable turnaround in the second period saw skipper Scott Cochrane's try fifteen minutes after the restart secure a try bonus point and ultimately the win for the Milngavie side.

Conditions were well nigh perfect as the visitors kicked off into a strong sun but with little wind to affect the play. Within two minutes, Glen's took the lead. From a line-out close to the home line, the Glen's' pack drove and set up the ruck. Tight-head Liam Frame took possession and crossed the line with ease. Scott Thomson's conversion attempt drifted wide of the left upright, setting the standard on an afternoon in which no kick was successful.



It was one-way traffic in the early exchanges with the West defence working overtime to stop Glen's extending their lead. Remarkably, within ten minutes of going behind, West had drawn level. Stand-off Rory Cuthbertson took possession of loose ball on his ten metres line and found Darren Allan in support. The centre kicked ahead before Jack McCallum did likewise before winning the chase to touch down. The young wing has pace to burn and few in the division can compete with him.

Glen's were soon back in the lead, blindside Sean Lennon finishing off a simple passing move after a scrum thirty metres from the West line. The Bishopbriggs men were completely on top but their opponents' defence was strong. Just past the half hour mark, West made their second venture into the Glen's 22 and for the second time, returned with five points. It was a very similar score to their opening try. McCallum kicked ahead and again was first to the ball. Lewis Howick's conversion attempt struck the post, the closest we would come to a successful kick all afternoon.

Two minutes from the interval, Glen's deservedly regained the lead. From a line-out ten metres out, the pack drove. They went through the phases, creating the overlap for Grant Henderson to score in the corner. At half-time, West trailed by five points, a gap that could and should have been much wider.

Whatever coach Trevor Carmichael said to his charges at half-time, it most certainly had a galvanising effect. Within four minutes of the restart, the sides were level again. It was a fine try. From a tap penalty ten metres out, the ball was quickly moved right. Left wing Callum McCormack timed his intrusion into the line perfectly to score. Cochrane's try had an element of luck to it in the build up. Cuthbertson's attempt to kick a penalty to touch from the Glen's 10 metres line saw the ball bounce straight and go into touch in goal. Two minutes later he had a second opportunity. This time, the bounce saw the ball cross the touch line just short of the flag. From the line-out, the forwards drove. Cochrane had broken off, taking possession to score in the corner.

West were now on top in much the way Glen's had been in the first half. The home pack was the stronger with Hamish Clark outstanding. It was now the Glen's defence that was under pressure. As the game entered the final stages, West still had that narrow five points lead. They really should have extended it as they created space in the Glen's 22. With men outside him, Allan decided to kick but only found Andrew Lytham. The full back called the mark before setting off. Superb support play saw Glen's just short of the



home line before Levi Ekevati tried to force his way over. The referee ruled he had been held up, a decision that Frame clearly disagreed with. His reward was a yellow card. With all present expecting a kick to touch, Cochrane decided to take the scrum. With injuries to two members of Glen's front row it would be uncontested. From the scrum, West took possession and drove. Almost inevitably, they were held up and Glen's had the put in. It took another tremendous effort by the home forwards to turn the ball over, regain possession and see the ball safely into touch.

Two successive try bonus point victories have more or less ended any relegation fears the Milngavie side may have had. They are fifteen points clear of Hamilton who have two games in hand but have still to record a victory this season. West are eleven points ahead of Cartha Queen's Park who have played one game less. Next Saturday, West travel to Dumfries. A win there would see them move ahead of their hosts.