

Carleton Park was cold and damp for Glenrothes second rugby match of 2025 when basement club Aberfeldy visited.

The early exchanges were dominated by the Glens with the Aberfeldy scrum in particular under severe pressure from the start. Both sides found handling difficult with the greasy ball being dropped or knocked on numerous times. It was no surprise when the Reds opened the scoring after a spell of concerted pressure. Ben Scappaticio, making his debut on the wing, was stopped short of the line but Darien Kerr was on hand pick up the ball and slalomed over the line before touching down for a deserved 5-0 lead which was increased to 7-0 with Shaun Gray's conversion.

Kerr, later named as man of the match, increased the Reds lead a little later with a run up the right wing after a scrum on Aberfeldy's 22m line. He finished the move with a dummy and step inside the last defender for a well deserved try. The conversion attempt flew wide.

Gray made up for the conversion miss shortly after with a penalty to extend the Glens lead to 15 points. Though they were under pressure for most of the half Aberfeldy had some spells of attacking play but the Reds tackling was solid until shortly before the interval. With Aberfeldy on the Glens 22m line, for no apparent reason the defence opened up like the Red Sea and the visiting outside centre strolled in untouched to score under the posts. The conversion gave a half time score of 15-7.

The second half followed a similar pattern to the first with Glenrothes in the ascendancy. Damien Peacock, who had shown signs of frustration in the first period, scored the Glens third try from a penalty 5m from the Aberfeldy line. He took the tap and dived over only for referee Graeme Dryburgh-Cook to call him back to retake the penalty but the result was exactly the same. Gray converted and added a further three points a few minutes later from a penalty.

Peacock scored his second try and the Glens bonus point try by touching down in the left corner to round off a move which had seen the ball travel the width of the pitch with forwards and backs involved in the best period of play of the game. The conversion attempt missed.

Aberfeldy mounted their own -period of pressure after this try and their right winger should probably have scored after Glenrothes missed a possible interception. He was however stopped near the goal line but the ball was recycled and despite desperate defence the same centre score Aberfeldy's second try. The conversion attempt bounced off the left hand upright.

Glenrothes struck back immediately. In attempting to gather Gray's restart, the ball was knocked on about the Aberfeldy 10m line. The Glens forwards pushed their opponents off their scrum ball and Lee Gartshore kept the ball at his feet until the 22m line when Kerr picked the ball from the scrum and passed to Richie Castle-Smith. He in turn passed to Gray who joined the line at pace and ran into score under the posts. He then converted his own try.

As the game neared full time the home defence again split open for the visitor's number 13 who looked certain to grab his hat trick score until a tap tackle stopped him just short. His offload went to a colleague who scored under the posts with the conversion rounding the score off at 37-19.

This was a competent display by the Glens and must have been particularly pleasing for Scott Cairns who has taken on coaching duties in difficult circumstances. The whole squad can be satisfied with the game, particularly given a number of missing regulars from the teamlist. The Glens next game is at Carleton Park on Saturday at 1pm when they will be looking for revenge against second top team Alloa who beat them earlier in the season.