

Glenrothes - Dunfermline 20/04/24

Match report by John Goodall

Glenrothes Rugby Club entertained near neighbours Dunfermline's second string to Carleton Park on Saturday in their final league game of the season. The game started with both sides observing a minute's silence in memory of Glens flanker Ross McGhie who passed away suddenly at the age of only 25.

With the visitors first fifteen having finished their season, it was anticipated that they would bring a strong squad but Glenrothes were soon on the front foot. Jack Bousie, revelling in his return to the pack after playing much of the campaign in the centre, made a break into the Dunfermline 22m area. He offloaded at the perfect time to Damien Peacock who crashed over the goal line to score under the posts. Harry Grieve converted.

The Glens moved further ahead with possibly their best try of the season. Kobi Meldrum pounced on a knock on from a lineout on the right hand side of the pitch. He made good ground before being halted. The rest of the forwards took the ball deeper into opposition territory before unleashing the backs. The ball zipped across the park to Ross Davidson who sprinted up the left wing to touch down in the corner.

Glenrothes were running rampant and Peacock and Lee Gartshore carved a hole in the Dunfermline defence with the latter offloading to Rohan Azim who danced in for the third try. Grieve converted.

The bonus point try was not long delayed with clever handling taking play yet again into the visitors' 22m area. Tommy Reilly hit the line at pace and barged his way through the defence.

Almost immediately Dunfermline opened their account. The Reds allowed the restart kick to bounce and the visitors grabbed the ball and the initiative. The ball was passed into the centre and a visiting player ran through weak tackling to score near the posts, with the try being converted. In fairness this was the only time that the Glens defence fell apart during the game.

There was still time for Glenrothes to score a fifth try before the interval. Azim, buoyed by his earlier try, went very close being halted inches from the goal line. Meldrum was on hand to recover the ball and despite desperate efforts from the defenders forced his way over the line. Grieve's conversion made the half time score 31-7.

In the second half, it was the same story with Glenrothes well on top throughout. Meldrum grabbed his second try early in the half with a strong run from 15m out. He fended off opponents and side stepped others for an excellent individual try. Grieve had a problem with his kicking tee and ultimately drop kicked the conversion.

Former Glens player Scott Herd, playing at hooker for the visitors, was forced from the field with a leg injury resulting in uncontested scrums for the remainder of the game. Despite the scrums having been dominated by Glenrothes this change had little effect on the complexion of the game. Darien Kerr was the next Glens player on the scoresheet. Clever footwork enabled him to find a little space and then he sprinted through a tiring defence. Grieve again drop kicked the conversion.

The half century was brought up with good handling between forwards and backs freeing Russell Grieve and he scored on the right hand side of the pitch.

Florin Radu had joined the game earlier at full back and he had the final say in the day's scoring. He had already shown his intention with a jinking run out of defence causing panic for the visitors and it was no surprise when he set off from halfway, bamboozling defenders with his footwork and throwing in a couple of dummies before touching down midway between the uprights and the left corner. This made the final score 55-7 in Glenrothes favour.

This was an excellent end to the season with forwards and backs all outplaying their opponents and sharing the tries between them. While scrums were contested, Glenrothes dominated. The lineouts were fairly even but in the loose the home forwards were quicker to the breakdown. and more effective once they were there. The backs showed good individual skills, raw pace and some nice handling. With the exception of the Dunfermline try, the defence across the whole squad was very good. The man of the match award was dedicated to Ross McGhie