

Glen's Experience Just Too Much for West

Allan Glen's 32 West of Scotland 17.

It was a most inexperienced West of Scotland side that faced Allan Glen's at Bishopbriggs on Saturday. Seven members of the team totalled just fourteen first team starts this season. With Fraser Brand ruled out for the season, Jack McCallum made his debut on the right wing. Lewis Howick made his first start, at full back. Conditions were just about perfect for a match West knew would be one of their toughest of the season, against an experienced, physical home side.

An early penalty to the Glen's saw them kick to the West five metres on the right. Everyone present knew what was coming, West were powerless to stop it. The catch and drive. The



home touch judge's comment that the throw was not straight was of little consolation. The home support rubbed their hands in anticipation of a good afternoon with a lot of tries to enjoy. That didn't happen. The young West side didn't give an inch, they played the better rugby. It was after some fine play by the hosts, though, that West drew level, just past the mid-point of the half. Many phases of rugby with excellent support play by both backs and forwards saw Glen's in the West 22. There they dropped the ball with West scrum half Callum Rutherford first to it. He kicked ahead. McCallum, showing tremendous pace, flew past the covering defender before hacking the ball into the

in-goal area. There was only one winner in the race to the touchdown as McCallum got his senior career off to the best possible start.

West were certainly the better side by now but it was the home side who would take just ten minutes to regain the lead. From a No 8 pick-up from a five metres scrum, the ball went right for a score in the corner. Very simple stuff but so difficult to defend. Glen's then did score something less prosaic, a fine handling move finished off in the other corner. Five minutes from the interval, West had the chance to narrow the gap. Howick, impressive all afternoon, particularly when putting boot to ball, set up a try scoring opportunity with a 50/22 to the Glen's right corner flag. The chance was lost, though, with a knock-on from the resulting line-out. It was hooker Conor Moran-Smith who would get the much-deserved score right on the whistle. Coming in off the right wing, his dummy was bought by all in a Glen's shirt before he went in under the posts. Rory Cuthbertson's conversion made the half-time score Allan Glen's 15 West of Scotland 12.

It had been a fine, closely contested match in the first forty minutes. The second period saw Glen's physicality dominate. They again scored within two minutes of kick-off, another try from good support play. The successful conversion took the home side's lead to ten points. West's disappointment at losing another early score was compounded by the loss of centre

Nicky Sutcliffe, such a vital member of the West back division. Glen's fifth try finished the match as a contest, a soft score with weak tackling allowing the runner through. The conversion took the gap to seventeen points, extended to twenty with a penalty goal after West were ruled offside fifteen metres from their own line.

There was an unfortunate incident toward the end of the game. Unfortunate in the sense the referee missed it. One would like to think the player involved would regret his action. Young McCallum could easily have suffered a bad injury. West did end the game on a high with a well-earned try from Howick. He came into the line to finish off fine link play between backs and forwards.



A disappointing result but the eighty minutes will stand the young West players in good stead. It was a very physical contest but they stood up to it. Next Saturday, West will host Whitecraigs at Burnbrae. Kick-off will be at three o'clock.

West of Scotland: Lewis Howick; Jack McCallum, Nicky Sutcliffe, Rory Cuthbertson, Mark Robertson; Jamie Carruth, Callum Rutherford; Hamish Clark, Connor Moran-Smith, Andrew Love; Adam Dunford, Gareth Craig; Dylan Matthews, Donald Morrison, John Vasconcelos.

Replacements: Dan York, Matt Cairns, Tino Mudoti, Owen Hourston.