



Inverleith Angle

We are delighted to extend a very warm welcome to the Cartha Queens Park tour party who have made the journey east for this National 1 fixture. We hope that President Gordon Miller, Vice President Tom Feasby, head coach Gary Grant and their players, committee members and supporters enjoy their visit to Inverleith.

Cartha currently sit one place above us in National 1, having (like us) recorded two wins and nine losses in the first half of the season. They have, however, secured two more bonus points than us, while their points difference is -84 to our -213. Both teams will be desperate for a win today to begin the long, slow climb up the table, and I fully expect today's game to be a hard fought one.

One of Cartha's two wins to date was, of course, that 24-22 victory over us at Dumbreck back in mid September. We lost that one with the final play of the game, despite having enjoyed the bulk of possession and having dominated at scrum and lineout. I think it's fair to say we have come a long way since then, even if the league table rather suggests otherwise!

I would normally use this part of the programme to look back at our more recent performances – but, thanks to the rotten weather, there haven't *been* any! We managed a game against Kelso at the start of December – as you'll read overleaf, *another* one that got away – but the subsequent matches against Accies (A) and GHA (H) were called off due to frozen pitches.

Despite the GHA game being called off, the Agenda 3 lunch that was to precede it went ahead, with SRU Chief Executive Mark Dodson setting out the Union's vision for the future of Scottish club rugby. He then took part in a frank and informative Q&A session hosted by our own Jim Calder. Representatives from Edinburgh University, Spartans, SMC, Watsonians, Edinburgh Accies and various other clubs were on hand to keep the questions flowing, and I think it's fair to say the afternoon went very well despite the lack of action outside on Pitch 1.

In between Christmas and New Year, there was also a charity match out at Oriam between the Cavaliers (with no less than seven sets of brothers in their squad) and a stellar Stewart's Melville Select. 300 people came down to watch, play and take part, and (most importantly) their generous donations made it a profitable day for the Steven Sims Cavaliers Foundation. Well done to everyone who took part in the event.

I hope that you enjoy the game today and look forward to discussing the finer points of it in the bar with you afterwards. Win, lose or draw, it'll just be nice to watch some rugby again!

Bill McNie
President



STEWART'S MELVILLE
R.F.C.

Match Report vs Kelso, Saturday 2nd December 2017

For the non-partisan (not many of them about) this must have been an exciting game of rugby, with no clear winner until the dying moments. Unfortunately it was not Stew Mel on this occasion – but, on a positive note, we did, at least, leave the Borders with two points.

As noted in the match day programme: “Our visitors today are on a notable run of improved form and, despite their lowly league position, I am sure they will prove a real test. You should never underestimate Stew Mel”. Fair comment, I think, and an encouraging one at that.

On to the game. A 3 pm kick off in perfect conditions under flood lights with a few minor changes to previous weeks – but, fundamentally, the same squad. Seb Trotter was back in the mix at 12, with James at 13, and we started with the half back partnership that ended the PL Cup match.

Kelso kicked off deep into Stew Mel territory and appeared to be camped there for a significant period of time until an interception by James, who had to expend all his energy early on by running almost the length of the pitch to touch down in the corner. The attempted conversion was a hard one and didn't quite get there. Kelso then resumed where they had left off, with the bulk of possession and territory that ultimately led to good hands and the ball out wide, which eventually paid dividends. 20 minutes in, Kelso 7 Stew Mel 5.

Stew Mel started to get more into their stride, and, more importantly, out of their own 22, pushing Kelso back with some good forward play and astute kicking. With a bit more possession allowing us to work off quick ball, corresponding quick hands and a good line combined put young winger Jack Blain over at around the 25 minute mark. Gregor converted, bringing the score to Kelso 7 Stew Mel 12.

More pressure in Kelso's 22 resulted in a kickable penalty shortly afterwards (Kelso 7 Stew Mel 15). As half time approached, Kelso again were attacking well and always looked dangerous with ball in hand, which resulted in another converted try for the hosts.

The time on the electronic scoreboard was slightly misleading (as is our own at Inverleith) as stoppage is not factored in, and there had been, during the course of the first half, a significant number of minutes when the ref's watch had stopped due to injuries - so this half was by no means over. As half time did approach, however, Stew Mel were back in Kelso's half and a kickable penalty came our way as a result of their Petulant Prop earning his second yellow, and, unfortunately, the end of his afternoon. **Half time Kelso 14 Stew Mel 18.**

So what would the second half bring? Stew Mel kicked off into the blood red sky and were immediately put under pressure from a 'fired up' Kelso, eventually resulting in a scrum 5 meters out. Thankfully a subsequent penalty gave us the opportunity to clear our lines.



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There was at no time any obvious indication of a one man advantage as both teams won and lost possession with equal ease. Some good play by Kelso put them into the ascendancy once again at around the 50 minute mark, bringing the score to Kelso 21 Stew Mel 18.

A spell of wayward kicking followed, then a great break by scrum half Charlie Simmonds almost led to another score, although a lack of support resulted in him being isolated, with the penalty going in Kelso's favour. With the Stew Mel lineout functioning relatively well most of the afternoon, possession was regained, and, after some good 'Gala-esque' forward play, Ruaridh Mitchell (apparently) claimed a score at around the 60 minute mark (Kelso 21 Stew Mel 25).

This game was far from over as Kelso continued to run everything with effect, which led to some tense moments and another try (Kelso 28 Stew Mel 25). The immediate response from Stew Mel saw us profit from a bit of opportunism when a Kelso clearance kick was charged down, Freddie Roddick winning the race to the line with around 10 minutes to go (real time).

I am sure, at this point, that the lads on the pitch, my fellow supporters and our coaches all had the feeling that this was it and that, although a tight game, a win was in our sights. Right at the death, however, Kelso came back once again and scored that crucial try, sending the Kelso faithful, understandably, into delirium. **Final score Kelso 35 Stew Mel 30.**

Prior to this game I always had the belief that the only team that could win when down to 14 men were the All Blacks. This was quickly disproved and the 'wounded lion syndrome' certainly kicked in for our hosts. I wouldn't necessarily go as far as to say that Kelso deserved to win - but I would give all credit to them for the way in which they did.

The question remains: how did we lose this game? I think there were two reasons. First and foremost, as alluded to, Kelso came back in the second half with great spirit and did not allow the one man advantage to work for the opposition. They have experienced players in both backs and forwards and were tactically more astute. Rugby is not just about brawn, it's about strategy, tactics and sound game management. Perhaps a bit of the latter was lacking in the dying minutes and the uncontested scrums probably didn't help our cause either.

We are now half way into the season and there is still so much to play for. I must praise the dedication of all the players and coaches alike. The team has certainly come on leaps and bounds since the start of the season, and I anticipate a good 'second half', starting with the local derby against Edinburgh Accies on Saturday. Regrettably I will not be there as I am attending a wedding in Aberdeen. I know where I would rather be!

Kevin Murchie



STEWART'S MELVILLE
R.F.C.

Saturday 6 January 2018: Kick off 2 pm

Stewart's Melville RFC

15	Sean Murchie
14	James Ferguson
13	Cameron Symes
12	Euan Morrison
11	Jack Somerville
10	Sebastian Trotter
9	Gregor Porteous
1	Cameron Taylor
2	Ruaridh Mitchell (captain)
3	Rhys Morgan
4	David Stoddart
5	Jamie Sword
6	Duncan Wood
7	Nikki Hay
8	Nick Winton

Player Sponsored By

Graham + Sibbald
Haldane UK
Trotter Family Bakers
Pollock
Craneware
Dreadnought Leith
DJ Alexander
Breadalbane Finance
Jim Hay Marketing

Replacements

16	Craig Willis	
17	Tom Petiau	Exception
18	David Devlin	
19	Mark Sinclair	
20	William Lockhart	

Head Coach

Gordon Henderson

Team Manager

Graham Inglis





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Cartha Queens Park RFC

- 15 Andrew Scott
- 14 Graeme Docherty
- 13 Ewen Campbell (captain)
- 12 Scott McInnes
- 11 Anthony Nyangweso
- 10 Wayne Burrows
- 9 Andrew McDougall
- 1 Michael John Downer
- 2 Fraser Paul
- 3 Juan Phyfer
- 4 Matt Gray
- 5 Graham Williamson
- 6 Milan Marinkovic
- 7 Calum Dickson
- 8 Peter Hollier

Referee Ian Kenny
AR 1 David Jack
AR2 Dave McKervail

Match Sponsor Craneware

Ball Sponsor Pollock

Replacements

- 16 David Irvine
- 17 Callum Spriddle
- 18 Istok Totic
- 19 Johnny Campion
- 20 Gregor Davidson

Next Home Game ***Sat 20 January 2018 vs Musselburgh Kickoff 2 pm***

Head Coach

Gary Grant

Ball Boys:





STEWART'S MELVILLE
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26/8/17	v Gordonians (Cup)	3 pm	Inverleith	47-31 (W)
2/9/17	v Edinburgh Accies	3 pm	Inverleith	26-38 (L)
9/9/17	v GHA	3 pm	Braidholm	83-19 (L)
16/9/17	v Cartha Queens Park	3 pm	Dumbreck Rd	24-22 (L)
23/9/17	v Jed-Forest	3 pm	Inverleith	0-48 (L)
30/9/17	v Musselburgh	3 pm	Stoneyhill	19-14 (L)
7/10/17	v Aberdeen Grammar	3 pm	Inverleith	25-67 (L)
14/10/17	v Dundee HSFP	3 pm	Mayfield	62-6 (L)
21/10/17	v Falkirk	3 pm	Inverleith	41-17 (W)
28/10/17	v Gala	3 pm	Netherdale	24-41 (W)
4/11/17	v Selkirk	2 pm	Inverleith	19-29 (L)
18/11/17	v Preston Lodge (Cup)	2 pm	Inverleith	33-27 (W)
2/12/17	v Kelso	2 pm	Poynder Park	35-30 (L)
9/12/17	v Edinburgh Accies	2 pm	Raeburn Place	P-P
16/12/17	v GHA	2 pm	Inverleith	P-P
6/1/18	v Cartha Queens Park	2 pm	Inverleith	
13/1/18	v Jed-Forest	2 pm	Riverside Park	
20/1/18	v Musselburgh	2 pm	Inverleith	
27/1/18	v Aberdeen Grammar	2 pm	Rubislaw	
3/2/18	v Edinburgh Accies	3 pm	Raeburn Place	
10/2/18	v Peebles (Cup)	2.30 pm	Inverleith	
17/2/18	v Dundee HSFP	3 pm	Inverleith	
3/3/18	v Falkirk	3 pm	Sunnyside	
10/3/18	v GHA	3 pm	Inverleith	
24/3/18	v Gala	3 pm	Inverleith	
31/3/18	v Selkirk	3 pm	Philippaugh	
7/4/18	v Kelso	3 pm	Inverleith	

Our BT National League Cup quarter final against Peebles will take place at Inverleith on 10th February with a 2.30 pm kick off.

The league game against GHA on 16th December was called off due to Inverleith being frozen. The game will now take place on 10th March with a 3 pm kick off – *unless* the Peebles game is cancelled.



STEWART'S MELVILLE
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STEW MEL PLAYER PROFILE

Name	Adam Howie
Position	Number 8
Player Sponsor 2017/18	Super Moons Lentil Puffs
Nickname	Phoenix
Date / Place Of Birth	Glasgow / 30 th November 1986
Height / Weight	6' 2" / 102 kg
Previous Clubs	Glasgow Accies, Murrayfield Wanderers, Edinburgh University
Representative Honours	Scottish Surgeons
Favourite Stew Mel Player	Sebastian Trotter
Favourite Other Player	Fraser Strachan
Most Embarrassing Moment	Falling for the classic 'The end of season Dinner is black tie' gag a few years ago
Claim To Fame	I was Mr Méribel 2010
Celebrity Double	Juan Smith
Favourite Stew Mel moment	Getting the losing bonus point against Watsonians to reach the play off game in 2014 at their expense. More specifically, the joy of seeing Willie Aitken outpacing their fullback to track back and touch the ball down for our 22.
Favourite Stew Mel try	When Kaide Whiting scored in the last play of the game to beat Watsonians in 2013 after we had been 24-0 down (there is a theme here!)
One thing you'd change at the Club?	Bring back Fraser Strachan!



STEWART'S MELVILLE
R.F.C.

SIX NATIONS CALCUTTA CUP

SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2018

**Join Finlay & Jim Calder for Stewart's Melville RFC's
pre match hospitality @ The Mary Erskine School
3 course lunch with wine & beer
(Free parking and only 10 minute walk to BT
Murrayfield)
(doesn't include match ticket)**

**£50
pp**

STEWART'S MELVILLE RFC