



## Inverleith Angle

We are delighted to extend a very warm welcome to the Howe Of Fife tour party who have made the short journey over the Forth for this Tennent's National League 2 fixture. We hope that President Chris Reekie, head coach Chris Martin and their players, committee members and supporters enjoy their visit to Inverleith.

It's fair to say that Howe have had a tough start to the season, with one win and one draw from the nine games they have played. There is, however, much more to their season than their league position would suggest; yes, they've shipped a lot of points (433, an average of 48 per game) – but they've also *scored* a lot of points (223 - to our 210).

Howe also came very close in the games they lost against Whitecraigs (52-46) and Glasgow Accies (40-31), while their winning margin against Lasswade was, at 52-22, rather more impressive than the one we managed down at Hawthornden.

All of which only serves to underline the fact that, in this league, there are no easy fixtures – I fully expect another tough contest today, *regardless* of what the league table says!

Today's fixture is made even more fascinating by the fact that our own form hasn't exactly been stellar of late, with away defeats to Dumfries Saints and Highland leaving us fourth in the table behind Biggar, Highland and Falkirk. Our trip to Dumfries was an eventful one, with the police stopping the team bus for a wee chat as we drove along the banks of the Nith, while the game itself saw us picking up various injuries as we sought to contain what was a pretty robust home team. It's heartening to report that our fitness and resilience ultimately shone through, with three tries in the last ten minutes of the game earning us a very welcome (and rather unexpected) losing bonus point.

As you'll read over the page, we didn't bring any points back with us on the train from Inverness last Saturday, having struggled to get into the game against what was another physical outfit.

It's significant, however, that both Dumfries and Highland said after the final whistle that we had been unlucky to play them on the day that they had finally 'clicked' – no one reading this should assume that teams are just playing 'OK' and still turning us over. I fully expect us to give Dumfries, Highland *and* Biggar a real game when we welcome them onto the lush expanses of Pitch 1 later in the season – enough of this small pitch, Astro surface nonsense!

I hope that you enjoy your visit to Inverleith and look forward to discussing the finer points of the game with you in the bar afterwards.

Bill McNie  
President



## Match Report vs Highland RFC, Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018

A 'warm' Highland reception awaited us, complemented by a pleasant (albeit cold) day with a slight drizzle. The impressive location and facilities were indicative of Highland's meteoric rise through the leagues in recent times and a hard contest was certainly anticipated, with a point separating the teams in the league, a similar pattern of results on the road and Highland unbeaten at home (much like ourselves).

As said previously, I have only been to Highland RFC once, but do recall the halcyon days when a number of their players came through the ranks to play for Scotland, Nairn MacEwan and (more recently) Moray Low to name a couple.

I am not a great fan of the plastic pitch. Am more of a grass man myself (this should not be read out of context) however we have to accept that we have a harsh climate, particularly up north, and this surface is sometimes the only way to ensure that games can be played.

A few notable changes for the journey up north, the most significant being the introduction to the starting line-up of Matthew Watson at full back and the welcome return of a fit Duncan Wood to what was, otherwise, a fairly settled and strong looking team.

The teams emerged from the tunnel, Highland first (welcomed by rapturous applause from the sizeable crowd and flag waving from the mini section) then Stew Mel, who kicked off towards the city of Inverness. Stew Mel immediately won possession and applied early pressure, only to be penalised. Highland, in an attempt to kick deep, didn't find touch, giving Stew Mel another opportunity to gain territorial advantage via the first lineout on Highland's 22. Highland won the ball cleanly, however, and made considerable inroads with a driving maul into Stew Mel's half, a knock on ultimately preventing further progress.

The first scrum of the afternoon was solid and some good interplay between Jack and Matthew moved us further up field, winning another set piece. At this stage both teams were trying to find their rhythm and test each other, with no significant ground being gained by either. Although the scrum was looking as if Stew Mel had the edge, a subsequent lineout faltered, a penalty was conceded and Highland jumped at the opportunity to move the ball cleverly inside to their number 11 who crashed over for the first try of the afternoon, against the run of play. 10 mins played, Highland 5 Stew Mel 0.

Highland again applied more pressure at the restart but some good defending kept them at bay, epitomised by Adam Greig almost knocking his opposite number into the Ness. Despite all the efforts, a kickable penalty unfortunately came Highland's way, taking the score to 8-0 in their favour after nearly 20 minutes. As play resumed a yellow card was produced for a relatively



innocuous tackle whereby a Highland player was 'taken out' in the air. Momo was the first to admit his overzealousness, to which there was no ill intent.

To their credit, Stew Mel weathered the storm for the 10 minutes they were one man down and the ref had to be given a gentle reminder to allow things to resume with both sides back to full strength! Momo's impact was immediate once he was back on the field of play and some good Stew Mel pressure saw us pushing into Highland's half as the drizzle eased and glimpses of sunshine appeared. The metaphorical sunshine on the pitch didn't last long, though, as Highland seized their opportunity once more while Duncan was grounded and got over, the conversion being successful. 30 minutes gone, Highland 15 Stew Mel 0.

As the first half came to an end, the play became a bit frantic, and, perhaps, Stew Mel began forcing it in desperation to get points on the board. As a result, an ambitious pass was intercepted to give a half time score of 22-0.

A lively start to the second half from Stew Mel saw the big ball carriers Thor and Momo in their element, ably assisted by Dave Allan who had replaced the injured Duncan. We were camped in Highland's 22 for at least 10 minutes, and, thankfully, pressure eventually led to points as Jack Somerville scored in the corner – although the attempted conversion didn't have the legs. Around 55 minutes gone, Highland 22 Stew Mel 5.

A further period of possession went in Stew Mel's favour and there was hope that we would capitalise – but, regrettably, mistakes crept in and Highland were quick to pounce, turning their immediate advantage into points. At the 65 minute mark it was Highland 29 Stew Mel 5. With another score and the commensurate lift in confidence, it wasn't long before Highland added to their tally following a period of sustained pressure, making the final score Highland 36 Stew Mel 5.

On reflection, and at the risk of causing controversy, I think the score line flattered Highland. They did play their game on their turf extremely well and were masters at exploiting and taking immediate advantage of our mistakes. They also ran some good lines and their kicking game was, for the most part, better than ours. That said, we had a reasonable amount of possession but couldn't get decent phases going consistently enough, and, at times, seemed to be forcing the game.

We have, without question, very good individual players and a mobile and strong pack. Ball carriers like Thor, Momo and (on Saturday) Dave, along with Connor and Doug, all did their bit, while Fraser worked away as best he could – but more vision is needed out wide. Matthew had a decent debut under pressure, but, overall there were too many missed tackles in the latter stages.

*Kevin Murchie*



## Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018: Kick off 2 pm

### Stewart's Melville RFC

15	Matthew Watson
14	Sean Murchie
13	James Ferguson
12	Euan Morrison
11	Adam Greig
10	Michael Miller
9	Charlie Simmonds
1	Connor McKay
2	Doug Randall
3	Ruaridh Mitchell
4	Jamie Sword
5	Alex Rappestad
6	Fraser Morrison
7	Alex Wainwright
8	Dave Allan

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Keith Dobson
Bill McNie

### Replacements

16	Nick Hart	Calder Family
17	Freddie Roddick	Glencairn Properties
18	Kyle Dixon	Saxen Ltd

**Head Coach**  
**Team Manager**

Nick McCashin  
Andrew Manson





**Howe Of Fife RFC**

- 15 Sam Rowlands
- 14 Gregor Smith
- 13 Graham Thomson
- 12 Sean Murray
- 11 Ben Mitchell
- 10 Cameron Ellison
- 9 Andrew Harley
- 1 Steven Player
- 2 Jake Douglas
- 3 Rory Johnstone
- 4 George Henderson
- 5 Jamie Thomson
- 6 Iain Bousie
- 7 Struan Smith
- 8 Will Howley

**Referee** Rebecca Rees

**Match Sponsor** FISCAL Technologies

**Ball Sponsors** Rigby family

**Replacements**

- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19

**Next Home Game** **Sat 1 December 2018**  
**Vs Biggar**  
**Kickoff 2 pm**

**Head Coach**  
**Team Manager**

Chris Martin  
Pippa Gardner





### 1<sup>st</sup> XV Fixtures, Season 2018/19

Date	Opposition	KO	Venue	Result
25/8/18	Carrick (Cup)	3 pm	Carrick Academy	19-41 (W)
1/9/18	Whitecraigs	3 pm	Inverleith	27-21 (W)
8/9/18	Biggar	3 pm	Hartreemill	36-3 (L)
15/9/18	Glasgow Accies	3 pm	Inverleith	40-15 (W)
22/9/18	Lasswade	3 pm	Hawthornden	13-17 (W)
29/9/18	Preston Lodge	3 pm	Inverleith	24-22 (W)
6/10/18	GHK	3 pm	Old Anniesland	7-46 (W)
13/10/18	Peebles	3 pm	Inverleith	22-7 (W)
20/10/18	Dumfries Saints	3 pm	Park Farm	41-26 (L)
27/10/18	Highland	3 pm	Canal Park	36-5 (L)
3/11/18	Howe Of Fife	2 pm	Inverleith	
10/11/18	Falkirk	12.30 pm	Sunnyside	
17/11/18	Whitecraigs	2 pm	West Lodge	
24/11/18	Aberdeen Grammar (Cup)	2 pm	Rubislaw	
1/12/18	Biggar	2 pm	Inverleith	
8/12/18	Glasgow Accies	2 pm	New Anniesland	
15/12/18	Lasswade	2 pm	Inverleith	
12/1/19	Preston Lodge	2 pm	Pennypit Park	
19/1/19	GHK	2 pm	Inverleith	
26/1/19	Peebles	2 pm	The Gytes	
2/3/19	Dumfries Saints	3 pm	Inverleith	
16/3/19	Highland	3 pm	Inverleith	
23/3/19	Howe Of Fife	3 pm	Duffus Park	
30/3/19	Falkirk	3 pm	Inverleith	



### Many thanks to all of our Player Sponsors this season

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<b>Chris Baikie</b>	Dreadnought Leith	<b>Euan Morrison</b>	The Wee Restaurant
<b>Joe Bailey</b>	Scott Dickson	<b>Fraser Morrison</b>	Hamilton Waste
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