

Lions' late rally not in time to avoid defeat



Lee Valley Lions 4 Haringey Greyhounds 5

LOCAL derbies are notorious for being full of passion, in view of the amount of pride at stake.

Earlier this season, Lions went down 8-4 to the 'Hounds, but the pride and passion was there in abundance. It was expected that this second meeting would be similar, but, very surprisingly, this was very flat match until midway through the third period, with an injury-hit Haringey side merely content to contain a different looking Lions line-up.

Lions had problems controlling possession and were out-shot by nine

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effort to seven. They had the majority of the play, but couldn't get their shots away and even when they had a five-three advantage for a minute-and-a-half, they had no shots on goal during this powerplay.

It was the Greyhounds who opened the scoring against the run of play, when a pair of ex-Lions, Gary Dodds and Jan Bestic, combined to set up Ricky Rutherford to score.

A Haringey second came from a Lions defensive error, Romanas Fedotovas gave up the puck in his zone and two visitors combined to give Lions minder George Alley not a chance of saving it.

By the end of the first period, Haringey had shook off their slow start and were in control, but just before the end of the session Lions' Nick Alley found Scott Beeson who scored from his favourite narrow angle.

The statistics would seem to suggest that the second period was full of excitement with Lions putting 18 shots in on goal, but they failed to score with any of them, all going straight at Andrews, the Haringey net-minder.

Just to rub it in, Haringey went further ahead when a shot from Martin escaped George Alley and trickled through the net-minder's legs.

The last session produced five goals and in the last six minutes there was something for the Lions fans to cheer, as they staged a spirited come-back.

Despite this, the Greyhounds scored a fourth to open a three goal lead and Lions were struck a further blow, Stas Prokofiev being hit very hard into the boards. He was down for some time and then assisted off the ice to take no further part.

It looked all over for Lions when Bestic added the Haringey fifth goal, but the match was far from over.

Nick Alley span on a sixpence to catch both the Haringey defence and net-minder out to reduce the margin to three.

HACKNEY HIT THE TOP SPOT AFTER A CLOSE ENCOUNTER

HACKNEY RFC now sit proudly

LEE Valley Lions' recent signing Nick Breigoos, who scored the side's fourth and final goal in a late rally against Haringey.



top of the Herts-Middlesex North 3 table, after scraping a win on their visit to Hatfield, getting home by just three points against the Mid Herts side.

It was a tough, closely fought affair at Roe Hill and the Griffins' confidence was high going into the match, following their recent successful run of results.

Hackney certainly don't have a good record at Hatfield and none of the present club officials could remember a victory on their hosts' ground.

The Griffins began with some good passages of play despite a very strong wind. An early penalty award gave Pete Grieves the opportunity to put points on the board, but his long range effort just

**Hatfield 17
Hackney 20
Herts-Middlesex 3**

ed, when their tight-head prop was sin binned for an innocuous looking tackle deemed late by the referee.

The Griffins were able to put pressure on the home scrum from the start of the second-half and their numerical advantage paid off when Grieves rounded off a strong run by Tully to add Hackney's fourth try.

But this was the last good moment for the Spring Hill team. They lost both their half-backs to injury in quick succession, which caused a major re-shuffle.

Hatfield decided to keep the ball

Ninety seconds later, Paul O'Neill fed Beeson to thrash in his second of the night.

Haringey anxiously called a time-out, but just 16 seconds after the re-start, newcomer Nick Breigoos netted the Lions' fourth and the visitors were now really clinging on to their solitary goal lead.

But survive they did, to complete a season's double over the Lea Bridge team, leaving Lions to feel that if they had played for the rest of the game the way they performed in the last six minutes, the outcome might have been very different.