

# Rampant Lee Valley win battle of the big cats

National League South  
Division Two  
Lee Valley Lions 7  
Wightlink Tigers 4

by Dave Carr

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**LEE Valley Lions' recent run of bad form ended on Sunday as they grabbed an important home win to leap over opponents Wightlink Tigers in the table.**

Despite coming out strong, early signs had been ominous for the home side as Canadian Jason Coles found the net after only five minutes to give the visitors the lead.

The Lions hit back almost immediately when hard-skating centre man Blair Dubyk converted a Gary Dodds pass to equalise.

Graham Lewis then took the Lions ahead following good work from Dave Richards and birthday boy Calum Mathison, who was celebrating his 21st on the ice in style.

The Tigers began to make chances of their own, with Daniel Giden and Graham McFarlane both being denied by Ruth Cattell in the Lions' goal.

The Hackney outfit got the vital two-goal cushion they needed as Richard Hodge found himself wide alone in the slot and finished past stranded Ti-

gers' goalie, Elliot Folley.

The Lions started the second period the way they had finished the first.

With six minutes gone, Dubyk cycled behind the net and passed the puck out front to Dodds, who slotted the puck under Folley into the net.

Two goals in the space of three minutes for Wightlink duly arrived as the home side began to panic.

Giden was the first to score, following a great pass out of the corner by Cole.

Coles then released Michael Palin, who rifled the puck into the top right hand corner of the net to reduce the deficit to one goal at the end of the second.

With the score standing at 4-3, Lee Valley needed to be quick out of the blocks in the final period to counter the visitors' growth in confidence.

Thankfully for the home fans an early goal came courtesy of Dodds as he tipped in a Lee Mercer shot from the point.

This knocked the stuffing out of the Tigers and Swiss import Philippe Mueller took full advantage of confusion in the zone by roofing a beautiful wrist shot into the top corner from the slot.



**On fire: Swiss star Philippe Mueller was man of the match for Lee Valley at the weekend.**

Pic by Julianne Bonner

Mueller effectively killed off the game just seconds later as he latched on to a poor defensive clearance to score a solo effort, making the score 7-3 to the home side.

Wightlink had responded at the start of the period by edging Tanner up front and he'd had a number of opportunities to score but couldn't take advantage.

The visitors finally scored

with four minutes remaining as Ricky Rutherford skated hard down the right wing and unleashed a dipping slap-shot from just inside the zone into the far bottom corner of the net.

"We knew they would have bus legs so we knew we had to come out strong in the first period," said veteran forward, Gary Dodds.

"They beat us convincingly 5-1 on the island and we knew

they would come back hard in the second, and true to form they did.

"We stepped up in the third and that is what we are aiming to do in future games.

"We need to show some consistency and put the bad run of form we have suffered lately behind us."

Lee Valley Lions' next game is away to Chelmsford Warriors on 4 December, face-off 5.40pm.