

Glory and despair for the Lions



OFF DAY: Ben Williams is sent off after his fight with James Mason at Cardiff (Photo: Julianne Bonner)

IT was a case of mixed fortunes for the Lee Valley Lions after they failed to back up an excellent home win over Milton Keynes on Saturday by crashing to a heavy defeat at Cardiff the following day.

This season's previous encounter with Milton Keynes saw the Lions fall 1-7, but they gained their revenge at the weekend with a 5-1 victory.

With all guns blazing, the hosts quickly opened the scoring when Paul O'Neill beat netminder Mark Woolf on 02:12.

Ben Williams then stepped to the fore and hit home a second powerplay goal on 05:27 to make it 2-0.

Lee Valley stung their visitors with a third consecutive powerplay goal, when Michael Jacobs passed to Williams who fired an impressive shot that was touched in nicely by O'Neill at 25:10.

The same successful line continued to dominate the game, a fourth goal - this time through Jacobs - saw the hosts getting the better of Woolf at 25:26.

Milton Keynes doubled their number of shots on goal during the second period and something finally gave when Aram Todd found a way through at 31:01.

With a lead of 4-1, the Lions relaxed a little during the third period although they still managed to add a fifth goal after Ranby fired past Woolf on 47:56.

After enduring a bumpy ride and a delayed start to their game in Cardiff on Sunday the Lions then went down 14-6 to the Welsh side.

The Dragons playing their

first match in their new Cardiff Bay home wasted no time in showing the Lions they meant business, as David James quickly found a way past Stefan Nubert.

Further goals in the opening period from Luke Piggott, Steven Deacon, Steve Fisher and Michael Price saw the home side power into a 5-0 lead.

Andrzej Maslak shot home at 14:26 with an assist going to Williams to reduce the deficit.

Piggott scored unassisted just two minutes into the start of the second period but then Maslak retaliated

with an unassisted goal of his own at 24:39. Price grabbed his second of the afternoon to make it 7-2, before goals from Richard Hodge and Stas Profokiev brought the Lions back into the game, although Cardiff had the last word in the second period with an eighth goal of the afternoon to move clear at 8-4.

The third period began and Lee Valley struck first with a goal at 42:42 from Scott Beeson, although gaping holes at the other end saw James and James Manson score. Romanas Fedotovas finally got the

goal he deserved at 50:24, but it was Williams who stole the attention.

A punch-up with Manson left the Lions man with a nasty cut to the nose and a match penalty for his troubles.

Mike Price scored an unassisted goal for Cardiff at 52:04 and Fedotovas also picked up a game ban for disputing the effort.

With two players ejected from the game, it was unsurprising that Cardiff stepped up their attack and were able to score a further three goals, bringing the final score to 14-6.