

Enniskillen – 9, Bangor – 13



Once again the ridiculous rule not allowing substitutes in Qualifying League Two directly influenced the result in what was frankly a very close game, with few try scoring chances created by either side.

With 'Skins numbers reduced for the best part of an hour they can justifiably hold their heads up, even in the bitter disappointment of a match lost in the closing minutes.

Bangor got off to the better start and enjoyed the upperhand in penalty decisions, with the first two of the game taking them into 'Skins territory and the third then resulting in a three point lead with only three minutes on the clock.

The game was played at a terrific pace with plenty of physicality and Bangor again made 'Skins pay for their misdemeanour's, doubling their lead after twenty minutes.

'Skins then lost the first of their quota when Jamie Johnston, who had received treatment a few minutes before was forced to leave the field.

Enniskillen did however get themselves back into the game with James McIntyre pulling a penalty back, but shortly after 'Skins suffered another loss when fullback Nigel Johnston had to take his leave, sporting a nasty gash following a clash of heads.



Despite being down to 13 men 'Skins ended the first half strongest and McIntyre brought the scores level on thirty-four minutes.

It was testament to 'Skins character that they took the lead, again through the boot of McIntyre, within five minutes of the restart after they surged downfield from the kickoff.



The game remained a close, tight and physical affair with no quarter asked or given. The 13-men of Enniskillen defended heroically but were unable to spark much offence with Bangor's superior numbers thwarting them time after time.



Playing with men short was always likely to catch up with 'Skins and the cause was not aided when John Courtney was shown a yellow card just short of the half-hour mark leaving 'Skins to see out the majority of the time remaining defending with only 12 men!

With five minutes left Bangor finally made the breakthrough. Another penalty was kicked to touch and despite 'Skins successfully defending the lineout they were given a second chance as the referee wasn't ready. From the second throw possession was secured and a try came from the maul. The conversion was successful, giving the visitors a seven point lead.

Enniskillen were unable to contribute much in the closing minutes and it was Bangor who threatened, but 'Skins defensive work was 100% and the final whistle saw the scoreline 9 – 13, much to very obvious disappointment to 'Skins, players, coaches and supporters.



Whilst the opening day loss was not what 'Skins would have wanted the manner of the performance from a number of players should please coaches and supporters alike. Next Saturday 'Skins entertain Ballyclare and will be looking to bounce back and here's hoping that they can keep 15 men on the pitch!



Photos courtesy of Terry McCartney