Written by Jackie Finlan
Friday, 09 November 2012 23:37

A truly thrilling match evolved between Las Vegas and Severn River during the Women's DII Club Championships today. All of the scoring was sequestered to 26 minutes of play, with both sides dotting down twice, but one – Severn River – slotting an extra conversion. Prop Maria McCalister's conversion made all the difference in the 12-10 win.

The first half was marked by Las Vegas' aggressive forward attack and Severn River's inability to tackle low and slow down the ball. It wasn't a matter of size, as Severn River battled well in the scrum, but just a lack of confidence. The edge allowed Las Vegas to keep the ball in hand an continually pummel inside Severn River's 22 meter. The result was two tries from flanker Melissa Cordero and playmaker Lo Stender for the 10-0 lead into the break.

"The girls were nervous in the first 40," Severn River coach Pamela Gouws said. "At halftime, I was emphatic about the fact that I've never seen them play so tentatively, and they were making all kinds of turnovers. I told them to dig deep, have fun and start playing their game."

Severn River did just that, keeping the ball in hand and taking care of their possession. Right after the halftime whistle, McAllister dotted down and converted her own try to pull within three. Eight minutes later and wing Carmen Farmer put down the game-winner.

"We had an edge in our wings, who are able to finish," Gouws said. "They're very good when we can get the ball out to them. We're not just forward-dominated; we've got it all. We've just go to put it together better.

Coming back from a 10-point difference means Severn River has a lot of stand-up character, and at the heart of it is lock Jackie Melsopp, No. 8 Candace Coston and flyhalf Meredith McAlister. But Severn River has been in tougher positions than this, so they're not satisfied with their first-half performance.

"We have a lot more to give," Gouws said. "We had to beat Raleigh and Norfolk to get here, so I can say we haven't played 100% yet. That's a good thing though. It's not like we gave it all and that was it. We couldn't have gotten here without being able to give more."

The path to the final continues tomorrow against Beantown II, which defeated Albuquerque 20-3 in their quarterfinal.