

Beantown Gets the Win That Counts

Written by Jackie Finlan

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It was a retributive win for Beantown, who had fallen to today's opponent, Twin Cities, twice during the season. Although today's game occurred during the Women's Premier League third-place match, and Beantown ended with a 34-21 victory.



"Mentally, we were more focused and a lot tougher, and consistent," Beantown coach Richard Ashfield said of the difference in today's game compared to the regular season's. "We had talked about Sunday at nationals being our best of the season, and it really was. Things didn't always go our way, but they made some adjustments and kept their heads."

It looked like Twin Cities was going to set the tone for the match early on, when WPL lead scorer Lynelle Kugler ran her patented defense-freezing line through the gut for a try that Rebecca Radtke converted.

"She runs a tight unders line and times the holes so well," Ashfield explained. "She's caught the ball and she's already passed you."

"We made some adjustments to try and stop Lynelle," Ashfield said. "We dropped an extra forward into the backline to try and clog that up more, and also get our launch in defense to mess up some of their timing. For the most it went quite well – apart from her two tries – but it was four, five tries the previous times."

But then the tide turned and Beantown ran in four tries before Twin Cities could answer. Emily

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Jones dotted down two forward tries, wing Alyssa Green broke away for a five-pointer, and Amy Daniels scored the first of her two tries. With Jones' two conversions, that 24-7 lead would be all that Beantown would need for the win.

But not first without Twin Cities giving Beantown a scare. At the 56th minute, Kugler once again crashed between to backline defenders, going into the tryzone untouched. Fifteen minutes later, Ashley Kastendick dotted down. Radtke slotted both conversions, closing the score to 24-19 with about 10 minutes to go.

As anxiety heightened, Jones put a penalty through the posts, pushing Beantown's lead to a two-score margin, 27-19, and changing the tone of the waning minutes. The nail on the coffin was Daniels' intercept try that occurred after a series of Amazons penalties building toward the line. A great chase ensued as Daniels trekked 80 meters, but she had enough gas to go in untouched.

Standouts included Eagle prop Mari Wallace, who, unfortunately for Beantown, will be returning to California. She was a fantastic leader, as was Jones. Ashfield also commended scrumhalf Jackie Hwang, who's been great all season, as well as outside center Evan Hoese, "a rocket," who highlighted a young backline.

"Friday was tough," Ashfield reflected on their 21-15 loss to Glendale. "We came here thinking we had a shot, but this has been redeeming, showing what we're capable of. We've got 26 players who are 24 and under. It shows promise for the future of our program."