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All of the Women's Premier League matches on Sunday occurred between teams that had played each other twice during the regular season. A blessing in one sense, monotonous in the other. But it worked in San Diego's favor today, as they used that familiarity to rack up another New York victory, 22-7 for fifth place.

"When you've seen a team twice, then you know what to expect, and you know what you're capable of against a team like that," San Diego captain Ryan Carlyle said. "So you can adjust your game plan more confidently around that.

"New York's defense is super powerful," Carlyle specified. "They come up hard, together and that puts pressure on us. But we knew that was coming, we knew to stay deeper and just worked around that."

The game opened with a nice, sustained series of attack near New York's 22 meter. Phase after phase pummeled the New York line, but the defense didn't bend. Finally, a frustrated Surfer chucked the ball football-style to a player out wide, and it skidded out of bounds to effectively end that scoring opportunity.

It took San Diego 24 minutes to breach the New York defense and have it pay dividends. Captain Julia Anderson, who anchors the forward attack, picked weak off the scrum, and the ball worked out to wing Val Griffeth to finish in the corner, 5-0.

The next three tries belonged to outside center Emilie Bydwell. With a little room in front of her, she's nearly unstoppable. Her first try came after Griffeth intercepted a pass to get San Diego deep in New York's end. The ball turned over, but two blocked kicks finally saw the ball move to Bydwell, and she took care of the rest. Her second try of the half originated near midway, and a nasty stiff-arm to NY fullback Kath Ryan opened up the field for an easy sprint to the try zone.

"Bydwell, with her strike running, was a huge deal for us," Carlyle said. "On defense, fullback Katie Lorenz saved us a lot of times. She's one of those players who you can always depend on back there. Instead of getting nervous when a kick goes over your head, you're just like, 'Oh, Katie's got it. We're going to be OK.'"

With Griffeth's conversion, San Diego led 17-0 into the break, and continued that momentum into the second 40. Bydwell logged her third try of the match in 47th minute.

New York got their lone points of the match after stealing a San Diego scrum, an always present threat. McCarthy broke weak and grubbered down the sideline, ending in a lineout to the orange-and-blue. McCarthy ended up with the ball again, spotted a hole in the drifting defense, and attacked with ease underneath the posts. It was nice retribution for a bobbled kick reception on New York's tryline, which ultimately helped set up a San Diego try.

Even though San Diego would have preferred to play in the upper tier, this win was still fulfilling in terms of the future.

"We were proud with how we played during the season, but there were just a couple of unfortunate losses that pushed us into this bracket, and we deserved to play higher," Carlyle said. "We proved that with our wins this weekend.

"We are so excited about how we played today and to carry that into next season," Carlyle added. "This is how we can play, this is our top performance, and that's how we should start our season, instead of waiting until the end before putting it together."