



A word from our President

Just back from sunny Portugal where Jane and I spent a wonderful three weeks and were joined by our children and their partners as well as a bevy of friends. A really jolly way to celebrate another of those milestone birthdays which seem to come around more frequently these days!

Anyway we hope that you are also managing to enjoy some long overdue sunshine with friends and families.

As a change to my usual introduction I thought it might be useful for you if I tried to summarise the recent very significant announcement from the SRU regarding a new competition, the Super 6, which will kick-off in season 2019/20 and replace the BT Premiership. Below the Super 6 there will be four totally amateur leagues of 12 teams, i.e. Scottish Championship, and National Leagues one two and three. There will be no promotion/relegation to the Super 6 for five/six years.

There were 12 applicants for the six franchises and the successful clubs are, Ayr, Boroughmuir, Heriots, Melrose, Stirling County and Watsonians. Franchise agreements are expected to be signed shortly. The losers are, Currie, Dundee, Edinburgh Accies, Gala, Glasgow Hawks and Hawick.

You will no doubt have already spotted that Scotland's largest City, Glasgow has failed to gain a slot and nor will there be any franchise North of the Forth.

However the SRU has indicated that there may be further expansion, possibly to a Super 8, as part of their five year plan, but they also stressed that the key point was to crystallise talent now in this part time professional competitive environment.

Those clubs outwith the Super 6 will operate on a strictly amateur basis. Perhaps, as a result, that will see the monies saved being invested in grassroots-volunteers and facilities. The SRU will also be investing significant funds in both the Amateur and Professional Leagues.

Hopefully the foregoing will give you a flavour of this momentous development. If you want to pour over the minutiae the SRU websites provide much more comprehensive information

David Mackay

Women's Rugby Quaich

At the AGM our President David Mackay intimated our intention to create a new annual award to be presented to the most promising up and coming female Scottish rugby player. The first presentation of this award will be made by the SRU President Dee Bradbury, at our AGM in March 2019, at The Caledonian Club.

A competition to produce the trophy/quaich is being run by Jennifer Gray, Programme Director of the Edinburgh College of Art, Department of Jewellery and Silversmithing. The competition will be run amongst the final year students to produce a proposal for FoSR to review in the autumn this year, and the winning entry will then be produced in time for our AGM in March.

If you would like to sponsor the trophy, or perhaps have the name of a loved one, commemorated in perpetuity in the award, please get in touch with our Secretary Les Fordham (les@f-s-r.org).

Neil McNair

Our New Ambassador

Rugby legend Craig Chalmers has agreed to be an ambassador for Friends of Scottish Rugby. Born 15 October 1968, Craig started out with Melrose and went on to play for Border Reivers, Edinburgh, Glasgow Caledonians, Harlequins, Worcester and Pertemps Bees before returning to Melrose. He joined Esher Rugby Football Club as a back coach for their senior team in August 2013.

Craig represented Scotland 60 times and also played in a test for the British & Irish Lions, against Australia in Sydney in July 1989. Many consider his greatest achievement to be landing three penalties in the Grand Slam-clinching victory over England in March 1990.

His preferred position was fly-half, though he occasionally played at centre. Craig was noted for his tactical kicking, game management and also for being a solid tackler, something fly halves were not noted for at that time.

FoSR are delighted to have Craig on our team!

But that's not all...

A date for your diary...

Our next big event will be "An evening with..." at the Caledonian Club on 19th September. Entertainment will consist of a panel of Scottish rugby celebrities hosted by Craig Chalmers himself.

Les Fordham

Another date for your diary - 2019 AGM

The 2019 AGM is scheduled for 21st March at the Caledonian Club so please make a note in your diary. Invitations will be issued early next year but we can already confirm that Dee Bradbury, Vice President of the SRU (who will be President from August this year) will be attending and will present the new "Women's Rugby Quaich".

And Another one... (almost)

We are pleased to announce that Ruth Davidson, Head of the Scottish Conservative Party has agreed to be our guest speaker at an event in late Spring 2019. Date to be agreed when she returns to work following maternity leave.

Autumn Internationals match tickets:

We have a pair of debenture tickets at Murrayfield for:

Fiji:	10 November 2018	Kick Off: 2:30pm	£38 each
South Africa:	17 November 2018	Kick Off: 5:20pm	£72 each
Argentina:	24 November 2018	Kick Off: 2:30pm	£64 each

The seats are located in the west stand (22BB6 and 22BB7) and tickets will be passed on to members (and their guest) at face value. If you would like to purchase these tickets, please contact Simon Frost (simon@f-s-r.org).

SRU - Nagasaki: Schools Initiative August 2018

The opportunity to take a touring party to Nagasaki arose last May. Mark Dodson our CEO spoke at a dinner in Nagasaki of a return trip to mirror a tour that had taken place earlier in the year with a Nagasaki under 15 team coming to Edinburgh to play. I was fortunate enough to be given the task of pulling it together.

The first decision to be made was who would tour and we were enthusiastic about giving this opportunity to a group that would ordinarily not get the chance to play rugby outside Scotland. The decision was made to select an under 16's team from our schools of rugby - 15 schools in areas of deprivation throughout Scotland - and having had our first session I can already see the eagerness, passion and obvious character of the group.

I have spoken to the players about how we will measure success and emphasised 3 key areas:

1. Values & Culture - they will be challenged to look at the behaviours and values we hold dear.
2. Rugby - we will highlight work ethic, teamwork, friendship, leadership and much more.
3. Enjoyment - a key factor in everything we will do, challenging times as well as the good ones.

We are lucky to have James Robson touring with us who has played a huge role in many players careers over the years including my own. He will provide the players with not only the best medical treatment but also the experience of many Scotland and Lions tours.

I am very confident we will give our touring team on and off field memories that they will carry with them for many years. I personally and everyone at Scottish Rugby are very grateful to Friends of Scottish Rugby for the support that has been offered to help make this tour happen.

Al Kellock, Scottish Rugby Ambassador

What about you?

If sufficient members are interested, Neil McNair would be happy to arrange an organised trip to Japan to watch the Scottish matches - This is just a nucleus of an idea so prices are not yet known. However, if you are interested in going along please let Neil know (neil@f-s-r.org). Watch this space...

Donations

The Dundee collection at the AGM raised money for the Alastair Hignell MS Resource Centre as nominated by Ian "Robbo" Robertson.

We have made a donation and short term loan to support the Kirkcaldy RFC U18s and U16s who are touring Italy at the beginning of June after a key fundraising event had to be cancelled due to bad weather.

We have also made a further donation to Kingussie High School.

The youngsters there have made sterling progress this year and are working hard for even greater success.

They were recently visited by the SRU who took the Calcutta Cup with them, much to the delight of all who attended.

Les Fordham

AN ODE TO THE FORMATION OF LONDON SCOTTISH FC

AT

MACKAYS TAVERN 3 WATER CLOSE LUDGATE HILL APRIL 10TH 1878

Well it was a great day of fulsome fate when on 10th April 1878

A group of worthy Scots met, aye in the Tavern of Mackay

And the great and the good after much ale ,drams and good food

Agreed to form and here's the rub

One of worlds most famous rugby club

And with no stress decreed on all future players their standard kit and dress

Yes a blue jersey with a red lion as a badge and two shockers

Red stockings and white knickerbockers

And so for all the world to see t'was formed London Scottish FC

And as we all should show them great gratitude

For setting us forth on a great journey

And for most of the time with no money

Playing with panache strength and flair

And providing Scottish Internationalists mair and mair

And with a fairness of spirit which has no limit

And with many great victories on the run

And always with great camaraderie and good FUN

So lets us look back over the 140 years with no tears and relish

That we are the great and famous London Scottish

Jock Meikle

April 10 th 2018

At Mac and Wild Great Titchfield St London

**Friends of Scottish Rugby thank our Sponsors
and Supporters for their generosity**

Visit us at "www.f-s-r.org"