



A word from our President

Jane and I are now in California visiting Euan and Aimee and we will be here for almost six weeks. We left with a great spring in our step after our very successful Summer Dinner on 30th July when Ruth Davidson MSP, Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, was our chief guest.

If you were unfortunate enough to miss the evening, believe you me it was truly wonderful. Ruth was absolutely first class in every respect and rightly enjoyed a very warm standing ovation.

Photographs are now available (contact les@f-s-r.org if you have not already seen them). Meantime thank you so very much for your support. The financial outcome will obviously help us to continue our work in supporting grass roots rugby.

Enjoy your Summer and we hope to see many of you at the Autumn dinner on 10th October where our innovative plans promise to be interesting and stimulating!

David Mackay

Summer Dinner - Guest speaker: Ruth Davidson

On 30th July, 96 members and their guests welcomed Ruth Davidson MSP to the Caledonian Club. We were piped from the reception to dinner by Ralph Potter and Mike McGlashan. David MacKay was giving the welcome address as Ruth arrived, straight from the airport, having been delayed due to thunderstorms over Heathrow. The entire room stood to applaud Ruth's entry into the packed Johnnie Walker room.

Grace was given by the Rev Alastair Cumming.

The President asked all present to congratulate Donald Shaw on being 92. In a stage whisper Donald replied that he would in fact be 98 shortly after the dinner!

The dinner consisted of smoked salmon to start, followed by roast loin of lamb, rounded off with glazed lemon tart, coffee and tablet. Prior to the dinner guests had been welcomed with Edinburgh Gin, courtesy of Neil Boyd, who also generously donated a 21 year old bottle of Glengoyne to the raffle.

Douglas Hutchinson gave the loyal toast.

Ruth introduced her speech by outlining the close connections between Scotland and Japan going back many centuries. In particular with Nikka whisky company in Yoichi. She wished the Scottish Rugby team good luck in the forthcoming World Cup in Japan.

Most of those present were of course more interested in Ruth's meeting the previous day with the new Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

After answering many questions from the audience, nearly all about Brexit, Ruth left to another standing ovation, to catch the sleeper train to Scotland.

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Prior to her leaving the President presented an SRU branded babygro to Ruth for her young son Fin.

The Dundee Collection was circulated and a substantial sum was raised to support the FoSR schools ball initiative.



Jock Meikle, on behalf of all members of FoSR, presented a specially engraved quich made for Donald McNab for the great work he had done in founding FoSR and guiding it through its early years.

Regretfully Donald was not able to be present, and Sir Willie Purves accepted it on Donald's behalf.

The vote of thanks was given by Ian Black.

The President made his closing remarks and hoped he would see all the members and guests at our Autumn Dinner on Thursday 10th October, at the Caledonian Club.

The theme of the evening will be "Songs from the Six Nations".

After the formal closure many members and guests retired, as usual, to the bar and terrace to continue the convivial conversations.

Neil McNair

Balls for Schools

As has been previously reported, FoSR has formed a joint initiative with Scottish Rugby to donate rugby balls to Tier Four schools. The project was formally launched at Murrayfield on June 20, 2019 and around 500 balls will be provided to the various schools, with each school leader also receiving a Scottish Rugby branded t-shirt and hoodie to recognise the hard work they carry out to facilitate the game of rugby.

The initiative sprang into life when David Mackay was chatting with Craig Chalmers (former Scotland), who is also one of our ambassadors, on how we best focus our donations. Craig said 'schools need rugby balls' and if you get them engaged at the entry level you will be doing the Scottish nation a great favour."

Suitably motivated, David discussed the idea with the other committee members and as the saying goes "the rest is history".

David was joined by former Scotland and Glasgow Warriors centre Graeme Morrison (FoSR Ambassador) at the national stadium, where the branded rugby balls were given out to school children. David said I'm very proud to see what we're doing to promote grassroots rugby.

Graeme was similarly pleased to see youngsters benefit from the FoSR donation. He said: "There is a desire for the sport in some of the more challenged areas around the country and there we believe kids will really benefit from this programme. "

(continued overleaf)

The former Dollar Academy pupil, who retired at the end of the 2012/13 season, added: "I was very fortunate to come through a school where rugby was the main sport and I'm a firm believer that rugby can provide so many more tools for life for kids." "Rugby can really give you discipline and direction in life and to feel part of a team and get the core values rugby has is a really good initiative."

Leith Academy and Tynecastle School and Wester Hails Education Centre were on hand to collect their kit and receive a tour of the national stadium.

Les Fordham

Ruth Davidson becomes VP

It is with great pleasure that we can inform you that during our Summer Dinner, Ruth Davidson MSP agreed to become a Vice President of Friends of Scottish Rugby. We have no doubt that all members will join us in welcoming her aboard.

New Ambassador

We are pleased to welcome Phil Anderton as an FoSR Ambassador. Phil was appointed the CEO of the SRU in February 2004 where he enjoyed several years of successful marketing. He then moved on to senior roles in the Sports Industry including Hearts, ATP, Abu Dhabi Sporting Club and the Better Together Campaign. Currently he is founding partner of his own men's grooming company.

Holyrood Recognition

Gordon Lindhurst (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): Friends of Scottish Rugby, Supporting the Sport at Grassroots Level

That the Parliament recognises the support that Friends of Scottish Rugby is giving to various schools to assist more pupils to get involved in the sport; acknowledges that the initiative will provide around 500 balls, as well as kit, to schools that are at the beginning of their rugby journey; notes that young people from Leith Academy, Tynecastle School and Wester Hailes Education Centre visited BT Murrayfield to receive such equipment and were given a tour of the national stadium; understands that this support is in addition to the over £600,000 that Friends of Scottish Rugby has contributed to clubs across the country for game-changing projects, and believes that this ongoing support will help facilitate the growth of the game at a grassroots level (S5M-17936).

Supported by: Clare Adamson, Gil Paterson, Miles Briggs, Alexander Stewart, Finlay Carson, Annie Wells, Margaret Mitchell, Alison Harris, Alexander Burnett, Edward Mountain, Bill Kidd, Richard Lyle, Fulton MacGregor, Liam McArthur, Tavish Scott, Stuart McMillan, Colin Beattie, Kenneth Gibson.

Dates for your diaries

10th October 2019: Autumn Dinner - we plan to have a change from having a guest speaker and will instead be entertaining you with three talented, award winning graduates, all from the Royal Academy of Music, performing well known songs from each of the Six Nations (You are welcome to sing along!).

29th November 2019: The London Scottish St Andrew's Day Lunch at The Savoy. A fun filled and entertaining afternoon celebrating the Great London Scot Awards and Scottish culture, whilst catching up with friends. The exclusive auction is fundraising for charity partner Maggie's. For more information and to book a table please contact: Louise Newton at louise.newton@standrewsdailunch.com

12th March 2020: AGM and Spring Dinner - Dinner will follow the AGM and quiches (and the newly introduced Women's Trophy!) will be presented to well deserving youngsters who are expected to go on to great futures in the sport.

The London Scottish 'Professional Entry Programme' (LSPEP)

The LSPEP represents a key innovation in London Scottish's player recruiting and development activities.

London Scottish are developing effective and sustainable rugby development pathways. These pathways will enable them to recruit and retain the best players, whilst growing their own talent to complement and enhance performance across all levels. They are focusing on helping players manage the critical 'transitions' they will experience through their career: from amateur to professional rugby; from an aspiring young player through to becoming a proven performer, an experienced leader, and ultimately, transitioning to a second career when the time comes to hang up the boots for good!

To help facilitate managing the first steps into the world of professional rugby more effectively, they have introduced a tightly focused and managed London Scottish 'Professional Entry Programme (PEP)' helping players to take their first steps in the professional game and aspiring to play at the highest levels and support them with bespoke programmes to help smooth the transition to rugby as a full-time job.

But such development comes at a cost to the player, at a time in their careers when earnings are at their lowest and this is where Friends of Scottish Rugby can help.

Miles Wakelling (LSPEP)

This season, FoSR will be sponsoring Miles Wakelling.

Player Profile

- Age - 21
- School - Reeds Weybridge
- Position - Flanker
- Junior Club - London Scottish
- Achievements - Scottish Exiles
- Height - 192cm
- Weight - 105Kg's

Miles is a success story of the London Scottish Junior programme after playing all his Junior and Colt rugby with the exiles. He then took his opportunities with the Highlanders (the old London Scottish 2nd XV) and was rewarded a Professional Entry Programme contract for last season.

Wakelling has continued to develop with the Scots, putting on some considerable size after working with the S&C staff and developing his on-field game last season with a loan move to Barnes in National Two South.

The young back row made his professional debut last season in the Championship Cup but went on to make his full Greene King IPA Championship debut against Doncaster Knights in March. He will be looking to add to his four 1st XV appearances this season.

Miles is looking forward to another year at the Club. "I am really pleased to have signed with Scottish for next season having really enjoyed my rugby over the past year. I am excited to see what the club and I can achieve in the upcoming season."

Head Coach Graham Steadman was looking forward to working with Miles again this season. "Miles is a good lad and he works hard. We are excited to continue to see him develop as a player this season."

Les Fordham

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