



ANNUAL REPORT

2011/12





Scotland's Rugby World Cup squad at the National Museum of Scotland with children from the players' chosen clubs of origin, August 2011

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

IAN McLAUCHLAN

With the obvious emphasis on Rugby World Cup 2011 and the subsequent RBS 6 Nations campaign, it's sometimes easy to forget that Scottish Rugby is about more than the national team and their international programme.

As a governing body we really are involved in the game at all levels – from organising training for girls wanting to take up the game in Stornoway to supporting mini festivals in Aberdeenshire; staging student finals day for nearly 1000 at Murrayfield; identifying and developing our Pathway players and guiding them through the age grade structure; supporting our referees and coaches; rewarding our volunteers; and working with our clubs across the country to attract and retain players.

Nothing worthwhile comes easy and we've all experienced challenges this year.

Clubs have worked through the second phase of changes to the league structure, the increased regionalisation helping teams with the time and money spent on travelling. More is to come next season, with alterations to the Premier structure. We'll continue to help our member clubs tackle the changes, champion the long-term benefits and work to make the game more enjoyable and satisfying for all involved.

Our own structure, within Scottish Rugby 'the business', has changed over recent months, too. We've welcomed a new Chief Executive, experienced a new Chairman take the reins and are continuing to make many other strategic changes. Having a fresh eye cast over the way we work, encouraging us to sort the issues we can fix now and kick-starting the challenges that will take longer to work through has been both testing and satisfying.

What hasn't changed, however, is that rugby and our clubs continue to be at the heart of what we do. I really enjoyed the now-annual 'road trip', visiting clubs the length and breadth of the country on our President's roadshow. We were able to share information that could help clubs – about awards, grants and such like – and they were just as keen to let us know what more we could do to help them.

The rugby family extends far and wide, however; a timely reminder of that came when, during last year's Rugby World Cup, we visited Christchurch. On the day that Scotland should have been taking on Georgia at the AMI Stadium, we were surveying the devastation wrought by the earthquake to the Lancaster Park ground and the city. Supporters back home had raised thousands to help the quake fund and we duly handed over the cheque; it was a small token of how our rugby community felt and I hope that the visit by our players and coach in some way helped. The physical damage had been done but, without doubt, the heart of rugby was still there.

That day in Christchurch is among the myriad of memories I'll take away from Murrayfield, as my two-year term ends this month. It's been an honour – and sometimes a challenge! – to be your President and experience rugby from the 'other' side of the game. I've had the pleasure of meeting and working alongside some truly dedicated people and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for their support.

I wish you all a great summer. Before you know it, the season will be kicking off again and we'll be back to the round of fixtures, competitions, training and club life. And we wouldn't want it any other way.

Ian McLauchlan
President
Scottish Rugby





CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

SIR MOIR LOCKHEAD

Despite difficult economic times we have achieved a relatively strong financial performance during the year and now have a clear debt reduction plan agreed and in place. During my first 12 months I have looked, listened and tried to learn about the issues that would help Scottish Rugby progress. Some changes would be quick fixes while others would be more considered shifts requiring further consultation for the longer term.

Really, we needed to make Scottish Rugby a more attractive proposition all round. Rugby, it's at the heart of what we do, and we have to continue to reinvent ourselves for our players and supporters.

We are developing a core commercial drive within the organisation to help increase the flow of supporters through the turnstiles. This means making Murrayfield Stadium a more welcoming proposition for international and Edinburgh Rugby fans. With support from the Board and a rapid response from our staff we were able to remove a few of these barriers and niggles that had been interrupting an enjoyable experience.

The car park behind the stadium was re-opened, its returning popularity leading to a sell-out of spaces during our two home RBS 6 Nations games this season. Supporters could meet their friends, enjoy the big-match build-up and rediscover some of the old spirit of the game, something many of us have enjoyed.

In our drive to become more customer friendly, we put tickets on sale on match day, for the Scotland games against Ireland and Italy, in the build-up to the Rugby World Cup – by the time of the Six Nations, the stadium was a sell-out with 67,000 in attendance. We have now added to this change by enabling the sale of tickets online, allowing customers to print off at home with a seat selection function similar to the airline model.

The third 'quick win' here was re-opening the President's Suite for Edinburgh Rugby supporters. A fan-focused approach along with some great performances by the team has seen both attendance and goodwill improve. People saw we were on the move and were happy to join us on the journey.

One of the longer-term aims was to give Edinburgh Rugby and Glasgow Warriors more autonomy to grow and develop as part of the Union. More delegation will help them to create an environment where the teams are generating their own support and where the professional players become more closely associated with club land and the local community.

This approach is really similar to the model adopted across the Irish Sea and our new five year strategic plan which will be launched at the AGM will provide a blueprint for this. Our plan highlights pro clubs as still part of the Union, linked to Scottish Rugby and the national side but very much flying their own flag, being innovative and exciting.

At all points in the strategy we've set ourselves ambitious targets – from driving up player numbers to increasing the amount of rugby coaching available in schools and, in addition, to raising our expectations for the national team's performance.

A taste of what could be came recently with Edinburgh Rugby's fantastic result in the Heineken Cup and Glasgow Warriors great progress in the RaboDirect PRO12 league.

In September 2011, we appointed Mark Dodson as Chief Executive and have welcomed the enthusiasm and hard work he has brought to the role. In my view, since his arrival he has refocused the organisation towards rugby and customer service and his style has already brought some success to the organisation. Prior to Mark's arrival Jock Millican was interim CEO and I would like to record my thanks to him for his work over the handover period. I would also like to record my appreciation to Gordon Bulloch, Donald Emslie and Ed Crozier for the help and work that they have done as they are standing down at the AGM.

In conclusion, we have continued to work closely with government over the last 12 months and I'd particularly like to thank Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government for their support in ensuring the Emirates Airline Glasgow 7s part of the HSBC Sevens World Series was such a success.

Finally my thanks go to our Board members and staff for their hard work and commitment during this period of change and I look forward with confidence to delivering our new strategy in the years ahead.

Sir Moir Lockhead
Chairman
Scottish Rugby





CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REVIEW

MARK DODSON

Rugby should be the heart of our business. Something I've said often over the nine months since I came to Scottish Rugby. Back last September there were areas where that sentiment just didn't seem to be the case. We'd lost some of our focus, we weren't listening to our supporters and we weren't working to our strengths.

Getting things back on track, rebuilding and revitalising the game hasn't been easy and the challenges will continue but I do believe we're making real progress.

I said at the outset that my focus would be on our pro teams. We've supported the management and coaches with the resources to create winning sides and we've already seen a return on that investment with the great progress on the pitch from Edinburgh Rugby in the Heineken Cup and Glasgow Warriors in the RaboDirect PRO12. Winning teams increase support and bring in revenue, get sponsors interested and attract broadcasters which, in turn, brings more people into the game and so the upward spiral continues.

The safety and wellbeing of our players, staff and customers is fundamental to the running of Scottish Rugby. The Are you ready to play rugby? programme maintains a consistent approach to player safety and our stadia and facilities are subject to constant vigilance to ensure the highest standards of customer safety.

We've invested in young Scottish talent but, at the same time, have been aware of the need for experience to help these boys develop, and win, and so have supported that by bringing in exciting, quality players from abroad. We need to think and act globally and now have the right man in that position, in the shape of Sean Lineen, to source that talent.

By generating this excitement in the game, we also want to attract as many youngsters as possible to give rugby a try. We want to tap into the feelgood factor following the recent pro team success, engage with them now and make rugby the sport of choice in our schools; see youngsters passing a ball around in the park, cheering on their local team, enjoying the fellowship and community that's such a big part of rugby and getting hooked for life on our great game.

Naturally we have been disappointed by our national team's performance this season however were buoyed earlier this month by the great wins over Australia in New South Wales, Fiji in Lautoka and Samoa in Apia.

A big part of what we've already started here forms the basis of our new strategic plan. The targets we've set are ambitious. We want to double the average attendances at our pro games and ensure these teams are consistently in the final stages of both league and Cup competitions. Our national and representative teams have to up their game and increase their standings in the world rankings. And at club level we need to support our teams by aligning them more with our professional and representative sides.

As I've said, rugby is what we do but recently we hadn't been doing it that well, off the pitch, in the eyes of many of our supporters. We hadn't listened to what people wanted and weren't providing a good enough match day experience or service.

Some of these were things we could fix easily – selling tickets on international match day, reintroducing car parking on the back pitches and reopening the President's Suite for supporters on Edinburgh Rugby match days. Ticket purchasers can now choose their seats online and print their match tickets at home. We want to continue to improve the customer experience by generally making our stadia as welcoming as possible and the process of supporting the teams as easy and fun as we can.

It goes without saying that we don't have all the answers and it'll be a difficult job but I'm excited about what is ahead of us. It's going to be a bumpy ride and we will have stormy times but we can weather them by working together, kicking the ball in the same direction and all appreciating what the strategic goals are.

We've turned Murrayfield around in a few months in terms of its philosophy, its openness and its transparency. We may get criticised for interference in certain areas of the game but my job is to take that and see it through.

Financial overview

The financial results for 2011/12 show a surplus of £1,570k for the year. This has been achieved through a number of factors, the most significant of which were the selling out of both home RBS 6 Nations matches, the performances of the professional teams, Glasgow and Edinburgh, in the RaboDirect PRO12 and Heineken Cup respectively, and sound financial control. There has also been, during the year, an increase in investment across all areas of the game, from grassroots clubs and schools rugby up to the national team.



Income

Income of £38.2m for 2011/12 is £3.1m higher than 2010/11, as a result of increases from various sources. These include improved pro team revenues achieved through both Edinburgh and Glasgow's performances during the season, higher hospitality and event income through RBS 6 Nations, the concerts in June 2011 and increased grant income from the IRB in Rugby World Cup year. These increases are partly offset by lower broadcasting and ticketing revenues as a result of the different profile of home matches both in the autumn and during the RBS 6 Nations.

International and professional rugby

The investment in international and professional rugby in 2011/12 increased by £2.4m from £16.7m to £19.1m. This resulted from the increased investment in the national team for preparing for, and competing in, the Rugby World Cup, together with increased pro team investment.

Community and performance rugby

Investment in community and performance rugby increased to £4.5m from £4.2m in 2010/11 reflecting additional regional and performance development expenditure.

Commercial and operational

Commercial and operational costs of £9.2m, incurred to support and enhance the revenue streams, were generally in line with the previous year's total of £9.1m.

Club support and development

Direct Club support and related development expenditure of £1.9m for 2011/12 was a 5% increase on the 2010/11 total of £1.8m. This reflects the ongoing funding of joint development officers and direct support to clubs including payment of club accident insurance premiums, club participation monies, travel support and match officials' expenses for club games.

Other expenditure

Interest costs of £0.9m were broadly similar to 2010/11 costs. Depreciation of £1.1m is above the 2010/11 charge of £1.0m

due to the recent capital expenditure investment in Murrayfield Stadium.

Average employee numbers for the year were 295, an increase of 12 on 2010/11. The notes to the financial statements include a detailed analysis of employees, showing where these changes have been.

Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure in the year amounted to £0.6m and involved a number of relatively minor works around Murrayfield Stadium, together with the east stand and other improvements associated with the re-configuration of the ground for Edinburgh matches, and a relatively modest refurbishment of the 1925 Suites and Boxes.

Borrowings and cash flow

Average borrowings during financial year 2011/12 were £12.9m compared to the previous year's average of £14.4m. Year end debt of £13.4m, however, is higher than the April 2010 figure of £12.7m. These cash movements are generally as a result of the differing cash flows in a Rugby World Cup year, together with the surplus for the year and various working capital movements. In recent weeks, a re-financing deal has also been completed, which ensures the funding of the organisation, within agreed parameters, for a further three years.

By working together towards our shared strategic goals Scottish Rugby will be where it should be – leading the development of the sport, respected in its field and not only promoting but living the values of this great game.

Mark Dodson

Chief Executive
Scottish Rugby



PERFORMANCE







PERFORMANCE

DIRECTOR OF PERFORMANCE

Graham Lowe



As the national team return from a tough three-Test tour to the South Pacific that involved a number of young exciting players, mixed with our current internationalists, winning remains our priority. Although we have made improvements in the

consistency of play with our national side and have introduced a number of young stars of the future to international rugby, next season we would expect to see more winning performances.

Our pro teams have grasped the nettle and worked consistently hard all season. Edinburgh Rugby's progress in the Heineken Cup, not least the memorable quarter final at Murrayfield, and Glasgow Warriors run in the RaboDirect PRO12 to the play-offs, have showcased exciting squads including a number of players graduating from our elite development squads who have been successfully integrated with both teams.

This year saw us field a full-time Scotland 7s squad for the first time. These players staunchly supported our pro sides during the Rugby World Cup and, after a positive start to the season, continued to post some mixed results. With a full focus on sevens next season, we would expect to see improvements here.

The national under-20 team is currently competing in the Junior World Championships in South Africa and while their Six Nations did not go as hoped, the side did edge Italy in a solid away victory to complete their campaign on a positive note.

Last season's changes to the player Pathway are now bedding in and we are beginning to see the benefits of one five-year

programme for our younger players as opposed to the previous format of five one-year programmes. This season has seen us generate more consistency at all age grade levels. Alignment of our under-16 programme has seen competition on a more like-for-like basis with other countries; and our under-18 national side came fifth in the FIRA-AER championship in Spain in April, so retaining their elite level European status.

There is an opportunity to build on pro team successes through quality programmes for our national teams in 7s and XVs. With the introduction of player acquisition, a crop of young talented players coming through our pathways and a commitment to working with clubs and schools at all levels to improve rugby I look forward to the coming year with excitement.

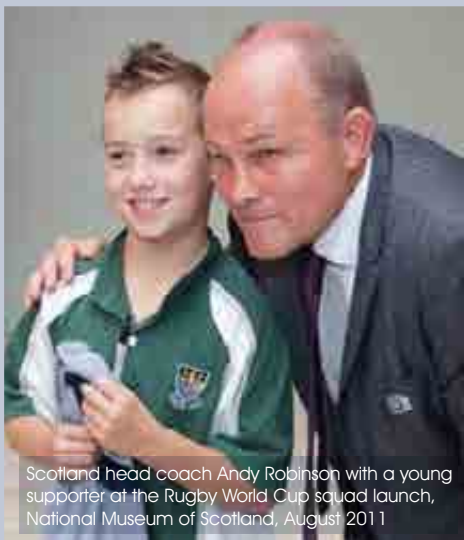
As ever, I'm indebted to our dedicated staff for their hard work and to the wider rugby community for their commitment and passion as we continue to build towards a winning Scotland.



Max Evans on the break against Romania, September 2011



left to right: Joe Ansbro scores for Scotland, August 2011; Allan Jacobsen is tackled by youngsters at a training session in St Andrews, August 2011; Andy Robinson at a Scotland training session in Princes St Gardens, August 2011; Scotland supporters show their colours



Scotland head coach Andy Robinson with a young supporter at the Rugby World Cup squad launch, National Museum of Scotland, August 2011

SCOTLAND

Scotland endured a disappointing international campaign in the 2011/12 season, frequently finding ourselves on the adverse end of the small margins that determine victor and vanquished.

The early optimism from the 2011 EMC Tests – where Scotland defeated both Ireland and Italy at Murrayfield last August – was not sustained beyond the opening two pool matches of the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand.

Scotland did achieve a try bonus point victory over Romania in their opening RWC match and emerged on top in a try-less arm-wrestle against Georgia.

However, thereafter an agonising one-point loss to Argentina in appalling conditions and then more heartache as the Auld Enemy won at the death, meant Scotland had failed to qualify for the knockout stages of a Rugby World Cup for the first time.

The hope – based around some redoubtable pro-team performances – that Scotland could bounce back come the 2012 RBS 6 Nations Championship, did not materialise.

England edged clear of Scotland in a nervy, error-riddled championship opener at Murrayfield and, denied the momentum and confidence that a triumph would have bequeathed, Scotland then went on to lose to Wales, France, Ireland and Italy.

From half-time in the Dublin game to full-time in Rome, it was hard to recall on what basis the buoyant mood of January had been promulgated.

And yet, we should not forget the impact that teenager Stuart Hogg made both on his debut off the bench in Cardiff and on his first start at Murrayfield, which he marked with a cracking try before a full house against the French. Nor should we overlook the introduction to the side on a regular basis of the likes of David Denton and Ross Rennie, both winners of RBS Man of the Match honours, tribute to their guts amidst the gloom.

Scotland's summer tour saw an upturn in fortunes with the valiant victories over Australia in New South Wales, Fiji in Lautoka and Samoa in Apia.

The end of the season saw a regular review and changes have been made to the coaching and management structure to elicit improvement. Head coach Andy Robinson was joined on the summer tour of Australasia by the experienced international coach, Scott Johnson, while in the new season, a new defence coach, Matt Taylor, will join the squad.

Scotland's summer tour saw an upturn in fortunes with the valiant victories over Australia in New South Wales, Fiji in Lautoka and Samoa in Apia.



Sean Lamont breaks free from the Irish, August 2011



left to right: Mark Cairns for Scotland 7s against Australia in Hong Kong, March 2012; Colin Gregor takes on South Africa at Scotstoun, May 2012

SCOTLAND WOMEN

On the back of an away victory over Holland Women (33-10) in November and a solid win over The Army (24-6) at Murrayfield in January, Scotland Women head coach Karen Findlay announced a 27-strong training squad for the 2012 RBS 6 Nations Championship.

Though the majority of the players were relatively new to the squad, experience featured in the shape of number 8 Susie Brown, scrum half Louise Dalglish and lock Lindsay Wheeler, the latter two passing the 50-cap mark during the Championship.

In the Scots' opener at Lasswade, they lost 47-0 to a highly experienced English side but posted their best result against England Women since 2008. 'Improved but could do much better' was the order of the day at Cross Keys as Scotland went on to be defeated 20-0 by Wales in their second tournament outing.

A buoyant crowd at Bridgehaugh then cheered on the home side as they took on France in the first women's international to be staged in Stirling – however the Scots couldn't make the pressure count as they lost 23-0. They came close to the try line but still failed to put points on the board as they went down 20-0 in Ashbourne to Ireland next, in a match which was streamed live through the IRFU web site to over 1500 viewers.

Scores from wingers Lauren Harris and Sarah Dixon drew much applause from the 1500-strong Italian crowd but together with a conversion from centre Lisa Ritchie, weren't enough to seal a first win for the Scots in this Championship, the Italian hosts running out 29-12 winners in Rovigo in the team's final outing of the season.



Sarah Dixon for Scotland Women takes on France, February 2012

SCOTLAND A

Scotland A stretched their unbeaten home record to three seasons this year courtesy of a thumping 35-0 win over England Saxons at Netherdale in February. The side's only fixture of the campaign saw them comprehensively dismantle their counterparts from over the border in front of a vocal and delighted crowd.

Stuart Hogg, a proud product of the Borders game, engineered a remarkable solo try, and there was also an impressive individual score for his Glasgow Warriors teammate Duncan Weir. Both subsequently broke into the full Scotland team, as did another Netherdale try scorer, Edinburgh Rugby centre Matt Scott.

Scotland A were led for the game by Edinburgh Rugby head coach Michael Bradley, who picked up where Nick Scrivener left off by plotting victory in tandem with forwards coach Stevie Scott.



Duncan Weir in Scotland A's win over England, February 2012

SCOTLAND 7S

At the beginning of season 2011/12 the Scotland 7s management team and Scottish Rugby's performance department showed their intentions to develop and improve their existing structure in the abbreviated game, ahead of the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the sport's induction into the Olympic Games in 2016, by announcing their first full-time squad.



left to right: Katy Green runs in a try for Scotland Women 7s against Norway in Belgium, June 2012; Jamie Farnsdale for Scotland under-20 against England, February 2012

Seven players were handed professional contracts along with six elite development players being aligned primarily to sevens. The contracts were given to Struan Dewar, James Eddie, James Fleming, Colin Gregor, Peter Horne, Andrew Turnbull and Mark Robertson. The elite development players were Adam Ashe, Sean Kennedy, Sam Hidalgo-Clyne, Kerr Gossman, Rory Hughes and Hamish Watson. All the contracted players were drafted into the Glasgow Warriors and Edinburgh Rugby squads as well to bolster the teams during the 2011 Rugby World Cup and the 2012 RBS 6 Nations when a number of their key players were on Scotland duty.

A further 11 club players were also named in the extended squad, ten of whom were **sportscotland** institute supported. These players were Callum Anderson (Aberdeen Grammar), Mark Cairns (Currie), Michael Fedo (Team Northumbria), Graham Fiskin (Ayr), Fraser Harkness (Selkirk), Ross Miller (Glasgow Hawks), Scott Riddell (Stewart's Melville), Greig Ryan (Aberdeen Grammar), Andrew Skeen (Melrose), Gregor Young (Jed-Forest) and Lewis Young (Jed-Forest). Cairns, Fedo, Fiskin, Harkness, Miller, Riddell and Skeen were involved in one or more of the HSBC Sevens World Series events.

The team's intentions were to qualify for Cup quarter-finals throughout the year, but only won the Bowl trophy in Dubai and South Africa and the Shield trophy in New Zealand and Japan. They also reached the Bowl final in Australia and London and finished the year in tenth in the circuit rankings.

However, a number of positive statistics have been achieved by a few of the players throughout the year. Most notable are the achievements of Colin Gregor, Andrew Turnbull and James Fleming. Gregor made it to number three in the season's top points scorers ranks with 242 points, boasting his kicking skills and his finishing ability. He scored 88 conversions and 11 tries. Turnbull continued to add to his try tally with 24 tries in the season, bringing his total to a record 118. Finally, Fleming was the Scots top try scorer for the year with 27 tries, which show his ever-growing attacking flair. He now has a total of 39 tries from 13 series tournaments in his two years involvement.

While in Hong Kong the team took some time to deliver coaching workshops and visit rugby initiatives as part of a bid to support a partnership between Scottish Rugby, the Scottish Government and their Hong Kong counterparts.

SCOTLAND WOMEN 7S

The decision was taken this season to look to qualify for the WRWC 7s in 2013 and Scotland entered the FIRA qualification process in 2012. Former Scotland 7s captain Scott Forrest was appointed as head coach and selection of Scotland's first ever

official women's sevens squad started in April 2012. It is hoped and anticipated that the Scotland Women 7s team will provide a vehicle for player development both at senior and age-grade level and will serve to further inspire involvement in rugby by women and girls at all levels. After reaching the Cup final in their first official tournament, a FIRA qualifier in Belgium, the squad is currently in Moscow competing for a place in the 2013 Women's Rugby World Cup 7s.



Scotland under-20 take on France at Netherdale, February 2012

SCOTLAND UNDER-20

Scotland under-20 have had a challenging season in the RBS 6 Nations championship winning only one of their games. Each week, however, they showed improvements and ended the tournament with an impressive win over Italy, 20-7, in Calvisano, Brescia. This was followed in May with a win over English Counties (33-20) at St Andrews University before the team headed off to South Africa for the IRB Junior World Championship.

In the IRB Junior World Championship, after a heavy defeat to Australia, Scotland then ran France close (30-29) before beating Argentina (17-12) to continue to the play-offs and a win over Italy (34-17) which sees them take on Samoa (22 June) for a 9th/10th ranking.



left to right: Jonny Gray for Scotland under-18 against Belgium under-19, August 2011; Ed Farquharson scores for Scotland under-18 against Wales, February 2012

Some of the season's most impressive performers were the youngest players in the team who will qualify for the under-20s again next season. At only 17 years of age both Jamie Farndale (wing) and Jonny Gray (second-row) consistently impressed throughout the year. This led to an Elite development contract for Gray who was also awarded the Macphail Scholarship to train in New Zealand for 18 weeks, so ruling him out of the Junior World Championship.

Throughout the season the team was captained by; Robin Hislop in the opening Six Nations clash against England (this match was streamed live on both unions web sites for the first time); Murray McConnell in the training match with English Counties; and Harry Leonard for the remainder of games.

The 2012 Junior World Championship marked the end of Peter Wright's involvement as head coach, with former Glasgow Warriors head coach Sean Lineen taking over next season as part of his new role as Head of Player Acquisition.

SCOTLAND WOMEN UNDER-20

The aim of the under-20s programme is to identify, develop and prepare young players to progress on to the full Scotland Women senior squad. A squad of 25-28 players was selected in early September and benefited from coaching and individual skill development by some of the best coaches in Scotland at six training days and two training weekends. The squad played three development matches, one against a senior regional select side and two against Hartpury College, a specialist girls' rugby college in England. Players have made notable improvements in terms of developing their own game understanding and decision making as well as core passing and tackling skills.



Scotland under-18 scrum down against England, February 2012

SCOTLAND UNDER-18

Following August's successful first outings for Scotland under-18 teams with wins over Belgium under-19 and Newcastle Falcons Academy; training camps in October and November; and continual monitoring of age-grade players in all corners of the country, two regional trial games and an exiles camp in December provided the coaching team with another opportunity to benchmark the youngsters before the annual end-of-year camp.



Scott Rendall breaks for Scotland under-18 against Wales, February 2012

New head coach Eddie Pollock, who succeeded Grant McKelvey, was assisted by Alex Duncan (Aberdeen Grammar) and Gordon Henderson (Preston Lodge) and watched his charges take on Wales at Braidholm in their first fixture of 2012. The side came within a minute of holding their opponents to a draw, a late converted try making the final score 12-19 to the visitors. In their second home fixture, the Scots were out-muscled by their English counterparts at Mansfield Park, Hawick (20-8) then lost to Ireland 12-25 in Dublin in April.

In their opening match of the FIRA-AER under-18 tournament in Spain in April, Scotland were defeated 19-7 by a powerful French outfit, despite some outstanding effort and commitment. They were then rewarded with a win (35-12) in a match in which they dominated possession with victory over their Portuguese counterparts before completing their Championship campaign with victory (29-10) over a physical Georgian side.

The result and performance means they bequeath to next year's under-18 group their place in the elite division of the competition.



left in right: Murdo McIndow for Scotland Under-16 against Belgium Under-19, August 2011 / Ruaridh Smith for Scotland Under-17 against England, May 2012

SCOTLAND UNDER-17

The programme was much shorter this year due to the under-16 squad taking up the challenge of the Wellington Festival. Players at the under-17 age group were to be offered an opportunity of experiencing international rugby with a fixture against England. Following the national selection fixtures in October and November 2011, and the identification of exiles from their camp, 45 players went forward to the national trials at Murrayfield in March 2012.

A squad of 26 were successful in being selected for the preparatory camp a week later, staying at the Police College, Jullian and using the excellent training facilities at Dollar Academy.

The following weekend, from their base at Peebles Hydro, the players, coaching and management team put the finishing touches to their preparations for the big match against England at the Greenyards, Melrose on Sunday 25 March. On a beautiful, sunny day Scotland under-17s, captained by Magnus Bradbury (Oban Lorne RFC/Merchiston,) went down by 33 points to 17 against a physical English team, with a few key defensive lapses proving costly. A stirring second half performance saw Scotland score two excellent tries from stand-off George Home (Iloive of Fifo RFC / Strathgalloway) and winger Ruaridh Smith (Northampton RFC/Oakham.)

Despite a disappointing performance the players worked very hard through the short but demanding programme and many of them will now move on to the intensive training camp at Valladolid, Spain this summer.



Magnus Bradbury for Scotland Under-17 against England, May 2012

SCOTLAND UNDER-16

A new age-group this year, in line with the restructured player pathway and exiles programmes, Scotland under-16 had Davey Wilson (Kolvisido Academy and Dalziel RFC) as head coach with Ben Fisher (Edinburgh and Midlothian Regional Academy Coach) and Jamie Dempsey (Glasgow Hawks) as assistant coaches. Borders and East Lothian Regional Academy Coach Chris Dewsnap was attached to the management as part of his development.

A national preparation camp involved around 70 players last October, then regional games took place before 46 players were invited to trial games at Murrayfield in March. Two weekend training camps and a 38-5 win in a warm-up match against Newcastle Falcons Academy helped finalise the 26-player squad for the Wellington Festival in April.

In previous years Scotland have competed at the Festival at under-17 level, however the aim now is to benchmark our players much earlier and make like for like comparisons against the other under-16 squads at the event.

Two yellow cards either side of the half-time break did not aid Scotland's cause as they lost their first Festival match (17-28) against England South, having led 10-6 at half-time through a second-minute try from wing Ben Roberts (who went on to complete his brace in the second half). After a bright start against a typically bruising French side, with a try from James Francis, the Scots then lost their second match, 35-5. The third fixture, between Scotland and England North, was postponed following an infection contracted by a competing team.



Scotland Under-16 falls on England



left to right: Chris Paterson retires from Edinburgh Rugby, May 2012; a young supporter shows his colours



As with many of the northern hemisphere's leading clubs, the Edinburgh Rugby squad lost a number of internationalists to the 2011 Rugby World Cup for the opening six matches of the RaboDirect PRO12; seven to Scotland and one to Fiji.

However, with adversity comes opportunity and, in this case, the chance was taken to introduce new signings Sean Cox and Chris Leck (both Sale Sharks) and welcome the return of hooker Steven Lawrie, after two years in the English Championship with Doncaster Knights.

Also evident in this period was the successful bleeding of the club's best performing elite developing players in top tier competition, many of whom have gone on to retain their place in the first team: Matt Scott, Grant Gilchrist, Harry Leonard, Gregor Hunter, David Denton and Stuart McNally.

After opening their season with two well-deserved wins over Aviva Premiership sides Sale Sharks and Newcastle Falcons, Edinburgh Rugby have enjoyed differing fortunes domestically and on the European stage.

As the season progressed the club channelled its efforts into the competition from which it earned greater success. Having qualified for the knockout stages for the first time in eight years (Edinburgh Rugby is still the only Scottish club to qualify from the

group stages) the club set up their Heineken Cup quarter-final with four-time former champions, Toulouse.

A Scottish Rugby and UK Heineken Cup quarter-final record crowd of close to 38,000 made their way to Murrayfield to roar on the club to the penultimate round in one of the most famous results (19-14) in the club's history.

Unfortunately the European dream ended in front of a near capacity crowd at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin as the club were edged 22-19 by Ulster. However the legacy of its success should live on as the side seek to build on a landmark season in their history, while aiming for a much better showing in the league.

Steps have already been taken to do just that with the club busy on the player recruitment and retention front throughout the season to secure a positive start to 2012/13. Edinburgh Rugby have so far extended the contracts of no fewer than 19 of their top performers while announcing a plethora of new additions arriving at the capital club.

All Black back and former Junior World Player of the Year, Ben Atiga; Free State Cheetah's Super 15 prop WP Nel; versatile Northampton Saints back Greig Tonks; Cardiff Blues pair John Yapp and Richie Rees; Georgian World Cup star Dimitri Basilaia; and second-row Perry-John Parker, will all be making their way to Murrayfield next season, as support and investment in the Scottish professional game increases and a promising future is forged.



Tim Visser heads for the line against Racing Metro at Murrayfield, November 2011



left to right: Federico Arambaru and family following his final game for Glasgow Warriors; Richie Gray with youngsters at Glasgow Warriors Easter camp, April 2012



It has been another positive year both on and off the field for Glasgow Warriors, the only major professional sports team who represent the whole of the city of Glasgow and the west of Scotland. Showing admirable consistency at home and away

throughout the season, the team reached the RaboDirect PRO12 semi-finals for the second time in three years, claiming some notable scalps along the way, especially on the road.

Foremost among these positive results was a 23-19 win over reigning European champions Leinster at the RDS; the first time the Irish side had been beaten at home in 29 games and almost two calendar years. The Warriors also won away to Ospreys, one of the eventual finalists, as well as Cardiff Blues. At Firhill, meanwhile, Glasgow did not lose a RaboDirect PRO12 game between September 23 and the end of the season.

Their campaign finally ended with a narrow 19-15 defeat away to Leinster in the play-off semi-finals, the week before the Dubliners played their third Heineken Cup final in four years.

Drawn in an extremely challenging Heineken Cup pool, the Warriors were firmly in contention for knock-out European rugby until the final day of the group stage, having beaten Bath and the previous season's French Top 14 finalists Montpellier at Firhill.

Glasgow's consistent form owed much to the emergence of a talented and committed crop of young players, headed up by

Hawick-raised prodigy Stuart Hogg, who quickly progressed from the club's Elite Development programme to win rave reviews for his electric displays in both the RaboDirect PRO12 and Heineken Cup and delighted the Warriors support by signing a long-term contract with the club until at least the end of May 2015.

Hogg was voted RaboDirect PRO12 Young Player of the Year, shortly after being named Warriors Young Player of the Season and Players' Young Player of the Season. Loosehead prop Jon Welsh and lock Tom Ryder were both included in the 2011/12 RaboDirect PRO12 Dream Team, alongside stand-off Duncan Weir, whose accuracy with the boot saw Glasgow home in many a tight game.

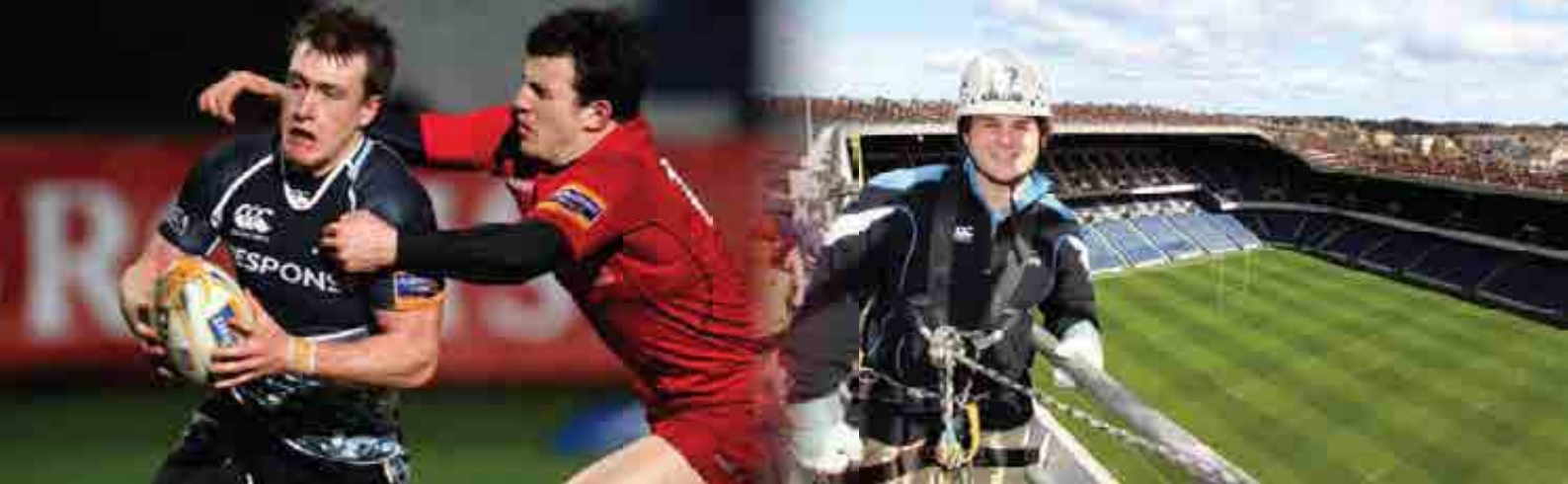
The Warriors worked quickly to ensure that the club's core of talent was maintained, re-signing an unprecedented 19 players while the season was still in progress. Experienced, classy customers like John Barclay, Chris Cusiter, Moray Low, Dougie Hall and Ryan Grant have committed the best years of their careers to Glasgow, as have all the younger leading lights.

Adding further quality and big game experience to the fold in season 2012/13 will be the club's five new signings. Former All Black flanker Angus Macdonald, Tonga World Cup No.8 Viliami Ma'afu, 2010/11 Newcastle Falcons 2010/11 Player of the Season Tim Swinson (a lock), and Scotland 7s centre Byron McGuigan have all been recruited ahead of the summer move to Scotstoun Stadium.

The team will be overseen by a new head coach, Gregor Townsend, with Sean Lineen moving to a fresh role as Scottish Rugby's head of player acquisition after six years at the helm. Defence coach



Chris Fusaro tackles Leinster in the RaboDirect PRO12 play-offs in Dublin, April 2012



left to right: Elite development players Stuart Hogg and Matt Scott; Warrior Finlay Gillies abseils for Cystic Fibrosis Trust

Gary Mercer has also moved on, with former Scotland A flanker and current Queensland Reds coach, Matt Taylor coming in to replace him. Season 2011/12 saw a number of changes in the club's off-field operation. Nathan Bombrys took over as managing director following Kenny Baillie's departure, while a number of major new sponsors came on board, complementing the backing provided by long-term partners.

Over £34,000, meanwhile, was raised for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust via a sponsored abseil off the West stand at Murrayfield. Warriors players, coaches and staff were among those who made the 100ft descent.

PERFORMANCE PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Finn Russell takes on Italy at the IRB Junior World Championships, June 2012

Following on from last season's review and changes, the programme enjoyed a full season to further bed in.

This year we had 26 Elite Development Players (EDPs) and 27 Regional Academy Players, the latter continuing to be supported by the **sportscotland** Institute of Sport.

Of the 26 EDPs, six were aligned to the Scotland 7s squad with a total of fifteen playing competitively in the RaboDirect PRO12 and Heineken Cup. Seven EDPs received professional playing contracts for 2012/13 including two – Stuart Hogg and Matt Scott – who were still EDP players when they began their professional careers this season and were capped for the full Scotland team during the Six Nations.

The significance of the alignment of Elite Development players to the professional teams was particularly evident during Rugby World Cup when a number of these players were not only able to step up and perform in League and Cup fixtures but actively vie for position on the return of the national squad to the clubs.

Currently in New Zealand as recipients of this year's John Macphail Scholarship are Gregor Hunter and Jonny Gray. The pair are spending 18 weeks in Christchurch, playing for local clubs and benefiting from the high-end facilities and coaching offered by the Canterbury RFU International High Performance Unit. Jonny received an EDP contract with Glasgow Warriors during the season, committing him to the club until 2014.

Phase 2 of the Player Performance Pathway restructure is now nearing the end of its first season with developments including having our under-16 squad compete against their counterparts at the Wellington Festival, a more streamlined under-17 programme, national trials at all levels and regionally based national selectors charting players within their club and school environments.

We have continued to work more closely with schools and clubs to identify and support our age grade players, challenging them to play in different environments and looking at ways to accelerate the development of the most talented performers at the appropriate level.



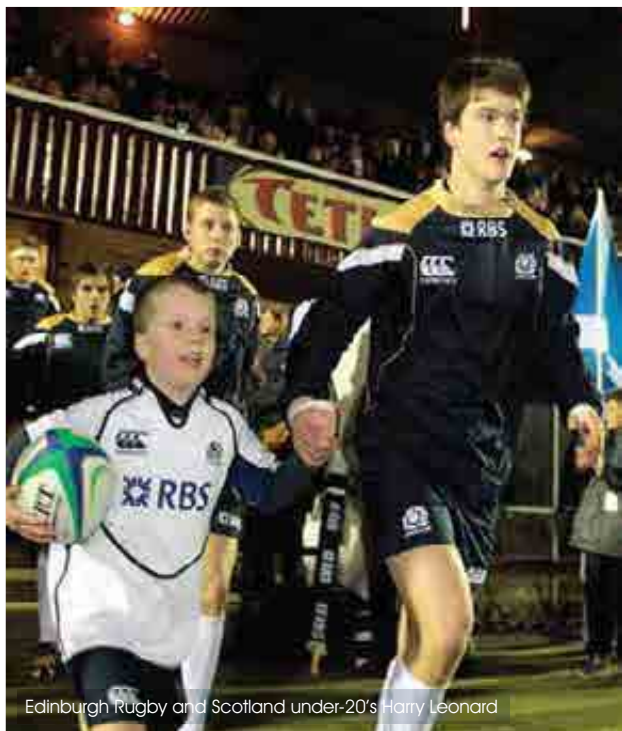
Michael Fedo breaks from the Kenyans at the Emirate Airline Glasgow 7s



left to right: George Home for Scotland under-17; Gregor Hunter and Jonny Gray, recipients of this year's Macphail scholarship

With the advent of a full-time Scotland 7s squad in 2011/12, we worked in partnership with **sportscotland** and the Institute of Sport to support the squad both financially and through ten supported club based 7s specialists.

EXILES



Edinburgh Rugby and Scotland under-20's Harry Leonard

The year has been another one of growth for the Exiles in terms of numbers and quality. Awareness has grown across the world with players getting in touch from as far afield as South Africa, Canada and Dubai with an interest in representing Scotland. Increased exposure has also meant that British-based Scots are becoming more involved. A regional festival involving six teams was held for the first time, allowing some of the young talent to show their abilities.

With this growing platform, it was also another great season when considering quality. There was a high representation amongst the Scotland age group teams (42 players in extended squads) and a further four players are also moving to Scotland to participate in national academy programmes. More highlights have been the success of Will Bordill (who began with the Exiles as an under-16) playing for Sale in the Premiership and Harry Leonard (based in Scotland for the last year) playing in the Heineken Cup for Edinburgh.

COACH EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This has been a busy year for the team with continued provision of courses, workshops and resources for coaches operating at all levels in the game. The vast army of volunteer club coach co-ordinators work closely with the coach development officers to up-skill and certificate their coaches appropriately - to date 1900 club and school coaches have gained their UKCC Level 1 qualification, 400 UKCC Level 2 and 50 UKCC Level 3.

Demand for places on our Strength & Conditioning for Rugby courses also remains high, along with our wide range of coaching workshops on many topics within the game.

Following the launch of Scottish Rugby's Long Term Player Development (LTPD) strategy and subsequent guide for clubs and schools in 2009, this year saw the production and distribution of our Coaching Tag and Mini Rugby resource. This important resource was produced to support coaches and teachers who are working with primary school age players in the first two LTPD stages: FUNDamentals and Learning to Play. It was launched at the start of season 2011/12 during a series of mini conferences delivered throughout the regions and a hard copy of the resource was made available, free of charge, to every mini coach / teacher in the country. Around 300 coaches attended the conferences with guest experts delivering on the children's game. The department is now developing the stage 3 Developing the Player resource for the coming season along with supporting educational resource.

sportscotland continues to financially support our programmes including per person funding for UKCC candidates, contributions towards our CPD programme as well as provision of the Coaching Matters programme aimed at supporting coaches operating in the performance areas of our game.

Further support was offered to the three British & Irish Cup teams through a mentoring programme and provision of video analysis software. Scottish Rugby subsequently brokered a video analysis provision deal which was made available to every coach in Scotland.

COMMUNITY





Girls festival at Scotstoun, March 2012



COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The community rugby department has had another action packed year, working with partners to support our club and school volunteers who continue to demonstrate, in abundance, all that is great about our game. This season was particularly enjoyable due, not only to the excitement surrounding the Rugby World Cup in New Zealand but also the roll-out of our first season of partnership with the Royal Bank of Scotland.

From the outset this partnership has enabled us to recognise and reward club volunteers across the country. We will never forget the spectacle of 120 club members from all corners of Scotland unveiling the new RBS sponsored national team kit on the Murrayfield pitch, ahead of our EMC August Test against Ireland. This fantastic event allowed us and the clubs to reward the countless hours of commitment made by so many people and to recognise the crucial role that they play in introducing, developing and nurturing players into our sport who may, one day, represent the national team.

This was followed by the announcement of the Rugby World Cup squad at the National Museum of Scotland where every player teamed up with a junior player from that internationalist's chosen club of origin; a fantastic visual reminder of the crucial role that the club and school game plays in the past, present and future of our sport.



Secretary for Justice Kenny MacAskill MSP with youngsters from Falkirk at Murrayfield

Through the RBS club and volunteer of the month we have been able to showcase the very best of club and school rugby and share the impact that these winners have had on developing the game in Scotland. Also, through the RBS try of the month, we have been able to profile our club rugby as a great game to participate in, via electronic and social media.

Clubs and schools remains the bedrock of our sport and through our award winners we can see the considerable local effort that allows the community team to run the programmes and competitions that help us all to grow the game across Scotland. We would like to thank all involved in clubs and schools and our hard working staff for their efforts throughout another year of growth in playing numbers. We still have much to do, particularly in adult rugby, but by working together and following the great examples highlighted throughout the season, we will achieve.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To support the development of rugby across Scotland, Scottish Rugby currently has 116 partnership agreements with clubs, schools and local authorities. The majority are for the 80 Club Development Officers in place from Shetland to Stewartry, and Elton to Oban Lorne. This season, through Cashback for Communities funding from the Scottish Government, we have developed new partnerships with 20 state schools to offer enhanced rugby opportunities at these schools and, in turn, demonstrate a contribution to wider educational priorities.

The regional workforce of club development officers and Modern Apprentice community coaches, led by regional development managers, have provided over 120,000 school children this season with a positive experience of rugby and a pathway to playing regularly in a local club or school. This activity plus supporting the thousands of volunteers in clubs and schools who work tirelessly to get rugby teams on the park every week, has again contributed to a further increase in the number of people playing rugby this season.

For further details on some of the programmes and activities that have been delivered in local communities across Scotland please read on.



left to right: Shona Robison MSP with youngsters at the launch of the Schools of Rugby initiative at Paisley Grammar School; Mrs McLaren hands over the Bill McLaren Shield to Hawick President Alister Pow prior to the match against Boroughmuir at Mansfield Park; Gala's Lee Miller against Melrose at Netherdale; John Houston for the Barbarians against South of Scotland at Mansfield Park.



Through the RBS club and volunteer of the month we have been able to showcase the very best of club and school rugby and share the impact that these winners have had on developing the game in Scotland.



Development officer for Shetland, Daniel Meadows, with Richie Gray and Lerwick schoolchildren

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY IN SCOTLAND

The Hygiene, Healthy Eating and Activity in Primary Schools initiative (HHEAPS) aims to promote integrated messages about food safety and a healthy diet, along with physical activity, to primary 5 and 6 pupils within the Active Schools network.

This is the fifth year that we have delivered this programme, in partnership with the Food Standards Agency in Scotland, and so far this season 5,533 pupils in 168 primary schools have completed the programme.

The classroom activities are based around a pupil mission book that covers six key topics and uses Scotland rugby players as positive role models to help reinforce key messages. Rugby development officers also fulfil this role through their delivery of the activity elements, providing a link between physical and classroom activities. This dovetails with the Scottish Government National Physical Activity Strategy by encouraging more children to get involved in exercise.

SCHOOLS RUGBY CHAMPIONS

Now in its fourth year, 235 schools have registered this season with the programme which identifies, recruits and supports a member of staff in state secondary schools, to act as the Champion for Rugby in that school. Although this represents a decrease on last year, the programme has been significantly revised this season. In the past it has been very much a 'light touch' programme of incentives and rewards whereas this year there is more emphasis on schools completing plans, audits and updating their own player registration. This season 129 schools gained an enhanced reward in return for completing the additional tasks.

Each Rugby Champion receives a package of incentives including equipment, as well as the support of local and regional development staff, as they progress towards the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. These awards reflect the level of rugby participation they have achieved in their schools and the valued service they provide to the local rugby community.



Bell Baxter High School and Nicolson Institute at the Brewin Dolphin under-15 girls Bowl final at Murrayfield



left to right: Barbarians against South of Scotland, October 2011; Brewin Dolphin under-16 Plate final between Peebles and Jedburgh, February 2012

CASHBACK FOR COMMUNITIES / SCHOOLS OF RUGBY

This season we launched the Schools of Rugby initiative in 20 secondary schools countrywide. The programme is funded through the Scottish Government's CashBack for Communities, which channels proceeds of crime money into helping young people.

A package of resources helps more staff to deliver rugby across the school including a focused programme for identified S1/ S2 pupils. The broad programme consists of rugby teams at all ages, opportunities for the development of girls' teams and non-playing opportunities for senior pupils in rugby coaching, refereeing, volunteering and running sport in local primary schools and rugby clubs.

Some notable successes to date include Larbert HS where over 100 boys and girls are now part of five new school rugby teams and more than 900 pupils, of all ages, now have access to a high quality rugby input within the PE curriculum. At Maxwelltown HS in Dumfries, the principal teacher of PE commented that: "It has transformed some of our youngsters from shy, reserved individuals to confident, responsible and successful youngsters with the ability to contribute to the whole school and activities within it."



Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and Shona Robison MSP at the Cashback for Communities announcement in Fife

G4S STREET RUGBY / REFERRAL PROGRAMMES

Proven successful as a low-level diversionary activity for young people in their neighbourhoods, this season around 500 G4S Street Rugby sessions have been delivered to 5000 youngsters across all local authority areas, in partnership with Community Safety Partnerships, police and other local stakeholders. Feedback showed there was an opening for a more focused programme, however, with groups of young people aged 12 to 19, 'targeted' or 'referred' by police, youth workers or school guidance staff.

Subsequently, the G4S Street Rugby Referral programme was launched this season as part of our new Cashback agreement. It teaches referred participants how to play rugby with a focus on developing the confidence and discipline required for contact rugby. By the end of the programme, they should be able to take part in a club/school training session with an understanding of the basic laws of the game and participants who demonstrate an aptitude for coaching and leading activities will be offered the chance to gain recognised coaching qualifications and experience. By bringing the group together as a distinct squad, building respect (for self, team mates, officials) and a team ethos, they will progress to play games against emerging school/club sides at a similar level. This season programmes have been delivered in Fife, Inverclyde, Angus, South Ayrshire, Falkirk and East Lothian.

YOUTH COACHING COURSE (YCC)

Sponsored by CashBack, the course is designed to provide young people aged 15 to 19 with the key skills and experience to coach rugby safely in a supervised and supported way. Participants are taken through five modules that combine classroom-based activities with practical coaching with their peer group. When they feel ready, participants can then progress onto the recognised RugbyReady and UKCC courses. The YCC has proved an invaluable tool for finding talented young coaches and candidates for our Modern Apprentice programme and, this season, around 800 young people will complete the programme.

CASHBACK RUGBY FACILITIES FUND

As part of Scottish Rugby's latest CashBack for Communities funding, £1.25 million was allocated to help rugby clubs make improvements to their facilities which would allow more young people, particularly from areas of deprivation, to enjoy increased and enhanced opportunities to participate in rugby.



left to right: Boroughmuir's Ali Davidson holds off Ayr's Andrew Wilson during the RBS National Cup Semi-Final match at Millbrae; match action from the RBS under-16 Youth Cup Final

In August 2011 approx £550k was awarded to twelve projects, with a further 18 awarded approx £700k in May 2012. Many of these projects are now underway with new and improved pitches, floodlighting and changing rooms being implemented across the country.

WOODEN SPOON NEW COMMUNITIES PROJECT

Wooden Spoon and Scottish Rugby are working together to provide tangible sporting and educational/training opportunities for disaffected young people, aged 15 to 25, living in deprived communities in Scotland. The project focuses on Greenock in Inverclyde and Levenmouth in Fife where there has been limited staffing capacity to deliver opportunities to young people.

In Fife, the participants were referred from Buckhaven and Kirkland High Schools, and have worked with staff on a weekly basis for six months. The group has completed the RugbyReady online course, attended a Scottish Rugby nutritional session and visited Murrayfield to learn more about the life of professional players. Several of the group visited Glenrothes RFC with one now a regular player for one of the youth teams.

In Inverclyde the group completed the RugbyReady course followed by coaching placements at holiday camps. Ten of

the group have progressed into education, work placements or employment.

EDUCATION

This season a new intake of 32 Modern Apprentices (MAs) joined the programme with 11 MAs progressing to their second year. As well as receiving a range of training at Murrayfield, these apprentices delivered a wide range of coaching programmes across Scotland, from Orkney to Maybole this year. In recent years we have seen MAs progress to become development officers and achieve places in further and higher education whilst others have taken on administrative roles with Scottish Rugby – we even have one MA sailing around the world!

The professional players continue to apply their minds to the future and take up part time study including biological sciences, business management, chemical engineering, law, software management and sport & exercise science. Scottish Rugby supports their players in this development and, where possible, arranges for exams to be taken in situ.

Scottish Rugby also continues to support age grade players with their education and, where required, provides advice on their academic development and planning so they can work around their busy rugby schedules. This support is also given to players as they join professional rugby to make the transition into rugby and then out of it as smooth and as successful as possible.



Wooden Spoon's Peter Brown and Charlie Bryden, Regional Development Manager Glen Tippett and coach Grant Anderson with youngsters in Greenock



left to right: Under-18 girls festival of rugby at Scotstoun, March 2012; Student Cup Finals, March 2012;

WOMEN & GIRLS' RUGBY

The focus earlier this season was on building up a regional staffing team dedicated to supporting the growth of the women's and girls' game. The eight part time staff range from local co-ordinators to part time regional development officers and are part of their local rugby development team. They provide a local point of contact for rugby in their regions and deliver development events and competitions alongside in-school activation work. It has taken most of the season to establish the team but we are starting to see the results on the ground. In Tayside and Fife, for example, team entries to the girls Brewin Dolphin competition has increased at both under-15 and under-18, and there is a new women's team in Montrose.

The priority of linking the development and performance sides of the game more closely to inspire young players has been successful this year. Girls' and women's developments events, as part of the build-up to the women's RBS 6 Nations matches, provided an opportunity to develop their own skills, meet the international players and watch them putting their skills into action on the pitch against some of the best teams in the world.

ARE YOU READY TO PLAY RUGBY?

Attendance at the annual Rugby Ready practical course, which focuses on keeping rugby safe, is the minimum standard for any coach, teacher, referee or volunteer delivering rugby coaching in Scotland. In 2011/12 we delivered 234 Rugby Ready courses to over 4000 people. Newly-introduced systems for monitoring compliance with this requirement indicate that this season 52% of clubs have achieved RugbyReady, 25% are not yet RugbyReady and 23% were working towards RugbyReady.



Ayr v Cross Keys, British & Irish Cup, November 2011

The overall number of players requesting permission to play up, from under-16 to under-18 rugby has declined significantly again this year. This is a welcome development, in line with our stated policy that young players should play within their own age band. The 186 boys applying to move up attended one of 37 assessment clinics around Scotland and, of those, 41% were found to have reached physical maturity and were therefore cleared to move up into under-18 rugby.

The number of applications by 16 and 17-year-olds to play senior rugby increased slightly this season to 302. Though this remains well below the numbers who were playing adult rugby prior to the implementation of the Are You Ready To Play Rugby policies, policy and procedures for under-18s in senior rugby are under review for next season.

STUDENT RUGBY

The Student Development Team – a group of part funded Student Rugby Development Officers (SRDO) and Student Rugby Development Co-ordinators (SRDC) – have delivered a programme of club support, planning and development as well as arranging for the required coach and referee education courses at their identified clubs. Freshers 10s tournaments have also helped student rugby clubs to retain and upskill players prior to the start of the student league programmes. A good example of growth is the work undertaken by a part funded SRDO taking a University rugby contingent from one men's and one women's club, with around 35 players apiece, to its current position of two representative rugby clubs – doubling the women's player base and tripling the men's as well as establishing a thriving inter-faculty rugby programme which supports a further four men's rugby clubs and one women's.

Attendance across all the student programmes has increased this season, as seen at the Student Cup Finals, when the largest recorded attendance by teams and players since the event's inception filled the back pitches of Murrayfield. The event was so large that it spread across seven pitches, hosted the British University & College Sport (BUCS) conference Cup Finals and the end of season clash between the Scottish Student Representative team and Scotland under-20A.

CHAMPIONSHIP REPORT

This season saw the final stage of the restructure of Scottish League rugby with clubs vying for positions in the ten team Premier, National and Championship Leagues for 2012/13.

Melrose retained their league championship after being pushed hard by runners-up Dundee HSFP, and both will be joined by Gala and Stirling County in a restructured British & Irish Cup next



left to right: Brewin Dolphin under-18 match action, March 2012; Team captains gather prior to RBS National Finals Day at Murrayfield, April 2012

season. Heriot's and Edinburgh Accies retained their Premier League places after finishing as the top two sides in Premier B, while Jed-Forest were crowned Premier 2 Champions as the leading Premier 2 side in Premier B.

Howe of Fife won Premier 3, while in National 1 Hawick YM were champions and are promoted to the new Championship Leagues along with Musselburgh, Dunfermline and Murrayfield Wanderers.

Caledonia League Division 1 saw Aberdeenshire triumph, Moray were the Caledonia 2 North champions and St. Andrew's University winners of Caledonia 2 Midlands, with the University side winning the Division 2 play-off. Other league winners in Caledonia were Panmure in Caledonia 3 Midlands, Aberdeen University Medics in Caledonia Division 3 North East, Stornoway in Caledonian Division 3 North West and Aberdeen Wanderers 2nd XV in Caledonia 4 North East.

Topping West League Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4 are Marr, on points difference over GHK, Helensburgh, McLaren and Lanark. Preston Lodge are champions of East League Division 1, Dunbar won Division 2 and Edinburgh Northern Division 3.

A new structure for the RBS Cup, Shield and Bowl saw clubs qualify from regional competitions for national semi-finals. In the RBS Cup regional winners were Ayr, Boroughmuir, Dundee HSFP and Gala, with the Borderers going on to defeat Ayr in the RBS Cup Final. Caledonia Region winners Dunfermline defeated Edinburgh Region winners Musselburgh in the RBS Shield Final, with Hawick YM and Kilmarnock Border and West Region winners. In the RBS Bowl Dunbar, Grangemouth, Hawick Harlequins and Helensburgh emerged as Regional winners, with Helensburgh going on to win the National title, defeating Dunbar in the final.



Andy Nicol, Danny Alexander MSP, Colin Thomson (Head of Community Rugby) and RBS Aviemore Branch manager Elspeth Mackay at the launch of the domestic leagues in Aviemore

Murrayfield Wanderers displayed their dominance of the women's game with an undefeated RBS Premier League and Sarah Beaney Cup double. Cartha Queens Park were crowned Premier 2 winners with Broughton winning the National League. On National Cup Finals day at Murrayfield, as well as Murrayfield Wanderers Cup Final triumph, Hillhead/Jordanhill won the Plate and Stirling County the Bowl.

In the National Youth competitions, the under-18 Cup was lifted by Stirling County Colts, defeating Selkirk Youth Club in a repeat of the 2010/11 final, with Glasgow Hawks winning the under-16 Cup. The under-18 Bowl was won by Peebles Colts while the under-16 Bowl went to Boroughmuir.

In the Brewin Dolphin Scottish Schools Cup Finals Edinburgh Academy squeezed past George Watson's in a thrilling under-18 final, while George Watson's defeated Dollar Academy in the under-16 final. The under-18 Plate went to Earlston High School and the Bowl to a combined Boroughmuir High School/James Gillespie's High School, while in the under-16 tournament, the Plate went to Jedburgh Grammar School and the Bowl to Madras College.

The Brewin Dolphin Girls Finals Day, at Murrayfield in March, saw The Community School of Auchterarder winning the under-18 Cup, Murrayfield Wanderers the Shield and Stirling County the Bowl. In the under-15 competition, Grantown Grammar School won the Cup, Carrick Academy the Shield and Nicolson Institute/Stornoway RFC the Bowl.

FESTIVAL OF RUGBY

Different venue, same result and that was another successful festival of rugby held over the two days of the HSBC Sevens World Series event at Scotstoun. Over 60 teams comprising more than 500 youngsters took part from P7s up to under-18s, both girls and boys, from clubs and schools. A major highlight for the under-18 boys was having their final played on the main pitch in front of the Scotstoun crowd.

A new scoring system has been invoked at the P7 and S2 event, helping us to promote the ethos of the rugby, highlighting the fact that rugby is a game of respect and sportsmanship. We need our players, coaches, teachers and parents to promote respect towards the referee/game coach and to promote sportsmanship in the way we interact with the opposition. In order to accomplish these festival aims we utilise a scoring system capturing this ethos.

This has been rolled out through the Positive Coaching Scotland programme in association with The Bill McLaren Foundation and operates as a partnership between **sportscotland**, the Winning



left to right: Student Cup Finals, March 2012; Brewin Dolphin under-15 finals, March 2012



Festival of rugby participants at Scotstoun, May 2012

Scotland Foundation, the Bill McLaren Foundation and Scottish Rugby. The main aim is to build and sustain a strong and positive rugby culture in order to develop young rugby players and develop young people through rugby.

On both days there was a parade for all the competing teams, players had their faces shown on the two big screens and teams made up banners; well done to Moray and Loch Lomond who won match tickets for having the best banners. (see Results & Awards for more information).

REFEREES

The High Performance group have had a very busy season at all levels of the game.

Neil Paterson refereed four Heineken Cup pool games, two high profile Amlin Challenge Cup games and was fourth official at the Amlin Final in London in May. He has also been involved in the RaboDirect PRO 12 refereeing seven games, was Assistant Referee 2 in the final of the competition and was Assistant Referee in two RBS 6 Nations games. Meanwhile Andrew McMenemy has refereed five Amlin CC games, six RaboDirect PRO12 matches and a number of exchange games in England, France, Ireland and Italy.

While Andrew Macpherson refereed five Amlin CC fixtures, five RaboDirect PRO12 games and a number of exchanges in France and Italy, he has also been involved in a number of games as Assistant Referee 1, assisting our up and coming Academy referees. Peter Allan refereed five Amlin CC games, four RaboDirect PRO12 games and was involved in this year's RBS 6 Nations as Assistant Referee 1 in one game.

'New boy' James Matthew joined the High Performance group this year and has been very busy with 15 of his appointments out of the country. James refereed two under-20 internationals, the final of the British & Irish Cup and took charge of his first RaboDirect PRO12 game in April. Cammy Rudkin is also a newcomer to the group and has refereed ten of his appointments in countries from Ireland to Spain where he took charge of a FIRA international, Spain v Romania, and also refereed a semi final of the British & Irish Cup.

Our Academy referees have progressed well with Charles Samson refereeing a FIRA international, under-19 international and at five legs of the HSBC Sevens World Series. Lloyd Linton was selected to referee the final of the FIRA under-18 tournament in Spain, took charge at a number of British & Irish Cup and exchange games and finished the season with the England Counties v Ireland Clubs international.

Domestically, referees from all societies have been busy with an increase in the number of games, up 100 on last year's figures. The number of match officials making themselves available has also shown an increase, up from 438 last season to 473. This helps to ensure more games at lower levels are now covered by local society referees and not just by club licenced referees. Due to a change in reporting the number of club licenced referees has greatly reduced and now stands at 1925. With the introduction of the combined Are You Ready To Play Rugby coaching/referee annual course the recording of foundation referees now comes under the coaching department.

Alex Pratt officiates at the FIRA women's European 7s in Ghent, June 2012





left to right: British & Irish Cup action between Ayr and Cross Keys, November 2011; Ayr's Grant Anderson in British & Irish Cup action

SCOTLAND CLUB INTERNATIONAL

The Scotland Club International side produced some entertaining rugby this year in their two matches against France and Ireland.

The first match was on Friday 24 February and was held at Millbrae, Ayr, a new location for this level of fixture. It was a successful evening with more than 1200 fans coming out to support the team who beat the XV of France, 25-18. Tries were scored by winger Fraser Thomson of Melrose, captain and hooker Sean Crombie (Boroughmuir) and Ayr's centre Ross Curle. Gala's stand-off Lee Millar also knocked over two penalties and two conversions.

With one win under their belt the team were in with a chance of making history by recording two consecutive wins in a season, and beating Ireland Club International on their home turf for the first time. However, despite putting in a hard fight and matching the host's try count the Scots lost the match, 21-26. The scorers, on Friday 9 March, were similar with tries from Crombie and Thomson, who operated from full-back on this occasion. They were joined on the score sheet by Glasgow Hawk's Rory McKay, with Millar converting all three touchdowns.

The team was captained by Crombie on both occasions and Ayr's back-rower Rob Colhoun won man-of-the-match in their home tie.

BRITISH & IRISH CUP

This season Scotland were represented by Ayr, Melrose and Currie. All teams posted notable wins in the competition but, ultimately, didn't display the consistency needed at this cross-border level to progress to the later stages of the competition. Ayr finished second in their pool, achieving notable victories away to Plymouth Albion (18-17) and at home to Bristol (16-14) but suffered a heavy away defeat to tournament runners-up Cross Keys (32-7) and lost out narrowly to this year's finalist Munster (9-3). Melrose started their British & Irish Cup campaign with a memorable last-minute victory against Bedford Blues (19-17) at the Greenyards before struggling on the road to Leinster (42-20 loss). Their home form continued with a victory over Aberavon (9-8) prior to a disappointing away loss to London Scottish (28-12) resulting in a third place within their pool. Currie struggled in their opening two games with a heavy defeat on the road to Leeds Carnegie (31-16) and at home to Ulster (13-28) before recording an excellent away win against Swansea (21-38). However this fine form couldn't be sustained and their remaining home game resulted in a disappointing loss at home to Nottingham (16-23). The British & Irish Cup continues to provide challenges for our top clubs and pushes the standards

of players, coaches and clubs ever-higher. This can only be of benefit to the future of Scottish club rugby and, to this end, we look forward to Scotland being represented next season by four teams – Melrose, Dundee HSFP, Gala and Stirling County.



Currie's Mark Cairns (right) and Ayr's Colin White during the British & Irish Cup Launch at Murrayfield, August 2011