



*Mike Munro, SRU Council Representative and North Forum Chairman, writes:*

MAY I welcome all readers to the new season. There have already been Shield/ Bowl matches. The leagues themselves do not start to the end of the month. There are a number of points that need to be raised before the start of the season and my apologies for raising them here and then, perhaps, repeating them at our Forum meetings soon to held in Aberdeen and Inverness.

### **Promotion/Relegation**

This obviously is something which is always at the forefront of the clubs' minds. As ever, relegation into Caley 1 is something which comprises crystal ball gazing. With the new National Leagues, as existed before, the bottom three teams will be relegated from National 3 into their respective regional leagues. That, therefore, can result in our welcoming into Caley 1, for season 2015-16, either no clubs or one club or two clubs. Hopefully, both Perthshire and Dunfermline will be able to remain at least in Division 3. The Caley Championship Committee is presently working on various scenarios allowing for the number of clubs to be relegated, if any, into Caley 1. Suffice to state, however, that the winner of Caley 1 will be promoted into National 3. Where there is the area for various scenarios is relegation out of Caley 1. The CCC will always ensure that Caley 1 comprises a league of 10 teams. Accordingly, allowing also for promotion out of Caley 2 North and Caley 2 Midlands, there has to be some facility for relegation. Whether there will be play-offs or straight forward relegation has not yet been decided. I will ensure, as best as I can, that such decisions will be made before the league season kicks off. Indeed, we are obliged to do that. I will ensure further that Gordon will send out an e-mail to all clubs advising them of the final decision that is made. It will then be repeated at all times that I meet clubs and in any communication. What we will not have is clubs saying in March/ April that they did not know what the situation was with regard to promotion and relegation from Caley 1 to 2 and consequently from 2 to 3. All I can say to clubs in the meantime is just make sure you play your games, fulfil the games and therefore there can be no last minute playing of games which sometimes can be looked at adversely when considering promotion and relegation.

### **The Rules of the Championship**

With regard to the possibility of having points deducted is explained later in the

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Newsletter. Frank Nicol, who is our representative on the Championship Committee, is fully conversant with all the rules and will explain them. If you have any queries, at any time, obviously contact Frank or indeed myself or your immediate rep on the North Forum.

### Transport

You may have heard that there has been an increase in the travel supplement. For a return journey of 200 miles or more, the contributions are £300 and for more than 400 miles, £450. For travelling to the islands (Stornoway/Orkney/Shetland) in adult competitions it is £2,750. For youth and school competitions £1,200 although Shetland is still £2,750. Note also that this applies for payment in BT Regional Reserve fixtures. Hopefully, this will be of some assistance and comes about as a result of an increase in the travel support from BT Murrayfield. Of course, such payments can only be made if a club has carried out the necessary registration. All clubs should by now have received the annual Club Participation Agreement. There is more information contained in it than in the past. Could all our clubs please read it and return the signed form to BT Murrayfield by Monday, 8 September.

### Reorganisation at BT Murrayfield

You will no doubt be aware that there have been changes at BT Murrayfield at senior management level and, perhaps more importantly for all of us, at domestic rugby level. There is to be a Director of Domestic Rugby appointed. He or she has not yet been appointed. The Director of Performance Rugby is Scott Johnson.

So far as domestic rugby is concerned, the Head of Youth and Schools is Colin Thomson; the Head of Club Services is Nick Rennie and the Head of Domestic Rugby Support is Neil Carrie. The Referee Commissioner is Tappe Henning. I have asked Nick and Neil to provide a short document as to their precise roles and they, and of course Colin Thomson, should be contacted by clubs in connection with any particular matters. However, I have to say that Nick and Neil have been exceptionally busy and, hopefully, the document from them will be provided in our next Newsletter. Another interesting change at BT Murrayfield is going to be the creation of what only can be described as a helpline. That is to be used simply for clubs to telephone BT Murrayfield with any problems and, hopefully, you will be

put through to the appropriate person or department.

### This year's AGM

went very smoothly. Upon our previous President Donald Macleod demitting office, Ian Rankin took over as our President. Our new Vice-President is Ed Crozier, who will be known no doubt to many of you as he has been within the SRU for a number of years. I am sure that you will agree that Donald has been a magnificent President of Scottish Rugby, particularly with his passion towards the clubs. Our new President shares a similar passion and also I think that it is safe to say that of Ed Crozier. Whilst everyone at BT Murrayfield has to acknowledge the importance of the professional game in all its aspects it is obviously good to know that the club game is being represented in the way that it is by our President and Vice-President.

Also at the AGM a large series of by-law changes were made to try and have the periods of office of the Council members not too greatly affected by the vagaries of the clubs of which they are members. In effect, a Council member can represent his constituency for a period of three years if that constituency agrees even if the Council member's club is promoted or relegated out of that constituency.

In addition, I was re-elected to the Board for a period of three years although, of course, I am liable for re-election to the Council at the end of this season. More of that during the forthcoming season!

There was discussion at the AGM as to moving the meeting around the country. It was thought that the numbers of attendees was reducing and that perhaps if it was moved around it would increase. My own personal view is that the numbers were not so high this year due to the fact that there was nothing contentious to be decided. There were still close on 150 delegates there. For reasons that have been explained in the past, the AGM has been moved to August. It is accepted that it is a bit close to the start of the season and, indeed, clubs might well have been playing pre-season friendlies on the day of the AGM. Indeed, there was even a Golden Oldies Festival on the same day at Hillfoots RFC (see page 3). The AGM next year will be slightly earlier and it is intended that it be held on Saturday, 8 August. That primarily is due to pre- World Cup friendlies. I personally do not think that the num-

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bers will increase and I think they would decrease if we were going to move it around the country and have it even in our own area of Aberdeen or Inverness. My view is that it is the subject matter at any AGM that attracts the crowds! However this is something that we can discuss at Forum meetings and I will take it back to BT Murrayfield.

### **Insurance**

As clubs will know the Scottish Rugby Union pays for the insurance of the constituent teams. However, that insurance of its necessity has to be, what I can only describe as, pretty basic. I would really like clubs to consider taking out additional insurance or if the club itself cannot afford to then you advise your members or indeed anyone who is reading this Newsletter as to the advantages of taking out private insurance.

### **Internationals**

Quite a number of people have asked me as to why the Scotland v Tonga game is not being held at Pitodrie this season. The answer is quite simple. Aberdeen FC were asked but due to a number of reasons they were unable to accept the invitation. As it was thought appropriate not to have the game at BT Murrayfield, other sports stadia had to be considered. The appropriately named Rugby Park in Kilmarnock was best suited given the fact that it holds approximately 18,000 spectators.

There are lots of other subjects that I could cover. However, we will do that at Forum meetings or, if anyone has got any queries at all that they want to take up with me, contact me by telephone or by e-mail at the address and numbers given in this Newsletter,

**Mike Monro**

## Fixtures—Caley Competition Rules .....

*Frank Nicol, Forum Committee member, Caley rep on the SRU Competitions Committee and Chairman of the Caledonia Competitions Committee writes:*

THE new season is upon us again, and there are not many changes to the competition rules from last season.

We now have Mark Salter as our Regional administrator. Mark has taken over from Iain Bowles, who retired at the end of last season. I am sure we would all like to wish Iain a long and happy retirement.

Some of you will have met Mark at this year's North Conference; Mark is already up to speed with Competition rules and is there to help!

The Caledonia Regional Championship Committee (CRCC) is tasked with running the competitions within Caledonia regional leagues, Mark is the secretary of the CRCC and puts out all the information to the clubs on behalf of the CRCC.

The North representatives on the CRCC are Gordon Cox (Moray) and Bob Richmond (Mackie). Vernon Fawcett (Deeside) has also been co-opted onto the CRCC. The representatives of

this committee are there to give help, advice and assistance to the clubs regarding the rules of the competition. If in doubt ask! WE DO NOT WANT TO DOCK POINTS OR PENILISE CLUBS FOR INFRINGING THE RULES!

So, I say again, if in doubt ASK! We want to see players playing rugby on a Saturday!

To try to ensure that the competitions run smoothly we would ask the clubs to ensure they adhere to the following. -

Fixtures can only be rescheduled due to certain conditions. Apart from weather, permission to re-arrange a fixture must be given by the Regional Competitions Committee. This request must be e-mailed by both clubs to Mark Salter in the first instance.

Too many clubs are under the impression that if they mutually agree a date with the opposition then the fixture can be moved. This is not the case - permission will not be given to move the fixtures for anything other than an emergency. The following reasons will not be accepted at short notice:

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- not enough players (whether injury; work, commitments or weddings etc.)
- no front row
- referee not allocated (reassurance has been given that referees will always be allocated; it is a matter of when the allocation appears)
- no transport

When applying sanctions the Committee will take into consideration the standard of competition the team is playing in. Therefore, Divisions 3 and 4 will be dealt with more leniently than Divisions I and 2. For instance, teams in Division 3 and 4 may be given a warning for a first offence at the start of the season, but first offenders later in the season may be dealt with more severely.

The Committee ask the clubs to understand that they must be committed to managing their fixtures. The Committee's responsibility is to provide sets of fixtures and playing dates for competitions. Clubs have to commit to those dates and be available to play on both scheduled and re-scheduled dates.

Please see below relevant sections from the competition rules:-

3.2. Every match shall be played on the date and at the time determined and advised by the Championship Secretary unless - first, both clubs agree to play on another date and/or time and, secondly, this is approved, in advance, by the Championship Secretary or the match is postponed as provided in these rules.

In addition, the home club is required to advise the Championship Secretary or relevant Regional Competitions Committee if a match is to be played at a venue other than that club's regular ground.

3.5 In the event that any match is not played on the date and time determined and advised by the Championship Secretary in accordance with rule 3.2, then the Championship Committee reserves the right to apply sanctions to either or both clubs, including a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct, or deduction of up to five league points and/or disqualification from the relevant competition and/or forfeiture of a proportion of the club's participation money as appropriate.

5.4.1 No later than 30 minutes before the kick-off

in any match, a club must deliver a fully completed team sheet to the referee and to the opposition's team manager or coach. A change in the team sheet may be made any time up to kick-off

5.4.2 That team sheet must specify the full name and position of each player who is eligible and selected to play in the match. The position of each front-row player (prop or hooker) in every match squad must be defined on the team sheet. The team sheet must also specify the name and registration number of any dual-registered player who is listed by his secondary club and any player borrowed from another club under National Competition Rule 5.8 (Emergency Player Loan Scheme).

5.4.3 A copy of the team sheet, including each player's registration number, must be sent to the Championship Secretary no later than 48 hours after the commencement of the match.

5.4.4 If a club fails to submit a team sheet in accordance with Rule 5.4.2, then for each team sheet not submitted a sum of £20 of the club's relevant participation money may be forfeited.

In the event that a club should fail to submit more than four team sheets (for all league and Cup competitions) in the course of any one season, that failure will be reported to the Championship Committee, who shall consider whether a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct and/or further forfeiture of participation money shall be imposed, and whether up to five championship points should be deducted from the Club. If the repeated failure relates to Cup competitions then disqualification from the Cup competition may be imposed.

Should you require any clarification on any of these points or wish to discuss any other competition matters please feel free to contact myself, Bob or Gordon (contact details on back page).

Finally, let's get on and play some rugby and all have some fun!

In The Spirit Of The Game,

**Frank B. Nicol**

SRU Championship Committee

CRCC Chair

# Golden Oldies Report .....

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## 6th Scottish Golden Oldies Rugby

### Festival

THE 6th Scottish Golden Oldie Rugby Festival took place at Hillfoots RFC, Tillicoultry in Central Scotland on Saturday 16th August, with teams participating from all parts of Scotland ..... Along with players from teams in Belgium (Charleroi Black Star Cub), France (Beauvais), and - for the first time - Israel (Elders of Zion).

The Oldest Player Award went to the Golden Oldies stalwart Alistair Urquhart (68), who was playing for Brechin BRUCE. He was joined by his stepson-in-law, who took up rugby at the tender age of ..... 69!

Although the SRU Annual General Meeting was held on the same day, Festival Ambassador - Alan Lawson - along with his wife, Linda, was present to assist with the presentation of Festival awards, whilst another former SRU President, Jim Stevenson, was also in attendance and assisted with the Golden Oldies' AGM. Amongst the elder players was Menachem ben Menachem, President of the Israel Rugby Union, along with Ed Freeman, a member of the European Golden Oldies executive committee.

Cheques from Scottish Golden Oldies Rugby were presented to the Bill McLaren Foundation - accepted by Linda Lawson, a director of the Foundation, and to the Murrayfield Centenary Trust - accepted by Jim Stevenson, a trustee of the Trust.

At the AGM the following were elected:-

President - Dave McDonald

Vice-President - David Carnegie

Secretary - Katie Barnett

Treasurer - Don Burns

Spaces still have to be filled for Regional Representatives on the Committee.

Thereafter, the following awards were made:-

The Innes Cup for the Festival's Oldest Player - Alistair Urquhart, Brechin BRUCE

Team of the Festival Award - Mackie Mammoths

Best Supported Team - Crieff

Referee of the of the Festival - Robert Hood Gillen

Festival Sportiest Spirit Award - Forrester Rubies

Slaters Festival Personality Award - Ray Mellis

Clackmannanshire Provost's Whisky, presented to the Farthest Travelled Team - Elders of Zion, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Festival Ambassador - Alan Lawson

A floral arrangement was presented by SGOR Secretary, Katie Barnett, to Provost Tina Murphy, who had attended the earlier part of the Festival.

A good time was had by all ..... And many of the players hope to be at the San Sebastien Festival - <http://egor2015.com> in June 2015 - as part of a Scottish touring team. If interested in participating, contact [goldiesrugby@gmail.com](mailto:goldiesrugby@gmail.com) or [scamie@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:scamie@hotmail.co.uk).

No venue has, as yet, been selected for our 2015 Festival ..... so, if interested, check the 'Documents' section of our website and, if further details are required, contact [goldiesrugby@gmail.com](mailto:goldiesrugby@gmail.com)

### **Dave McDonald**

President

Scottish Golden Oldies Ruby Committee

[www.pitchero.com/clubs/scottish\\_golden\\_oldies\\_rugby](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/scottish_golden_oldies_rugby)

# The View from the Press Box .....

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*The Newsletter is, once again, delighted to welcome Jack Nixon, the P&J rugby columnist (although he writes here as a freelancer) :*

## A Wake up Call for Caley Clubs

WHILE there has been generally wide acclaim for the competitive nature of the Caley leagues, and in particular Caledonian 1, no one in their right minds would argue that clubs in the north and north - east have covered themselves with glory in the 2013/14 season.

The exceptions being Caithness and Orkney who with a little bit of luck could both have been promoted, instead of Perthshire and Dunfermline. Elsewhere in the area it made for depressing reading. In particular clubs in the Aberdeen area had generally poor seasons, under achieving to the point spending most of the season fighting to survive in the division.

The dearth of players able to step up to the mark for their respective first teams being a major factor, and certainly not entirely due to runs of injuries.

I will, however, concede that having an oil industry in the region does not help, leading in many cases to players being absent for up to four weeks at a time, playing havoc with team selection for each club.

It is therefore vital that each club, regardless of location, must look to recruiting each summer in preparation for the forthcoming season.

Not always easy for a minority sport who seems to think it is up there with the great god soccer. Convincing youngsters they should play the oval ball game is difficult, especially given the domination of the so called beautiful game.

All the indicators are that press coverage does little to attract players, this despite the fact the area has the best coverage of local rugby in Scotland, including the Borders, and certainly in the central belt.

But that's not the issue, as it is clear that the social media, so familiar to youngsters is the best form of promoting the game, and one that some forward thinking clubs are already and using with considerable success.

Aberdeenshire who are in fact enjoying one of its best phases has already tried this method in bringing into existence a 3rd team who made great impact in Caley 3 North last season. the Woodside club seem to have been able to get members to contact potential players, getting a good return for its initiative. Recruitment must be seen by every club as the way forward, otherwise there can be no game for us to support.

But while I have in part written off my own vehicle of communication I would still like to publicise your development plans. Indeed nothing gave me more pleasure than to write up the Fraserburgh story in which a new club came into existence this spring, and will play in the newly formed Caley 4 North league this coming season.

Good luck to President/ player Dean Underwood and his committee.

Finally I was privileged to be able attend your Annual Conference in Elgin on May 25, learning from your thoughtful contributions, but disappointed that there was no discussion on where the professional game is going

Each and every club must be discussing the pro game, after all it is your game, and your players who will ultimately make up the composition of each pro team.

Unless of course Scotland intends to field teams full of mercenaries!

## The Rise and Fall of the Sevens Game

THE recent Commonwealth Games in Glasgow have rightly been hailed as great success for a number of sports not high usually on the public agenda. The game of rugby was one of them, albeit the abbreviated version, but nevertheless rugby played in front of 180,000 over two days at Ibrox to the obvious delight of. in the main. non - rugby people.

The seven - a - side game is at its best quite electric, played with skill and pace it is a wonderful spectator sport, especially when delivered by teams from the Southern hemisphere.

This is of course the rub of the matter, as from the cheap seats the impression was that the home nations had lost the art of sevens play which, given

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the fact that Melrose butcher Ned Haig had given the world the game in 1883, is nothing less than tragic.

The truth is that fewer clubs in at least Scotland are now playing the sevens game, including the Borders where the public appetite for the sport has dwindled dramatically over the years, including the flagship of the game at the Greenyards.

The attendance at the Melrose was down once again this year, as supporters turned their collective backs on the pro teams who now dominate the once famous event.

The same supporters are in fact not daft, refusing to fork out up to £40 for a ticket to watch the inevitable march of the professional players to the winners enclosure to collect the Ladies Cup.

Borderers like myself are also unhappy to see our team being served up as cannon fodder for the visiting pro teams.

The decline of attendances will continue, making the SRU's decision to spend a considerable amount each year on a sevens team highly debateable at

best.

Far from being warmed by the excitement of Ibrox, the occasion was depressing for those who were prepared to take a glimpse into the future where Scotland will be unlikely to make any impact in the sevens game.

I would of course love to see the shortened version of the game rise to prominence on the international scene, but fear that the lack of grass roots input will hopelessly stunt any ambitions of the hierarchy of the game.

Once again it would seem that the aforesaid grass roots has not been consulted in the process, particularly important if we are to see the game grow, regardless of how many players are on the field.

At this moment in time clubs are more concerned about getting its quota of 15 a side out every week. Raising a sevens team is not on their agenda, and their in lies the problem, the Scotland seven cannot exist in isolation.

The issues surrounding the development of the pro game need to be addressed, if we are to continue to enjoy any kind of status on the world stage.

**Jack Nixon**

## Welcome to Fraserburgh RFC! .....

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THE newest club in the north-east is set to make its debut in a newly constructed Caledonian League when the 2014-15 season gets under way in September.

Fraserburgh Rugby Club will play its first game at the Meadows at Ellon on Saturday, September 13.

Dean Underwood, the founder member of Fraserburgh, acknowledged it was appropriate that the club meets an aspiring club like Ellon in its first game in the newly established Caledonian 4 North. He said "The first priority for us is to give local guys a game of rugby.

The fact that we are going straight into a competitive structure does not change my Committee's view of getting a social game of rugby. We want to see smiles on faces when we play, though the success of Ellon is something all clubs should aspire to, but not yet for us at any rate."

Underwood is Glasgow born and counts Hyndland, Strathendrick and Waysiders-Drumpelzier as teams he has played for.

He will continue his playing career with the

Fraserburgh outfit, while filling the key role of President. He said: "The response from local youngsters keen to play the game has been most encouraging. We are getting around 20 players turning up for training twice a week at the James Ramsay Park in Fraserburgh."

The club has yet to find a pitch for its home games, and may be forced to take up an offer of playing home games at Boddam, but according to Underwood plans are in place to play more locally. He said: "We have a good relationship with Fraserburgh Academy from where we hope to recruit players in return for us coaching in the school."

The Broch President was hoping to arrange a game against Buchan rivals Peterhead in preparation for the new season. He said: "It would not be a league game, as we are going into the newly structured Caley 4 North (see page 9), but we might just try to organise a friendly against our near neighbours. We already have formed a link with Banff, so it is all falling into place."

# Conference on the North Game .....

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CLUB reps from a disappointing thirteen, out of a possible thirty-odd clubs, along with reps from the two North Referees' Societies, attended the 7th North Conference at Elgin last May.

Following a welcome from Mike Monro, North Forum Chairman and North Regional League representative to the SRU Council, Gerry Tosh and Ed Crozier (who eventually won the election at the subsequent AGM of the SRU), who were both standing for the Vice Presidency of the Union, addressed the meeting.

In syndicates, the following topics were discussed:  
**Sustainability Course**—presented by Keith Pope, RBS. Its objective was to help provide participants with a better understanding of what success for their club looked like and how they could plan for their clubs to achieve this.

In summary, clubs were advised to

- review their management team and strength;
- use SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) analysis – what did it tell them?
- analyse the Business Plan – was it robust, focussed, committed, regularly reviewed and was there an implementation and execution plan?
- remember—Cash was king!
- win in their local community
- remember—Social Media was a great way to involve the whole Club and be lots of fun!

**Fixture Management** – Iain Bowles, former Caledonia Administrator for six years, explained how to get through the season with the least amount of hassle by remembering that club fixtures were the club's responsibility. His presentation was broken down into:

- Season Structure;
- Participation Agreements;
- Competition Rules – he suggested a copy, obtainable as a PDF from the SRU website, should be posted in/on each club's clubhouse and website;
- Sanction Procedures; and
- the Rescheduling of Fixtures Process.

A checklist comprised:

- o ensure stand-by dates are included in drawn-up fixture lists;
- o copies of relevant Competition Rules on display in Clubhouse;
- o ensure all players are registered to the Club;
- o ensure there are sufficient non-players to assist with the running of teams;
- o get appropriate dates 'blanked off' as soon as

possible;

- o speak to the other Club if problems are anticipated; and

- o be flexible about when you play.

The 28-0 award was discussed. It was explained that the North Forum Cttee disagree with this award; and that playing games is paramount

What happens if a team turns up with ten players? – in Division 1 this would be treated as non-fulfilment; in Divisions 2 and 3 (and now 4) a more lenient view would be taken with the result being acceptable if the game was played, with or without loaned players. Spirit of the Game is what matters.

Consistency in these decisions was sought

**.Caledonia (North) Leagues** – Mike Monro advised the Conference of a motion, from the Midlands and to be presented to the SRU AGM in August, proposing change to the format of Caledonia League Division 1. (The motion was subsequently NOT presented to the AGM, so no change was effected). A drop in playing standard, from the current Caley 1 to the proposed North 1 and Midlands 1, had been identified and feared.

The Referees Societies' representatives present pointed out that a lower quality of games from the proposed set-up would certainly not have helped with the development of referees in the North.

It was confirmed that Caley 2 (North) would comprise ten teams next season, leaving up to eighteen teams below that level. One club had highlighted the one-sidedness of some fixtures in Division 3, of no benefit to either winner or loser. Social rugby was again discussed and the general feeling was that a Caley 3 (North) league of ten committed teams be formed along with a Caley 4 (North) of six or eight clubs who would not be committed to so many games and a lenient view taken on the playing of these. At the same time, such a league could accommodate any fully committed side aspiring for promotion.

**Youth Rugby** – Colin Phillips, Regional Academy (North) Coach provided an update on the Regional Academy structure, which was under review as part of the SRU Initiative Update. He explained the Specialist Skills programme as well as Club Workons, both of which were included in his brief. He was asked if the number of Age-Grade internationalists in the North was considered to be a

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reasonable/acceptable number, to which he answered 'yes' – adding that an amazing amount of work was being done at youth level in the North, and which was unappreciated.

**Referee Issues** – Kenneth Knott (H&IRRS) and Vernon Fawcett (ADRRS) identified three main areas for discussion:

*recruitment/retention of referees*—

more referees were required; could this form part of the Participation Agreement?

*club feedback on referee performance and development areas*—

the various forms of providing invaluable feedback to the Referee Societies was discussed;

*club inter-action with Referee Societies*—

do clubs attend Society meetings? Or, do they have a designated contact with referees?

**Coach Education Update, including Age Grade Law Variations (AGLVs)** - Sinclair Patience, Coach Development Officer for the North, explained;

- the Coach Development Staff set-up and the rationale behind it;
- Quality Coaching required to achieve goals within the SRU Strategic Plan;
- SRU Strategic Plan consultation process; changes in the Coach Education landscape, with the aims of right time and training – what to do? Answer was to be age specific.

The Age Grade Law Variations (AGLVs) presentation identified:

- need for clear rationale; that updates be progressive;
- safety;
- a link to Coaching Strategy;
- a need for national consistency, ie same in north as south, east and west; and
- an aim to produce more rounded, skilled players.

Feedback from workshops was to be analysed with trials run before Christmas. Following further workshops after Christmas, the new AGLVs would be released in time for season 2016/16.

Finally, it had been announced that a Level 4 course, to Edinburgh/Glasgow standard and providing international opportunities, was mooted.

### **SRU President**

Donald Macleod, SRU President, addressed the Conference, stating that his first agenda, in office, had been to promote the Club agenda and achieve

sustainability.

It was unfortunate that clubs, schools and youth sections did not speak to each other; this had to be addressed. This season he had brought together Ayr RFC U-18 and Watson's College for such a first time game; at the same time the semi juniors of the Borders still needed to be integrated into the national system.

Also on his agenda had been Governance. A new structure of Board and Council had to be established to obviate the problems of the 'churn', or turnover, of members. A report by the new Governance working party was now available on the SRU website and resulting motions would be carried forward to the AGM. Included in this subject was length of office of the President and Vice-President (2 years and 2 years?) which was under consideration and whether club representation should be determined by league or geographical (district) situation. Such anomalies as one representative for London Scottish and their Hong Kong counterparts, as compared with club representation for home-based clubs, had also to be addressed.

There had been lots of flak thrown at the Union regarding the 6 Nations (non) performance.

However, on the positive side, the way forward had appeared in the form of the SRU Initiatives, with the relevant papers produced or awaited. The Club paper had upset people and the idea of a semi-pro league had not been well received. A Working Group, of which he was a member, had made recommendations for improvement to the Board. The club structure had to be right and players had to come from the clubs, including late developers.

This season's British & Irish Cup had been an embarrassment for Scottish rugby, with only two out of twenty four games being won by a Scots side. Some suggested that there were too many additional games for a Scots club side and that District teams should compete instead.

The President closed on a positive note. The European Rugby Cup problem had been resolved through the Scots negotiators, Mark Dodson, Iain McLauchlan and Robert Howat, who had presented an acceptable argument to maintain a healthy Scots involvement in the competition. Money, necessarily, cascaded down from the top, but the game climbed up from the bottom!

The day closed with the AGM of the North Regional Forum.

**Gordon Cox**

# Allocated North Forum Cttee Members .....

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References are made elsewhere in this Newsletter to allocated North Forum Committee members. In an endeavour to aid the SRU Council representative in the execution of his duties the North, clubs have each been allocated to a Committee member, who acts as a first contact and will provide guidance and help and/or, indeed, pass on to Mike as necessary .

Allocations are as follows:

## **VERNON FAWCETT**

Vernon.fawcett@UK.BP.com  
07920 213479

## **ABERDEENSHIRE**

### **GORDONIAN**

### **ABERDEEN EXILES**

### **ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY**

### **DEESIDE**

### **REFEREES**

## **BOB RICHMOND**

bob@3bcsl.co.uk  
07785 342071

## **MACKIE ACAD FP**

## **ORKNEY**

## **ABERDEEN WANDERER**

## **DYCE**

## **NORTH SCOTLAND POLICE**

## **ABERDEEN STROLLERS**

## **ALASTAIR McKENZIE**

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## **RAF LOSSIEMOUTH**

## **KINLOSS EAGLES**

## **STRATHSPEY**

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## **CAITHNESS**

## **HIGHLAND**

## **LOCHABER**

## **ROSS-SUTHERLAND**

## **STORNOWAY**

## **INVSS CRAIG DUNAIN**

## **SKYE & LOCHALSH**

# Caley/North Leagues & Cups



Make up of BT Caley 1, BT Caley 2 (North), BT Caley 3 (North) and BT Caley 4 (North) Leagues, as well as BT Caley Shield and BT North Bowl Competitions, 2014 - 15. Fixtures are available on SRU web site.

## Caledonia Division 1

	p	w	l	d	f	a	bp	pts
Caithness								
Ellon								
Glenrothes								
Gordonians								
Highland								
Hillfoots								
Mackie Acad FP								
Morgan Acad FP								
Orkney								
Strathmore								

## Caledonia Division 2 (North)

	p	w	l	d	f	a	bp	pts
Abdn University								
Abdn Wanderers								
Aberdeenshire 2								
Garioch								
Lochaber								
Moray								
RAF Lossiemouth								
Ross Sutherland								
Shetland								
Stornoway								

## Caledonia Division 3 (North)

	p	w	d	l	f	a	bp	pts
Aberdeenshire 3								
Abdn Grammar 3								
Abdn Uni Medics								
Deeside								
Dyce								
Gordonians 2								
Invss Craig Dunain								
Dyce								
Kinloss Eagles								
Peterhead								

## Caledonia Division 4 (North)

	p	w	d	l	f	a	bp	pts
Abdn Wanderers 2								
Ellon 2								
Fraserburgh								
Garioch 2								
Highland 2								
Mackie Acad FP2								
North Scot Police								
Strathspey								

### **BT Caledonia Shield**

#### **Preliminary Round — 23 August**

Mackie Acad FP 70, Morgan Acad FP 14

Glenrothes 35, Ellon 8

#### **1st Round—30 August**

Caithness v Gordonians

Hillfoots v Highland

Orkney v Strathmore

Mackie Acad FP v Glenrothes

### **BT Caledonia Regional Bowl (North)**

#### **Preliminary Round —23 August**

Abdn Wanderers WO, Fraserburgh scr

Strathspey 12, Deeside 34

Kinloss Eagles 67, Peterhead 0

#### **1st Round—30 August**

Deeside v RAF Lossiemouth

Moray v Lochaber

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**BT Caledonia Regional Bowl (North) (cont'd)**

**1st Round—30 August**

Dyce v Shetland

Abdn Uni Medics v Stornoway

Abdn Wanderers v Kinloss Eagles

Abdn University v Banff

North Scotland Police v Ross Sutherland

Invss Craig Dunain v Garioch

## A Referee's request .....

FOLLOWING the issue of the SRU Guidelines for Refereeing Domestic Rugby, issued to all domestic referees, Forum Committee member Vernon Fawcett has asked, with his referee hat on, and also from a club perspective, that the opportunity is taken to remind clubs to confirm their fixtures in a timely manner:

**Home team has to confirm with visitors and referee (by the Wednesday evening preceding the Saturday game); and**

**Remember to confirm location, time of kick-off, shirt colour and any other relevant details, appropriately.**

Seems obvious but it doesn't always happen!

## And finally .....

COMMENT on any of the items contained in the Newsletter is welcomed.

Additionally, if you or your club has something of interest you would like the rest of the North Forum members to know about, feel free to send in an article.

Articles and correspondence should be addressed to the Forum Secretary whose contact points, e-mail and telephone, are listed on this page.

## Dates for your Diary .....

Forum Mtg, Aberdeen	Seafield Club, Gordonias RFC, Abdn	Wed 27 August , 6.30pm for 7pm
Forum Mtg, Inverness	Ice Rink, Inverness	Early September t.b.c.
Scotland v Argentina	Murrayfield	Sat 8 November, 5.30pm
Scotland v New Zealand	Murrayfields	Sat 15 November, 5.30pm

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***All articles and correspondence  
should be addressed to the  
Forum Secretary at the contact  
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