

Match Programme:

Saturday 25 August 2012 : Stirling County v Melrose (RBS Premiership)

President's Message

Welcome back to Bridgehaugh for the start of our most eagerly anticipated season in recent years, as we look forward to a feast of top quality competitive rugby over the coming months, including County's debut in the British & Irish Cup.

What better way for County to start the new ten-team RBS Premiership campaign than a visit by current Scottish Champions Melrose. A warm welcome to The Greenyards club's President John Reid, his committee, coaches, players and travelling supporters.

While County's pre-season preparations have seen success in the Glasgow Hawks and Boroughmuir tournaments, as well as useful warm-up matches at home to Currie and at English National One side Wharfedale, the real action gets underway today.

It is pleasing to see our players continue to achieve in the professional ranks, with Grant Gilchrist now a full-timer with Edinburgh; Sean Kennedy and Rob McAlpine securing player development contracts with Edinburgh and Adam Ashe in the Glasgow Warriors' academy. We wish the players well, and hope to see them playing for County as much as possible this season. We welcome a number of new faces to our squad, including Rory Hughes, Steven Gillies and Adam De Ste Croix; with others including Jonny Hope and Robbie Hogg returning to the Bridgehaugh ranks. As the SRU looks to build closer links between the professional game and the top club sides, we have been drafted a number of professional players from Glasgow Warriors, who we may see in County colours as the season progresses. We also welcome Henry Edwards who has joined County as forwards coach, and brings a wealth of experience at the top level.

We have a full season of rugby to look forward to across all sections of the Club. I am sure all our teams can count on your support over the coming months.

During the close season, the Grounds and Facilities Committees have undertaken a power of work, including new drainage installed on the main pitch, and general maintenance. My thanks to John and Jack and their respective teams for their tireless efforts, and also to Waitrose and RBS for their volunteers' assistance. Bridgehaugh is once again looking in fine condition for the season ahead.

We have just launched our new look website, and are grateful to our local partners 2-evolve and Vizibility for their work in re-designing the site, allowing all to keep up to date with what is happening on and off the field, including our social events calendar, while further raising the profile of County.

Thanks to all who have renewed their Membership for the coming season – this is a very important source of income to your club. Subscriptions have been held at previous year's prices - Full Members gain FREE entry to all home Premiership matches and 50% off admission to British & Irish Cup matches at Bridgehaugh – great value! If you have not already done so, please consider joining and why not introduce a friend. Membership forms are available today from the bar.

My thanks also to Ondeo Industrial Solutions, entering their fourth year as main sponsor, and to all continuing and new sponsors, your valuable support of Stirling County is greatly appreciated.

Finally, well done to Sarah Dixon, who played for the Scotland 7s team over the summer, and to three of our senior players who have recently entered fatherhood – congratulations and best wishes to Craig Deacons, Ben Addison and Garry Mountford and their partners.

Enjoy your rugby...

Kevin Robertson
President