

## Match Programme:

### Saturday 21 February 2015 : Stirling County v Currie (RBS Premiership)

#### President's Message

A very good afternoon and welcome to Bridgehaugh for what is our last home BT Premiership match of this season against our visitors Currie - and what an important match it is!

I extend a warm welcome to Currie President Phil Thomas, his travelling committee, coaches, players and supporters. I also welcome today's match officials, and ask that you treat them with good humour and most importantly respect.

Currie beat County by a single-point in a closely-contested league meeting at Malleny Park earlier this season. Under the guidance of Head Coach Ben Cairns, Currie have steadily improved and had a resounding win in their last outing against championship challengers Melrose, a result which saw the Edinburgh side go above County in the BT Premiership table.

For County it is back to league business after last week's BT Cup quarter-final at Meggatland, in which we were just edged out by Boroughmuir, but our lads played the better rugby and showed plenty of endeavour and commitment throughout the match, which Head Coach Graeme Young will be keen to see taken into this afternoon's encounter.

The foot of the BT Premiership is very tight with six teams striving to avoid the relegation / play-off places. County have three matches left to secure our place in the top-flight, and we are looking for big performance from our lads today. Please give them all your support and encouragement.

Congratulations to County youngsters Archie Russell, Lewis Wynne and Matt Smith who have already played their part in Scotland Under-20s' Six Nations competition, with centre Archie in the side that impressively beat Wales at Netherdale last weekend; Cammy Fenton is in the training squad.

Also well done to our stand-off/centre Fraser Lyle, who marked his Guinness Pro-12 debut for Glasgow Warriors with a try against Zebre in Italy last Sunday; County's backs Ali Price and Rory Hughes also playing their part in the victory that saw the Scotstoun side go top of the professional league.

I have been particularly pleased to see the progress of our talented Under-16s squad, under the guidance of head-coach Chris Faili, who have recently achieved emphatic wins in the National Youth League Cup against Melrose (35-0) and Hawick (8-34) to reach the final of this prestigious competition at Murrayfield on Sunday 1 March against Ayr. Why not come along to the national stadium and cheer on our youngsters in what will be an exciting and memorable occasion. Ten of County's Under-16 squad also played for the Caledonia District, who finished top of the age-grade championship, with victory over their Glasgow District counterparts. Well done to all our young players – you have a very bright future in our sport.

My thanks to today's match sponsor **Ondeo Industrial Solutions** for their continued support. I also thank our main sponsor **United Auctions** and all our sponsors and advertisers who have assisted Stirling County over the season, your generosity is very much valued and appreciated. Thanks also to today's table hospitality sponsors and all who are attending our pre-match lunch in the Bridgehaugh 'Marquee'.

County's next BT Premiership match is scheduled to be at Glasgow Hawks next Saturday (28<sup>th</sup> February), with the final league match at Edinburgh Accies on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Both matches may be subject to change if the teams have three or more players in the Scotland Under-20 or Club International match-day squads – check the Club website for confirmation of dates. In any case your support at these key away matches will be greatly appreciated – so please try and go to Old Annesland and Raeburn Place add your vocal support.

Also this afternoon at Bridgehaugh, our 2<sup>nd</sup> XV entertain Aberdeen Grammar in National Reserve League One, while our 3<sup>rd</sup> XV host Bannockburn in Caledonia Midlands Division 3. Tomorrow (Sunday) our Women's team play their penultimate BT Women's Premier League match against Hillhead-Jordanhill at Hughenden (kick-off 2pm). It's also great to see four of County's Women in the

Scotland Women Under-20 squad – Heather Davies, Jodie Hutton, Megan Kennedy and Lucy Winter - well deserved ladies.

A reminder that County's annual fund-raising **Sportsman's Dinner** will be held on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March – the event will be hosted by Tam Paterson, with renowned speakers John Gahagan and Joe Camay; a special evening of entertainment in the Bridgehaugh '*Marquee*' not to be missed – there are still a few places left, please contact Ally Logan or Club Office.

There is still an opportunity to buy raffle tickets to support our Mini Rugby Easter 2015 Tour to Northern Ireland – with fantastic prizes to be won - tickets available from Mini Rugby coaches. Thanks to all sponsors and parents who are supporting the Mini Tour and our Under-15s visit to the Orthez International Tournament 2015 in France – these annual tours provide a great rugby and cultural experience for our youngsters.

If you are not going to Murrayfield or Twickenham in the coming weeks, why not come along to Bridgehaugh and watch Scotland's **Six Nations** matches on the TV screens in our Club-rooms.

Finally, thanks to all of you for supporting County throughout this season's campaign – we look forward to welcoming you back to Bridgehaugh again next season.

As ever - enjoy your rugby.

***Kevin Robertson***  
***President***