

Match Programme:

Saturday 24 January 2015 : Stirling County v Hawick (BT Premiership)

President's Message

Good afternoon and welcome to our latest BT Premiership match at Bridgehaugh.

This afternoon our visitors are Hawick and I extend a warm welcome to their President Ross Cameron and his travelling committee, coaches, players and supporters who have made the journey up from the Borders to Stirling. I hope you enjoy our hospitality.

After the winter weather caused the postponement of all County's senior XV's matches last weekend, it is good to get back to rugby action today.

Our lads will be keen to make amends for the narrow defeat to Gala in our last BT Premiership outing, and I am sure our Head Coach Graeme Young will have his team well-prepared for today's vitally important league match.

Hawick, under the guidance of coaches Nicki Walker and Roddy Deans, will as always prove difficult opponents, and like County the Greens still have an eye on a fourth-place league finish and the coveted championship play-offs.

In an increasingly tight BT Premiership table, and with a great deal at stake for both Clubs, we will undoubtedly be in for another highly competitive and entertaining encounter this afternoon.

I also welcome our referee and touch judges, please treat them with good humour and respect throughout, as any abuse of match officials will not be tolerated.

This afternoon County's 2nd XV entertain Watsonians in BT National Reserve League One, while our 3rd XV host Grangemouth in BT Caledonia Midlands Division Three.

Tomorrow (Sunday 25th January) our Under-16s are scheduled to play Melrose in the quarter-final of the National Youth League Cup at Bridgehaugh - best wishes to our boys, come along and add your support – kick-off is 2pm. It was great to see 12 of our Under-16 players selected for the Caledonia Under-16 District side. This again proves that County have one of the finest rugby development programmes in the country and bodes well for the Club's future.

I thank today's match sponsor **Anderson Strathern**, who have generously supported Stirling County RFC over a number of seasons. My thanks also to our main Club sponsor **United Auctions**, who are hosting a hospitality lunch this afternoon, and to our table sponsors and all others who support our Club; your continued backing is greatly appreciated.

This afternoon we are holding a collection for Connor Hughes, a 19 year-old rugby player who was seriously injured earlier in the season playing for Stirling University RFC, and which has left him paralysed. Connor's family are fundraising to send him to the 'Project Walk' rehabilitation centre in the US and to buy the necessary equipment for Connor – you can donate at the '*Connor's Journey*' web-page. Our rugby family always comes together and supports such worthwhile causes – please give generously. We wish Connor well....

Our **last pre-match hospitality lunch** of this season is on Saturday 21st February, before our crucial home BT Premiership match against Currie. Over one-hundred have already booked for this popular end-of-season event in the '*Marquee*' – so don't miss-out! Before that we have a re-scheduled league match at Glasgow Hawks on Saturday 7th February and our BT Cup quarter-final at Boroughmuir on Saturday 14th February to look forward to.

I'd like to remind you of our annual **Race Night** next Saturday evening (31st January). This is always a most enjoyable evening's fun and entertainment and a key fundraiser for the Club – come along and have a wee flutter, there are a few places still available – please contact Ally Logan. Another key event for your diary is our annual **Sportsman's Dinner** with three renowned speakers, which will be held in the Bridgehaugh 'Marquee' on Friday 6 March – reserve your seat or table early to avoid disappointment – please contact the Club Office. Our Mini Rugby section is also holding a **Ceilidh** on Saturday 7th February to raise funds for their Easter 2015 Tour to Northern Ireland. Please support these social events at your Club.

Enjoy your rugby this afternoon.

Kevin Robertson
President