

"Knock-On"



the Newsletter of Aboyne Rugby Football Club - Feb. 2008

PRESIDENT'S PATTERN

As we get into 2008 I am pleased with developments within the club and the desire to get out of the lower half of the league has seen steadily improving performances from the 1st XV. Much credit goes to the efforts of Mike Avis as coach - his time and energy seems boundless. Under his guidance, the team has had some good wins and several times come close, only to see good leads lost in the last quarter due to a lack of concentration.

Recently we made the long away trip to Ross Sutherland where although the team lost 15 - 0 the players put in a great performance. The forwards outplayed the bigger Ross pack taking 3 scrums against the head and dominating the lineouts. Highlight was one driving maul which went 30m or more. The backs tackled manfully and, importantly, everyone enjoyed the day.

For the seniors we are still short of players and need to keep working to recruit more new faces. Although the U18s are not putting out a team now, hopefully we can integrate those who want to play into the senior training and games following the example of Jake and Dan. The U15s scored a great win against Grammar and the S1,S2s have been playing well too (see below). Many thanks go to all - players, coaches and parents. The mini-rugby on Saturdays keeps going strong and again thanks to all involved.

SOCIAL

Hopefully you'll get this in time to remind you about our first social event of the year –

Quiz night on Friday 8 February at Woodend Barn Arts Centre (doors open at 7 pm for a 7:30 pm start)

After the highly successful evening last year we will again be finding out which people in the club have brains packed with knowledge, those who have minds full of useless information and those who have heads which simply don't respond to the challenges of an Aboyne Rugby Football Club Brain-teasing session.

Once again we are grateful to Banchory Contractors who are sponsoring the event and helping us keep the cost down to a ridiculous £5 per person. For this paltry sum you will also be fed during the interval and entertained by some home-grown musical talent before you go home.

Bring your own drinks, sense of humour and a team of 4 to 6 suitably prepared and named for this fun-packed evening. If you're not in a team already, come anyway – we'll soon fit you into one.

Contact Vernon Fawcett (01330 823514 or vfawcett@f2s.com) to book your place

A list of other forthcoming club events and dates for your diary is given at the end of the newsletter.

EX-ABOYNE PLAYER IN 6 NATIONS SQUAD

The Club was delighted to see that Moray Low was included in this year's Scotland squad for the Six Nations as he started his rugby career with the club's mini-rugby set-up. Beginning in 1990 at the age of seven, he played at



Aboyne until he was twelve and the coaching he received from the likes of Colin Cashmore - and particularly his father and ex-club captain John Low - gave him an enthusiasm for the game and a solid basis for his huge achievements thereafter. After the family moved from Aboyne in 1996, he spent two seasons with Moray RFC before moving to Inverness. While at U16 / U18 levels at Highland he was on the fringe of the Caley Reds team and in 2003, played a season in Oz for Wellington Redbacks. He returned to Highland and then played two seasons for Grammar. Moray was selected for Scotland for the U21 World Cup in Argentina and for the inaugural Scottish Club International side against Ireland. He then got an apprentice contract with Glasgow Warriors and when he gained a full contract in 2007, he immediately went on to establish himself as first-choice tight head prop.

At 6'2" and 120 kilo, Moray is fast and mobile - as is needed from a modern front-row player – and it has to be said, rather different from his father who himself was a very useful prop, albeit with the 'classical' build of a brick outhouse.

For a small club, our junior section has been highly successful for many years, punching well above its weight in providing players for representative district squads. For one of our former juniors to be in the national squad is a huge tribute to the club and its coaches – and, not least, a just reward for the hard work put in by Moray and the support he has received from parents. His success is a real role-model for our current crop of juniors,

SO COME ON YOUNGSTERS – ONE IS NOT ENOUGH – YOU TOO CAN DO IT!

Many of our juniors will be amongst over 100 Aboyne club members going to each of the home internationals and, like us, will be disappointed that Moray didn't make the final 22 for the first 6 Nations game against France. But his time must surely come.....

History lesson: *Aboyne RFC has a few honorary vice-presidents but only one Honorary Member - another local lad - David Sole from Glen Buchat.....ex-Scottish Captain and prop. Wouldn't it be great to have another one? No pressure Moray.....*

ABOYNE ABROAD

For those who like to keep up to date with our exiles, **Sharpie** has moved from his posting in Jamaica to pastures new in Brazil (obviously didn't like our climate enough to return. Surprised?). He says he is busy polishing up his Portuguese and even found some aged ex-pats who play touch on the beach at Ipanaema on a Wednesday (*This is making me sickEd*). In his spare time he's done all the predictable sights of Rio, Corcovado, Sugarloaf, Copocabana....(*Vomit...Ed*).

Pete Burrows, Andy Whitaker and Co. again gave Aboyne RFC a noteworthy presence in the Dubai 7s Veterans tournament, although this year's result was rather less noteworthy. Rumour has it that the club's presence over there has been reinforced by a certain **Stevie Duncan**, now working for aforesaid Mr. Burrows. We'll soon have our own 7s team out there! Andy was threatening to lead a tour to Dublin for the international v. Scotland so if you're going yourself, keep your eyes open. I'm sure Andy will say 'The Guinnesses are on me (won't you Andy?!). Meanwhile **Kelson** (Darren Kelly) sent a cryptic e-mail saying "all is OK, Dodger, I just have to go back and get my x rays updated to make sure the plate hasn't moved any". Hmmm.....

Sadly even more players are becoming exiles: **Scott Egerton** has been a real force on the pitch for the club over several years but has legged it to the sunny shores of Australia - his forceful style of play should go down well there. **Mike Brownlie** also becomes an ex-pat, presumably Shell think that New Zealand needs a decent back. **Stevie Shirlaw** isn't moving quite so far - he's relinquished his roles as player and match secretary to become a hooker in Edinburgh (?!).

Good luck guys and don't forget to come back sometime – meantime, keep us up-to-date with your e-mail address to get complimentary copies of Knock On.

S1 S2 section mid season report.

The S1/S2 section of the club started training again back in August on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings at Tillybrake. Saturday training has been cancelled only on two occasions due to the weather and average attendance is 30 players, with 38 turning out on one occasion. The S2s have played nine games so far against sides from Wanderers, Ellon, Mackie, Garioch, Westhill, Grammar, and Aberdeenshire, while the S1s have played eight matches. Both teams have clearly made some excellent progress as the season has continued and the only club we have failed to beat yet is Ellon. The S2s, however came very close to beating them and the coaches have no doubt that if the current progress continues, a win against what is no doubt a well organised club is within our sights.

In November the players received their new match strip courtesy of sponsors **Banchory Contractors**. These are modelled on the seniors' strips and have certainly instilled a new level of pride and commitment to the club from the players. The next big event on the horizon for the S1/S2s is the Caledonia North S1 and S2 tournament planned for Sunday the 16th March. The tournament is normally a lot of fun and a good litmus test for where the squads are relative to their peer group. For the past four years it has been held at Moray RFC/Elgin Academy - details for this year will be posted on the club web site as soon as they become available.



S1/S2s and their coaches celebrate in the new strip, presented by Alex Burnett of Banchory Contractors (far left, apparently getting an uppercut from Steve Hillier!)

Club Merchandise

Over the coming year the club intends to launch a variety of merchandise so keep an eye on the websites to see these as they become available.

Anybody who wants to buy their own club shirt should get in touch with Neil Scott for details (Captain@Aboyne-rfc.co.uk; home no. 013398 81042; mobile 07973 301109). Neil is ordering replicas of the new home/ away kit, in the same material as the official strip but without numbers or sponsorship logos.

We also have new club ties available from Gareth Austin (gpaustin79@yahoo.co.uk; home no. 01330 822604; mob. 07961 902726). Cost £10 .

Websites

Aboyne RFC continues to run two websites in parallel. Every effort is being made to keep information up to date on both sites. The SRU website focuses on youth and junior rugby whilst the Aboyne-RFC site is for senior players. Please add both websites to your favourites list.

<http://www.aboyne-rfc.co.uk> – site focused on seniors' rugby

<http://www.scottishrugby.org> – site focused on youth and junior rugby (Requires a club search to get to section on Aboyne RFC)

Forthcoming events

- Family Quiz Night: **Friday 8th February**
- Visit by our old French rivals Clichy RFC **5-8th April** (to be confirmed)
- Under-18 Sevens tournament **19th April** (to be confirmed)
- Captains v Presidents match & AGM: **Saturday 10th May**,
- Dinner Dance: 30th Anniversary **May 17th**, Victory Hall Aboyne
- Minis tournament 31st May, (to be confirmed)
- Golf Day @ Aboyne Loch: **June 28th** (to be confirmed)
- Mini Rugby Summer Camp: **4th-8th August** (to be confirmed)
- Aboyne Games: come and support the Aboyne RFC stall, **Saturday 2nd August**

We look forward to seeing you at any (preferably all!) of the above events. Keep an eye on the websites for confirmation of the above events and also for updates on each week's matches.

AND A FINAL REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ANY OF YOUR CONTACT DETAILS, ESPECIALLY YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS, PLEASE LET VERNON FAWCETT KNOW, OTHERWISE YOU MAY NOT GET IMPORTANT COMMUNICATIONS.

Thanks to our contributors. If you have any comments please e-mail the editor (R.Cummins@macaulay.ac.uk)