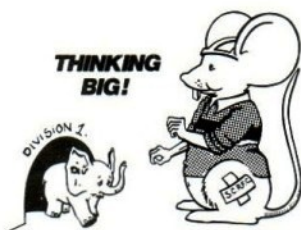


# County's target . . .

## A First Division place by 1985



At the end of a decade of expansion, the club is a lively social centre for all interested in playing the game and nurturing the fellowship involved in being part of the rugby world.

Bridgehaugh, with its four pitches, floodlit training areas and comfortable clubhouse, has been developed as the late James McLaren and his fellow planners dreamed it might.

Victories in competitive rugby and enjoyment in just taking part have been the good fortune of most players in the 70's while good fun and a healthy balance sheet has been provided by the dedicated officials of the various management teams.

Although rugby is a team game and social organisation depends on co-operative enterprise, the contributions of talented individuals willing to take responsibility and give expression to their unique skills are necessary to make the various combinations interact with vigour.

The most consistent catalyst in this respect in 1st XV rugby has been Iain Mackay. Captain in the 1970-71 season, and the sole survivor of that squad still playing National League rugby today Iain's influence in raising the standard of play at the top level has been invaluable.

The turning point in the playing fortunes of County can be traced unequivocally to the determination of a young business man from

Cupar who joined the club from Howe of Fife during the 1972-73 season.

Ken Crichton viewed the playing malaise with customary acuity and on being appointed club coach, he literally took the playing side by the scruff of the neck, set long term targets, exacted obedience, gained respect for both himself and his methods, and really worked.

Players' fitness, mental approach, turnout, playing facilities, equipment, leisure amenities, choice of opposition — nothing escaped him in his search for perfection.

Currently a club vice-president, and the first man to be chosen from Stirling to serve on the full Glasgow District Rugby Union Committee, Ken continues to press forward through the agencies of members delegated to follow in his footsteps and maintain the high standards he has set.

Since 1970, when three, sometimes four XV's were fielded each Saturday, the participation rate has been raised to six XV's and often seven, including the Colts XV which started in 1975, and the "ageing" Wolfhounds XV, in 1978.

This concern for youth and old crocks initiated by John Henderson as a coach, and later as match and fixture secretary, was followed by the introduction of mini and maxi rugby by Ian Nelson and Ben Coull.

The weekends have become hectic as young nine-year-olds up to the mature Easton Roy take their turn chasing the "misshapen" ball.

Parents serve orangeade and crisps to their kids, and stronger brew is appreciated by thirsty cohorts and camp followers during adult hours of relaxation.

The 77-78 season saw the continuing rise of the 1st XV to Division 5 after promotion the previous season from Division 7, and also that year, the majority of the lively St. Modans Rugby Club members joined the County. This latter move provided a ready made fixture card, and so the 2A XV was born.

Apart from the 1st XV's inevitable progress into Division 4, and a promising start in the race for entry to Division Three, the 2nd XV made rapid strides both socially and on the field.

Tours of Ulster and hosting Welsh, English and Irish opposition were much enjoyed as was their promotion to Division I of the Glasgow 2nd XV 'League'.

The Wolfhounds established their camaraderie under Duncan Tulloch's magnanimous leadership and safaris to Mull and Oban, plus an unforgettable visit to Currie were tributes to the art of "coarse rugby" at its finest!

Apart from the 150-odd championship and friendly XV-a-side matches from September through to March, other competitions and tournaments abound — particularly in the brighter days of April. The Glasgow K.O., the Murrayfield K.O., the Doc Johnston Cup for Old Crocks, the Grangemouth K.O., and Sevens Tournaments from Langholm to Inverness, tax the endurance of the club's best players.

Indeed April '78 and '79 saw historic first victories for the Stirling Seven in their own competition.

The Hillfoots' Cup for Colts, the Grangemouth Cup for Juniors, and the maxi and mini tournaments at Jock's Lodge, Murrayfield, Old Anniesland and Bridgehaugh are among the many chances the youngsters get to hone their competitive edge.

Internal competitions for the Kickup, the Top-Ten Trophy and the Aiken Mugs give members of all levels of ability the chance to match their skills in friendly rivalry . . . and so it goes on.

Never a dull moment at Bridgehaugh in the 70s.

Presidents, Messrs. Walls, Kennedy, Coull, Cuthbertson, Miller and McAndrew must be pleased to see the fruits of their decade's leadership being savoured, and be grateful to their fellow office-bearers for their substantial support in such worthwhile promotions.

What will the 80s hold? More youth pitches, improved drainage, better dressing rooms, club rooms and a grandstand are projected.

Division I rugby by 1985 is a major target. However the priority aim must be continued respect of the game's fine objectives and the lasting friendships such attitudes can produce.



Mr. C. W. Drummond (President, S.R.U.) unveils the Presidents' Board in 1975 accompanied by County President Ben Coull and Vice-President Iain Cuthbertson.





# Leading County to the 1980s

Pictured above are the officials who will lead County into the 80s . . .

Back Row (l to r) R. J. K. Fulton, T. C. Wright, J. W. Christie, A. Burns, E. J. Welsh, I. Mathieson.

Middle Row: M. B. Halliday (secretary), J. L. Kinvig, F. F. Smith, I. B. F. MacDonald, A. H. Munn, W. D. N. Miller, R. B. McNaught, A. Cunningham, J. R. Muirhead (Treasurer).

Front Row: J. Henderson (Vice-President), R. J. Mackay, Mrs. G. Parry, J. McAndrew (President), Mrs. D. Mackinlay (President, Ladies Section), J. N. Mackinlay (Captain), Mrs. H. McGregor, K. I. Crichton (Vice-President).



The presentation of the 1979 Schweppes Trophy . . .  
Front Row officials and guests: K. I. Crichton, J. N. Mackinlay (Vice-Capt.), D. Brotchie (G.D.R.U.), Provost Mrs. L. McCaig, E. G. Pullar, J. McAndrew (President), A. H. Munn (Captain), I. A. A. MacGregor (S.R.U.), E. McIntyre (Schweppes).

*It happened on a summer's day,  
With thoughts of training far away,  
That Scotland made a bold decision,  
To set up rugby by division.  
There were a few dissenting cries  
From border clubs and old school ties.  
But soon democracy won the day  
And Leagues in Union came to stay.  
Four groups of twelve made up the best,  
The fifth was split, one East one West,  
Which one for County would best suit?  
This club from West in East was put.  
They started well with mighty plans  
To finish top, not 'also rans,'  
But like the words in Burns' lay,  
Their "best-laid schemes" went "aft aogley."*

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#### 1974-75

*They tried again the following season  
That league to win with strength and reason,  
But dearie me, what consternation,  
The seventh division — humiliation.*

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#### 1976-77

*Late summer came, the squad worked hard,  
Full fitness would be their trump card.  
For leagues to win was the great hope,  
With Stobswell first they had to cope.  
They took the field with apprehension,  
This Dundee team were worth a mention.  
But County showed their power and skill  
To overcome them twenty nil.  
For Murrayfield they headed east,  
The 'Royal Vet's' could be a feast.  
"Victory? Yes without much doubt."  
But twenty eight nil was not a rout.  
Back home again, one to be feared,  
Dalkeith a hurdle to be cleared.  
So, thirteen nil and it was grand,  
With six points now for Rasey's band.  
"East Kilbride, this won't be easy,  
Such heavy ground and ball so greasy."  
The slogging contest which we saw  
Had final outcome called a draw.  
Seven points earned with seven to play  
"Now watch it boys — Drummie away."  
But fate stepped in or so it seemed,  
A flooded pitch — postponement deemed.*

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#### 1975-76

*With battered pride yet full of zeal,  
They said "It's easy, wounds will heal."  
Alas, that season bore no fruits,  
Don't mention Moray nor Hillfoots.  
With heavy heart and furrowed brow,  
The Coach, bemused, thought "What now?"  
But hark, was it a change of luck?  
His lads regained the Gowan's Cup.*

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## On the championship trail . . .



. . . is a review in verse by  
Vice-President KEN CRIGHTON  
of County's light in the 1970s to  
gain promotion from Division 7.

*Next week arrived would there be cheer?  
"Hillfoots at home — recall last year."  
The fourteen men survived the heat,  
With fifteen nine, revenge was sweet.  
Then southward bound they journeyed far  
To Wigtownshire based in Stranraer.  
The game was fierce but luck held true,  
An interception let County through.  
From Strathclyde Uni' — sixty points, enough?  
Five tries for Matt, even one for Muff?  
But no — disappointment — a cancelled game  
As too many students fell sick or lame.  
Half way break let's see the score,  
Six games, eleven points — couldn't be much more.  
Remember too, the Drumpellier match,  
Plus two points from Strathclyde to catch.  
Spring came round and all were ready,  
"Don't stumble now — so nice and steady."  
"Whitecraigs away — a tense affair  
But thirteen six just got us there."  
Bridgehaugh for Liberton and it got tougher  
"Don't falter now — don't make us suffer,  
Forget the game — record a score."  
Fourteen three and two points more.  
That postponed game down Coatbridge way  
A victory there must be O.K.  
Support for County went in strength,  
And cheered them 10 points clear at length.  
The final journey north by rail,  
Apparent champions without fail.  
And so it was on Accies' field  
With sixteen nil to gain the Shield.  
So let's review with swollen chest,  
Nine won, one draw, one no contest.  
Points difference of plus one one four  
One try against, not any more.  
But here's a caution, one and all  
Especially those still walking tall.  
When smiling over what's been done  
Remember that was Seven not One.*

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#### 1977-80

*From that time until this day  
Things have gone the County's way  
A non-stop thrust from six to three  
With rousing rugby, bold and free  
So let's maintain this winning run  
Yet onward to Division One.*

K.I.C.