

Scottish Women's Rugby's Trailblazers and Pioneers

Scotland recorded their first win in the Women's Six Nations tournament since 2010 at Broadwood Stadium last week by beating Wales 15-14. A delighted squad and coach shared their thoughts on the game and explained the significance of the result in an [exclusive post-match interview](#).

Tomorrow Scotland's women will take on England at The Twickenham Stoop in what will be a testing encounter. The performance against Ireland in the opening round and the victory against Wales in the third are promising signs that women's rugby in Scotland is heading in the right direction. Since Scotland had not won a match in the tournament since 2010, that in itself was a psychological barrier and with the win against Wales that hurdle has finally been eclipsed. But after a recent period of change within the hierarchy of Scottish women's rugby, positivity is being sown into the team and the future looks bright for women's rugby with the 200 + girls training in the pathway program.

Sheila Begbie, Head of Women and Girls' rugby in Scotland, was appointed two years ago after having taken the Scottish women's national football team to new heights. The Scottish Football Association (SFA) have just invested heavily in the women's game as a result of their success in qualifying for the Euro 2017 finals. This new funding will allow Scotland's home based players to go full time, which allows for additional time to prepare for the tournament and 100% dedication to training and practice. Sheila explained that women's rugby is some way behind women's football in terms of funding and infrastructure. However, the appointment of Shane Munro as head coach and the funding for the BT academy is a huge leap forward in direction.

Women's rugby in Scotland is in its teething stages and newly appointed staff like Sheila Begbie are pioneers of the game. Although the Scottish women's team might currently be comprised of accountants, students and one full time professional player, they are laying the groundwork for future generations who might one day consider becoming professional rugby players. These women are the trailblazers and pioneers of the women's game and their commitment and dedication will provide inspiration for generations to come.

Despite recent efforts made by Scottish Rugby to improve the women's game in Scotland, a significant imbalance between the English and Scottish game still exists. In England, the women's rugby has more than fifty full time, professional athletes to Scotland's one, so naturally the teams are not on a level playing field. It should be no surprise that Scotland will suffer cricket score like defeats in the future against sides like England and France, but the reason for this is the historic gulf in funding, investment and opportunity, not a lack of commitment or resolve.