

# Interview with an International 8 (Pt. 1) – Scotland Rugby and LMRCV's Jade Konkel



23 year-old Jade Konkel became the first Scottish female player to be awarded a full-time contract with Scottish Rugby in mid-2016 and so enter the hallowed realms of the BT Sport Scottish Rugby Academy, Stage 3 Player. This season, Konkel was the first, of what is now three, players so sign up to play professional rugby in France with Lille Metropole Rugby Club Villeneuveois – a Top 8 club which has a partnership with Scottish Rugby.

First out of the blocks at the beginning of June, Konkel's move capped a fine season for the No. 8, as Scotland had their best Six-Nations for several years, finishing fourth and, in April, her Scottish club, Hillhead-Jordanhill secured the Sarah Beaney Cup, beating eternal rivals, Murrayfield Wanderers, in the final. 

During August Scottish Rugby and LMRCV announced that another two Scottish International players would be crossing the seas to join Konkel in Northern France. Both Chloe Rollie and Lisa Thomson have signed for the French club and, at the same time, became the second and third female players to enter Scotland's Academy Stage 3 programme.

All three LMRCV contracts are, initially, for one year and all three players will be made available for International call-ups during that time.

The interviews were compiled and sent out prior to travelling

over to France with a colleague, Adrian Henry of Rugby People, to photograph one of their first matches and, hopefully, catch up with the three players for some 'off duty' photos.

The three interviews are in the player's own words and, as they have taken up their own time to compile these, they have not been edited down, so each will appear in two parts.

### **Tell us a little about yourself**

I grew up on the Black Isle near Inverness in the countryside. I've always been a big fan of sport and my main sports were basketball and a martial art called Kempo. I was in the army cadets for 5 years also where I competed in various sports such as football, hockey, athletics, tug of war etc. I have 2 brothers, 1 older (Paul 28) and 1 younger (Steven 22) who both played rugby for Inverness Craig Dunain alongside my dad, Steve, when he was onshore from work. My mum, Emma, still regularly turns out for the women's team and is the helping hand as the first aider at all the men's games. My sister, Sammy, however is the complete opposite and is much more delicate when it comes to her hair, make up and nails, but the bond we share is fantastic despite being polar opposites.



I attended Munloch Primary School and Fortrose Academy, then moved to Glasgow when I was 18 to study Social Work in 2012 and to be closer to play for Hillhead-Jordanhill as I used to drive Inverness-Glasgow and back every Sunday to play. I studied and graduated after 3 years so I could focus on rugby. I spent 1 year focusing on my unpaid Stage 2 contract which was more gym, skills and physio support whilst working some shifts at Erskine Glasgow care home who were brilliant with flexibility to allow me to follow my passion.

In June 2016 I was offered the first Women's Stage 3 contract.

Dream come true! However I ended up needed a big shoulder surgery that left me out for 7 months but with the contract and every day support of the physio, Paula, I was back on the pitch ready to compete in the 6 Nations at the top of my game.

*Image of Jade playing for Hillhead-Jordanhill courtesy of [Rugby People](#)*