

Scrumming along together

The University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Rugby have formed a new strategic partnership in a move hailed as a “huge boost” for the capital’s oval ball pathway.



Edinburgh Rugby players Sam Skinner, left, and James Lang flank Douglas Struth and Sir Peter Mathieson at the launch of the collaboration.



L to R: Claire Cruikshank, Head of Performance Rugby (Ladies), The University of Edinburgh, Peter Sawkins, Edinburgh University Sports President, Colm Harmon, Vice Principal Students, The University of Edinburgh, Douglas Struth, Managing Director Edinburgh Rugby, Sir Peter Mathieson, Principal and Vice Chancellor, The University of Edinburgh, Dr Catherine Martin, Vice Principal Corporate Services, The University of Edinburgh. Mark Munro, Director of Sport & Active Health, The University of Edinburgh, Ross Simpson, Head of Performance Sport, The University of Edinburgh and Dave Adamson, Head of Performance Rugby (Men's), The University of Edinburgh.

The foundations of the new deal are said to be built on sporting collaboration, which will see the two institutions working closely together on player recruitment, development, education, and coaching, and to enhance the University's rugby programme.

The partnership also will offer Edinburgh Rugby access to the University's world class training facilities, equipment, and support services and will extend off the field, with expertise available on both sides to support in the areas of teaching,

volunteer experiences and match day experiences as well as placement and internship opportunities.

The two institutions will also work together to explore further commercial, event and marketing collaboration opportunities, including showcasing The University of Edinburgh logo on the Edinburgh Rugby matchday kit.

Professor Sir Peter Mathieson, University Principal and Vice Chancellor, said: "We're delighted with this new relationship which connects two of Edinburgh's most successful institutions in a meaningful strategic partnership. We're excited to work with Edinburgh Rugby to enhance the quality of our rugby programme and build and broaden our international sporting reputation."

Douglas Struth, Edinburgh Rugby Managing Director, added: "The many opportunities to work together are as deep rooted as they are diverse and, over the coming years, we aim to maximise our collective potential for professional development, player recruitment and education for life after, as well as facilities and expertise exchange. It's a collaborative model that's proven to be successful around the world and is certainly something we aspire to emulate to better support university and professional players at the various stages in their careers through a symbiotic relationship."

Founded in 1857 The University Men's Rugby Club were one of the eight founding members of the Scottish Rugby Union in 1873. One year earlier, in 1872, the first representative Edinburgh Rugby side would take the field to face Glasgow, with three of the University's players named in that trailblazing side (C W Cathcart, J Forsyth and M Sanderson).

The University has a strong history of producing and supporting top class players including 55 Scottish, 12 Irish and five English Internationals, as well as currently having one of the leading performance rugby programmes in university

sport.

The Edinburgh University Ladies Rugby Club are at the forefront of the women's game in Scotland with over 25 current students and alumni having represented their country.

Claire Cruikshank, Head of Performance Ladies Rugby at the University of Edinburgh, was recently appointed to lead the coaching team of the newly formed Edinburgh Rugby women's team, which features eight current University of Edinburgh students.