

League title bagged – Preston Lodge focus on cup run

Preston Lodge rugby club (PL) have set their sights on winning a national knock out trophy as an encore to title success.



Preston Lodge celebrate winning Scottish Rugby's National League Division Three: now for a cup run?
The Prestonpans based club bounced back from relegation caused by league re-construction to win National League Division Three with a match to spare.

And in a bid to ensure the foot remains firmly on the pedal both captain Jack Gordon and coach Mark Steedman have highlighted the upcoming National League Cup which gets underway with a trip to Whitecraigs, from the league below, on 9 March.

PL had lost only one league fixture by the time they routed Orkney at The Pennypit 51-12 to clinch the title.

And while, coincidentally, the return fixture up north was their only defeat (24-18) it was also a catalyst for success according to skipper Gordon, a back row forward.

Says Jack: "It was a long day having set off at 4am then seen our flight delayed.

"But after the game we stayed over in Orkney and recognised we had just received the kick up the backside we needed.

"In what proved to be a bit of a bonding session we resolved to take whatever chances came our way for the rest of the season."

And so it proved with coach Steedman crediting a more close knit feel to the squad helped by the arrival from Currie Chieftains of centre Josh O'Brien whose dad, Alan, had represented the club alongside Jack Gordon's dad, David.

Also, there was delight that centre Paul Glynn and back row/hooker Pete Johnson were able to give a regular commitment while recent colts Scott Brown, Harris Weir and Fraser Falgate have been able to step up.

"We haven't had to use as many players but training attendance has increased and we have been able to integrate some of our under-18s may get their chance in any cup run particularly as No 8 Andy Horne and winger Gus Hillhouse are off to New Zealand shortly for a spell where they are hoping to pick up some games.

“Another factor in our success has been the support with 580 turning up for the Orkney match” said Mark.

That might not seem earth-shattering but compare it to the bottom tier of Scottish League football where, on the same day, there were 607 fans at Bonnyrigg Rose, 559 at Clyde, 605 at Elgin, 657 at Stenhousemuir and 501 at Forfar.

Preston Lodge are due to complete their league programme with a visit next week (17th) to Dumfries Saints and once again coach Steedman is setting targets.

“I’ve never won at Dumfries so a massive priority will be to end the league season on a high.”



PL captain Jack Gordon “led by example” according to coach Mark Steedman