

Rugby charity launch aims to boost grass-roots

A charity aimed at giving a much needed boost to grass-roots rugby in Scotland is due to be launched in Edinburgh on Wednesday.

A gathering of EROS – Edinburgh Rugby Oldies Society – will hear plans to fund-raise through lunches, donations, bequests etc so as to stabilise the lower tiers where it appears some clubs are finding it difficult to raise teams.

Also on the wish list is a fund to help schools return to catering for rugby.

By registering as a charity the organisers of “Grass-Roots Rugby for Everyone Awards Trust” believe they can circumvent inheritance tax.

Chair of the project is former Stewart’s Melville winger Andy Scott who is due to speak at the EROS lunch in the company of Scotland coach Gregor Townsend, SRU vice president Keith Wallace, and former PE teacher and raconteur, Willie Allan.

Andy said: “I get the need for sustainable professional teams but more money needs to be raised for grass roots. It is a serious situation.

“By establishing the Grass-roots Rugby For Everyone Awards Trust every penny raised, after admin costs, will go towards an area of the game in considerable need.

“The more successful we become the more development officers

we can employ, the more we can contribute to transport costs and so on.”

Scott is hoping to tap into massive goodwill he believes exists towards Scottish rugby

“There are a thousands of rugby supporters out there with money who really care. Many are moaning about the state of things compared to when clubs like mine used to run up to nine teams in the ‘70’s and ‘80s; but this is their chance to contribute positively.

“If this doesn’t happen then Scotland will fall further behind other Six Nations countries.

“There are pockets of good news in Scottish rugby but without money ...

“We are not ignoring the SRU but we are operating independent of them.

“Money raised will not be going to the pro game or on salaries. Rather it will be to try and get kids in state schools in particular playing (rugby) again.”



Andy Scott