

# **An innovative entrepreneur – honorary degree for Richie**

**Edinburgh Napier University have  
awarded an Honorary Doctorate to  
innovative Scottish rugby coach,  
Richie Gray.**



Richie Gray Rugby Coach and Honorary Graduate of Edinburgh Napier University

Also acclaimed widely as a training equipment entrepreneur, Richie gained representative honours as a player at the start of the professional era in Scotland nearly 30 years ago.

However, it is in coaching that he has really made his mark, landing roles with the national rugby union sides of Scotland, World Cup winners South Africa and Fiji as well as with American Football giants Miami Dolphins and Philadelphia Eagles.

Club sides assisted include French outfits Toulon, Montpellier, Herault and Lyon.

Alongside his coaching Richie, from Galashiels, has spent years developing contact training methods and equipment designed to reduce the levels of collision injury and concussion among players through his company, GSI Performance.

The results of his work have been adopted by teams, governing bodies and manufacturers in both rugby and American Football.

The honorary degree recognises Richie's pioneering work in sport.

Richie said: "I have always believed that if you are lucky enough to work at the top of your chosen profession then you have a duty to leave it in a better place. You must make a difference and leave a lasting legacy.

"Where I wanted to make a difference was in the world of contact and collision sports on a global scale, especially within rugby union and American football – the two sports with their own challenges, particularly related to health, safety and player performance.

"Through my company, GSI Performance, I have coached with the top teams and players in both sports, re-written contact and

collision coaching methodology and created and innovated the world's best technical training aids.

"I hope that as an ambassador for Edinburgh Napier University I can help inspire and support future generations in the sporting world."

GSI Performance now has partnerships with sports equipment giants Gilbert Rugby, Riddell, FieldTurf and Red Bull.

Presenting his honorary doctorate Pete Laird, lecturer at Edinburgh Napier University's School of Applied Sciences and himself an American Football coach in Scotland, said: "Richie is a small town lad who has taken on the giants of multinational business with his unique and original thinking.

"He has problem-solved and diversified his ideas. He has been innovative and entrepreneurial, He has been steadfast and committed.

"I can think of no better person to receive an honorary degree."