

WHY WAS SUPER6 RUGBY INTRODUCED?

I wholeheartedly agree that Scottish Rugby should have an overall strategy for the game from mini rugby through to the international arena and that positive change has to be constantly considered.

For any new structure to be introduced to a specific sector of the game, the implementation strategy must surely have the objective of improving the sector itself and generating a positive effect on the rest of the game.

I support the objective of providing achievable targets for all levels of players, coaches, medical personnel and administrators.

Maintaining and, hopefully, increasing the numbers playing the game, from mini rugby through to senior, amateur, club rugby should be high on the list of SRU objectives.

In March 2019, I read the Scottish Rugby SUPER6, February 2019, Update Document and found it difficult to see how this new team and new competition structure could provide any support to meet the aforementioned objectives.

Here are just a few of the player-related issues that should have been considered:

- 35 players are contracted to each Super6 squad and it is very likely that more players will be required to be added to this number, due to injuries, illness and other issues. These additional players will be taken from Premier and National League Clubs, which has the potential of negatively affecting the particular club in their quest for winning their respective league, gaining promotion and, worst of all, stopping being relegated.
- Downward movement of Super 6 contracted players, between Super6 franchises and Premier/National League Clubs, is not allowed. This results in players, who are not selected for a Super6 match day squad, missing out on playing rugby.
- There is sound reasoning behind why Premier and National League clubs do not want Super6 contracted players to move downwards to them.
- When you consider that Edinburgh and Glasgow professional players are not available for Super6 franchise squads, this, again, reduces the opportunity for professional players to keep developing their game when not selected for a Professional squad match day.
- There were a maximum of 12 fixtures confirmed for the inaugural, 2019/2020, Super6 season (An additional 8 x cross border fixtures were being sought but not confirmed), therefore, the Super6, contracted players were not going to be exposed to enough high level competition.

Why introduce something new to Scottish rugby before doing everything you can to ensure that it is going to be of benefit to the game, as a whole, from the outset?

SUPER6 did not pass the first stage of a SWOT analysis and, as a result, the new, semi-professional structure was not ready to be introduced to Scottish rugby.

There are alternative ways forward which can address the above issues, and we will have a chance to consider these over the coming weeks and months ahead.