

## **Dundee Eagles S1 & S2 land after battling for Scotland in France!**

Dundee Eagles S1 and S2 squads have recently returned after a successful overseas tour to the Hauts-Valies U13 and U15 Rugby Tournament held in Lille, France, where the Eagles were representing not only their club but also their nation as the sole representative of Scotland. 32 teams and over 1000 players participated in the event with many familiar club names present including Saracens and Windsor from England, Lille, Grenoble, Nuits St Georges and Souresnois (Paris) from France, Frankfurt from Germany and Hainault from Belgium.

The Eagles met stiff opposition, in many cases playing against much older and bigger players, particularly the S2 (U14 team) who were playing well above their age level in an U15 tournament. However the Eagles performed very well, defending in the truest Scottish spirit. Although the S2 team found the U15 competition hard going, losing to Saracens and the select teams of Nord and Lyon in the preliminary stages, they ended the tournament with their heads held high, as they battled hard to defeat Frankfurt in the play offs, to finish 14th out of 16. With captain Ewan Fox willing his team on as literally 90% of the stadium including most other teams chanted 'Eagles', the squad were inspired to fight hard in all their matches.

In the U13 competition, the S1's performed fantastically well, also having to punch above their weight. They won the first two games against Hainault and Nuits St Georges and only lost their final group game, against the home team Lille, by 1 try. Coming second in their group, the S1 Eagles flew through the 1/4 final, soundly beating Frankfurt and earning the chance to face the favourites and Cup holders Grenoble, in the semi finals. Grenoble, again the eventual winners of the competition, were well coached and drilled for this type of occasion and proved just too much for the Eagles, in the end outmuscled by the bigger French side. However, captained by Angus Fraser, the squad lifted themselves after the defeat and finished the tournament with a stirring performance again against the local team Lille in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> playoff. Although arguably the better side, they again narrowly lost by 1 unconverted try to end the competition in a fine 4th place.

The Eagles competed very well in what was an organized and impressive competition against some extremely strong sides and did their club, city and nation proud. In addition to winning the 4th Place U13 trophy, as a result of the spirit, determination, good nature and impeccable behavior of the entire squad, the Eagles were also presented with the Fair Play trophy for their overall positive and sporting play during the tournament. This was collected on behalf of the Eagles by the S2 squad. As the squads started their long journey home, it was clear to the Dundee Eagles coaches that the players had learnt much both on and off the field and should be very proud, as they made a huge impression on the tournament. Their overall confidence will have been boosted as well as their understanding of the international camaraderie of the game of rugby.