

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 698 (which corresponds to Litir 1,002). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I want to tell you about two Gaelic-speakers who played rugby at Murrayfield the first time that Scotland won the grand slam in the Five Nations Championship. A grand slam means when one country defeats every other country in the competition. It happened to Scotland for the first time in 1925.

The first game took place in January in Inverleith in Edinburgh. Scotland defeated France.

The Scots had a good team, particularly among the backs. George MacPherson was very strong. So was Ian Smith who was playing on the wing. MacPherson and Smith both played for Oxford University. Smith scored four tries against France.

He score four tries again in the second game against Wales in Swansea. Scotland won 24-14. In the third game in Dublin, Scotland defeated Ireland. Then the English came to Scotland's new stadium – Murrayfield. They played the game in front of seventy thousand

Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu dhithis aig an robh Gàidhlig, a chluich rugbaidh aig Murrayfield a' chiad turas a thug Alba a-mach an t-sàr-bhuaidh no *grand slam* ann am Farpais nan Còig Dùthchannan. 'S e a tha ann an sàr-bhuaidh nuair a nì aon dùthaich an gnothach air a h-uile dùthaich eile san fharpais. Thachair e do dh'Alba a' chiad triop sa bhliadhna naoi ceud deug, fichead 's a còig (1925).

Ghabh a' chiad ghèam dhen fharpais àite anns an Fhaoilleach ann an Inbhir Lìte ann an Dùn Èideann. Rinn Alba a' chùis air an Fhraing.

Bha sgioba mhath aig na h-Albannaich, gu h-àraidh am measg nan dìonadairean. Bha Seòras Mac a' Phearsain air leth làidir. Bha, agus Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn, a bha a' cluich air an iomail. Bha Mac a' Phearsain agus Mac a' Ghobhainn le chèile a' cluich airson Oilthigh Oxford. Chuir Mac a' Ghobhainn ceithir scòraichean an aghaidh na Frainge.

Chuir e ceithir scòraichean a-rithist anns an dàrna gèam an aghaidh na Cuimrigh ann an Swansea. Bhuannaich Alba fichead 's a ceithir gu ceithir-deug. Anns an treas gèam ann am Baile Atha Cliath, rinn Alba a' chùis air Èirinn. An uair sin thàinig na Sasannaich gu stadium ùr na h-Alba – Murrayfield. Chluich iad an

people.

The day was dry and sunny, and the game was tight. Scotland won by three points – 14-11.

There were at least two people on the field on that famous day who were Gaelic-speakers. John Bannerman was highly respected as a player for Scotland. He was born in Glasgow. But his father belonged to South Uist. And John spoke Gaelic.

On the other team there was a Roddy MacLennan – Roderick Ross Forrest MacLennan. Although he was playing for England, he was also born in Glasgow. And he was a Gaelic-speaker.

Were the two men speaking to each other on the field in Gaelic? I can't say. But they were after the game, apparently. I'll tell you about it next week.

gèam mu dheireadh dhen fharpais air beulaibh seachdad mìle duine.

Bha an latha tioram is grianach, agus bha an gèam teann. Bhuannaich Alba le trì puingeann – ceithir-deug gu h-aon-deug.

Bha co-dhiù dithis air a' phàirc air an latha ainmeil sin aig an robh Gàidhlig. Bha Iain Mac Ille na Brataich cliùiteach mar chluicheadair airson sgioba na h-Alba. Rugadh e ann an Glaschu. Ach bhuineadh athair do dh'Uibhist a Deas. Agus bha Gàidhlig aig Iain.

Anns an sgioba eile, bha fear Ruairidh MacIllInnein – Roderick Ross Forrest MacLennan. Ged a bha e a' cluich airson Sasainn, rugadh esan cuideachd ann an Glaschu. Agus bha Gàidhlig aige.

An robh an dithis a' bruidhinn ri chèile air a' phàirc ann an Gàidhlig? Chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh. Ach bha an dèidh a' ghèam, a rèir choltais. Innsidh mi dhuibh mu dheidhinn an-ath-sheachdain.