

To all band members,

It is my intention to stand down as pipe major of the band. This is entirely my own decision. I feel after accepting the post in 1987 the time has come for someone younger with a fresh approach to take the reins. Hopefully my successor will come from within the ranks of the current band with the full support of the members.

This has been a very difficult decision to make in terms of timing. I feel the current team in place are in a position to continue running the band without causing any disruption in moving forward. In the short term I would like to continue as a player within the ranks or even perhaps play a minor role with the key players or management of band in the future. I would however take a back seat and distance myself during the start of the winter schedule to allow my successor total clearance to run the band in their own style. I am fully aware that all of this is easier said than done but I do think the transitional period can be carried out in such a way that the band enjoys continuity and develops further in the coming months and years.

I would prefer any announcement to start with the appointment of the new pipe major rather than the retirement of the current one. This is why I have moved on this now rather than the end of the season. Historically I have seen pipe majors vacate their position at the close of season which can cause a void when some players are looking to take time out, holiday or even exit the ranks. Very often bands never recover from that position from the start of the closed season. I feel the hand over could be done over the next two contests to allow my successor to hit the ground running when the band is fully operating allowing him to pre-plan winter practices and also minimize any media speculation, etc. I am looking forward to competing at the Worlds and hopeful that we can deliver top performances. I have had long talks with Jim and I am happy to report that he will be staying in the band to work with the newly appointed pipe major. I hope all members will endorse that full support.

Thank you to everyone that has given me their support over the last 24 seasons. But after that length of time it's little wonder I need a rest. During my spell as pipe major the band earned 5 Scottish, 9 British, 6 European, 5 Cowal, 5 World Championships and 9 Champion of Champions. What more could a PM ask for? Well maybe a win on Saturday would be nice and round it up to forty.

The journey has been a blast, thanks for everything.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R Mathieson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right underneath the name.

Rab