

# Growing Grassroots Sponsorship Income through Professional Outreach using Digital Tools



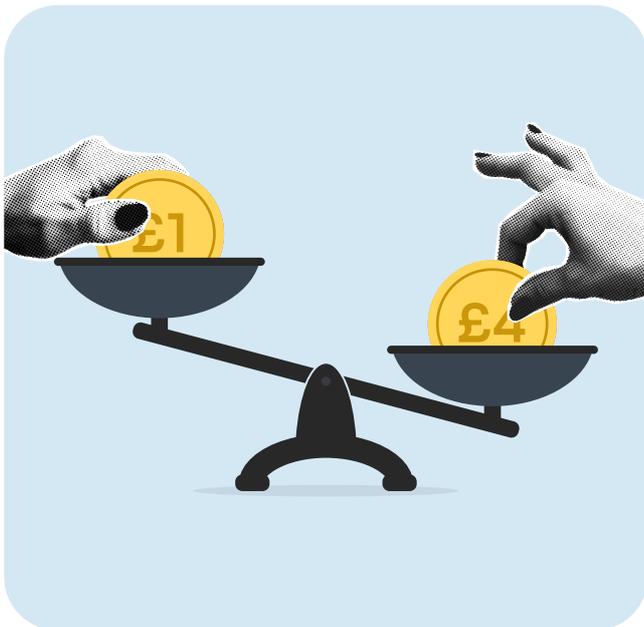
# Background

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**Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite in a way that little else does.**

Nelson Mandela

Grassroots sport is a vital cornerstone of British society. Across the UK, more than **150,000 community sports clubs** support not only physical health but also drive social inclusion, resilience, and youth development. For every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity, over £4 is generated for the wider economy and society (Sport England). In short, sport is a force multiplier for public good.

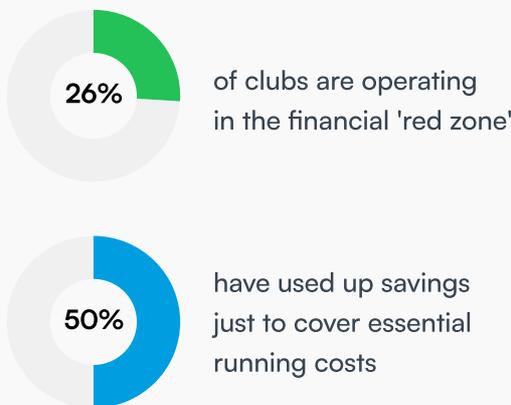


There is growing and consistent evidence that participation in sport and physical activity significantly improves mental health outcomes in young people, as highlighted by Sport England research. Simultaneously, the ongoing childhood obesity crisis continues to threaten long-term health and well-being, with consequences including type 2 diabetes, asthma, and reduced emotional development (Sahoo et al., 2015).

Yet despite its societal value, grassroots sport remains underfunded and under-resourced. Many clubs are still recovering from the devastating financial impact of Covid-19.



According to the Sport and Recreation Alliance, **26% of clubs are operating in the financial 'red zone', 30% have no financial reserves, and 50% have used up savings just to cover essential running costs.** These financial pressures are even more pronounced for Women and Girls' teams, where participation levels remain disproportionately low — **24% fewer girls play team sports compared to boys (Women in Sport, 2025).**



Adding to these challenges is the issue of digital underinvestment. While many clubs use Facebook or email for communication, only **11% have sufficient digital capability** to manage core operations or income generation (ISCA). The funding ecosystem is similarly inefficient. Despite the UK corporate sector's growing focus on CSR, just **0.5% of total corporate CSR funding** reaches grassroots sport (Sported). Why? There is no scalable, cost-effective way to broker professional sponsorships with a clear return on investment. National brands want to support local causes but lack the mechanism to execute hyper-local campaigns.

Imagine enabling a fashion retailer to sponsor every 17- and 18-year-old girl playing football or netball within five miles of its stores, all across the UK, with the push of a button. That is the scale of the opportunity — and the efficiency gap we must close.



Currently, club sponsorship outreach is inconsistent and inefficient. Volunteers often send hundreds of emails to local businesses with minimal response. Instead, clubs rely on long-standing members and their networks. Sponsorship becomes an act of goodwill rather than a meaningful commercial partnership. Activation is typically limited to a banner on a fence or a mention in a printed programme.

This traditional approach leaves value on the table and restricts access to new funding. By digitising sponsorship outreach and professionalising how clubs engage with both local businesses and national brands, grassroots sport can enter a new era of sustainable growth. Better tools enable better results: more players, more inclusive opportunities (especially for Women and Girls), and stronger community ties.

# Why Player Sponsorship Works: Four Key Benefits

Despite being one of the most underutilised revenue opportunities in grassroots sport, player sponsorship delivers an outsized impact, fast.

1

## Speed to cash

Securing 40 sponsors as a single volunteer in a week is unrealistic. But 20 players each securing two £50 sponsors? That's £2,000 in the bank within days.

2

## Shared workload

Once a player has their sponsorship offer ready, they - along with parents or coaches - can take ownership of reaching out, turning one big task into manageable mini campaigns.

3

## Easy to deliver

Player sponsorship is quick to fulfil - a low-cost package with light-touch benefits like a shout-out and social media post, making it simple to sell, buy and deliver.

4

## Long-term pipeline building

Those 40 “low-value” sponsors are now warm contacts - real businesses invested in the club. Over time, many naturally evolve into higher-value supporters through team, event or club-wide opportunities.

# Player Sponsorship

## As is

The existing player sponsorship model is informal and inefficient:



## To be

A modern, digital-first player sponsorship model unlocks scale and commercial value:

- ✓ Still driven by volunteers, but supported by **digitally confident player "champions"** across both Men's and Women's teams.



- ✓ Each player is encouraged to bring in **one or more sponsors** from their extended networks (family, friends, work, community).



- ✓ Players have **fun and engaging digital profiles** that tell their story, highlight their personality, and show their value to potential sponsors.



- ✓ Sponsorship is no longer limited by team or gender — **all players have equal value** and equal access.



- ✓ Profiles are easily shareable via a **unique URL**, so outreach is scalable and not reliant on centralised administration.



- ✓ **Multiple sponsors can back a single player**, each getting distinct benefits (e.g. matchday mentions, social shout-outs, digital exposure).



- ✓ Payments are **instant via Stripe**, removing friction and decision delays.



- ✓ **Automated activations** like pre-written social posts and in-match callouts provide value and visibility for sponsors.

This model also ensures that Women and Girls have equal commercial standing. Brands want to be associated with values of equality, inclusion and community, and this approach provides the infrastructure to deliver that alignment.

## The potential benefits are exponential:

- ✔ More sponsored players = greater total income
- ✔ More sponsors per player = diversified funding
- ✔ Better sponsor experiences = improved retention and long-term partnerships
- ✔ Stronger digital presence = club-wide growth and exposure



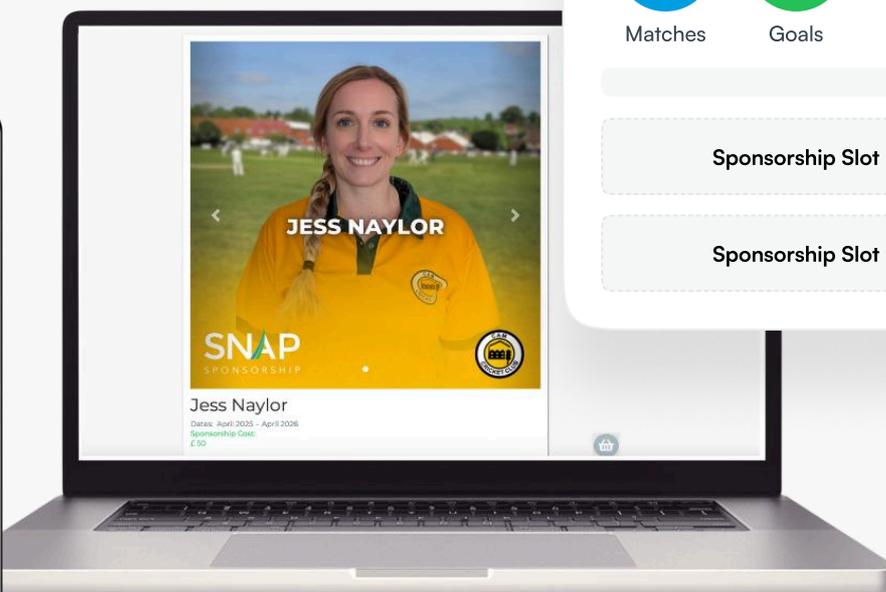
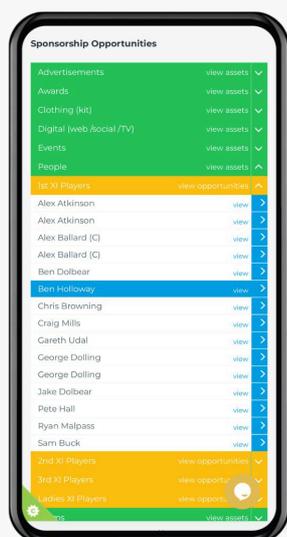
# Bridging the Gap with SNAP Sponsorship

While there are emerging digital tools for match scheduling, tournament management, or membership fee collection, there has long been a **gap in digital tools focused on income generation.**

This is where **SNAP Sponsorship** comes in. The platform is purpose-built to empower volunteers, simplify sponsorship, and help clubs grow their income sustainably.

## SNAP enables:

- ✓ Real-time ROI tracking and social media integration
- ✓ End-to-end sponsorship management
- ✓ Easy player profile creation
- ✓ Digital asset templates for clubs and players
- ✓ Secure payments and contract automation



**Sarah Smith**  
Forward



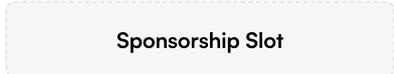
Matches



Goals

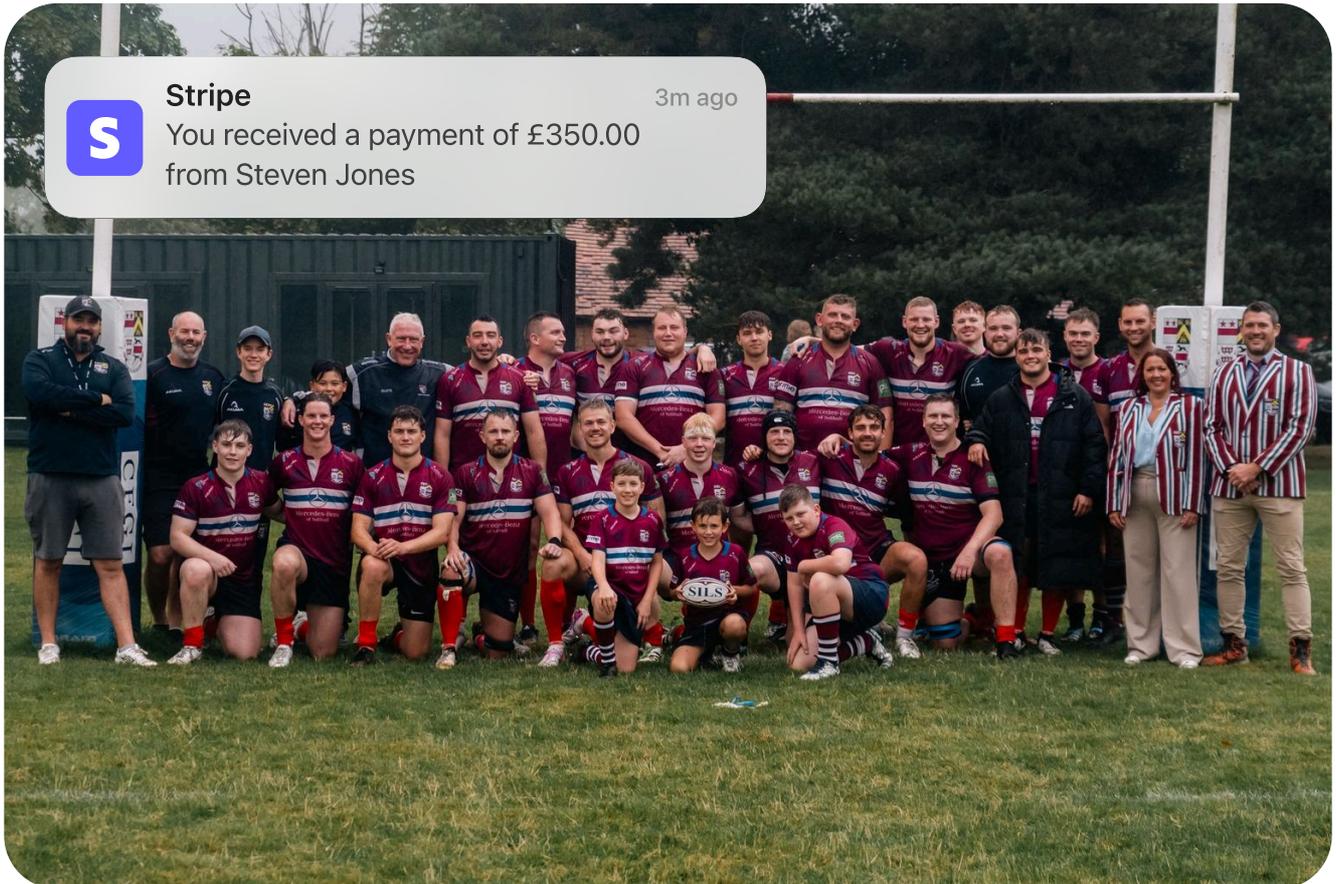


Assists



**Simon Pennock**, a serial tech entrepreneur/investor, and **Mark Covington**, SNAP CEO & Founder, have spent years engaging with grassroots volunteers to understand their challenges. What began as a consultancy has evolved into a digital platform used by clubs across the UK, helping to democratise access to sponsorship and bring in commercial partners that would otherwise be out of reach.

The message is clear: professional sponsorship is no longer just for elite sport. With the right tools, grassroots clubs can take control of their commercial destiny, create better experiences for players, and connect brands to real community impact.



## Next Section Preview

Stay tuned for Part Two, where we explore how clubs can go beyond player sponsorship to unlock revenue from team kits, facilities, events, and digital content.