

New Game Plan

to tackle epilepsy in Ireland

Brainwave, The Irish Epilepsy Association, is one of several organisations that is turning to the world of celebrity to seek support in trying to raise awareness about epilepsy. Its inspiration has come from the world of sport, and the game of rugby in particular.

Tom Smith is well known to rugby supporters in Ireland and the UK as the fearsome prop on the Scottish rugby team and a Lions Team member. But very few people will know that off the field of play he has another opponent to tackle – his epilepsy.

The 33-year-old Scotsman, regarded as the quiet man of rugby, began to speak out, on behalf of Epilepsy Scotland, after being diagnosed with the condition. He is considered one of the best props in the world, played in six

tests during two recent British and Irish Lions' tours and collected 61 international caps during his eight year international career.

Recently, one of Tom's greatest admirers, Irish rugby star Gordon D'Arcy, has joined forces with Smith in a new campaign launched by Brainwave The Irish Epilepsy Association.

Gordon commented that Tom Smith's huge achievements in sport showed that epilepsy need not prevent anyone from living their dream.

"I personally haven't been affected by the condition but I do know that while growing up I looked up to certain sports men and women. Tom's campaigns for greater awareness and education about epilepsy have inspired many people in Scotland.



"If my involvement today brings an Irish celebrity forward, then I think it will be a very positive development," he said.

Brainwave's *Wanted* campaign is hoping to encourage more celebrities who have been touched by epilepsy in some way to become spokespersons for Brainwave. The campaign has had a fantastic start, with features included in major Irish newspapers and magazines.