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PODCAST 43 – Aston eyes Super League return flight for Eagles

Sheffield Eagles legend Mark Aston says he is determined to take the club back into the big time sooner rather than later.

Aston, who was famously part of the Eagles' side that beat Wigan in the 1998 Challenge Cup final, wants games like Saturday's fourth round tie with St Helens to become the norm again for the South Yorkshire outfit.

The club's chief executive and head coach played a starring role in their unexpected 17-8 victory over the Warriors 13 years ago as he picked up the Lance Todd Trophy for a man-of-the-match performance.

However, he now wants another generation of Eagles players and fans to have their own fond memories to talk about, having breathed new life into a club that was tragically allowed to die soon after that memorable day at Wembley.

Aston had to rebuild the Eagles from scratch following their ill-fated merger with Huddersfield Giants, but he still believes the new organisation can one day replicate the achievement of the original club by securing a Super League spot.

The former Great Britain international, who is the latest guest star in the [PROBIZ Tryline](#), said: "I thought it was disgrace what happened to Sheffield, after all the hard work that had been put in over the years, and that is why we set up the new club in 1999/2000.



"We have now got the facilities and infrastructure and are hitting 10,000 school children a year in the Sheffield and South Yorkshire area. We have five full-time development officers going into 103 schools and out of that we are getting participation and performances as well as setting our scholarships up at 15 and 16 that are competing against teams like Castleford and Leeds.

"Our under-18 academy are in Super League and it was only a month ago that they were leading 14-12 for 30 minutes against Warrington Wolves in their first league game and while they went on and got beat, it shows that we can compete and that the kids are coming through within our structures.

"The reserve grade is also full of local lads from the area and obviously the first-team is doing well in the Championship. However, our long-term aim is to get back into Super League, although when that will be, I don't know but I would like to think that we will be in a position to apply for the next franchise,"

Aston also talks in the latest [PROBIZ Tryline](#) about the Eagles' developing relationship with Sheffield United and their owner Kevin McCabe, having moved to Bramall Lane from Don Valley Stadium two years ago. He believes the venue is ideal for staging top-class Rugby League after problems generating an atmosphere at their old home of 20 years.

His team go into this weekend's clash with Saints in good spirits after some respectable performances in the Challenge Cup in recent times. Last season, they faced Wigan again in the fourth round but there was to be no fairy-tale outcome as the Warriors ran out 50-34 winners, while a year earlier another good showing against Hull KR ended in a 34-24 in a fifth round tie.

Perhaps it will be third time lucky for Aston's side against Saints on Saturday?

The [PROBIZ Tryline](#) is available to download now in a number of ways including iTunes and in this latest edition, fans are invited to take part in a ticket giveaway thanks to the Super League's title sponsors Engage.

For further information please contact:

Rob O'Neill
Phoenix Multimedia Productions Ltd
0781 3841662
rob.oneill@phoenixmpltd.co.uk
<http://www.phoenixmpltd.co.uk>

Amy Sweetman
PROBIZ
01344 777 900
amy@probiz-excellence.com
<http://www.probiz-excellence.com>