

PRESS RELEASE

NORTHERN IRELAND'S FOOTBALL STARS JOIN FORCES IN AID OF BABY LOSS CHARITY

Northern Ireland international footballer Ivan Sproule will get together with some of football's finest this Friday, in a charity match aimed at raising money for the Northern Ireland stillbirth and neonatal death charity, Sands.

Ivan, whose baby daughter Molly was stillborn in 2009, has called on fellow footballers to take part in the charity match, and has also been gathering one or two coveted items for a raffle and auction after the match. Football enthusiasts will have the chance to get their hands on sought after signed shirts from Spurs, Rangers, Portadown and Glentoran, and even a pair of David James' goalkeeper gloves.

Ivan says Sands is a "very poignant" charity for him and his wife Janet. "Because of Molly, Sands is obviously a charity close to our hearts, and it's great to be able to do something to support the work the charity does for anyone who has been affected by the death of a baby.

"The event on Friday is our way of giving something back. Team mates old and new are being very generous with their time and their donations – we aren't charging for tickets we just want people to make a voluntary donation of however much they feel they can, then come along and enjoy the event."

Steven Guy, co-ordinator of Sands Northern Ireland, said he was thrilled to bits with Ivan's generosity and efforts.

"We have been thinking for a while that it would be great to have an event that dads in particular could attend, so when Ivan called me about this I was delighted. It will be a great evening, and all the money raised will help Sands to continue supporting people who, like Ivan and his wife, go through the tragedy of losing a baby."

The match will take place at Darragh Park, Castlederg, and teams will include current and ex-league players and internationals. Kick Off is at 7.30pm, and the auction will take place in the clubhouse after the game.

-ends-

For more information, contact Sands press officer Lisa Wardle, e:lisa.wardle@uk-sands.org, t:07554 454309