



# BSRFC

OFFICIAL MATCH PROGRAMME

**IN THE SPOTLIGHT**  
SEAN EDWARDS

**MATCH REPORT**  
BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1ST XV  
VS ROTHERHAM

**HERE COMES THE GIRLS!**  
CARLY POYSER TALKS WOMENS RUGBY



NATIONAL LEAGUE 1  
**BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC V OLD ELTHAMIANS**  
13th April 2019

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# PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

## MICK COLEMAN



I'm delighted to welcome the players, officials and supporters from Old Elthamians to Silver Leys for our last home match of the season. Let's hope the weather is slightly less inclement than when we visited Marvels Lane on a cold, wet day back in December!

It was about that time when Stortford hit rock bottom, and propped up the rest of the league, but what a turn around since then! With an 'adjustment' to our tactics and a more manageable injury list, our progress up the table has been steady, playing some glorious rugby combined with a mean defence, we've managed to take some notable scalps along the way. Since the game against Moseley, we've played 11 winning 9 of them, we've scored 358 pts and conceded 163 and are now 9 places higher - not a bad run. So, today we take on Old Elthamians who are currently 2nd in the league and need to win to keep their promotion hopes alive, but as I've said, we've taken some notable scalps..... Great credit must go not only to Longy, but also to his two very capable assistants Tom and Marcus for the turnaround, and of course, the commitment and hard work put in by the players, and that's not just on match day!

But as everyone knows, there's a massive amount of hard work that goes on behind the scenes as well. Out of the 400 people here today, around 100 of you are sponsors in one form or another - be you corporate, player sponsors, Club Stortford or Oval Club, you are all greatly appreciated and without your generous support, there is no way that we

would be able to compete at this level. However, please don't feel excluded if you're not yet sponsoring, there's always room for more! A huge amount of credit (and our thanks), must go to Julie North who works tirelessly in her duties as our excellent sponsorship co-ordinator, ably backed up by Al Jones and Colin Tilley when necessary. A great team effort!

Headline sponsors this week are our Match Day Sponsors Westbury Garden Rooms, Tees are Man of the Match Sponsors, Belcom, Match Ball Sponsors and Russell Partnerships - Match Day Experience. Thanks to you all!

I could probably fill the entire programme with all the volunteers we should be acknowledging, but as space doesn't allow, I'll just mention a few, but rest assured you're all very much appreciated. So, special end of season thanks must go to Gilly and her catering staff, Sian and her bar staff, Peter and Mark in Banksy's Bar, Rob and Anne Walker for their excellent and patient (not always...) work in organising the lunch, Dennis, and of course all our fantastic duty dogs and as I've said, the many, many other volunteers who give of their time to make this exceptional club work.

It just leaves me to urge you to get behind the team today, with plenty of vocal support, and we'll see some of you in Darlington in 2 weeks time for the final game of this season and the rest of you hopefully next September for the start of the next.



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# DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

## ANDY LONG



Good afternoon everyone and welcome to Silver Leys for our final home game of the season.

Well it's fair to say this campaign has been a roller coaster both physically and emotionally. To be going into this final game in 7th position is remarkable and I'm so proud of the squad, coaches, management and medical teams for their huge efforts.

You will all need no reminding that after Round 17 at Birmingham Moseley we were rock bottom, so to be where we are 11 games later is all the more incredible. We always believed we were better than the results were showing and I would like to thank all of you supporters and sponsors for sticking with us and staying positive throughout.

Today's opponents Old Elthamian's have had another fantastic season and rightly are battling for the league title, we've enjoyed some brilliant encounters over the seasons and I'm sure this afternoon will follow suit.

It's been a season of enforced retirements with Johnny and Sean's injuries meaning they have to call time on their playing days.

We also have three clubmen playing their last games at home in Bally, Tomo and Tom. All three have made immense contributions both on and off the field and we would not be where we are now without the huge sacrifices they have all made over the years.

This will also be the final appearance in the Blue and White for Mark McCraith. His determination and if I can say downright bloody mindedness have been traits typical of our progression as a club in these recent years. He has always led from the front and even though he won't want to admit he has been crucial in the development of so many of the younger forwards that have stepped into the 1XV.

I would like to personally thank all of them for their efforts over my time at the club, always challenging me and the other coaches to deliver the best for the squad. I know you will join me in wishing them all the very best for the future.

Enjoy the game everyone  
Longy



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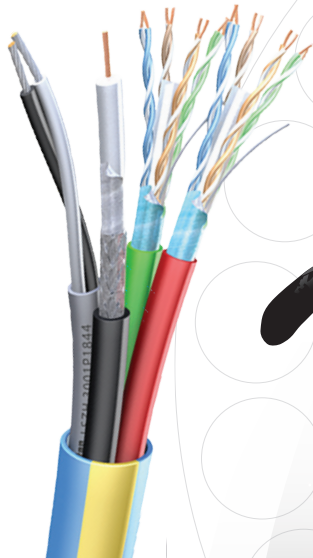


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# Ian Cairns turns 60

Ian Cairns has been a favourite at Stortford rugby club for a long time and has always rolled out with a smile on his face for whatever team he has been asked to play for. He recently turned 60 and entered his 50th consecutive year of playing rugby. The game for the Abbot's v Cheshunt 3s Saturday 23rd March was his first game as a 60-year-old. Read Ian's own words re his rugby career: -

"I Started playing at age 10 when I went to boarding school at Wymondham College, Norfolk, full contact tackling in those days at that age, no prisoners taken, suffered a broken arm at age 14 which was the first of 14 broken bones, excluding fingers, over the next 50 years including nose, cheekbone, arm, ribs, elbow, ankle and foot, some several times! After 7 years of school and reaching 1st XV level I took a year out and played first team rugby for High Wycombe, then I went to Liverpool Polytechnic to do a 4-year language degree playing 1st Team rugby for the college and also in France and Germany during my exchange periods there.

In 1982 I moved to the south coast and one of my customers recruited me to play for Eastbourne where I reached first team level again, playing there for 4 years before getting a job with Athena posters (remember the Tennis Girl!?) in Bishop's Stortford. I researched all the rugby clubs in the area but in the end, there was only one choice so I joined Bishop's Stortford RFC for the 1986/ 87 season.

32 seasons on and having played for all club teams from 1st XV to 5th XV, plus Vets, I've seen the club grow from a time when the duty team had to clean out the changing rooms and man the bar on match day, to today when we're seating up to 380 people for a pre-match lunch for a 1st XV home game. They even saved my life in 2007 when I suffered a heart attack on the pitch, the 1st Team Physio on duty that day, and Jules, called it immediately, got me to hospital within the so-called golden hour and here I am 12 years on still playing!

So it was a privilege to run out onto the pitch for the club last Saturday to start my 50th consecutive year of rugby and my first game as a 60 year old!"



# THE PLAYERS

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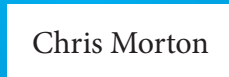




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# BLUES - END OF SEASON REPORT

Good Afternoon and a warm welcome to Silver Leys for the final time this season as we host Old Elthamians. I hope the sun is shining as the Blues will be looking to finish the season in style, playing some fast paced, free flowing rugby. Please do come over and soak up some of the match action, your support has been greatly valued all year!!!

As it's the last programme of this season, I am of course going to take the opportunity to reflect on what has been a fine 8 months of rugby for the Blues. I think it's fair to say that I certainly had a few nerves about the capabilities of the team having to blood so many new players and youngsters into the side this term. It only took 80 mins of all the boys trying to fill Hertford 1st XV in at pre-season for me to realise that the squad definitely had what it took to compete with the likes of Richmond, Amptill and Jersey.

Without wanting to bore you with a game by game run through of the season, I would just like to pick out some key highlights. The Blues have completed doubles over Esher, Barnes and The Rams (and still have the chance with OE's and Wimbledon). We completed a good home win over Jersey, narrowly missing out on a way win 24-19. We beat Richmond's 2nd and 3rd XV's for the first time since joining the Zoo League structure!!! And it's looking likely that we will secure 5th place out of 13 teams. And that finishing place in the league is probably a good reflection of the rugby we have played. Whilst clinical at times, we have sometimes been left needing to produce a little extra to get us over the line.

For most teams the success of a season is measured by your final league position. But for the Blues, this season more so than any other, it has been about the growth and development of the players. Many have come through the Blues this season to make their impact in the 1st XV. Ben Harrison has been exceptional when called upon to anchor the scrum against some seasoned National One props. Big Brad Etherington has taken his chances in a 1st XV shirt showing what a dangerous prospect

he is in the back row. George Keen is a fully-fledged member of the 1st XV now but guest appearances in the Blues are always welcome. And finally Tom Walker has impressed in both the Blues and 1st XV at full back.

All of the younger lads have shown exceptional talent this year and a full season of Blues rugby under their belt will do them good in preparing for the challenges of the next.

"I have really enjoyed getting to Captain the side on a number of occasions this year. As a senior player it's great to have that feeling of trying to direct the team to achieving success week in week out. Danny, Faiersy and Ash have put a massive amount of hard work into the Blues this year. To have a coaching team of 3 pushing us every week really has made the difference. I think Ash's hard work with the backs has really shown through in the quality of tries we have scored. I can't fault their commitment and the confidence they give us as a group to perform.

Thanks also to the old faithful (mainly mums and dads) that support us far and wide!!! And finally thank you to all the players, let's get in that top 3 next season"!!!!  
Scants xxx





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# TODAY'S OPPOSITION

## OLD ELTHAMIANS RFC



Old Elthamians RFC were founded in 1911 by the Old Boys of Eltham College. The school had moved from Blackheath to its present site in Mottingham, where it provided a pitch for the Old boys to use.

In 1951 Foxbury Field, in Chislehurst, was purchased by the Old Boys Association and this stayed the club's home until for the 2014-15 season they to the Queen Mary Sports Ground in Chislehurst, they stayed there for just two seasons before moving to their current home of College Meadow adjacent to the college itself for the start of the 2016-17 season. In 1972 falling player numbers forced them to admit non-school players for the first time and just two years later they were the second club in Kent to start a mini rugby section. They currently run three senior men's teams, a Women's team and the full range of Mini & Youth age groups from U6 to U18.

They finished second to us in 2017 in National Two South, and won promotion by travelling to and beating Sale RFC 19-14 in a tense play-off. They finished one place & three points above us last season in a highly respectable 6th place. Although in the head to head we came out on top on both occasions winning 19-13 at their place in September & 34-20 here just before Christmas.

They have been magnificent this season, going nose to nose with Amptill at the top of the table until unfortunately losing 36-6 to the Bedfordshire side on 9th March & in doing so yielding the initiative for the sole promotion place to their rivals.

Before play starts today they lie 5 points adrift with of course only the two games to play.

Just before Christmas we lost a hard-fought encounter with them in horrendous conditions by 17 points to 3





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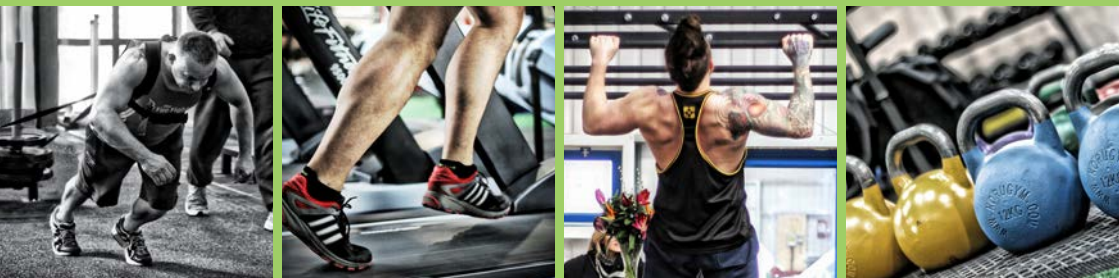
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# RESULTS GRID, TABLE & FIXTURES

## NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

FIXTURE SCHEDULE & RESULTS GRID 2018-19

Ampth	Ampt	Bklnth	Birm	BSRFC	Caldy	Camb	Chin	Cind	DMP	Esher	L'boro	OE's	Plym A	Ross Pk	Roth	Sal
Ampth	26-31	33-22	25-17	34-24	59-7	6-13	38-27	54-10	40-29	35-20	43-34	36-6	48-15	21-20	22-8	13-04
Bklnth	26-31		30-26	12-21	46-32	22-27	22-14	31-7	15-0	27-04	39-32	10-21	27-32	23-15	13-04	41-24
Birm	26-40	17-27		41-31	27-04	15-6	33-40	23-24	36-41	29-27	30-29	10-14	48-26	27-45	28-22	31-22
BSRFC	10-29	15-16	52-8		3-13	24-6	47-10	37-17	23-26	26-29	57-25	13-04	57-24	25-27	20-22	29-15
Caldy	19-18	17-25	30-27	14-16		15-12	17-20	31-38	14-8	31-29	43-19	9-40	3-27	13-04	29-33	20-23
Camb	11-22	24-43	13-04	23-22	22-27		20-22	10-6	29-15	28-20	25-22	17-20	32-26	8-17	20-24	36-36
Chin	38-33	22-33	7-41	6-13	24-27	27-26		27-29	26-31	24-18	29-50	20-20	27-04	33-33	48-35	28-21
Cind	20-26	22-22	38-14	0-11	27-25	14-9	21-26		13-04	26-0	45-36	12-32	15-12	29-36	36-19	40-31
DMP	26-33	24-29	17-17	27-04	14-22	3-22	21-23	10-7		34-17	47-30	41-26	22-19	34-33	42-19	29-31
Esher	49-48	7-36	21-38	14-27	17-14	17-10	13-04	10-7	24-25		17-14	17-34	21-24	13-17	15-45	31-29
L'boro	27-04	19-53	35-25	26-41	53-19	14-20	48-46	8-39	39-27	43-29		26-69	6-34	20-46	5-38	33-17
OE's	13-13	11-12	38-27	17-03	34-7	31-3	22-3	22-17	31-22	22-10	48-24		40-29	28-22	27-04	32-14
Plym A	17-5	20-21	54-28	23-19	24-14	29-17	11-26	21-10	42-29	19-16	13-04	15-19		21-35	24-17	14-7
Ross Pk	10-6	28-22	27-22	25-17	26-10	37-28	38-31	27-04	31-32	17-25	39-31	37-24	22-17		46-24	31-26
Roth	24-36	10-7	21-20	41-35	29-5	14-25	32-26	20-3	25-13	22-12	23-29	33-34	25-14	29-12		32-27
Sal	10-27	18-32	37-30	22-8	26-24	27-04	31-22	31-17	32-27	38-44	38-31	42-38	31-22	23-31	13-12	
ROUNDS 1 to 28																
ROUNDS 29 to 30																



## Season 2018/2019 NATIONAL 1

## Results From 6th April

Home Team		Away Team
Sale FC	31-22	Plymouth Albion
Rosslyn Park	37-28	Cambridge
Rotherham	41-35	Bishop's Stortford
Loughborough Students	43-29	Esher
Birmingham Moseley	26-40	Amphill
Darlington Mowden Park	14-22	Caldy
Chinnor	22-33	Blackheath
Old Elthamians	22-17	Cinderford

## Season 2018/2019 NATIONAL 1

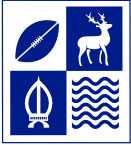
## Fixtures for 13th April

Home Team		Away Team
Cambridge	vs	Birmingham Moseley
Blackheath	vs	Rotherham
Esher	vs	Chinnor
Amphill	vs	Sale FC
Caldy	vs	Rosslyn Park
Plymouth Albion	vs	Loughborough Students
Bishop's Stortford	vs	Old Elthamians
Cinderford	vs	Darlington Mowden Park

## National League 1 - 2018/19

Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points
Amphill & District	28	21	1	6	861	551	310	19	5	110
Old Elthamians	28	21	2	5	786	531	255	15	2	105
Rosslyn Park	28	20	1	7	803	649	154	15	4	101
Blackheath	28	19	1	8	744	570	174	15	5	98
Rotherham	28	16	0	12	698	646	52	13	5	82
Plymouth Albion	28	14	0	14	655	660	-5	12	6	74
Bishop's Stortford	28	13	0	15	713	565	148	11	8	71
Darlington Mowden Park	28	12	1	15	679	735	-56	14	6	70
Chinnor	28	11	2	15	696	811	-115	14	7	69
Sale FC	28	12	1	15	715	792	-77	12	6	68
Cinderford	28	12	1	15	576	634	-58	10	7	67
Birmingham Moseley	28	9	1	18	734	826	-92	13	9	60
Cambridge	28	11	1	16	529	590	-61	4	8	58
Caldy	28	10	0	18	538	739	-201	8	8	56
Loughborough Students	28	8	0	20	781	1026	-245	18	6	56
Esher	28	9	0	19	569	752	-183	7	8	51

# THE TEAMS



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## BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1<sup>ST</sup> XV

BLUE AND WHITE

1	SEB BROWNHILL
2	HARRISON KING
3	TOM McCRONE
4	MARK McCRAITH
5	MATT TOMLINSON
6	JAMES APPERLEY
7	DAN ELSOM
8	BAXTER WILSON
9	SAM COLEMAN
10	TOM COLEMAN
11	JOSS LINNEY
12	GEORGE KEEN
13	SAM WINTER ©
14	ROB DUFF
15	NICK HANKIN
<b>REPLACEMENTS</b>	
16	SAM JAMES
17	BEN HARRISON-PRICE
18	STEVE BALL
19	TOM HITCHCOCK
20	SAM CAPPAERT

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**Defence Coach** Marcus Cattell | **Attack and Backs Coach** Tom Coleman | **Blues Head Coach** Danny Johnston  
**Backs Transition Coach** Ash Boyle | **Forwards Transition Coach** Rob Faiers  
**Head of Strength and Conditioning** Ben Sheath | **Assistant strength and conditioning coach** - Adam Vine

**Referee** Joe James  
**Assistant Referee 1** Michael Woods  
**Assistant Referee 2** Philip Bowers

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ROYAL BLUE AND GOLD

ALEXANDER ROGERS	<b>1</b>
NATHAN MORRIS	<b>2</b>
KIERON SCUTT	<b>3</b>
FREDERICK HOSKING	<b>4</b>
ADAM BATT	<b>5</b>
HARRY LEDGER	<b>6</b>
HAMISH BARTON	<b>7</b>
BENJAMIN KING	<b>8</b>
OLIVER CLAXTON	<b>9</b>
THOMAS WHITE	<b>10</b>
GEORGE PERKINS	<b>11</b>
KIERAN MOFFAT	<b>12</b>
JAMES GOLLEDGE	<b>13</b>
ALEXANDER BROWN	<b>14</b>
BENJAMIN HOWARD	<b>15</b>

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## REPLACEMENTS

STEFAN NORTH	<b>16</b>
JAY RUDLAND-THOMAS	<b>17</b>
CHARLIE SELF	<b>18</b>
RHYS MORGAN	<b>19</b>
CHARLES DOCKERY	<b>20</b>

**Director of Rugby** Gavin Lach | **Head Coach** Sam Howard | **Coaches** Aaron Liffchak., Adam Preocanin  
**Managers** Ally Vanner, S and C Nick McBride | **Physio** Trev Keys and Grace Sheppard



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# MATCH REPORT

ROTHERHAM TITANS 41 - 35 BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1ST XV



Stortford edged out at 5th placed Rotherham in an unusually loose game, with attacks dominating defences.

With Stortford struggling in the scrums and the Rotherham lineout misfiring, neither side could count on a consistent flow of possession, so this high-scoring game was decided by a series of decisive attacking moves, exploiting some patchy defending on both sides. The first breakthrough went Stortford's way after 7 minutes, with Chris Smith bursting over for a try, having cut in off his wing to take a short pass from Tom Banks in the midst of heavy forward traffic, following a good dash up the middle from Matt Tomlinson.

The scrumhalf added the conversion, but the scores were levelled 9 minutes later, when Rotherham's tall left wing, Dan Leake leapt high to catch one of many excellent box kicks from scrumhalf, Alex Dolly, as Stortford's defenders, rooted to the ground, waited in vain for the ball to come to them. Taking the ball at full pace, the winger was able to reach the try line almost unopposed for the number 9 also to add the extras. Stortford struck back quickly, with Reuben Bird Tulloch cutting a great line to take the ball at full pace from Banks to burst clear and make the try-line out wide. The scrumhalf again converted from the touchline and it was the same player that added 7 points to his team's and his personal tally 14 minutes later, with a converted try, after he side-stepped the final defender to cross under the posts, after a Rotherham box kick bounced favourably for Nick Hankin, giving the fullback enough room to spot a gap in the home defence and burst through. The home side were not done, though and could easily have turned round all square from a period of sustained pressure, but had to settle for a single further converted try after 38 minutes, when an initial break by No 7, Zak Poole was taken on and finished off by his fellow forwards under the posts, following a couple of quick ruck balls. Dolly duly converted to leave Stortford with a 7 point lead at the break.

The visitors were caught cold after the restart, allowing Leake to repeat his running leap of the first half to take the opening dropout and

burst through the heart of Stortford's stationary pack to feed hooker, Jack Bergmanas, who went over untouched under the posts with Dolly inevitably levelling the scores. Worse was soon to come, as a badly missed tackle in midfield put the home side once more on the front foot and a good long pass found Leake in space on the outside for another easy try. Dolly again converted from the touchline to take Rotherham into the lead for the first time. They retained the initiative from the restart and the visitors were probably relieved, when the opposition settled for another 3 points from Dolly, after a penalty in front of the posts. Stortford finally began to gather themselves, but it took a mistake from the home side to bring the next score, when a poor defensive kick after 25 minutes cannoned into another Rotherham player, producing a scrum to the visitors for accidental offside. Totally against the balance of previous scrums, the Stortford eight put on a great drive and were awarded a penalty try to narrow the deficit to 3 points. It was soon Stortford's turn, though to show generosity, when a loose lobbed pass in midfield, as they threatened to run out of their own 22 was easily intercepted.

Rotherham reacted quickly and it took two great, last-ditch tackles from Rob Duff to prevent another try being conceded. Unfortunately, after the second one, he couldn't resist the temptation to play the ball on the ground, knocking it into touch, for which he was yellow-carded. The home side soon scored yet another try out wide, through second row, Dan Preston-Routledge, with Dolly, once again kicking a great conversion with 10 minutes left. Stortford hurled themselves back onto the attack, but were held out by some good home defence, until, with 2 or 3 minutes left, Bird-Tulloch found a weak spot out wide, wheeling right against the grain of play to round two potential tacklers to touch down. Not to be outdone by his fellow scrumhalf, Banks converted superbly from the touchline to bring his side once more within 3 points. Rotherham, though quickly regained the edge they had enjoyed for most of the half and were happy, shortly after to settle for another three points from the tee, effectively conceding the second bonus point to the battling Stortford side.

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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT: SEAN EDWARDS



Sean Edwards – Social Hand Grenade to Stortford Legend!

**Best team performance?** Hard as there have been so many. One that sticks in my mind is Cambridge away the on the 2nd of January 2016 when we just blew them away and all whilst still feeling a bit jaded after a good New Year's do with the lads.

**Biggest disappointment / regret?** I don't have many, maybe not joining the club straight from university or not being able to play down the sides. I was looking forward to my 3rd team debut at Inside centre

**Best Try?** There weren't many only 11 in total! A match winning push over scrum at Gravesend in Nat 3 in 2013 is probably up there. Big 8-man effort in awful conditions.

**Favourite away venue & why?** 100% Cambridge away. The support is just amazing from our fans and love beating them on their patch. Best feeling (good pub crawl on the bus back to boot)

**Toughest opposition / opponent?** Redruth away. Bloody horrible place. Never won there!

**Best player in the league?** On current form it has to be none other than Jos Linney. What a player! Everything I was not



**Funniest memory?** Again so many mostly involving Tom Banks and the dagger (You'll have to ask him). But I will always remember my big first away trip to Guernsey. From Popey stacking it in the hurdles to naked hotel fountain swimming followed by a competitive naked roman wrestling contest in the hotel lobby. And all with the poor hotel managing looking on in dismay!



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# CLUB STORTFORD

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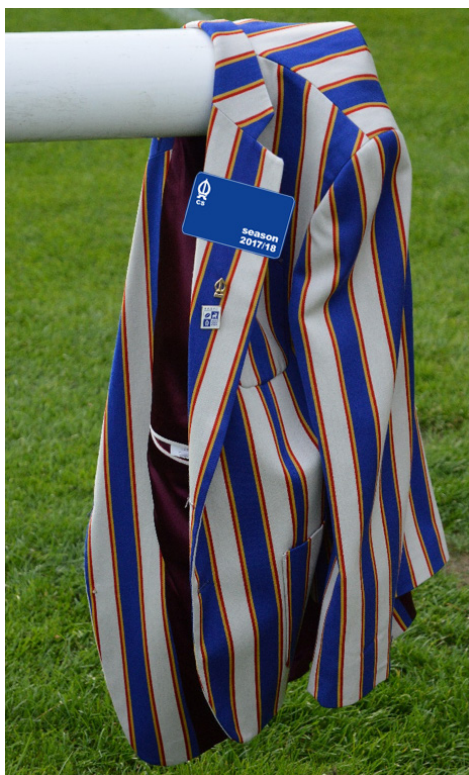
Working in conjunction with the 1stXV coaching team, CS provides funding for various expenditure beyond the financial resources of the main club.

Director of Rugby, Andy Long, has reiterated on a number of occasions the importance he attaches to the financial support given by Club Stortford. Quite simply, without it’s support, the team would not be able to perform at such currently high levels.

We continue to look for new members, to allow us to broaden and deepen the extent of our support.

We would urge you to consider joining Club Stortford. If you are interested and would like further information, please contact our secretary,

Russell Cattell 07778 101988



# THE OVAL CLUB



The Oval Club was formed in 1998 by some Bishop's Stortford Rugby Football Club members who wanted to find a way of raising funds to improve the playing facilities of the Club with the mission statement:

'To contribute towards promoting the highest possible standard of rugby throughout Bishop's Stortford Rugby Football Club'

The Oval Club is an autonomous body and entirely independent of the Rugby Club's operations. None of the Committee members hold a position or appointment in the Rugby Club's infrastructure. The Oval Club does not seek to influence decisions of the Rugby Club. It responds to requests for financial assistance for projects which have been approved by the Rugby Club's Executive Committee and which fall within its mission statement.

Funds are raised by monthly contributions from the Members two thirds of which are set aside for Rugby Club projects with the other third reserved for social events for Members.

To date The Oval Club has raised over a quarter of a million pounds with the Rugby Club receiving more than £150,000.

The Oval Club makes contributions to the Rugby Club for one off projects which are of long term value and not part of on-going budget requirements. Often these contributions have been made to the Club to enable it to secure grants from the Rugby Football Union and other sources.

So far, major contributions have been made towards the cost of:

- Flood lighting the main pitch,
- Floodlighting the back field pitches,
- Pitch repair and maintenance,
- Improvement of the playing surfaces, including the purchase of a verti-drainer,
- Drainage of the back field pitches,

- Rabbit fencing,
- Replacement of goal posts,
- Refurbishing the changing room showers,
- Purchase of physiotherapy equipment,
- Playing equipment and travel costs for all teams,
- Supporting youth and mini through tours, kit and additional playing facilities,
- Junior coaching courses.

On the social side there are annual Members' events. Currently these are:

- A self-supporting golf day at one of the local golf clubs,
- An Annual Dinner and Forum,
- A First Team Home lunch,
- A First Team Away coach trip and lunch.

Through its contributions The Oval Club plays a considerable part in helping the Rugby Club enhance its playing related facilities for the use and benefit of all members of the Club.

Anyone who is interested in joining The Oval Club should contact a member of the Committee below.

## The Oval Club Committee:

Robbie Kerr - Chairman  
John Robinson - Secretary  
John Power - Treasurer  
Mark Caulfield  
Mike Howatson

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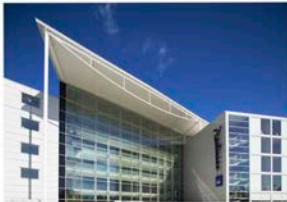
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# BSRFC Girls and Ladies Update and Thanks

Carly Poyser Manager BSRFC Girls & Ladies Teams

Here come the girls....

Looking to the future of the ladies rugby meant making sure we have girls rugby firmly established at the club and we have been working on this since December 2017 when 8 of the ladies team took their England RFU level 2 coaching award and we launched our girls' teams in January 2018.

With the girls teams, we are currently training as one mixed group, however we are going to be breaking off each age group with its own dedicated coaches and fixture secretaries, just like the boys youth teams which will be an exciting change this coming season and something we are looking forward too.

We have 4 age groups, U11, U13, U15 and U18 and this year we have 42 girls registered. with a growing number of girls looking to take up the sport after watching England Ladies secure a Grand Slam in the 6 Nations we are seeing numbers grow which is fantastic! Two of our girls took part in county trials this season and both were given places, so huge congratulations to Molly Green in U15s and Freya Keen in U18s, we are proud of your achievements and know you will continue to do well and you'll have lots of your Stortford team mates joining you soon!

Over the summer we will be running various fun fitness sessions for the girls, so please keep an eye on social media and pop along!

**Don't stop us now....we're having such a good time!**

The end of our third year and second league season is in sight and the BSRFC Ladies are going from strength to strength. With 35 registered ladies, we ended this season finishing 3rd and I could not be prouder of how far we have come as a team and as part of the club. With next season looking promising and with a possible move up to Women's NC 2 plans are already in place for summer fitness sessions, 7's festivals, social events and we have a ladies tour to Dublin to look forward to too!

The end of this season will see a change in how the ladies team is run as I step down from Managing and the team. The ladies will be run

the same as the clubs senior men's side are by, coaches and captain. Whilst it wasn't an easy decision to step away, and I will be there to support and guide, I do think this is a really exciting time for the club as the ladies team is ready for that next step and is certainly a permanent fixture at the club.

**Thank you!**

I would like to say a huge thank you to our ladies & girls coaches as without you we would not be in the position and as successful as we are. The extra roles such as social media, banking and social events could not take place without the ladies willing to take on those tasks, so thank you, you are truly appreciated.

Along with the fantastic support I have received in guidance from various members in the club a huge thanks must go to Colin Tilley for supporting the growth of women and girls rugby and not just laughing when I first approached him in 2016 with the idea!

Wishing you all a wonderful summer, see you next season!



# Bishop's Stortford Independent

www.bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk

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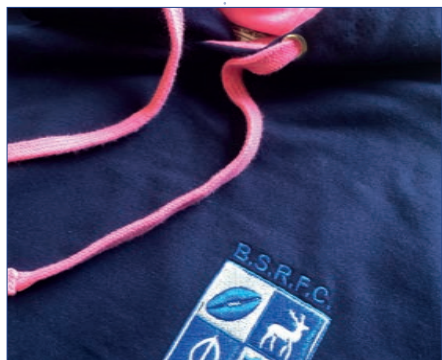
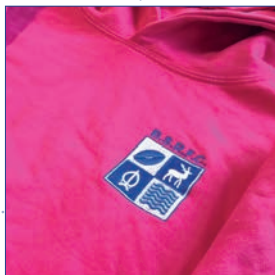


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OPENING TIMES:

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For further information please see the club website: [www.bsrfc.co.uk](http://www.bsrfc.co.uk) or contact **Bob Winnington** on **07988 646 384**.



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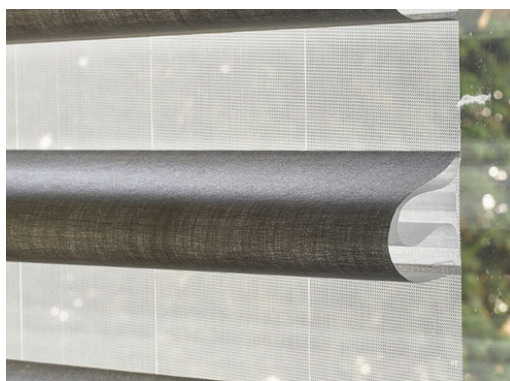


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# MATCH REPORT

BLACKHEATH 12 - 21 BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1ST XV



Early exchanges were fairly evenly balanced between two sides eager to play fast, open rugby. It was the visitors that made the first telling breakthrough in the 14th minute, when Nick Hankin exploited a two on one out wide to touch down after good handling through several phases had stretched the home defence. Tom Banks converted confidently. Blackheath, though swept straight back onto the attack from the restart and, with good handling from their backs and power from their forwards in the loose, soon had Stortford's defence on the rack. Some characteristically committed tackling held out the home backs, but two swift forward thrusts off the fringe of rucks were enough for their pack to force their way over for an unconverted try. Stortford's attack now seemed to lose momentum, with a number of handling errors preventing any rhythm being found.

As a result, Blackheath dominated possession for most of the rest of the half, providing an even tougher examination of the visitors' defence. This time it was able to hold firm, aided on occasions by handling errors from the opposition. No such help was on offer, though after half an hour, when Blackheath launched a lightning counter-attack, after a rare Stortford sortie into opposition territory broke down and it took some mighty scrambling by backs and forwards to prevent a second home try. Despite more tremendous Stortford tackling, Blackheath eventually forced a penalty under the posts but chose to take a quick tap and spun the ball wide, only for a knock on to be made under pressure. The battling visitors were able then to see out time until the break, with their noses just in front.

Stortford started the second half strongly and, for a while found some attacking rhythm to threaten the Blackheath line a couple of times, but foundered on the home side's own strong defence. A couple of penalties conceded by the visitors produced a major turning point after 10 minutes, as the second was kicked to touch close to their 5 metre line and the pack had no answer to a well organised driving maul, which quickly shifted the point of attack and drove at the line. The maul collapsed and Tom McCrone was considered

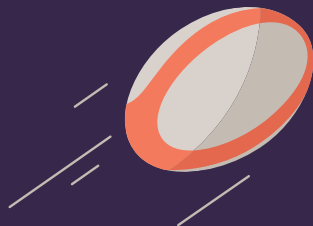
responsible, receiving a yellow card on top of the penalty try awarded by the referee, which took the scoreline to 12-7.

This heralded another period of intense pressure on Stortford territory by Blackheath's constantly threatening backs, but this was met by an even more intense defensive effort and the threat was repelled. Stortford fought back and, mounted their own period of pressure, after a scything run by Banks from a turnover inside their own half, well supported by Joss Linney took them to the Blackheath line. When, shortly afterwards, a penalty was won at a set scrum inside the Blackheath 22, the visitors' tails were lifted. Now under intense pressure themselves, Blackheath conceded a penalty under their posts, which Banks tapped and went for the line. He was stopped just short, but Baxter Wilson, part of an outstanding backrow effort throughout, was on hand to seize on the ball and drive over through the ruck with 20 minutes left. Banks' conversion established a two point lead and both sides threw themselves into the fray with renewed vigour. Blackheath's backs again looked threatening, but the match turned some 10 minutes later, when a home forward was shown a red card at a breakdown after a crucial Stortford turnover.

It took barely three minutes for the visitors to take advantage of the extra man, when a long pass from midfield created space out wide for Linney. The winger charged downfield, breaking the tackle of his opposite number and making more ground, before finding Reuben Bird-Tulloch with a pinpoint inside pass and the centre had just enough pace to make the line. Banks again added the extras and his side were able to see out the remaining minutes without any further score, once more demonstrating the magnificent defence on which this huge win was built and triggering great jubilation among the large band of travelling supporters.

# FORWARD.

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