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THIS WEEKS FEATURES:



**THANK YOU PERRY OLIVER -
A VERY DIFFICULT ACT TO FOLLOW....**

30 YEARS AT WESTBURY

**BSRFC LADIES:
NICKY WILKINS**

**IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
STEVE BALL**

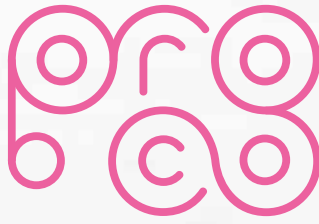
NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC V CAMBRIDGE RUFC

21 April 2018

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Members £5



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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

PERRY OLIVER



FOR THE FINAL TIME IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU HERE TODAY TO SILVER LEYS & IN PARTICULAR THE PLAYERS, COACHES, OFFICIALS & SUPPORTERS OF CAMBRIDGE RUFC.

With just the one game to go after today, this season must be once again adjudged a huge success. We anticipated that the challenge of third tier rugby would be fierce and so it has proved. But our stellar start to the campaign means that we've more than achieved our original aim of surviving and can now begin to look forward to another season at this level.

Last Saturday provided us once again with proof that playing teams from the lower reaches of the league at this time of the season isn't the advantage it perhaps should be! This is a personal view but I'm really not convinced that 'Melville's Rule' that allows National One clubs to link up with Premiership teams and play up to ten of their 'academy' players is good for the overall integrity of this league.

It might be good for the individual; it's undoubtedly handy for the Premiership club but in my opinion it really isn't beneficial to the long term health of the junior club and perhaps more fundamentally it adds bias to & thus distorts, National One as a competition. The old adage that league positions don't lie, simply doesn't apply to this league. Fortunately on this occasion it doesn't matter to us but it might in the not too distant future!

I know we're playing 'big boys' rugby now & we don't want to be seen as whingers but it can't be right that a team who only won three of their matches in the first half of the season, have now, with the trapdoor beckoning, won 5 of their last 6. Clubs who can't or don't want to enter such an

arrangement are clearly at a distinct disadvantage. That means clubs like our visitors today are being dragged into a relegation dog fight despite having so far amassed a highly respectable 12 wins & 62 points.

Right that's it I'm off my soapbox now.

Today marks my last home 'appearance' as President. It's been a huge honour to hold the title particularly in our first season in National One. There are 11 of us alive who can say we've done it and soon that will become 12. Club legend -Michael Coleman takes over for the next few seasons and I of course wish him every success in the role.

So that's it - in the last 2 seasons I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Rows of empty seats at Darlington. Our attack on fire off the shoulder of Exmouth. I watched our backs glitter in the dark near the Oxshott Gates. I've even witnessed Rosey buy a round. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in the Good Friday rain. Time to hand over.

I hope you enjoy the game and party afterwards. Soak up some sun over the summer & we'll see you all back here in September for another season of adventure at Level 3

COYB!

Perry Oliver
President

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DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

ANDY LONG



THE SEASON HAS FLOWN BY, IT DOESN'T SEEM A SECOND AGO WE WERE PREPARING FOR CALDY IN OUR OPENING GAME IN NATIONAL 1.

The season has been one of ups and downs, but ultimately we are satisfied with how we've gone in this first season. I say satisfied because at times we've been very good but on others we've fallen below the standards we set ourselves. We can't use the excuse of the new league anymore as we've proven ourselves more than capable of beating any of the sides in this league.

Today we welcome Cambridge to Silver Leys for our final home game of the season. Fixtures between our sides have always been close and edgy contests and I'm sure today won't disappoint. It's been great to travel to new grounds this season and test our ability against unfamiliar sides like Plymouth and Darlington, but it's also brilliant to have local derbies.

I'd like to thank all of you for your support this season especially the large groups who have travelled the length and breadth of the country cheering the team on.

Please get behind the team and make plenty of noise.

Onwards and Upwards

Longy



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NEWS FROM THE BLUES

WELCOME TO SILVER LEYS FOR THE FINAL TIME THIS YEAR! I HOPE YOU ARE IN FOR A CRACKING DAYS RUGBY AS WE ENTERTAIN OLD RIVALS CAMBRIDGE IN A BIG DOUBLE HEADER.

It isn't often that the boys really get to publicly thank everyone who puts the extra effort in to make Blues rugby what it is, so I will take my chance now.

Thanks to Julie North for getting the Blues this slot in the programme and making sure I send something in every week or so (believe me, it's a tough job). Thanks to Sylvi for all her Physio work!!! She is a bit of hero and the boys will really miss not having her pitch side on matchdays next season!!! Someone who we will miss on the pitch is captain fantastic Luke Webber. He is hanging up his boots after 7 years of Blues rugby which for a converted footballer isn't too bad! A big hole will be left, and let's hope for everybody's sake I don't end up playing flyhalf!!! Fairsy has once again shown massive commitment to coach us through a difficult season. In short, he is the rock of the squad. And finally, to our merry band of supporters, mainly mums and dads, that follow us home and away, iPads and all!!!!!! I will leave you with some words from Luke below.

Scants xx

"If I had to describe the season in one word. Frustrating..... From a Blues perspective, we never really replaced some big departures from last seasons squad and with the number of injuries across both squads this season, we've struggled to maintain our high standards. More to the squad is key, particularly in an increasingly competitive division.

The Blues need to rekindle their identity a bit and get back to enjoying their rugby again. It was clear on Saturday against Chinnor that if we turn up on

a game day with the right attitude, we produce some really good rugby. In my time in the Blues, we've never had to deal with such adversity in losing a lot of games in a season, so it was new territory this year for us all. The silver lining is that the squad now has that experience to take into next season.

I decided before the end of last season that this would be last year playing. I've had all year to think about it, so I'm confident that the time is right. We've done an awful lot with the Blues since I came into the setup with Hearn back in 2011, and I'm so proud of it. I've won plenty, made friends for life, and biggest of all, met my wife to be, Sylvi (even if it did take me 5 years to realise it!)

Enjoy the game today and fingers crossed for another photo like this next Sunday after our Herts Cup Final".



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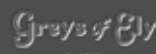
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30 YEARS AT WESTBURY

MAY 2018 MARKS THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF WESTBURY GARDEN ROOMS,

the Essex-based timber joinery and garden room company which has been a dedicated sponsor of Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club for some years. Westbury's link to BSRFC is rooted in the company's founder, Jonathan Hey, who played for the club – as best he could – during the 80s (you can probably tell by the hair – see photo). Although his playing days are now over, he remains a loyal fan and supporter of the club, with Jonathan's nephews - Mark McCraith (aka Ferret) and Tom McCraith (aka Beef) and Sam Prior (aka Bit Solutions) - following in this family tradition Jonathan keeps close ties with the rugby club, not only through his sponsorship but also through his continued support, as does Westbury's housekeeper, Pauline who tirelessly makes large vats of curry and chilli for training nights in order to keep all the guys at the club fed.



Westbury also works closely with BSRFC's excellent coach, Andy Long, who has extensively assisted the company as a team builder and motivator. Jonathan feels that Westbury is a strong fit for the club as a sponsor, since much of what he learnt on the rugby pitch at BSRFC (turns out he really did learn something) has been put into practice at Westbury.

"To create a successful business that can survive in a competitive marketplace, you need to be constantly driving forward, creating new boundaries and always trying to get the perfect team".

Jonathan Hey – Westbury Founder

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30 years on and the company is taking great strides in its growth, having doubled output over the last five years and with significant growth projections forecast for the next 5 years. From its humble origins as a one-man-band, Westbury now employs over 70+ permanent staff, a number which is continually growing, and in order to ensure the quality of the people it employs.

Westbury works closely with Investors in People, recently achieving Silver Accreditation – the hallmark of an outstanding place to work.

From little acorns...

Jonathan started out as a self-taught builder renovating houses working with Carl Green (aka Greenie) in the 1980s. With a sharp eye for detail and a constant drive for improvement (aka picky and awkward) the business has gone from strength to strength and is now the go-to name in the marketplace for joinery and garden rooms.

PERRY OLIVER

A VERY DIFFICULT ACT TO FOLLOW.....

I'M SURE WE'RE ALL MASSIVELY EXCITED AT THE PROSPECT OF ANOTHER TREMENDOUS GAME AGAINST OUR OLD FRIENDS AND RIVALS FROM CAMBRIDGE,

which will be our last home game of yet another excellent season for the boys, but of equal importance, we should also celebrate the last home game of someone else who exudes excellence, our president, Mr Perry Oliver.

Perry's BSRFC career started way back in 1996 when as a copper in the Met, he made his first appearance as hooker for the 5ths, no doubt persuaded by one of the many other police who also turned out for the club. Perry was no ordinary copper though, as he rose through the ranks to become an Inspector in the Tactical Support Group. And he proved to be no ordinary club member either. He took over as Captain of the fifths in 1998 and stayed as their Captain until 2009, which must stand as some sort of club record for longevity (or stupidity!) Under Perry's captaincy, the team became known by everyone as the 'Mighty Fifths', rarely losing, winning league and cup doubles, always fulfilling fixtures and importantly, supporting the other teams with players to make sure that everyone played rugby. However, whilst his team scored tries for fun, Perry became known as Captain Zero due to his total inability to score even a single try. His team enjoyed touring, notably to Munich, where Perry famously intervened in a night club fracas to help apprehend a group who were 'kicking off', whilst dressed as Dennis the Menace!

Obviously, someone with too much time on his hands, he qualified as a referee, for no other reason than the club were short of refs which is typical of the man. It was not unheard of, for Perry to ref 2 youth games on a Sunday if no-one else was available. He also headed up

the fireworks committee, which if the weather plays ball, is a huge fund raiser that benefits the whole club.

With his playing career coming to an end, Perry was parachuted into the role of club chairman, a massive job, and one he served with great distinction for 7 years. He rapidly made his mark with strong, decisive leadership, leading the club through some important changes with great energy and determination.

Upon his decision to stand down as Chairman, Perry was rightly offered the prestigious role of Club President, where he has continued to be an influential voice on all club matters, particularly on our community work and the one club ethos.

As is the long tradition with BSRFC President's, Perry has, for the last 2 years, reigned supreme with enormous dedication, hard work, passion and humour (well, apart from Chinnor!). He can also be belligerent, and very opinionated, -nothing wrong in any of that - but never be in any doubt that everything Perry has done, and believes in, is always with the club's best interest at heart. A very difficult act to follow.....





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TODAY'S OPPOSITION

CAMBRIDGE RUFC



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They have spent the majority of recent seasons playing at the various guises of Level 3 having won promotion at the end of the 2005 /06 season. Their highest ever finish was in the 2008/09 season when then finished runners up and were a mere 3 points away from promotion to the Championship!

They were though relegated in 2013 and played alongside us in our first season at level 4 on National Two south in 2014/15 . The next season they won that league and in doing so regained their position in National One.

Last season they finished 3rd from bottom but survived relegation when London Welsh went into administration.

Apart from their 1st team they have two other senior men's XV's.

Mini and Youth Rugby was started at Cambridge as far back as 1975 and today have one of the largest Mini & Youth sections in the country which includes Youth girl's teams.

Probably their two most famous ex-players are Dickie Jeeps (England and British Lions) and Alex Goode (Now Saracens & England) who played all of his junior rugby at Grantchester Road.

Recent 1st XV encounters

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18/01/14 Cambridge 32 Bishop's Stortford 36

13/09/14 Bishop's Stortford 32 Cambridge 19
20/12/14 Cambridge 33 Bishop's Stortford 32

12/09/15 Bishop's Stortford 18 Cambridge 10
02/01/16 Cambridge 12 Bishop's Stortford 29

16/12/17 Cambridge 22 Bishop's Stortford 21

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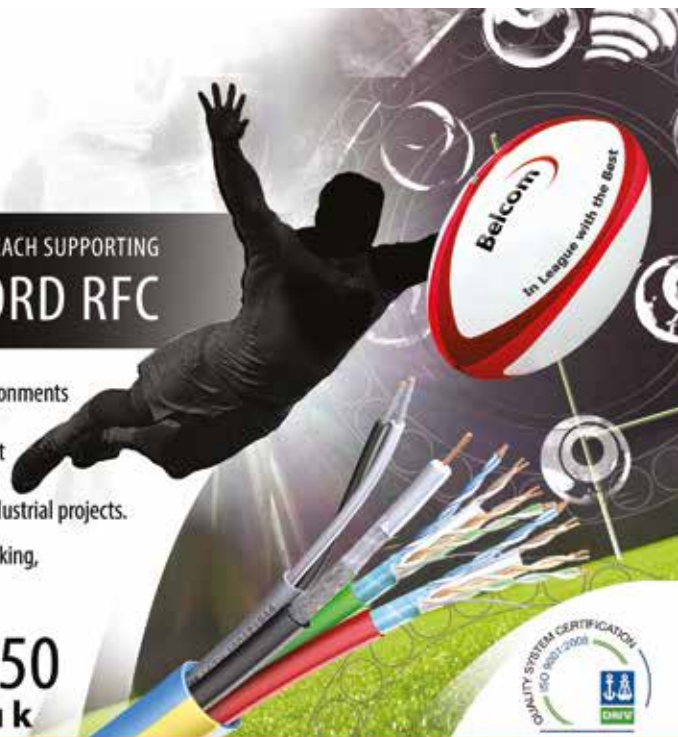
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RESULTS GRID, TABLE & FIXTURES

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

National League 1 Results Grid																
	Ampt&D	B'ham	BSRFC	B'heath	Caldy	Camb	Coventry	DarlMPK	Esher	Fyde	Hull Ion	L'boro S	O.Alb'n	O.Eltham	Plym'th	RossPk
Ampt&D		28 / 4	22-12	21-14	30-14	7-8	22-10	15-17	45-5	35-12	45-17	17-17	28-24	33-7	33-28	29-23
B'ham	21-21		25-27	14-55	13-11	14-13	17-41	17-31	20-20	36-21	38-24	36-10	34-13	28-32	16-20	21 / 4
BSRFC	22-41	10-15		15-5	49-26	21 / 4	10-36	22-22	24-17	71-24	35-31	43-12	18-14	34-20	17-36	20-22
B'heath	16-15	20-12	19-21		29-17	23-12	61-29	39-24	29-28	36-5	46-13	21-22	31-3	21 / 4	32-31	17-17
Caldy	22-39	21-20	28 / 4	42-18		16-20	12-55	8-10	15-7	37-19	27-26	71-14	21-0	32-24	17-34	33-3
Camb	20-8	15-22	22-21	16-27	6-15		7-40	15-25	22-32	28 / 4	29-19	9-14	50-26	28-29	16-14	50-23
Coventry	63-14	50-11	30-27	37-10	38-14	40-10		21 / 4	57-12	47-3	28 / 4	36-0	52-5	48-13	29-14	32-27
DarlMPK	21-15	42-7	41-35	33-19	32-26	35-18	0-42		18-16	40-7	26-0	33-23	52-24	36-21	33-31	36-7
Esher	29-29	27-32	17-28	28-19	21 / 4	10-13	26-61	33-26		50-12	38-27	23-25	24-8	39-14	29-33	32-17
Fyde	5-26	22-26	29-22	19-26	9-34	12-25	0-64	10-13	17-32		12-14	21 / 4	21-31	7-43	0-26	29-20
Hull Ion	21 / 4	13-29	14-21	32-21	29-24	27-21	20-63	15-27	43-28	33-14		15-15	26-36	27-11	33-14	27-26
L'boro S	14-36	32-33	32-14	34-34	26-31	21-28	24-31	28 / 4	49-38	21-0	58-29		37-18	21-25	28-49	37-15
O.Alb'n	35-35	19-38	36-17	6-32	43-25	7-54	19-21	33-31	29-15	15-16	50-28	34-19		15-24	21 / 4	0-58
O.Eltham	6-18	47-17	13-19	32-7	23-21	12-7	16-20	14-19	28 / 4	55-10	42-26	36-20	29-34		16-12	34-27
Plym'th	16-9	28-24	17-10	28 / 4	21-16	17-10	21-24	34-19	43-10	68-15	29-3	TBA	26-8	17-17		5 / 5
RossPk	21-31	30-26	24-31	6-25	36-32	10-7	13-43	38-26	44-37	31-15	36-37	49-14	28 / 4	29-36	26-26	
Round 16-30																
Round 1-15																

Season 2017-2018 NATIONAL 1

14th April Results

Home Team			Away Team
Darlington Mowden Park	40	7	Fylde
Amphill & District	22	10	Coventry
Caldy	42	18	Blackheath
Cambridge	22	32	Esher
Loughborough Students	32	14	Bishop`s Stortford
Old Elthamians	29	34	Old Albanian
Plymouth Albion	28	24	Birmingham Moseley
Rosslyn Park	36	37	Hull Ionians

Season 2017-2018 NATIONAL 1

21st April Fixtures

Home Team		Away Team
Coventry	Vs	Darlington Mowden Park
Birmingham Moseley	Vs	Rosslyn Park
Bishop`s Stortford	Vs	Cambridge
Blackheath	Vs	Old Elthamians
Esher	Vs	Caldy
Fylde	Vs	Loughborough Students
Hull Ionians	Vs	Amphill & District
Old Albanian	Vs	Plymouth Albion

National League 1

Club	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	PD	TBP	LBP	Ded	Pts
1) Coventry	28	26	0	2	1139	428	711	24	0	0	128
2) Darlington Mowden Park	28	21	1	6	768	584	184	18	2	0	106
3) Amphill and District	28	17	4	7	719	519	200	15	5	0	96
4) Plymouth Albion	26	16	2	8	705	490	215	15	6	0	89
5) Blackheath	28	16	2	10	731	584	147	13	3	0	84
6) Old Elthamians	28	15	1	12	691	651	40	13	4	0	79
7) Birmingham Moseley	28	13	2	13	641	715	-74	12	6	0	74
8) Bishop's Stortford	28	14	1	13	695	662	33	8	7	0	73
9) Caldý	28	12	0	16	680	673	7	11	8	0	67
10) Esher	28	9	2	17	702	799	-97	16	8	0	64
11) Cambridge	28	12	0	16	551	566	-15	6	8	0	62
12) Rosslyn Park	27	9	2	16	678	762	-84	14	7	0	61
13) Hull Ionians	28	10	1	17	648	861	-213	14	3	0	59
14) Loughborough Students	27	9	3	15	639	804	-165	9	5	0	56
15) Old Albanian	28	9	1	18	585	862	-277	11	4	0	53
16) Fylde	28	3	0	25	365	977	-612	3	4	0	19

THE TEAMS



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AND GLASS BOTTLES ONTO THE FIELD. REUSABLE, R
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BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1ST XV

BLUE AND WHITE

1	Will Roberts
2	Declan Caulfield
3	Sean Edwards
4	Jon George
5	Matt Tomlinson
6	James Apperley
7	Baxter Wilson
8	Steve Ball
9	Tom Banks
10	George Cullen
11	Ryan Hutler
12	Johnny Neville
13	Sam Winter ©
14	Rob Duff
15	Nick Hankin

REPLACEMENTS

16	James Palmer
17	Seb Brownhill
18	Rory Banks
19	Chris Smith
20	Sam Coleman

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Director of Rugby Andy Long | **Team Manager** Ed Merivale | **Physio** Paul Sharma
Coaches Danny Johnson, Richard Gill, Tom Coleman, Marcus Cattell

Referee Doctor Jonathan Cook
Assistant Referee 1 Jack Sutton
Assistant Referee 2 David Myers

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CAMBRIDGE RUFC

RED & YELLOW

	Harry Morley	1
	Ean Griffiths (Co-Capt)	2
	Matt Meek	3
	George Bretag-Norris	4
	Rob Conquest	5
	Josh Peters	6
	Louis Rawlings	7
	Jake McCloud	8
	Cameron Keenan	9
	Ben Penfold	10
	Ashely Elvers	11
	Matt Hema	12
	Archie Russell	13
	Mike Ayrton (Co-Capt)	14
	Vincent Hart	15

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REPLACEMENTS

	Alex Rayment	16
	Shane Moynihan	17
	Darren Fox	18
	Joe Green	19
	Jake Hennessey	20

Director of Rugby Ross Stewart | **1st XV Manager** Tracey Baxter
Head Physio Paul Carter



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LOUGHBOROUGH STUDENTS 32 BISHOP'S STORTFORD FIRST XV 14

STORTFORD ARE OUTFOUGHT AND OUTPLAYED BY A LOUGHBOROUGH SIDE, BOOSTED BY THE INCLUSION OF SEVERAL LEICESTER TIGERS ACADEMY PLAYERS BUT, ON THE DAY SUPERIOR IN ALMOST EVERY DEPARTMENT OF THE GAME.

In perfect, dry conditions, on Loughborough's 4G pitch, both sides started looking to play, quick, expansive rugby and, although the home team probably enjoyed a slight edge in the early exchanges, it was Stortford that opened the scoring, when Will Roberts reached through a ruck of players to place the ball on the line after 6 minutes. The position had been created through a well-drilled lineout, producing quick ball off the top, from which Sam Winter hit a flat pass to crash through the first line of defence. George Cullen converted well, but the good work was immediately undone, when Loughborough were allowed to take clean ball from their restart kick and drove through to score a very similar try to Stortford's with barely 2 more minutes elapsed. The conversion attempt went wide, as it did 17 minutes later, following a good backs' try to the home side, when a pinpoint crossfield kick/pass was taken cleanly by the right wing in space, who made ground down the flank before finding support inside. The rest of the half passed with much endeavour on both sides, but, with Loughborough's pack having a clear edge in the scrums, they once again looked the slightly more threatening.

The second half was much less even, with an increasingly lacklustre and often slipshod Stortford struggling to string any phases together under heavy pressure from Loughborough's aggressive defence. In marked contrast, when the home side attacked they always looked threatening. Their cause was greatly helped by a flying start, when they were awarded a penalty in front of goal, having taken yet another clean drop out ball of their own and flyhalf, Owen Waters kicked the three points. The home side's tails were up and they added a converted try after 9 minutes of the half, when centre Oskar Hirskeyi-Douglas scythed through the centre of Stortford's defence from some 20 metres out, with barely a hand laid on him.

Stortford did then manage briefly to threaten with a couple of individual breaks but, on each occasion an error led to the ball being turned over. A golden opportunity arose for the visitors, when home No 8, Freddie Tuilagi was yellow-carded for a high tackle after 20 minutes but, far from capitalising on this advantage, they proceeded to concede another try 6 minutes later. Loughborough were now attacking with increased confidence and fluency but, ironically the score came from a scrappy loose ball, which they simply wanted more than the defenders and, having recovered the ball, quick hands and quick feet saw winger, Alex Glashon in for an unconverted try out wide on 28 minutes.

Following personnel changes in the front rows, Stortford now were enjoying a decided advantage at scrum time and it was particularly disappointing, therefore, to see Loughborough scramble ball back from a rapidly retreating scrum in their own half to set the first receiver galloping into acres of space, where a well-judged rolling kick was gathered by a supporting player for a simple try, this time well converted by Waters on 37 minutes. With time running out, Stortford finally managed to string a handful of phases together, taking a quickly tapped penalty to set Dec Caulfield and Matt Tomlinson crashing forward and, when the ball was moved quickly from the breakdown, Joss Linney, supporting in the centre from the blindside wing was able to exploit the stretched defence to burst between two defenders for a consolation try, converted by Cullen.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT: STEVE BALL



‘YOU LIVE WHERE?’ IS PROBABLY THE QUESTION I GET ASKED MOST AT SILVER LEYS, FOLLOWED BY ‘WHY DON’T YOU PLAY FOR SOMEONE CLOSER TO HOME?’

Both are understandable questions, an average of 400 miles a week getting to and from training and games certainly wouldn’t be for everyone, but I honestly wouldn’t change it. From the moment I spoke to Popey and he explained he had taken over at an ambitious club with a great brand of rugby and an even better culture I knew it was going to be for me, he had thought so too hence the phone call and although I had to bid my time and fight my way into an extremely tight knit group of players which at that time wasn’t used to guys coming in from outside (with a few notable exceptions), I have been able to become a consistent member of the side. To date I’ve played just over 160 games for the first team in my 5 and a half seasons here and in that time I’ve been a part of some great moments in the clubs history, achieving two promotions in a short period of time whilst at the same time being able to retain our core values as a team and a club is no mean feat and highlights what to me is the key ingredient to the continued success and growth of our club, the people.

There are examples of these people everywhere you look at the club; from the lads playing their trade in the first team who started off as minis and bleed blue, the ex-players (Michael Coleman, Rob Faiers, Tom Coleman et al) all passing their knowledge on as coaches, to the various volunteers and club officials who keep the ship running. This ‘one club’ ethos is something lots of clubs now talk about but few in reality achieve, sure as a club we have had to expand our horizons and look to be more professional in the way we approach our first team rugby especially but its always done with an eye on that one club ethos.

My own sponsors Croucher Needham are a perfect example of this- not only do they sponsor me but also the clubs 5th team side. Without the genuine support of local businesses and local people clubs like ours often lose their way even when they are successful on the pitch and can end up in a vicious cycle which we have all seen end in sadness at many a club up and down the country.

I’ve played with some great players in my time here the first side that I was regularly a part of consisted of the likes of Gilly, Mark, TC, Marcus and Sam Winter to name just a few, all guys who I’ve been lucky to play with and who’ve become great friends. I mentioned at the start that the team I joined wasn’t overly accustomed to welcoming in ‘outsiders’ but another good example of how the club has grown in a positive fashion is the way that we now welcome new players, its probably only a few each season but they all seem to make their mark both on and off the field think; Hanks, JG, Johnny Neville, Baxter, Dan Elsom and this year Chris Smith. Additions like these have been key to our continued success along with the stream of Blues youngsters like James Apperley and Alex Patton who continue to break into the first team.

I’m very lucky to have the support of my family when it comes to my rugby commitments especially my mum (Sally), Dad (Chris) and wife Emma- without whom I simply wouldn’t be able to play the game I love. Emma and I have just welcomed our first child- Isabella and although the added responsibility will make the commitment even harder next year I have a burning desire for her to see me play in the blue and white so I may add some mileage to the clock yet! Up the Stort!





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NOW IN ITS FIFTH SEASON, CLUB STORTFORD WAS SET UP BY A SMALL WORKING PARTY, TO SUPPORT THE 1STXV SQUAD AFTER PROMOTION TO NATIONAL LEAGUE RUGBY IN 2013/14. OUR AIM IS “TO ENSURE BISHOP’S STORTFORD RFC HAS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE IN NATIONAL LEAGUE RUGBY AND CONTINUES TO NURTURE HOME GROWN TALENT.”

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 A GROUP OF BSRFC MEMBERS WHO GOT TOGETHER TO TRY TO FIND A WAY OF RAISING FUNDS TO HELP THE PLAYING SIDE OF THE CLUB WITHOUT HAVING TO INCREASE DEBT OR UTILISE RESERVES. TO THIS END THE OVAL CLUB WAS FOUNDED WITH THE FOLLOWING 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 and purposes which have been approved by the Rugby Club's Executive Committee and which fall within its mission statement above.

Of the funds raised two thirds is set aside for the Rugby Club the other third is reserved to fund social events for Members.

To date the Oval Club has raised over £225,000 and the Rugby Club has received in excess of £138,000.

In line with its mission statement The Oval Club makes contributions for one off projects and purposes which are of long term value to the Rugby Club and not part of on-going budget requirements. Invariably contributions have been made to the Club to enable them to secure grants from the RFU and other sources.

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

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

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

On the social side there are several Members' events which take place throughout each year for. 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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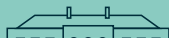
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BSRFC Ladies XV -

Q&A with Nikky Wilkins, Captain

This year was the first time BSRFC has entered a ladies team into a league, what does the future hold for the Ladies XV in the coming season?

The future for BSRFC ladies looks really strong. The team has developed so well over the 2017/18 season. The skill level has increased amazingly as well as the confidence of individuals and the belief that this Ladies XV can travel through the leagues and gain experience that will keep developing the bond between us.

This coming season is going to be exciting – having watched and witnessed the team play matches against a variety of standards they are able to adapt and overcome, which will set us in a good place to attack the upcoming season with the tenacity we already have. We still have things to learn and areas to develop but this will be a welcomed challenge by everyone in the team.



You've played for Harlow, Essex and Eastern Counties over the years. From an experienced player's opinion, how has the womens' game developed over this short time?

Having played rugby for 18 years now – the game has changed so much over this time. The best thing that has happened to women's rugby is its coverage. It is becoming much more popular which is enabling more opportunities to girls and women around the world. Schools are also bringing girls' rugby into lessons, which allows every girl the chance to give it a go. I wish had been born a bit later – to have had the opportunities that are there now would simply be unreal. Even if females don't fancy playing the opportunities to be part of the sport are much bigger, female referees are more predominant in all areas.

Other versions of the sport including 7s, have made a huge difference to the game. It promotes different

aspects of the game and allows people to travel the world watching it. It has been a big step watching it in the Olympics and the Commonwealth games. (It is a sport that is now acceptable to play – the stigma and stereotypes surrounding womens' rugby are rapidly fading out).

You've taught the ladies a lot over the season. Have you learnt anything from any of the new players?

I've been reintroduced to the 'fun' that is rugby. I had lost a lot of that aspect from my last club and this team have brought that back. They have shown how committed they all are to training and matches as well as the extras in fitness nights and socials which has given me a reason to get the boots out and be 'all in' with this team. The new players each bring something unique to the team – they are great fun and a force to be reckoned with.

Are there still a few years left in those legs?

This question has made me laugh out loud! I think there are a few years left. I've got a lot of areas that I personally need to work on – which the summer will help with.

The younger players coming through are making me realise how old and long I've been playing rugby for. I am definitely slowing down! I'm more concerned about the joints that need continuous strapping to keep my body in one piece. I may need to take a share out in the companies selling strapping and electrical tape. I have to keep going so that my little girl (BSRFC Watergirl) and I may one day run onto the pitch together for the same team!

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the club website: www.bsrfc.co.uk
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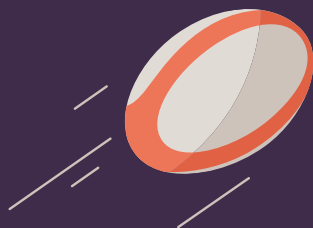
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1 Match. The day kicks off with a Q&A in the 1st XV Changing Room, followed by Training, Games & Warm up Sessions with the Coaches and Players. They then form the "Players Tunnel" alongside the "Blazers" to welcome both the opposition and the 1st XV onto the pitch before the game. Their experience culminates with Post Match Photos alongside the Players.



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