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OFFICIAL MATCH PROGRAMME

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Mark McCraith

MATCH REPORT

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1ST XV
VS PLYMOUTH ALBION

NEWS FROM 'TEAM REHAB'

INJURY UPDATES



NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC V AMPHILL & DISTRICT RFC

27th October 2018

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

MICK COLEMAN



I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone visiting Silver Leys today, especially to officials, players and supporters from Ampthill, who provide today's opposition to both the First's and the Blues. I've no doubt both teams are massively looking forward to going into battle against each other once again, as many of our previous encounters have been crackers, and also seem to have that extra bit of spice added that local(?) encounters seem to bring.

Since my last programme notes, things haven't gone too well on the field with the boys suffering two narrow losses against Esher at home and a somewhat distressing last minute loss away at Plymouth. However, we have managed to secure 3 bonus points which has pushed us one place up the table, and again emphasises just how tight this league is. Ampthill have moved a few places above us, following a big win against Cinderford last week.

The huge injury list we are currently experiencing, not only impacts on the First team, but also significantly affects the Blues. Whilst their results have suffered with two losses and a cancellation in the last three weeks, the level of performance has been very encouraging from such a young, inexperienced side. Try to spend some of this afternoon cheering on the Blues and I'm confident you'll see what I mean!

Congratulations to the Colts who won their first National cup game last week against Saracens Amateurs, and now have a home game in Round 2 scheduled for the 18th November. Also well done to our ladies who chalked up their third win of the season.

And finally, a warm welcome to Rob Smith and Sarah Moores of Forward Corporate Finance who are today's match day sponsors.



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DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

ANDY LONG



It's fair to say the last two weeks have been incredibly frustrating, in both games we've seen victory slip away in the last few minutes. As a group we have to learn the lessons and learn them quickly as the games keep coming thick and fast.

It's in times like we find ourselves in right now when we need to dig deep, continue to work hard and stay true to our rugby philosophy. We've seen enough really good moments to know we're heading in the right direction, small moments win games and right now we're not winning those.

I've been fortunate enough this week to visit Oviedo in Northern Spain, a wonderful rugged place. I spent time with Rugby Oviedo and visited local schools helping them to understand the values of rugby and how they are consistent with those needed in general life; discipline, team work and respect.

It was a wonderful experience which made me feel incredibly grateful for the opportunities I've had and the experience I've gained over the years.

Enjoy the game

Longy



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Annual Mini's Festival

Sunday morning brought the annual Mini's festival with 700+ kids turning up from all over Essex and Hertfordshire.

The current under 9's coaches & parents had the pleasure of organising the event and the whole day ran like clockwork, despite having the odd team turning up who hadn't registered, some quick re-arranging ensured all got plenty of rugby. Not even the car park ground to a halt or the local roads get gridlocked!

The early mist soon cleared into a glorious autumn day and there was lots of great rugby being played from the under 7's at their first "home" festival up to the under 12's getting very competitive with scoring being introduced at this age group. In the end medals, certificates and hot dogs concluded what was a great day.

The army of volunteers from coaches, pitch marshals, registration tent, time keepers, barbeque, bar etc etc etc created a great atmosphere and we are grateful for those parents who helped out even if their child wasn't playing. A real sense of #OneClub on show.

A special mention to Niall McCrae (Chairman of the Minis), the under 9's and all those on the organising committee for the endless hours put



into, in my eyes the best Mini festival that we have attended. Biased but true.

A huge thank you needs to go to the main sponsors of the festival, Russell Properties.

We look forward to next year when the current under 8's will undoubtedly look to put on an equally great festival.

Chris Longman



THE PLAYERS

BSRFC 1'S XV 2017/18



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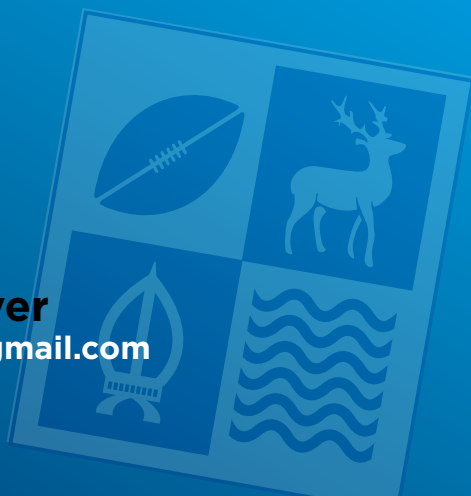
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NEWS FROM THE BLUES

RICHMOND VIKING'S 45-7 BISHOP'S STORTFORD BLUES

With the season now settled, and form lines well established, the task that faced the Blues last weekend was never going to be easy. That fact, coupled with an injury list impacting on both squads only compounded the challenge set for these emerging talents.

With Jack Scantlebury back at the helm having been on first XV duty, there was a noticeable energy to the side, which made for an excellent start in this encounter. Etherington, Law and Mak made early inroads into the Richmond half, only for the much larger team to scramble well and foil attacks on the Richmond line.

Despite early advances it was Richmond who capitalised, when a stray pass was intercepted by the speedy Richmond 11 to go from his own 10 metre line to score a try against the run of play.

This did not trouble the spirits of the Blues, who with workmanlike intent went straight back into the Richmond half, pressing time

and time again only for Richmond to clear the possession back to Stortford. Inspired runs by Martin, and Sam Coleman pushed the hosts back, but again a stray pass out wide gave another breakaway try, making the half time score 14-0 in Richmond's favour.

The second half saw a more clinical approach from Richmond, who made very good use of their possession to extend their lead to 45-0, with the threat of putting further damage on the score board with 10 minutes to go.

But as previously mentioned, this young Blues side has champion like character, and a determined last ten minutes saw them get a well-deserved try through Mikey Gallagher.

Whilst the score line finished hugely in the favour of Richmond, the Blues can take a massive amount of pride in how they remained committed and competitive in every contest of the game.





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The playing of the game of rugby in Ampthill can be traced back as far as 1881. The current club was reformed after WWII in 1950. They have played at their Dillingham Park ground since 1960.

They were elevated to National One at the end of the 2014-15 season when of course they defeated us in a promotion play-off, 19-10.

One of the biggest clubs in Bedfordshire they boast no fewer than six senior men's teams, a Ladies team and a massive Mini & Youth section covering all age groups from U6 to Colts.

This is then their 4th consecutive season at level 3 and indeed they have and very quickly established themselves as one of the 'teams to beat' at this level. In the last two seasons they have finished a highly commendable 3rd & 4th respectively. Last season they did the double over us, winning 22-41 here, before repeating the trick 22-12 in January back at Dillingham Park.

So far this season they have won four & lost four but worryingly last Saturday demolished Cinderford 54-10 at home. So perhaps they are getting back to their normal competitive selves.





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RESULTS GRID, TABLE & FIXTURES

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

FIXTURE SCHEDULE & RESULTS GRID 2018-19

	Ampt	Bkth	Bir M	BSRFC	Caldy	Camb	Chin	Cind	DMP	Esher	L'boro	OE's	Plym A	RossPk	Roth	Sale	
Ampt		33-22	8.12	16.02	2.02	6-13	22.12	54-10	24.11	35-20	43-34	9.03	12.01	30.03	3.11	13.04	
Bckth	19.01		30-26	30.03	16.02	2.02	8.12	9.03	15-0	27.04	24.11	10-21	5.01	23-15	13.04	3.11	
Bir M	6.04	9.02		5.01	27.04	15.12	17.11	23-24	36-41	23.03	2.03	19.01	1.12	2.02	28-22	27.10	
BSRFC	27.10	1.12	52-8		17.11	2.03	26.01	23.03	23-26	26-29	57-25	13.04	9.02	22.12	8.12	12.01	
Caldy	19-18	27.10	30-27	9.03		9.02	12.01	3.11	8.12	31-29	43-19	30.03	26.01	13.04	24.11	22.12	
Camb	26.01	24-43	13.04	3.11	22-27		20-22	16.02	30.03	12.01	22.12	24.11	32-26	8.12	9.03	36-36	
Chin	38-33	6.04	9.03	6-13	24-27	5.01		19.01	16.02	15.12	30.03	20-20	27.04	3.11	2.02	24.11	
Cind	9.02	17.11	22.12	24.11	2.03	27.10	21-26		13.04	26.01	12.01	8.12	15-12	29-36	30.03	40-31	
DMP	23.03	12.01	26.01	27.04	6.04	1.12	27.10	15.12		2.03	9.02	5.01	17.11	34-33	42-19	29-31	
Esher	5.01	7-36	24.11	2.02	19.01	17-10	13.04	10-7	3.11		8.12	16.02	21-24	9.03	15-45	30.03	
L'boro	27.04	23.03	3.11	19.01	5.01	14-20	1.12	8-39	39-27	6.04		2.02	15.12	16.02	5-38	9.03	
OE's	17.11	22.12	38-27	15.12	1.12	23.03	9.02	6.04	31-22	27.10	48-24		2.03	12.01	27.04	26.01	
Plym A	17-5	20-21	30.03	23-19	24-14	19.01	11-26	2.02	9.03	22.12	13.04	3.11		24.11	16.02	8.12	
RossPk	1.12	26.01	27-22	25-17	15.12	6.04	2.03	27.04	19.01	17.11	27.10	37-24	23.03		5.01	9.02	
Roth	2.03	15.12	12.01	6.04	23.03	17.11	32-26	1.12	22.12	9.02	26.01	33-34	27.10	29-12		32-27	
Sale	15.12	2.03	16.02	22-8	26-24	27.04	23.03	5.01	2.02	1.12	17.11	42-38	6.04	23-31	19.01		
																ROUNDS 16-30	
																ROUNDS 1 to 15	

Season 2018/2019 NATIONAL 1

Results From 20th October

Home Team		Away Team
Ampthill	54-10	Cinderford
Cambridge	22-27	Caldy
Esher	15-45	Rotherham
Chinnor	20-20	Old Elthamians
Loughborough Students	39-27	Darlington Mowden Park
Sale FC	23-31	Rosslyn Park
Plymouth Albion	23-19	Bishop's Stortford
Blackheath	29-27	Birmingham Moseley

Season 2018/2019 NATIONAL 1

Fixtures for 27th October

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

National League 1 - 2018/19

Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points
Caldy	8	6	0	2	215	189	26	4	1	29
Old Elthamians	8	5	1	2	254	215	39	5	1	28
Blackheath	8	6	0	2	200	146	54	3	0	27
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Rosslyn Park	8	5	0	3	216	201	15	5	1	26
Chinnor	8	4	1	3	188	177	11	4	3	25
Ampthill & District	8	4	0	4	227	173	54	5	3	24
Sale FC	8	4	1	3	238	238	0	4	1	23
Darlington Mowden Park	8	4	0	4	221	227	-6	6	1	23
Plymouth Albion	8	4	0	4	157	153	4	3	3	22
Cinderford	8	4	0	4	185	200	-15	3	3	22
Cambridge	8	3	1	4	177	191	-14	2	3	19
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MATCH REPORT



Plymouth Albion 23 Bishop's Stortford 19

A highly combative Stortford performance, despite losing Seb Brownhill during the first half, in the end failed to bring its just desserts, as the home side's forward dominance in the last 10 minutes proved decisive. The game was nip and tuck throughout and in the end it was probably Plymouth's stout defence against our clearly superior backs that made the difference, allowing the advantage they had at set pieces eventually to carry the day.

Stortford mistakes allowed the home side to dominate early territory and possession and it was only Stortford's own dogged defence that limited the damage after 10 minutes to 2 penalty goals to Matt Shepherd. After 17 minutes, though the deficit was halved, when Manu Vunipola knocked over a penalty from the breakdown at which Brownhill's injury occurred. With Tom McCrone on for Brownhill, two successive penalties at scrums went Stortford's way and a third penalty for a breakdown offence, after Stortford opted to go for touch allowed Vunipola to level the scores with 7 minutes of the half left.

After Plymouth had missed an eminently kickable penalty a couple of minutes later, it was Stortford's turn to win a decisive turnover after a counter-ruck of which the powerful Plymouth back row would have been proud. This provided the platform for the best passage of rugby in the whole game, as the visitors went through several phases, swinging the ball first right then left allowing Rob Duff and Dec Caulfield to make two telling breaks, with the latter finding Mark McCraith in close support to gallop over for a try from some 20 yards out with only 3 or 4 minutes to go to half time. An excellent conversion from Vunipola stretched the lead to 7 points but in the 5 or 6 minutes that the ref allowed the game to go on, Stortford concede a number of penalties, eventually allowing the home side to go for touch close to the visitors' line.

Although Plymouth's previously dominant lineout drive was on this occasion stopped well by Stortford, a quick pass from the base was all that was needed to allow No 12, Connor Eastgate to step around an exposed defender to touchdown

under the posts, allowing Shepherd to level the scores immediately before the halftime whistle blew. 13-13 at halftime was probably a fair reflection of the game, with Plymouth's territorial and possession advantages balanced out by the greater threat that Stortford had posed on the few occasions they won good ball.

The second half continued in similar vein, with Stortford conceding a soft breakdown penalty shortly after the restart to allow Shepherd to nudge his side into another 3 point lead after only 2 minutes, followed by some more sustained forward pressure on the Stortford 22. The visitors countered, though and eventually forced a penalty for a high tackle in front of the Plymouth posts, with Vunipola making no mistake from the tee in levelling the scores. Stortford then took advantage of a botched attempt by Plymouth to clear a box kick from the visitors to launch another series of attacks on the home line but, eventually had to settle for another 3 points from Vunipola's boot, for an offside penalty. At the death, unfortunately from Stortford's point of view, Plymouth's bigger pack found an extra gear and looked for all the world as if they would scrummage their way to victory, after demolishing two successive Stortford scrums and the winning penalties at three successive put-ins of their own.

Finally, though – and somewhat miraculously, it seemed – Stortford produced a solid scrum and forced the home side to run the ball. Another penalty was eventually conceded, as Plymouth continued to press, but, with time running out, they went for touch and Stortford again rallied by winning the lineout. Unfortunately, though the now very young visitors' pack lacked the ability to protect the ball at the resultant maul and conceded another scrum. This, almost inevitably produced a further penalty to Plymouth and this time, their pack proved unstoppable, as they won clean lineout ball and drove over the line for a try to replacement hooker, Paul Davis. Shepherd's difficult conversion stretched the lead beyond a penalty goal and, with time up, Stortford's valiant final fling of the dice to try and register a winning try foundered with a knock-on close to the Plymouth 22.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

Mark McCraith

The final curtain

It will come as no surprise to many, but this is my final season playing for Bishop's Stortford RFC. It's a day I've dreaded coming, as when you start out, it seems so far away. However, it's definitely the right time to finish, my body has been dropping subtle hints for a couple of seasons now that it really is time.

I can safely say I never thought when I started out that I would play over 300 games for my home club, winning 2 national league promotions, the Herts County Cup and captaining the 1st XV team for 3 years. It was more than I ever expected or believed was possible.

I played my first game with some amazing players, legends of the club when I was playing mini rugby like Paul Woodford, Dom Haysom and Rob Faiers. I feel incredibly privileged to have played with that era of Stortford player as they finished their careers and also get to play with the current generation. Obviously, the difference between then and now is night and day, both on and off the pitch, but the enjoyment has always been the same. It's great that each year the club seems to thrive, and seems to be heading in the right direction as it nears its Centenary year, preparing for another hundred, and I look forward to supporting the teams in the future.

I'll take a lot of pride in the fact that I was playing when many of the current team made their debuts, the likes of Sam Winter at full back in terrible conditions at Dorking, Dec coming from a school match to play Tring at home and Tom Banks throwing up over me on his first away trip after just one beer!

I've been lucky enough to play with some of my close friends at the club over the years like Tom, Marcus, Bally, Gilly to name but a few. As well as my brother and cousin.

Thank you to all those that have and continue to support the team and me over the years, the backing we receive for each match is amazing, both home and away. I'll definitely miss it and it will take some getting used to being the other side of the fence.

Before this starts to sound too much like an Oscar acceptance speech I do need to thank my parents for getting me involved in the club aged 6, and amazingly they still come and support me all these years on.

My wife Stacey, who has put up with my mad obsession with rugby, and supported me when I've been injured and encouraged me to keep going. It's not easy when as players we are away a lot, either training or on match days.

Obviously, it's still early in this season, so I'm determined to finish strongly, and help the team achieve our goals, so hopefully you'll see me a bit more before the end of the season.

Finally, a big thank you to my sponsor this year, **Forward Corporate Finance** and Rob for their support, helping me play one final season for this great club.

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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 established in 1998 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 autonomous and entirely independent of BSRFC’s financial and administrative functions. Members of the Oval Club contribute each month by standing order to raise funds to support one off projects within the Rugby Club which should be of benefit to the whole club and to provide social events for Oval Club members.

Since its inception The Oval Club has contributed more than £150,000 towards the cost of BSRFC projects such as:

- Drainage and floodlighting of the No 1 and back pitches
- Improvement and maintenance of all playing surfaces
- Protective fencing around back pitches
- Funding the cost of the use of additional playing surfaces
- Supporting Minis and Youth sections
- Refurbishment of changing rooms and showers

Regular social events are organised for and enjoyed by Oval Club members each year.

The Oval Club has played a considerable part in donating much needed funds to enable BSRFC to provide facilities and to enhance its reputation in the local and rugby communities.

Membership of the Oval Club is currently 76 and any member of BSRFC who is interested in joining the Oval Club should contact the Secretary, John Robinson, via jbr@talktalk.net



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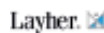
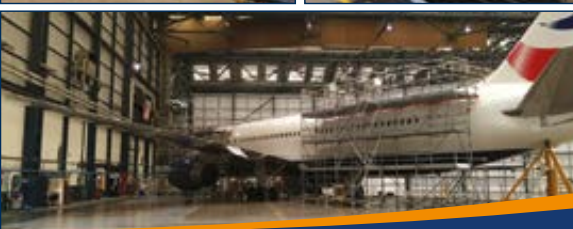
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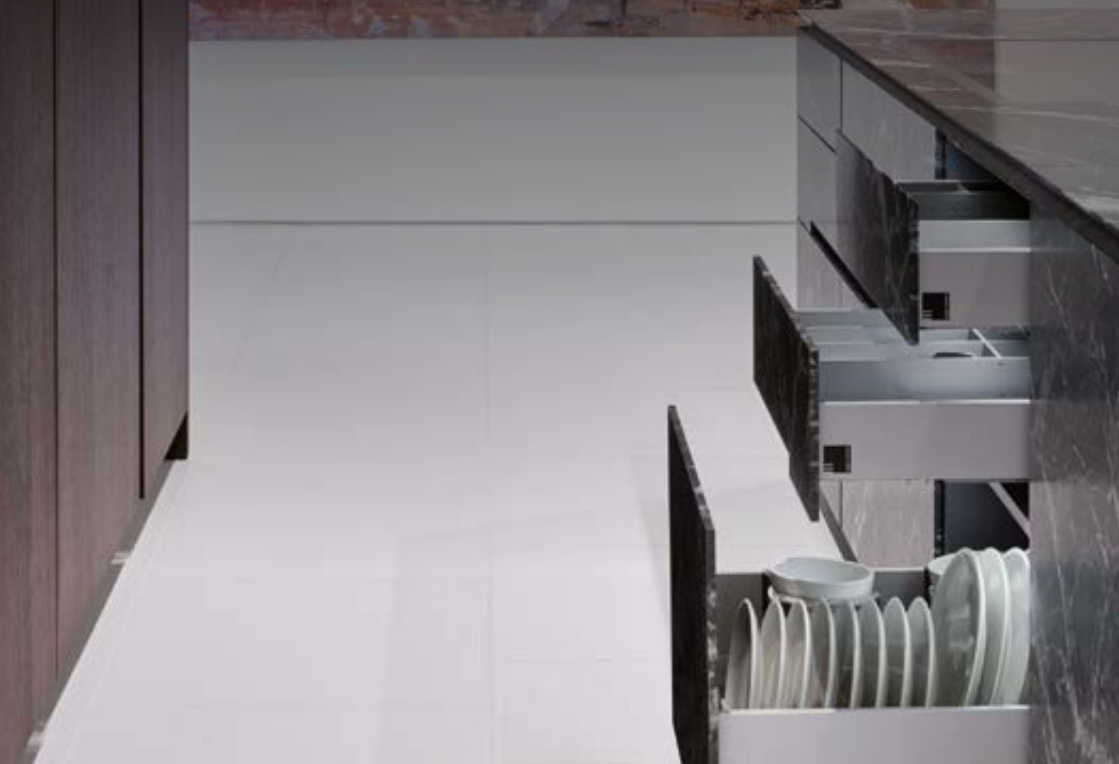


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BSRFC Girls and Ladies Update

By Nikky Wilkins

BSRFC Ladies travelled to Fullarians RFC in Watford for their 3rd game of the season. After a long break and postponed match they were more than ready to get on the pitch.

Fullarians are a fairly new team, and this is their first league season, however it was clear to see they were keen for a home win and their determination if not experience shone through.

With Fullarians opening the scoresheet with a try, the BSRFC Ladies came back with big hits and runs meaning 7 tries and 2 conversions to see their third game of the season finish like the first 2 with a win!

With new player Megan Lines receiving Back of the Match and Charlie Parker receiving Forward of the Match & her first try it was a great afternoon of Rugby in the sun!

The ladies are always looking for new players and no experience is necessary. With girls (10+) and ladies teams (18+) growing at the club why not pop down on a Tuesday evening and give rugby a try!

Contact Carly Poyser on 07738591232 / bsrfcladies@gmail.com

A Cheeky Christmas Present

You might think it's a little early to start thinking about Christmas (but probably not, unless you're a last-minute-Christmas-Eve-present-buyer), but the BSRFC Ladies are incredibly pleased to announce that you will very shortly be able to buy our BRAND NEW cheeky calendar.

On sale soon, the calendars will be available in desk or wall calendar formats and sold online and through the club shop. At £10 each (plus postage if bought online) these calendars are in aid of The Eve Appeal, a charity which raises awareness and funds ground-breaking awareness into the five gynaecological cancers.

With the aim of raising as much money as we possibly can for this charity, our ladies stood strongly for body positivity and empowering as many women as we could.

We obviously wouldn't have been able to do this without our sponsors, Charterhouse Voice and Data, HR Go, and Nockolds Solicitors, and of course, the wonderful Andy Todd (who was very professional, and is probably owed quite a few apologies from the ladies who took part...).

We owe a very special thanks to Amwell Electrical who VERY kindly paid for the printing of the calendar. Their generosity means that we are able to donate 100% of all profits to The Eve Appeal – make sure to keep an eye out for when they go on sale!



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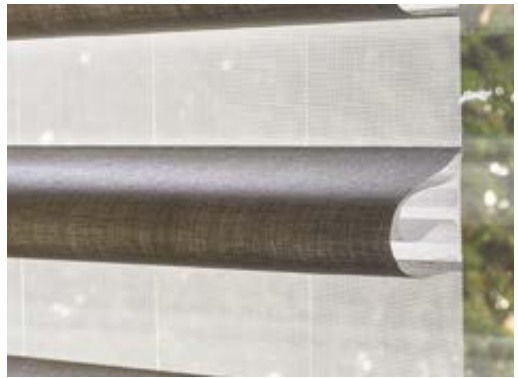


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Latest news from 'Team Rehab'

Baxter Wilson

Baxter fractured his ankle during the Canterbury pre-season game. He underwent an operation to unite the bone & now 9 weeks following surgery he is doing well. His cast is off and he is walking unaided. He is set to start running within the next 4 weeks and if he continues to sail through his recovery, we hope to return him to the pitch in late January.

Steve Ball

Steve had a lateral meniscectomy in early September which was a success. He is currently undergoing an intensive rehabilitation program to regain the strength in his legs. Proposed return to play will be early next year, this type of operation normally takes longer to return to play but Steve is progressing well, and his pre-operation fitness has put him in a good position to return sooner than expected.

Jimmy Rea

Jimmy sustained a concussion during the Esher game. He has been assessed thoroughly during the last few weeks and is steadily recovering. He starts his return to play protocol today and should there be no aggravation of symptoms, he will be set to return for the Cambridge game, if selected.

Charlie Kingham

Charlie fractured his ribs during the game against Loughborough. He needs to allow 6 weeks for these to heal fully and will return for the Caldý game

Will Roberts

Will sustained a back injury at the end of last season which resulted in him suffering from Sciatica and lower back pain. He has seen top consultants in London and has undergone intensive treatments & rehabilitation help from our physiotherapists. Unfortunately, this type of injury has a vague timeline for recovery and it is too early to set a definitive date for his return. Hopefully he will return early next year.

Seb Brownhill

Seb sustained a concussion last Saturday at Plymouth. He is currently resting and recovering following the RFU concussion guidelines. As soon as his symptoms disappear he will be seen by a neurologist to assist in his return to play. All being well he should return to play no later than the 17th November.

Sean Edwards

Sean was involved in a road traffic accident which has left him with significant injuries. Due to these it is not envisaged that he will return to play for some time. Sean has a positive mind set and is recovering well thus far. We wish him all the best with his recovery and hope to see him return to rugby when he is ready.

Johnny Neville

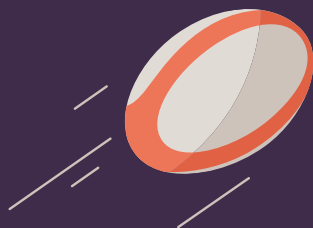
Johnny sustained a concussion during the pre-season game against Bedford. He has recovered well and is starting to get back to full fitness. Due to having sustained multiple concussions, Johnny is undergoing assessment and discussion with specialist consultants within the UK to decide how best to facilitate his return to play and future rugby career.

We of course wish them all the speediest of recoveries.



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BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC MATCH DAY EXPERIENCE

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE 1ST XV



As part of the Clubs ethos 'to be a strong and successful rugby club united from Senior to Mini's, trusted and valued by our community' the BSRFC Director of Rugby, Andy Long, Club Captain Sam Winter, & the rest of the 1st XV Squad provide an insight for our "Mini & Junior" Members into what goes on behind the scenes as the Players prepare for a National League

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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Contact address :

Postcode:

Telephone :

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Email :

Hand this form with your payment to a member of the bar staff or contact the Membership Secretary – contact information on the website.

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