

**NATIONAL LEAGUE 1** 

12th January 2019

**BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC V SALE FC** 

# B\$RFC

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### **PRESIDENT'S WELCOME**

### MICK COLEMAN

It gives me great pleasure to extend a very warm welcome to the players, officials and supporters of Sale, who have made the long trip south to provide the opposition for today's first team match. Also good luck to our Blues away to Richmond Saxons, hopefully they are fully recovered after their excursion to Jersey last weekend!

Sale are currently doing a little better than us, hovering around a mid table position, and will no doubt be buoyed by an excellent 31-17 win over Cinderford last week.

Unfortunately for our first team, 2019 has started pretty much as we finished 2018 – with a hard-fought defeat away at Birmingham Moseley. We built up a good lead playing some excellent rugby, but our Achilles heel caught up with us again in the second half, resulting in a 41-31 loss. Despite our precarious position, we are still playing some good entertaining rugby, and it's now more than ever that we need to get behind the boys and give them as much support as we can.

I am delighted to announce that your wonderful attire of festive jumpers together with the generous

auction prize of a
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from Barons BMW we raised in excess of £1300
for our chosen charity Accuro, a huge thank you to
everyone that supported this!

It's great to see corporate supporters Coke Gearing here, as Man of the Match sponsors represented by Adam Tindall and Louise Campbell, and also the ever-present David and Brian from Three Willows/Ace of Lanes. Also joining us today is Mary McHutchinson from Bovis Homes who are one of our First team sponsors, and sponsor of Sam Coleman, you're all very welcome.

And finally, it was with great sadness that we learnt of the passing of a legendary club volunteer, Phil Gatland, over the Christmas period. For many years Phil could be found behind the bar pulling pints both on match days and training nights and a more delightful, sincere man it would be hard to find. A lovely character, who will be sorely missed by everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him. I wish everyone an enjoyable afternoon at Silver Leys today, with some great rugby, great company and most of all. a Stortford win!



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## **DIRECTOR OF RUGBY**

**ANDY LONG** 



Good afternoon everyone and welcome to Silver Leys

It's was another frustrating game for us last week, we started fantastically and built an early lead but the sin bin killed our momentum and we didn't really manage this time and conceded some easy points that allowed Moseley back in the game. Some missed opportunities in the second half coupled with our hosts scrum dominance meant they gained the momentum of the game and pulled away. We valiantly pulled the bonus point try back so we left with something from the game. However it really should've been more.

Clearly we are in a real dogfight and as a group we are all up for the battle that confronts us. Training intensity has been excellent and competition for places high.

Our visitors Sale FC have enjoyed a great first season in National 1. A physical side with dangerous players dotted across the backline will mean we will need to be at our best for 80 minutes today.

There is no magic wand but a combination of hard work, courage and belief is what's required. There are still 65 points at stake and we know we need to get a huge chunk of these.

I ask you all to get behind your team today and make the difference as the 16th man.

Enjoy the game

Longy



**Marcus Cattell** 



Tom Coleman



Kathy Hills





**Adam Vine** 



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### **COLTS REPORT**

Preparations are well under way for next month's National Cup Round 3 encounter between a resurgent Bishop's Stortford Colts squad and old rivals Hitchin.

Stortford Colts are riding high after two convincing victories in the early rounds and are looking forward to the clash at Silver Leys and hoping for a strong home crowd. After losing to Hitchin in the County Cup Final last season, the U18 contingent are particularly keen to set matters straight. The squad has continued to train hard all over Christmas and the New Year and at training this week they were looking very sharp, with none of the usual drop-off in fitness at this time of the year.

As part of the build-up, on 27th January, the National Cup squad will travel to Maidenhead to challenge the side that knocked Stortford out of the Cup last season, before going on to win the competition outright. "That's how ambitious we are!" says Colts' Director of Rugby Andre Beukes, who insists his boys are a match for any team. "This is an outstanding group of rugby players. As a team, who play for each other, they have no equal."

They are also giving him no end of selection

headaches with two or three players from across the U16s, 17s and 18s contesting almost every position.It's a good problem to have.

Tuesday night sessions have moved to an allweather pitch courtesy of Bishop's Stortford College whilst Thursday nights will continue at Silver Leys with input planned from 1st XV and Blues coaches over the next few crucial weeks.

The coming months are not just about the National Cup squad. The second half of the season is jampacked with rugby for the four Colt's sides: U17 A's and B's and U18 A's and B's. Up to Christmas. school rugby has to take precedence and playing time carefully managed so as to minimise the risk of injury and burnout. Now most of the schools have moved over to football and hockey, it's full steamahead at the club. It promises to be an exciting time for the U18 B's who are so far unbeaten and sit at the top of the League table. The A's league campaign gets underway against Wasps on 3rd Feb. U17 B's remain undefeated in the league after two fixtures with their next game against Chess Valley tomorrow. Beset with injuries, the A's have had a harder time of it so far but are confident of turning the corner against Hammersmith and Fulham next week now that school rugby has finished.



## THE PLAYERS BSRFC 1'S XV 2017/18



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### **NEWS FROM THE BLUES**

JERSEY REDS 24 - 19 BISHOP STORTFORD BLUES

The first game of the new year saw the Blues back on their travels, and Jersey Reds certainly counts as a travelling fixture.

The Blues had the usual challenges ahead of them with a physically bigger Jersey side as expected, but also the journey over to the island which added more challenge to the usual game preparation the Blues are used to.

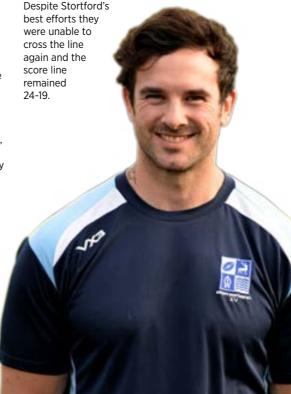
The game started with both teams setting a competitive and physical tone to the game, which would very much prove to be the formula for the entire match. Stortford scored the first try of the match when a clever inside ball from fly half Jack White, put a powerful Connor Austin over the line for a try under the posts. The try converted by Ben Creasey. 0-7 This was topped up soon after when Ben Harrison held on to the ball at the back of a well-set mail to touch down in the corner. The score went unconverted meaning the lead stayed at 0-12 with 20 minutes gone.

With Stortford in the ascendency, chances started to present themselves for an extension in the lead, however desperate defence and soft penalties from Stortford gave crucial opportunities to Jersey for them to clear their lines. It was two offside penalties that gave Jersey the opportunity to kick to the corner, and from here they launched their first driving lineout attack. This led to their first score, which when converted brought the score to 7-12 with a few moments of the first half remaining.

Jersey now aware of the effectiveness of their driving line out wasted no time in making the most of their lineout again, and in the final play of the first half scored another driving lineout to make the score 12-12.

The second half was much the same. Jersey scored another driving lineout, and a try against the bottom of the posts in the first few exchanges of the half making the score 24-12.

With the threat of the game becoming focused around the driving threat of Jersey, the Blues had to find a way to keep the ball and challenge Jersey in their own half, and through an excellent build-up of continuity and ball carrying play, Stortford responded with a converted try from Conor Mak who scored for a converted try. 19-24

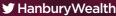


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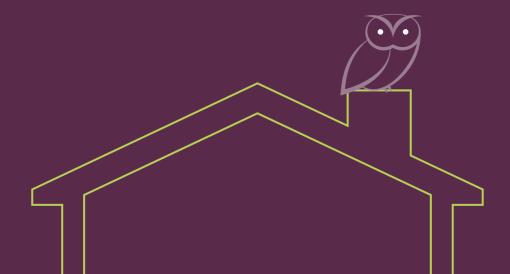
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## **TODAY'S OPPOSITION**SALE FC



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The Clubs most treasured possession is a Minute Book from 1865 which included for the first time the ten rules to be followed by all players & it is believed to be the world's oldest existing rugby rule book.

The clubs famous Heywood Road ground has been home for them since 1903.

Over the years, Sale FC have featured many prominent international and county players including Fran Cotton, Steve Smith, Dewi Morris, Richard Trickey and Jason Robinson.

Sale Sharks, the professional premiership team are an offshoot of Sale RFC moving out of Heywood Road to plough their own furrow in 2003.

Sale were National 3 North champions in 2015 and National 2 North champions last season thus securing themselves promotion to National One & Level 3.

We made our first ever visit to Heywood Road in September but left empty handed after suffering a 22-8 defeat.

They currently sit 10th in the table having won 7 of their 17 games to date.





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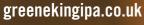






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|         |       | :     | :     |                |       | -     |       |       |       |       |       | ī            | i     | i     | :     | -     |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Ampt    | Ampr  | 33-22 | 25-17 | 16.02          | 2.02  | 6-13  | 38-27 | 54-10 | 40-29 | 35-20 | 43-34 | 9.03         | 12.01 | 30.03 | 22-8  | 13.04 |
| 3ckhth  | 19.01 |       | 30-26 | 30.03          | 16.02 | 2.02  | 22-14 | 9.03  | 15-0  | 27.04 | 39-32 | 10-21        | 27-32 | 23-15 | 13.04 | 41-24 |
| 3ir M   | 6.04  | 9.02  |       | 41-31          | 27.04 | 15-06 | 33-40 | 23-24 | 36-41 | 23.03 | 2.03  | 19.01        | 48-26 | 2.02  | 28-22 | 31-22 |
| SSRFC   | 10-29 | 15-16 | 52-8  |                | 3-13  | 2.03  | 26.01 | 23.03 | 23-26 | 26-29 | 57-25 | 13.04        | 9.02  | 25-27 | 20-22 | 12.01 |
| Saldy   | 19-18 | 17-25 | 30-27 | 9.03           |       | 9.02  | 12.01 | 31-38 | 14-08 | 31-29 | 43-19 | 30.03        | 26.01 | 13.04 | 29-33 | 20-23 |
| Camb    | 26.01 | 24-43 | 13.04 | 23-22          | 72-27 |       | 20-22 | 16.02 | 30.03 | 12.01 | 25-22 | 17-20        | 32-26 | 8-17  | 9.03  | 36-36 |
| Chin    | 38-33 | 6.04  | 9.03  | 6-13           | 24-27 | 27-26 |       | 19.01 | 16.02 | 24-18 | 30.03 | 20-20        | 27.04 | 33-33 | 2.02  | 28-21 |
| Sind    | 9.02  | 22-22 | 38-14 | 0-11           | 2.03  | 14-9  | 21-26 |       | 13.04 | 26.01 | 12.01 | 12-32        | 15-12 | 29-36 | 30.03 | 40-31 |
| ЭМР     | 23.03 | 12.01 | 26.01 | 27.04          | 6.04  | 3-22  | 21-23 | 10-07 |       | 2.03  | 9.02  | 41-26        | 22-19 | 34-33 | 42-19 | 29-31 |
| sher    | 49-48 | 98-2  | 21-38 | 2.02           | 19.01 | 17-10 | 13.04 | 10-7  | 24-25 |       | 17-14 | 16.02        | 21-24 | 9.03  | 15-45 | 30.03 |
| -'boro  | 27.04 | 23.03 | 35-25 | 19.01          | 53-19 | 14-20 | 48-46 | 8-39  | 39-27 | 6.04  |       | 2.02         | 06-34 | 16.02 | 5-38  | 9.03  |
| OE's    | 13-13 | 11-12 | 38-27 | 17-03          | 34-07 | 23.03 | 9.02  | 6.04  | 31-22 | 22-10 | 48-24 |              | 2.03  | 12.01 | 27.04 | 26.01 |
| lym A   | 17-5  | 20-21 | 30.03 | 23-19          | 24-14 | 19.01 | 11-26 | 2.02  | 9.03  | 19-16 | 13.04 | 15-19        |       | 21-35 | 16.02 | 14-7  |
| 3oss Pk | 10-06 | 26.01 | 27-22 | 25-17          | 26-10 | 6.04  | 2.03  | 27.04 | 19.01 | 17-25 | 39-31 | 37-24        | 23.03 |       | 46-24 | 9.02  |
| Roth    | 2.03  | 10-01 | 12.01 | 6.04           | 23.03 | 14-25 | 32-26 | 20-03 | 25-13 | 9.02  | 26.01 | 33-34        | 25-14 | 29-12 |       | 32-27 |
| sale    | 10-27 | 2.03  | 16.02 | 22-8           | 26-24 | 27.04 | 23.03 | 31-17 | 2.02  | 38-44 | 38-31 | 42-38        | 6.04  | 23-31 | 19.01 |       |
|         |       |       | RG    | ROUNDS 1 to 17 | 17    |       |       |       |       |       | RC    | 30UNDS 18-30 | 0     |       |       |       |

FIXTURE SCHEDULE & RESULTS GRID 2018-19

### Season 2018/2019 NATIONAL 1

### **Results From 5th January**

| Home Team              |       | Away Team          |
|------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Rosslyn Park           | 46-24 | Rotherham          |
| Birmingham Moseley     | 41-31 | Bishop's Stortford |
| Loughborough Students  | 53-19 | Caldy              |
| Chinnor                | 27-26 | Cambridge          |
| Darlington Mowden Park | 41-26 | Old Elthamians     |
| Esher                  | 49-48 | Ampthill           |
| Sale FC                | 31-17 | Cinderford         |
| Blackheath             | 27-32 | Plymouth Albion    |

### Season 2018/2019 NATIONAL 1

### **Fixtures for 12th January**

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

| National League 1 -    | 2018, | /19 |   |    |     |     |      |     |     |        |
|------------------------|-------|-----|---|----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|--------|
| Team                   | P     | W   | D | L  | PF  | PA  | PD   | TBP | LBP | Points |
| Rosslyn Park           | 17    | 12  | 1 | 4  | 466 | 384 | 82   | 10  | 1   | 61     |
| Blackheath             | 17    | 12  | 1 | 4  | 411 | 323 | 88   | 6   | 2   | 58     |
| Old Elthamians         | 17    | 11  | 2 | 4  | 448 | 345 | 103  | 8   | 2   | 58     |
| Ampthill & District    | 17    | 10  | 1 | 6  | 475 | 346 | 129  | 10  | 5   | 57     |
| Rotherham              | 17    | 11  | 0 | 6  | 431 | 368 | 63   | 7   | 2   | 53     |
| Chinnor                | 17    | 9   | 2 | 6  | 450 | 437 | 13   | 9   | 4   | 53     |
| Plymouth Albion        | 17    | 8   | 0 | 9  | 351 | 358 | -7   | 6   | 5   | 43     |
| Darlington Mowden Park | 17    | 8   | 0 | 9  | 393 | 427 | -34  | 8   | 3   | 43     |
| Caldy                  | 17    | 8   | 0 | 9  | 375 | 432 | -57  | 6   | 4   | 42     |
| Sale FC                | 17    | 7   | 1 | 9  | 452 | 491 | -39  | 6   | 4   | 40     |
| Cinderford             | 17    | 7   | 1 | 9  | 336 | 380 | -44  | 5   | 4   | 39     |
| Cambridge              | 17    | 7   | 1 | 9  | 338 | 345 | -7   | 2   | 6   | 38     |
| Esher                  | 17    | 7   | 0 | 10 | 372 | 459 | -87  | 4   | 5   | 37     |
| Birmingham Moseley     | 17    | 6   | 0 | 11 | 459 | 508 | -49  | 7   | 6   | 37     |
| Loughborough Students  | 17    | 4   | 0 | 13 | 440 | 597 | -157 | 9   | 5   | 30     |
| Bishop's Stortford     | 17    | 4   | 0 | 13 | 355 | 352 | 3    | 4   | 7   | 27     |

### **THE TEAMS**



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

**BLUE AND WHITE** 

| 1  | Seb Brownhill      |                           |
|----|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 2  | Sam Crean          |                           |
| 3  | Ben Harrison-Price |                           |
| 4  | Sekonaia Kalou     |                           |
| 5  | Matt Tomlinson ©   |                           |
| 6  | James Apperley     |                           |
| 7  | Dan Elsom          |                           |
| 8  | Charlie Kingham    |                           |
| 9  | Tom Banks          |                           |
| 10 | George Cullen      |                           |
| 11 | Joss Linney        |                           |
| 12 | Jack Scantlebury   |                           |
| 13 | George Keen        |                           |
| 14 | Rob Duff           |                           |
| 15 | Nick Hankin        |                           |
|    | REPLACEMENTS       | Man of the Match Sponsors |
| 16 | Harrison King      |                           |
| 17 | Tom McCrone        | Coke Gearing              |
| 18 | Mark McCraith      | Chartered Surveyors       |
| 19 | Tom Coleman        |                           |
| 20 | Sam Coleman        |                           |

Director of Rugby Andy Long | Team Manager Darren Orbart |

Lead Physio Kathy Hills | Assistant Physio Adam Mufti | Assistant Physio Tom Phillips

**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

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## **SALE FC**GREEN AND BLUE

Chris Owen

20

|                           | Daniel Birchall        | 1  |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----|
|                           | Neil Briggs            | 2  |
|                           | Simon Griffiths        | 3  |
|                           | Rhys Davies            | 4  |
|                           | Matthew Postlethwaite  | 5  |
|                           | Andrew Hughes ©        | 6  |
|                           | David Seymour          | 7  |
|                           | Ryan Parkinson         | 8  |
|                           | Matthew Bradley        | 9  |
|                           | Mark Lawrence          | 10 |
|                           | Paolo Odogwu           | 11 |
|                           | Johnny Leota           | 12 |
|                           | Connor Doherty         | 13 |
|                           | Jack Moorhouse         | 14 |
|                           | Jonty Rawcliffe        | 15 |
| <b>Corporate Sponsors</b> | REPLACEMENTS           |    |
| -0                        | Joe Kelly              | 16 |
| DOME                      | Christian Taylor       | 17 |
| <b>BOA12</b>              | Stone Priestley-Nangle | 18 |
| HOMES                     | Tom Ailes              | 19 |



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## **MATCH REPORT**

BIRMINGHAM MOSELEY 41 - 31 BISHOP'S STORTFORD 1ST XV



George Keen touched down close to the posts after, Jack Scantlebury ripped through the home defence, cutting a great angle, after Nick Hankin had run back a loose Moseley kick. Tom Banks converted, but the home side bounced straight back onto the offensive and tested the visitors' defence through phase after phase, with inside centre, Jamie Williams a constant threat. In the end, though, Moseley had to settle for three points, when the referee stopped play to allow George Keen to be treated for an injury, with play under Stortford's posts and then awarded a penalty to the home team at the restart scrum, with 15 minutes gone.

Stortford soon registered their second converted try, though, after Hankin, once again threatened from a Moseley kick, backed up this time by James Apperley, making a telling break through the middle

The home side could stem the threat only by conceding a penalty at a breakdown some 10 metres from their line, but the respite was extremely short-lived, as Tom Banks seized on the ball, took a quick tap and forced his way over, giving himself a relatively straightforward conversion.

Despite the disruption inevitably caused by a series of enforced substitutions of Stortford threequarters, the visitors' backline continued to threaten and the team again dominated the exchanges.

Their third try duly came after 27 minutes, when Seb Brownhill touched down from a tremendous forward drive from an attacking lineout, after a long George Cullen penalty kick to touch. The attempted conversion from the touch line went wide, but this seemed insignificant, as Stortford powered back onto the attack. Unfortunately though, they were unable to capitalise on another

lineout within striking range of the Moseley line, with the throw missing its target and to compound this error, the pack was unable to win its own scrum, when the opposition knocked the ball on almost immediately.

With barely 5 minutes of the half left, Moseley again showed their attacking skills in surging quickly downfield and this time were able to make the pressure count, with number 8, Chris Brightwell touching down in the corner. A great conversion from the touchline by that man, Williams twisted the knife in the wound and a penalty goal from the same player, as time ran out brought his side's deficit down to a mere 6 points.

Stortford again looked threatening at the start of the second period, but two poor handling errors, when in attacking positions turned the ball over and, with their scrum now in total control, Moseley were able on each occasion to take full advantage by running in tries. Both were well converted again by Williams to take his side into an 8 point lead, with barely 10 minutes of the half gone.

With penalties now being conceded by Stortford at virtually every scrum, the home side drove ruthlessly on and further converted tries after 20 and 30 minutes took the game beyond the visitors' reach.

Full credit to the Stortford team, though for showing considerable pride and commitment in fighting back against the inexorable tide and forcing the final two scores. The first went to Charlie Kingham, plunging over by the posts, after several phases of expansive rugby, with the side finding renewed energy and purpose in their running lines.

The conversion was made and the Moseley defence again had no answer, as the Stortford pack launched a driving maul 5 minutes later from a 5 metre lineout from one of a series of penalties, with time running out. The conversion attempt this time bounced out off an upright and the final whistle blew.

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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

## SAM COLEMAN

I have been playing rugby at Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club since I was 6 years old where I joined with my brother Jack, we were following in the footsteps of our eldest brother, Tom, and our Dad, Mick. As a family we have so many amazing memories through this club, and on a personal level I have made some very good mates – whether they are from my age group level, Colts or 1st XV.

As most of you will know, my Old Man is now the President – let's hope his jokes improve as soon as possible (apologies to anyone at the lunch who has had to listen to some awful ones). Dad represented the 1st XV from the age of 17 until he was far too old. Tom also represented all age groups and 1st XV from the age of 17. He is now the backs coach for the 1st XV, having hung up his boots last season and then taken them back down to play again this season – are you actually playing anymore, no one seems to know?

Jack decided to focus on his Farming and drinking career so hung up his boots (that he probably took off me or Tom) a long time ago, however he did actually play some senior rugby up here... apparently? Then there's me, still struggling to understand rules, moves and general tackle technique, but enjoying it (most of the time) nonetheless. I think it's safe to safe Jack's possibly in the best position!

Some of the National Cup and County Cup victories with the Colts are memories I will cherish forever, however my top two have to be winning National Leagues 2 and 3. There aren't many clubs that can boast the achievements we have as a club with so many homegrown players, and it's that togetherness that helps us to succeed. Even the players that aren't home grown have become such an important part of this team, and that's not down to talent, it's through buying in to our culture and being proud to represent and be part of this club

Speaking of togetherness, the support we have as a squad from within the club is huge. We appreciate the effort from every single one of you that turns out to support this squad, volunteer around the club, coach the younger age groups and cheer us on as a team week in week out, so thank you. We all support the same team and when we have finished our playing days we will be right next to you cheering on the next generation of players.

I also want to say a big thank you to Bovis Homes who are my player sponsor and support the club as a whole in a big way. Bovis have really bought into the culture of our rugby club and the community around the club – so thank you Bovis (especially you, Mary). I am looking forward to Ladies Day with you!





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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 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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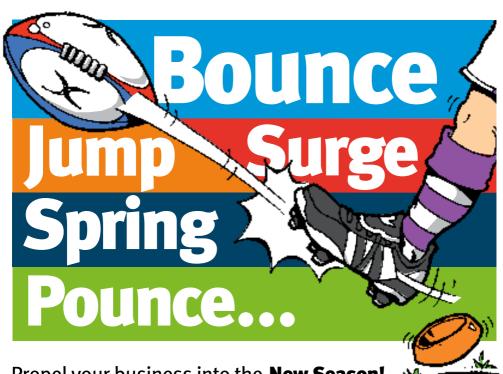


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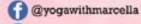
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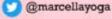


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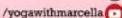


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## **PHIL GATLAND**

#### THE ORIGINAL STORTFORD SUPER VOLUNTEER

Sadly we lost one of our longest serving members over the Christmas Break.

Phil Gatland, who was one of our Distinguished & Honorary Life members passed away on Christmas Eve having recently celebrated his 90th birthday.

Whilst he may not have been a familiar face to many of our newer members, to those who have been 'around a while' Phil certainly was! For well over 40 years Phil provided a reassuring welcome to all who visited the club in his regular voluntary role as barman.

The most commonly recanted story about Phil is about his 'under the counter' dispensing of 100% proof 'Vodka', which he obtained on his frequent business trips to Russia, to his favourite customers to act as a chaser for their ordered pint of IPA. It is reported that several of those apparent favourites subsequently needed assistance to leave the premises!

Phil continued to man the pumps long after we transitioned from an entirely voluntary bar team to paid staff, something Phil never really forgave us for. He was still pouring the odd pint on match days, in the then called Presidents bar as recently as 2012 but inescapably age related health issues soon enforced his complete retirement.



In many ways Phil was the personification of the strong volunteer culture we have today & upon which we rely so heavily to deliver our core objectives as a charity and club.

In his youth Phil played for his local team in South London 'Old Mitchamians' and although only a lad when war broke out, did his bit by acting as a messenger for the Air Raid Wardens, before joining the RAF at 18 as a radio operator.

In 1954 he moved with his wife June to Harlow New Town and took a job as a lab assistant at Revertex, a company that produced a natural latex in drums that could be shipped all over the world. His career soon took him to Malaysia, the birthplace of the company at a time when British colonialism was coming to an end.

Upon his return to the UK we are fortunate that they chose to settle in Dane Park, across the road from the Rugby club, and raise a family. Given this proximity getting involved with the rugby club and indeed the cricket club was almost inevitable.

Phil eventually rose to become General Manager at Revertex and in that capacity made frequent trips to their biggest emerging customers, the Soviet Union & China, often having high level meetings with members of the communist regimes, hence the Vodka presents.

In 2010 Phil was made an Honorary Life member of the club in recognition for his long & distinguished voluntary service and continued, when his health allowed, to visit the club, meet old friends and cheer on whoever was playing right until the end.

Phil's funeral was on Monday & it was great to see a so many blazers on parade to say farewell. Afterwards a pint of two was also raised to his memory but no vodka!

Our thoughts are with June, his children Phillip & Helen & their families at this time.

Thank you for allowing him to spend so much time over the years with us at the club. He will be greatly missed.

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