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NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

**BISHOP'S STORTFORD v CAMBRIDGE RUFC**

18th December 2021

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# President's Welcome

## MICK COLEMAN



Welcome one and all to the Big One! Yes, it's Bishop's Stortford vs Cambridge, our only remaining local derby, a traditional fixture that goes way, way back in time, and a match both teams, officials and all supporters eagerly look forward to every season. And this one's certainly no different.

Whilst we started the season reasonably well, Cambridge endured a tough start, but have since recovered to put some impressive results together and steadily climb the table. Our own form has continued to fluctuate but showed encouraging signs of improvement last week with a solid win over Chinnor, which augers well for a hard-fought game this afternoon.

The Blues are also at home today taking on Barnes second team in the Raging Bulls Shield Div. 1, so there's plenty of action to choose from. With some of our injured players now beginning to get back to fitness, our Blues especially, should start seeing an uplift in their results.

We have well over 300 guests for lunch today, which I find quite extraordinary! It's just brilliant to see so many of our sponsors and club members here, and, on behalf of the club, I can't thank you all enough for your continued support. Of course, these lunches don't just

happen, there's masses of people behind the scenes bringing it all together. So, a quick, thoroughly deserved mention to Rob Walker, Julie North and all the wrinklies that gather on a Friday to prepare the marquee and generally tidy up, and of course Lisa our fantastic caterer. Apologies for not being able to name everyone, but we just aint got the space!

Today's headline sponsors are Tees as our Match Day sponsors and Bit Solutions are sponsoring the Man of the Match. I would also like to give Pete Watkins and Ben Hewer of HD Print a special mention. Ben and the HD Print team are the people behind the design and print of this excellent programme together with all our posters and social media artwork, what a fantastic job they do!

We urgently need to boost our Centenary Fund and the best way to do this now is to buy your Christmas raffle tickets. It is your very last chance to win one of our fantastic prizes as the raffle finishes tomorrow. So, I urge you to support the fund, put your hand in your pocket, and please, buy some tickets! Details can be found in this programme or on the website.

It just leaves me to wish you all a very happy Christmas, I hope you all stay safe, and I really hope we get a Stortford win!







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# Head Coaches

## TOM COLEMAN / MARCUS CATTELL



Hello and welcome back to Silver Leys for the last time in 2021, and what better way to finish a truncated year by welcoming Cambridge & Barnes for two huge league games for both the 1st & Blues XV's

Two weeks ago we were disappointed not to take more out of the game vs Caldý. A slow start gave us too much to do, and even though we controlled the middle part of the match, Caldý deserved their victory and we left empty handed.

A big reaction was called for, and that's exactly what we got down in Oxfordshire last Saturday when we put in a huge performance against a very good side in Chinnor. The whole squad 1 -20 played their part, and even though a late Chinnor resurgence raised the heart rate a little, we dominated most areas of the game and left with 5 points. No less than 12 of the match day squad are players who have come through the Mini & Youth teams at Bishop's Stortford, which always makes it that little bit sweeter.

For our Blues it was last minute heart break vs Chinnor Falcons as we thought we had won it when a late Dan Cole penalty kick had put us ahead, only for victory to be snatched from our grasps with a try from our hosts. That though doesn't begin to tell the full story as the Blues had lost two of their starting team before kick-off due to late injury forced changes to the 1st XV game having a knock-on effect. Even so it was a great squad effort and the lads will be excited at getting back into league action today.

Looking back at the first half of the season, we can't help but be slightly disappointed with our current league position, however we do feel we are moving in the right direction and with a few key players returning it promises to be an exciting 2022. The lessons and experiences we have taken as a squad will hold us in good stead to push up the league and put in the

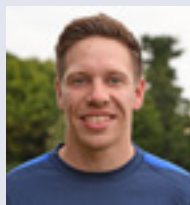
performances, we all know we can deliver, on a more regular basis.

Lastly I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoy your festive period holiday with friends, family & loved ones. Thanks for the great support we get each and every week from our sponsors and supporters, the volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes, and most importantly the players and coaching team, for their unwavering commitment.

Oh Stort are we...

**Tom & Marcus**

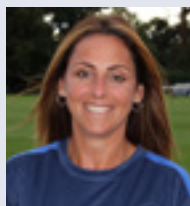
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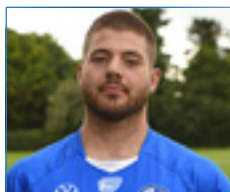


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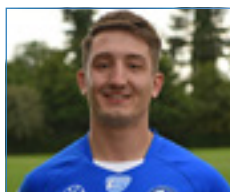
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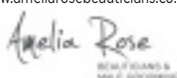
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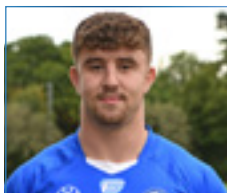
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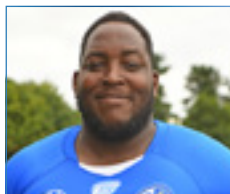
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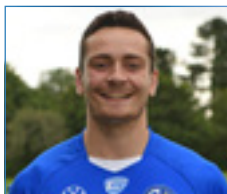


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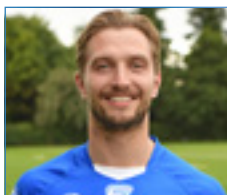


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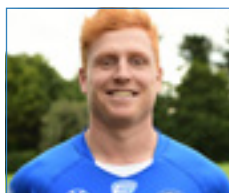
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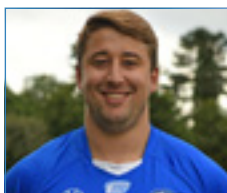


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# Today's Opposition

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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 they 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.

I think it's fair to say that since we joined them at level 3 in 2017 the Blood & Sand have had much the better in the head to head results, in fact they lead us 5-1. Admittedly some of the games have been desperately close but as we always say 'a win's a win'. Our solitary victory (24-6) came here in March 2019

So far this season they have had a productive campaign and amassed 40 points already from six victories, 3 draws and 10 bonus points.

They enjoyed a tremendous result last Saturday inflicting

only the second defeat of the season upon league leaders Rosslyn Park 34-29

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.

### CAMBRIDGE RUFC



**George Bretag-Norris (Captain)**



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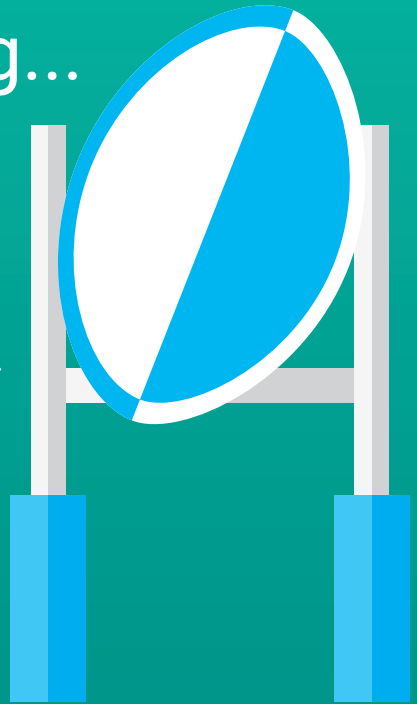
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# Results grid, table and fixtures

## NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

FIXTURE SCHEDULE & RESULTS GRID 2021-22

	Bir M	BSRFC	Bath	Caly	Camb	Ch	Crd	DMP	Leeds	Phym A	Rams	Ross Pk	Sale	Taunton	Tf's
Bir M		33-3	22-20	15/01	29/01	22-29	23/04	23-22	33-32	19/02	05/02	8-29	09/04	05/03	34-21
BSRFC	33-3		02/04	20-31	18/12	16/04	12/03	12/02	15/01	32-19	19-21	29/01	26/02	26-22	30/04
Bath	08/01	16-6		16-18	9-15	29/01	15-18	23-14	09/03	30-36	09/04	26/03	28-34	42-19	19/02
Caly	0-24	09/04	22/01		19/02	27-27	08/01	27-22	31-28	05/03	20-3	20-26	21/04	26/03	47-40
Camb	32-7	23/04	12/02	22-22		26/02	22/01	26-26	15-17	26/03	28-34	34-29	08/01	09/04	45-14
Chlor	22/01	19-23	34-28	12/02	30-32		28-33	20-23	26/03	36-41	21/04	09/04	34-21	22-5	05/03
Crd	18/12	55-19	30/04	29-21	41-26	15/01		16/04	50-12	36-12	26/03	05/03	15-19	26-21	29/01
DMP	30/04	33-22	15/01	29/01	05/03	19/02	26-7		23/04	09/04	29-23	17-28	15-32	32-38	26/03
Leeds	26/02	33-25	27-25	12/03	02/04	12-29	19/02	18/12		16/04	22/01	08/01	29/01	29-41	21-19
Phym A	34-12	08/01	26/02	7-26	0-17	12/03	12/02	49-22	05/02		19-26	08-37	22/01	21/04	02/04
Rams	02/04	19/02	13-17	16/04	30/04	17/12	22-20	26/02	29-11	15/01		24-21	21-32	29/01	24-13
Ross Pk	12/03	14-13	55-14	02/04	16/04	28-27	38-31	22/01	60-10	30/04	12/02		20-15	15/01	18/12
Sale	24-0	32-24	16/04	18/12	15-7	30/04	02/04	12/03	21-17	38-27	05/03	19/02		53-28	15/01
Taunton	22-19	22/01	12/03	31-36	26-26	02/04	26/02	08/01	30/04	18/12	18-17	14-40	12/02		16/04
Tf's	12/02	18-18	21-23	26/02	12/03	15-34	12-21	24-30	09/04	12-10	08/01	23/04	30-21	21-24	
ROUNDS 1 to 13						ROUND 14 (plus rescheduled)					ROUNDS 15-28				

# Results grid, table and fixtures

## NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

### Season 2021/2022 NATIONAL 1

### Results from 11th December

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Darlington Mowden Park	26-7	Cinderford
Cambridge	34-29	Rosslyn Park
Caldy	20-3	Rams
Blackheath	28-34	Sale FC
Chinnor	19-23	Bishop's Stortford
Tonbridge Juddians	21-24	Taunton
Plymouth Albion	PP	Leeds Tykes
Spare week		Birmingham Moseley

### Season 2021/2022 NATIONAL 1

### Fixtures for 17th/18th December

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Rams	Fri	Chinnor
Bishop's Stortford	vs	Cambridge
Leeds Tykes	vs	Darlington Mowden Park
Cinderford	vs	Birmingham Moseley
Sale FC	vs	Caldy
Taunton	vs	Plymouth Albion
Rosslyn Park	vs	Tonbridge Juddians
Spare week		Blackheath

### National League 1 - 2021/2022

Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points
Rosslyn Park	13	11	0	2	425	235	190	9	2	55
Sale FC	13	10	0	3	357	266	91	6	1	47
Cinderford	13	9	0	4	382	291	91	8	3	47
Caldy	13	8	2	3	326	295	31	5	1	42
Chinnor	13	6	1	6	369	310	59	10	6	42
Cambridge	13	6	3	4	325	270	55	8	2	40
Rams	12	7	0	5	257	247	10	5	3	36
Taunton	13	5	1	7	309	389	-80	7	3	32
Blackheath	14	5	0	9	306	332	-26	4	8	32
Darlington Mowden Park	13	5	1	7	311	342	-31	4	3	29
Bishop's Stortford	13	4	1	8	300	316	-16	5	2	25
Birmingham Moseley	12	5	0	7	207	298	-91	2	2	24
Plymouth Albion	12	4	0	8	262	324	-62	5	2	23
Leeds Tykes	12	4	0	8	249	378	-129	4	3	23
Tonbridge Juddians	13	2	1	10	260	352	-92	3	5	18

# The Teams



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## Bishop's Stortford 1<sup>st</sup> XV

### BLUE AND WHITE

1	Will Roberts
2	Alex Rayment
3	Tom McCrone
4	Harry Charter
5	James Thacker
6	James Apperley
7	Jacob Wrafter
8	Rory Banks
9	Dan Smart
10	George Cullen (c)
11	Chris Smith
12	Ollie Betteridge
13	Dan Powell
14	Alex Gilham
15	Michael Ayrton

#### REPLACEMENTS

16	Harrison King
17	Seb Brownhill
18	Jake Bridges
19	Tom Walker
20	Joss Linney

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**Head Coaches** Tom Coleman | Marcus Cattell |

**Lead Physio** Jade Leeder | **Team Manager** Darren Orbart |

**Backs Transition Coach** Ash Boyle | **Forwards Transition Coach** Rob Faiers |

**Head of Strength and Conditioning** Ben Sheath | **Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach** Adam Vine |

**Forwards coach** Lee Soper |



# The Teams

**Referee** Calum Howard  
**Assistant Referee 1** Simon Bourne  
**Assistant Referee 2** Dr Jon Petzing

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## Cambridge RUFC RED & YELLOW

	Harry Morley	<b>1</b>
	Ben Brownlie	<b>2</b>
	Billy Walker	<b>3</b>
	Kieran Frost	<b>4</b>
	Gareth Baxter	<b>5</b>
	George Bretag-Norris (c)	<b>6</b>
	Matt Dawson	<b>7</b>
	Ben Adams	<b>8</b>
	Kieran Duffin	<b>9</b>
	Marc Koteczky	<b>10</b>
	Andrew Henderson	<b>11</b>
	Matt Hema	<b>12</b>
	Will Wand	<b>13</b>
	Joey Patrick	<b>14</b>
	Joe Green	<b>15</b>

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### REPLACEMENTS

	Will Priestley	<b>16</b>
	Ziana Alexis	<b>17</b>
	Anthony Maka	<b>18</b>
	Jake McCloud	<b>19</b>
	Darryl Veenendaal	<b>20</b>

**Director of Rugby** Richie Williams | **Forwards Coach** Dan Richmond |

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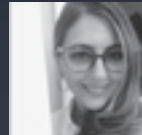
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# Colts Report

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMA COX



As we come towards the end of December, we find ourselves halfway through the Colts season. It's been a mixed start, some highs and some lows, but the team spirit is still excellent and we are continuing to strive to push the boys to higher and better standards.

Unfortunately, we were knocked out of the National Cup in the Third Round, which was obviously hugely disappointing for all concerned. We had an excellent Second Round win in the National Cup to Chelmsford winning 64-12 at Silver Leys. The boys played some excellent rugby and proved too strong for their opponents. Our Third Round opponents were Cambridge. It was a very close affair; Stortford had a narrow lead at half time 8-7. We then scored in the second half to make it 13-7. Cambridge came back well and scored and converted to make it 14-13 to them. The boys tried incredibly hard to get back in the game, playing into the wind, but unfortunately feel short, with Cambridge once again scoring



and converting in the dying minutes. Stortford eventually losing 21-13.

Some of the positives from National Cup experience were that half the team were just 17 years old, so these boys have a year's experience playing at this level, hopefully meaning that they will learn from the defeat and be hungry to give the National Cup another go next year.

Herts and Middlesex league games have also started, in which we have had some cracking games and positive results. The A Team went to Hoe Lane to face local rivals Hertford, in their first league game in Division One. Again, some fantastic flowing rugby with some incredibly well worked team tries, Stortford running out victorious at 69-0. The B Team played on the same day against Hertford but in a friendly.



Again some amazing team play, cracking tries and a resounding victory 48-0. Our B team also played Welwyn with their first league game in Division Three, an incredibly hard-fought match in boggy conditions, where the boys showed some true grit and team spirit to come out winners 24-16.

So even though we are out of the National Cup, our focus is now solely fixed on both of our Colts leagues and also on the County Cup Competitions. Hopefully, if we are able, we should get plenty of games in the New Year, so we have plenty to be positive and excited about.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Wardy**  
Colts Team Manager



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# Match Report

CHINNOR 19-23 BISHOP'S STORTFORD



With Jack Scantlebury back and leading from the front as skipper, Stortford started much more positively and aggressively than in recent games, despite having lost three selected players before kick-off. This meant that James Thacker and Dec Caulfield were moved up from the Blues and Alex Rayment came off the bench to play 7.

It was the home side, nevertheless, that took the lead after 7 minutes, when two breakdown offences in a row put the visitors on the back foot and a touch kick from the second penalty provided the platform for a driving maul from the lineout, which Stortford couldn't stop, producing an unconverted try. Eight minutes later and another driving maul provided a turning point, when Stortford were surging forward in midfield and Chinnor's tighthead was sin-binned for pulling the maul down. Within 5 minutes, the visitors had taken advantage, levelling the scores, with a try by Ollie Betteridge, after half breaks and good offloads by Tom Banks and Scantlebury gave the centre a sight of the line.

With 25 minutes gone, Stortford started to assert themselves at the scrum and were rewarded with a penalty on a Chinnor put-in close to their own 22, which Tom Walker converted. The home side fought back, though and despite a couple of loose passes in midfield, the bouncing ball from the second was picked up and hard running from fullback and wing saw a try out wide, brilliantly converted in the slippery conditions by Caolan Ryan. Just before the break, Stortford got their noses ahead again, with an unconverted try to winger, Dan Powell, taking a smart long pass from Dan Smart (on 10 minutes earlier for the injured Tom Banks) to break the tackle of his opposite number to crash over in the corner, from a position created by clever interplay

between George Cullen and Powell, followed by a powerful drive up the middle by Rayment.

Stortford dominated the first 15 minutes of the second period in both territory and possession, as the wet and slippery conditions deteriorated, but dogged Chinnor defence held strong, until a crooked throw at a defensive lineout gave the visitors a scrum deep inside the home 22. Chinnor were penalised at the scrum and again at the reset, but managed to force a handling error at the third attempt, only to concede yet another penalty on their put in. This time the visitors went to touch and a good lineout drill saw them over for another unconverted try, touched down by Harrison King from a driving maul. Stortford maintained pressure and, although the home side came more into the game, it was the visitors that scored again after 64 minutes, when Joss Linney won the race to touch down a clever grubber kick from Ollie Betteridge for the bonus point try.

Chinnor now went up a gear and it took a great sliding pick-up by Smart to prevent a try from a long kick and chase. There was no such reprieve, though, with 4 minutes left to go, when a clever chip into space created, after Stortford were reduced to 14 men by a yellow card for preventing a quick penalty being taken brought a 5 metre lineout and a mauled try, brilliantly converted from touch. This narrowed the gap to 4 points, leading to a very tense final period, as Chinnor hurled themselves forward.

Stortford's fighting spirit remained, though and, despite having a much rearranged backline, due to a couple of injuries and the sin-binning, they were able to see time out for a crucial 5 point victory.

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# Meet the Medics...

BY AUSTIN POPE & CHRIS SMITH



**Jade Leeder** may be small, but don't be fooled she is also mighty. Her principal responsibility is to get the boys back on the pitch as soon as possible. Despite the obvious Coronavirus struggles and generally difficult bodies to manage (Joss Linney),

she does a fantastic job and goes above and beyond in ensuring the squad are at their peak physical fitness.

Plus, she makes a hell of a roast dinner! Or so I've been told!

Jade's arrival at the club coincided with an exponential increase in lads' rehabilitation needs, along with widespread anatomical confusion - for reference, Sam Coleman, your shorts need not be removed for a shoulder examination!

Despite being only a year away from the age at which she can apply for a bus pass, Jade is young at heart. She brings with her a wealth of experience from her time with serious professional athletes at Team GB Squash, which is a million miles away from her day to day dealings with the rigs of the 1st XV squad.

This range of sportsmen demonstrates her diverse knowledge of the dark arts of sports physiotherapy, knowledge that so far has seen her go through no less than sixteen apprentices and colleagues as assistants to her role, a fact that either speaks volumes of her ability to upskill people or that she's just that difficult to get on with - I'll let you, the reader, decide.

Jade is very much part of the 1st XV squad and of course that means that the lads all ensure that they take good care of one of our own - just ask Darren 'Bobby Dazzler' Orbart about his favourite gifts for Jade for the van journey to fixtures.

**Ryan Clarke** has been with us at BSRFC for only a short amount of time (a year to be exact), but it is sure to say that he has become one of the favourites amongst the club. Believe it or not, he is actually quite a good physio, who clearly puts in a lot of time and effort to keep us healthy, happy and fit - as well as being able to take some pretty average banter on behalf of the players... he dishes out as good as he gets!

Sadly, his playing career had to be cut short following a recurring ACL injury, but by all accounts, he was a handy player in his day pulling the strings for St Albans at fullback with "nerves of steel under the high ball". He has been described by some as a like for like comparison of Wales' Louis Rees-Zammit, the only difference being his 15-year-old's physique and chocolate knee. I am just happy that he decided to venture down the route of becoming a physio, as opposed to a referee!

He first heard about Stortford through the club's very own head of Strength and Conditioning **Ben Sheath**. Ben's experience and level of knowledge of the game makes a seamless transition from rehab to playing. Ben had asked Ryan to come down and support the medical staff for a couple fixtures, in our previous season. He had a positive experience working with the players and coaches so was more than happy to stay on board, the rest is history...

His favourite Stortford moment to date was beating Chinnor at their ground last week after a difficult run of results and is looking forward to the test against Cambridge this week. In terms of players spending the most time on the physio bed, Alex Rayment is comfortably in the lead, shortly followed by Alfie Orchard who has been very unfortunate this season, and to the surprise of many, Robert Faiers!

All jokes aside we are very lucky to have Ryan at the club alongside Ben, Jade and Viney. They all do an incredible job, and we massively appreciate all the effort they put in during the season.

# Henley Bulls 7-26 Blues

BY JAMIE GAGE



Two Saturdays ago Bishop's Stortford made the trip to Oxfordshire to play the Henley Bulls in a friendly fixture.

Stortford got off to a great attacking start spending most of the first half inside Henley's 22m but not being able to capitalize through some unforced errors but also good Henley defence. The deadlock was broken by the quick

thinking of Joss Linney and converted by Alex Gilham.

Henley then managed to launch an attack of their own via a break away from their own try line which was only stopped by our great scramble defence which forced them to knock on.

Normal service was soon resumed as Stortford returned to the front foot to bring pressure on the hosts late into the first half which finally saw Tom Radley score a try on his Blues debut which was again converted by Gilham to make it 14-0 at half time.

Stortford scored first after the break with Linney showing all his experience to run a great line to receive off the top ball from a well-executed line out 21-0.

Too their credit the Bulls responded well and enjoyed a period of sustained pressure which finally brought them reward with a converted try of their own 21-7.

But the Blues has the last laugh when just minutes from the end of the game a well worked backs move set another Radley, this time Joe free to touch down for an unconverted score.





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# Club Stortford



Now in its sixth season, **Club Stortford** was set up by a small working party to support the 1st XV 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.

Our Joint head coaches Tom and Marcus have stressed on a number of occasions how important the financial support given to them by Club Stortford is. 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 101 988**



# The Oval Club



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- A self-supporting golf day at one of the local golf clubs,
- An Annual Dinner and Forum,
- First team home and away lunches.

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**  
**Mark Smith**  
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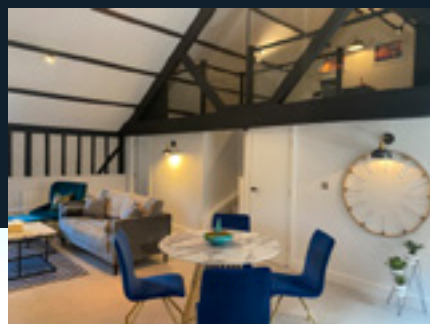
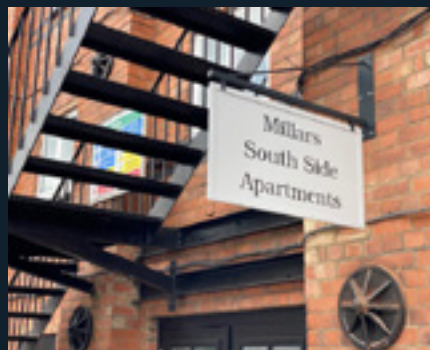
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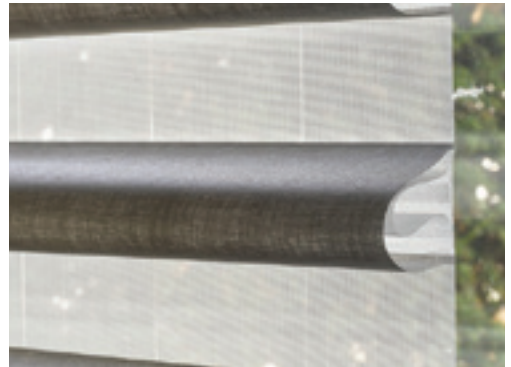
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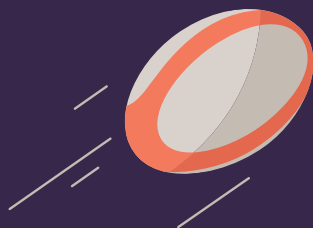


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# BSRFC Centenary Book

## ON THIS DAY - DECEMBER



In December 1962 Christmas came early for the Club with a 43-0 win against Maldon, when BSRFC 'ran riot', scoring thirteen tries, only two of which were converted. In 1966 the 1st XV was unbeaten in the first eleven months of the calendar year until a narrow defeat by Fords of Dagenham 10-11 in December. In 1973, the 'A' side, captained by Bob Gould, had a strong season scoring heavily over Bury St Edmunds 40-3, Hitchin 50-10, and Barnet 46-0 before beating Welwyn 'A' by 28-3 in December to take their total points in the first half of the season past 500.

We have a long history of playing Cambridge. In the 1920s we played individual colleges and then the University LX Club, which was effectively the university's 2nd XV. In 1934 we played Cambridge on Boxing Day at home but lost 0-9. There was a mix up on 2nd April 1983 when our 1st XV went to Cambridge to play their 1st XV, but their 1st XV had travelled in error to Silver Leys and beat our 2nd XV 32-6 whilst our 1st XV ran riot and won 79-0 against their 2nd XV! I don't think we should count this as our biggest win over Cambridge!

By January 1996 Stortford was chasing promotion having

beaten Cambridge away by 16-12 but Spring 1999 brought a thumping loss, 14-66 at home to end promotion hopes. A happier memory against them is one of the most important matches in our 83-year history when in 2002-03, after fifteen seasons in PowerGen London Two North, we sought promotion to National Two at Cambridge, having never played at a higher level. With only five minutes left Cambridge scored a try to take the lead, for the first time, challenging to the limit the resilience and temperament of the players, and the heartbeats of the supporters. A penalty from Stuart Haslam took Stortford into a narrow lead, then scrum-half, Matt Bainbridge won a turnover and raced down the left wing before feeding Shane Leeks a beautiful inside pass to score under the posts for Haslam to convert and secure the win. The blazered Stortford supporters had turned out in noisy force and could now begin their celebrations. As was to be expected after the long years of waiting for promotion, the joyful party went on long into the night, and it must be said the blazered 'Wrinklies' could not keep pace with the players!

In 2015-16 in the National Two league, we did the double over eventual champions Cambridge, coming back from 10-0 down to win by 18-10 at Silver Leys and then beating them in their own backyard 29-12. It's not often the team winning their league loses both games to the same side.

**The book was four years in the planning, researching and writing and was finally printed in November last year. Sales efforts in 2020 were hindered by Covid lockdown so we are hoping for strong sales this year.**



***Bishop's Stortford Rugby Football Club, 100 Years Of Blood, Sweat and Cheers* is available in the Club shop - it would make an excellent Christmas present for members, friends and family.**

# BSRFC 10-0 Fullarians RFC

## LADIES MATCH REPORT

Traditional rugby weather returned to Silver Leys as a 20 strong ladies squad prepared to host Fullarians RFC for a match targeted as a must-win game. Along with debutant Charlii Kempton, it was great to welcome back two squad members from the very first Stortford ladies' side in Nikki Chapman and Raquel Obama-Frades.

Fly half Becca Coppen got the game underway, and Stortford immediately put pressure onto Fullarians, allowing them no easy exit from their own 22. This pressure told after only 4 minutes when the Fullarians fly half decided to try and pass her way out of trouble 5m from their own goal line. Inside centre Mia Richey was first to pounce on the loose ball and carried over to put the first score on the board. Coppen missed the tough conversion to leave the score at 5-0.

From the first scrum of the afternoon, the Stortford pack, led by props Christina Radukic and EJ Cappuccini, got on top of their opposing numbers with Radukic declaring 'I'll do this every week, if it's always this easy' which for the remainder of the first 35 minutes allowed Stortford a stable base to play.

After 15 minutes, Stortford had been battering away at Fullarians and were camped in the 22 but resolute defence from the visitors prevented any further score. Stortford won a penalty at the breakdown as a Fullarians ball carrier was isolated and deemed to be holding on. Stortford elected to try and lengthen the lead but the attempt at goal slid agonizingly past the right hand upright.

The Stortford pack repeatedly carried strongly to push the gain line before allowing the back line some space to run into, however Stortford struggled to execute the last killer pass to really break away and Fullarians' impressive defensive

front continued to hold. The half time whistle blew at 5-0.

Fullarians were fired up for the second period and perhaps the benefit of the wind helped them as it had Stortford in the first half as the first quarter was a much more even affair. Fullarians gave Stortford a taste of their own medicine as they were able to make a rare break through the Stortford line to venture into the Stortford 22. Stortford switched back on and cut back on the sloppy errors that had crept in, returning to the performance level of the first half. Chloe Capp, playing away from her usual position, was particularly ferocious in shutting down Fullarian space to get the ball back for her side.

With 10 minutes to go, Fullarians kicked over the Stortford defensive line into what appeared to be an empty back field; however, replacement full back Raquel didn't need a second invitation to collect the ball and remind all her team mates how her pace had been missed. At least 5 defenders were beaten on the full back's 80m run to the line to put a small amount of breathing space between the two sides.

Fullarians spent much of the last 5 minutes trying to break the Stortford defence, but Stortford held out firm to shut out the visitors and give the side an incredibly well deserved 10-0 victory.

The side now has a break until the New Year and will look forward to welcoming Tabard to Silver Leys on Sunday 9 January - see you there!



# Match Day Experience

BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC

## Behind the scenes with the 1st XV...



As part of the Club's ethos 'to be a strong and successful rugby club united from Senior to Minis', trusted and valued by our community BSRFC Joint Head Coaches Tom Coleman and Marcus Cattell along with Club captain Sam Winter and the rest of the 1st XV Squad, provide an insight for our "Mini and 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 QandA in the 1st XV Changing Room, followed by Training, Games and 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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