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**MATCH REPORTS -
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From the President

By Len Lindop



We had an exceptionally long journey to Leeds last week with traffic problems and a detour through Headingley meaning we did not arrive until 2.00 pm. The short preparation did not deter the team who came away with a convincing win. This means today's game with Plymouth is interesting with only one point separating the two teams. We are seventh in the league, seven points ahead of the eighth club, Darlington. Today's game should prove to be a highly entertaining match with two high-scoring teams playing against each other.

As always, it is great to see so many of our sponsors and their guests here today. Today's Match Day Sponsors are Mulberry Homes, we are delighted to have you as new sponsors this season. The Man of the Match sponsors are long term sponsors HAM. Our Match Day Experience will not be held again until 18th February, our special thanks to Helen Andrews for organising them so far. Club Stortford and other sponsors supporting us today are The Three Willows/Ace of Lanes, Nockold's, Steel Builders and Advanced Demolition who are also new sponsors this season, our sincere thanks to them all.

We are also delighted to have such a large contingent of Vice Presidents here today. I hope you all appreciate catching up with old friends and remembering all the tries scored in yesteryear. Have a wonderful day enjoying the food, camaraderie, rugby, and a Bishop's Stortford win.

Last Sunday we held our own Mini Festival at Silver Leys, all the local teams were well represented and despite what was dreadful weather it was extremely successful. As the

teams were arriving, they were greeted with a heavy thunderstorm that gave problems to the organiser Woody (Paul Woodford) and his team. The pre-preparation that they did in getting polyethylene boards, care of CM23 Scaffolding, ex 1st team second row and Mini Coach, David Rose, ensured that the cars could navigate their way to parking on the electricity substation and Water Board land at the rear of the club. Despite the early rain, all the youngsters thoroughly enjoyed their day. Well done Paul and your amazing team.

This week we will continue to raise some money for the changing room project and Peter James has again kindly donated a turkey for auction. We trust, with turkeys in short supply this year because of bird flu that our members will accept the opportunity to sort their Christmas dinner out early. Our thanks to Peter.

The other fundraising activity we are holding is our annual Fireworks display next Saturday. Volunteers are still required to help on the night. Please contact Neil Clark at

Neil.Clark@hessiancoffee.com If you cannot help, please bring your children/grandchildren along to enjoy the best display in East Herts. You will need to buy tickets in advance from **www.bsrftickets.co.uk**



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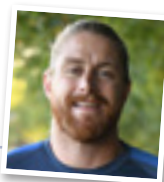
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Head Coaches

Marcus Cattell & Tom Coleman



Hello and welcome back to Silver Leys for today's encounter with Plymouth Albion, which will no doubt produce some excellent attacking rugby if the league table and form guide is anything to go by. Games in season's gone by have always been high scoring, exciting games and I'm sure today will be no different. We extended a warm welcome to the Plymouth Albion players, coaches and supporters and hope they have an enjoyable day out!

Last week saw us take on an in form Leeds Tykes side up at West Park Leeds RFC and come away with a very pleasing 27-13 win. The manner in which we controlled the game for the majority (except for a period before half time) and keep a dangerous side to only one try was great to see, something we will be looking to replicate today. Special thanks for the travelling supporters who made their way

up to Yorkshire and cheer us on, the noise you create certainly doesn't go unnoticed.

The Blues travelled to south London to face Blackheath with the returning Nick Hankin after an extended period on the side-lines. It was great to see Nick back in action and further strengthens our back 3 options within the squad. The Blues won 40-10 which keeps them in second place in the Zoo league. Today the Blues are back on the road once again and head down to the South Coast to play Worthing Raiders 2ndXV.

We hope all our wonderful sponsors, supporters and members have a great day and we look forward to seeing you all in the clubhouse for a well earned beer or two.

Allez les Bleus!

Marcus & Tom

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The importance of sleep

Jon Skelton



One of the areas I find myself talking about, particularly to the younger members of the group, is how important sleep is. However, this does not just apply to Rugby players, as it is valid to all of us. Sleep is important for many aspects of health, including brain function, heart health, immunity, and more. Getting enough sleep can also help improve your mood and overall well-being.



There are several reasons why sleep is so important for health. For starters, sleep helps to consolidate memories and supports learning by giving the brain time to process new information. This takes place in one of our sleep cycles called Rapid Eye Movement (or REM sleep.) It also plays a role in regulating hormones and helping the body repair cells and tissues.

Getting enough sleep is essential for maintaining a healthy immune system. When we don't get enough sleep, our body doesn't have time to properly heal from infections or injuries. Sleep also

helps to regulate inflammation, which is vital to all of us, not just the players coming back from injury

It's not just our physical health that sees the benefits. There are many benefits of sleep to mental health. Sleep helps the brain to recover from the day's activities and to prepare for the next day. It also helps to reduce stress and anxiety, and to improve mood and well-being. Sleep is essential for good mental health. It helps the brain to function properly and to stay healthy. Without enough sleep, people can experience problems with their thinking, emotions, and behaviour.

Getting enough sleep is important for everyone, but if you are having trouble sleeping, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional. There are many things that can help improve sleep, including relaxation techniques, changes to your sleep environment, and possibly medication (but only at the advice of the doctor). Try creating a regular sleep schedule and stick to it as much as possible. The younger you are the more sleep you need. But as we get older the need for sleep reduces by a couple of hours a night. Avoiding caffeine and alcohol (tough one as a Rugby player and supporter) before bed and create a relaxing bedtime routine that includes winding down for 30 minutes before lights out can be very beneficial. As is always widely published, you should also avoid working or using electronic devices in bed. Lastly, make sure your bedroom is dark, quiet, and cool to promote optimal sleep.

Sleep is an important part of good mental health. Make sure to get enough rest every night so that you can function well during the day. As with any of my articles if you want to discuss anything I've written about, I'll be happy to have a chat!

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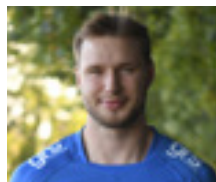


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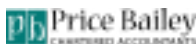


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Today's Opposition

Plymouth Albion RFC



The present club was founded in 1920 from a merger between Plymouth RFC and Devonport Albion RFC (both founded in 1876). Since 2003 they have played their home games at The Brickfields stadium.

Albion were a major force in English rugby union in the 1920s having five internationals on their books at one time. It was around this time they attracted a crowd of 18,000 to a midweek game against Oxford University which established a record crowd for a club match in England which was not exceeded until the 1980s.

On their way to promotion to Tier 2 and National One (which became the Championship in 2009) in 2002, the team had been on a two seasons unbeaten streak of over 50 games. The streak starting when the club was in Division Three South.

After thirteen seasons in Tier 2 in the Championship (which had been the old National One until 2009) in 2015 they were relegated to Tier 3 and National Division One.

Albion experienced financial problems a few years ago and only avoided entering administration early in 2015 following a cash injection of £250,000 by local businesses. That though did not save them from formally entering administration in April 2016 at which point two former players, Bruce Priday and David Venables, came to their rescue. However, by going into administration they incurred a RFU penalty and a 30 points deduction was applied to the standings of the 15/16 season which dropped them to 8th position instead of 4th.

Bruce Priday has since moved on, but Max Venables is still the Club's Managing Director.

In National Division One in 16/17 they finished 2nd, in 17/18 they finished 3rd, in 18/19 they finished 5th but we did have our first win against them in convincing fashion at home that season.

In the aborted 19/20 season after the final

standings were announced they were placed 6th. We did famously record a first away win against them in the first game of that season at the Brickfields stadium when we came back from 21-0 down after the first 15 minutes to win 40-42. The return fixture that season was a victim of the pandemic.

Last season was the first time that we have finished above them in the National Division One table when we finished 9th and two places above them when they finished 11th.

They have previously always been high placed finishers in National Division One and have made no secret that their goal is to secure a return to the Championship.

Albion also have a successful women's team and recently formed a Under 18s Academy.

PLYMOUTH ALBION



Herbie Stuppel (Captain)



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
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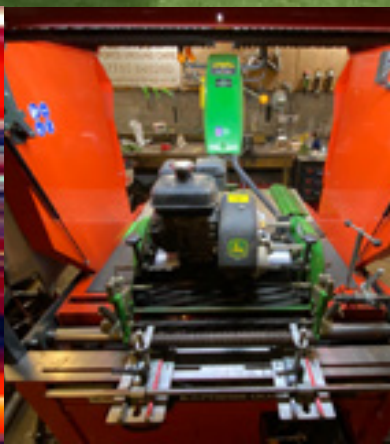
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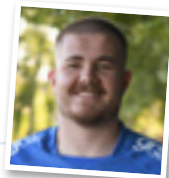
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Blues Match Report

By Charlie Garwood



The Blues picked up their first win on the road in south-east London last Saturday. On what was a narrow pitch in the corner of the ground they won 40-10 over Blackheath Heathens, in a good response to the previous league game being a loss to Rosslyn Park.

The game began with some early pressure from the Blues, regaining the ball deep in Blackheath territory with two try opportunities missed through Luke Bury and Joe Tracy, from knock on and held up calls by the ref. Blackheath took this opportunity to play with some territory of their own, and many phases attacking the Blues 22 were repelled. A quick counter and fast rucks led to Bailey Albert dipping over to open the scoring.

The scrum, which never went backwards and at times went forwards at quite a pace, became a building block for Stortford, and the pressure led to more tries through Jack Scantlebury and Joe Radley. The game was not as smooth as previous outings, and a few promising attacks led to nothing where in previous weeks these chances were taken. The Blackheath back row were quick on the ball and a sudden string of penalties led to a yellow card and a defensive line out on the 5m line. The maul rolled over and the home side went into the break with their tails up.

The second half saw a similar picture with a fast Blues start with possession in the

Blackheath 22, but again little inaccuracies led to opportunities for Blackheath to relieve the pressure. But as the half continued on, and despite conceding another try, things began to stick and two more tries were scored by Luke Bury and a second for Joe Radley, who had many successful runs against his opposite man throughout the game. The game finished with more Blues pressure and a powerful carry and score from debutant Tristan Smith, which preceded Tommy Walkers fifth successful conversion from six attempts.

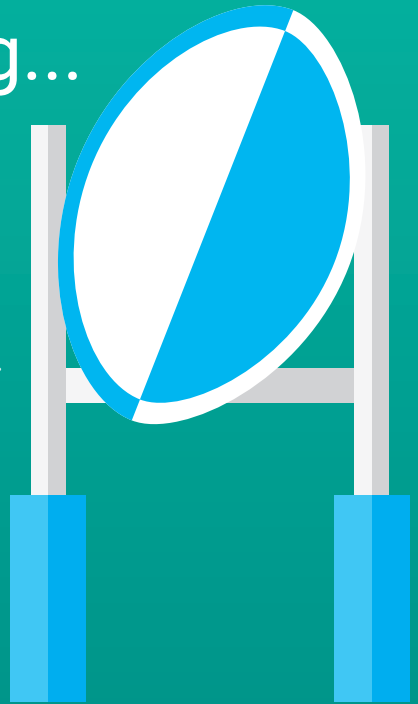
All in all a good day, with much still to work on but positive performances from young players and club veterans alike, and it was especially good to see Nick Hankin return from a long period of injury and show of his quick feet, hard running and footballing skills. Focus now turns to Worthing Raiders, back at home on familiar surface, perfect for some fast, fun and flair-filled Blues rugby.



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Results, fixtures and table

National League 1

Season 2022/2023 National 1

Results from 22 October

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Sale FC	35 - 21	Esher
Cambridge	40 - 29	Cinderford
Leeds Tykes	13 - 27	Bishop's Stortford
Birmingham Moseley	32 - 30	Darlington Mowden Park
Plymouth Albion	45 - 5	Hull
Rosslyn Park	21 - 29	Rams
Taunton Titans	21 - 31	Chinnor

Season 2022/2023 National 1

Fixtures for 29 October

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Hull	vs	Taunton Titans
Bishop's Stortford	vs	Plymouth Albion
Chinnor	vs	Sale FC
Esher	vs	Cinderford
Rams	vs	Birmingham Moseley
Rosslyn Park	vs	Cambridge

National League 1 - 2022/2023											
Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points	Adj.
Rams	7	7	0	0	281	149	132	7	0	35	0
Cambridge	7	6	0	1	239	180	59	7	1	32	0
Rosslyn Park	7	6	0	1	273	172	101	6	0	30	0
Sale FC	7	5	0	2	226	149	77	6	1	27	0
Cinderford	7	5	0	2	207	189	18	6	0	26	0
Plymouth Albion	7	4	0	3	236	184	52	7	2	25	0
Bishop's Stortford	7	4	0	3	194	189	5	6	2	24	0
Darlington Mowden Park	7	2	0	5	180	200	-20	5	4	17	0
Birmingham Moseley	7	3	0	4	192	216	-24	3	1	16	0
Leeds Tykes	7	3	0	4	137	205	-68	2	1	15	0
Chinnor	7	2	0	5	175	210	-35	3	2	13	0
Taunton	7	2	0	5	154	202	-48	3	2	13	0
Esher	7	0	0	7	167	240	-73	4	2	6	0
Hull	7	0	0	7	140	316	-176	2	2	4	0

The Teams



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Bishop's Stortford 1st XV

BLUE AND WHITE

- 1 Tim Matthews
- 2 Alex Rayment
- 3 Tom McCrone
- 4 Harry Charter
- 5 Obinna Nkwocha
- 6 Harrison Langworthy
- 7 Ollie Jones
- 8 Will Rogers
- 9 Chris Bolton
- 10 Matt Riddington
- 11 Josh Stannard
- 12 Austin Pope
- 13 James Ayrton(c)
- 14 Jake Morris
- 15 Dan Powell

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REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Luke Bury
- 17 Will Roberts
- 18 Jacob Wrafter
- 19 Chris Smith
- 20 Connor Lloyd

*Homegrown player

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Lead Physio Ryan Clarke | **Team Manager** Darren Orbart | **Lead Forwards Coach** Ian Simpson |

Forwards Transition Coach Rob Faiers | **Head of Strength and Conditioning** Ben Sheath |

Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach Adam Vine | **Mental Health Coach** Jon Skelton |

The Teams

REFEREE: **Dr Jonathan Cook**
ASSISTANT REFEREE 1: **Dewald Swart**
ASSISTANT REFEREE 2: **Simon Bourne**

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Jamie Salter **2**

Dan Pullinger **3**

Shek Sheriff **4**

Jake Clemson **5**

Angus Hodges **6**

George Mills **7**

Herbie Stupple(c) **8**

Jack Oulton **9**

Tom Putt **10**

Frankie Nowell **11**

Jeremy To'a **12**

Isaak Welch **13**

Kyle Speare **14**

Phil Jones **15**

REPLACEMENTS

Davy McGregor **16**

Harry Wilkinson **17**

Dan Collier **18**

Torin Clarke **19**

Tom Davies **20**

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Youth Update

By Jim Tanfield



We are indeed blessed with another season of fantastic numbers of boys wanting to play their rugby at BSRFC. All of the youth teams (U13-U18) can consistently put out two teams on a Sunday, which is one of the main objectives of the club. This of course means there is more of a player base moving through the age grades and transitioning into senior rugby. This is the Holy Grail of club rugby one that BSRFC excels at and one that exemplifies the spirit of community sport. With that said, such huge numbers of boys doesn't come without great amounts of effort from the club's volunteers. Our 40+ dedicated youth coaches, team managers and first aiders deserve all of our admiration for their tireless work in ensuring boys enjoy their rugby safely and competitively. We quite simply couldn't do it without you, so thank you.

Moving forward, youth rugby will inevitably have to reflect current concerns and here at BSRFC we are already adapting and doubling-down on the injury prevention front, with special attention given to head injuries. That is why we will be focussing on coaching the best techniques in contact situations, with all coaches required to have a minimum level of RFU training and a new coaching coordinator to help fill in any gaps and offer workshops focussed on areas such as tackling and scrums.

Also helping with these important skills are our

senior players and we are lucky to have a strong connection between them and our youth teams, with some of our First XV players developing their coaching skills as well as passing on their experience to the boys and our coaches. We will seek to make this link even stronger in the coming seasons.

We also implement the RFU's guidance on ensuring boys don't spend too much time both playing and training to keep an eye on - this is always going to be a challenge in a town where the schools provide so much mid-week rugby before the new year. Tired players are far more likely to get injured of course, but we are absolutely determined that the guidance won't affect fixtures and have asked our coaches to proactively seek alternatives to contact training mid-week during busy periods. We are also asking parents to be upfront and let the coaches know if their boy could do with a break for a session or two.

The results coming in so far this season from all age groups suggest a strong season ahead, despite a disappointing Round 2 exit for the Colts in the National Cup at the hands of a strong Bury St Edmunds side - sealing it by two points with a penalty at the death. However, there is a lot of rugby to come in 2022/23 including Herts Middlesex League fixtures and of course the passion and fun of local rivalries in the County Cup.



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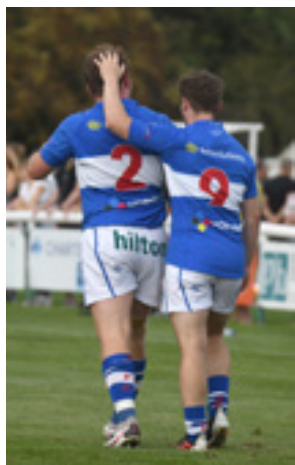
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In the spotlight

Joss Linney. Sponsored by Bit Solutions



Older followers of the club will know about pocket battleships in WW2. It was the name the British press used to describe German naval battleships that were smaller than a British battleship but were very heavily armed, faster and difficult to fight. I think that “pocket battleship” is a great description for Joss Linney’s play on the wing for Stortford. Joss very rarely avoids contact with the opposition, he is never easy to tackle. The highly combative nature of his style of play has during his career led to a large number of injuries which has curtailed his appearances for Stortford. Looking back over the records and the match reports in the 2018/19 season he made 18 appearances and scored 12 tries, last season he made 10 appearances and scored 5 tries. This is the scoring frequency you would expect from a winger who also has a reputation as a very good sevens player. Inevitably his try scoring is reported with “powered over”, “forced his way over”, and “crashed through tackles”.

It must be his Sevens experience that means Joss does not immediately touch down after crossing the line having no qualms in dealing with opposition tacklers in the dead ball area and will always endeavour to touch down under the posts for an easier conversion. Unfortunately, against Rotherham at the end of a home game in December 2018 the touch judge decided he had touched down wide out after crossing the line whereas he was just on his way to touch down under the posts. The Stortford conversion from wide out was missed and Rotherham won the game 20-22. The touch judge was obviously unaware of Joss’s Sevens style play and experience.

Joss has a strong reputation as a Sevens player having represented Worcester in a Premiership Sevens tournament and toured with the Rambling Jesters, an invitation Barbarian style Sevens side that

play worldwide. Joss has also coached the Swedish Ladies International Sevens side to an unexpected tournament medal place.

Joss started at Stortford at seven years of age, earning the asterisk on the program team lists and after studying at Loughborough was persuaded to play again for Stortford in National Division One to prolong his rugby career rather than retire after numerous injuries. At present Joss is also enthusiastically working in the role of Community Rugby Development Officer for Stortford.

Joss is sponsored by Bit Solutions who provide IT services and they have no plans to branch out into supplying naval battleships despite the success of Joss’s style of wing play.





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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
Steven Wasley
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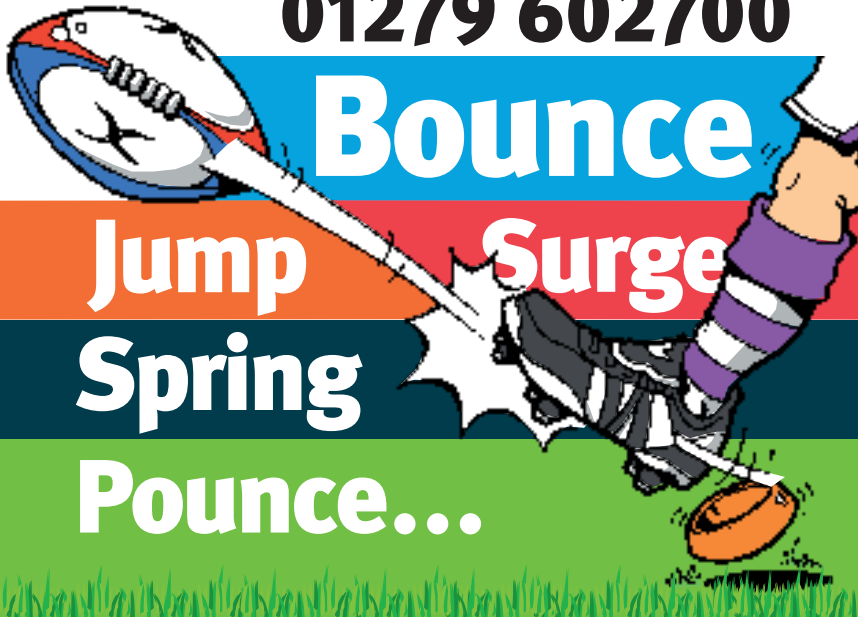


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Fortnightly collections in bin?

East Herts Council is bidding to reduce costs by emptying black bins once every three weeks

East Herts Council is set to cut rubbish collections to once every three weeks in a bid to save money – and the plan.

On Tuesday evening (Sept 20) its overview and scrutiny committee was set to discuss working party recommendations to revolutionise the authority's refuse policy.

Over three years from 2024-25 the council needs to find £5.66m savings – and waste is its single biggest expenditure.

A report by Bishop's Stortford's Cllr executive member for environmental sustainability warns: "This comes at a time when we are experiencing inflationary pressures significantly above projections in the case of

Sinead Carr
sinead.carr@stortfordindependent.co.uk

the waste contract, over double the budgeted figure for 2024-25.

"Any proposals to reduce services or generate income will not provide savings on the current budget but mitigate the financial pressure. It is anticipated that cost pressures could be in excess of £1.5m."

East Herts wants to negotiate a new eight-year waste contract in partnership with North Herts Council which will harmonise both districts' collections.

The current contract covers the collection of waste and recycling from approximately 124,000 households and 1,500 commercial customers as well as street cleaning services across both districts.

The recommendations are that "residual waste", the contents of black bins – are collected once every three weeks rather than the current fortnightly service and that all new 2nd replacement bins will be reduced in size from 240 litres capacity to 180 litres.

At the same time, the authorities want to roll out 25-litre food waste caddies in properties.

The recommendation follows data showing black bins in East Herts contain 28.9% food waste. The United Nations' Environment Programme estimates that 8%–10% of greenhouse gas emissions are from food which is wasted. A public consultation earlier this year indicated 69% of respondents in East

Herts said they were likely or quite likely to use the weekly food waste service.

The councils are also set to introduce the collection of plastic film in dry mixed recycling from 2025.

Other recommendations under consideration include ending the provision of trolleys and paper tanks across the district and ending parish litter-picking grants.

A new colour coding for bins has also been proposed. Both authorities spent a total of £277,000 on new bins and bin replacements in 2021-22. According to the report to the committee, the current global shortage of plastic polymer, and the continued impacts of Brexit and the pandemic have significantly increased the cost and availability of bins.

To ensure greater resilience in stock levels and reduce storage space, the proposal is for all future bin replacements to have the standard grey/black body with a coloured lid to depict the material type.

It is recommended that replacement recycling bins have a blue lid, replacement residual waste bins have a white lid, and replacement garden waste bins have a brown lid.

Last year the council introduced charging for garden waste collection with a £10 annual tariff for the previously free service.

Cllr Graham McAndrew



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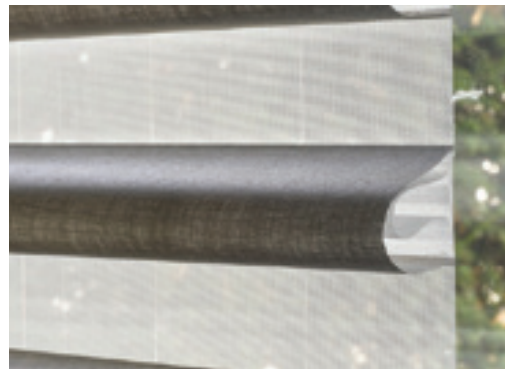
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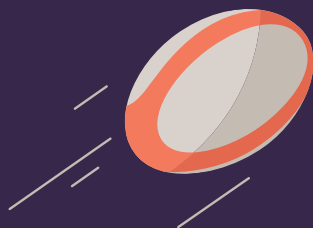


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Around The Club

Richard Evans



John Allanson the Club's Match Reporter

What does John regard as the purpose of the club's match report? It is to give a concise and timely account of a Bishop's Stortford rugby match which will be as accurate as he can make it, although inevitably, from time to time it will unfortunately include an embarrassing error. This is an opportune time to apologise publicly to Jake Morris for originally having attributed his try against Moseley two weeks ago to James Ayrtton. A good report should also convey some sense of the emotional ups and downs experienced by the spectators. It should, of course, include all the scores, scorers and important incidents but it should also give a good reflection of the nature of the game and importantly should not be overtly biased. As a Bishop's Stortford produced report it will of course comment on the action from a Stortford viewpoint but must give a fair assessment of the game.

Whenever I read a John Allanson report I always recall Arsene Wenger, the famous cerebral Arsenal football manager saying "You are never as good as they say you are after a win and you are never as bad as they say you after a loss". Anyone who has ever watched the Arsenal Fan TV channel on YouTube will understand what he means. I think John's match reports would be fully appreciated by Mr Wenger. They are always fair and realistic no matter what the result of the game.

When I peruse one of John's match reports of a game that I have attended, to me his reports always capture the true essence of the match I watched. In turn when I read his reports for the games that I did not attend, I know that these reports will be a fair and accurate reflection of those games.

John takes the task of producing the match reporting very seriously, considering the time constraints he needs to work with to produce these reports promptly, he does remarkably well every weekend of the season. His reports are "syndicated" and appear in the local paper and the Rugby Paper. The severe space constraints

imposed by the latter, unfortunately mean that it is not always possible to cover all aspects of the game as well as he would like – not to mention that their 18.30 Saturday night deadline for match reports means he typically has to skip the first 90 minutes or so of post-match beer and banter in the clubhouse after home games. You have to read the full unedited reports on the away matches in the programme and the home matches on the club website to fully appreciate his reports.

What is also amazing, as well as attending all Stortford's league matches and doing the match reports, is the vast number of other jobs and tasks John does around the club. He is the model for the true Bishops' Stortford RFC volunteer.

He could not remember exactly when he started doing his match reports, however I believe the true value of his reports will only be known and appreciated when the club has its bi-centenary in 2121 and there will hopefully be a digital archive available of John's match reports to recall how the club performed on the field in the club's "golden period" of its first seasons in the upper reaches of English league rugby.





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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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Match Report

Leeds 13-27 Bishop's Stortford



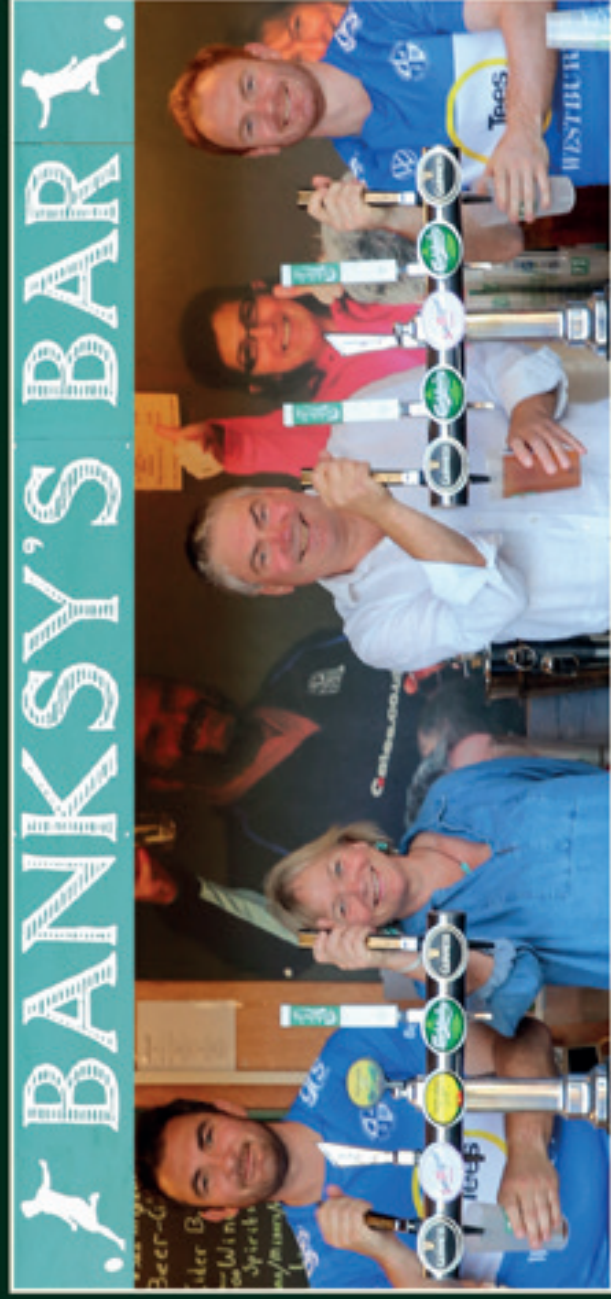
Although Leeds were playing with the strong wind in the first half, it was the visitors that controlled most of the territory, by dominating much of the possession. Determined home defence held out a number of early Stortford drives at their line and their threequarters used the elements to kick to great effect to gain substantial ground, whenever they managed to turn the ball over. It was the visitors, nevertheless that registered the first score, with scrumhalf, Connor Lloyd plunging over from close range at the base of a ruck after 18 minutes to score against his former club. This capped off an extended period of pressure, with the ball swinging from side to side to stretch the determined Leeds defence and Matt Riddington did well to add the extra points across the wind. The home side countered with a clinical 50-22 kick 7 minutes later, after Stortford had kicked the ball away, but were forced by stern defence to settle for three points from the boot of Tighe Maxwell-Whiteley from a penalty for offside in front of the posts. The flyhalf repeated the feat 7 minutes later, in almost identical circumstances, except that territory was this time gained via a scrum penalty, kicked to touch. Stortford extended their lead with an unconverted try 4 minutes later, when they spurned a kickable penalty of their own to go for touch. A clean lineout routine set up a driving maul and with threequarters piling in to give added momentum, Will Roberts was able to break off the back and dive over to reach the line. With barely 3 minutes of the half to go, though, the home side was far from done and quickly turned over the opposition, as they tried to run the restart kick out of defence. Leeds players hurled themselves into drive after drive, forcing a series of penalties, including two at successive scrums taken in lieu of kicks, the second bringing with it a yellow card for Tom McCrone. The next scrum almost inevitably produced a

try, well converted with the clock in the red by Maxwell-Whiteley, to take his side into the break with a one point lead.

Stortford were again able to control possession for extended periods of the second half and, aided by a number of potentially crucial handling errors by Leeds, not only saw out the rest of the sin-bin period, but were able once more to threaten the home line. This pressure told after 12 minutes, when the visitors managed to stretch the strong-tackling Leeds side by moving the ball first to the right wing and then quickly left. This allowed Riddington to drift wide of the last defender and a great long pass from Lloyd dropped perfectly into his hands, the scrumhalf adding the two points from out wide. With the lead still less than one score and Leeds continuing to fight hard, once again calling for many more strong Stortford tackles, the next score was always likely to be crucial and, to the relief of Stortford's very vocal supporters it went their way. This took an exceptional finish from Jake Morris, handing off the first up tackle close to the halfway line and then sprinting past the cover to go in for an unconverted (bonus point) try in the corner after Stortford, for once, dominated a scrum in midfield. The visitors piled on the pressure and a couple of minutes later forced a penalty, as Leeds tried to run out of defence, with Riddington kicking the goal from in front of the posts to stretch his side's lead to two converted tries. The game home side battled hard, putting Stortford's defence once more to the test, but it proved up to the task and was able to see out the match without further score. A very important and hard won 5 points!

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