

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

VS PLYMOUTH ALBION NATIONAL LEAGUE 1

COME ON YOU BLUES



Saturday 16th September 2023 Kick-off 3pm

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MEMBERS: £7

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I will state the obvious and note that the rugby season has started and so has summer. It was a great achievement for the players to compete right to the end in the searing heat last week at Blackheath and score two late tries to earn all five points.,

This week we welcome Plymouth to Silver Leys and look forward to a highly competitive game, as has been proved in all our previous encounters.

This week our Match Day Sponsors are Nockolds, and the Man of the Match Sponsor is GRS Group. We also welcome Keith Mullings

from Koru Gym and Karl Foster from Mr. Barbers as well as our regulars. David and Brian from Three Willows/ Ace of Lanes.

Following on from Colin Tilley's address at the last home game, today's speaker is our President-Elect, Al Jones. Al as you know has been an everpresent coach to the Under 6s and now sits on the Board of BSRFC Trading.

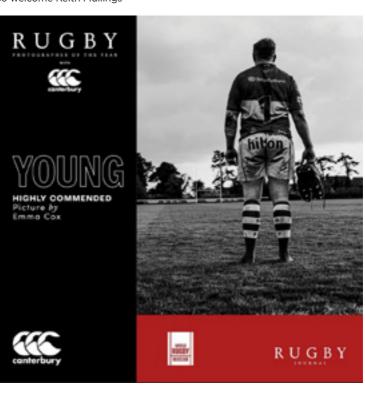
We intend to follow the lead of Taunton and have a special day on 11th November, Armistice Day

to commemorate the armed forces. By coincidence, we are paying Taunton that day. We will let you all know of the details nearer the time but like to inform you that the team will be wearing special commemorative shirts for which we intend to hold a silent auction for the 20 shirts. Details of the arrangements will follow.

Just a reminder of our annual Fireworks to be held on 4th November, for more information see page 64 of the programme.



And I'd like to congratulate our fantastic young photographer **Emma Cox** on receiving a Highly Commended award in the Rugby Photographer of the Year's Young Photographer category. Well done Emma!





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This season we have set two non-negotiables of which underpins everything we are about. We want to be the 'hardest working team' and the 'most aggressive team' every time we step foot onto the pitch. Hardest working is a mindset that our work rate and ability to play at such a pace & intensity that teams can't live with. When you see your team mate flagging, you pick him up and take him with you, as you know he will do the same when you are in a dark place. This was certainly the case last Saturday against Blackheath, especially after half time, when our inaccuracies in attack and lack of discipline at the defensive breakdown meant we had to withstand a barrage of attacks from a very well coached and threatening side. We were able to stay in touch and didn't panic, believing in our ability that we would be able to turn the tide and with any possession we could muster, would create opportunities which we did, and which we took. Being aggressive is playing with intent, wanting to win every physical confrontation we are faced with, whether it be a one-on-one tackle, a clear out at a ruck or a carry into the opposition. The two non-negotiables come hand in hand, one on its own won't be good enough at this level, against the quality of opposition we face, today being no different in Plymouth Albion.

Plymouth certainly arrive in free-scoring form, having crossed the white-wash 11 times in the opening two rounds of the season. We will certainly have to be at our very best today if we want to take anything from this game, but rest assured confidence is high and we are looking forward to putting on a show for all the home supporters today.

Our Blues started their Zoo league campaign away at Blackheath last week, which had to be one of the hottest days we have ever faced for league rugby.



A scrappy first half had the Blues trailing, but a strong second half performance led to a 41-19 victory and 5 points in the bag.

The opening week of the season, two weeks ago now, didn't quite finish how we wanted it, with Cinderford taking the win at the death. It was one of the most disappointed I have felt after a game, having put ourselves into the lead going into the final 4 minutes, unfortunately we gave Cinderford an opportunity which they didn't need a second invite to take and we all know what happened. The reaction from the boys the following week was spot on, and we certainly improved in a lot of areas down in South London last week. The challenge is to keep improving week on week, adding layers to our game and learning each week from the experiences we gain.

Away from National One, it was great to see England put in a fantastic performance against Argentina last Saturday, even with 14 men for 75+ minutes. Shades of England at the 2003 RWC?!? Some of the rugby on show so far in France has been nothing short of incredible, with France's opening day win vs New Zealand surely the result of the round! I feel there are most upsets on the way.

Finally, I hope you all have a wonderful day up at Silver Leys today. Come on the Bishop's!

Marcus

















THE COACHING STAFF

Top, left to right: Cameron Boon, Konrad McKenzie, Ian Simpson, Darren Orbart.

Bottom, left to right: Manu Vunipola, Rob Faiers, Ryan Clarke, Jon Skelton.





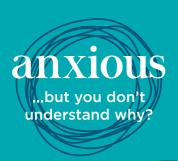
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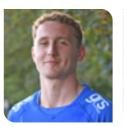
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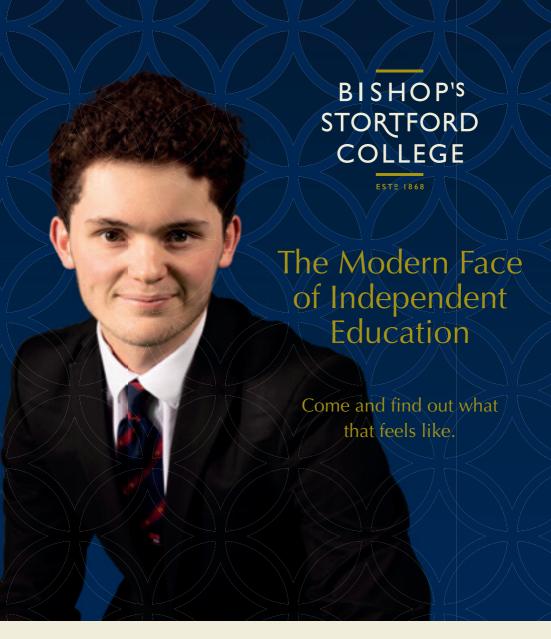


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Heading in to our third season as the development squad Mitres, we now (finally!) seem to have created a constant stream of players from the ever-strong colt's teams. The struggle of previous seasons to field a full squad for every game, is hopefully a thing of the past!

Following our three pre-seasons warm up matches to Hitchin, Harlow and Royston respectively, almost thirty players were involved across the three games, and with the oldest player being 26, and the average age still under 22, we're looking stronger than ever ahead of our first league game away to Letchworth on the 16th September.

Having worked hard to get the boys together over the first two seasons, I'm pleased to say that now, the participant numbers seem to maintain themselves and with the added bonus of Dave Macfie coaching both alongside myself and also as lead coach for the colts, the transition from colts to senior rugby is as easy as it has ever been.

Furthermore, I now work closely with Simmo who leads up the blues squad and helps to provide an easy progression for those playing with us who have aspirations of a higher level of rugby. This was evident when looking at

the blues squads for their pre-season matches. For example, when they faced Old Albanians with a squad of 22, 12 of those selected had played for the development squad the previous season.

So after the heat of the warm up matches, we have. I'm sure, the reality of plenty of soggy British weather ahead of us to look forward to!

I wish you all the best for season 22-23 and we'd love to see you cheering on the development squad Mitres on soon!



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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.

After thirteen seasons in the Championship, in 2015 they were relegated to National One.

Albion were a major force in English Rugby Union in the 1920s having five internationals on their books at one time. Around then 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 National One in 2002, the team went on a two seasons unbeaten streak of over 50 games, starting when the club was in Division Three South.

Albion experienced financial problems a few years back 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 of a thirty points deduction which was applied to the standings of the 15/16 season and moved them to 8th position instead of 4th.

Since then, Bruce Priday has moved on, but David Venables is still the Club's Managing Director.

In 2016/17 they again showed their class by finishing Runners up to Hartpury and one place above now promoted Ampthill.

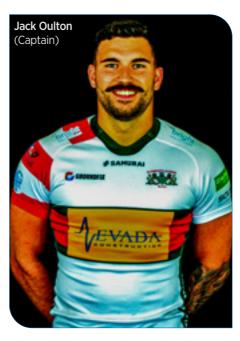
In 2017/18 they finished 3rd, 2018/19 5th, in the aborted 19/20 season after the final standings were announced they were placed 6th although we did famously record a first win against them in the first game of that season, at the Brickfields stadium when we came back from 21-0 down after the first 15 minutes to win 40-42.

In 2021/22 Plymouth finished 11th in National One but only just two points behind us in ninth position. They beat us 31-17 at Plymouth and we won 32-19 at home.



Last season Plymouth finished 5th in National One with 78 points to our 77 points in 6th position. However, we did the double of them winning 31-19 at home at the end of October despite the appearance of a large flock of suspected Devon seagulls on the pitch before the kick-off. We also won only for the second time, at their place 12-24 at the end of February. This away win was considered a memorable win for Stortford as it ended Plymouth's unbeaten home record and made the long trip down to the South-West very enjoyable for the club's away support.

Albion also have a successful women's team and recently formed an Under 18s Academy. They have started Project 150 in the build up to their 150th Anniversary which will be in 2026.





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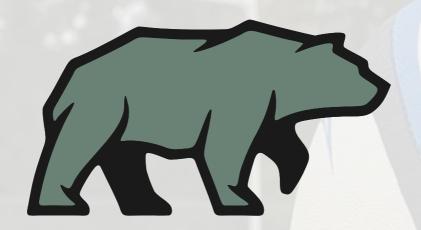
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BSRFC Women & Girls: Release your #InnerWarrior

The season has officially started for our women and girls' teams. The women are back in full flow with training on Tuesday nights from 7.15pm, and the girls returned to their Sunday sessions on 3 September.

Last weekend we held our first Inner Warrior session of the season for the girls whilst the women trained alongside. The sun was shining and the water sprinkler was out – not quite perfect rugby weather, but perfect for socialising with a BBQ afterwards.

For those who don't know, the Allianz Inner Warrior Camps have been created as an introduction to rugby for all levels of experience. The sessions give the girls, aged 11 to 17, and women, 17+, the opportunity to learn new skills alongside other like-minded females. Rugby isn't traditionally taught in schools for girls, like it is the boys, so these sessions provide a great opportunity to experience a new sport at any age – it's never too late to try something new!

To make the session even more exciting, Harlequins and Red Rose Emily Scott came down to give our girls some top tips. Lianna Kearns, Girls' Team Manager says "Even with the hot weather we had a great turnout of existing and new players, and the use of the sprinkler added to the fun.

"A huge thank you to all who volunteered on the day, the event wouldn't



The season ahead for the women: NC3 Midlands (South)

With 14 new players, our 28 women strong squad are ready and raring to go in the NC3 league. Our first match of the season is on Sunday 24 September, with a 2pm kick off at home against Aylesbury. We'd love as many spectators as possible some come down and see what our women are made of!

Fancy giving the game a go?

Each of our teams welcomes girls and women of every shape, size and fitness level. If you – or anyone you know – would like to give rugby a go, drop us a message on one of our social media channels or email ladiesmanager@bsrfc.co.uk







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Saturday 9th September Blackheath 2s vs BS Blues

The temperature was a major challenge, pushing 32 degrees in London on Saturday afternoon. Because of the conditions, the Blues took a shortened warm-up and then hydrated as much as possible to make the best chance of avoiding overheating.

This was a good strategy

Buoved by the return of Blues' Captain Reece Lane after overcoming a concussion, the Blues got off to a slower than anticipated start and conceded a well-worked try early on followed by a much needed first water break of the afternoon. The Blues then responded in the first play after this break with a strong lineout leading to a try from the back of a powerful maul. Not converted.

Unfortunately, after a string of BSRFC penalties, Blackheath managed to work their way into our 22 and powered over to make the score 14-5. However, in the last play of the first half, a penalty around the halfway line was awarded for strong work from the forwards and the decision was taken to kick for goal and was slotted well by Dan Cole.

Half time: Blackheath 2's 14-8 BSRFC Blues

After a "strong team talk" during the break, the Blues came out firing and a break from Brad Comber in his second game for us eventually

led to the team's second try, this time from Bailey Albert, which was converted well by Dan Cole, making the score 14-154to the Blues. The next



try was down to the work of Dan Powell as he read a Blackheath move and intercepted well to jog in under the sticks to give BSRFC an 8-point margin on Blackheath.

Further into the game, the forwards got to show their fitness levels and work rate to give the backs the opportunity to play, which they took with both hands, as swift handling from Alex Gilham and Joe Radley allowed Tom Walker to walk in our fourth try to take the score to 14-29

Two more well worked tries from Charlie Parkhouse extended the lead to 14-43 and after a late score from the hosts, the game ended Blackheath 2's 19-43 BSRFC Blues.

Despite the slow start to the game and the very tough conditions, the Blues eventually showed the work that had been put in during pre-season in impressive set piece and defence while still being able to show the free-flowing rugby that BSRFC Blues are known for.

A strong performance from the whole team ahead of what looks like being a promising season ahead.



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Results from 9th September 2023

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Rams	29 - 19	Chinnor
Birmingham Moseley	21 - 44	Sedgley park
Blackheath	27 - 31	Bishop's Stortford
Cinderford	23 - 17	Leicester Lions
Plymouth Albion	54 - 29	Taunton
Richmond	24 - 31	Rosslyn Park
Sale	21 - 28	Darlington Mowden Park

Fixtures for 16th September 2023

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Bishop's Stortford	VS	Plymouth Albion
Chinnor	VS	Sale FC
Darlington Mowden Park	VS	Cinderford
Leicester Lions	VS	Blackheath
Rosslyn Park	VS	Birmingham Moseley
Sedgley Park	VS	Rams
Taunton Titans	VS	Richmond

National League 1 Table											
Team	Р	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points	Adj.
Rams	2	2	0	0	79	55	24	2	0	10	0
Sedgley Park	2	2	0	0	76	52	24	2	0	10	0
Rosslyn Park	2	2	0	0	70	60	10	2	0	10	0
Cinderford	2	2	0	0	53	45	8	0	0	8	0
Plymouth Albion	2	1	0	1	90	68	22	2	1	7	0
Bishop's Stortford	2	1	0	1	59	57	2	2	1	7	0
Blackheath	2	1	0	1	63	64	-1	1	1	6	0
Chinnor	2	1	0	1	41	39	2	1	0	5	0
Leicester Lions	2	1	0	1	40	42	-2	0	1	5	0
Darlington Mowden Park	2	1	0	1	38	43	-5	0	0	4	0
Richmond	2	0	0	2	55	63	-8	1	2	3	0
Taunton	2	0	0	2	62	90	-28	2	1	3	0
Sale FC	2	0	0	2	40	51	-11	0	2	2	0
Birmingham Moseley	2	0	0	2	57	94	-37	1	0	1	0

BISHOP'S STORTFORD

BLUE AND WHITE



- 1 Toby Hill
- 2 Alex Rayment
- 3 Henry Peck
- 4 Fraizer Kiff
- 5 Harry Charter
- 6 Harrison Langworth
- 7 Toby Tierney
- 8 Will Rogers
- 9 Chris Bolton
- 10 Dan Cole
- 11 Chris Smith
- **12** Austin Pope
- 13 James Ayrton (c)
- 14 Josh Stannard
- 15 Jake Morris

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Ryan Jackson
- 17 Matt Ramzan
- 18 Tom Charter
- 19 Connor Lloyd
- 20 Nick Hankin

Head Coach:

Marcus Cattell

Forwards Coaches:

Rob Faiers Cameron Boon

Blues Lead Coach & Forwards Coach:

lan Simpson

Attack & Backs Coach:

Manu Vunipola

Head Strength & Conditioning:

Konrad McKenzie

Lead Medical:

Ryan Clarke

Team Manager:

Darren Orbart

Performance Coach:

Jon Skelton

REFEREE:

Ben Wood

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ASSISTANT REFEREE 2: Matthew Shepherd

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PLYMOUTH ALBION RFC

GREEN. WHITE AND RED



- Ramaz Rukhadze
- 2 Tom Cowen-Dickie
- 3 Dan Pullinger
- 4 Dan Collier
- 5 Angus Hodges
- 6 Torin Clarke
- 7 Jake Bond
- 8 Sam Dalv
- 9 Jack Oulton (c)
- 10 Phil Jones
- 11 Pita Ratukadreu
- 12 Archie Hill
- **13** Sonny Hirini
- 14 Seta Raumakita
- 15 Tom Putt

REPLACEMENTS

- **16** Harry Wilkinson
- 17 Jenson Boughton
- 18 Brad Howe
- 19 Morgan Lamb
- 20 Craig Duncan

Coaches and Staff Attending:

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Medical

Rebecca Earp

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Blackheath 27 Stortford 31

Stortford got off to a fast start, threatening from the kick-off and took three points from a Connor Lloyd penalty for offside. The home side fought back immediately and, although a couple of threatening moves by their slick backs were frustrated by good Stortford defence, Blackheath were not to be denied and pressure eventually told, when flyhalf, Tom Ffitch dummied his way over for a try under the posts, which he also converted. His side continued to look the more threatening and it took a fantastic solo try from Josh Stannard to take the visitors back into the lead. Taking a long pass close to halfway, he stepped out of a first-up tackle to run into space and scythed his way past a number of covering defenders to score under the posts. Blackheath again threatened but lost the ball under pressure in midfield and were penalised for holding on in their twenty two after a great Stortford chase of the hacked-on loose ball. From the resultant 5 metre lineout. Stortford were able to drive the maul over the line for a try to Harrison Langworthy, well converted by Lloyd. The home side finished the half strongly, though, with an unconverted try out wide from more ambitious handling by their backs and a penalty under the posts at the death - one of many awarded against Stortford at breakdowns.

Blackheath picked up after the break, where they had left off and looked well on top after 20 minutes, when they had converted three penalties, as Stortford's breakdown play in particular continued to find the referee's displeasure. Arguably, the home side failed fully to press home their strong advantage by kicking the third goal, rather than going for a try and they were eventually made to pay the price when the visitors seemed to find a second wind and new cohesion after one of a number of drinks breaks on a stiflingly hot day. The comeback started after half an hour of the half, when Stortford broke out of defence with an initial break from

James Ayrton, taken on by Chris Bolton. The scrumhalf, recognizing that he didn't quite have the pace to make it all the way to the try line,



set the ball up and a couple of quick phases later, Chris Smith was given a gap for the third try, well converted by Matt Riddington. The turnaround was completed 7 minutes later, when a good offload from Fraizer Kiff set Ryan Jackson galloping into the home 22, where Riddington put in a clever grubber kick and Toby Tierney seized on the ball, having the presence of mind to stop and step inside the covering defenders to score under the posts. Riddington converted and the pack were able to see out the remaining minutes with controlled possession rugby against a shocked home side, who had probably thought that the game had been won, when they had gone 10 points up.





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New Player Signings 2023-2024 Season

Unlike the English Football Premier League there is no transfer deal deadline that would highlight the issue of new player signings in National One rugby, but in order to build a successful side for a new season it is imperative for the coaching team to have started a recruiting plan almost as soon as the previous season ends. There will be key players retiring and players moving on as well as the positions in the side that the coaches want to strengthen to improve the team's performance in the new season. Following the successful recruiting campaign at the start of last season eight of the ten players that were in the "Welcome to the Club" article in the Cambridge home match fixture on 10 September 2022 are now established first team squad players.

This season's new signings recruitment so far includes eleven players: five front rows, one second row, three back rows, and two centres, these new signing positions correspond almost exactly with the positions of the last season's players first-team squad players that are no longer in the squad.

The prop new signings are: **Cam Meechan** (Lindenwood College, USA and New Hall School, Chelmsford, sponsored by **MM Property Services**), **Henry Peck** (Cambridge, sponsored by **Westbury Garden Rooms Ltd**), **Matt Ramzan** (Old Albanians, sponsored by **Hanbury Wealth**), and **Toby Hill** (Bury St Edmunds, sponsored by Bit Solutions).

The back row signings are: **Gabriel Seriki** (Sedgley Park, sponsored by **CrossFit** Huntsman), **Matt Mahoney** (Ealing Trailfinders, sponsored by **Nockolds**) and **Mason Nicholls**





(Westcliffe, sponsored by **Winged Boots**).

The centre signings are

Jack Biard (Shelford,
sponsored by Russell Property) and Jamie
Hoyes (Cardiff University, sponsored by
Excelsior Kitchens).





The second-row signing is **Ben Harrison** (Henley Hawks, sponsored by **Steel Builders**). The hooker signing is **Jack Hussey** (Newcastle University, sponsored by **Shield Batteries**)















1.Cam Meechan 2.Henry Peck 3.Matt Ramzan 4.Toby Hill 5.Gabriel Seriki 6.Matt Mahoney 7. Mason Nicholls 8.Jack Biard 9.Jamie Hoyes 10.Ben Harrison 11.Jack Hussey



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Did you know



Club Stortford works closely with the 1st XV coaching team to provide funding for expenditure beyond the resources of the main club. Head coach Marcus Cattell says "We could not remain as competitive as we are in National League Rugby without the help of Club Stortford. The group

League Rugby in 2013/14.

has helped us with everything from match analysis equipment, scrum machine repair and even funding of players' medical expenses to get them back on the pitch sooner. This allows us to develop our entire squad, improve our performance and nature our homegrown talent."

We are always on the hunt for new members which help us broaden the extent of our support for the squad. Both individual and corporate membership options are available. and come with exclusive Club Stortford jacket and ties, pre-match lunches and other perks like access to Six Nations and Autumn Internationals tickets. Alongside this, you'll get discounts to local restaurants like Zara.

Get in touch with our secretary Russell Cattell on 07778 101 988 for more information or to join.



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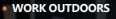




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The Oval Club was formed in 1998 by some Bishop's Stortford Rugby Football Club members who wanted to find a way of raising funds to improve the playing facilities of the Club with the mission statement:



'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 ongoing 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 Mark Smith

October 2022

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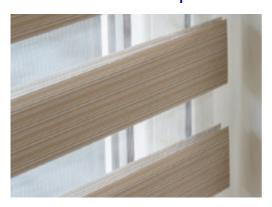
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BSRFC Shop

You only have to be at the BSRFC shop at the clubhouse on a Wednesday evening at the start of the season to appreciate the work that has gone into ensuring that the shop is well stocked for the season to enable members to obtain what kit they require. The club provides Colts and Youth teams with their playing jerseys, but parents have to provide the shorts and socks. All the mini age groups have to provide their own shirt as well as shorts and socks. With the number of sides the club run this is a major retail logistic exercise. Nobody is looking for the new season's club strip with a star player's number on the shirt but are looking for the required club kit to be able to play for their respective age groups. This is the "bread and butter" of the club shop operation.

The club shop also stocks kit for the girls' and ladies' sides, therefore quickly you need a reasonable inventory of kit available for the start of the season. The club shop provides a range of training clothes and coats which includes mid-layers, hoodies, contact tops, technical tees and hooded jackets. This sporting attire may not even have been heard of by the older supporters, let alone worn – watch this space. It will also be a major event when one of the older club members turns up in the club house wearing a pair of the club skinny training pants!



The shop also encourages recycling of boots with plastic containers of "pre-loved" boots in the shop at very reasonable prices.

In addition, older club supporters of course

have their Club blazers, the Oval Club and Club Stortford have ties to display their club allegiance. The club umbrellas, bobble hats and caps from the shop will often come in useful in the winter months.



Elaine Moore, Sarah Wildman-King and Helen Andrews are tasked with running the shop



operation along with a number of capable younger staff running the shop counter sales. The club shop website has been upgraded with the valuable assistance of our kit supplier. Fenton Sports, it may take a little more time to rival Amazon! However.

you only have to be at the club on a Sunday

morning to witness the numbers of colts, juniors, minis and supporters in club kit to appreciate the success of the club shop.



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