

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC

STORTFORD

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GROWN HERO
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26 OCTOBER 2024
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FROM THE PRESIDENT: AL JONES



The last three weeks have seen some really great rugby from our 1st XV.

After a 5-point win on the road at Sedgley Park, we gave Rams a real fright a fortnight ago and showed real mettle in defence and were unfortunate not to take the win. The performance up at Rotherham Titans last week, especially the superb first 30 minutes, was a real step up, against a side who have had a very strong start to the season. Another 5 points on the road was just reward, although picking up another couple of injuries was not ideal.

The fixtures have fallen such that we have faced the 3 sides at the top of the league table in consecutive weeks with Richmond visiting us today.

We've had some tremendous matches with our friends from Richmond down the years, and although we came out on the wrong side of things in both our games last season, there were no lack of points scored by either side. I'm sure we are in for another great game today.

Thank you to today's Man of the Match sponsors Nockolds Solicitors, hosted by Mario Panayiotou we are also joined by the ever present Three Willows & Ace of Lanes. As ever, we remain indebted to all our sponsors for the support they give us. Thank you all.

My guests today are Ashton Hunt, Managing Director of our principal sponsor, Tees, and his wife Julia. I'm also joined by Barry Precious-

White who has been one of our team of match day tweeters for several years now.

Finally, former 1st XV player Jimma Taylor joins me. It was due to Jimma's organisational efforts that Owen Farrell's Saracens shirt from his 250th appearance last season displayed the BSRFC badge as recognition of the Club selling most tickets for 'The Showdown' match at the Tottenham Hotspur stadium. That shirt now hangs in the Clubhouse and Jimma is already organising the ticket sales for this year.

Last Sunday, our minis had their annual festival. It was great to see the next generation have such a great day, even if a little on the damp side. Over 600 kids were taking part and there was some wonderful rugby from the Under 7s to the Under 12s who had their first experience of playing on pitch 1. Who knows if some of these players will be running out for our 1st XV in a decade's time. Congratulations to the Under 9s parents for organising the event and thank you to all the volunteers who helped it run so smoothly.

Next Saturday our 1st XV have a rest week, but the Club will be exceptionally busy as we host the annual fireworks display. Details appear later in the programme, but please come along and support the event which is a vital fundraiser for the Club.

Have a great day everyone, and I will see you pitch side.

Al





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TOM COLEMAN: HEAD COACH



Welcome to all supporters, guests, and sponsors for today's match against Richmond who we are excited to host here again at Silver Leys. I have coached and played against Richmond numerous times over the years, so I know very well what type of challenge we are in for today. I am sure both sets of players will be ready for battle and put on a great spectacle for National One rugby.

Richmond have had an excellent start to the season and remain unbeaten to this point, so another extremely tough opponent to for us to try and break down today. They look a well-coached team who have some experienced players within their ranks to lean on, something we will need to be very mindful of today.

Focussing on us, we have seen considerable progress in the team over the past month, with an improved level of performance that we can be proud of. We know we need more than to just be competitive, but sometimes you have to be patient and allow mistakes to happen to see real growth in the team. We have seen over the last few rounds a pleasing amount of improvement within the team, particularly at Rotherham. This has laid the foundation for two very good away performances, sandwiched in the middle, a frustrating defeat to Rams that I am sure everybody watching that game would agree we could and possibly should have won.

It is worth mentioning how delighted I was with the character the players demonstrated last weekend to win in the manner they did at Rotherham. There is plenty of fight in the boys and when your tight head prop who has moved from loose head pulls his hamstring in the warm-up, that is not a good place to be in, away at Rotherham! But the character Toby showed to hobble through half of the

game and to come back on at the end to help the team was incredible. I would also like to mention Ollie Moffitt who came on to replace the injured Alex Rayment after 30mins. Ollie sustained a fracture to his collarbone just before half time but continued to the end of the match which showed incredible courage especially being a hooker! These boys have epitomised the togetherness within the group and what it means to be a great teammate.

Nevertheless, we will not make excuses and today will be no different. The players have been well prepared and will be doing everything they can to go into the break week with a win behind them.

I encourage all our supporters to bring energy to the team today; your presence is invaluable and makes a significant difference to the atmosphere on match days.

Thank you to everyone as always for your unwavering support and let's make this a memorable match.

All the best.

Tom

THE COACHING STAFF



Left to right: Ryan Clarke, Cameron Boon, Tom Coleman, Rob Faiers, Jon Skelton, Ben Sheath.

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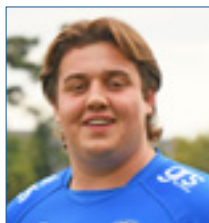
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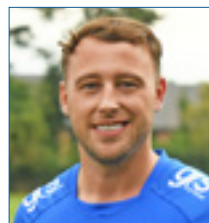
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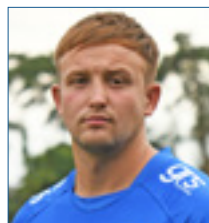
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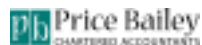
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MINIS FESTIVAL 20TH OCTOBER 2024



On Sunday 20th October, BSRFC Under 9s hosted the 16th Minis Rugby Festival at Silver Leys... and it was a huge success! We had close

to 700 players, from under 7s through to under 12s, competing against 10 different clubs across Hertfordshire & Essex. Whilst the under 12s were the only age group challenging for trophies, it's fair to say the real winner on the day was the rugby! All players, coaches, supporters and volunteers embraced the spirit of what we set out to achieve and a great time was had by all involved. Even the weather was relatively kind to us despite the forecast!

The Under 12 Cup Competition was won by Harpenden and the Plate by our very own BSRFC. Trophies and medals were presented by our fantastic main sponsor for the day, Lloyds List Intelligence, as well as legendary club mascot Story! This year, a record amount of sponsorship revenue was raised and in addition to the main sponsor, we would like to thank the other five age group sponsors as well as the 20+ local businesses who generously donated products and advertising towards the event.



Under 11s

The success of the festival is only as good as the support behind the scenes, and this year in particular, we had a superb team of volunteers led by the Festival Chair Amanda Kempton. 140 volunteers collectively parked 500 vehicles, baked 1000 cakes, sold endless cups of tea and coffee, designed and distributed 700 medals, marshalled and refereed 125 matches as well as spending over 20 hours setting up and clearing down. All of this contributing towards an excellent day of rugby!

Positive feedback from the day has been sent by many who attended, and we are pleased to share a couple of examples of the wonderful comments and photos below:

"The mini's festival was brilliantly organised... a very well-oiled machine, with everything running flawlessly!". Parent, BSRFC

"It is the best organised festival of the lot! You've done your club proud". Coach, Letchworth RFC.

So, all that's left to say is... BSRFC Minis Festival 2024, it's been a blast! Over and Out!





Under 12s Plate winners



U11s girls doing their last ever festival



Storty meeting some of the players



Under 11s loving festival life!



Under 9s Team Sharks



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TODAY'S OPPONENTS



Richmond FC are the second oldest rugby club in the world having been formed in 1861, like Blackheath they were founder members of

the Rugby Football Union. Bishops' Stortford presently have National League One fixtures with both and can therefore by playing these two sides consider themselves to be in very distinguished company in the league. Stortford can also consider their progress through the RFU league structure and the migration from the amateur game to the professional game as especially serene compared to Richmond's adventures.

Richmond started their league career in Courage League Division Two in the 1987-88 season, after moving up and down between Division Two and Division Three it was with the advent of professional rugby in 1995 and Ashley Levett financing the club that led to their promotion to the English Premiership in 1997. Stortford's interest at this time was of course the big money signing by Richmond of Ben Clarke from Bath. Richmond's time in the Premiership was ended dramatically by going into Administration for the 1999-2000 season and then reforming as an amateur club at the bottom of the league structure, progressing from Herts/Middlesex 1 to London 2 South in four seasons from 2000-01 to 2003-04.

Stortford played Richmond home and away in London 1 in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons and lost all four games by considerable margins. We did not play them again until the home and away fixtures during Covid's truncated season of 2019-20 following our promotion to National One in 2017 and Richmond's relegation to that league from the Championship in 2018-19.

Stortford were convincingly beaten at Richmond in January 2020. Richmond was promoted in the 2019-20 truncated season back to the Championship but of course there was no league rugby played in 2020-21 and they were relegated again from the Championship to Division One in 2022-23 to renew our playing acquaintance with them last season.

Richmond finished 6th in 2023-24 with 67 points with 11 wins and one draw. This was comfortably above Stortford in 10th with 56 points although we eventually only won one less game than them. They did the double on us as we lost 50-40 in a high scoring game at Richmond and 14-38 at home. Last season however, the Blues had a big 36-66 win in September at Richmond against the Richmond Saxons.





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WOMEN & GIRLS: FLORENCE FUDGE



BSRFC Women 51 Braintree Vixens 5

BSRFC Women kicked off their season spectacularly this past weekend achieving a 51-5 win over Braintree Vixens at home.

With the weather holding out and following a successful recruitment drive over the summer which brought in a pool of new talent, the ladies took to Pitch 3 to demonstrate their dominance and give a flavour of what they plan to exhibit during the coming season.

Despite being a bigger pack, the Vixens were no match for the Stortford forwards who were really put through their paces from the offset, with two scrums in 10 minutes setting the tone for the match. With new coach, Kyle McDonald, at the helm, the ladies in blue looked well drilled and well organised, demonstrating their technical abilities and really putting Braintree through their paces.

The first try of the match came fifteen minutes into the game, with Captain and scrum half, Jasmin Bice, picking and going from the back of a breakdown at the 5-meter line. The second try followed shortly after with, Kiera Chadburn, making a strong carry out of the back of another ruck.

Chadburn also secured the third and final try of the first half, following a glorious kick from Amy Vernon which saw the ball fly down the pitch from one 10m to the other. Vernon went on to provide the conversion for this try bringing the score to 17-5 at the conclusion of the first half.

Not a team to give up easily, Braintree came back fighting, and the game looked physical from the sidelines, with a handful of stoppages required due to injury. Stortford won a number of lineouts and continued to push Braintree hard, making excellent ground even when they were not in possession of the ball.

Powerhouse, Kim Welsh, provided try 4, dragging defenders behind her as she went, with Becks O'Mahoney securing the fifth try after a magnificent show of teamwork from the Stortford ladies initiated from a line out at the opposition's 5m line.

TWight pod work from the forwards and quick feet from the backs, enabled Elise Sauvary to bring in the sixth try, with Welsh securing try 7 from beyond the halfway line. Despite their grit and determination, Braintree could not keep pace with the ladies in blue and seasoned vet, Harriet Creasey - too fast for their tiring defence - secured the penultimate try of the match.

With the clock ticking down and full time approaching, Georgia Butler, in only her second appearance for the club, secured the ninth and final try with a magnificent break down the wing which enabled Donna McDonald to send the ball flying between the posts to secure a conversion and bring the score to 51-5 as the final whistle blew.

Special acknowledgements should be given to Bethan Jones and Becks O'Mahoney for making their debut appearances, and to the coaching staff - Kyle McDonald, Tom Brady, Dave Walker, and Imogen Spanton - who work tirelessly each week to ensure that the team are equipped with the skills and strategy to confidently pull off victories such as these.

Stortford have started the season as they mean to go on and will undeniably be a force with which to be reckoned over the coming months.

If you wish to become involved or for any further information. Please contact **Kate Hawkins** at ladieschair@bsrfc.co.uk



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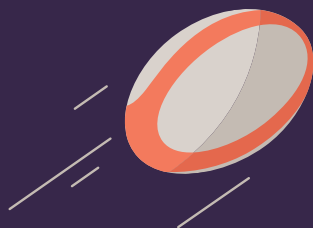
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NATIONAL 1: RESULTS, FIXTURES, TABLE

Results from 19th October 2024

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Blackheath	50 - 27	Esher
Darlington Mowden Park	34 - 38	Sale FC
Rams	24 - 7	Birmingham Moseley
Richmond	43 - 12	Leicester Lions
Rosslyn Park	61 - 24	Ding Crusaders
Rotherham	34 - 45	Bishop's Stortford
Sedgley Park	41 - 26	Plymouth Albion

Fixtures for 26th October 2024

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Birmingham Moseley	vs	Rotherham
Bishop's Stortford	vs	Richmond
Ding Crusaders	vs	Darlington Mowden Park
Leicester Lion	vs	Rosslyn Park
Plymouth Albion	vs	Rams
Sale FC	vs	Esher
Sedgley Park	vs	Blackheath

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1 TABLE											
Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points	Adj.
Rams	7	7	0	0	249	114	135	6	0	34	0
Richmond	7	6	1	0	257	133	124	5	0	31	0
Rotherham	7	5	0	2	254	170	84	5	1	26	0
Birmingham Moseley	7	5	0	2	174	139	35	4	0	24	0
Plymouth Albion	7	4	0	3	209	195	14	6	1	23	0
Rosslyn Park	7	4	0	3	249	162	87	4	1	21	0
Blackheath	7	4	0	3	217	161	56	4	1	21	0
Sale FC	7	4	0	3	153	191	-38	3	1	20	0
Bishop's Stortford	7	3	0	4	158	174	-16	3	1	16	0
Dings	7	2	1	4	196	261	-65	4	0	14	0
Sedgley Park	7	2	0	5	196	178	18	2	3	13	0
Esher	7	1	0	6	168	323	-155	4	0	8	0
Leicester Lions	7	1	0	6	128	238	-110	2	1	7	0
Darlington Mowden Park	7	0	0	7	120	289	-169	2	1	3	0



BISHOP'S STORTFORD

BLUE AND WHITE

- 1 Tristan Smith
- 2 Isaac Bell
- 3 Jake Bridges
- 4 Hamish Ferguson
- 5 Harry Charter
- 6 Harrison Langworthy
- 7 Ollie Jones
- 8 Will Rogers (c)
- 9 Charlie Briers
- 10 Dan Powell
- 11 Alex Gilham
- 12 Austin Pope
- 13 Jack Biard
- 14 Josh Stannard
- 15 Tom Mills

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Murray Davidson
- 17 Josh Cilia
- 18 Frazier Kiff
- 19 Sam Johnson
- 20 Chris Bolton

Head Coach:

Tom Coleman

Forwards Coaches:

Cameron Boon

Defence Coach & Blues Head Coach

Ian Simpson

Scrum & Throwing Coach:

Rob Faiers

Head Strength & Conditioning:

Ben Sheath

Lead Medical:

Ryan Clarke

Head Physio:

Ryan Clark

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- 2 Alex Post (c)
- 3 Ntinga Mpiko
- 4 Chris Te Mete
- 5 Jake Monson
- 6 Lucas Schmid
- 7 Toby Saysell
- 8 Ethan Benson
- 9 Luc Jones
- 10 Alex Burrage
- 11 James Whitehouse
- 12 Sean Kerr

- 13 Henry Cheeseman
- 14 Hamish Graham
- 15 Alex O'Meara

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Conor Maguire
- 17 Jimmy Litchfield
- 18 Max Murphy
- 19 Matt Marsh
- 20 Tom Smith

Head of Rugby & 1st Team

Head Coach: Rob Powell

Men's Attack and Backs Coach:

James Brooks

Lead Vikings Coach & Forwards Coach:

Nic Rouse

Scrum Coach: Andrea Pozzi

Coach: Cadan Murley

Head of Strength & Conditioning:

Mikey Crowley

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Maurice Clifford

Josh Bunn

Team Manager:

Liam Burnett

REFEREE:

Henry Pearson

ASSISTANT REFEREE 1:

Nick Borkett

ASSISTANT REFEREE 2:

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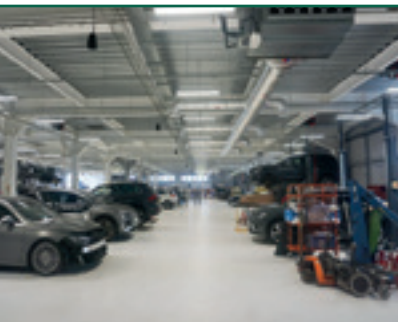
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MATCH REPORT: JOHN ALLANSON



Rotherham Titans 34 Bishop's Stortford 1st XV 45

The visitors started like a train and were a converted try ahead within 5 minutes, after

Rotherham were turned over close to halfway and quick ball to Alex Gilham put the winger into open space, with one pass inside to Chris Bolton seeing the scrumhalf under the posts, giving Mike Cooke an easy conversion. The home side struck back almost immediately, with powerful thrusts from two of their big forwards making inroads, eventually setting up centre, Jamie Cooke for an unconverted try. They were quickly rocked, however with 3 more converted tries to Stortford in the next 15 minutes to bring up the bonus point. The first went to Jack Biard, exploiting a big gap in their midfield to swerve outside his opposite number and sprint in from 30 metres. Roth. countered with a penalty goal but, straight from the restart, Will Rogers swooped for an opportunist try, as the home side were slow to support as their catcher laid the ball back clear of the tackle area and the number 8 was the first to react, hacking on and collecting the bouncing ball to canter in for the try. The fourth try came from a penalty try for an illegal challenge on Cooke, as he caught the opposition flat-footed to run at the line from a position created by his own 50-22 kick. Stortford were now rampant and it took a last ditch tackle to stop Tom Mills scoring in the corner 3 minutes later, but the home side's respite lasted only 2 minutes, as Rogers went in for his second try, after David Hayes ran back a Rotherham kick through the heart of the home defence, with Alex Rayment (unfortunately getting injured in the process) providing the link to his skipper. Cooke maintained his 100% record off the tee to move his side 27 points ahead, but the team had to finish the half with a fantastic defensive stint, as Rotherham's powerful pack hurled itself repeatedly at the try line, producing a series of 5 m lineouts. Stortford dug deep, making tackle after tackle and finally ended the danger when Ollie Jones made a clean steal of another 5m lineout.

The second half was a very different affair, with Stortford now the side under pressure, particularly at scrum time, conceding a number of penalties at the set piece, but adding to their challenges with several, sometimes unforced offences in open play. The home side, clearly stung by the drubbing they'd taken in the first half took full advantage, exerting enormous pressure and repeatedly testing Stortford's still resolute defence. This resulted in a stream of red zone penalties, numerous 5 metre lineouts and two yellow cards, which overlapped, meaning that the visitors were reduced for the second week in a row to 13 men for a period. The second came after the home side repeatedly took scrums from penalties, with the Stortford pack, already under pressure, naturally unable to cope with only 7 forwards. Rotherham pulled back three tries, but Stortford's staunch defence meant that they had to work extremely hard for them, running 33 minutes off the clock, with another Cooke penalty goal in the meantime, leaving his side 27-38 ahead. Shortly afterwards, a Rotherham forward was carded for going into contact, leading with a high forearm and, with his team now running out of time, they made a crucial handling error, trying to run the ball out of their own 22. Tom Mills seized on the loose ball to tap it ahead and regather for an easy try, again converted by Cooke. The home side was down, but not out and they fought back in typically robust fashion to end the game with a forwards' try close to the post and a final score of 34-45.



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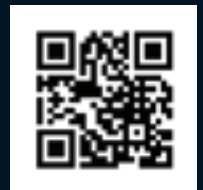
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IN THE SPOTLIGHT: AUSTIN POPE



Austin Pope is one of the last of Stortford's home-grown players having made his way up through the Minis and Colts. Austin made three appearances at number 10 for the 1st XV in the 2019-2020 season as an outside half, it was suggested by the Coaches that he bulked-up to move from playing in the half-backs to the centre. He became a hard tackling, crash ball number 12 centre three-quarter! His breakthrough season was 2022-2023 when Sam Winter's retirement at the end of the previous season, he established himself in the centre alongside the new Club Captain, James Ayrton.

Ideally the number 12 role in the centre should be for a player a bit taller and bit heavier however, when you watch Austin playing there is no way he demonstrates any disadvantage in his play from his size and height. During his first full season in the centre, his extra robust style of play to compensate for any lack of physical presence earned Austin too much "yellow card" attention from the Referees. The yellow card reputation was very cured last season when he was not carded once in the season. We do wonder if this may have something to do with Austin no longer taking to the field with a very severe "number one" haircut as in the previous season.

In addition, any excessive robustness has been channelled into benefiting the side with Austin making several appearances at the end of last season starting in the back row as well as coming off the bench into the back row. Match Officials appear to be much more tolerant of backrow forwards tackling techniques than centre's techniques where their tackling is carried out in much more noticeable in open field situations. Austin considers tackling as a backrow much

harder on his shoulders as you need to be lower to contend for the ball in the ruck. It speaks well for Austin's effectiveness in the back row when he can come on and replaced Harrison Langworthy in the back row, there is no drop off in the robustness of Stortford's backrow tackling effort.

This season Austin has been regularly paired in the centre with Jack Baird, the two are starting to build a good understanding together in the centres. During the recent game against Rams, Austin showed another aspect of his former outside half skills with a brilliant 20/50 kick in the second half from the outside of his boot that faded beautifully into touch. That is not the type of kick you expect from a crash ball centre, it obviously harks back to his early outside-half days.

Austin will become a father of a baby boy this season, will he eventually be a back or a forward?

Austin is sponsored again this season by the Wickman group.





Did you know **Club Stortford** has raised over **£467,000** to help the 1st XV team over the last twelve seasons? Now in our 13th season, it's hard to believe we started as a small working party to support the squad after our promotion to National League Rugby in 2013/14. It was the brainchild of Charlie Dunsford, Russell Cattell and others from the club. Many members have worked tirelessly both at the forefront and behind the scenes throughout the last 13 years and we want that to continue. At our recent AGM **Charlie Dunsford** and **Jamie Baker** were duly elected to take up the ongoing challenge as the New President and New Secretary.



Club Stortford works closely with the 1st XV coaching team to provide funding for expenditure beyond the resources of the main club and our Mission Statement remains a simple one;

- **To ensure BSRFC continues our journey in National 1s League Rugby – this includes the 1st & Blues as one squad**
- **To cultivate new homegrown talent throughout the club drawing from the - minis - youth - colts - development squad.**

We continue to be on the hunt for new members who can help us to broaden the extent of our support for the squad. Both individual and corporate membership options are available, and come with exclusive Club Stortford ties, 2 x Club Stortford pre-match lunches, match reports after each league game and other perks like access to Six Nations and Autumn Internationals tickets. There will also be regular updates for Club Stortford Members from Tom Coleman, our new head coach. Alongside this, you'll get discounts to local restaurants like Zara. Get in touch with our secretary **Jamie Baker** on **07922 422 489** for more information or to join.

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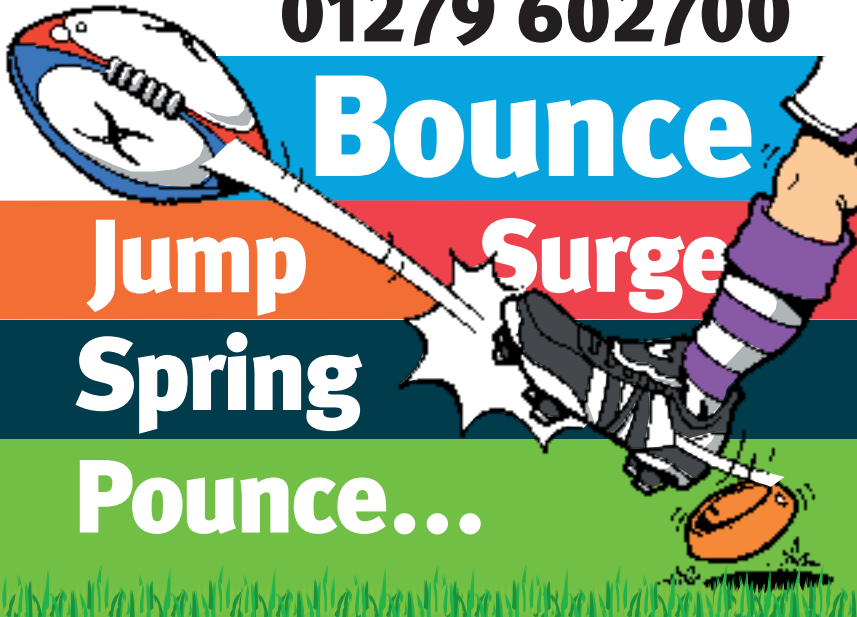
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The Oval Club was formed in 1998 by some Bishop's Stortford Rugby Football Club members who wanted to find a way of raising funds to improve the playing facilities of the Club with the mission statement:

'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 £200,000.

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 of all sections and members of the Club, including Senior Sides, Ladies & Girls, Colts, Youth, Mini and Touch Rugby

Anyone who is interested in joining The Oval Club should contact a member of the Committee below.

THE OVAL CLUB COMMITTEE:

Robbie Kerr - Chairman
Steven Wasley - Secretary
John Power - Treasurer
John Robinson
Mark Caulfield
Mark Smith

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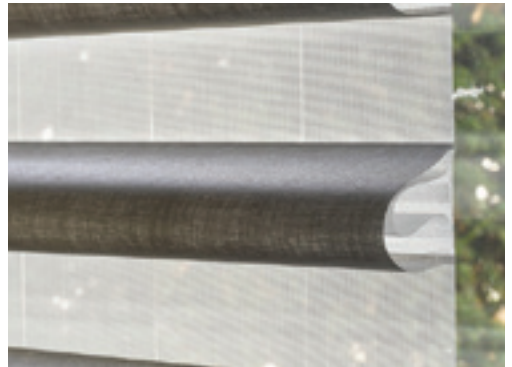


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Plans in for town centre Travelodge

Hotel at Goodyard development would have 92 rooms and parking

Sinead Carr
sinead.carr@bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk

Plans for a 92-bedroom hotel in Bishop's Stortford town centre have been submitted.

Solum Regeneration and Travelodge Hotels Ltd have asked East Herts Council (EHC) for planning permission to construct a four-storey building as part of the Goodyard development at the railway station.

The brick exterior, three-storey Travelodge will be built above 522 sq m (5,941 sq ft) of flexible commercial space at ground floor level.

An open-plan reception lobby on the ground floor will be visible as guests approach from the station.

For visitors arriving by car, EHC has struck a deal to provide 60 overnight parking bays in the spaces in the Lewen Terrace car park at Hockerill.

According to supporting documents, the budget hotel has been designed by JVA architects, who have "extensive experience of designing high-quality new buildings in key regeneration areas".

The 1.4 hectare regeneration site is a parcel of land in the northern part of the Goodyard footprint bordered by Station Road, Seasons Road and Anchor Street.

In July 2018, planning permission was granted for a four-storey, 85-bed hotel as part of the wider development of 641 homes, office and retail floorspace, two multi-storey car parks, improvements to the bus interchange, a north-south link road through the site (Sixtons Road), an east-west connecting link road (Moran Peio Road) and a "public realm".

In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the hotel operator esplanaded for the site withdrawal.

The planning statement says: "Solum undertook extensive marketing efforts to explore new opportunities. This process was prolonged, primarily due to the market's cautious approach towards progressing new sites until stability was observed post pandemic."

"Additionally, the town's ability to accommodate the demand was not carefully assessed, given the substantial supply of accommodation around Stansted Airport."

The new plan, albeit with seven extra bedrooms, sits within the same building footprint as the first scheme previously approved design.

Overall, the refined masterplan for the Goodyard is set to deliver around 720 homes, a minimum of 2,004 sq sq (2,241 sq ft) of commercial floorspace, 1,262 sq sq (11,677 sq sq ft) of retail floorspace, 891 sq sq (9,536 sq sq ft) of



An artist's impression of how the new Travelodge in Bishop's Stortford town centre is expected to look.

flexible commercial floorspace and up to 270 sq sq (2,906 sq sq ft) of flexible commercial floorspace and a further parking facility.

and alternative use retail and healthcare floorspace, two multi-storey car parks, parking for the residential units, and improvements to the Bishop's Stortford transport interchange.

In addition to the homes and commercial units already built, EHC is currently considering a hybrid planning application, with detailed planning permission sought for 178 homes and 2,066 sq sq (22,306 sq sq ft) of

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OFF THE PITCH: RICHARD EVANS



Q1. When did you first start doing articles for the programme?

A1. My first players profile article was for

Jack Scantlebury (Scants) for the Darlington programme in February 2022. There was a photo in the article of Scants, Tom Banks, George Cullen and Will Roberts in the same Stortford U12 side.

Q2. When did you start doing the Around the Club/Off the pitch articles?

A2. I did an article in the first programme of the 2022/23 season for the Hull match on the fourth official role at the club having been prompted by David Royle to get the fourth officials a mention in the program. After Julie North agreed to an article on the fourth officials, this led to me being asked by Julie to starting the series of articles under the heading of "Around the Club". I have really enjoyed doing these articles and have found them all to be very interesting topics and learnt a lot about the club aside from what just happens on the pitch.

Q3. What do you consider your best article?

A3. The article in the Cinderford programme of March 2022 when Julie agreed it was a good idea to write about the intricacies of Loose Head props and Tight Head props. The player profile in this programme was Seb Brownhill so Julie indulged me by including the article in the programme, but I was never sure if she did appreciate the differences between a loose-head prop and a tight-head prop from the article.

Q4. Does your surname signify that you are from Wales?

A4. Of course it does.

Q5. How many seasons have you been doing the fourth official duties?

A5. I am not really a fourth official now as I just sit on the subs bench and

input the match events into the RFU GMS (Game Management System) app. Someone else does the hard stuff running up and down the touchline and liaising with the home team managers, visitors team managers, and the officials. David Lockwood talked me into being a fourth official many seasons back. He told me it would be simple and interesting, it has been interesting, but it has never been simple using the GMS system.

Finally, I would like to give a shout out to Julie North for all her work in the production of the match programme. Julie has very often had to curb my verbose Welsh tendencies when writing stuff for the articles because as a true Welshman I do love a good rugby story, and can go on a bit!

Jack Scantlebury RICHARD EVANS



The photo of the victorious Bishop's Stortford Under 12 of the 2004-2005 season shows four very young players who have progressed all the way through all the playing levels of club in the accepted Stortford way to now have all played for the First XV in National Division One. They are George Cullen (outside half), Will Roberts (prop), Tom Banks (scrum half) and Jack Scantlebury (centre). Scants has put on some bulk and grown his hair longer since his Under 12 days and progressed from half-back to centre. He maybe has not established a place in the First XV for as long as his three fellow compatriots in the photo but he has had the opportunity to play rugby at National Division level, made a major



contribution to successful Blues sides and has played representative rugby for Hertfordshire. This season he was captain and a key player in the club's first away win of the season at Chinnor. Scants has always enjoyed playing against Chinnor and definitely enjoyed playing his part in the 19-23 win for Stortford at Chinnor in December. Fittingly the four Under 12 players in the photo all played in the game. It is also a sign of the rigours of rugby in National Division One that Tom Banks, Will Roberts and Scants all had to be substituted during the game.



In recent times Scants potential appearances in the First XV have been curtailed by serious knee injuries when a combination of the retirement of Johnny Neville in 2018, Covid in 2020 and Sam Winters injuries this year could well have provided Scants with an opportunity to have a long run of games in the First XV. Scants has no regrets whatsoever in having played a lot of games in the Blues and has really enjoyed playing in some strong Blues sides. He has been able to play with and encourage a number of younger players who have followed his path through the different playing levels at the club



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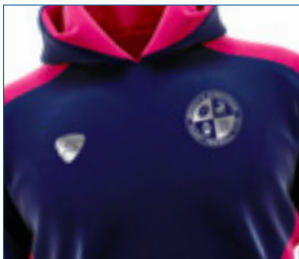
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