

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD RFC

# STORTFORD

IN THE SPOTLIGHT  
**MICHAEL  
COOKE**  
PAGE 43



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# FROM THE PRESIDENT: AL JONES



Today marks the end of our run against 'The Four Rs', as Rosslyn Park FC join us at Silver Leys.

It is a couple of years since we last came out on the right side of the score against today's opponents. We suffered a narrow defeat under the 'Friday Night Lights' in early November down at Priory Lane where, much like Scotland in the Calcutta Cup, struggles from the kicking tee cost us the game.

After a tremendous win on the road at Rams, a close game in defeat against Rotherham, and a tough loss away at Richmond last week, we are looking forward to another good contest this afternoon.

We have a large number of corporate guests joining us today and are immensely grateful as ever for the ongoing support of all of our sponsors.

Russell Partnership long time sponsors of our minis section and great friends are today's Match Day sponsors and our Man of the Match sponsors are SB Civil Engineering.

Additionally, we are joined today by our principal Club sponsor, **Tees**, the ever-present **Ace of Lanes & Three Willows** and the almost ever-present **Nockolds**. We are also delighted to welcome **Grove Gallery**, **Price Bailey**, **Mantle Space**, **Hanbury Wealth**, **Seneca Reid**, **Handlesbanken**, **Group1 Auto**, **Uplands** and, with erections that last apparently, **Steel Build Masters**. We thank you all.

I am also joined at lunch today by Jamie Bishop from Dons of Dunmow who have been our match day coach supplier this season for both the 1st XV and have on a couple of occasions provided us with a supporters coach as well.

Today is our annual Former Players Lunch, and I am delighted to welcome all former, and a few current, players to lunch today. It is great to have such great numbers attending this particular lunch - a sell out this afternoon.

On the subject of our former players, I also wanted to mention today the work of our new Club Rugby Committee, chaired by John Cullen and consisting of Mark McCraith, Sam Winter, Steve Bull and Mick Coleman. They have started vital work with our mini and youth coaches to increase the quality of performance across the entire Club and to strengthen us all the way through to senior rugby. There is an article about their plans later in the programme and I encourage you to have a read, and I thank them for their work so far.

Finally, following a walkover 'win' last Sunday, our Women's Team play Clacton tomorrow afternoon at home where a victory should see them seal their league title. I wish them the best of luck and would encourage you to come along and watch them.

In the meantime, I hope you all enjoy your afternoon at Silver Leys today.

*Al*







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# TOM COLEMAN: HEAD COACH



Another week, another incredibly tough opponent coming to town. It sure has been relentless over these last few weeks and there are certainly some sore bodies to reflect this in the squad.

What I love about this team, is they turn up each week ready to battle and put their best foot forward, and I don't think any of us can argue with that. Yes, we've been frustrated that we haven't picked up some more victories along the way, but we remain incredibly tight as a group, and I'm convinced that we can finish the season strongly.

The last meeting with Rosslyn Park was our first ever Friday night league game. It was a hugely physical battle at 'The Rock' in which both teams played some good rugby. I expect today's game to be no different and the motivation will certainly be there from our side to deliver a top performance. We understand very clearly that

Rosslyn Park have some major threats across the pitch and that we will need to be on our metal to deal with that.

Touching on last week's game at Richmond, on reflection they were serving of their victory, and we ultimately paid the price for not gaining any sort of territory throughout, and you can't live on scraps for 80 minutes and expect to beat a high-quality opponent. We defended extremely well during that first half, but too many individual errors cost us in the second half and Richmond deserved their win.

Lastly, we would like to thank all the supporters who travel far and wide to give the team that vocal support week in week out, it is greatly appreciated. I would love to hear a raucous atmosphere at Silver Ley's today to push the boys on when they need your support the most.

COYB!

*Tom*

## THE COACHING STAFF



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



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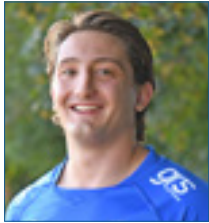
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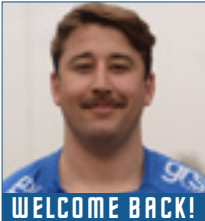
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# CARDIAC RISK IN THE YOUNG



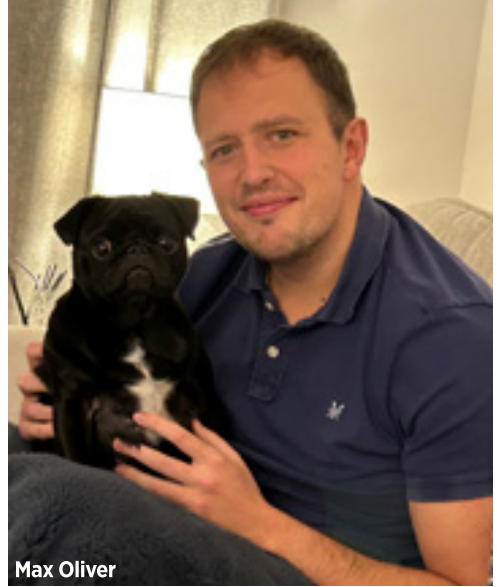
18 months ago, my family suffered a terrible loss when my brother-in-law died as a result of a Sudden Cardiac Arrest. He was 49 years old.

At the start of this season, our Rugby Club family lost our friend and teammate **Max Oliver**, again to a Sudden Cardiac Arrest, at just 31 years of age.



The Oliver family wanted to try and make something positive happen from their unimaginable loss and, with the help of Max's friend Spencer Kersey, set up a JustGiving page to raise money for **Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY)**.

Every week in the UK at least 12 young people die of undiagnosed heart conditions. Since its formation in 1995, CRY has been working to reduce the frequency of young sudden cardiac death (YSCD). CRY supports young people diagnosed with potentially life-threatening cardiac conditions and offers bereavement support to families affected by YSCD.



Max Oliver

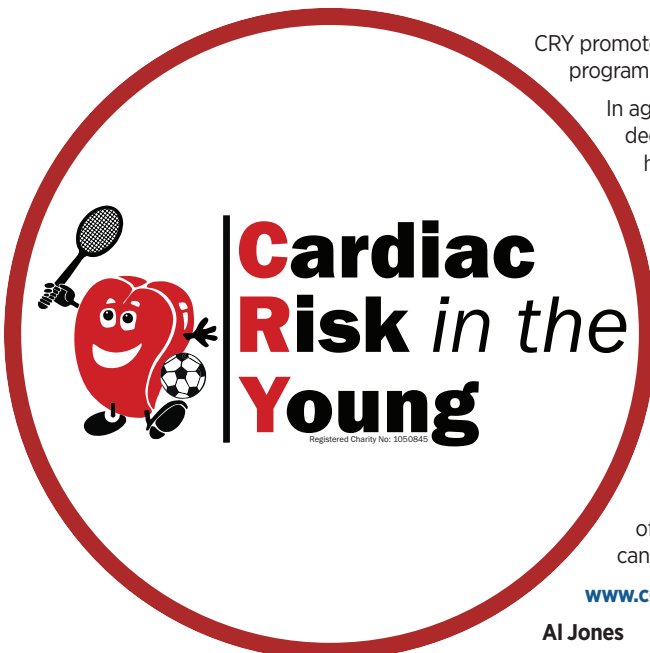
CRY promotes and develops heart screening programmes and funds medical research.

In agreement with the family, I decided to join with them and have the Memorial Fund for Max with Cardiac Risk in the Young as my President's Charity for 2024-25.

Within 2 months, £41,000 has been raised in Max's memory. If we can achieve £70,000, this would be sufficient to fund cardiac screening for 1000 young people. We hope that a number of the screenings would take place here at Silver Leys and as many of our young members as possible can benefit from the screening.

[www.c-r-y.org.uk](http://www.c-r-y.org.uk)

Al Jones





# BURSARY UPDATE: JIM TANFIELD



The cost-of-living crisis hasn't gone away. Even in wealthier corners of the country, including Bishop's Stortford, some families are in a constant battle to make ends meet.

Parents and carers are having to make the difficult decision to reduce expenditure by dropping their child's sports club subscriptions and in doing so release themselves of all the additional costs involved.

The Youth, Girls and Mini Bursary believes that sport is an essential in a child's life and not a luxury. It can of course be extraordinarily expensive for a child to get fully kitted out for their club as well as getting them to training and matches - with BSRFC youth being in the Herts Middlesex League, away games can be as far out as Teddington, which on an early Sunday morning start in winter feels as if it's practically in Wales! Then let's not forget about tours - and while I am always keen to ensure our age groups don't out price some families with costs and destinations -it all adds up.

For those struggling the Bursary was set up two seasons ago to help with exactly this.

We sort out the players with not just okay kit, or lost property, but kit to be proud of and cherish. Boots, training tops and jackets all good quality.

The Bursary will help the parents with travel costs too, providing a bit of petrol money for away games if an alternative can't be found as well as a bit of pocket money for the player for their visit to the all-important festival burger and sweet stall.

Giving the funding for the player to expand their love of the game by helping them afford tours without feeling singled-out and worried about the cash in their pocket is important to us.

You will not know who the bursary players are, that was our goal, absolute confidentiality, and we have so far achieved a decent level of awards with only the lead coach and Bursary chairman (me) with the names of those being helped.

We ask for nothing in return except they love the sport and if they choose to continue playing, that they choose BSRFC as their home.

However, we need funds to continue this support. We estimate that each player on a full bursary cost around £500-£700 per season and it is difficult to rely on the same donors each season.

And while we appreciate all the other areas of support the club asks for, can we stick out our cap and ask for some donations?

If you would like to help, either with a donation or an offer to help me organise a fundraising event please let me know - [YouthChair@BSRFC.co.uk](mailto:YouthChair@BSRFC.co.uk) - and together we can continue to make rugby the wonderfully generous and inclusive sport that gets us all out of bed on a Sunday morning.

## CLUB RUGBY:

Our united coaching initiative which has brought together the club's most experienced coaches into a single space to help advance our coaching teams across minis and youth.

Unfortunately, the wet and frosty weather resulting in the loss of many Sundays has meant the youth section has had to look at alternative days to bring our coaches together - but this will happen ASAP to help give our talented youth section coaches the tools to inspire and motivate their squads. This continued development, we hope, will become a fixture in the coaching calendar and we urge anyone involved in coaching to take part and grow the skill sets which make training fun and results pop!

For any further information or to donate to the bursary, do please get in touch.

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# TODAY'S OPPONENTS



Rosslyn Park Football Club were founded in 1879 by cricketing friends in north London in order to keep the players together during

the winter. There was already a Hampstead Football Club (from which both Wasps and Harlequins sprang), so the cricket club's name was adopted, reflecting the area of Hampstead where the cricketers first played their games in the grounds of Rosslyn House. Their original rugby ground was at South End Green, Hampstead, then Gospel Oak and Acton before a lengthy tenure at Old Deer Park, Richmond until 1956, when Rosslyn Park moved to its current premises in Roehampton.

Originally they wore a blue shirt with white Maltese cross but in 1881 adopted the current red-and-white hoops. It still remains a Football Club, without the need for the word Rugby, and so is correctly Rosslyn Park FC, not RFC.

The club became the first English side to play rugby internationally when they beat Stade Français in Paris on 18 April 1892. In 1975 and 1976, the club played in the final of the John Player Cup, narrowly losing on both occasions

When English league rugby began in 1987, Park was placed in Division Two, which they won. The first team currently play in the third division of the English league system, National League One.

Their clubhouse has two bars, which are named after two of the club's famous players - Andy Ripley and Alexander Obolensky.

Our record against them in National One does not make for happy reading. Played 10, Won 1, Lost 9 but the majority of our match ups have usually been close, including an agonising single point loss (14-13) down at Roehampton at the beginning of October 2021. Last season we again lost both games but the result was relatively close at Stortford in February, when we lost 21-27 (but we lost away 48-22 back in November 2023).

Rosslyn Park went on to finish third in the league last season with 82 points and 14 wins, with Stortford finishing eleventh in the league with 56 points and 10 wins.





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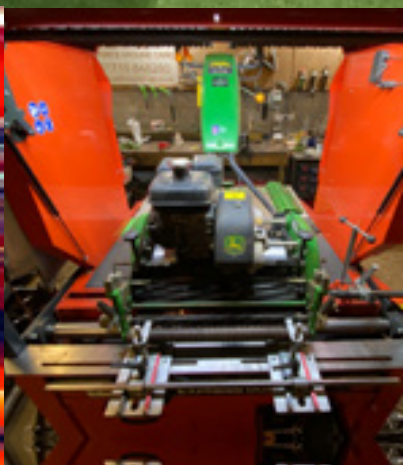
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# WOMEN & GIRLS: SABRINA SCHUTTE



## Match report | Datchworth Ferns 0 - 64 BSRFC Women

This weekend, BSRFC Women's XV returned to the field after an extended break to continue their league promotion campaign.

The match kicked off with a strong start from BSRFC Women, who successfully turned the ball over in their favour within the first 10 minutes. With an impressive display of handling from the back line, the ball made its way to fullback Amy Vernon, who opened the scoreboard with a try, successfully converted by fly-half Rebekah Coppen.

Unfortunately for Datchworth, the kick to restart landed straight into the hands of number 8, Kim Welsh, who set the dominant tone of the game with a powerful run. After a couple of picks from the forwards, flanker Sarah Harvey performed her trademark line-break straight through the Datchworth pack to score a fantastic try, once again converted by Coppen.

As the pressure of the game continued to build, both teams were forced into handling errors resulting in several scrums. Seizing an opportunity, scrum-half Donna McDonald showcased her speed and agility, picking the ball from the back of a scrum to run the entire length of the pitch for another try, with Coppen adding the extras.

Datchworth's strong defence proved difficult for BSRFC Women, who were not in for an easy ride. Phase after phase ensued until a hard hit to winger Alice Borman called for an early substitution, bringing in Grace Rhoden who made her debut in a Stortford jersey. At the lineout, Stortford regained possession before Welsh stormed through to add another try to the tally. Coppen's boot proved valuable again in the conversion.

Despite the scoreline, Datchworth continued to be a force to be reckoned with, testing the visiting side at every given opportunity. Strong collisions led to further substitutions, but a swift pass from the back of a breakdown resulted in the fifth try of the first half from captain Jasmin Bice. Shortly afterward, Harvey scored her second try of the match, which was converted by Coppen, bringing the score to 0-40 at halftime.

The second half saw continued dominance from BSRFC Women who, unfazed by the bitter weather, were passing the ball edge-to-edge to evade and tire the opposition. Another game-breaking tackle into touch by Datchworth resulted in a lineout; although they were unable to compete with flanker Lorell Jordan, who once again stole the ball for a Stortford turnover.

In a bid not to end her season scoring streak, number 8 Kiera Chadburn crossed over the line for another try, converted by Coppen. Crucial tackles from Holly Knight and Larissa Cushway ensured that Datchworth were never on the front foot, forcing the hosts into several handling errors. Working to Stortford's advantage, Coppen scored and converted her own try, followed by a second try from McDonald.

As the match moved into the final phase, Stortford's relentless pressure led to a Datchworth knock-on. The referee blew the full-time whistle to seal a convincing 0-64 victory for BSRFC Women.

### • Forward of the match:

Holly Knight (available for sponsorship)

### • Back of the match:

Jasmin Bice (sponsored by C&S Design Associates)

### • Matchday squad:

1. L Opperman;
2. R Lee;
3. C Kempton;
4. C Day;
5. Y Knott (VC);
6. L Jordan;
7. S Harvey;
8. K Welsh;
9. D McDonald;
10. R Coppen;
11. B O'Mahoney;
12. J Bice (C);
13. E Sauvary;
14. A Borman;
15. A Vernon;
16. H Knight;
17. A Madigan-Rowe Ramos;
18. L Cushway;
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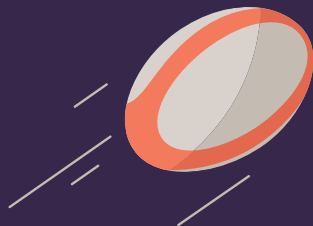
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# NATIONAL 1: RESULTS, FIXTURES, TABLE

## Results from 1st March 2025

HOME TEAM		AWAY TEAM
Blackheath	22 - 25	Sedgley Park
Darlington Mowden Park	24 - 31	Ding Crusaders
Esher	21 - 37	Sale FC
Rams	33 - 47	Plymouth Albion
<b>Richmond</b>	<b>38 - 21</b>	<b>Bishop's Stortford</b>
Rosslyn Park	21 - 19	Leicester Lions
Rotherham	28 - 27	Birmingham Moseley

## Fixtures for 8th March 2025

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

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1 TABLE											
Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	TBP	LBP	Points	Adj.
Richmond	20	17	1	2	624	374	250	13	0	83	0
Rotherham	20	17	0	3	636	429	207	10	2	80	0
<b>Rosslyn Park</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>0</b>
Rams	20	13	0	7	561	385	176	15	4	71	0
Plymouth Albion	20	13	0	7	559	492	67	14	5	71	0
Blackheath	20	12	0	8	620	446	174	10	5	63	0
Sale FC	20	10	0	10	458	471	-13	9	6	55	0
Birmingham Moseley	19	10	0	9	451	439	12	8	3	51	0
<b>Bishop's Stortford</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>-28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>0</b>
Sedgley Park	20	7	1	12	487	511	-24	7	5	42	0
Dings	20	7	1	12	511	626	-115	11	1	42	0
Esher	20	6	0	14	538	812	-274	11	1	36	0
Leicester Lions	20	3	0	17	360	586	-226	5	6	23	0
Darlington Mowden Park	20	1	1	18	368	738	-370	6	3	15	0



# BISHOP'S STORTFORD

BLUE AND WHITE

- 1 Seb Brownhill
- 2 Alex Rayment
- 3 Henry Peck
- 4 Hamish Ferguson
- 5 Frazier Kiff
- 6 Harrison Langworthy
- 7 Sam Johnson
- 8 Will Rogers
- 9 Chris Bolton
- 10 David Hayes
- 11 Alex Gilham
- 12 Austin Pope
- 13 Tom Mills
- 14 Jake Morris
- 15 Dan Powell

## REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Ollie Moffitt
- 17 Tristan Smith
- 18 Ollie Jones
- 19 Jack Biard
- 20 Chris Smith

**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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## RED AND WHITE

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- 2 Jasper Cameron
- 3 Rhys Charalambous
- 4 Gregor Gillanders
- 5 Jordan Martin
- 6 Dan Leventure
- 7 Jack Glover
- 8 Jack Digby
- 9 Ewan Fenley
- 10 Steffan James

- 11 Benji Marfo
- 12 Tom Stanton
- 13 Joe Luca Smith
- 14 Will Glover
- 15 Charlie Walker

### REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Ali Wade
- 17 Sam Clark
- 18 Arthur Ellis
- 19 Charlie Mulchrone
- 20 Ed Morgan

#### Coaching Team:

Kieran Power, Steven Neville,  
Tony Paul, George Trimmer,  
Fergus Farrell, Diego Cost,  
Leigh Groombridge

#### Head Physio:

Lorraine Allen

#### REFEREE:

**Henry Pearson**

#### ASSISTANT REFEREE 1:

**Andrew MacNeaney**

#### ASSISTANT REFEREE 2:

**Michael Maple**

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Due to printing deadlines,  
the Rosslyn Park team  
shown is the team from  
last week's game against  
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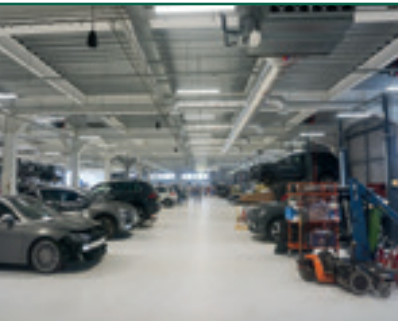
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# MATCH REPORT: JOHN ALLANSON



## Richmond 38 Bishop's Stortford 1st XV 21

Stortford fought a tremendous rearguard action in the first half, getting out of their own half only 3 times and the majority of the rest pinned down in their own 22, yet turned round 7-14 up. Goal line defence from the visitors was superb, forcing error after error out of the Richmond's all-action table-toppers. After only two minutes, a tremendous interception by Mike Cooke in his own 22 broke up a sequence of attacking phases from the home side and his kick ahead was perfectly judged, just about making the Richmond try-line, where Tom Mills won the race for the touchdown and a 0-5 lead, quickly made 7 by Cooke's conversion. With Stortford struggling to string any possession together and the lineout spluttering, they had to soak up a lot more pressure on their line, but proved up to the huge challenges posed by the home side. A great turnover by Sam Johnson on his own 22 caught Richmond off-balance and a chip kick from Cooke bounced kindly for Mills, who gathered at full pace and was able to gallop clear for his second try under the posts, giving his flyhalf an easy conversion. The home side surged back onto the attack, but Stortford's defence continued to hold tight. With 24 minutes gone, it looked as if the visitors had once again repelled a dangerous attack, when Harrison Langworthy worked his way into the middle of a driving maul from a Richmond 5m lineout to win a scrum. The ball was duly won, but the home scrum half seized on the ball, as Will Rogers broke off and was able to dive over the line unchallenged. The conversion halved his team's deficit and gave renewed impetus to their stream of attacks. Stortford, nevertheless, dug deep and were able to battle their way to half time without any further concession.

The second period started as almost a mirror image of the first, with Stortford, this time on the attack, but a poor kick chase allowed the home 15 to break free and find a supporting backrow, who galloped over for an equalising try, with barely a minute gone. Worse was soon to come, however, when Richmond's 10 emulated Cooke's first half feat of intercepting a pass on his own 22, though in his case, he had the pace to run clear and touch down himself for another converted try. Richmond pressed again and, after Alex Gilham had been yellow-carded for a deliberate knock-on, quickly added their 4th 7 pointer, through their 12. Stortford took similar advantage of a swing in their favour in playing numbers, when the home side saw their 12 and 5 yellow-carded in quick succession – the former for a blatant and forceful high tackle that might easily have incurred a red. Within a minute of the second card, Tom Mills went over under the posts for his hat-trick, after his pack had sucked in the defence with a couple of strong drives from a 5m lineout. Unfortunately for the many Stortford supporters present, their team managed to squander the remainder of their numerical advantage, allowing Richmond to dominate possession and, indeed, add 3 points from a breakdown offence penalty. The remainder of the game was dominated by the home side, who finally managed to turn a period of forward pressure into a try after 74 minutes to seal the result. Stortford battled to try and score the 4th try that would have brought a bonus point, but were unable to break down a strong home defence.



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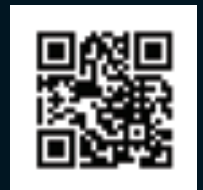
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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MICHAEL COOKE



Michael Cooke is 171 cm tall and weighs 82 kilograms; that is nearly optimal for a number 10 (it converts to 5ft 7ins and 12 stone 12 lbs in proper rugby measurements).



Michael joined Stortford at the start of this season 2024/2025, and played in two pre-season game wins against Tonbridge Judians and Cambridge. He then played in the first seven league games of the season before doing a stint in the Blues, then returning getting back into the First XV for the recent games against Rams and Rotherham. So far this season he has scored 66 points, with kicks and one try for a total of 71 points. He has had one technical yellow card at Rams somewhat harshly awarded (according to John Allanson's report) for not retreating at a quick tap penalty even though a try was scored.

Michael started his career playing for his local school in Andover, Hampshire and then made a number of appearances for the London Irish Academy sides and joined the Irish pathway process. Michael then went to the famous Sedbergh rugby school in the wilds of the North of England and made a number of U18 Irish side and Irish Sevens appearances while at Sedbergh. He then went to University in West London at Brunel University and joined the Ealing Trailfinders Academy that was associated with Brunel. He was loaned out to play lower league rugby while at university and has also appeared for Esher and Sutton and Epsom.

At the end of his three years at Brunel he went over to Munster to attend Limerick University and joined Shannon RFC in the Irish leagues in the 2023/2024 season. He came back to England the following year and joined Stortford for the start of the 2024/2025 season. Stortford was recommended to him by players he knew from his Ealing Trailfinders Academy days. He now works in Sawbridgeworth and lives locally just across the road from the ground near Tesco.

He has played all his rugby at outside half but did play scrum half as well in his school days in Hampshire. He concentrates on accuracy in his touch line kicking and has a good success rate in conversions kicking for wide out kicks.

He is sponsored by Hanbury Wealth and so can be assured that Julie North will find some good photos of him to include in the program.





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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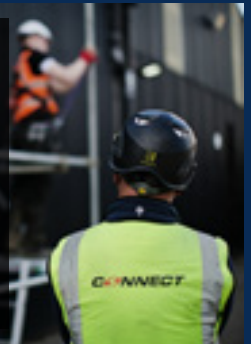


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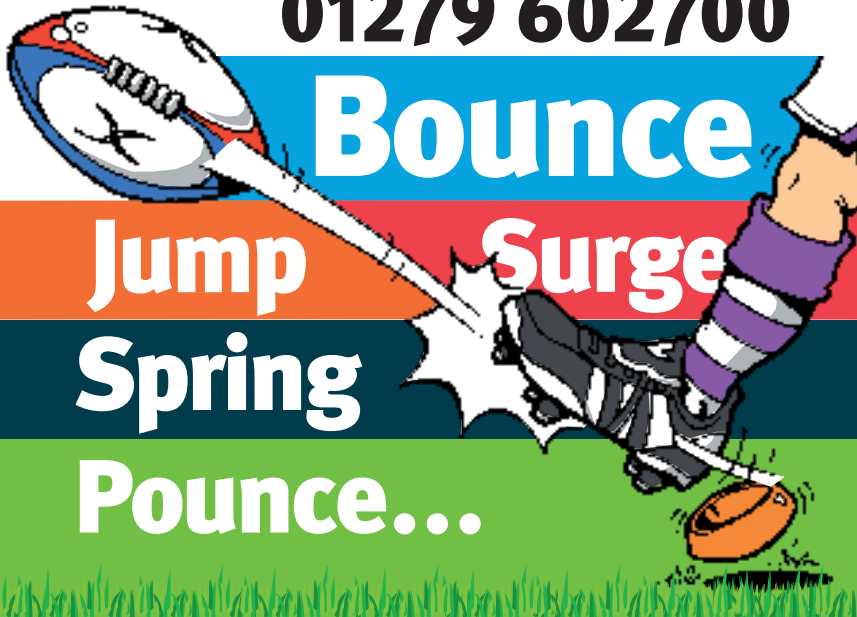
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The Oval Club was formed in 1998 by some Bishop's Stortford Rugby Football Club members who wanted to find a way of raising funds to improve the playing facilities of the Club with the mission statement:

## **'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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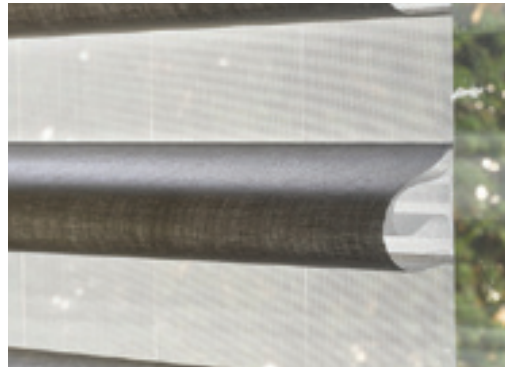


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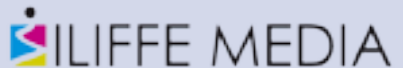


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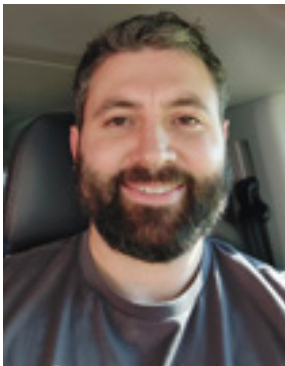
## Genesis of the BSRFC “Club Rugby Committee”

Wherever we are on a match day Saturday – whether enjoying one of Lisa’s fantastic marquee lunches, getting the first of many rounds in at Banks’s Bar, or out shopping and hovering over Twitter (X) for the latest update - we all strap in every week for the roller coaster ride that is life in National One Rugby.

It is arguably the most competitive league, and we should all be rightly proud to call BSRFC one of the top 30 clubs in the whole country, especially given the uneven financial playing field. Neither should we forget that each week we go toe-toe with some of the powerhouse names in club rugby history - Richmond, Rosslyn Park, Moseley, Rotherham, Esher.

The term “Community Club” is easy to bandy about, but in the case of BSRFC we know that words lie at the heart of the club’s success. How the club got here is a tale of massive commitment from a long list of names that, on the playing side, have inspired the rapid growth and success of the Minis, Youth and, more recently, Women’s & Girls’ teams, to complement the continued strength across the senior club. At the same time the tireless work off the field of volunteers across the raft of committees, ground, events and administration is equally crucial. And as for our generous sponsors - we cannot express our gratitude too highly.

The issues of the modern game are not just restricted to financial pressures, or laws and governance which plague the game at the top. We are also in an age where the physical nature of the game is, quite rightly, highlighting potential risks, and can lead to less interest among schools and a reduction in playing numbers in senior rugby.



This is a reality that we ignore at our peril, and we are delighted to highlight that the BSRFC Minis and Youth first aid team have been singled out by the RFU as being one of the best in the country in their approach to player safety.

In a move to unite all the moving parts of the community machine, the club created, at the start of the season a new “Club Rugby Committee” which, without portfolio, has been lifting the bonnet and looking at ways of oiling the different engine parts. On the playing side, for example, it has looked to assist the 1st Team Squad and Coaching team in their efforts to attract and retain homegrown talent and new players to the club, whilst at the other end of the playing scale, looking to help our legion of minis and youth coaches best develop the next generation of first team players for our men’s and women’s teams. On the commercial front the committee is looking to assist the Trading Company and Club Stortford, to stimulate interest from a wider range of potential new sponsors – perhaps from among minis and youth parents or new business entities in the area who might wish to get involved in the club in some way... but have not yet been asked!

It is early days - and more will be communicated soon - but, for now, in the spirit of Community – let’s buckle up and get behind Tom Coleman, Will Rogers and the team for today’s match

**John Cullen**  
Club Rugby Committee - BSRFC





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# MATCH DAY EXPERIENCE

## 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 Head Coach **Tom Coleman** along with Club captain **Will Rodgers** 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 Q&A in the 1st XV changing room, followed by training, games and warm-up sessions with the minis coaches and injured 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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# CLUB SHOP

## OPENING HOURS:

Wednesdays 7pm - 9pm

Saturdays  
(when there is a 1st XV home match)  
12pm - 3pm

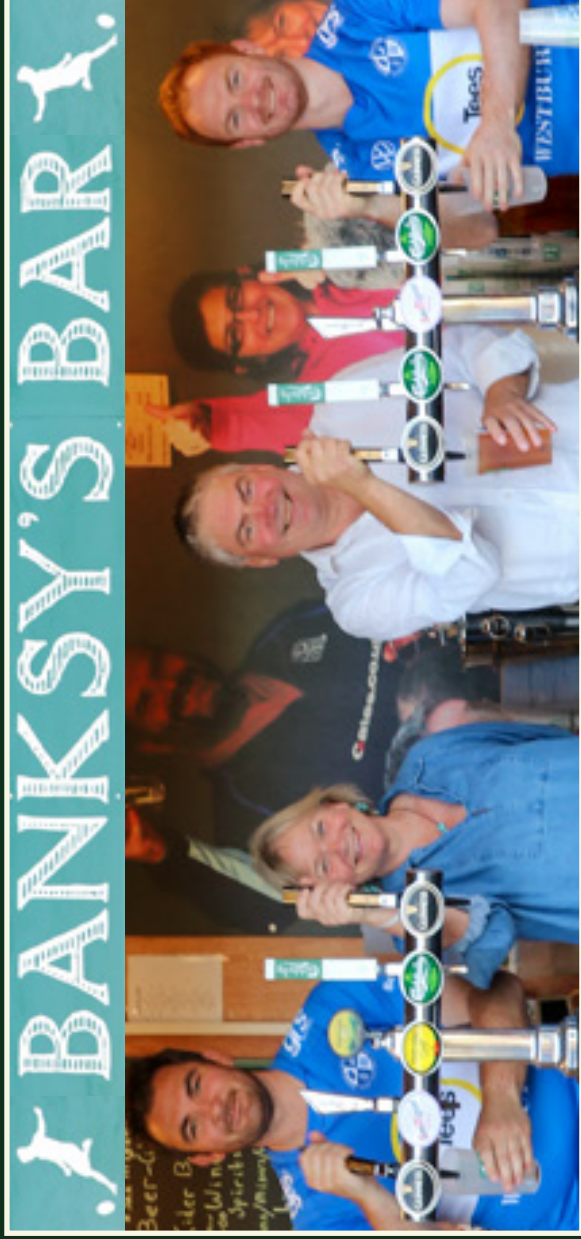
Sundays 9am - 1pm

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