

Surrey Spotlight #3

Apr 2023

HELPING OUR CLUBS TO PROSPER AND THRIVE



IN THIS EDITION

- The Matthews Sisters
- Surrey County Rugby Update
- Kyle Sinckler & Tyree
- Farnham RUFC
- New Website Launch
- Finals at the Stoop
- Old Emanuel RFC
- Offers to Members
- Volunteer Rewards
- Quins Finals Results & Photos
- And much more....

Surrey U16 Girls
Regional Festival
Hertford RFC

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the intro

Chat from the Chair

We are now getting to the business end of the season -with league games completed and cup finals underway. Also I hope that in due course there will be an opportunity to celebrate successes with players, coaches, supporters and all the volunteers who keep our grassroots game going.

The most talked about topics beyond Surrey Rugby have been the proposed changes to the Tackle Height Law and the performance of the England Men's XV in the Six Nations competition. Both have had their problems!

The grassroots game of course welcomes all initiatives to mitigate risk and remove concussion and sub-concussive risk to players. Changes to Laws which are fundamental to a physical contact sport are emotional minefields. Although we all want to see the game as safe as possible, effecting such changes is a difficult and complicated task.



Neither Surrey Rugby nor any other geographic CB was specifically consulted before communications were sent to clubs about these proposed changes. This process led to a furore at all levels. Although much of the flak was about the lack of consultation rather than the matter itself, naturally the manner of implementation without consultation exposed a number of legitimate concerns.

The RFU understood this and has striven to correct the process by widely consulting players, coaches, referees and administrators -in fact anyone who can contribute positively to the debate and the management of change. Time is of the essence. If you wish to participate, please make sure your contribution is heard either online or at the many forums around the country. Gathering all inputs is a herculean task. Inevitably there will be lively debate about the "how" and the "when", even if we all agree on the "what"!

Our own competitions and game development teams have been battling to fit in cup and play off fixtures towards the end of this never ending season of rain, snow, frozen pitches and over played teams.

We have seen an explosion of interest in Walking Rugby and Mixed Ability Rugby as well as strong growth in the Women's and Girls' game. When we combine this with the Game On approach taken to make sure as many players as possible continue to run out as often as possible, it is a remarkable tribute to the volunteers behind the scenes in Surrey and in all your clubs.

We are working to support clubs with a range of initiatives including much needed financial support to many clubs who have lost fixtures and revenue streams through weather or lack of players post Covid. It is clear that the recovery will continue for some time. Although we have not lost a lot of clubs, we have lost a significant number of teams. Clubs are seeing that many players do not want 35 games per season and may not have an appetite for end of season cup competitions, perhaps favouring Sevens as an end of season activity.

Our own efforts have included a renewed focus on social media. Not only does this keep the people informed of developments but is also as a cost effective delivery medium for delivery of support services including coaching and referee development.

We have been working hard to revamp and update our website as a source of reference data and a news board. For this I am grateful to Joanna Gordon, a recently recruited volunteer who has injected boundless energy into this activity. The new website is now live. We hope you find it's an improvement both in terms of information and ease of use.

I hope the balance of the season provides more entertainment and enjoyable rugby both at local and international level. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Awards night and Volunteer Recognition event. Please keep your eyes open for the forthcoming dates.

Best Regards
John Pownall
Chairman

the game

Surrey Quins Cup - Colts

Thank you to all who took part and to those who contributed to a successful Finals Day, in particular London Irish for hosting us all (again) and the LSRFUR for providing us with so many great society referees. Finals Day average match score was 23-12 so winning a margin of 11 points (same margin as Colts Waterfall Finals Day) with 100% completion of all pool matches

Tier 1 - Oak	Gold	Bronze	5th/6th	7th/8th
	Farnham	Old Reigatians 29	Old Ruts 7	Rosslyn Park 29
	v	v	v	v
	Guildford	Dorking A 31	Teddington A 15	Richmond A 12
@ The Stoop, Sat 22nd April				
<p>The Gold Final takes place at The Stoop on Saturday 22nd April. The Bronze final was won with a last play try by Dorking to secure a thrilling comeback win and proving the old sporting adage that rugby is indeed a game of two halves... Teddington edged out Old Ruts in the battle of the Blue and Yellows, and Rosslyn Park took the win against Richmond.</p>				

Tier 2 - Twickenhar	Gold	Bronze	5th/6th	7th/8th
	Wimbledon 22	Esher 31	London Welsh A 15	Reeds 22
	v	v	v	v
	Chobham 0	Cobham 19	Sutton & Epsom 7	Battersea 12
<p>Wimbledon secured the Gold final against Chobham, Esher finished strongly to pull clear of Cobham after the match was deadlocked at 19-19 for a long time, Welsh pipped S&E for 5th and Reeds beat Battersea in the early KO battle for 7th.</p>				

Tier 3 - Stoop	Gold	Bronze	5th/6th	7th/8th
	Quins Ams 13	Haslemere 24	Barnes 36	London Irish W
	v	v	v	v
	Vandals / OCs 12	Croydon BaaBaas 12	Camberley 19	Cranleigh L
<p>Another thriller saw Quins Ams beat Vandals OCs by the narrowest of margins, Haslemere took the honours against the Croydon BaaBaas and Barnes pipped Camberley for 5th spot. Especially great to see the composite teams working so well and giving so many players a chance to compete in the competition - credit to the respective coaches for making it happen.</p>				

Tier 4 - Hampstead	Gold	Bronze	5th/6th	7th/8th
	Old Emanuel 12	Richmond B 5	Teddington B 22	
	v	v	v	
	Reigate 8	Dorking B 32	London Welsh B 12	
<p>A last minute try saw Old Emanuel pip Reigate to the win in the Gold final, Dorking beat Richmond to Bronze and Teddington's late try added a final flourish to their close match with Welsh. We hope to expand the number of B teams in next season's competitions to provide competitive rugby for as many players as possible.</p>				



Harlequins

The Oak Gold Final took place at the Stoop on Saturday 22nd April. Check page 51 for the winners!

More team photos on the [website](#)

the game

Colts Gallery



Dorking A Colts - winners of the Oak Bronze



Wimbledon Colts - winners of the Twickenham Gold



Esher Colts - winners of the Twickenham Bronze



Quins Ams Colts - winners of the Stoop Gold



Haslemere Colts - winners of the Stoop Bronze



Croydon BaaBaas - runners up for Stoop Bronze



Dorking B Colts - winners of the Hampstead Bronze

the game

Please call me Miss or Ref

“Yes Sir” might be a well-worn expression on a rugby pitch but things are changing on rugby pitches across Surrey. With many people taking up refereeing after deciding their playing days are behind them, the average referee is a “mature” male. But this season a new initiative, the Surrey/SW London FYMO project, is changing that. What is a FYMO? A Female Young Match Official.



“Becoming a referee has made my own playing game a lot better. I also love encouraging the younger girls I have reffed to make them better players.”

Ellie, 15, Cobham Rugby Club



The FYMO programme is open to young women aged 14+ and participants do not need to have any knowledge of the laws or have played rugby before. All FYMOs will be fully supported during their training and an experienced mentor will accompany them at all tournaments and matches. In addition to increased understanding of the laws and the game the programme provides an opportunity for participants to gain confidence, improve their communication and management skills, while having fun in the process. It can also contribute to Duke of Edinburgh awards and is a great addition to any CV/application letter/interview preparation. FYMOs start refereeing at U12 level and move up the age groups as they gain confidence and experience. As they can referee up to their age group, one week they might be your opposition, next week your referee! There are also opportunities to be an AR (Assistant Referee) in exciting games, including Harlequins academy matches, to learn from more experienced referees as part of a team of 3.

“Refereeing has helped me to develop my leadership skills. The community has welcomed and encouraged me to progress further.”

Natalie, 16, Chobham Rugby Club.

If you think you or someone you know is ready to give it a try, the first step to become a referee is to sign up to a course. The London Society of Rugby Football Referees runs regular “Take up the whistle” courses. This course is held over two evenings at clubs across Surrey and covers referee basics for both age grade and senior rugby. After completing the course you are ready to step onto the pitch. You can either referee at your local club (for junior rugby up to U14) and/or sign up to the London Society of Rugby Football Referees (U16 and above). The next level up is the RFU’s England Rugby Referee Award which is a longer training programme that runs over the course of a season. It involves 2 full days of in person training as well as online seminars. It is primarily aimed at candidates looking to referee U16/U18 and Senior Rugby. Funding is available to FYMOs from Surrey Rugby to cover the cost of both of the courses.



the game

Please call me Miss or Ref



"Refereeing is a great way to stay active and learn new skills even if you don't play. It has given me the opportunity to challenge myself and do things I never would have done before."

Molly, 16, Esher Rugby Club

With the RFU hosting the Rugby World Cup in 2025, there has never been a better time to get involved in women's rugby, in particular match officiating.

To join the Surrey/SW London Society FYMO program or find out more information: email femaleYMO@surreyrugby.co.uk. Keep an eye out on the pitches for the FYMOs and remember there is no match without the referee.

"It's fantastic to see the next generation of female referees coming through. Being a referee can be daunting but it's a great way of being involved in the game and helps to develop numerous skills. And it's great fun!"

Sarah Stanley, Northern Hemisphere's first female International Referee



Katrina Hamm
Surrey Rugby Young Female Referee Development

the game

Surrey Schools



KCS Wimbledon School

Surrey Schools Finals at Twickenham is always a favourite day on the Surrey Rugby Calendar. This year was no different, with a herculean effort by both Trinity and KCS Wimbledon in their respective finals, the U18s and the U15s. Unfortunately it wasn't their day, but they provided a superb day of rugby. Watching their school mates arriving in coach loads, clapping them into the changing rooms and then cheering them on from the stands was heart-warming. Eagle-eyed Surrey Rugby Hon Sec Sue Gardner even spied Connor O'Shea there, spotting young talent



Trinity School

the support

Your CB out and about

Would you like a visit from our team at Surrey CB? We'd be happy to get to know you and your club better. We can also send along someone someone specific - for example Club Development if you need help with a facilities issue or Comms if you've got a story to share in the Newsletter.

Recent visits (1) Weybridge Vandals RFC hosted Trinity RFC. Surrey Rugby members Joanna and Ty met John Crate, Trinity ex President and one of Surrey's current RFU Council Members, and Kevin Keaney, President of Weybridge Vandals.

(2) & (3) Cobham hosting London Irish Amateurs. Ty and Joanna met Gerry Gallagher, Chair Kevin Flynn and Terry Long of London Irish ARF and enjoyed a beer after the game with the Chair of Cobham Steve Heard.

(4) A beautiful day saw Joanna visiting Reeds Weybridge RFC and meeting their President, Simon Walls, their Chair Ed Peters and Hon Sec Dave Woollatt.



John Crate, Joanna Gordon, Kevin Keaney and Tyrone Lawless



Gerry Gallagher, Kevin Flynn and Terry Long with Joanna



Kevin Flynn, Tyrone & Steve Heard



Simon Wallis, Ed Peters and Dave Woollatt with Joanna

the support

Your CB out and about

Have you got a celebration, major achievement or want one of your members to be recognised for outstanding contribution? We can arrange presidential visits - where one of our team of Past, Current and Deputy President can come along and join you to celebrate a special volunteer or to help present awards. We can even provide rewards from us!

- 1) Enjoying watching Hazelmere v London Irish at Hazelmere
- 2) Old Tiffinians invited one of our Council Reps to a pre match lunch
- 3) Our Chair of Comms enjoying a fun lunch at London Irish ARFC
- 4) A great day of rugby at Barns Elms watching London Exiles
- 5) Visiting Old Blues



Tyrone & Hazelmere Coach and Fixtures Secretary for Juniors Darrell King



Paula Carter



President Bart O'Connell & Joanna



London Exiles President Tim Edghill & Tyrone



Tyrone & Old Blues Fixtures Secretary Eric Gimber

comms

New Website



WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR WEBSITE?

After hearing criticisms about our website, we've taken action - and after a lot of hard work over the past couple of months our new website is now live!

We'd like to invite you to have a look around. Click here: [SURREY RUGBY WEBSITE](#). Hopefully you'll find it practical, interesting, helpful and current.

Any glitches you might find, or suggestions for improvements, please let our Chair of Comms & Marketing Joanna Gordon know via comms@surreyrugby.co.uk

WHAT DO WE DO?

We were given the remit - Surrey Rugby does loads but no one knows what we do. Taking on that challenge we realised a lot of people know we do Game Fixtures and run the Surrey teams, but might not know about all the other diverse areas where we can assist.

Check out the [WHAT WE DO](#) section to find out more and get in touch so we can help.



WHO DOES WHAT?

Check out [Surrey Rugby Structure](#) to find out who does what, learn a bit more about them and get direct contact information.

opportunities

Rugby 7s Coaching



Surrey Rugby are pleased to announce that they have arranged a series of Rugby 7s coaching Masterclass sessions for senior and junior coaches in April and May with world leading 7s coach Mike Friday.

Mike has a proven track record of coaching 7s at the highest level with England, GB, Kenya and USA. He has coached at the Commonwealth, and Olympic Games as well as World Cup 7s.

Mike will be focussing on up-skilling Surrey coaches on attack and defence patterns alongside kickoffs and ball retention. There will also be a session on physical fitness for 7s. Please look out for final course details on the Surrey Game Development section of the website and social media posts.

Chair of Game Development Tyrone Lawless said “I’m thrilled to be able to offer this exciting and innovative coaching opportunity to all Surrey coaches. Working with Mike will really enhance the coaching levels of 7s going forward. All sessions will be free to Surrey coaches.”

England Under 18s



Our Surrey Under 18 Harlequins PDG England U18s players celebrating their 62-7 win over Wales U18. Lucas Schmid, Sean Kerr, Tom Humphreys, Conor Byrne and Frank McMillan . The future is looking bright!



the game

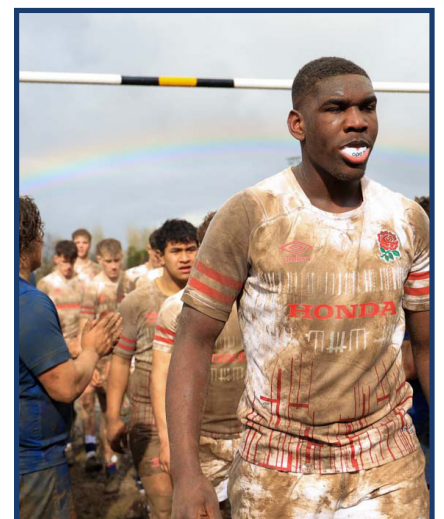
England U18 Boys



On 18th March England's U18 Boys played France at Esher RFC. It was a very wet, muddy day but the rugby was off the charts. Unfortunately we were narrowly defeated, but well done to everyone involved and a huge thank you to the over 2,000 spectators who came along to support the lads.

Surrey was proud to see players from our clubs selected; Starters - Kepu Tuipulotu & Rory Taylor from London Irish, Lucas Schmid, Sean Kerr & Conor Byrne from Harlequins. Replacements: Ralph McEachran (London Irish) & Frank McMillan (Harlequins).

[For full gallery of images click here](#)





the perks

Rewarding Volunteers

Surrey Rugby were busy rewarding our amazing volunteers at the recent Six Nations games!

England Scotland saw Caroline Pitts (Youth Discipline Chair) and Katrina Ham (FMYO Development) hosted by Councillor John Crate with a pre-match lunch and a fabulous view.

Ty Lawless hosted Old Reigatians Girls Under 16 Coaches in the Honda hospitality section and Sue Gardner invited Amy Atkinson (Rugby United), Andy Drummond (Manager of Surrey Under 20s Men) and Dom Palacio (Surrey Coach Development) into the CB Bar for drinks before enjoying the close fought game.



Sue Gardner, Amy Atkinson, Dom Palacio & Andy Drummond



Cllr John Crate, Caroline Pitts & Katrina Hamm



Ty and the Reigatians Girls Under 16 coaches



the perks

Rewarding Volunteers

The Italy match saw Surrey rewarding more volunteers. Referees Peter O’Keefe and Charlotte McGee enjoyed pre-match hospitality in the Honda section. So did Surrey’s Chair of Club Development Geraint Thompson as he hosted a Surrey Partner, Laurent Boudlet from Top Tasting Tours. Also having a blast were MYMO’s Matt Perry and Ely Heart.

At the French game Surrey Vets Mighty Oaks Captain & Surrey Vets League Secretary Cam Barlow, Chris Cloughly & Gary Stennett were invited along.



Charlotte McGee & Peter O’Keefe



Laurent Boudlet & Geraint Thompson



Matt Perry & Ely Heart



Cam Barlow



Chris Cloughly & Gary Stennett



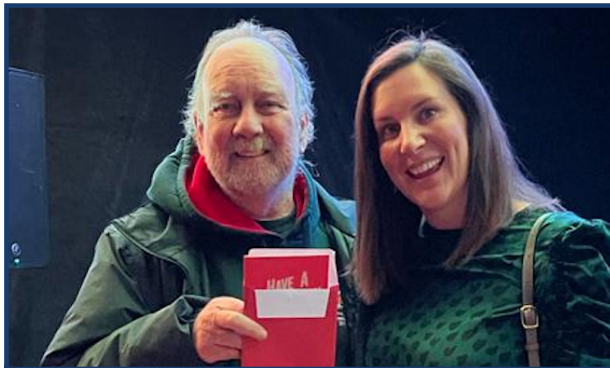
the perks

Rewarding Volunteers

Surrey Rugby Committee members are delighted to be invited along to club events to present awards or certificates to deserving volunteers. We are also often able to provide a great prize ourselves. Get in touch if you have an award ceremony coming up.

On the 11th February past President Nigel Heslop attended a Chobham's Awards Evening with 150 of their amazing volunteers. Surrey Rugby organised a draw giving each attendee a ticket. Laura Lane was the lucky winner - her prize was a visit to the Shard and dinner for two at the nearby Maro Pierre White restaurant.

At the London Irish Amateurs Volunteer event Surrey Rugby Volunteer Lead Keith Heal presented Trevor Burns - Under 21st Coach of London Irish Amateurs - with a Surrey Rugby reward of a meal for two at the Shard. Colm Murray - Mini and Youth Coach and Miriam Brown - Honorary Secretary also attended.



Nigel Heslop Chobham Volunteers Evening



Colm Murray, Miriam Brown and Trevor Burns



Gerry Gallagher & Ray 'Merlot' McLennan

More news from the London Irish ARFC! Here we have two members modelling the regular club tie (left) and the special striped tie. The striped tie is awarded to only two exceptional players per season. Merlot is a youthful 84, beginning his rugby career at London Irish when he was 23 and remaining as a dedicated volunteer with them all his life! What a great idea.

the players

The Matthews Sisters

Having been born in Frimley Park Hospital, where both Jonny Wilkinson and Toby Flood were also born, and living in their parents' house backing onto Watchetts Recreation Ground, it is not surprising that during their formative years, both girls spent a lot of time at Camberley Rugby Club.



Whilst attending the local school, Watchetts Junior School, which backs onto Camberley's pitches, and then Kings International College opposite their home, their father Dave, wanted them to take up athletics, but the local club said they were too young. So instead Dave took them to Camberley Rugby Club to join the Mini section. Fran started playing when she was 6 and Alex began even younger when she was only 3. They played at Camberley from 1995 to 2007 during which time Dave became Hon Treasurer for the Youth section of the Club for several years.

Following school, Fran went to East Durham & Houghall Community College in Durham where she took a BTEC National Diploma in Sports Fitness. England prop Dave Wilson was a student at the college. Whilst there she also played for Blaydon before joining Richmond on completion of her course. Fran has represented England at 5 levels: U19, U 20, A, Sevens and Seniors. Her first game as an England senior player was against Sweden and she gained 26 caps during her playing career. Her favoured position was left wing.



After retiring from playing, Francesca obtained Qualified Strength & Conditioning Coach and Level 3 Rugby Coach before going out to Australia. She now lives in Sydney and is Head of Athletic Performance for NSW Women Waratahs, who play in the Super W competition. She is also Strength & Conditioning Coach for World Rugby, working with the match officials on the World 7s circuit.

Alex attended the same schools as her sisters (two other sisters do not play rugby) and she played at Camberley from 1997 to 2007. On turning 14 went to London Irish for a couple of years before moving to Richmond and linking up with her older sister. Alex attended Hartpury College, where she was on the AASE (Advance Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence) programme and was captain of the College team. Alex burst onto the international scene in 2011 and was among the youngest members to lift the Rugby World Cup trophy in 2014, coming off the bench to play in the last 15 minutes of the final. She studied Sports Psychology at Roehampton Uni and worked as a PA for children with disabilities.

the players

The Matthews Sisters



Alex featured in every game of the 2017 World Cup in Ireland, receiving the Player of the Match for her performance against the USA and started the final against New Zealand. Contracted to 7s after the 2014 World Cup, she returned for the 2017-18 season and took Bronze at the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Voted RPA Women's 7s' Player of the Year 2018, Alex played in all five HSBC World Rugby Women's 7s Series events that season. She was a key member of the England squad victorious in their Olympic qualifying event in Kazan.

Alex represented the Red Roses in Autumn 2020 and the 2021 Six Nations. She was part of the Team GB squad who finished fourth at Tokyo 2020. Alex played in the 2021 Autumns and Six Nations, earning her 50th cap in France. To date she has 56 caps, was awarded back to back RPA Women's 7s Player of the Year 2018 & 2019, was nominated for Player of the Year in 2022 and selected in the Dream Team at No.6. Alex currently plays for Gloucester-Hartpury.



Alex is grateful for the coaching she received from her mentors Bob Jones and Ron Campbell of Camberley. They still provide moral support, as do both her parents, Dave and Vanessa.

the players

Interview with Alex

It was Alex's childhood dream to represent her country, as her older sister had done. "I followed my sister, and wanted to be better than her. That was a big driving force growing up! I didn't think the age difference meant anything so was constantly trying to push myself to be better. I also learnt a lot from her about a rugby career and injuries."



After finishing with Camberly RFC mixed Minis and Juniors at 12, Alex continued training on a Friday night with the boys until she was 13, to get the extra challenge she was looking for. "They were always very welcoming," Alex says, "Fran, three years older than me, had paved the way and then I joined in. We were the only two girls playing with around 40 boys in our age group. My favourite thing about that time was the inclusiveness, the wide range of individuals you got to know who you didn't necessarily speak to at school, different people brought together because they like chucking a ball around on a Sunday morning. Early on you gain a better understanding of people and other perspectives."

A highlight in her rugby journey was going to Hartpury College on a scholarship; it gave her the freedom and independence to enable her to do her A levels but also train like a professional athlete. She trained four times a week with 25 women/girls sharing the same passion for rugby.

When asked how the women's game has changed, Alex says, "The first World Cup I went to watch in 2010 had only friends or family in the stands. Now at a World Cup Final you're filling out Eden Park! The interest and number of girls who are picking up a rugby ball now has grown massively. Starting the Premier 15s for women 4 years ago has also led to lots of traction from other nations. Women are now playing for teams like Gloucester-Hartpury or Exeter, getting full-time training, a nutritionist etc, the same as the men's professional game. I train from 2pm til 9:30pm. However, not everyone is professional, so that makes it harder, but lots of clubs are creating jobs so girls can work at the club and still fit in the training, which is fantastic."

For Alex the hardest thing about rugby is dealing with concussion. "I think; is it just in my head? Am I overthinking things? As there's no physical injury it's a hard one to manage. You really need to be honest with yourself and consider the future wellbeing in life."



Finally, what are Alex's top tips for young girls starting out? "Make mistakes. Don't take it too seriously, too early. When I was younger everything was about getting to the next step, progression up. The way the game is now you're getting picked up for your club/England at 23/24. Back then if you weren't noticed by 18 you might never play for England. So don't put pressure on yourself. Enjoy it, because that's how you learn."

the game

Surrey Quins Cup - U15

Many thanks to all who took part and helped make the Under 15 Finals a success. Special thanks to the three clubs who hosted; Seven Under 15 Finals matches were held at Esher RFC, five matches at Chobham RFC and three matches at Guildford RFC.

<p>Quins Cup: Warlingham V Camberley @ the Stoop 21/4/23</p>	<p>Quins Shield: Guildford (24) V (17) Wimbledon Winner: Guildford</p>
<p>Quins Plate: Reeds Weybridge (15) V (34) Rosslyn Park A Winner: Rosslyn Park</p>	<p>Quins Bowl: Farnham A (35) V (12) OWW Winner: Farnham A</p>
<p>Quins Trophy: Richmond A (13) V (18) London Irish Winner: London Irish</p>	<p>Quins Jug: Sutton & Epsom V OC's A Postponed: 21/4/2023</p>
<p>Stoop Cup: Effingham (10) V (10) Teddington Winner: Teddington (first Scorer)</p>	<p>Stoop Shield: London Welsh (22) V (17) Reigatian Winner: London Welsh</p>
<p>Stoop Plate: Warlingham (26) V (7) Battersea Winner: Warlingham B</p>	<p>Stoop Bowl: Weybridge Vandals (8) V (7) Chobham Winner: Weybridge Vandals</p>
<p>Stoop Trophy: Cobham (18) V (5) Barnes Winner: Cobham</p>	<p>Leonard Invitational Cup: Old Ruts (28) V (0) Streatham Winner: Old Ruts</p>
<p>Twickenham Cup: Dorking & Cranleigh A (17) v (31) Guildfordians A Winner: Guildfordians</p>	<p>Hampstead Cup: Whitgift (19) V (12) Farnham B Winner: Whitgift</p>
<p>Twickenham Shield: Sutton & Epsom B (22) V (17) Rosslyn Park B Winner: Sutton & Epsom</p>	<p>Hampstead Shield: Camberley B (10) V (8) Dorking & Cranleigh B Winner: Camberley</p>
<p>Twickenham Plate: Chipstead (20) v (5) Haslemere Winner: Chipstead</p>	<p>Hampstead Plate: Richmond B (5) V (25) Reigate Winner: Reigate</p>
<p>Hampstead Plate: Richmond B (5) V (25) Reigate Winner: Reigate</p>	<p>Leonard Invitational Cup: Old Ruts (28) V (0) Streatham Winner: Old Ruts</p>



Wimbledon U15



Battersea U15



Harlequins

the game

U15 gallery

The Quins Cup Final with Warlingham A vs Camberley A took place at the Stoop on Friday 21st April. Check out page 51 for results. More team photos on our [website](#)



Weybridge Vandals - Winners of the Stoop Bowl



London Irish U15 - Winners of the Quins Trophy



Cobham U15 - Winners of the Stoop Trophy



Reigatians U15



London Welsh U15 - Winners of the Stoop Shield



Sutton & Epsom Colts - Winners of the Twickenham Shield



Reigate U15 - Winners of Hampstead Plate



Rosslyn Park - Winners of the Quins Plate

the heros

Sophie Capito - Life Saver



SOPHIE CAPITO

November 5th 2022 at Gravesend RFC is a day Reeds Rugby Club will never forget. For once it wasn't the game everyone was discussing afterwards, rather the heroic efforts of their team Sport Therapist, Sophie Capito.

Supporters and players were heading for a post game drink in the bar at the conclusion of the Regional 2 South East League match between Gravesend and Reeds Weybridge, believing the drama of the day was over. Unfortunately they were wrong. Drama swiftly unfolded off the pitch when lifetime Gravesend member, and ex President, John Moxham collapsed. Those close by suspected it was a stroke and an ambulance was called immediately.

In the meantime Sophie rushed to help. She quickly took charge, assessed the situation and found the supporter showed no signs of life. Calmly and efficiently Sophie went into action, started CPR and attached an Automated External Defibrillator. She applied several shocks alongside performing intensive CPR for a full 10 minutes until the ambulance and paramedics arrived. They applied their more powerful defibrillator which, combined with adrenaline, thankfully enabled some rhythm to return. Sophie then assisted the paramedic to intubate the patient after which John was swiftly taken to a London hospital in the ambulance.

Everyone at the game that day left in awe of Sophie, well aware that without her quick thinking and confident actions there may have been a very different, catastrophic, outcome.

I am pleased to report that 11 weeks later we learnt that John was spotted back on the touchline at Gravesend.

There is no doubt Sophie's quick thinking and well-trained, calm approach saved a life that day. Everyone at Reeds is immensely proud of her heroic efforts.

Jes Isaacs - Reeds Weybridge 1ST XV Manager

the game

Focus on Minis Rugby

Mini Rugby is flourishing in Surrey under the continuing leadership of Ryan Reino, Surrey Rugby's Chair of Mini Rugby.

During the season, clubs offer regular Sunday morning training sessions around the county and also come together regularly for both triangular fixtures and fabulous festivals. Festivals are often a highlight for the children within a season and thanks to hundreds of coaches, who dedicate their time & energy to make sure rugby is accessible to all Under 12's who'd like to have a go. All dates for Mini Rugby Festivals in Surrey that have been provided consent to go ahead are on our calendar on the website. Contact Ryan via minichair@surreyrugby.co.uk if you'd like more information.

Coaching courses are available through the RFU allowing coaches to get support and grow in their development as the children go up the ages.



Chobham



Reeds Weybridge



Sutton & Epsom



Minis Tour to Kent and Sussex



the people

Meet your Surrey Team



JOANNA GORDON

Joanna worked in roles in both IT and marketing before leaving the UK for 20 years to live in a different country every 3 years. She focused her free time on voluntary and charity work, while being heavily involved in roles at her daughter's schools in Brazil, Mexico, Spain, Argentina and France.

Back in England Joanna became cofounder of her local Trading Alliance, working to bring together the local business and residential communities, and also running all the town events. She ran projects to see the funding and building of a local play park and new access for all pathways. She's currently working to get a skatepark in the town.

Volunteering at the local Covid Vaccine Centre Joanna met Ty Lawless, and before she knew it was signed up to volunteer with Surrey Rugby. Here she has taken on Comms & Marketing, developing the new online Newsletter and is in the process of creating and populating a new website for Surrey Rugby as well as rebranding and invigorating all social media platforms.

She's also responsible for Volunteer Reward, Recruitment and Recognition and is enjoying sharing pictures and stories of volunteers being rewarded and recognised for their incredible work.



PAULA CARTER

Paula's executive career has covered private sector and public companies and large, complex and regulated organisations with multiple stakeholders. She has worked at the most senior level in all the major British Television Companies during a time of transition from a linear terrestrial to an online digital ecology.

Her non-executive roles include the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Parliamentary Ombudsman. Paula is currently a non-executive director of the Port of London Authority, be the business, a business driven productivity movement, and Chairman of the Ofcom Advisory Committee for England. Paula now sits on the RFU Board of Directors, is Chair of the Governance Standing Committee and Chair of the Head Injury Prevention and Management Sub Committee.

Paula's consultancy career included roles in the Cabinet Office and advising a Parliamentary Committee as well as working for the Communications Regulator, Ofcom and the Royal Opera House. She was a rugby referee for 10 years, reaching level 7 and refereeing on the London Premier List. She also joined the Surrey Disciplinary Committee in 2013 and sat on panels for the RFU and European Premier Club Rugby.



JOHN CRATE

John has considerable administrative and management experience in rugby matters at both club and CB levels. This is also true in his business career which includes time spent in senior positions in marketing and general management.

He was a Club Secretary for fourteen years and for a large part of that time he doubled up as first XV Team Manager. He experienced rugby at levels five down to eight. During this time he took a break from the Hon. Sec. role for three years when he was his club's President. Prior to becoming Secretary he held a number of minor committee positions at his club.

Since 2001 he has sat on the Surrey Competitions committee and has been Vice Chair and Treasurer. During this time he had several seasons as a league secretary and is particularly proud of the part he played in the development and introduction of electronic match cards.

He is currently the county Discipline Secretary, a position he has held for six years having sat as a panellist for two years before that.

At the RFU he is on the Age Grade Governance Committee and presently on the Steering Committee for the consultation on lowering the tackle height.

the people

Meet your Surrey Team



JO FISHER

Jo worked for the Civil Service as a Duty Clerk at 10 Downing Street - while John Major was PM - before leaving to have children. She then retrained as an Early Years Practitioner.

In 2000, when her son was 3, his dad took him to watch rugby at Chobham and he joined Minis. After her daughter joined 2 years later Jo started volunteering as Medic for the team, which she continued to do for the next 10 years.

When her daughter joined the U14's Jo took over as Manager for girls, building the girls team at Chobham. She then became Women & Girls Chair for 6 years. During this time she joined the Women and Girls Committee at Surrey Rugby, taking over as U15s and U18s Manager - which she's now done for 9 seasons.

In 2016 she saw the ad for the job as Administrator, left her role in Early Years and became an official member of the team. She's remained as Surrey Rugby reduced costs by moving to their current location and reducing staffing. Jo is now the only paid staff member of Surrey Rugby with responsibility for all the varied admin that entails, including purchasing Surrey kit and managing the GMS database whilst continuing her role with Women & Girls for Surrey.



JOHN KILBY

John worked as a Chartered Accountant for over 40 years, most recently as Head of Tax at a major UK property company. He retired in 2020 and again in 2022.

John has been the Club Photographer for Cobham RFC since 2016. He turned up at Cobham one day and started taking pictures. He fully expected to be asked to leave but instead was welcomed and stayed.

John is a very welcome new addition to the Surrey Rugby Committee, only joining this month after Joanna spotted him with his large lens at Cobham. He has proven very willing to drive around the county following Surrey action on the pitch. You may have seen his amazing photos on social media recently, and many of his images are used in this newsletter.

Luckily for John the Surrey role unites three of his main enthusiasms - rugby, photography and IT. He likes being able to record high quality playing memories for the players and their friends and relatives and is looking forward to doing this throughout the County.



DR AMY ATKINSON

Amy is Youth Chair, Under 15 & 16's Head Coach and Head of Girls' Rugby at Old Whitgiftian RFC in Croydon, where she has been coaching for almost 10 years. She has recently started the girls' section at Whits - The Whits Saffron Stormers - who are the first ever girls' rugby team in the history of O.W.R.F.C, since 1929.

Outside her rugby work, Amy is a Doctoral researcher in Education, Psycho-Social Linguistics and Modern Foreign Languages and has worked in a number of schools across London and in Austria. She has worked in Education in various capacities for over 25 years. She is also Co-President elect Associate of Newnham College, Cambridge, where she mentors young women, both at Cambridge University, and those who aspire to study there, with a particular focus on encouraging applications from young women from historically under-represented groups at the university.

Currently participating in the RFU's Leadership in Union programme, Amy is delighted to be working with Surrey Rugby on the RFU's Rugby United project to reflect the values of equity and inclusion on a wider platform to widen participation in our game. As part of this process, we will be understanding and seeking to address any barriers to participation in rugby, in multiple formats.

the club

Farnham RUFC

The 2022/2023 season marks the tenth anniversary of Farnham Rugby Club's move to its purpose built, state of the art, facilities at Monkton Lane. While their previous notoriously muddy grounds, cold showers and cramped clubhouse are only five kilometres away as the crow flies, the club is now light years away in terms of its evolution.

Over the past 10 years the 1st XV has raised itself from the depths of Surrey II and after 5 promotions and a journey to Twickenham (winning the RFU Senior Vase in 2017) has just finished this season in second place in Regional 2 South East - their highest ever league position. This success is underpinned by four other senior sides including a 4th XV that plays in the Hampshire league and a doughty Vets side.

Like many clubs Farnham has also seen an explosion in Women's and Girls rugby. The Falcons, the Women's 1st XV has earned promotion this year, backed up by a strong and ever growing 2nd XV. The club also boasts thriving U12 - U18 Junior Girls' squads who are regularly winning their games and providing players for their county. This year nine of our U16 girls represented their county under the auspices of the RFU's Developing Player Pathway.



The 2021/22 male Academy (U17/U18) were both Quins Cup and Waterfall Cup Champions and this season's group of young men are maintaining the same momentum. Most Junior sides - including the Academy - field two or more teams with record numbers of players being drawn to represent their county or premiership clubs - notably Academician Tom Humphreys who is inked in as Quins No 11 for this season's U18 competition. He is following in the footsteps of Oscar Baird and Will Trenholm, both contracted Quins professionals and England U18 and U20 caps.

The mini section of the club also continues to thrive with over 500 children involved, and the club has recently started catering for budding players who are too young for the U5s section. The spirit and enthusiasm is outstanding, no more so demonstrated by the annual Mini Tour which this year saw a five hundred strong touring party invade Dorset.



the club

Farnham RUFC



The club boasts a burgeoning touch section that already has sent players into the England set up. Some 80 touch players turn up and keep the clubhouse busy throughout the year and, in particular, during the Summer months.

The club's playing success is a direct result of the club's #1 strategic objective – "To provide the best rugby experience". This objective drives more than what happens on the pitch. Last year the club completed "The Shed" – its own gym and rehabilitation facility. The original requirement was to find somewhere to store all the training paraphernalia that

clogged up the two changing rooms originally intended to accommodate female players. As that section exploded into life, the club had no option. Planning permission was dependent on creating a building in keeping with the clubhouse – with the associated significant cost. No containers, please! That drove the decision to ensure the storage shed made a financial contribution – and the idea of a gym was born. Officially opened by Bill Sweeney CEO of the RFU and England World Cup winner Simon Shaw, the Shed is used by the players – junior, senior, men and women - in supervised sessions and is available ad-hoc to members on a pay-as-you-go basis.



A brilliant rugby experience is not created just by great facilities and well-coached players. The essential ingredient is the match officials. We would not have a game without them. To that end the club has embraced the Young Match Officials programme and late last year some 20 teenagers were signed up to the programme that embraces RFU-led training to Level 1 and beyond. With generous sponsorship from Sintela Ltd, the YMOs are fully kitted out including radio links to their pitch side mentor. So far, FRUFC YMOs have officiated over 60 games (as they are allowed to for age groups two years younger than themselves) – including competitive festival fixtures and provided the assistant referees for senior men and women's "friendly" fixtures.



And what of the future? Well, the club was confident it could accommodate the playing membership when in 2012 it gave up its three, narrow and muddy pitches (two of which featured an alarming slope) at Wrecclesham for the four floodlit, well drained pitches at Monkton Lane. That confidence barely lasted a season as the new facilities attracted a raft of new players, young, old, male and female. In total over 1,000 people train or play with the club each week of the season. Despite renting additional

space adjacent to the current ground, the club is also forced to use the facilities at local schools and the Army pitches at Aldershot in order to accommodate everyone's needs.

the club

Farnham RUFC

To reduce the pressure on the existing grounds and to give everyone a better chance of spending their rugby time at home, the club is in the process of launching a project to build its own artificial surface pitch. FRUFC is first and foremost a community club and it expects the pitch it builds will be in constant use by the club and the local community. The club recognises this isn't the best time to launch a major fundraising exercise, but also remembers that it launched the fundraising for Monkton Lane in the midst of the 2008 financial crash! Hope springs eternal!

Away from the pitch the club has a vibrant social agenda with first class facilities for hosting major events and celebrations. Each year the club holds its fireworks night celebrations that regularly attract over 2,000 people and every year it hosts the now legendary Sportsman's Lunch which attracts nearly 500 people for a first class lunch and a chance to hear star names of the game speak – this year is no different with David Flatman topping the bill.

It goes without saying, that the club would be nowhere but for the army of volunteers that coach, administrate and provide first aid throughout the age groups – not to mention those who quietly go about their business behind the scenes to make things work. The club prides itself on being friendly and welcoming and has come a long, long way since its move in 2012. If you would like to be part of its future, please don't hesitate to drop in.



Under 14 Boys - Junior Rugby thrives at FRUFC



2012 - group of Minis carry the crossbar to the new ground from the old - a club tradition from the 1970's



Left: This season's 1st XV fly high against KCS Old Boys

Right: Happy days for members and supporters at Twickenham, May 2017



game development

Rugby Safe

RFU AND LONDON HEARTS AED BURSARY SCHEME 2022-23

During the 2022-23 season the RFU are offering a limited number of bursaries to support clubs in purchasing an AED (Automated External Defibrillator).

This is a one off opportunity and we would highly recommend you take up the offer if your club is in a position to do so.

Working with London Hearts the RFU is offering a £250 bursary, this is in addition to the London Hearts subsidy of £300 which is already in place. This means your club can potentially purchase an AED for approx. £300-500 (depending on model/accessories etc.) instead of £900-£1200. London Hearts will also help you source any further local funding if applicable.

If your club could benefit from having an AED, the only eligibility criterion that the RFU/GRFU requests is that the club continues to have a Club RugbySafe Lead in place and ensures that the annual first aid risk assessment is completed and recorded on GMS.

London Hearts is an England wide charity and one of the leading heart charities in the UK for placing defibrillators in communities and delivering CPR and defibrillator training. Working with England Rugby, London Hearts can support clubs and provide guidance on the purchase of defibrillators for rugby clubs who do not already have this lifesaving equipment. It also supports clubs who already have a defibrillator on site. With every package, London Hearts provides an online CPR and defibrillator training video and ongoing support, including advice on purchasing and maintenance of an AED unit.

For more information visit the London Hearts website: <https://londonhearts.org/>

Please email your interest to jo@londonhearts.org or for further information go to our website: <https://surreyrugby.co.uk/what-we-do/rugby-safe>



EMERGENCY FIRST AID IN RUGBY UNION (EFARU) PLACES

During the 2022-23 and 2023-2024 season the RFU are offering a limited number of EFARU free places to support clubs in meeting the Regulation 9 first aid provision standards.

Each club is being offered a certain number of free place(s). The only eligibility criteria that the RFU/CB is requests is that the club continues to have a Club RugbySafe Lead in place and ensures that the annual first aid risk assessment is completed and recorded on GMS.

For more information on the Regulation 9 first aid provision standards visit the RugbySafe Community Rugby First Aid Provision and Information Toolkit.

For more information or to request a free first aid voucher(s) for your club please contact the Chair of Game Development, Tyrone Lawless via gamedevelopment@surreyrugby.co.uk.



the offers

50% off tickets

An exciting, exclusive offer for Surrey Rugby members!



50% off Premium Tickets for Barbarians & World XV

On May 28, **Eddie Jones** will head up the **Barbarians** and **Steve Hansen** will lead a **World XV** at Twickenham Stadium for the **Killik Cup**.

Fans can expect an entertaining match, with attacking rugby full of tries and the teams packed with world class international players. Global stars already invited include:

Barbarians: **Alun Wyn Jones** (Wal), **Danny Care** (Eng), **Andre Esterhuizen** (Sa), **Justin Tipuric** (Wal), **George Furbank** (Eng), **Rhys Webb** (Wal), **Joe Marler** (Eng), **Toby Faletau** (Wal), **Jack Nowell** (Eng) & **Jonny May** (Eng).

World XV: **Semi Radradra** (Fij), **Charles Piutau** (Nz), **Marika Koroibete** (Aus), **Michael Leitch** (Jap), **Willie Le Roux** (Sa), **Nick Phipps** (Aus), **Nangi Laumape** (Nz) & **Joe Launchbury** (Eng), plus many more top players from both teams...

Take advantage of a special **Killik Sponsor Ticket Offer** – 50% off centrally located "Premium Adult Tickets" (£94 down to £47) or £27.50 for adults & £16.95 for kids. Buy now! Visit www.ticketmaster.co.uk

A must-see match of 2023 at Twickenham.

BUY NOW

N.B. To receive the offer you must purchase direct from this communication and tickets are subject to availability.

the charity

Cobham Allstars



This April, Cobham Rugby Club Veterans' team (aka the AllStars) will be departing on a five-day tour to the Caribbean island of Jamaica. The tourists consist of members from all the senior teams, although the majority are over the 35-age bracket (the average age is 42).

The tour is being led by Ian Snead, who is originally from the island. He said: "Not in my wildest dreams did I ever think Cobham players would be travelling to Jamaica. I want us to leave a long-lasting impact."

The team have been fundraising to buy rugby balls and boots to take to high schools on the island. One of the schools is Aabuthnott Gallimore High, located in the rural hills about 90 minutes inland from the north coast city of Montego Bay. The rugby set-up there is promising, with over 40 players across both boys and girls from ages 12 to 16.

Despite the lack of balls and boots, this school is enthusiastic about the game and travels all over the island to play against other schools. Snead says: "They only have two balls, so we can't wait to see the smiles on their faces when we deliver our rugby cargo of boots and balls, and also looking forward to a joint training session with them as well."

While football and cricket are the dominant sports on the island, rugby is experiencing strong growth at grassroots level. Jerry Bezwick, Chairman of the Jamaica Rugby Football Union says: "We are delighted to welcome the Cobham team from England and appreciate them taking the time to visit and inspire grassroots rugby in Jamaica."

the charity

Cobham Allstars



The main fixture of the tour, being billed as an International Vets match, is between the Cobham AllStars and the Old Jamaican Crocs. It will take place in Kingston on 21 April. There is also an International Touch Tournament the following day that Cobham will also enter.

The Club and players would like to thank all the sponsors, associated partners and Virgin Airlines for helping make this all possible, in addition to all the donations to our JustGiving page that will be used to pay for balls, boots and tackle pads being taken to Jamaica.



The shoes and the kits are all packed up in the bags and ready to go!



the offers

Top Tasting Tours

Honda Volunteer of the Year Nominee Andrew Edge of Camberley RFC was the lucky recipient of two tickets from our newest Partner Top Tasting Tours. He's off on a guided tour of Hampton Court with afternoon tea at the Mitre Hotel. Photos next edition! Check out this great offer to our members!

toptastingtours.com



Top Tasting Tours are offering Surrey Rugby members a 10% discount on their tours in Paris, Marseilles, Antibes, Nice, Central London & Hampton Court. Just go to their website and enter the code: PSR10-23

The Royal Hampton Court Guided Tour and Afternoon Tea



Step back in time to 16th century Tudor England and be immersed in a place steeped in the history and drama of Kings and Queens, Hampton Court Palace.



A perfect "All in One" Experience. Full Day Entry Ticket, an afternoon tea and a fun and friendly guide showing you around



We'll also soon be running a draw for two tickets to their Marseille Top Tasting Tour, happening during the World Cup. So if you've got tickets to go to the games, keep an eye out on our socials and you could be in for a treat!

the club

Old Emanuel RFC

Fantastic Floodlights!

At Old Emanuel it feels like things are finally turning a corner. Normally a club will undertake one major project a year, Old Emanuel are juggling many. Bruno Plaskow and Joanna Gordon visited to see how work was progressing.

They heard first-hand of all the difficulties Old Emanuel have had to overcome; first team retiring almost en masse after Covid, recruitment of a new head coach, the whole club moving site from Blagdons - their previous home of 95 years - to Taunton Avenue in Raynes Park, the renovation of a council-run sports pavilion.



Bruno Plaskow & Joanna Gordon (Surrey Rugby) with Darryl Plummer (Club stalwart and Mens Senior Manager) & Justin Latta, Chair of Old Emanuels

Fortunately a committed team of volunteers is working hard to turn things around.



Although lucky to find a site so close to their old home it came with a compromise; no permanent floodlights. The team quickly identified portable lights as a necessity on an open site. However, with a club house needing lots of work, money was tight and mostly already allocated to other capital projects.

Old Emanuel were able to set aside some money for the lights but it wasn't enough. After liaising with the RFU the club were signposted to Surrey Rugby to see how we could help. And we could! With a package of support which allowed the quick purchase of the lights.



the club

Old Emanuel RFC

Justin Latta, Chair of Old Emanuel, takes up the tale. “These lights have been a game changer for the whole club, not just the seniors, but also our youth sides from under 14’s to Colts and our Touch Rugby section. We had been borrowing lights from a football club which were great for grid work but could only do small areas. At a difficult time for the club these lights have been a very visible demonstration of improving facilities that has given us all a boost and encouraged wider participation. Thank you Surrey for your support.”

The club is very excited for the future. The site offers great potential and is well located for transport links, being within 5 mins of Raynes Park Train Station. Old Emanuel is an open, inclusive club offering rugby for all levels with a thriving mini and junior section “The Lions”, Touch Rugby, Vets and Senior Men’s. They would also love a Womens team to complete the set.

We wish them all the very best. It was truly an inspirational visit with a team who are clearly passionate and committed to securing the long term future of the club.



Photo Credits: Zhroon Al Sabba

the charity

Mindset

Meet Matt: Rugby is my happy place

Doesn't matter if I'm playing or watching, it always puts a smile on my face.

It's important to develop healthy coping strategies that allow you to deal with some of the daily stresses and challenges we come across.

The more the merrier too, having just one coping mechanism isn't great because what happens if you can't access that for some reason. In the case of Sport what if you got injured.



What do you do then?

Helpful Coping Strategies like the '10 keys to happier living' allow you to free up mental space to deal with some of the bigger challenges that life will undoubtedly throw at you and help manage and regulate your reactions to some of the more day-to-day stressors.

Build up a bank of coping tools if you can so you can turn to more of them in times of greater need, but remember to turn to a professional for support if your coping mechanisms are overwhelmed.

Also remember, just because it works for you it doesn't mean it works for everyone else so be supportive and let people explore what works for them.

Where is your happy place or what's your go to healthy stress buster?

#mentalhealthmatters #playhardbekind #dontwaituntilitstoolate #sportforall

PLAY
HARD
BE
KIND
#dontwaituntilitstoolate

FUNDRAISING
without your support we cant do what we do

we rely on fundraising and donation to help us keep the Community Kit Bag on the road and provide FREE mental health training to sports clubs

DONATE
<https://gofund.me/2e37cfe0>





SURREY RUGBY **Mindset Sport**

Fully funded courses for Surrey Rugby Coaches & Volunteers*.

Introduction to Wellbeing and Mental Health 1st** Monday of each month 7:30pm - 9pm to book head to www.mindsettraining.co.uk/book-online

Time table of courses

- 6th Feb:
- 6th March
- 3rd April
- 15th May
- 5th June:
- 3rd July:
- 7th August

* you must be involved with Surrey Rugby as a club or player coach or volunteer to apply for these courses
** due to holidays we could not have a place in the next available monthly



Harlequins

The Oak Gold Final took place at the Stoop on Saturday 22nd April. Check out page 51 for results.

More team photos on the [website](#)

the game

U16 gallery



Camberley U16



Warlingham U16



Old Reigatians U16



Farnham U16



Old Ruts U16



Sutton & Epsom U16



Old Emanuel U16

the game

Girls Rugby



This season saw the establishment of the first ever girls' section at Old Whitgiftian RFC, the Whits Saffron Stormers. At the beginning of the season, some of our younger Stormers, Nancy and Tess came up with a determined call to action - "ONWARDS!!" This has been duly adopted as the team mantra, the Stormers have certainly been true to their words.

In early March, on a windy day in Croydon, Whits Saffron Stormers U14s combined with Ruts Tigers U14s to reach a milestone for Old Whits by playing the first all-female match at Croham Manor Road in the 129-year history of the club, in the Surrey Waterfall Cup.



In a tense match full of creativity, tenacity and spirit, a large crowd of supporters witnessed every girl on the 1st team pitch, and supporting their teammates from the sidelines, and from the clubhouse roof, make history in our game and at our club.

The match ended in a 15-10 win for the Stormers. With the Dorking defence preoccupied by the maul, the ball went left down the blindside to Stormer Anastazie who had only one defender to beat, she dummied to the Winger before cutting inside to score, to a huge roar from the home supporters. A moment in time, that will never be forgotten by so many of us. Onwards indeed....!

Amy Atkinson – Youth Chair & Head of Girls' Rugby O.W.R.F.C



sponsor spotlight

Gilbert Rugby



Like to get hold of some lovely Surrey Rugby Stash? Go to the dedicated [Surrey Rugby page](#) of GILBERT RUGBY and get an exclusive 15% off Surrey merchandise using code A_SURREY15 at the checkout.



Plastech (Southern) Ltd is a specialist supplier of underground plastic drainage & ducting systems

Plastech (Southern) Ltd provide a dedicated approach to the supply of products for the building, construction, civil engineering, leisure & agricultural industries. The skills & experience of the management team plus our extensive supply network enable us to offer one of the most comprehensive & diverse ranges of plastic ducting & drainage products in the UK. if you or your company are looking for the ideal supply partner of specialist underground plastic drainage and ducting systems then make Plastech (Southern) Limited your first call and number one choice because 'Service is our Speciality'.

Want to be involved?

If you're interested in sponsoring Surrey Rugby and supporting game development, competition offerings or a Representative Team we have a combination of Sponsorship Packages to support all sizes of businesses. Find out more on our website [SPONSORSHIP](#) or get in touch with Tyrone Lawless, Sponsorship Manager, via gamedevelopment@surreyrugby.co.uk.

the players

Kyle Sinckler & Tyree

There is a decent dumping of December snow on the ground at Old Whitgiftians rugby club as the junior boys trudge out to train on a Friday night in Croydon. “This should be illegal,” one boy moans, trying to stay warm in temperatures dropping down to minus 3C,



wondering why this session was not cancelled to save their fingers and toes.

It is because Kyle Sinckler is about to turn up and change someone's life. The Bristol Bears, England and British & Irish Lions tight-head prop, 29, has been planning this evening for four months.

A couple of years ago Sinckler's eyes were opened. “I realised the responsibility I have in inspiring,” he says. “I was always very naive and didn't understand how influential I can be. It's a responsibility but a privilege, because I'm living my dream. I have everything I've ever wished for. I have to take that, be grateful, appreciate it, but you get to a point in life when you come full circle and think 'now it's time to give back and inspire the next generation, as without them the sport is dead.'”

Sinckler did not just want to do that by playing well for club and country, though. He had a vision to directly influence the lives of children from underprivileged backgrounds; kids like him, from areas like the one he came from — Tooting and Mitcham — who were not born with a planned pathway to the top of sport.

So he has invested part of the millions he earns from playing rugby in starting a project — more a movement — and called it R3cusants, his shirt number at the heart of an idea to rescue “the others” dealt with a tough hand. “One of the things that makes me very sad and disheartened is not seeing talented people from the same background I was from having the same opportunity,” Sinckler explains. “I work hard, am professional, am talented, but it means nothing if I don't have the opportunity.”

That is the reason he is here in South London. He has learnt of a talented 15-year-old boy who deserves an opportunity for a new start, a leg up, a life-altering intervention. ‘

I'll sort the team, you drive the bus

Tyree knows nothing of what is about to happen as he changes from his Crocs to boots in order to play touch rugby under the floodlights on powdered snow. Only Amy Atkinson is aware of what, or who, is coming. She is the Youth Chair and Head of Girls Rugby at Old Whitgiftians and has coached Tyree since he first picked up a rugby ball aged seven. From the moment he did, and his eyes lit up, she thought this could be his life skill.

The link between Amy and Sinckler comes via his old teacher at Tooting's Graveney School, Anastacia Long. Sinckler still calls her “Miss Long”, and alongside his mother, Donna, she has been the most important person in his life so far. When a teenager, he asked her to help him set up a rugby team at school. “I'll sort the team, you organise the games and drive the bus,” Sinckler told her then.

Miss Long now works for Trinity School in Shirley Park, Croydon, as the head of girls' games and remains in regular contact with Sinckler as he tries to find youngsters who need assistance.

She knows Amy from the local circuit, and therefore has found out about Tyree's story.

the players

Kyle Sinckler & Tyree

I'm a single parent and proud to be one

"It's just me and my son," Sharon, Tyree's mother, explains. "I'm a single parent, proud to be. He has got a father, he's still alive, but he has no contact with him." Tyree and Sharon have had it hard since the Covid-19 pandemic struck. Sharon was born in Kirkby, Liverpool, but has lived in London for 30 years. Tyree spent the first 14 years of his life with her in emergency accommodation — a two bedroom maisonette in South Norwood — until the private landlord hiked up the prices to a level Sharon simply could not afford while on her modest shop-worker's salary.

Tyree has had to grow up quickly while his mother has had her battles with alcohol, and the pair of them were evicted from their home. They were moved to a hotel for three months. This, clearly, affected Tyree's education. He has moved schools for a second time recently, but his grades are low — particularly in maths. What he has never struggled with, though, is rugby.

Claire Bird, his old deputy head at Robert Fitzroy Academy, was the one who told him to try the sport eight years ago. Tyree was sponsored to go to Old Whits and just over a year ago was scouted by Harlequins. At 14 he joined their Developing Player Programme group, in which he will stay until 2024 when he takes his GCSEs. A hotstepping centre, he is a clear talent. Tyree looked up to his grandfather, Dennis, but when he passed away four years ago he suddenly was left with no father figure in his life. Tyree, in trying circumstances, became the man of the house aged only ten.

When Sinckler heard Tyree's story it resonated with him. He too had a close relationship with his grandfather, to the point he wore a pair of his boxer shorts under his rugby shorts for years — until they were so ragged and torn they had to be chucked. He too came from a single-parent family, struggled not knowing his father, but found an outlet for his anger in rugby. Sinckler saw himself in Tyree, and knew he had to help him.

Sinckler's own opportunity came by happy accident. Collin Osborne, the Harlequins coach, spotted a big, raw kid while watching his son play. He saw potential, if he was guided in the right direction. Osborne took Sinckler to Quins as a 12-year-old, and, in another stroke of good fortune, by 16 he had a scholarship to Epsom College.

The private school had given up all their bursaries for the year, so could not fund Sinckler's move. However, Edwin Doran, who owned a prosperous sports-travel company, asked the Epsom headmaster if he could help pay for the place at his old school.

Doran had already sponsored Delon and Steaon Armitage through their education to the England rugby team. He agreed to pay more than £60,000 for Sinckler's sixth form fees.

Thirteen years on it is Sinckler's chance to do something similar.



I've come all the way from Bristol for this

It is just after 7pm when Sinckler emerges from the darkness at Old Whitgiftians. He dons a beanie hat as he strides into the middle of the boys' training session, on a small pitch marked out by red cones. The small number of parents on the sideline fumble for their phones to video this moment.

the players

Kyle Sinckler & Tyree

"I've come all the way from Bristol, so you better give me 100 per cent!" Sinckler announces as he takes over training, the boys, all full of energy, forget they are frozen solid.



Sinckler works them hard. He sets up a series of touch-rugby games, asking players to run back to their tryline if they make a tackle, encouraging attackers to offload if possible. Near the end of the half-hour he sets the two teams a challenge.

"First to two tries will get tickets to a Quins game of their choice," he declares. "And you can meet the players. Who do you want to see?"

"Marcus Smith!" comes the reply. "Cool, you can meet Marcus, definitely."

Suddenly there is a frenzy. Tyree takes control of his team, leaping first for the ball Sinckler chucks up for two boys to claim, looking for those precious tries.

Both teams score once, but the winner is taking too long to emerge, so, with fingers now freezing, there is a new decider. Catch a kick. Sudden death. First drop loses. Sinckler's third hoof is shelled and it's all over; but everyone ends up a winner — tickets for all.

Time to head back to the clubhouse for a Q&A over pizza. After questions about Eddie Jones's sacking, Sinckler's upbringing, how much he can bench-press (195kg personal best, it turns out) and who he prefers, Smith or Owen Farrell (diplomatically handled under pressure), the boys take selfies, ask for him to follow them on Instagram, and Tyree requests Sinckler signs his shirt with a Sharpie pen. He is about to receive far more than that.

You're going to make me cry

Sharon is asked to go into a side room with Tyree. The pair sit next to a present wrapped in silver paper. Before Sinckler gifts Tyree that box — full of Adidas kit, boots and socks — he tells Tyree that he has tracked him for four months, watched his matches, read his school reports, and wants to give him an opportunity to change his life.

He says he knows how Tyree feels, that he is resilient, driven, leads through actions, and is talented. "You're going to make me cry," Sharon says, unable to stop the happy tears flowing. Then Sinckler cuts to the chase. "Me, Miss Long and Amy have worked together to get you a scholarship to a rugby-playing private school for sixth form," he says. Sharon is beside herself, only able to form the word "wow".

"Under one condition. You need a minimum standard of grades. I didn't think it would be fair to provide you this opportunity without academic support, so I've been speaking to Cynthia — a tutor based in Croydon who will help you."

Cynthia sits on Sinckler's left. She will now place a tutor with Tyree, for 18 months. His place at a private school is not guaranteed unless his grades improve. "I know you're not stupid bro, but you're like me, school just isn't interesting to you," Sinckler says. "But when you see it's the stepping stone to the next opportunity I know you'll get your head down, will focus and get there. Now you know the opportunity is there. The ball is in your court."

the players

Kyle Sinckler & Tyree

Tyree sits, calmly, taking this all in. It was only last night he watched Kyle Sinckler's ITV documentary on the advice of a friend, and now the prop is here in the flesh turning his world upside down.

"I'm a bit overwhelmed and just don't know what to say," he says. "It was so unexpected and is going to help me a lot in my future, and the present with school and everything.

"In the next couple of years I really want to do well in my GCSEs to get into this sixth form and in further years I want to pursue my rugby career further and just be the best I can.

"One thing I lacked with school, and rugby sometimes, is motivation. I've always been quite a lazy person. The fact I've been given this opportunity, the extra tutoring and everything, it is definitely going to make me more determined to do well academically so I can do better in my career. I'm thinking, why me? It feels like it isn't even real."

Sharon looks to the sky with her hands clasped in prayer and mutters "thank you dad," for Dennis. It has been a big week for her, having started her new job as a housekeeper at a hotel two days ago. "It's going to change my son's life," she says. "I don't believe this is happening, I really don't. It's very surreal."

I can remember being in their shoes

Sinckler will now track Tyree's progress carefully. He is the second young man he has helped via his platform — following Elijah from Bristol — and will not be the last. "They're the future," he says. "I remember being in their shoes, wishing I had that kind of opportunity to sit down with someone who is living the dream they aspire to, to show them it is possible.

"It's an untapped reservoir, with these underprivileged kids. They possess things you can't teach — power, pace, agility. They have explosiveness, and aggression, and just want it. "You can teach someone to pass, kick, tackle, but you can't teach someone to have unreal pace, power or explosiveness.

"Tyree, the stuff he's gone through, being made homeless a few times, he's really had to step up and be the man. I know in my heart he won't let me down, and he won't let himself down. "It will be amazing if Tyree gets a contract, ends up playing for England — amazing. But on these days I imagine there's a young kid who could have fallen by the wayside, ended up in gangs, or in prison, but instead turns into a positively contributing member of society. To me that's just as important.



"The aim is to get those kids to reach their potential in rugby, as that's all I know, but it's just as important to inspire them to be good men, fathers, brothers, role models to people in their area too. It's that trickle-down effect. "I know what it's like growing up in those areas. You can get influenced very easily, so it's just trying to keep them on the straight and narrow."

Sinckler has created his online platform for these stories, work-out videos and animated podcasts. He hopes to attract charities and sponsors to invest in it, and after he retires to take on the project full time.

Having been guided to do so by his mentor from a company called Saviour World, he started it with his own money, pays for his videographer, website and animation designer, and uses his network of sponsors and contacts to make a difference. "The onus is on players to pave the way," he adds. "Once we show it's possible the likes of the RFU, or whoever wants to get involved, will get involved. "These kids don't understand how much of a privilege it is for me to do this, as it reminds me of why I play the game.

the players

Kyle Sinckler & Tyree

“As you get older your life and choices get in the way and you lose sight of why you start playing rugby. I love rugby — it’s not about the Instagram followers, the likes or the money. You can get lost in all that. This brings back that purity of why I do it.”

And with that, a big bear hug, more pictures and laughs, it is almost 9.30pm, so Sinckler is off into the night, driving the three hours back to Bristol so he can train at 7am the next morning.

Outside the clubhouse Sharon puffs on a calming cigarette in the chill. She telephones her sister. “You sound really emotional, what’s wrong?” she asks. “Everything is perfect,” Sharon replies. She will not sleep tonight, or be able to stop crying for a while. Her son Tyree has much to do to realise his dreams, but thanks to Sinckler they now feel far more realistic.

Reproduced with permission from The Times, an article that appeared on 30/12/22
Many thanks to Will Kelleher for the article and Peter Tarry for the photos

Rugby United



Surrey Rugby has been chosen to deliver an exciting new project across its Community and have selected three clubs to work with for the next three years. The clubs are: Croydon, Streatham-Croydon and Wimbledon.

We’re pleased to say that we’ve been able to provide all the clubs with a super new branded gazebo, a defibrillator and First Aid kits. Here’s Adam Sheehy and Owen Howells of Streatham-Croydon RFC receiving theirs. All three clubs were excited to take delivery and to be able to progress their plans for connecting with local individuals and communities who are missing out what rugby has to offer.

Being true to our principles of rugby as a game for all, we must keep striving to engage with all parts of society to show what makes our sport the joy and passion for millions across the country and seek to understand and challenge any barriers that there may be in accessing and experiencing a sense of belonging in rugby.

We must show that everyone is welcome into all aspects of the game, from playing and coaching to volunteering at a club or becoming a match official.

If you’d like to find out more, or to donate, please visit the RFU website [RUGBY UNITED](#)



the game

Surrey U16 Girls

County rugby has seen many matches played this quarter. The Under 16 Girls had a great season - well done to all selected and involved.

Here are a selection of the amazing photos taken by our new volunteer photographer, John. For all the full gallery, go to our website [PHOTO GALLERIES](#)



the game

Surrey U18 Girls

Surrey U18 Girls made it 3 for 3 this season. Congratulations! Their results were:

Surrey vs Sussex 38 - 15

Hampshire vs Surrey 19-29

Tries: Maya Halahan, Amina Kazi, Amy Asten, Holly Thompson, Emily Lunn

Conversions: Amy Asten (2)

Surrey vs Middlesex 34 - 12

Tries: Iley Bailey, Amy Asten (2), Holly Thompson, Emily Lunn, Elsie Fairn

Conversions: Amy Asten (2)



the game

Surrey U16 Boys

As part of the Academy Pathway, over 100 DPP players from Surrey and Sussex played each other in three trials in front of Surrey and Harlequins coaches. They all excelled themselves. They will now transition into the Surrey Under 17 Development Squad with a few being lucky enough to join the Harlequins PDG.



Here is the team list that played against the Bristol Bears at Surrey Sports Park in Guildford on 12th of April.

Congratulations to the selected players.

Come along with the family for a great day out supporting your county!

Dylan Hall
Ted Hardisty
Tom Harper
Ted Harris
Joseph Hirst
Oliver Jackson
Joseph Jenkins
Keagan Jerling
Ryan Kelly
Freddie Kendall
Louie Petrides
Mckenzie (Max) Redding
Joe Ridler
Alexander Sherry
Harry Sturgess
Lucas Walker
Sam Webber
Fraser White

the game

Surrey U18 Boys

Surrey County RFU U17 2022 to Surrey County RFU U18 2022/23

Following the COVID 19 pandemic it was obvious across the board that all players had lost several years in rugby development where it was our deepest challenge to coach the selected players to their optimum skill level. Changing from before the pandemic of training the U17 alongside the U18 where the latter are being prepared to trial for London & Southeast England (LSE) divisional selection, the U17 County players were trialed separately in April 2022 and played county their fixtures in May. This was a tough and fast process where although the U18 coaches could see the selected players' potential, the Surrey County U17 were all outgunned by Sussex, Kent & Hampshire, our normal opponents. However the players' spirits were still high and they were ready for the U18 season starting in October. Certainly it was now down to the Coaches to map out the forthcoming session plans to develop and motivate the squad.

On 30 October 2022, the first U18 trials took place at John Fisher playing fields, Purley. To confirm this was an U18 trial and without doubt just being an U17 County Player did not give automatic entry to the U18 as we are always ready to accept late and new developers; 39 players were shortlisted for an ideal squad of 35 to 36 players. The second trial and first training day was set for the week following, Sunday 6 November 22 at the same venue to finally select the squad and catch the 'sick, lame & lazy', however this was cancelled due to horrendous weather and flooded pitches. Another day was lost in coaching the players. All parents and players agreed that every player would get at least half a game and hopefully a full game with the best squad selected for the last game where all were informed that often LSE dictate to us who they want to see. It is now up to the boys.

Thus our next U18 training day doubled up as the final selection of the squad and player development. To summarise before we enter into the graded matches where each player must have 2 ticks from the selectors to gain entry in the LSE trials. Unfortunately, our next training session was also cancelled due to frozen pitches and thus this years' U18 had only one trial day and two 3 hour training sessions whereas our competitors had been able to meet many times.

1st Fixture Surrey v Kent at London Irish RFC 4 December 2022

Our first game saw us struggle against a strong Kent side that turned out to be the strongest team in this division. Kent played well denying us possession of the ball for the majority of the first half, securing the ball with numerous phases and direct running lines from supporting runners. Quick swift accurate passes put Surrey under immense pressure from the outset allowing Kent to penetrate over the gain line and over the try line. Surrey's 23 player squad was depleted by 2 players getting injured before kick-off. However this is not an excuse as Kent played great rugby. The fact that this is our first fixture and only having met for 2 training sessions, it was impressive to see the players gelling as a team as the match progressed. Kent did not score in the later part of the game as we started to develop our play, maintaining possession and scoring a great try from with Ollie Shepherd with innovative play. Final score was Kent 22 Surrey 5.

The LSE selectors noted 11 Kent players and 4 Surrey players – Tom Dicken, Paul Louis Howard, Ollie Shepherd and Ollie Wickens.

2nd Fixture Surrey v Hampshire at Dartford RFC 1100hrs KO 18 December 2022

A cold wintery day on an All Weather Pitch where the snow had been cleared away that morning, one stood gazing at the Dartford crossing in an exposed position to the elements, we did not envy the players coming out in shorts and a rugby top. Notwithstanding this, Surrey came out guns blazing with much better format of play, maintaining the principles of rugby in their entirety. Surrey maintained possession through several phase of play on numerous occasions gaining good ground with continuity and support. In defence they stopped Hants gaining ground holding the gain line. Our core skills were excellent with



the game

Surrey U18 Boys



tackling taking the foremost however, our passing, running and kicking was sublime. We constantly hit hard lines against the grain putting Hants under enormous pressure. Hants played well and did not give up and managed to get over the try line twice due to minor errors by Surrey. Daniel Odumeru, Paul Louis Howard and Robert Harrison were phenomenal as our back row 'fetching' as they should and with some fantastic runs by Daniel, Surrey pressurised Hants from every angle. Oliver Shepherd controlled the play at fly half with accurate passes putting runners into gaps and employing excellent decision making when to run and kick.

Final score was Hants – 12 and Surrey 26 with tries from Harry Hudson, Cassian Hodges, Oliver Shepherd and Joe Patient. Oliver Shepherd converted 3 of the 4 tries.

The LSE selectors noted 4 Hants players and 10 Surrey players – Harry Hudson, Joe Patient, Daniel Odumeru, Paul Louis Howard, Archie O'Hanlon, Oliver Shepherd, Ollie Wickens, Daniel Yabia, Harrison Mumar and Cassian Hodges.

3rd Fixture Surrey v Sussex at Crawley RFC 8 January 2023

Once again horrendous conditions with driving freezing sleet and rain were not conducive to good running rugby. In fact this was cemented by the game being abandoned 15 mins into the 2nd half due to ponding water and danger to players safety. However, how wrong am I, when Surrey came out and played the best running rugby one could imagine. We could name the whole squad where each one of them dominated a strong Sussex side, working as a team and supporting one another, a pleasure to watch. The score does not reflect the game but does detail Sussex's strong defence that denied us getting over the try line several times. Our tackling was immense driving Sussex back naming a particular two man legal tackle in the ¾'s from Daniel Yabia and Harrison Mumar knocked the Sussex runner back several metres. A groan rose from the crowd as the hit was heard even over the driving rain. I cannot say more as this was an impressive display by Surrey that made me proud as the Head Coach. Well done boys.

Final score was Sussex 5 Surrey 7 with a try and conversion from Oliver Shepherd.

The LSE selectors noted 5 Sussex players and 10 Surrey players with another 4 to be reviewed by video – Alfie Rankin, Harry Hudson, Daniel Sweeney, Cassian Hodges, Daniel Odumeru, Paul Louis Howard, Oliver Shepherd, Will Springett, Max Webber and Ollie Wickens – with the additional 4 being Finn Basil, Robert Harrison, Daniel Yabia and Joe Patient.

To conclude for the U18 2022/23 season Surrey had 7 players out of 8 counties nominated to the LSE trials to take place at Dartford RFC on 29 January 2023. The Players were Harry Hudson, Tom Dickens, Paul Louis Howard, Daniel Odumeru, Oliver Shepherd, Ollie Wickens and Finn Basil. A truly fantastic result and one of the best outcomes for the U18 for many years.

A truly great achievement is the fact Paul Louis Howard made it in the full London and South East England divisional squad to play SW England counties, Midland counties and Northern counties. LSE won every match. In addition Daniel Odumeru and Harry Hudson were named as first reserves for the squad. Unfortunately there will be no England Counties this year to play Ireland, Scotland or Wales but they will name a squad.

A marvellous season and great achievement to all Surrey U18 2022/23 squad, well done.

Barry Nolan
Surrey RFU U17/U18 Lead Coach 2022/23 season

the game

Surrey U20 Men

The Under20 Men are midway through their season - well done to all selected and involved.

Our photographer made it to one of their games. Here are a selection of the amazing photos he took. For all the full gallery, go to our website [PHOTO GALLERIES](#)



the game

Waterfall Finals at The Stoop

It was an incredible end to the Waterfall competition in Surrey with the Finals for the U14 & U16 Girls and the U14, U15, U16 & Colt Boys teams being held at The Stoop for the first time! An amazing opportunity to play at this awesome location. Congratulations to every team in the final - a huge achievement. Full [galleries](#) will be on our website. Winners: U14 Girls: Chobham, U16 Girls: Old Reigatians, U14 Boys: Esher, U15 Boys: Warlingham, U16 Boys: London Irish, Colts: Guildford



the game

Waterfall Finals around Surrey

Many thanks to all the host clubs - Cobham, Esher, Haslemere, Old Cranleighans, Camberley, Kingston, Chobham and Guildford - and the teams of volunteers who enabled an incredible day of rugby on Sunday 23rd April - so many games, and so many cups won! An end of a fantastic season for U12's, U13's & U14's rugby in Surrey.

Here's a small selection of photos of teams involved on the day. For the full album go to our [Facebook page](#).



the connections

Have your say

Hopefully you've enjoyed this edition of Surrey Spotlight. We'd love to hear from you! Have you got a story you'd like to share about your club, your players, your volunteers, or details about upcoming festivals or courses you're running? The deadline for copy for the next issue is end of June, but the sooner the better!

Have something instant you'd like us to share on social media? Please tag us at @surreyrugby so we're sure to see it.

Get in touch

Contact Surrey Spotlight Editor Joanna Gordon via comms@surreyrugby.org or on 077202-44555

Stay in touch

Make sure you keep up-to-date with what's happening in rugby within Surrey, find out first about any courses running and any festivals taking place - by following us on social media!

FOLLOW US:



Photos

Many of the photos in the newsletter are taken by our new Photographer John Kilby. John is happy to send you hi res digital versions of any of his photos - free of charge! Get in touch via [PHOTOGRAPHER](#)

the sponsors

Thank you!



Surrey Rugby is not for profit and exists to support 30,000 players, 5,300 coaches, 2,300 referees, countless volunteers and parents of Youth - all of whom contribute to making our community rugby what it is.

That's over 70,000 members across our affiliated clubs!

We are very grateful for the fantastic support of our current sponsors - without whom we could not help our clubs to Prosper and Thrive.