



Fairford RFC Newsletter

March 2021



We now have almost three months of lockdown #3 behind us, the plan for ending of restrictions is clearer, vaccinations are going well and it's looking likely we may be able to enjoy the summer. Big shout out to those of you with children, who have survived home schooling and now have kids back with their teachers and friends (well, until Easter anyway!).

Well done everyone, we've (nearly) made it! Soon, we can also start to play and watch local rugby again – yippee - and this issue of your Newsletter provides details from your Club on training restart, plus other important updates. Enjoy.

Return to rugby roadmap – update

England Rugby RETURN TO RUGBY ROAD MAP: COMMUNITY GAME V1 - 05/03/21

FOR INFORMATION ON USE OF CLEVERLYDES, CHANGING PLACES AND OFF-FIELD PROTOCOLS, PLEASE SEE ENGLANDRUGBY.COM/COVID19RUGBY

PHASED RETURN	A	D1	D2	E1	E2	F
CURRENT STATUS	INDIVIDUAL TRAINING WITH ONE OTHER PERSON	READY4 RUGBY & SOME CONTACT TRAINING	ADAPTED LAW MATCHES	FULL CONTACT TRAINING	FULL CONTACT MATCHES	ALL RESTRICTIONS LIFTED
	UNTIL 29TH MARCH	FROM 29TH MARCH	FROM 26TH APRIL	PROVISIONALLY WHEN STEP 3 OF GOVERNMENT ROADMAP REACHED (NOT BEFORE)	2 WEEKS AFTER STAGE E1 REACHED	NOT BEFORE STEP 4 OF GOVERNMENT ROADMAP REACHED (COULD BE LATER)
PERMITTED ACTIVITY	CURRENT LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS REMAIN INDIVIDUALS ALLOWED TO EXERCISE WITH ONE OTHER FROM ANOTHER HOUSEHOLD SCHOOLS & COLLEGES ARE TO PLAY TO STAGE D1 INTERNALLY FROM 8TH MARCH	CONTACT TRAINING (EXCLUDING SCRUM & MAUL) READY4RUGBY, O2 TOUCH & TAG MATCHES AGAINST OTHER CLUBS	CONTACT TRAINING (STILL EXCLUDING SCRUM & MAUL) ADULT & AGE GRADE MATCHES, WITH ADAPTED LAWS (NO SCRUM & MAUL)	FULL CONTACT TRAINING (INCLUDING SCRUM & MAUL)	ADULT FULL CONTACT MATCHES * SOME OFF FIELD RESTRICTIONS LIKELY TO STILL APPLY	ALL RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

PLEASE NOTE

- *Age Grade out of season activity (after 31st May) permitted in line with revised RFU training and playing guidance to follow
- Progression to the next set of Age Grade rules, along with any dispensations for 17 year olds to play adult rugby, are suspended until 1st January 2022
- All adult and age grade competitions anticipated to start in September as normal, under full laws
- References to contact rugby includes USA, 10s and 7s
- Stages B & C in previous roadmaps are no longer currently relevant due to changes in Government restrictions

The first thing to note about the new RFU rugby roadmap is that it's **green**, which overall reflects the more positive current state, versus the red graphics of lockdown.

Headlines are: restricted training can restart from **29th March**, full rules training from **17th May**, unrestricted matches 2 weeks later and all on/off pitch restrictions lifted **21st June** (subject of course to no disruption to the government plans...). More detailed guidance that sits around these headlines is available on the RFU website or upon request.

For all of you directly involved in junior and senior rugby, coaches will no doubt have been in touch to confirm plans for restart, but just in case, here's a summary:

Juniors/Minis:

Sunday 4/4/21 (Easter Sunday) – training re-starts at Leafield pitches at 10.30am. The 'season' has been extended to 31st May, to allow us to make up for lost time, so training will continue until then. Parents please refer to the newsletter sent by Lindsey Thurlow, for more details.

Seniors:

Tues 30/3/21 – 6.45pm - **Mixed** touch rugby starts at CHOP

Thurs 1/4/21 – 6.45pm - **Mixed** rugby fitness circuits start at CHOP for 4 weeks, after which **Mens** full rugby training will restart on Thursdays and **Vixens** training on Wednesdays 7-9pm, details to follow. (The ladies are also looking to set up a couple of touch matches with local development teams before the end of season, again, details in due course).

Whilst talking rugby re-start, Laura Stitt tells us the Vixen squad is looking for new players (novices or experienced) to bolster their ranks. So, if you're age 17+ and female or if you know any ladies who might fancy giving this great sport a try, Laura can be contacted on 07983 427234.



Legends in your Living Room

As reported last month, the Club managed to secure a few 6-Nations 'legends in your living room' experiences from Rugby Bash/Rugby Tours and gifted those at random to a few lucky juniors, coaches and their families.

Below are a few of the messages and pictures we have kindly been sent, all from those who tuned into the Wales v England game on 27th February:

Ashleigh Jones u5/6 (from Ashleigh's Dad, Greg)

"...She decided that Wales were going to win yesterday before kickoff; so was happy with the result, although couldn't understand why I was a bit annoyed with some of the decisions made by the match officials! I was in my England shirt, so I think she decided to pick the opposite to me!..... she didn't really understand who the legends were, but I enjoyed listening to them over the match commentary.....Mike Brown's face told a thousand words and I enjoyed both his and Gareth Anscombe's stories

Thanks again for putting this on for us



Ethan James u8 (a couple of pictures.....and plenty of rugby snacks!)



Richard and Ben Rees-Jones U11 (purchased for them from the Club by Mum Debbie)

My boys are really pleased with the treats. Thank you for organising Lindsey.



David James u13/14 coach

We had a great time having these guys to watch the game with. There was a lot of chatter and questions asked via different avenues and then asked of both Mike and Gareth. Guy asked what would they advertise on TV, as Ben Youngs is advertising Dove for men? Mike Brown suggested shampoo for his hair or lack of it. Gareth even took us to the toilet with him. He was wearing his wireless ear pieces and forgot to take them out. We all ribbed him about it a few times. Hope he washed his hands!



Looks like the legend 'chat' and the snacks, provided by the organisers to complete the experience, went down well. We hope the other families enjoyed theirs too, but if they were England fans some of those snacks might have stuck in the throat!



Fairford RFC Challenges – update

Lockdown 3 – February 2021 Challenge



February proved to be another incredible month of physical achievements by everyone who took part in the Club's *final* lockdown challenge.

Here are some of the stand out statistics for February (thanks to Lindsey Thurlow for these):

Most miles on a bike: 555.49 (Colin Spour - Bravehearts)

Most miles on foot: 180.16 (Leanne Ricketts - Bravehearts)

Most bonus points earned 112 (all of the following;

Colin Spour, Bravehearts

Andy Marklove, Force

Callum Thurlow, Force

Fay Butler, Force

Sabrina Crocker, Force

Helen Ross, Carnage

Gillian Stopka, Carnage

Nick Baynham, Carnage)

Full house in a single day of 30 mile on bike, 15 on foot and full bonus points (Adam Blizzard, Force and Lindsey Thurlow, Force)

We should leave the final word (and overall results) on this incredible set of achievements by every participant to the 'Challenge Master' Danny Briggs, the guy

who organised, recorded, motivated, participated, loved and encouraged every single one of us. This was Danny's final Facebook post in February:

Good evening you absolute legendary people. I just want to start off by thanking everybody who has been involved, participated, shouted about what we are doing and for putting blood sweat and tears in to yet another FRFC Challenge. You are all genuinely awesome and I for one will miss this in March!

The Team challenge has had an out and out leader nearly all the way through. Fire led 99% of the days and went into the last day with almost 100 points to play with. Game over right? Not quite - today Team Force have achieved incredible things and I promise it is tight at the top.

First - Brave Hearts: What a team, despite setting individual targets they have worked together, encouraged each other and have achieved great results.....

Brave Hearts - 3581.03 Miles and 324 Bonus Points.

Fire - 2353 points. (2313.83 miles)

Force - 2341 points. (1877.48 miles)

Carnage - 2312 points (1653.91 miles)

Rage - 1487 points. (1082.82 miles).

Club mileage = 10509.07 miles!!!

SO THE WINNERS ARE TEAM FIRE!!!! Congrats all, well deserved and a massive well done to Team Force for pushing them so close today x

All participants and indeed the Club as a whole owes a debt of gratitude, forever, to Danny Briggs. As a result of your solo efforts to get these challenges up and running, we all came through lockdown in better mental and physical shape than we would otherwise have done - FACT. Thanks Danny, a legend in your own living room.

What's next? No more immediate challenges! Danny thought it was good to allow people to ease out of lockdown and back to rugby, without the 'pressure' of getting out on the wheels or feet every day.....instead, maybe catching up on all those DIY and gardening jobs that we've neglected over the winter.

But, it's important we keep up the #oneClub togetherness and spirit that has been enhanced through these challenges. So, there are already plans for 2 further activity based 'events' in the summer. Get the dates in your diary and keep up to date with the details here or via the Club's Facebook/Instagram accounts.

- 3rd July 12 hour non-stop touch rugby, for seniors (men and ladies)
- 24th July Club cycle/run day including a mile route for juniors and minis to get involved.

Both of these will be fund-raising events and the organising committee and participants have already agreed monies raised will be split equally between the **Fairford RFC** and '**Crohns and Colitis UK**', a charity close to many hearts within the Club.

In future issues of Newsletter, we will provide more details on these events, as they firm up and begin to 'feature' some of the participants and why they are taking part.

The other main dates for your diary:

20th – 22nd August 2021 – The much awaited return of the magnificent community event, FAIRFEST !!!

People are already talking on Facebook about what to wear.....well for everyone's sake let's hope its more than this!



‘Spotlight’

This month, we are back to featuring Club *players* in this ‘let’s all get to know each other a little better’ section and in particular, a couple of our juniors:

Name	Luke Jackson
Which Team/section do/did you play for	U14s
Preferred Position(s)	No 8 (Dreams of being a No 10)
How long at Club	7 years (That’s half your life Luke!)
Best memory of the Club	Charging down a kick, away to Witney and Guy scoring a try from it.
Worst memory of the Club	Not being able to play for the last year
Fun Fact	I’ve watched Brooklyn 99 about 5 times all the way through.



Name	Sam Jenkins
Which Team/section do/did you play for	U10s
Preferred Position(s)	N/A – just anywhere where I have the ball
How long at Club	4 years
Best memory of the Club	Dursley festival because we played so well.
Worst memory of the Club	Not being able to play due to COVID
Fun Fact	I collect helmets; I have a motocross one, a real Army one and a Starfighter one from Star Wars.

(NB: No picture of Sam available)

Clubhouse

We promised last month to keep you posted on progress with this and we will be bringing you news of the options for Clubhouse that are being investigated. However, there has been a little delay in getting these documented for this issue, so we will bring more on this to you next month.

New Hedging – Leaffield Road pitches

Fantastic news: The Club has taken steps to address the ongoing issues of dog fouling on the youth pitches at Leaffield Road. We have erected a hedge along the perimeter fence, in the hope this will stop dogs straying off the footpath and onto the playing area (with the help of their owners of course!).

On **Saturday the 6th March**, after an appeal from George Ellis for Club volunteers, **2 teams of 5 guys planted c2000 saplings along a 400 metre stretch in about 6 hours**. That is more than 5 plants put into the ground every minute, that's some going, right?

It was luckily a sunny day for the work and George brought along the Butty Van to keep the troop fed and watered. What a great team effort; massive shout out to:

Adam Blizzard; Chris (Chuffer) Nicholas; Mike Wrona; James Wrona; Will Bowers; Danny Pugh; Andy Stopka; Colin Spour; Daniel Hague and Ben Taylor for getting their spades and wellies out for the Club.

I'm sure the lads would also like to say thanks to **Gaia Hedges** who 'manned the van' dishing up bacon butties and coffee for breakfast and burgers and beers for lunch.

Of course, none of this would have happened without the hard work of **George Ellis**, who organised it all including securing the donation of saplings from the **South West's Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)**.



Boys always boys, blocking in poor 'Chuffer'!

This was a win win project; the Club, the local community, the environment and local wildlife will all see the benefits from this hedge as it gets established. The FWAG provided a whole variety of hedgerow saplings (including Hazel, Quickthorn, Field Maple, Dog Rose) and they should create a lovely area for nature in time.

The Club and community needs to now do its bit, though, by using the paths and access to the pitches and not breaking the existing fence. Hopefully the hedge will deter people from doing this in future.

If you're turning up to train or play there, please always use the gate and not climb the fence; if you don't and George catches you, in his own words, he will be 'very very cross'and we wouldn't want that now would we?

FRFC 'Housekeeping' Content

FRFC Kit

Whilst Club rugby activity is on hold, you can still access junior Club kit by emailing our brilliant volunteer kit co-ordinator Debbie Rees-Jones on dbracewell72@googlemail.com .

However, as soon as we re-start junior training, the cabin will be open as normal on Sundays.

Volunteers

Remember to get in touch with our volunteer co-ordinator (and volunteer herself!) Katharine Buchanan: familybuchanan@outlook.com, if you think you can spare even an hour a week to help the Club.

Keeping in touch

If you're not already following the Club's Social Media, it's a great way to keep in touch with what members of the Club are up to and engage in the 'banter':

<https://www.facebook.com/fairfordrfc/>

<https://www.facebook.com/frfcjuniors/>

<https://www.facebook.com/FairfordLRFC/>

What else would you like to see from FRFC?

As always, this is your Newsletter so should contain the stuff you want to see. If you have any ideas for content - funny stories (rugby or otherwise), appeals for help, upcoming local events, people in the community you would like to see featured – whatever it is, if you think it would be relevant for the FRFC community then just get in touch (Karen at kspour@sky.com) in the first instance).

Thank-you to all our sponsors for their continued support:



