



# Fairford RFC Newsletter

July 2022



The Newsletter had its summer break in June, now we're back and already we are at the end of July, looking forward to the new season and covering what's been going on behind the scenes, during the close season so far.

Training for Seniors and Vixens is already well underway (after a great, very popular and well attended few weeks of mixed touch on a Wednesday) so if you want to get involved we are always happy to take on new players or coaches, just pop along to the CHOP on a Tuesday/Thursday (Seniors) or Wednesday (Vixens). Minis/Juniors will be back early September.



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England  
Rugby

**TEAMWORK**

**RESPECT**

**ENJOYMENT**

**DISCIPLINE**

**SPORTSMANSHIP**

## Sponsors

Firstly, as has been the case all season, we include a copy of this booklet of sponsors for the 2021-22 season. *(Logos are featured at the back of this newsletter, as normal).*

Members of the committee have been and continue to be busy securing sponsorships for all sections, for the forthcoming 2022/23 season and we will update these in due course.

## Fixtures – 2022/23 season

A copy of the fixtures, so far, for all sections of the Club is attached to the email

As you may know, for Seniors, there was a league restructure so names of some of the opponents this coming year may be less familiar to members.

As far as the Vixens and Juniors/Minis are concerned, these are the fixtures so far secured, but efforts are ongoing to secure further games and this list will be kept up-to-date and re-issued here, as and when.

## Changes in personnel – 2022/23 season

### *Senior Team Structure*

The Club was very sad to learn it was to lose first team captain, Ben Taylor, due to a change in his personal circumstances (not really sure why he wasn't prepared to travel from Nottinghamshire every weekend though haha!). We wish he and his partner Casey all the happiness in their new home and life.

We have a fabulous replacement Captain and have taken the opportunity to implement a team of people to manage the Senior team. The new 'Player Support Group' (PSG) was announced on Social Media, as follows:

**New club captain** - Harri Cummings. Harri has been an absolute hero the last 2 seasons both on and off the park. He absolutely loves the club and has the respect of all. Expect him to bring some dynamic running and with his excellent boot, he will direct us around the park with ease. Best of luck Harri, we all are right behind you.

**Vice Captain**- very happy that Keelan Little has agreed to continue in the role. Keeks is, always has been, and always will be a leader. He is a warrior on the park and people naturally follow his example. Supporting Harri from the back of the scrum, only good things can come from this partnership.

**Head Coach** - Danny Briggs. Danny loves this club, loves everybody involved and will work tirelessly to get the club back to where it should be. *(After Danny informed the Club that he was stepping down as Head Coach for the forthcoming season, we were very relieved and happy when he decided to stay after all)*

**Assistant Coach** - Kenny Robins. Kenny is Mr Fairford. He is instrumental in everything good about the club and he will forever be a Fairfordonian. Combining playing, managing and coaching, we are indebted to his hard work.

**Backs Coach** - Neil Craggs. Craggsy has an abundance of rugby knowledge and will be working on getting our backs firing at will. Studious of the game, there is no doubt we are a greater squad with him directing from the touchline.

**Forwards Coach** - Ben Goodey. Ben unfortunately has had to retire from front row duties however there is nothing he does not know about forward play and we are fortunate to have him on the side of the paddock directing our exciting pack. With direction to improve our forwards phase play from the line-out and the scrum, be ready for some power play rugby.

We look forward with anticipation to the 2022/2023 season and we welcome anybody to get involved.

## *Committee*

Following the sad passing of our friend Beamer last year, Steve Darley has been fulfilling the role of committee chair, whilst also continuing to act as Club secretary.

Following the AGM, he has been installed formally as the new committee Chair, with Andy Stopka formally taking over the role of secretary, a role he had started to perform in recent months, in support of Steve. We know these two guys will serve the Club with ongoing commitment and professionalism. Thank you both.

## *Club President*

Sadly, after 18 years at the helm, Scott Cohoon has decided to relinquish the role of Club President. Although he was unable to attend the AGM due to holiday, he asked that his resignation be shared at that meeting. His resignation message read out at the meeting speaks for itself:

I have had 18 wonderful years with the most amazing club that I've ever been involved with. You all are such a very special set of people.

I brought my son Ben when he was only 5 1/2 years old to the most amazing rugby club. I thank everybody that was involved at the time and during his rugby career, giving him the opportunities that he had and thoroughly enjoyed.

I feel now is the time for me to step aside and let a very young and enthusiastic new committee take the club forward. I will continue to support and love everything that you will do to continue to make FRFC the most amazing club in our community.

I would just like to thank personally everybody that I've worked with over the last 18 years and thank you all for a wonderful time, the highs and lows that we've all been through together.

Good luck to the new committee members and please work as hard as you possibly can to make your memories as special as mine. All the very best in FRFC Rugby xx

We are obviously sorry to see Scott step down but it's fair to say he has given the Club his all in those 18 years. We're sure we will continue to see Scott and the lovely Ali on the sidelines and at Club events.

We will let you know as soon as we find someone suitable who agrees to replace Scott.

## Recruitment

From changes in personnel to the acquiring of new personnel. We are currently recruiting players for all sections of the Club, partly to replace players we've sadly lost (due to injury, retirement or relocation) and partly to enable us to continue to grow and prosper as one Club. We send our thanks to Keelan Little for giving up his very precious time to produce these fantastic posters for advertising purposes, thanks Keeks.



If you know anyone who may themselves (or have children/grandchildren who'd) like to play the greatest game in the world, please feel free to share these posters with them and tell them what an amazing Club we have going on here. The new season is fast approaching and we need to grow our numbers and get all new players training as soon as possible.

## SPOND

Following such success last season and as a result of the new safeguarding measures that we are working to, we have decided to make SPOND our main communication tool throughout the club going forward and remove the old WhatsApp groups. All members will be asked to sign up to the app and join their specific age group.

As players, you will receive reminders and be able to confirm attendance for weekly training and fixtures. All documentation, policies and files are located in one easy to reach place, meaning that we do not have the need to blanket communicate all members with information that might not be relevant.

We feel that this is a really beneficial tool and hope that you will enjoy using it. Of course, if you have any queries or need support, don't hesitate to get in touch with Lorna, our

Safeguarding Lead, on 07540 160942. She will also be on site most Sunday mornings too so do ask if you need assistance. If you're linked to the Seniors or Vixens squads, then Danny is your contact.

If you haven't already got it, you might want to download the app (see logo below) so you're ready for the new season. You will need to set up a SPOND account using your email address and a password, but the App will take you through the process. Then, once you renew your Club membership for the new season (or join for the first time), you will be sent a link which will give you access to the relevant part of SPOND for your section/age group.



## Club Challenge Event

We mentioned in May's Newsletter that from 18<sup>th</sup> June to 3<sup>rd</sup> July the **Pink Panthers**, **Golden Eagles** and **Green Army** were coming back, to compete in a summer challenge, counting miles on foot, bike, rower or in the pool in pursuit of fun, personal and team satisfaction, whilst raising some money for a worthy local cause.

Below is an article that recently made it in to the local press, reflecting on the success, once again, of an FRFC Challenge event. This was a fantastic effort by the Club and everyone who took part and, with this coverage, is also a great advert for the Club's ethos of being a fully integrated Club that welcomes all and supports its local community.

Thanks has to also go to Danny Briggs for co-ordinating the whole thing, once again.

## Fairford and Lechlade news

# Rugby Club steps up to help Ki's recovery

FAIRFORD Rugby Football Club (FRFC) members are always keen to compete in challenges with men, women and children involved in walking, running, cycling and swimming to earn points for their team.

The challenges first started during lockdown with a team-based competition to help maintain physical and mental health during a difficult time.

Post lockdown, the Club has been using the opportunity of these challenges to raise money for various local and national charities such as Shine Bright, MIND, Crohn's and Colitis UK.

The fundraising cause this time was for a young local man, Ki New, who had a tragic accident on his bike in 2021, which left him paralysed from the chest down. Ki is a regular at Club matches in Fairford and the Club wanted to help Ki by raising much needed funds for his rehabilitation.

Nearly 80 people, including whole families, took part in this year's event, split across three teams: Green Army, Pink Panthers and Golden Eagles.

The Pink Panthers were victorious this time, led by Vixens



Ki

ladies team player, Wendy Button, beating the Green Army into second place by nearly 200 points.

The £750 target was smashed with £920 raised so far for Ki

through this challenge.

Following the challenge, Ki posted this message on the challenge Facebook page: "Thank you to everyone who got involved.

It goes a long way. Big shout out to Wendy Button and Danny Briggs for making it happen. I really appreciate it."

## Mali Project

It's not just local communities that your Club supports!

Danny learned that Dan Withers, one of our players, is currently working in Mali and had visited a Malian after school club where, as well as other lessons, the children were being taught the disciplines of our great game. However, their kit and equipment is below standard or non-existent.

Danny asked Dan if there was anything the Club could do and, after consulting Serge Betsen (of French rugby fame), who is supporting the schools' rugby programme, it was agreed that we would collect unwanted kit and equipment, to post out to the children of Mali.

So, Danny rounded up all obsolete kit/equipment in the Club's hands as well as collecting any offered by members/the Fairford community and posted off to Mali recently. We are sure that the children will be very excited to receive and wear the FRFC shirts, it's a

lovely thing that Dan and Serge are doing and it's great for the Club to be getting international exposure, too. Everyone wins.



## CHOP Refurbishment

You may remember in May we reported the Club's support of the Fairford Football Club's project to deep clean and redecorate their changing facilities, which of course we use on match days.

Well this work inspired junior coach and committee member Chris Hill to come up with a plan to refurbish the old cabin at the CHOP.

Chris came to the committee with a fully costed and funded (by sponsors) proposal which was quickly approved and, in a few short weeks, Chris has managed to get resources together to start implementing his proposal, to install new floor and roof, clad the walls and refurbish the interior, including, hopefully, a toilet block.

Here's a few pictures of the improvements so far and what Chris had to say:

### Project CHOP

With the season at an end, it gave us all an opportunity to review as a club what we want and needed to move on to make a success of the new season.

It was decided that Project CHOP was the way forward, Providing an area that we could use on match days

and training for all teams.

Fairford Seniors, Vixens and Juniors are all extremely excited to see the completion of Project CHOP.

Over the last several weekends, long days and nights we have had numbers up to 20 volunteers at a time all helping with the renovation works of our old changing room.

None of this would have been possible without the help of Sponsorship, Friends, and Families.

We have begged, borrowed and borrowed again to make this work. From children running around keeping each other amused, whilst Dads considered career changes as builders and wives/partners/friends making bacon rolls for the troops.

This is our vision that we are a club on the rise, we are not just a small-town rugby club we are a family, and we have all come together to pull this off.

Sponsoring companies as follows:

- **CIA Fire & Security Ltd**
- **P Morse Roofing Ltd**
- **Buzz Electrical**
- **Garden & Plant Co**
- **Plumbstop**
- **Commercial Energy Group**
- **Free port Europe**
- **Wrona Project Management**

Still plenty to be done but what an improvement already and huge thank you from the bottom of are hearts.

Further updates to follow.







We are of course very grateful to the sponsors and volunteers who helped to make this happen. But, we should also highlight that this was a project conceived and executed due to the efforts of a single Club member.

We cannot thank you enough, Chris, for taking the initiative on our behalf and changing for the better the experience of all players at the CHOP for years to come. We are very lucky to have Club volunteers like you around!



## Fairfest 2022 - 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> July

The annual festival was held last weekend at Walnut Field, a little earlier than normal this year and once again was a great success.

This perennial event is a great opportunity for the community to get together and enjoy family and party time and is also a solid fundraiser for the Club.

The bar was open all weekend, manned mostly by Club volunteers (thanks to them all) and was busy most of the time, the usual varied range of food outlets were kept busy too and the programme of family activities and music acts kept everyone entertained (again thanks to everyone who gave their time willingly to help make the event a success).

Below are some pictures shared on social media before and after the event. If you haven't yet, take a look at the Fairfest Facebook page, which has some lovely comments on the event as well as a few personal videos, showing the festival in its best light.

Just before the event took place, it was also announced that Fairfest had won the Southern enterprise award for Best Beer and Music Festival in Gloucestershire 2022, which is absolutely fantastic!

Congratulations to George Ellis and Davina Hedges who are instrumental in putting the whole thing together year after year; thanks to them and others involved in the organization and to Lindsey Thurlow for entering Fairfest for this award. Finally, thanks of course to all those who supported the event through sponsorship of cups, barrels etc.

Roll on 2023.





## Another Vixens Tour

The ladies are off on their travels again at the end of August, allegedly to up their pre-season game, but we expect the local pubs to be busy. Good luck in the Newquay Beach Rugby Tournament, ladies.

Many thanks to Jason Little who has sponsored new shirts for this event, very generous.



## FRFC 'Housekeeping' Content

### Dates for your diary

Date	What/Where	Time
16 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2022	Next committee meeting – Cricket Club	7pm
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept 2022	Seniors first league game – away @Chosen Hill	3pm
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept 2022	Vixens first friendly – away @Ashley Down	3pm
4 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2022	Minis/Juniors restart training* – Sundays – Leaffield pitches	10.30am
2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 2022	Juniors current first match – away @ Chippenham	10,30am

*\*this first training session for juniors is a taster session, so if your child plays but has friends who might be interested, bring them along for a free go at rugby. Also if you have a child or grandchild you think might like to join in our Sunday morning fun, come on the 4<sup>th</sup> and see how they get on.*

## FRFC Kit

As always, remember to go to the Raging Bull link below for all your 'kit' needs. There are

sections for Seniors, Vixens and Juniors.

[https://www.ragingbullsportswear.com/product-category/rugby-union-club-stores/fairford-rfc/?fbclid=IwAR0QxAVizwzyW\\_GWZE6sfyZWhoepayP8RIzQs9wGyJ4\\_0OwHsK3FxvyUOUg](https://www.ragingbullsportswear.com/product-category/rugby-union-club-stores/fairford-rfc/?fbclid=IwAR0QxAVizwzyW_GWZE6sfyZWhoepayP8RIzQs9wGyJ4_0OwHsK3FxvyUOUg)

If you want to check availability on 'in stock' kit or if you have any queries, email volunteer kit co-ordinator Debbie Rees-Jones on [dbracewell72@googlemail.com](mailto:dbracewell72@googlemail.com).

## *More Volunteers Needed*

As we have said before, we are always looking for extra hands to lighten the load of running a successful Club, So, if you can help on the field with coaching, off field with admin or catering or can help us push forward our Clubhouse planning, we would be very happy to hear from you.

If you are interested in getting involved with Fairford RFC, in any capacity, please drop an email to [rugby@fairfordrfc.co.uk](mailto:rugby@fairfordrfc.co.uk) in the first instance. Thank you.

## *Feedback is a gift*

If you are receiving this newsletter but no longer wish to, have any feedback (on content, frequency etc) or have a contribution for a future issue, please email Karen at [kspour@sky.com](mailto:kspour@sky.com) in the first instance.

Thankyou to our sponsors for their continued support:

