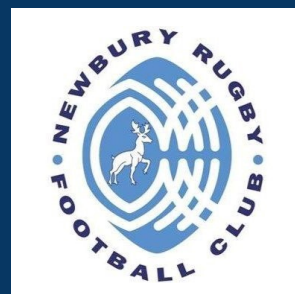


BLUES NEWS

KEEPING IN TOUCH - 17

OCTOBER 2021



This newsletter is sponsored by



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KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you would like to contribute to the next Blues News, please email content to [David Jones](#)

NEWBURY
RUGBY CLUB

Welcome to the October newsletter. Eight weeks into the season and how great to see so many familiar faces and friends back at the club. There was a very big crowd last Saturday as The Blues turned on a fabulous performance against Windsor. The previous week at Grove, our supporters outweighed the home team. We even had three match officials (two as linesman) to ensure a good game. The Women are as enthusiastic as ever as they rebuild their team and recently narrowly lost to London Irish (29-14), despite a spirited performance.

The Minis and Juniors are busy training on Sunday mornings, but matches are in short supply as COVID keeps numbers down. Unfortunately, we have also had to withdraw the third team from the leagues due to difficulty in getting enough players and last weekend also saw the Stags match have to be cancelled. However, they did have a great win recently over Reading Abbey (31-22).

Players, get your boots on and get back playing. You are a very long time retired!! Playing rugby and the camaraderie that goes with it, you will look back as one of the big highpoints of your life.

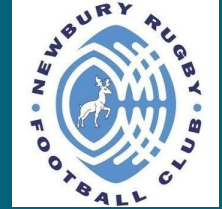
The club is currently above budget and at the moment is doing well financially, but it is the busy time of the year and we still have a huge amount to do. One problem solved usually means two more created, but we are working towards giving this club a clear structure so that it is sustainable and the best community sporting asset in West Berkshire. Your management team, rugby committee and the commercial team have been working very long hours to try and secure our future. If you attend the FAGM on 24th Nov, you will have a chance to find out and ask any questions you may have.

Staff recruitment as well as volunteer recruitment is always a challenge and has not changed. It is a problem shared by most clubs I have spoken to, but if you can help in any small way then please let us know. A big thanks to all the current volunteers who keep the club alive.

A brief mention of the commercial team here at Monks Lane, who work long hours during the week and don't always get recognised. They are responsible for bringing in 75% of the income into the club (rugby just 25%), allowing us to play rugby at these amazing facilities. Last month during weekdays they coordinated over 57 separate lettings at the club as well as weddings and parties every weekend since July. The income generated plays a huge role in reducing our debt at the club. Lettings vary from Martial Arts to Slimming World, and from Beavers and Cubs to Dance classes. Last Saturday due to quick thinking by the team, we housed the Mobile unit for the COVID Tests due to the problems at Chieveley. Thank you to all in the commercial team.

Nigel Thorne has been appointed as part of the Health & Safety team to tackle the compliance issues at the club, alongside Richard Deal, Richard Batley, Ian West and Hywel Price Richards. You will be hearing more from them, especially the team managers and coaches. Thank you to those volunteers.

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH



Don't forget the **Big Weekend on 6th Nov** when **kick off will be 2.30pm** (NOT 3pm), for Blues v Beaconsfield. There will be real ale, international rugby, live music and hopefully lots of supporters staying on to enjoy a great club day. **Don't forget to book your tables for the two Christmas games on the 11th and 18th December**, when again there will be live music and Christmas carols respectively.

There has been much in the press regarding the WBC all-weather pitch. Rest assured we have been working on this on a daily basis and are in touch with West Berks Council, the RFU and Sport England. We cannot comment on the press reports because we can only deal with the areas relating to us as a rugby club. Our only interest is to preserve an amazing Community amateur rugby club at Monks Lane for the benefit of over 500 playing members, plus many more supporters, and our belief is this will be a great benefit to us achieving that. It also contributes and supports the ethos of a sports multi-use hub which is the way forward for Sport England. As soon as we are able to advise members of what is happening, we will do so, but we are not in control of the WBC discussions with other authorities. We are however, ready to sign the lease subject to confirmation that those discussions have been concluded.

Robin Varley has been doing a huge amount of work on Sponsorship, generating new leads and reorganising the boards around the pitch, with the help of Richard Purton. If you have any other potential leads you can pass to him, please do. A big thank you to all our sponsors as always. You are hugely appreciated and without you, we would not be here.

Thanks as usual to the ever reliable Sarah Thorne for coordinating this newsletter and to Brian Lee and Zea Daniels for their regular contributions. We always want to hear news from any section in the club so please [contact us](#) - we would like to hear from you.

David Jones - President



jones robinson

— SIMUL MOVERE —

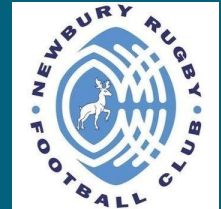
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BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

WHAT'S GOING ON AT MONKS LANE



25th Birthday Weekend
Saturday 6th / Sunday 7th November

Newbury Blues vs Beaconsfield
Kick-off Saturday 6th - 2.30pm

Live Music – 4.30pm

Wales vs South Africa
on the big screens – 5.30pm

Newbury Women vs Newton Abbot Women
Sunday 7th – 1.30pm

More information coming soon

[f NewburyRugby](#) [@newburyrfc](#) [newburyrfc](#) [#COYB](#)

** Correct at 27.10.21 – events subject to change**

To: All Voting Members of Newbury Rugby Football Club

NRFC FINANCIAL AGM

Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 7.00pm
at The Clubhouse, Monks Lane, Newbury Berks. RG14 7RW

The purpose of the meeting is to receive and approve the Accounts for the Financial Year ending 30 June 2021. The Agenda, with Minutes of the previous FAGM, postponed to 3 March 2021 and a summary of the Club's Financial Statement for FY 2020/21 will be sent to Voting members two weeks prior to the meeting.

Apologies for absence may be sent to the [Secretary](#) - Christine Morrell.

CLUB GOES GREEN AND PLANTS TREES TO SAVE THE PLANET (AND HELP THE CLUB)

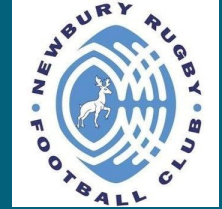
NRFC has ordered 200 trees from Greenham Common Trust who have very kindly sponsored 25,000 trees to be planted in West Berkshire, to help towards reducing our Carbon Footprint. It's a small way for the Club to support the Community, but it's a positive start. Thanks to Steve Gibbs (who remembered I was very keen to go green at the Club) for signing us up to be involved in this great initiative. The deal was I would plant the trees, if Steve ordered them!! So.....once they arrive I will need a team of volunteers to help plant them. Please let me know if you can help, otherwise I may be at the club a long time digging holes.

If anyone or a family would like to sponsor a tree, we will organise a plaque to go by that tree with the family name. What a great 'GREEN' Christmas present!! A bit of you will be there for ever.

David Jones - President

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

LATEST FROM THE WOMEN'S SECTION



The Women's Section have got off to a great start this season managing to field two teams for multiple fixtures already. The first XV most recently played London Irish. Despite Newbury Blues getting off to a good start, London Irish pushed back to get the win in the end. As always Newbury are straight back to training and are now looking forward to their next game at home on the 7th November at home against Newton Abbot Ladies.



That same day NWRFC are excited to also be hosting an Inner Warrior Series sevens tournament where our Development Team, 'Out of the Blue' will be playing a triangular fixture with Andover and Alton. As part of the Inner Warrior Series all three teams have already played each other twice and are continually

integrating and developing new players. Please come along and support us on the day! Here's a snap of all three IWS teams at our October game away at Andover.

Both the First XV and Development squad have been delighted to see lots of experienced and new players coming up to train with us on our joint regular Tuesday and Thursday training sessions.

To support new players who may have never played before the development team have introduced bi-weekly 'Back to Basics' training on Fridays. Flo from Transcend Fitness has kindly volunteered her time to provide these extra sessions which the Development squad are eternally grateful for. Thank you Flo. So far attendance at 'Back to Basics' training has been great and numbers are growing by the week within the Women's section.

Congratulations to all our new players who have played their first games of rugby this season! Also, Congratulations to Kirsty Batten on becoming Vice Captain for the First XV, and to Oli Johnson on becoming Vice Captain for the Development Team! We'd also like to wish our Coach Darran a very Happy Birthday!!

As always the Women are preparing for their Annual Halloween celebrations, this year's theme is 'A Childhood Nightmare'. We will look forward to seeing all the fun games and pics from that in the next edition. In addition to this year's Halloween social, the women will be heading to Exeter on the 31st to watch Red Roses take on New Zealand!

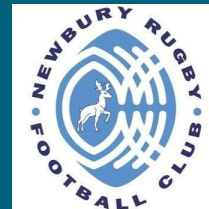
That's all from us, look forward to seeing you pitch side.

Happy Halloween from the Women's section!

Zea Daniels

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

SPONSORS



SPONSORSHIP

Robin Varley has been busy generating new sponsorship for this season. Thank you to all those sponsors who have already signed up and all offers to support the club financially.

Anyone wishing to sponsor or support the club, however small (or BIG), please contact Robin Varley - NewburyRFC@varleyuk.com

Please note that support of certain community club projects will be match-funded by Greenham Common Trust. Thank you!

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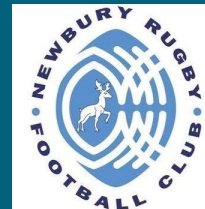
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BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

SPONSOR A SHIRT



SPONSOR A SHIRT

Take part in our new sponsorship programme this season and sponsor a shirt number.

It's easy! Simply head to the membership/sponsorship table in the foyer on game day or email Louise Goodall with the number you wish to support for a match or two.

Help raise funds for our new Coaching Development initiative, providing and supporting the best coaches at NRFC.

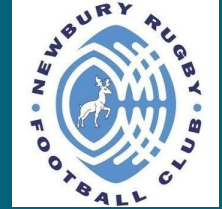
Sponsor a Shirt Number

1 x game £20 - All 13 x home games £195

Louise Goodall, Club Chair - Louise.goodall.rugby@gmail.com

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

WEEKENDS, DONKEYS AND VOLUNTEERS



Without wishing to give too much away about my personal life, one of my favourite times of the week is Sunday morning, reading the rugby reports in the Sunday Times. Stephen Jones is an exceptionally good journalist, opinionated yes but I guess that's what Rupert Murdoch pays him to be. His journalistic spats with Stuart Barnes is worth the price of the paper alone. In his book *Endless Winter*, published in 1993, Jones describes the inevitable road to professionalism in the sport and like many people he wasn't wrong about this. At elite level rugby governing bodies were asking increasingly more from players yet denying them the opportunity to make any financial gain from the game. Unsustainable, as events on 27th August 1995 proved when the game officially became professional. Many clubs, us included, decided to have a crack at the big time. We all know how that ended and on a continuum along the way to financial purgatory as a club, we were well down that particular road. That's not to say there weren't fantastic moments along the way. Newbury against Western Samoa in 1996 for goodness sake and losing by only 21-35. On that tour they beat Bath by a greater margin. Under 21 six nations matches, Under 21 Rugby World Championships at Monks Lane. Heady days. Was it all worth it? That's not for me to answer here.

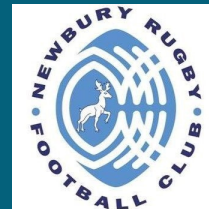
For all the great rugby played around that time, the overriding thing that stands out for me is the number of people who volunteered to help at the club. Car parking was always an issue and needed what seemed like thousands of stewards on pitches two, three and four to assemble the cars so they could at least leave in an orderly fashion. As a club we made a pretty good fist of it and the point is we made a good fist of it because a lot of people decided they wanted to help. Volunteers, rugby clubs up and down the country would be absolutely stuffed without them. To quote from *Endless Winter*, "Rugby has a roll of honour of supremely dedicated amateur officials with which you could wallpaper the pyramids. There are millions of the lovely little beaverers: club secretaries and treasurers and chairmen (and chairwomen) and boot blackeners and line markers and bottle washers, mini rugby coaches and tea ladies and tea men who vividly demonstrate their affection for the game and its ambience by spending every leisure minute in the exhausting process of providing the fitting backdrop for players at all levels to come out on the rugby field and play. They still do, these heroes. Every week. For nothing." Great writing.....

There are a whole host of people at the club in this category, who have been helping year on year on year and if it wasn't for the dread of missing someone out I would name check them. Without this help the club would have gone under. Ok, in many ways we were lucky to have land to sell off to keep us afloat; we had a debenture scheme to help out and there was revenue from the bar and conferencing which alone was not enough to keep us going. The club house is a huge fixed cost and hopefully the leasing arrangement with the council will enable us to move forward with a certain amount of financial security, so my grandson who is currently in the U7 has the opportunity to play at senior level for Blues and for his children to do likewise. What will this take, well continued strict financial management, which was not always the case in the past, but also for more, "little beaverers" to appear to help the club in the brave new world we will hopefully move into if and when the leasing arrangement with the council is sorted.

Some will argue that in the good old days at Pinchington Lane there were always volunteers on hand to help out serving beer and making food but the move to Monks Lane and the failed attempt at professionalism has led to volunteers being kept at arms length. Whilst there may have been a grain of truth in this at the time of the move, it's not that straightforward. The Catering Department at the club has conferences, weddings, meetings and all sorts of activities to prepare food for and whilst this persists it's not a question of any of us simply turning up to pull a few pints of beer or make a few portions of sausage and chips. There are regulations and rules as long as a donkey's penis to satisfy (not that I'm an expert in either of these matters) before a "non trained" person is allowed to peel a few spuds or make a coffee or even get near a ring pull on a can of fizzy drink. Crazy, perhaps, but it is the world in which we currently live. Whilst some things are different to back in the day what has not changed however is the need for the club to attract more help, for more people to give of their time, for more

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

.....WEEKENDS, DONKEYS AND VOLUNTEERS



people to contribute their knowledge, experience and know how for the benefit of the club, for the benefit of players of all ages to be able to go out and represent Newbury on the rugby pitch. Helping out gives a good feeling and generates friendships, a feeling of togetherness, of camaraderie, of working towards a common goal which can only be bettered by the bonds between team mates actually playing a match. For those who have retired from the game this is impossible but it's good to get the next best thing.

And so the point of this article? Its not to extol the virtues of Stephen Jones. He is after all associated with Maidenhead RFC. It's not about the good old days, whatever that means, it's not about lamenting the fact that Western Samoa or even Samoa would now beat Blues by a considerably bigger margin. It's not about any of these things. It's about people, us, club members, wanting to help to make sure we still have great rugby days at the club. Remember the Clevedon game and more recently the Marlborough and Sherborne games. Who needs international rugby at Monks Lane anyway? What is so great are local young men and women turning out on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon with their teammates, playing as well as they can and having a few drinks after the game to continue the great amateur ethos that surrounds much of rugby at community level. For all of rugby's flaws, this is the essential goodness of the game and we can all make sure it continues well into the future by giving a bit of our time.

If you haven't already, try helping out. You will not be disappointed.

Brian Lee

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Two volunteers are needed to train in the use of the hydraulic lift to assist with floodlight maintenance and repairs. You would be part of a team of six to spread the load and ensure there is always maintenance cover when needed. If you are interested in being an occasional volunteer as part of this team, please contact [Nigel Thorne](#).

There are also other volunteer roles needed to support newsletter production, Events Co-ordination and general match-day support. If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact [Ian West](#), our Volunteer Co-ordinator. Thank you.



100+ CLUB

Have you bought your monthly draw ticket yet?

Did you have an annual ticket that has expired?

You can buy a monthly ticket via Pitchero for just £2 a month - simply scan the QR code.

You have to be in it to win it!!

Ticket holders must be over 16 years of age.



Congratulations to our latest 100 Club draw winners:

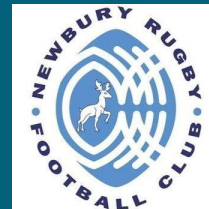
1st Toby Bartlett

2nd Rob Harris

3rd Richard Deal

A BIG ' THANK YOU' to recent winners who have again kindly donated their winnings to the Club's Good Exchange projects. This is hugely appreciated.

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

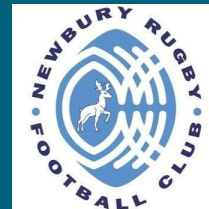


Some old
rugby brains
spotted
celebrating
at the club
in the
summer



BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

ROOM HIRE FOR EVENTS AT 'THE VENUE'



The Wickens Suite looking amazing this Summer for a wedding for 180 guests.

To enquire about hiring any of the Club facilities, including smaller rooms such as the Langdon Suite and the Boardroom, please contact [The Venue](#).

ROOM HIRE

Contact The Venue for details
01635 230023

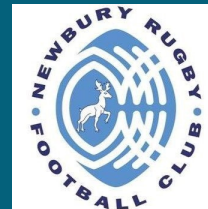
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