

# Gate Post

Harrogate Rugby Union Football Club  
Founded 1871



## Gate Post No. 147 June 2023

This newsletter is sent to all the supporters, current and past members of Harrogate Rugby Club for whom we have an email address. Please forward the newsletter to anyone else who may be interested. If you would like to be added to our database for future copies please send your email address to [brianforshaw4@virginmedia.com](mailto:brianforshaw4@virginmedia.com). Your contributions would be most welcome along with your feedback. If you would like copies of previous editions please contact Brian Forshaw.

## Players Dinner

On Saturday 13th May 2023 over 60 members attended the Annual Players Dinner in the Rudding Lane clubhouse. Following their highly successful season the Harrogate Colts were also well represented.

Players Player of the Year - Martin Dodds

Coaches Player of the Year - Thomas Spencer-Jones

Supporters Player of the Year - Martin Dodds and Thomas Spencer-Jones (Shared)

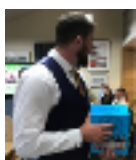
Most Improved Player of the Year - Sam Fenn

Trainer of the Year - Lawrence Richmond

Georgians Player of the Year - Diego McDonald-Rodriguez

Clubman of the Year - Lucas Braithwaite

Graham Siswick Award - Tim Thorley



**THANK YOU TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS AND ESPECIALLY THE PLAYERS AT THE HRJF2023 FESTIVAL! SATURDAY 29 APRIL 2023 - SUNDAY 30 APRIL 2023.**

For those who like numbers:-

1061 players, ranging from U7 to 11's, U12-U16 girls and U12 - U15 boys. Thank you to our U16's for pushing cars and cleaning up. A big thank you to Blueski Photography.

504 medals, including 3 awarded by the U8's to their coaches.

172 matches, on 5 pitches over 2 days.  
71 teams from as far away as Sunderland, Liverpool, Southend, Biggleswade and even Coleraine, Ireland.  
£20,000+ raised, which, after costs, will go towards the hire of the All Weather Pitch for the juniors, new training gear, coaches courses and club and pitch maintenance.

119 volunteers.

1,100 Sausages cooked and sold from the BBQ.

527 cars parked, 17 coaches.

1 potential broken finger from a non-player trapping her finger in a door!

NO reportable injuries from rugby. £3,000 of ambulance cover and thankfully no need to use it.

1000's of fantastic memories.

367 days until HRJF2024 May 4/5th 2024. Star Wars theme?!?



### **Dates for your diary:-**

Wednesday 28th June 2023 Yorkshire Cup celebration BBQ and touch rugby at the rugby club from 6pm.

Sunday 3rd September Junior Rugby returns.

Friday 8th September Mens Rugby World Cup starts.

Thanks also to our sponsors:-

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## **The Story of the Harrogate RUFC Touchline Internationals**



Every club has its 'touchline experts' who are easily identified, and you may be one yourself without realising it. They always know best how the game should be played. Advice is freely given to players and officials both during and after the game and in the bar. Harrogate has always had more than its fair share of such expertise and at the end of the 1987/1988 season a crescendo was reached when these mature supporters, who had long ago hung up their boots and jockstraps, became 'organised'. This happened when the late, great, John Tinker, following a rather disappointing Harrogate performance, was the recipient of a torrent of hindsight advice from a

Yorkshireman of Dewsbury extraction and a Welshman from the Pontypool area. The normally patient and tolerant John could stand no more and exploded with the now famous remark, "you're nothing but a bunch of (expletive) Touchline Internationals." The two mature experts totally agreed and the term stuck. Within a short space of time the Harrogate Touchline Internationals became an organised group of true rugby supporters who loved the game and the social camaraderie which goes with it.

Among the founder members were Gordon Ogilvie, Glyn Smith, John Dalton, Malcolm Spark, Wyn Davies, Gordon Keeley, Graham Keightley, David Brook, Leo Niemic, John Englefield, John Henry, Richard Whitfield, Barry Timmis, Phil Eggleston, Idwal Thomas, Jim Riley, David Bowen, Hamish Robertson, Brian Croft and John Elshaw. The main objectives were to ensure that new supporters and visitors were made welcome and to promote social activities within the club. At the inaugural dinner twenty two T.I.'s consumed twenty one bottles of port.

Match sponsorship, dinners, Christmas lunches, Golf Days, Burns Night suppers, and running the Pub Sevens have all helped to add several thousand pounds to the club coffers over the years. Some of you may remember the video evenings especially the one showing 100 Welsh Tries (but that was a long time ago).

A Touchline International of the Year Trophy was presented at the annual dinner in the form of a silver cockerel. The first holder of this prestigious award was Idwal Thomas, followed by John Dalton, Glyn Smith, Barrie Timmis and Rodney Spragg. All clubs have their equivalent of the Touchline Internationals but at Harrogate they are something special.

When the club moved to Rudding Lane in 2016 the TIs purchased two cupboards for storing the club's archives. These are located in the the ladies and the men's toilets. How disrespectful! We have a collection of match programmes stored in the cupboards dating back to 1949 when the club first printed a match programme.

### **The Touchline Internationals - The Beginning (1988) (A poem by Glyn Smith)**

Once upon a time at Claro Road,  
A rugby story did unfold.  
Twas a tale of rugby folk of mature ages,  
Who considered themselves to be rugby sages.

As the kick off approached a group would gather,  
In front of the squash courts in a bit of a lather.  
A pint or two had got them ready,  
And some of the older ones were very unsteady.

As the match progressed they would cheer, moan and deride,  
With often an amusing and witty aside.  
They were a sort of entertainment team,  
And in rugby knowledge, they were supreme.

The referee and touch judges were usually given fair play,  
Although eyesight, fitness and parentage were questioned on the day.  
Sound advice was given loudly and freely to those on the field,  
But was not well received, it was later revealed.

After the final whistle, the clubhouse beckoned,  
And, over a pint, match details were carefully reckoned,  
As they looked forward to players and officials returning,  
To face their experts critique and improve their learning.

As the players sidled in to get to their tea,  
They knew what sort of comments there would be.  
You would have scored that try you know,  
If you hadn't let the ruddy ball go.

You shouldn't have passed the ball in that position,  
Especially to one of the opposition.  
You should have kicked not passed,  
You were behind your own line, you silly ass.

But one player took it all with good humour and cheer,  
As he sat at the bar sipping a well earned beer.  
John Tinker was that man's name,  
A great Yorkshire(County) player of no little fame.

Even John, one day, had heard enough,  
After a match, which was hard and tough.  
A Yorkshireman and a Welshman aroused his ire,  
And of their expert advice he soon did tire.

The smile on his face was replaced by a glare,  
As he cast his gaze upon the pair.  
You're nothing but a lot of ruddy Touchline Internationals,  
He loudly stated, as the pair continued, unabated.

At that, both men were stopped in their tracks,  
And looked at each other, quite taken aback.  
But then both men smiled as realisation did dawn,  
They both agreed with John, and the TIs were born.

### **Wilmslow 12 - 17 Harrogate played 14/9/1968**



Former Harrogate Player, Richard Booth visited Harrogate in May and reminisced about his time with Harrogate Rugby Club. Along with several match programmes from his playing days he brought the above photo of a game between Harrogate and Wilmslow. 14/9/1968.

Harrogate left to right: Tim Beaumont, ? , Tony Hill, Steve Hipps, Richard Booth (with the ball), Dave Brittain.

Harrogate team: R.F.B.Cheney, B.A.Henry, I.R.Shackleton, R.B.Westley, K.F.Gascoigne, I.F.McPhee, J.L.Salt, W.D.Midgley, T.Beaumont, M.Newport, A.Hill, S.R.Hipps, R.H.Booth, D.J.Brittain, H.J.Nicholson.

Try: Henry, 1 conversion, 3 penalties Cheney, drop goal Shackleton.