



TALKING BALLS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF BOLTON RUGBY UNION F.C. DECEMBER 2007



Brocky gets all shirty!

Chairman, **Mark Brocklehurst**, presenting the new first team shirts on behalf of Oki Printing Solutions to 1st team Captain **James Brodie**

2007 is proving to be a very eventful year for the club and as the months fly by I am only just starting to understand the degree of involvement & commitment by such a lot of people involved in the club.

Probably the most significant event of the year saw the previous Chairman of 13 years retiring from the position and moving abroad to Austria.

Clive was the lifeblood of the club and with his vision and sheer bloody mindedness, he shaped Bolton into a Junior Club with attitude, that didn't seem to know its place in the traditional RFU structure.

We punch way above our weight in terms of club infrastructure and facilities, field 4 senior and a ladies team, the junior section is flourishing and our work in the schools and local community is the benchmark that the RFU sets for the rest of the country.

Clive was the driving force behind all of these achievements and whilst none of these could be achieved by one man alone, it needed his imagination and dedication to make it happen. The club owes Clive a massive debt of gratitude, and I am sure you will all join me in wishing

By **Mark Brocklehurst**, Club Chairman

him all the best in his new Austrian venture.

One of the areas that I believe I can add value to the Club is by attracting outside investment in the form of sponsorship, we were already very fortunate in having a few generous benefactors in place, William Hare and Phoenix instantly spring to mind but we have been successful in introducing a number of new ones this year which include Oki, Toshiba, Lexus, Admiral Leasing and IDN to name but a few.

Generous individual donations at the recent "Old Boys" luncheon generated over £600 which will be used to help produce a new modern designed club tie, all these contributions help the club spend its limited funds on the core areas of running Bolton Rugby Club.

One of our former players, Kev Spencer, is helping us provide some interesting items to auction at the annual Sportsman's Dinner next February. Through his company MBN Promotions, which organises sporting luncheons he has taken two first team rugby shirts and is getting them signed by a multitude of sporting heroes, one so far already

carries the signatures of all 6 Rugby World Cup winning captains.

The recent Beer Festival again saw the club benefiting from this annual institution, JP Hardman worked extremely hard coordinating the event, and with the help of a good number of volunteers and some corporate assistance we raised over £2000 for the club.

JP was again instrumental in organising the most successful to date Caltucker Cup, a great day was had by all with some memorable moments and yet again more money provided for the club, JP is a superb organiser and activist within the club and deserves a big thank you!

I will leave the playing aspect of the club to those more qualified than me but it is encouraging to see the First XV flying high in the league and satisfying to know that they have a true "Club Man" in Gary Hodgkinson at the helm, I wish Gary and all the club players, coaches and helpers all the best for the coming season.

My role as Chairman will have a different look and feel to that of my predecessor Clive, I couldn't begin to emulate his hands on approach and I doubt that many could. I have a lot to learn and a lot of people to thank, we have a great club and the team works, onwards and upwards and enjoy the ride!



BOILER PROJECT HEATING UP

I am pleased to announce that following our application to the RFF (Rugby Football Foundation) we have been awarded funds to carry out a full replacement of our 20 year old boiler and water heater system.

The award was for a grant of £2,000 and an interest free loan of £18,000, repayable over 5 years, which means we can now create a project team to select a supplier and manage the installation process. Annual fundraising, over the next 5 years, is therefore required and your suggestions are very welcome.

Duncan Trench
(Club Treasurer)

NYE @ BRUFC

New Years Eve Party

Live Band, Disco & Food all for £5

TICKET ONLY
Only a few tickets remaining!

Contact Wayne, Steve Knibb or ask at the bar.

They've all gone Crunchy Nuts!

Take a close look at the latest Kelloggs Crunchy Nut Flakes TV advert. Recognise the posts, the pitches, the containers in the background? Yes, it's Bolton Rugby Club!

In a League of their own

This season, Bolton Mets Rugby League team will play all of their home games at Avenue Street. For the last couple of seasons the Mets have finished their season at the club after their normal pitches became unplayable.

Some of our greatest supporters...

Once again our thanks go to **William Hare Ltd** and **Phoenix Commercial** for their continued financial support.

William Hare for their partnership with **Sports Match** helping to provide another year of Rugby Development in Bolton and **Phoenix Commercial** as Club Sponsors.



Thanks to 2007/08 Shirt Sponsors

OKI Printing Solutions

1st XV

IDN Supplies

1st XV Change

Toshiba

1st XV Warm up tops

Salads to go

U 16

Knightsbridge Business Sales

U 14

Prescience

U 12

Junior Polo shirts

This season, every paid-up Junior player will receive a free Polo shirt. They have been sponsored by **Brabners Chaffe Street LLP**.



BRUFC Women show spirit

It's been a series of ups and downs for the women of Bolton RUFC in the first part of the season. With half the girls only picking up a rugby ball for the first time and other players returning to the team after periods out of the game, it was always going to be tough to turn in a winning season.

After struggling in their first 3 games, the girls showed great potential and spirit against Colne and Nelson, with a player down

Story by Helen Vincent

for half of the match, the forwards provided a solid platform and tireless support in setting up mauls and rucks, dominating their much bigger opponents in the line out. The backs looked like they had been playing together for years with their stylish running lines, intrinsic handling and committed tackling.

Two weeks later, they hosted Rossendale in their last match before Christmas and were unlucky to be beaten at the final whistle. The backs continued in their

rich vein of form and the forwards demonstrated controlled aggression and self-belief. Unfortunately, the match was marred when young prop forward Fiona Catterall, who has been an early contender for player of the season left the action with a broken arm. Everyone wishes her a speedy recovery.

For those members of the club that haven't witnessed the women in action yet or see the female version of the game as an 'after-thought' to the men's game, come down on a Sunday afternoon or a Wednesday evening and see these combatants in action.

Eastern Bloc and tackle

This year's annual tour was looking bleak when in late February no tour had been organised and no ideas were apparent. It was then taken up by one of the younger first team players to organise it himself. Having travelled Europe the previous year, knowing good destinations wasn't a problem, it was a matter of finding cheap flights for 20 plus people.

It was decided that Berlin would be the choice of Destination and Berliner RUFC would be the players choice of opponents. Numbers were

Story by Greg Abbott

not as high as hoped due to the last minute arrangements, but four new faces played an integral part in the tour entertainment.

The tour was a success with a well fought game being played against a traditionally cheerful, sporting German side, tour traditions being kept and influenced on the new recruits.

This year's trip is again being organised by Greg Abbott. The choice of destination is Bratislava, Slovakia. The capital city and one of the remaining cheap eastern block cities that has not been invaded

by Stag Do's. The tour price has been set at £230, all in. And with local beverages being consumed at 80 pence a litre, it will remain a relatively cheap trip.

We will be departing on Friday 4th April returning on Mon 7th April. We currently have a match organised for the Saturday one day after arrival, having now learned from mistakes.

It appears last year's success is still rolling with 22 people already set to go, including all last year's virgins and 5 new.

So if you are interested please contact Greg Abbott at training or on match days with a deposit of £100.

It's a family affair

On September 22nd, the 1st XV travelled away to Heaton Moor with 4 members of the Singleton family selected to play. Maybe if Dad, John had also have been playing we might have won !

BRUFC on Talking Sharks

The club was featured recently on Channel M's "Talking Sharks" programme. You can watch a re-run at www.channelm.co.uk/programmes/index/0/6/talking_sharks.html. Choose episode 10, starts at 9:30 mins and runs thru to 14:45 mins.

Optimism for club U13's

U13's Report by **Mark Robinson**

Bolton U13s welcomed back the old regulars for our first season on full-size pitches.

Rebecca Trist and Jessica Smethurst have both moved to girls rugby and are doing well.

Newcomers have included Tijani Zarouk, Sayon Harwood, Ashley Wilson, Jacob Buckley, Tom Cross, Harrison Peak, Iain Carthy, Richard Gallagher, Daniel Doyle and Matthew Ault. All have played well with Daniel Doyle and Richard Gallagher scoring fine tries.

The team played well in the Lexus tournament, recording wins over Hull Ionians and Old Brodleians to qualify for the semi-finals where we lost to as super Sandbach side. Our first league game was a hard one, away to Aldwinians, their wide players using the full width of the pitch proved too much for us. However our next league saw the entire team play exceptionally well to record a 12-10 win over Waterloo. We look with optimism to our other league games.

Word from the 'oval' office

Alan Walsh, Club President

Ladies and Gents, it's been a while since that last "Talking Balls" a time for reflection and if I may a few observations from myself.

My personal view is that the Club is a more mature club then it was a few years ago, a process that any club needs to progress through, let alone a club where the members generally run and manage it themselves, this process takes time and people need to learn by their mistakes. We have made tremendous strides forward over the years both in the clubs development and the recognition it gets both locally and nationally.

I would ask all members to understand that the club is still relatively new to managing in terms of what we currently achieve; 4 senior men sides, a ladies team and most encouraging a very vibrant junior section with teams from 8 years to under 18's.

All the above takes a tremendous amount of time and organisation, most of which the people involved in the process get right, on the few occasions it goes wrong please understand that it goes right much more often than it goes wrong! There are any number of clubs around that have been around for much longer, who have not or cannot maintain the levels of achievement that we at Bolton have achieved, it is the aim of everyone involved at Bolton to maintain this level and to aim ever higher.

The above being said, there is a lot more that we need to do;

Junior section

The club recognises that there needs to be better communication, an issue that we are actively tackling, in addition we still need someone to take over the chairmanship of the Junior section.

Club Selection

We are aware of the issue with club selection with regards the 2nds, 3rds and 4ths and some players not wanting to move away from the teams that they normally play in. In most cases I think that this is no more than a communication problem. Could I suggest a few simple solutions;

Players give an indication after a game if they are available the following week. If a players tells their captain that they are available and for what ever reason that changes, would the player please take the responsibility themselves to let their previous weeks captain know and not wait for the captain to contact them!

Players not to rely solely on expecting someone to contact them regarding the weeks games and in which team they may be playing in make an effort to find out for yourselves.

Please help the club out, if at the last minute you are asked to play for a team other than the one that you were originally selected for, this should not happen on a regular basis! If it does come and see me!

Overall the club is a vibrant and enjoyable place to be part of lets keep it that way and above all enjoy your rugby.

Lunch bunch raise hundreds 'fert club

Story by **Alan Walsh, Club President**

This year's lunch was held on the 3rd November. 46 former players attend, and I think everyone enjoyed the event. I think however that we can do better on the numbers and will be aiming for more next year. We have identified that we do not have contact with many players that have stopped playing over the last 5-8 years a situation we aim to rectify for next year.

It's generally a challenge for me personally to stay out drinking to the early hours of the morning way past my bed time! However seeing the state of JP Singy in the Curry House in the early hours made me feel much better!

The event is not just a get together of grumpy old men, but also a fund raising event, this year raised £330 surplus from the meal etc, with a further £150 from individual donations, many thanks to Bob Chadwick and Dave Brownlow, with Terry Haran paying full member subscriptions, again many thanks Terry.

In addition a total of 12 former players pledged £50 each so that a new club tie could be designed and purchased, more on this in a future edition.

Highlights of the day were the look and a lack of seeing the funny side, on the face of Dave Mann when soap was spilled on his "Mauve" jumper! (or was it Lilac?). This was matched when a number of unscrupulous former members conspired to ensure that Bert Catterall bought a round of more than two drinks?

It is my intention to write a summary of the history of Bolton RUFC in the next edition or for inclusion on the web site, but some brief details for now;

- **Original Bolton club formed in 1872**
- **Reformed as Old Heywardians in 1965**
- **Formed as Bolton Rugby Club in 1975**
- **Moved into Club House in 1988**

Next year will the 20th Anniversary of Bolton being in the Club House, we aim to make next year's a bigger event to celebrate this milestone.



The 2nd XV pictured early in the evening of their Xmas party.
"Trig" had to leave shortly afterwards as his mum wanted her lounge curtains back.

YOUR NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!

Forget Facebook and MySpace - We want your funny pictures and club gossip, don't keep it to yourself, email it to: talkingballs@boltonrugby.co.uk

EMAIL YOUR PHOTOS, NEWS, STORIES - ANYTHING! **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED**



Congratulations to Dave Brownlow and Phil Turner who both recently won £250.00 in the draw.

New members are required to help boost Club Fundraising. **It's only £1 per week** and there are 68 annual prizes drawn regularly throughout the year.
52 x £25.00,
12 x £50.00 and
4 x £250.00.

Contact Duncan Trench, ask at the bar or the Sunday morning desk for a standing order mandate.

If we can increase the membership by 70 that's the £18,000 RFF loan paid for without any impact on Club expenditure.



Full kit and handbags at the ready the Women's section hit Bolton's night life this summer in a bid to recruit new players

Club's big show at beer festival

Story by **JP Hardman**

The Senior section once again stepped in to provide the "muscle" behind two of Bolton's recent beer festivals at Edgeworth Beer Festival and in support of the Lads and Girls club at the Howcroft pub.

As usual a motley turn out of all shapes and sizes brought the usual bout of mirth from the rather inebriated customers who had a fascination that Jon-Paul Hardman was Elvis and that 1st team skipper James Brodie did indeed resemble a giraffe!

These two events are in turn two of the major fund raisers for the Senior section and the returning "Colonel" was pleased to see his troops in fine fettle. Both Beer Festivals were resounding successes with no fuss at all. The Sunday at the Howcroft saw BRUFC players selling off the remainder of the beer at a pound a pint before aiding and abetting in the breaking down of the bar.

Special mention goes to all those people who helped out but thanks go out in particular to Phil McDermott for organising the Edgeworth event and Daniel Barlow/James Henderson who gave up virtually all of their free time to help out every night at both events.

And remember people... "Beer Fest is Best"
Cheers, JP



Sunday Breakfast

Every Sunday from 10.15am

Hot drinks & breakfast sandwiches.

New extended menu.
All profits go to the Junior Section.



Email groups

The Club's email groups are a great way to keep in touch with what's happening at the club. **BRUFC** for Senior players, **JuniorRugby** for Junior players and **WomensBRUFC** for Womens players. **Make sure you are 'on the groups'.**

If you want to join send an email to groups@boltonrugby.co.uk stating which one you want to join.