

Extracts from Yearbook







**Ben Cottam**

## FROM THE CAPTAIN'S TABLE

**The 1st XV play in North 2 West, with RFU away fixtures ranging from Cheshire to Northern Cumbria. The players are already excitedly planning for 3 coach trips in a season, accompanied by the delicious stops at Tebay.**

Following a somewhat disrupted season, all the players are now looking forward to a full and hard preseason with the aim to hit the ground running. Squad depth and a lack of continuity in important positions during the last full season meant that we never fully showed what we were capable of. The main ambition for the season coming is to improve our results and confirm our place within a new league structure, with an eye on challenging the top of league in the coming seasons. To achieve this there has been a big drive to increase the squad depth and the turnout to training sessions. Both Richard and I have been amazed at the attitude and numbers at training sessions, particularly during the pandemic which limited us to only two friendly games.

For the season ahead I am looking forward to developing the game plan from the basics we have been putting together when allowed this season, particularly getting to work on the lineouts and scrums which have been

greatly missed during the amended games. Personally, my hopes for the season ahead are to see the team pull together to form a tight group with a common aim.

Whilst the established core of the squad will be familiar to any of our regular supporters, some may find themselves in unfamiliar positions (watch out for Niall Murphy dictating the backline). We have seen promising new players join the squad. Josh Lincoln has taken up rugby for the first time following his retirement from international gymnastics, his post-game celebrations are definitely worth a watch (although plans to teach Louis Critchlow may backfire on us all). Simon Steel has joined us, fitting into sessions seamlessly and giving great performances in his two matches so far.

We have also seen the return of former junior Bolton players after a few seasons away from the game. Both Nathan Collins and Lewis Rostron have been powerful additions to the forward pack. Lewis Picton arrived in the senior squad with two storming performances in his first games for the 1st XV, his powerful running and aggression in the tackle will make him a prominent asset in the season to come.

Key to the 1st XV is links to the junior section, with substantial numbers of home grown players having played their junior rugby with Bolton. Last season about 65% of 1st XV players were former Juniors, this is something we want to continue. One of the major aims for every season is development of the bright young players we see every Sunday.





## ALL ROADS LEAD TO AVENUE STREET

Club historian, Tom Macdonald digs into the past 150 years

**BRUFC was first formed in 1872 (ie 7 years before Bolton Wanderers) and was first listed in the "Football Annual" of 1874.**

It reads: "Bolton formed 1872, has 100 members, ground at Burnden. Which is 1 mile from Bolton station. The dressing rooms are on the ground and it plays Rugby Football. The Secretary or Manager is F H Kevan of 12 Acresfield, Bolton. The colours are Blue jerseys, socks and cap, white knickerbockers. Result of matches last season: - Won 3, Lost 3, Drew 1. Result of goals Won 5, Lost 7."



## BOLTON'S BRILLIANT!

Some of our club members' achievements...

June 2019



Former player and current Club 'Sparky' Peter Davies charity swim of the Bosphorus in Istanbul.

Jan 2019



RFU President Chris Kelly invited grounds volunteer Ian Hart to Twickenham following his Mitsubishi volunteer award.

May 2018



Former Bolton Junior Phill Mills, aged 24, played for England Counties following his recent appearance for Lancashire.

Jan 2018



Former player Nick Griffiths participated in the Yukon Arctic Ultra Race, over 300 miles of snow and ice at -40°C.

Nov 2017



Rhys Pritchard played for the Lancashire Royals against the Cheshire Harvesters.

Nov 2017



Jon Paul Hardman was shortlisted as Rhino Rugby's community hero award, Prop Star.

Oct 2017



Bolton's Morgan Skeels-Caldwell & Ben Turner selected for Lancashire Under 18's

May 2017



Keith Howie, Bolton's u15's Head coach, won Students RFU Coach of the Year

July 2015



Bolton RUFC win the Schools Links award presented to Peter and Joey Gore by HRH the Earl of Wessex.

Feb 2014



Chairman Mark Brocklehurst and Nick Griffiths, arrived in Antigua after rowing across the Atlantic Ocean.

Feb 2013



Two former Bolton Juniors, Conor McGrath and Phil Mills, selected for Lancashire under 20's

Mar 2011



Nathan Stansfield selected to play for England North U16's