



1923 - 2012

South Lancashire/Cheshire League 1

Welcome to Winnington Park RFC from Warrington RUFC

A warm welcome to our visitors for today's game – Winnington Park RFC. We feel sure that a hard and close game will take place today, given the fact that both sides are very close in the league table – Winnington Park 10th of 14 teams, Warrington 12th. Enjoy yourselves ladies and gentlemen and put as much money as possible behind the bar. Don't forget our post-match raffle either.

➤ *Today's Referee* : Craig Barclay, Manchester Referees Society

Winnington Park RFC Contacts and Information:

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Brian McLoughlin: Brian has been recognised by Lancashire RFU as an outstanding example of a rugby Club volunteer. The Club put in a nomination for Brian as a candidate and it was accepted by Lancashire. Brian isn't getting a Nobel or Lottery prize but his efforts have high visibility. We all know what Brian has done over the years and he has earned his moment of glory (plus his tie and an individualised plaque). Well done Brian – now get outside and mark out the pitches.

Regards

Dave Broadbent, *President, Warrington RUFC*

➤ **See Page 15 for an account of a famous encounter between Warrington RUFC and Winnington Park RFC 50 years ago.**

Final Words from the Club President: 2011-12 Review

Even those of us who have survived many seasons playing for and supporting the Club have not seen such a nerve-tingling finish as this. Season 20011-2012 could be one of the most memorable in the Club's history. We have seen an astonishing revival in the fortunes of the 1st XV, the strongest 2nd XV in living memory and a 3rd XV, even with Tom Wray as captain, is poised for a higher league.

Recently, most of us have become students of the Bonus Points system. As we have lifted ourselves up from table bottom, our main rivals' points difference is the cause of earnest discussion, their defeats welcomed.

The 1st XV have put themselves – as well as their followers – through the mill over the past 8 months. Their recent successes have been based on a magnificent defence, a growing confidence in attack and a spirit rooted in courage and a strong teamwork. One more massive heave today and we are 'safe'. In December, only the deluded would give us a chance of surviving in this league. Slowly and surely we have worked our way back, culminating in an outstanding win at New Brighton three weeks ago. This was one of a series of victories which mean that a good win against Winnington Park today will see us home.

There are no secrets as to why we have improved. Fitness, dedication and a desire to play for each other brings with them rewards. Allied to the technical know-how, intelligence and direction of Steve Riley and Darren Abram, the team has improved beyond recognition¹. Whatever happens, I am proud of the efforts made by many over the whole season.

Equally, the 2nd XV deserves every congratulation. Guided by Stuart Coleman (or 'Lunch' as he is now known) and well captained by Sean McDermott they have played marvellous rugby, scoring from all parts of the field. They will be a threat in the higher league if they can keep the core of the team together.

The robust style of the 3rd XV has also brought deserved success. Promotion is secured and referees will be in for a treat next season.

All players will wish to acknowledge the splendid Brian McLoughlin for looking after them in his unassuming, laconic manner. He has been as instrumental as anyone in presenting the Club in a better light. No visiting official has left the Club after a game thinking the worse of us.

To all players in all teams who have contributed to the image of the Club, playing hard, clean, open and disciplined rugby, I thank you.

Good luck to Dennis Smith, our new and estimable President. He will be an excellent ambassador for this Club. No truth in the rumour that his brother George will succeed him.

I have enjoyed the last two years and my respect and admiration goes to the players and coaches. To those who I have insulted from the touchlines and who have given back in equal measure, I wish a happy result today.

Thanks for the entertainment and thanks for the memories.

Dave Broadbent, President, Warrington RUFC

¹ .. and mercifully prevents Mike Cornelia and Terry Critchley from making comebacks

Welcome to Winnington Park RFC

A warm welcome to Winnington Park for the last League fixture of the season. It has been very much a tale of two halves to the season for both clubs. At the half way point of the season in December Winnington had 32 points and Warrington 6, both having played 13 matches. After 12 games in the second half of the season Winnington have added only a further 14 points and Warrington 35.....what a difference a few months make!

Both clubs face the prospect of relegation today although reality says it would have to be the greatest sporting upset in history if both Warrington and Collegiate overhaul our visitors on this final day of the season. Warrington would need to get a bonus point win, Winnington no points and Collegiate win by a large margin at Sale and score 4 tries!

The Warrington team today shows many changes from the one that took the field at Burrows Hill back in September, including the scrum half that day playing in the second row today.....some change of position that! Only Kevin Jones, Haydn Fraser and Duncan Rickard remain in the backline, whilst upfront Mike Haddon and Shaun Yoxall are the only forwards to play that day.

How To Avoid Relegation

A 5 point win today and no points for Winnington will ensure we don't go down – any other outcome other than that and we need to look at what Orrell do at home against Ormskirk and how Collegiate get on at Sale. Other than that it is far too complicated to even try and explain the possible permutations!

A Big Thanks

As the end of the season beckons may I take the opportunity to say a big thanks you to the new coaching team of Steve Riley and Darren Abram, with the later addition of Andy Roberts to the team. The achievements made since October have been staggering. I should not forget the work done over the previous two years by both Dave Rockey and Steve Hennessey who took the team out of the very difficult CLS2 in 2010-2011 and were largely instrumental in putting the core of this team together – without their hard work we wouldn't have been close to where we are today. Across the two coaches teams has been the stability of Jim Park who has combined coaching duties with that of running touch most games.

The 2nd XV has already gained promotion under the leadership of Shaun McDermott and Stewart Coleman aided and abetted by a number of other experienced players. The 3rd XV, should they win today, will also gain promotion so here are anticipated congratulations to Tom Wray, Mike Mullen and Jon Bennett for all their work this year.

Hopefully, I've not forgotten anyone!

Peter J Riley

Warrington RUFC**1st XV Fixtures and Results (*) 2011-2012**

Date	Opposition	Result (*)
2011		
3 Sept	Winnington Park (A)	L 31 - 17
10 Sept	Orrell (A)	L 30 - 3
17 Sept	Ormskirk (A)	L 21 - 7
24 Sept	West Park (H)	L 9 - 34
1 Oct	Bowdon (A)	L 43 - 3
8 Oct	Glossop (H)	L 14 - 15
15 Oct	Hoylake (A)	L 26 - 21
22 Oct	Liverpool Collegiate (H)	L 14 - 17
29 Oct	Wigan (A)	L 22 - 20
5 Nov	Sale (H)	L 6 - 27
12 Nov	Tyldesley (A)	L 17 - 12
19 Nov	New Brighton (H)	L 15 - 24
26 Nov		
3 Dec	Ashton-on-Mersey (A)	L 12 - 5
10 Dec	Orrell (H)	W 33 - 23
17 Dec	Ormskirk (H)	W 10 - 6
24 Dec		
27 Dec	Thorn Cross (H) Friendly	W 50 - 26
2012		
7 Jan	West Park (A)	L 22 - 3
14 Jan	Bowdon (H)	L 17 - 37
21 Jan		
28 Jan	Glossop (A)	L 19 - 11
4 Feb	Hoylake (H) (see 25 th Feb)	Postponed
11 Feb		
18 Feb	Liverpool Collegiate (A)	W 10 - 28
25 Feb	Hoylake (H)	W 13 - 10
3 Mar	Wigan (H)	W 17 - 6
10 Mar	Sale (A)	L 54 - 7
17 Mar		
24 Mar	Tyldesley (H)	W 29 - 0
31 Mar	New Brighton (A)	W 5 - 36
7 April		
14 April	Ashton-on-Mersey (H)	W 25 - 5
21 April	Winnington Park (H)	W 44 - 29

(*) Home team score first

Warrington RUFC vs Winnington Park RFC

WARRINGTON RUFC 1ST XV APPEARANCES 2011/2012 SEASON to 14/4/2012 (Ashton)

NAME	CAREER	THIS YEAR + AS SUB	TRIES	CONS + PENS + DROPS	POINTS
A ALMOND	114	17 + 2	6		30
T ARNOLD	2	0 + 2			
J BRAZENDALE	1	0 + 1			
M BRAZIER-KOBUS	2	1 + 1			
C BYRNE	11	5 + 1	2		10
S COOMBES	70	1			
M DRINKWATER	194	6			
JA FARRELL	24	1			
JO FARRELL	19	5 + 1			
E FIELDS	147	12			
D FLEMING	23	21 + 1			
D FLOYD	5	4 + 1			
H FRASER	19	18 + 1	10		50
O GILES	1	1			
L GILLET	2	0 + 2			
L GRAHAM	219	0 + 1			
P GRANT	199	18 + 4			
T GREEN	1	0 + 1			
E GYIMA	1	1			
M HADDON	87	22 + 1			
M HENNESSEY	63	8			
P HENNESSEY	63	4 + 11			
T HOCKENHULL	3	2			
G HOWSON	30	10 + 1			
A HUGHES	64	1	1		5
J HUGHES	27	1			
K HUGHES	17	9 + 2	6		30
S HUGHES	40	3 + 1			
E JOHNSTON	16	15 + 1			
I JONES	7	6 + 1			
K JONES	189	14 + 7	6		30
J KERAI	34	4 + 1			
P LYNCH	7	3 + 4			
Z LYTHGOE	63	20 + 3	2		10
S MCDERMOTT	72	1			
S MELVIN	14	14	3		15
D NEWENS	45	19 + 1	7	13 + 20	121
N PENNINGTON	4	2			
M RANDLE	3	2 + 1			
A RICHARDSON	14	6 + 2			
D RICKARD	137	22 + 1			
J RILEY	15	10 + 2			
A ROBERTS	6	6	1	4 + 1	16
M ROBINSON	15	5 + 2			
M ROCKEY	122	7 + 1		8 + 6 + 2	40
J SHAW	109	2 + 1			
P THOMPSON	191	14			
S TICKLE	47	0 + 1			
D TURNER	6	6 + 1		1 + 2	8
C WHITE	5	1 + 3			
T WOOD	10	10	2		10
S YOXALL	46	15 + 4			
TOTAL		52	40	29+32+2	375

SLC 1 Results and League Table

➤ *Saturday, 14th April 2012*

Bowdon	12 - 19	New Brighton
Glossop	20 - 27	Tyldesley
Hoylake	15 - 46	Sale
Ormskirk	10 - 63	Winnington Park
Orrell	28 - 29	West Park (St Helens)
Warrington	25 - 5	Ashton-on-Mersey
Wigan	18 - 35	Liverpool Collegiate

SLC 1 League Table

➤ *Saturday 21st April 2012 (a.m.)*

<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>B Pts</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>Adjust</i>
Sale	25	25	0	0	1379	234	1145	25	125	0
New Brighton	25	18	1	6	608	423	185	12	86	0
Tyldesley	25	15	2	8	497	473	24	12	76	0
Bowdon	25	16	0	9	524	469	55	11	75	0
Wigan	25	14	0	11	534	542	-8	13	69	0
Hoylake	25	14	1	10	395	427	-32	5	63	0
West Park (St Helens)	25	12	1	12	461	512	-51	14	54	-10
Ashton-on-Mersey	25	10	1	14	464	510	-46	12	54	0
Glossop	25	9	1	15	431	514	-83	14	47	-5
Winnington Park	25	9	0	16	468	623	-155	10	46	0
Orrell	25	8	2	15	390	600	-210	9	45	0
Warrington	25	8	0	17	375	519	-144	9	41	0
Liverpool Collegiate	25	8	1	16	383	579	-196	7	41	0
Ormskirk	25	4	0	21	286	770	-484	6	17	-5

➤ Trivia

Question: Why do England rugby union players have a rose on their shirt when the football players have three lions?

Answer: The answer is, no-one knows for certain, but there are three possible reasons: The red rose symbolised the House of Lancaster in the War of the Roses and subsequent monarchs after that were associated with that. The red rose can therefore be seen as symbolising England or English monarchy – however inaccurately! Secondly, the founder of Rugby School where the game started was presented with a coat of arms by Elizabeth I and was allowed to use the red rose on it - this then became the school's crest. Thirdly, it is the symbol of Lancashire and two of the first subcommittee which selected the first England team were from that county. It is also possible that they chose the kit as well.

University of Salford: Division 3 South

➤ *Saturday 21st April 2012 (a.m)* Warrington 2nds v Winnington Park 2nds

	<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Wo</i>	<i>Co</i>	<i>Nfw</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Agst</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>+/-</i>
1	Caldy 3	22	19	0	2	0	1	0	0	850	245	605	82	0
2	Warrington 2	22	20	0	2	0	0	0	0	827	269	558	82	0
3	Liverpool Collegiate 2	21	16	0	4	0	1	0	0	620	208	412	72	0
4	Chester 3	23	14	1	8	0	0	0	0	725	534	191	66	0
5	Burnage 3	22	14	0	8	1	0	0	0	532	528	4	64	0
6	Hope Valley 1	21	12	0	9	1	0	0	0	529	447	82	57	0
7	Bowdon 2	22	10	0	12	0	0	0	0	584	480	104	52	0
8	Lymm 3	22	9	1	12	0	0	0	0	442	502	-60	50	0
9	Marple 2	22	9	0	13	0	0	0	0	408	471	-63	49	0
10	Broughton Park 4	23	5	0	18	0	0	0	1	401	932	-531	36	0
11	Wirral 3	22	4	0	18	0	0	0	0	404	799	-395	34	0
12	Winnington Park 2	22	4	0	18	0	0	0	0	353	849	-496	34	0
13	Altrincham Kersal 3	22	4	0	16	0	0	2	0	315	726	-411	32	0

University of Salford: Division 4 West

➤ *Saturday 21st April 2012 (a.m)* Warrington 3rds v Waterloo 3rds

	<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Wo</i>	<i>Co</i>	<i>Nfw</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Agst</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>+/-</i>
1	Moore 2	22	13	1	2	0	6	0	0	588	216	372	80	0
2	Warrington 3	23	14	0	7	0	2	0	0	570	319	251	71	0
3	Liverpool Vet School 1	23	16	0	6	0	0	1	0	814	350	464	70	0
4	Merseyside Police 1	22	13	0	7	0	1	1	0	523	316	207	63	0
5	Widnes 3	23	12	0	9	0	1	1	0	574	380	194	61	0
6	Liverpool St. Helens 3	23	12	0	9	0	0	2	0	547	585	-38	57	0
7	Christleton 1	24	9	0	12	0	2	1	0	477	620	-143	56	0
8	Waterloo 4	23	10	0	11	1	1	1	0	575	493	82	55	0
9	Sefton 3	23	10	1	11	0	0	1	0	418	567	-149	53	0
10	Waterloo 3	23	8	2	13	0	0	0	0	559	600	41	52	3
11	Southport 3	23	7	0	16	0	0	0	0	431	691	-260	44	0
12	Crosby St. Marys 2	23	5	0	14	0	1	3	0	210	780	-570	32	-6
13	West Park 3	23	4	0	16	0	0	3	1	307	676	-369	30	0

➤ **Close Call:** Fancy being on the end of this score ! Consett 143 – 0 Redcar
(Durham/Northumberland Division Two 14th April 2012)

Warrington RUFC v Winnington Park RFC**Saturday 21st April 2012 at Walton Lea****WARRINGTON RUFC****Colours:** Red, White and Green**WINNINGTON PARK RFC****Colours:** Royal Blue and Sky Blue**TEAMS**

Haddon, Mike	1	Burgess, Will (C)
Thompson, Paul (C)	2	Robbins, Joe
Johnstone, Elliot	3	Armstrong, Rich
Riley, Josh	4	Moriarty, Ian
Yoxhall, Sean	5	Heales, Chris
Melvin, Stuart	6	Underdown, Shaun
Randle, Mike	7	Armstrong, Will
Flemming, Danny	8	Stubbs, Harry
Wood, Tom	9	Cross, Matthew
Roberts, Andy	10	Brookes, Sam
Hughes, Kieran	11	Bradley, Mike
Rickard, Duncan	12	Richardson, Ben
Rockey, Matt	13	Hewitt, Callum
Fraser, Haydn	14	Duncan, Jon
Jones, Kevin	15	Allmark, Lee
	<i>Bench</i>	
Lythgoe, Zak	16	Alston, Elliot
Newans, Danny	17	Heptinstall, Chris
Hennessey, Paul	18	Sant, Matt

Rest of Today's SLC 1 Fixtures (see current league table on page 6)

Ashton on Mersey	vs	Bowdon
New Brighton	vs	Glossop
Orrell	vs	Ormskirk
Sale	vs	Liverpool Collegiate
Tyldesley	vs	Hoylake
Wigan	vs	West Park

Trivia: A "try" is so-called because the act of running over the line and touching the ball down originally carried no points and merely allowed the team to 'try' for a kick at the goal, which did carry points. WRUFC played by these laws at the RFU Centenary Game at Orrell on January 26th 1971.

Warrington RUFC Results and Match Reports

➤ *Saturday 14th April 2012*

WARRINGTON 1st XV 25 ASHTON ON MERSEY 1st XV 5

Warrington turned out another bonus-point victory with resolute defence matched by incisive counter-attack. Ashton started strongly with one of their typical driving mauls taking them to within 5 metres of the Warrington line. Warrington managed to steal the ball, however, moved it wide and scampered into Ashton's 22 where they were awarded a penalty for the tackler not releasing. Roberts stroked the penalty over. Warrington then went on the attack from the restart moving the ball confidently among the backs and constantly threatening the Ashton line. However, it was No. 6 Melvin who opened the try scoring crashing over in the corner in the 10th minute.

Warrington resisted another period of pressure from the strong Ashton pack with back rowers Randle and Fleming managing to purloin the ball at crucial times and Roberts regaining territory with long touch kicks. Taking a leaf out of the opposition's book, the Warrington pack then camped on the Ashton line but were kept out. After two final drives the ball was moved out in a well rehearsed move to put Fraser in in the left hand corner for Warrington's second try, converted by Roberts. From the restart there was a moment of *deja vu* as the Ashton pack again trundled towards the Warrington line, were dispossessed by the wily Randle and forced back into hectic defence by a superb break by Roberts. With the whitewash beckoning and good support on either side the stand-off could not get his pass away and Ashton breathed again. Warrington continued to bang on the line, however, and it was only the half-time whistle which let the visitors off the rack.

Warrington returned them to the rack straight after the interval with Fraser nearly adding his second try two minutes in but Roberts made sure 5 minutes in with his first which went unconverted. Ashton began to dominate possession and Warrington struggled to get out of their own half as they insisted on running the ball when a large boot downfield might have been the better option. However, in the 65th minute the commitment to running rugby paid off with a magnificent break from centre Rockey who surged up to half way. The ball flowed effortlessly through the copious support and it was full back Jones who finished with Warrington's fourth try. Ashton did not give up, however, but only managed a try with the last move of the game.

➤ **Postscript:** Warrington's relegation rivals in Cheshire South Lancs Division One, Liverpool Collegiate, also managed to secure a 5 point victory to keep them level on points so next week's game against Winnington Park will prove crucial. Liverpool Collegiate, however, have to play top of the table Sale so the odds are in Warrington's favour.

WARRINGTON 2nd XV 52 ALTRINCHAM KERSAL 5

With promotion now secure, Warrington's goal is now to win the league where points difference is all that separates them from Caldy 3, the other contenders. They set about the task with gusto and stormed into a 21-5 lead at the interval with tries from Tickle, Drinkwater and Brazendale, all converted by Drinkwater.

The visitors had their purple patch at the start of the second half, but man of the match, the ubiquitous Lynch, disrupted their possession and effectively slowed the attacks. Warrington then proceeded with the demolition and with hard running and good offloading from the backs tries flowed from Byrne, West, Green, Drinkwater and Jackman with Drinkwater adding three conversions.

WARRINGTON 3rd XV W MERSEYSIDE POLICE

Warrington's 3rd XV were awarded a win over Merseyside Police who scratched.

This leaves them scrapping for second place promotion with Liverpool Veterinarians, the outcome of the last games of the season being crucial.

Trivia 1

Cheats from Across the Sea

The Bajada scrum practiced by The Pumas (Argentina), has a very unique way of binding - not through the legs, like most teams, but with their arms around the props waists. Although the physics of scrummaging are the same, all the power is directed into the hooker, scrumming along an imaginary arrow drawn pointing inwards from either side of the No 8. The scrum half gives a three part call after the 'engage': on pressure all members of the pack tighten their binds and fill their lungs with air.; on the call "one" everyone sinks the legs at this point should be at 90 degrees; on "two" the pack comes straight forward while violently expelling the air from their lungs. a key note is that nobody moves their feet until forward momentum is established. If the first drive is insufficient the scrum half begins the call again and the opposing pack is usually caught off guard and pushed back.

Trivia 2

In 1971 the IRFB increased the try from three to four points for 2 years on an experimental basis in the northern hemisphere. It was written into the rules during 1973. It was increased to 5 points in 1992, where it stays today.

➤ **Question for Steve Riley:** How would you motivate the Redcar team after the result listed at the bottom of page 7? Write on one side of the paper only.

WRUFC Club Memories

Loushers Lane

Prior to moving to Bridge Lane, WRUFC played their home games at Loushers Lane. The facilities comprised two pitches, a rickety stand, a clubhouse, wooden baths and spartan changing rooms – all surrounded by acres of scrubland. The first team pitch was extremely well-drained and games were played there when most other games in the country were called off. The baths were put to good use when the players dumped a fully clothed John Maddocks in one of them, after a particularly scathing report on the game the previous week. John was a junior reporter for the Warrington Guardian in those days. He achieved further fame in a match report where he slated the stand off for having a poor game but added that it was better than the game Alan Tunna would have had if he had played in that position!

The move from Loushers Lane to Bridge Lane was precipitated by fears of the security of tenure at the former, which was owned by Warrington Borough Council. The wisdom of this move has often been queried but, as with recent events, we may not have been playing rugby at all had we not made a decision to relocate. I have fond memories of Loushers Lane, especially the way you could tell Warrington spectators from visitors in the old stand there. The ball often landed on the roof and when it did, Warrington supporters would put their hand over their drinks to avoid the rust that fell from the underside roof of the stand. Unwary visitors were left with rust slivers in their drinks, necessitating further purchases from the bar.

Many an advantage was taken by Warrington players against opposition players who were bewildered to see what appeared to be ships passing through the fields not far from the club - they were actually sailing along the Manchester Ship Canal, but this could not be seen from the Loushers Lane pitches. They imagined they were witnessing the Wagnerian '*Flying Dutchman*'.

The Longest Rugby Kick in History

In the late 1940s (1947?), Warrington were playing Davenport at Loushers Lane, close to the Manchester Ship Canal. The ball was kicked some distance and landed on a ship passing through the canal en route to Canada. The ball didn't hit *terra firma* until some 3,500 miles later, making this the longest kick in rugby history. It is not recorded who made this historic kick and for which team. This story may be apocryphal but appeared in the Sunday Times anyway.

Warrington RUFC First XV - April 1951

The First XV selection as reported in the *Warrington Guardian* was as follows:

W. (Bill) Baines, J. O'Connor, T. Fallon, T. (Tom) Higgins, K. Edwards, G. Wallington, K. Miller, T. Smith, R. Christie, L. (Les) Davenport, A. (Alan) McIntyre, R. Walker, G. Worgan, A. (Alan) Peaker (*), D. (Denis) Lloyd

Res: R. (Bob) Young, L. (Laurie) Gilfedder (who later played Rugby League for Warrington, Lancashire and Great Britain).

(*) The 'famous' Alan Peaker as reported on elsewhere in this season's programmes.

Rugby in The Olympic Games

- A photograph of a rugby game between France and Germany at the 1900 Games



Pierre de Coubertin, the reviver of the modern Olympics, introduced rugby union to the Summer Olympics at the 1900 games in Paris. Coubertin had previous associations with the game, refereeing the first French domestic championship as well as France's first international. France, the German Empire and Great Britain all entered teams in the 1900 games (Great Britain was represented by Moseley RFC, Germany by the SC 1880 Frankfurt). France won gold defeating both opponents. The rugby event drew the largest crowd at that particular games. Rugby was next played at the 1908 games in London. A Wallaby team, on tour in the United Kingdom, took part in the event, winning the gold, defeating Great Britain who were represented by a team from Cornwall.

The United States won the next event, at the 1920 Summer Olympics, defeating the French. The Americans repeated their achievement at the 1924 Summer Olympics in Paris, again defeating France in a tournament marred by controversies surrounding the rivalry between the two teams. Though rugby had attracted bigger crowds than the track and field events in 1924, it was dropped from next Games and has not been included since.

In October 2009, the International Olympic Committee voted to return a form of rugby to the Olympics, with rugby sevens to be contested in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

Nigel Melville states the fact Russia and China, as well as the United States, are looking at rugby sevens in a different light now a glint of Olympic gold is discernible. "All the big Olympic Nations are saying the same thing ... even the likes of India and Brazil are upping their programmes and they've got massive economies behind them." England's head sevens coach, Ben Ryan, has also detected a spike in interest. "I get lots of players ringing me, stand-out Premiership players and senior internationals, saying: 'Any chance you can speak to my director of rugby and get me away for a couple of weeks to sharpen me up?' They enjoy it and think it improves them as players."

Women's Rugby

This developed in Victorian times but was frowned upon as unladylike².

By 1980 there were club championships in USA and Sweden, and provincial championships in New Zealand. The game first appeared in Japan in 1981 and in February 1982 University College, London's women's team went on a tour to France playing, amongst other teams, Pontoise—the first recorded overseas tour by a UK team (and possibly the first international tour by any team). A few months later on 13 June 1982 the first women's international—Netherlands 0, France 4—took place at Utrecht (see Women's international rugby union for more details on the history of the international game).

In the UK 1983 saw the Women's Rugby Football Union (WRFU) formed to govern the game across the British Isles.

The game began to be organised on a more formal basis elsewhere, including:

- **1984** The LNRF (Lega Nazionale Rugby Femminile) formed in Italy
- **1986** First UK National League and Cup competitions established
- **1987** Canadian women's rugby board established
- **1988** Japanese Women's Rugby Football Union formed
- **1988** Women's International Rugby Board (WIRB) formed.
- **1989** Women's rugby union began to be organized in the USSR
- **1989** ARFR is formally integrated into the Federation Francaise de Rugby (FFR), and
- **1990** The USA become the "Eagles" and play officially for USA Rugby for the first time

1990 also saw the first international tournament—*RugbyFest* held in Christchurch, New Zealand. As well as a variety of club sides, including teams from Japan (but not the Japanese national team), were four "national" teams—USA, New Zealand, USSR, and the Netherlands—who played a round-robin tournament. The winner was New Zealand, who then played—and beat—a combined "World XV".

1990 - 1998

Rugbyfest pointed the way to the next big leap forward—the first women's rugby world cup, which took place in Wales the following year. Timed to coincide with the second men's world cup being held in England it did not meet with official approval from the IRB, a decision which threatened the competition and was a factor in the New Zealand RFU not supporting their entry. However, this did not stop the New Zealanders from taking part—nor Wales, USA, England, France, Canada, Sweden, USSR, Japan, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands.

The competition was run on a shoestring. Russian players sold souvenirs before and during matches to raise funds to cover their expenses, while four England administrators re-mortgaged their houses to cover the expenses of attending the competition. But after fifteen matches the first world champions were crowned—the USA, who beat England in the final. Despite the lack of support from the men's game, and very little media coverage, the competition had been a success, and the women's game continued to grow.

- 2012: IRB plans to launch the IRB International Women's Sevens Series, similar to the men's, and Rugby Sevens will be included in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

² See <http://rugby-pioneers.blogs.com/> for numerous fascinating articles on the game

➤ **Winnington Park RUFC History**



Grounds: *The Paddock 1907-1914,*
 Tank Field 1920-1923,
 Jubilee Field 1923 -1947
 Moss Farm 1947 – 1976,
 Burrows Hill 1976 – Present Day

Between 1892-94 a chemical plant at Lostock Gralam had been established by Bowman Thompson, this being eventually bought out by Brunner Mond and Company in 1900. Many of the first workers came from either Runcorn or Widnes, where rugby was the dominant winter sport. A sports club was formed and a rugby team was started, playing most of its games in the Merseyside area. When the 1895 union/league split occurred, this Lostock team sided with the rugby league code, but they too had disbanded by the time of the Brunner Mond takeover.

Contemporary with this was the expansion of the Winnington Recreational Club, which was centred around the chemical plants at Winnington and Wallerscote. Here a 'state of the art' recreational facility was established, providing a range of sporting and intellectual activities. All the major sports were represented and as early as 1892 it was suggested that a rugby section should be organized.

However this idea failed to take root and it was not until 1907 that a Winnington Rugby Club was formed. The Recreational Club's archives show no details of a rugby section and it is to be presumed that this club was independent from the 'Rec', although it did use the pavilion to change in and to use the social facilities. Matches were played on 'The Paddock', adjacent to the Recreation Club ground and rugby shared this playing area with the hockey section and the horses of the company. This green field site later became the location of the Low Caustic Plant Boiler.

The first reported match took place on 22nd October 1910, when Winnington lost 23-3 to Sale 'A.' Two hundred spectators witnessed the next fixture, when Broughton Park won 15-0, while the first win came in late November – a 11-0 victory over Horwich. Winnington officially opened their new £52 000 clubhouse on Sunday 4th April 1976.

The process of the move started in 1973 when ICI Limited decided, as part of their centenary, to donate the Moss Farm Complex to Cheshire County Council. The area was developed over a period of time, with the addition of a new town swimming baths, the arrival of Northwich Cricket club and eventually the acquisition of the old rugby clubhouse by Mid-Cheshire Rugby Club (who became Northwich Rugby Club in 1990-91) Winnington negotiated a separate lease for the eighteen acres of land to the west of the enclosed football pitch – this contained the existing four rugby pitches, but resulted in the clubhouse being isolated from them and now on county land.

In 1973 the club began the process of designing and building a new two storey club, with its changing facilities on the ground floor and its bars and social areas on the first floor and overlooking the two main playing areas.

1985 saw the start of regional leagues and as hoped for and anticipated Winnington were put in the top echelons on the junior rugby circuit, along with other Cheshire clubs – Chester, Lymm and Davenport (Stockport). Three championships on the run enabled Winnington to climb through the league system and the acquisition of the Cheshire Cup, which they won five times in seven years between 1986 and 1994, meant automatic qualification into the national cup – The Pilkington Cup (formerly the John Player Trophy).

For a number of reasons the season 1986-87 could be regarded as the best of the previous eighty and better than any of the twenty seasons which followed it. The first team won an unsurpassed 33 games, they won all ten league games to retain their title, they were promoted to the Area North Division (effectively one of the National League Division 4's) and on a different level the club ran seven teams on some Saturdays – at least 105 adults playing rugby. Three hundred yards away Mid-Cheshire College were also turning out a minimum of five teams per week. In effect the town saw a boom in rugby with nearly 200 adult rugby players and as many again youth, junior and mini rugby players indulging in the sport and its social benefits.

In 1997 Park made the decision that they were not in a position to have a fully professional 1st XV and accordingly they struggled to retain their National status eventually being relegated to North 2 West (Level 6) in 2000. The team consistently finished in the top six culminating in a play-off spot in 2006 where they lost to Beverly. They were gradually overtaken in league status by the 'local' Cheshire clubs, who were able to attract new players with financial incentives and finally in 2008 were relegated to South Lancs Cheshire League 1.

➤ **Winnington Park – Warrington: Chaos and 'Fame' in 1962**

On November 3rd 1962, both the Warrington and Winnington Park First teams were sent off by the referee, Ken Hope of Sale. Extracts from the *Evening Chronicle* :

'Two Rugby Union teams, Warrington and Winnington Park were today smarting under the indignity of being sent off the field five minutes before the end of the game when free-for-all fighting broke out. There is believed to be only one previous occasion in Rugby Union records where complete teams have been sent off. The gamealthough hard had been clean until the second half.

Then the referee dismissed two players – M. Rooney (Winnington Park) and P. Glenn (Warrington) – for allegedly fighting

.... within minutes there was fighting on the pitch involving six players from each side. Mr. Hope immediately stopped the game and ordered both sides off the field. Winnington Park were leading 5 – 3 ' [at the time].

Ho Ho Ho!

1. It was at The Arms Park, Wales were playing England. The young supporter was standing back trying to watch the game when he noticed an empty seat in the front row on halfway. He sauntered down and spoke with the old gent next to the empty seat.

"You minding that seat for someone?"

"No, my wife and I always sit here when Wales are playing"

"Oh, where is she?" asked the young fellah.

"'Tis sad to say she passed away"

"I'm terribly sorry. So you come here every game and leave the seat vacant as a sign of respect."

"Yes me lad, we always sat here, I'll miss her" the old gent sighed.

"That's a wonderful thought. How long ago was it that she passed on?"

"This morning"

South African Rugby - after losses to Ireland and England

2. A seven year old South African boy was at the centre of a courtroom drama today when he challenged a Pretoria Supreme Court ruling over who should have custody of him.

The boy has a history of being beaten by his parents, and the judge awarded custody to his sole aunt. The boy protested that his aunt beat him more than his parents and refused to live there. When the judge suggested that he live with his grandparents the boy claimed that they beat him more than anyone.

The judge dramatically allowed the boy to chose who should have custody of him. Custody was today granted to the Springboks Rugby team, as the boy firmly believes they are not capable of beating anyone.

Thank You

Thank you all for your support this season. The committee, players and other Club members would love to welcome you all to Walton Lea again next season.

Thanks are also due to Dave Jervis and Roy Potts for the match reports, and to Dave again for his help in the physical production of this programme over the season. Peter Riley has also done sterling work producing other parts of the programme and is in line for a Club 'chuffy' badge.

See you all next season.

Terry Critchley
