

Extension to Changing Rooms

I realise that showing the inside of a changing room is probably not everyone's idea of the front page of a Newsletter, but I think it's important, especially for those of you unable to visit personally, to appreciate what the club has managed to achieve as part of the recently opened extension. It is certainly a far cry from having to squash into shared changing rooms as many of us will remember doing in the past.



We now have four discrete changing rooms each with its own integral showers, toilets and basins, conditions that are essential for the continued development of our boys, girls, men, and women's rugby. We have named the rooms Mead, Eley, Myhill and Mitchell in memory of Phil, Martin, Dick, Lynette and Colin. Representatives of all four families were present on Saturday, 16th September when the extension was officially opened prior to a sit-down luncheon.

I'm pleased to say that the project was delivered within the planned budget, and we do not owe a penny to anyone. Having said that, improving our facilities is still very much a work in progress and we are exploring every avenue to raise sufficient funds to apply the finishing touches needed to the exterior and interior.

For now, though, I would like to pay a special tribute to Madeleine Cozens who liaised with the Sussex Foundation for several years to raise the majority of the required funding, and to our Chairman Liam Bennett, and Treasurer Shaun Rimmer, for their huge efforts in driving the project through to completion.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

I am also delighted to say that we raised just over £10,000 again last season through donations from Vice-Presidents. This now sits alongside bar revenue, sponsorship, and player subscriptions as a main source of revenue. Many thanks to those of you who continue to pay by standing order or who have already contributed for this year.

Yes, it is that time of year again so, as a reminder, most VPs either pay by monthly standing order of £10 or an annual transfer of £100.

The details you need are:

Payee: Bognor Rugby Club

Sort Code: 20-20-62

A/C No.: 90135259

Reference: (Your surname) VP

Some of you may have had payments returned by Barclays due to an error on their part. The system will be back up and running within days but, to be on the safe side please delay any transfers until 1st October.

Please feel free to continue using cheques/cash if you prefer.

AWARDS 2022/23

The following awards were presented at the Annual Club Supper at the end of April:

1st TEAM

Player of the Year

Charlie Jays (top photo)

Most Consistent Player

Josh Burgess

Most Improved

Jeremy Newton-Young

Top Tryscorer

Tyrone Makasi

Supporters Player of the Year

Sean Bailey

2nd Team

Player of the Year

Adam Booker (2nd photo)

Most Consistent-

Ben Walker

Top Tryscorer

Jake Merritt

Team of the Year

1st Team

Colt of the Year

Noah Flinn/Ollie Fuller

Clubman of the Year

Richie Hay

Dick of the Year

Shane Stevens



SPECIAL AWARDS

The huge contribution made to the Club by these three members was marked by special presentations before the luncheon on September 16th 2023

Marie O'Connor was presented with the Eve Award which was designed and crafted from lead by Phil Mead. Amongst her many roles, Marie is Safeguarding Officer, 1st team Medic, and - by her own admission - "nanny" to the youthful senior squad.

Faye Flynn was presented with the Martin Eley Award for Enriching Club Culture. No-one has done more than Karl to enhance the on-field ethos, whilst Faye has worked wonders in recent years to raise the social profile in the Clubhouse.

The respect and warmth that they show to all members is indicative of the great community spirit for which our club is well-known.

Roy Evans was presented with the Unsung Hero Award after nineteen years of the essential but unglamorous job of cellar maintenance.



Rugby Roundup

The senior coaching team (L-R Paddy Burnett, Nick Baker, Karl Flinn, Paul Mitchell and Billy Toone) have been delighted with the consistently high numbers at pre-season training. Warmup matches against Chichester, Pulborough and Shoreham ensured that they were able to look at all players and the early signs for a very young squad are encouraging. The 1st Team lost their first league match against Eastleigh last Saturday despite dominating the set pieces and creating several scoring opportunities.



This photo, taken by Chloe Dent, is of full-back Dan Robinson making one of several searing breaks. Some consolation was gained by the 2nd Team who beat a seasoned

Millbrook team by over forty points. Youth Chairman 'Kiwi' Mike O'Connor reports that there have been good numbers at mini and junior training, with encouraging results at pre-season friendlies. He wishes to thank all of the many volunteers without whom there would be no mini or youth section. The input of ex-players has been invaluable, and he is confident that the successful transition this year of Colts through to



senior rugby will continue next year.

One area where we are thin on the ground is refereeing so, if you fancy a go, see Mike and he will arrange the necessary support and training.

Our successful U-16 Girls (Flamingos) from last year have combined with Pulborough in order to ensure that we continue to offer the girls a positive experience in terms of training and matches.

Meanwhile Jules Boyce is working hard to assemble our first women's team. Anyone interested in playing should contact her on 07539 648178.

Hire of Clubhouse

Just a reminder that, if you have a function coming up such as birthday, wedding anniversary etc, why not book the clubhouse? We offer competitive bar prices, the use of a modern kitchen and access to a new sound system.

There is no hire charge for members- all you have to do is pay the wages of bar staff.

Free Beer for the Whole of December! Only kidding, but please read this because it is no exaggeration to say that we are in desperate need of help. We have a fantastic group of volunteers who maintain the pitches and clubhouse, and run the bar. Unfortunately most of them have been doing it, unpaid of course, for the last forty or fifty years. They are getting older and the size of the group is dwindling. I honestly don't know how long we can carry on relying on the same people- as the years go by they are having to do more work, not less. The bar is the lifeblood of the club and without it we are lost. Some of the tasks involve ordering, collecting from the warehouse, receiving deliveries, serving and, since Roy Evans' retirement due to ill health, cleaning the pipes in the cellar. You can do as much or as little as you are able and, in respect of the pipe-cleaning, you can do it at any time of the week to suit you. Full training will be provided by Mike Lewin so please, make his day, and call him on 07986 131170.

Dates for your Diary

October	14 th	Hawaiian Night (Cocktails)
October	17 th	Singsong Supper IV (at the Pink Pub – see me for details)
November	4 th	League Lunch (v Andover)
November	10 th	Quiz Night
December	2 nd	Christmas Bingo
	16 th	League Lunch (v Havant 2)
	31 st	New Years Eve Party
January	27 th	VPs League Lunch (v Alton)
February	17 th	Old School Disco
March	23 rd	League Lunch (v Trojans)
April	19 th	St George's Day Lunch
	20 th	Chichester- Sausage Cup
May	3 rd	Tour to Italy (contact Karl Flinn)
	25 th	Volunteers Lunch

I look forward to seeing you all at the Club soon.

Best wishes
Leighton Thomas

