



## **Chairman's Report for 2021/22**

After no competitive rugby during 2020/21 season it was almost back to normal at the beginning of 2021/22 season. The decision to train throughout 2020/21 seemed a wise one as the Club came out of the blocks quickly. Winning the first few games saw PJF on the top of the table. The buzz around the club was that we could win the league. Then came the fateful game against Old Amplefordians which we lost by the narrowest of margins. But due to an irregularity about the way Amplefordians had approached the game we were awarded the points. Nevertheless, the season started to unravel from that point and a number of losses by the narrowest of margins saw PJF slide down the table. After a loss to close rivals O Whitgiftians the coach Rhodri sat down to have a rethink. The result was a plan for a more structured game. There followed a couple more narrow losses but the overall play was improving. The game against bottom side Effingham at Brown's Lane saw another narrow loss and two points gained. It should have been all five but for a mad 20 minutes midway through the game. But the signs were that PJF were improving. There followed a string of wins, the highlight being the sound drubbing handed out to top of the table Kingston. PJF finished the league in 5<sup>th</sup> place and will play in Counties 2 in the re-organised league structure.

Discipline was good other than an unfounded accusation against one of the Club's players that was resolved in the Club's favour by an RFU hearing.

The second team had a disappointing season and will need to be the focus of attention for the coming year. Recruitment and attendance at training being two key issues that need to be addressed if the club is to improve. The goal for the season past was one of consolidation which we achieved. But as a Club we cannot rest on our laurels because that is how we slip backwards. A big thank you goes to Rhodri for his patience and coaching. Thank you also go to 1<sup>st</sup> team captain Luke Couchman, 2<sup>nd</sup> team manager /father figure, Julian Emmanuel and Club Captain Iain Greenwood.

Off the field we had three well attended lunches and thank you goes to chef Julian Norton and the girls who so brilliantly wait tables.

On the down side, just before Christmas we suffered an arson attack on the pitch side container and we lost the post pads, tackle bags pads for the scrummage machine, that were brand new, and various other bits of training equipment. No culprit has been identified by the police, and it looks as though we shall receive no insurance reparation because the container was not part of the clubhouse. So we have to find the funds to

replace the lost equipment along with a set of posts for the second team pitch as the old posts have been irreparably damaged over a number of years.

Lisa who was running the bar for us also left just after the new year.

Another high note was the performance of the minis who took part in a number of festivals this year in which they performed admirably. The top age group the Under 9s started to play a level of contact and there looks to be some real talent in their ranks. The U8s and U7s also showed their skills in the tag arena. The season ended with a fantastic awards day up at the club in May. Again, we need to focus on recruitment and becoming better at what we do. But a huge thank you goes to Brendan and John Hession, Jon Vellacott, Kevin Ali, Adam Bailey, Jim Brannigan and Matt Hanlon, who we are sadly losing to America. A special mention goes to Jim for identifying an opportunity to work with some of the lads at the school at U13 level who want to play more rugby than the school currently provides.

On a sad note, the club saw the passing of a number of past members and good friends to the club. Most notable among the losses were those of Derek Berry, Howard (Dickie) Bird and most recently, and suddenly Mark Crow father to Charlie. We will miss them all.

The season finished on a high with the Players' Awards Dinner which was a tremendous success, and we look to expand the format going forward.

I would like to extend a massive thank you to the committee who serve the club so well. Luke O'Shea, Bryan Whicher, Tim Wood, Phil Jones, Callum Law and Pat Liddiard.

I know that we need to become more astute at what we do and would like to see some more people put themselves forward to help keep the club moving in the right direction. I would particularly like to see more well organised socials and of course I would love to see the club return to touring. I know for certain that the number of alikadoos would likely match the number of players on tour, so it would be a mighty club event.

Thank you to all the players and committee members for their support over the past couple of years that have been a real challenge for the club. But if it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger.

Niel Kenny