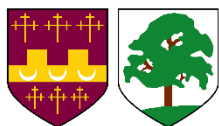


OLNEY R.F.C.



1877

Olney Rugby Football Club

Youth Tour Guide



This Tour Guide applies to all Olney RFC age grade squads – an age grade squad is any Mini, Junior or Colts squad which contains any player who is under 18.

VALUE OF GOING ON TOUR

Whatever the age group of the team, going on tour is a fantastic way to build team spirit, morale and identity. Be it at the beginning or end of the season, it provides a rare and exciting opportunity for players and coaches to get to know each other that little bit better and helps to build teamwork both on and off the pitch. Tours often provide memories and friendships that will last a lifetime; the camaraderie and banter can be second to none.

Youth tours are primarily about and for the players. Adults seeking to organise an excuse for a drinking/social weekend away should do so without involving U'18s.

GENERAL RULES REGARDING YOUTH TOURS

- No Youth Tour can take place without the prior approval of the Club Executive Committee.
- All Youth Tours must meet RFU *Touring with Children* safeguarding requirements
- All volunteers who are working closely with children whilst on tour will be required to have a RFU DBS check; it is a legal requirement for all those who are supervising the children overnight to have a RFU DBS check. It is highly advisable for there to be a contingency plan to ensure that there are enough DBS checked adults to adequately supervise the children during the night (Adults who are simply supporters or spectators and do not form part of the vetted Tour Party must not accompany/supervise the Tour Party other than their own children)
- All Youth Tour games must be played within the playing season – the last day of the age grade playing season 2023-2024 is Monday 6th May.
- All Tour squad members are representing the club throughout the tour and must commit to a 'good behaviour' undertaking prior to departure.

HOME TOURS AND OUT OF UNION TOURS

For the purposes of this Tour Guide, a 'Tour' is a trip of any length that involves Tour squad members staying away from home overnight. Games played on tour must take place within the age grade playing season.

Home Tours are tours within England (Home Union).

Overseas Tours are tours outside our home Union England. Tours to Wales, Scotland, Ireland or further afield require approval on the RFU Outgoing Tour form in addition to the club's Youth Tour Application form.

ARRANGING A TOUR

Tour Committee

Arranging and running a Tour is time consuming and can be complicated. Meticulous planning and preparation are essential. It is important that all the Tour details are not known by just one person as this can lead to problems in the event of that person becoming ill etc. Accordingly, well before the Tour departure date, it is recommended that a Tour Committee is established to share the workload. All members of the Tour Committee should be given clear terms of reference.

It is suggested that the Tour Committee is (as a minimum) made up of:

- Tour Manager (to deal with all admin, travel, insurance, notifications to RFU etc)
- Squad's Lead Coach for the Tour
- Tour Accountant (to deal with all monies to fund the Tour)
- Club Home Contact (someone NOT going on Tour who will be readily contactable throughout the Tour).

Other possible members of the Tour Committee (depending on age of Tour squad, length of Tour, location of Tour) are:

- Team Admin
- Tour First Aider(s)
- Tour Welfare Officer
- Other Coaches going on Tour

Planning period

The length of time required to arrange a Tour will depend largely on the length of the Tour, the location of the Tour, the number of different locations being visited, help given by host Clubs/Unions, use of a tour company and whether a similar tour has been undertaken by another squad in the Club (which may be able to give some guidance re accommodation, venues etc, etc). Err on the side of caution and allow months rather than weeks to organise even the briefest of Home Tours.

Planning for an Overseas Tour should start 9/10 months before the date of the proposed Tour. If using a tour company be aware of dates for deposits and final payment deadlines.

Budget

Ensure the budget/costings for the Tour are carefully worked out and ensure that monies are collected 'up front'. The Club cannot fund/underwrite tours. Organisers must be aware of making costs equitable and affordable to all. Consideration needs to be given on how to support players who may not be able to pay the full price. This could involve charging others a little more to create a surplus or discreetly seeking/using sponsorship.

Protecting Tour Funds

At least two adults should be responsible for tour funds. This provides protection for the Tour funds and the Tour accountants against suggestions of misappropriation. Post Tour accounts should be available for the coaches/adults involved. A special bank account must NOT be set up in the Club's name to hold Tour monies.

Length of Tour/fixtures

When planning the Tour bear in mind that the duration and intensity of the Tour as well as the length of travel involved should be appropriate to the age, aptitude, and abilities of the Tour squad's players. Most club tours are over a long weekend from Friday to Sunday/Monday. Check that the host teams being considered are of similar age, size and playing standard to the Tour squad. Remember some overseas countries have double age bands (e.g., U11 and U12 combined).

Size of Tour Party

It is vital that the size and balance of the Tour Party is established early in the planning stage. All members of the age group must have the opportunity to go on tour. Every effort should be made to support players who may be excluded by ability to pay.

The size and balance of the Tour squad (the playing squad) should be calculated, amongst other things, by reference to:

- age of the Tour squad members
- number of games to be played/teams that can be entered
- length of the tour/games being played
- need for extra players (at all positions) to cover injuries etc
- maximum squad size permitted by host Club/Union
- need to avoid overplaying Tour squad members

The number of adults in the Tour Party must meet (or exceed) the ratio of:

- 1 adult for every 6 Tour squad members in the case of Mini squads
- 1 adult for every 8 Tour squad members in the case of Junior/Colts squads. It is strongly recommended that a greater number of adults than the minimum set out above make up the Tour Party in the case of an Overseas Tour.
- Qualified First Aider - At least one adult per 30 players in the Tour Party
- Tour Welfare Officer – at least one with a successfully completed recognised Child Protection course

DBS vetting

All adults in a Tour Party working closely with children must have been vetted by the DBS prior to departure of the Tour. This procedure takes some time (months rather than weeks in some cases). Accordingly, any adult who is intending to go on Tour must submit themselves to vetting at the earliest opportunity – contact the Club's Safeguarding Officer for more info.

The Tour Manager must seek confirmation from the Club's Safeguarding Officer that all adults in a Tour Party have been vetted to the Club's satisfaction.

Risk/risk assessment

When organising a Tour and during the Tour itself ensure that all reasonably practicable steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the Tour Party. This involves (amongst other things):

- making adequate provision for the supervision of the Tour squad whilst on Tour,
- making sure the Tour Party understands the supervision needs and expectations,

- applying a good behaviour and discipline practice,
- being aware and avoid booking accommodation for junior players where they may cause a nuisance and disturb other residents,
- ensuring that accommodation is safe and secure (the Tour Party's immediate accommodation should be for the exclusive use of the Tour Party; if accommodation is not staffed 24 hrs a day ensure there are security arrangements in place to stop unauthorised visits; familiarise the Tour Party with emergency procedure/escape routes in the event of a fire etc, etc),
- having appropriate access to First Aid,
- being aware of risks particular to the location the Tour is visiting (e.g. if going abroad and using UK coach transport be vigilant when the Tour squad is disembarking – the coach exits could be next to a road rather than a pavement),
- recognising that on longer Tours many of the health problems of children are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep – take steps to avoid this (e.g. set a bed time for the night before match days, ensure the Squad has access to fruit/energy bars, drinking water etc, etc),
- ensure that an appropriate number of responsible adults do not partake in drinking alcohol each day to deal with emergencies/driving to hospital etc
- arranging appropriate back-up services where necessary,
- making provisions for the possibility of a member of the Tour Party becoming separated from the rest of the group (establish rendezvous rules etc),
- ensuring that adequate arrangements are made to occupy the squad during any leisure time

The above list is not exhaustive – the risks will vary from Tour to Tour and may depend on many variables such as the age of the Tour squad members, the location of the Tour, mode of transport being used etc, etc. It will be necessary to undertake a risk assessment so that significant or unnecessary risks can be eliminated/avoided and other risks can be minimised to an acceptable level. The risk assessment should ascertain potential hazards, decide who might be harmed and how and then to evaluate the risk and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done. It is possible that even after all reasonable precautions have been put in place some degree of risk will remain. Unless the risk is low, the hazard must be avoided (e.g., change accommodation). NOTE: Where at all possible, a pre-Tour visit should be made by a member of the Tour Committee to conduct an onsite evaluation of risks. Other than in exceptional cases a written copy of the risk assessment must be supplied to the Club when applying for permission to tour. *A template risk assessment is available*

Transport

The Tour Manager should be satisfied as to the suitability and safety of any transport used. If travelling by coach, written confirmation must be received from the coach company that the coach meets all local safety requirements – regarding seat belts. If it is necessary to transport squad members on Tour in private vehicles the Tour Manager should be satisfied that the driver is qualified, and that the vehicles used are appropriately insured.

DOCUMENTATION

Travel/accommodation documentation and itinerary Clearly this will vary for each Tour. All bookings should be confirmed in writing and copies of relevant correspondence kept. The Club Home Contact must be provided with a copy of all relevant documents.

Itinerary, costs & kit requirements. Written details should be issued to potential Tour squad members so that parents can decide whether they are happy for their child to tour.

Behaviour. It is a Club requirement that all Tour squad members commit a 'good behaviour' undertaking. Adult members of the Tour Party must be reminded that it is an RFU requirement that they do not drink alcohol in front of youth squad members whilst on Tour. Likewise, all adults in the Tour Party must ensure that Tour squad members abide by the good behaviour undertaking.

Insurance. The RFU provides individual players with public liability and personal accident insurance as members of the Club. Additional insurance must be affected for all Overseas Tours as mentioned above. Insurance should be considered for all Home Tours including additional adequate insurance will be taken out for all non-rugby related activities and cancellation cover.

A copy of the Insurance Policy should be taken on Tour by the Tour Manager. The Club Home Contact should also hold a copy.

Health. Parents/Guardians of all Tour squad members should complete a health declaration/consent form. *A template form is available.*

Tour party information. This info will be held by both the Tour Manager and the Club Home Contact.

a) info re members of the Tour Party.

The minimum info to be held in respect of all members of the Tour Party is:

full name and address

home phone

next of kin info

health declarations/consent forms for all Tour squad members mobile phone no(s) of any adult(s) in the Tour Party who will take their mobile on Tour.

b) detailed itinerary

c) addresses and phone no(s) for all accommodation

The Tour Manager and Club Home Contact should also have a copy of the Info for parents referred to below.

Info for parents. Prior to departure on Tour, parents of Tour squad members should be given written details of:

- travel details
- Tour itinerary
- accommodation address(es) & phone no(s)
- mobile phone no(s) of any adult(s) in the Tour Party who will have their mobile on Tour

- name, address & phone no of the Club Home Contact
- advice re level of 'pocket money' Tour squad members may need (and whether this will be held by the squad member or should be handed in to a designated adult in the Tour Party)

Travel register

This should be a complete list of all members of the Tour Party. A head count/register should be taken very regularly throughout the Tour by the Tour Manager or other designated adult. Before and during the Tour members of the Tour Party must be reminded of the purpose and importance of the register.

OVERSEAS TOURS

Overseas Tours are tours outside our home Union England. Tours to Wales, Scotland, Ireland or further afield require approval on the RFU Outgoing Tour form in addition to the club's *Youth Tour Application form*.

Coaches should be aware that not all the home unions play the same rules at the same ages as we do in England. Accordingly, prior to departure on a Overseas Tour, the Tour Manager should liaise with the teams to be played during the Tour to clarify exactly what rules will be played. Tour squad members must be made fully aware of any differences to the rules they normally play under. It should also be remembered that not all home unions band youth players by reference to their age on 31st August, some work by calendar years. Check in advance. It should also be remembered that some overseas countries band youth players in double age bands. Check in advance that opponents are of the same age, aptitude, and ability as the Tour squad members.

Host Clubs, particularly on Overseas Tours, often make a presentation at the end of a game. It is as well to take some small gifts on Tour (e.g., Olney RFC club ties) so that a reciprocal presentation can be made if need be. The cost of such gifts should be factored into the Tour costs.

Be aware of local legislation that may differ from the UK. For example permitted drinking ages for non-distilled alcohol (beer, cider) is lower in Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg.

Passports/visas. For Overseas Tours and tours to the Republic of Ireland, ensure all members of the Tour Party (adults and Tour squad members) have valid passports, with at least 3 months remaining validity on the date of return, and any necessary visas. It is strongly recommended that the Tour Manager has a photocopy of the page bearing passport number, date of birth, photo – this can be very useful if a passport is lost whilst on Tour.

KIT NEEDED FOR THE TOUR

Tour Party's kit. If members of the Tour Party are required to buy special Tour kit (e.g., bearing Tour motifs etc) they must be advised as soon as possible. Expensive items should be avoided as they could result in some squad members being unable to tour due to cost. Tour kit should be sourced via the Club and its preferred suppliers.

Playing kit must be in standard Club design and colours and designs approved by the club.

Rugby kit Balls, pumps, tackle pads etc will need to be taken by the Tour Party if the squad wants to train before games. In the case of an Overseas Tour, make sure you have sufficient free baggage allowance for this kit.

First aid kit Take a plenty of first aid supplies on Tour, they may be hard to come by and/or very expensive (particularly on Overseas Tours). Again, in the case of an Overseas Tour, make sure you have sufficient free baggage allowance for this kit. The First Aid kit should be kept by the Tour First Aider(s) and restocked as necessary whilst on Tour.

PRE TOUR BRIEFING MEETING

A briefing meeting should be held before the Tour for all members of the Tour Party and parents of the Tour squad members.

At this meeting

- The role of each Tour Party official should be explained, the final itinerary should be detailed and all outstanding medical and consent forms collected in,
- Tour squad members and their parents should be reminded of the expectations and commit to good behaviour that will be required on Tour,
- It should be made clear whether or not the Tour Party is to travel in Club/Tour kit such as Club sweatshirts/hoodies (which could be helpful when trying to do head counts in a busy location) or mufti,
- The importance of sticking together as a group whilst on Tour must be stressed and re-stressed at this meeting.

DURING THE TOUR

Squad members will inevitably have some 'free time' whilst on Tour. Ensure arrangements are in place for this time to be supervised. Squad members must not be allowed to wander off on their own during any 'free time'.

SECONDARY ACTIVITIES

Avoid all secondary activities whilst on Tour which are high risk – e.g., sailing, rock climbing, etc, etc. Host clubs sometimes offer secondary activities to help fill a Tour squad's leisure time. Do not accept any offers unless they are 'low risk' (e.g., visit to the cinema, disco at the clubhouse) and are not excluded from the provisions of any insurance cover effected by the Tour Party.

BRIEFINGS

During the tour hold regular briefing meetings for all members of the Tour Party.

All changes to timings, travels arrangements must be notified to all members of the Tour Party.

In addition during such briefing's reminders must be given of:

- the importance of sticking together and looking after each other whilst on Tour.
- the importance of their own safety and the safety of the group of complying with the rules and instructions given by the coaches/adults in charge

- the expectations of the Club's behaviour requirements, for older age groups, those relating to not drinking, smoking or taking illegal drugs.
- that all times they are representing the Club