

SO IT'S A JOLLY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL!

Club enjoys successful festive season on field and off!

What's the difference between Prince Charles and frostbitten limb? Well, a frostbitten limb is also white, blue blooded, cold and clammy but it usually still has some feeling.... What's the difference between George Best and Henri Paul (Di's driver)? George could still take corners when he was pissed. What did Di have in common with George Burns? They both died when they hit a hundred.

Good places not to have been this Christmas: the Straw household.

TEAMS FOR SATURDAY 10th January 1998 v Ruthin, TBA and Caldý

<i>1st XV</i>	<i>2nd XV</i>	<i>3rd XV</i>	<i>4th XV</i>	<i>RESERVES</i>
<i>v Ruthin</i>	<i>v TBA</i>	<i>v Ruthin</i>	<i>v Caldý</i>	
<i>Home, 1.00pm</i>	<i>Away, 1.00</i>	<i>Home, 1.00</i>	<i>Away, 1.00</i>	
L.ROBERTS	C.AINSLIE	S.ROBERTS	JOEY DAVIES	G.MURRAY
C.ELKERTON	M.ASTBURY	L.GORDON	J.JENKINS	I.MACKIE
M.PEERS	B.DAVIES	P.GRAVES	C.SMITH	P.MORAN
P.COTGRAVE	D.BALDWIN	J.BIRD	J.BROOKES	A.ROBERTS
A.GAYLE	G.DAVIES	C.SALISBURY	R.DUTTON	M.COFFIN
				FOGGO
D.THOMAS (C)	M.HOUSTON	G.KNAPMANN	M.DALTON	A.HOWARTH
G.FURLONG	J.BURGESS	N.LEEDS	M.COTGRAVE	C.HAYES
				P.PREEVES
				C.CHEARY
A.VICKERS	C.McHUGH	W.THORNBUR	FM	
G.FISHER	R.DODD (C)	K.JONES	M.GAUNT	
S.MURRAY	T.BAKER	M.CAVANAGH	D.McCLUSKEY	
P.WALLACE	M.TYLER	J.BOLTON	J.HOLLAND	
P.COLLINS	S.CROMPTON	D.BALL (C)	K.GATHERCOLE	
S.WALLACE	O.ROBERTS	R.TRIGGS	B.SHAW	
S.COPPLE	C.HOLLAND	W.LEE	N.WATTS	
P.LEWIS	J.TUOHY	D.WALKER	G.LEWIS	

Reserves: B.ELKERTON

ALL CRY OFFS BY FRIDAY AT THE LATEST TO: (Late cry offs on Saturday to Golf Shop 609 0669)

Dave Thomas
608 0423

Russell Dodd
01706822202
0125457966 (W)

Dave Ball
653 0831

Paul Bennett
644 9775

Kick Off times this week: 2.15pm, due to darkness falling before 4pm.

PLEASE NOTE

In recent weeks there has been a spate of people just not turning up for games for which they have been selected. This is making life hard for captains and for the lads who do turn up - we are leaving late for away games which means we have little time to change and prepare. Please let captains know if for some good reason you won't be turning up. Emergency numbers for Saturday contact, if you can't get hold of your own skipper: up to 12.00, Russell Dodd is on 01772 257696 ext 2412; after 12, Russell is on 0410 754567.

The 3rd XV Captaincy is now being shared between Carl Salisbury and Dave Ball due to Matt's elevation to the 2s. Thanks to Matt for his work so far and to the lads who have agreed to step in.

CLUB NEWS

Sunday 11th January: Under 17s XV v Wirral at the club. Kick Off 11.00am, much support will be appreciated.

Club Photographs: Phil Davies has now mounted several splendid shots on the wall near the kitchen with an invitation to the wits in the club to produce some apposite captions. Please exercise what brains you have left!

Chris Holland and his family send thanks to all at the club for the messages of support and for the collection recently held after his son Ben underwent serious surgery. We are happy to report that the little fellow has made a full recovery and is indeed to be seen most weeks scampering round the Prenton creche, sometimes known as a rugby club!

Best Wishes for a speedy recovery are sent to Ian 'Macca' McLean, who is recovering in Arrowe Park from a nastily septic finger. "Some people will go to any lengths to avoid getting their round in," grumbled the less charitably inclined! All the best to Lynne and to baby Hannah, who are having to cope without Macca. There is no truth in the rumour that Lynne is finding one baby easier to handle than the two she is used to!!!

Prenton RUFC Annual Club Dinner is now confirmed for **Friday 27th February** with guest speaker Tony Spreadbury, ex international panel referee. Club President Phil Davies will also say some words of wisdom. Well, he'll make a short speech. Tickets, strictly limited to 70, £20 each from Toby Tyler. Black Tie. No riff raff.

Club Subscriptions: there are still a great many players out there who have not paid subs. It was heartening to see an occasional visitor like Luigi Martini paying his membership last Saturday to enable him to keep in touch with club affairs. An example many should follow. See Mick Cavanagh to make some contribution to your membership.

The Festive Season was a great success at Prenton this year, with lots of fun had by all and, just as vital for the club's health and future, lots of lovely bar takings. Special thanks are due to **Helen Roberts** for yet another magnificent Childrens' Party with over 65 youngsters in attendance; Helen worked almost single handed and did a marvellous job. Also special thanks to **Big Peter Lewie** for organising two great dos on Boxing Night and on New Years Eve, both thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended and created a splendid festive atmosphere on both nights. And let's not forget the bar staff, ably led by the Lovely Lesley, who worked their doodahs off pulling for us all!

Match Results/Reports

Saturday 20th December

1st XV - no game; having cried off the Rhyl game, a match with Wirral was arranged but they didn't materialise.

2nd XV v Collegiate, home, won 60-0; something of a pre Christmas canter this one, with tries from Steve Wallace (2), Steve Roberts, Graham Davies (2), Dave Baldwin, Mark Astbury, Matt Houston, John Burgess and Chris McHugh. Man of the Match, caught by ace cameraman Joe Fisher on video, was Peter Collins who played full back for the visitors. At one point, he was taken head on and bounced out of the way by a rampant Steve Wallace en route for a try. "After I realised what I had done," said Wally, with much sense. "I promptly apologised to him and promised I wouldn't do it again." Matt Houston converted five of the ten tries.

3rd XV v Collegiate, away, lost 12-17; clearly the better Collegiators had chosen not to travel as we faced a pretty stiff side here. Tries were scored by Jason Holland and Alan Roberts and Mush Cotgrave converted one for a creditable performance in the circumstances.

Saturday 27th December

1st XV v St Edwards, home, won 10-5. This was an excellent win against a side which blended some hard experience with a set of talented student backs who were home on holiday. We won through a Peter Lewis try, converted by Gary Furlong, the latter also slotting a penalty.

2nd XV v St Edwards, home, won 21-5. Terry Baker was our outstanding player, filling in at number 8, and our scores came from tries by Bongo Elkerton and Matt Houston who also kicked a conversion and three penalties. It was a bit of a mixed day for Bongo who was supposedly subbing for the firsts (he got changed in their dressing room, the elitist sod) and pressed into action for the 2nds spent much of the game watching the firsts from the 2nd XV pitch! For which he was awarded the prestigious horned headgear as Twat of the Day!

3rd XV v Birkenhead Park, away, lost 5-20. A Jeff Bird try our only reward in a hard game.

Saturday 3rd January

1st XV v Halton, home, league, won 27-5. There's nothing quite like a good romp in weather conditions such as were existent at Prenton on this day. Of course, most of the old arses, safely wrapped up in their waterproofs and warm woolies, claimed they had often played in conditions far worse than this, as they gaily told one and all in the safe warmth of the clubhouse after. Worse conditions than this? Excuse me, but I didn't realise that there was a rugby pitch just off Cape fucking Horn. Or near the top of Mount fucking Everest. Anyway, your editor will save a graphic description of the weather for the 3rd team report (he played in that game) and concentrate on the Big Boys of the club who are brave and strong first XVers. These are the men of whom it must be said that, 'when the going gets tough, the tough palpably fail to assess the situation with sense and sanity.' Into the elements in the opening half, we played some excellent controlled rugby and Peter Lewis rewarded early pressure with a neatly taken push over try. Steve Copple scored his debut for the club and Dave Thomas collected a simple score when Gary Furlong charged down a clearance kick. The normally namby pamby half backs were running around like dervishes, hungry for action just to keep warm! Steve Wallace scored a forwards' try after a great line out catch and slip by Peter Collins and Gary Fisher slithered over for a try in the corner to round off a good move. Gary Furlong managed one conversion. A day for kickers it was not. And spare a thought for the visiting winger - he had to be carried off the pitch and treated for mild hypothermia in the boiler house. No you young ones, this was not some strange sexual practice, the lad was just fucking cold!

2nd XV v Hoylake, away, won 19-10. Once again, conditions dominated but we exhibited that bit more mastery and control and so won comfortably against a Hoylake side which contained the usual two competent old arses (actually, Chris Roberts is a bit more than just competent!) and loads of youngsters. Taking to the pitch, alarm was expressed in our ranks at the massive bulk of one of their props, a man who looked frighteningly fit as well. His bubble was soon burst however by the hawk-eyed ref who told the daft sod to go and take his padding off. On return, he looked a right wimp and was suitably dismantled by our relieved front row, all of whom has star games! The first half was end to end stuff but as the second progressed, we started to win lots of ball, including many of their scrums, and at the finale we were dominating with comfort. Tries came from Terry Baker, Dave Baldwin (a slick interception this one) and John Tuohy with a push over. Matt Houston converted two of the three. Much opprobrium was heaped on poor old skipper Dodd who, on one occasion, found himself in the fly half position with lots of men outside him and the ball in his hands. Naturally the happy hooker chose the worst option - he kicked for touch, a decision he justified on the grounds that he could never pass to his right anyway. Matt was especially virulent in his condemnation, something of an irony really - in similar circumstances, with a three or four man overlap, there is no doubt what he would have done. Spun the ball out? Would he fuck. Matt would have taken on the defending centre, winger and full back all on his very own!

3rd XV v Wirral, home, drew 10-10. Of course, the firsts had it easy, after all, their pitch is protected from the worst of the weather by the clubhouse. No such luck on the top pitch. The peak of the Matterhorn in a raging blizzard snow storm was probably a more hospitable place than the top pitch last Saturday. Wirral had arrived with 15 men but no recognised props but to their credit were happy to play with contested scrums. After five minutes of horizontal sleet, hail and freezing rain, everyone was pretty damned cold. Very soon, everyone was to become very damned cold. And not long after that, everyone was absolutely bollock freezing. The forwards, exercising a sort of collective intelligence opted for very long maul type affairs, not that they were expressing good rugby technique, they just wanted the scant warmth of human contact. Alan Roberts, refereeing, at one point skipped round to the leeward side of the scrum, opposite to the ref's normal position by the scrum halves. "Have you got a problem with the propping at this side, ref.." asked Mick Coffin. "Not at all," chattered Alan, "it's just a bit more sheltered round this side." Line outs were abandoned, they were simply not possible in the gale and scrums became the order of the day. The visitors took the lead with a smart interception try. We attacked with cold induced vigour, forced a short scrum and quickly fed the ball left where Ian McDougal, looking like Michelin Man with his fancy Dan padding, scored a good try in the corner to level. Half time was reached at five all and, ten minutes into the second spell, some sanity arrived when after an especially virulent blast of freezing ice, there was a call for abandonment. One Wirral flanker, clearly man with no brain, ergo no sense, grunted fiercely, "No, let's play on." And for some utterly inexplicable reason, we all followed the call of this fucking half wit and played on! Now we know why lemmings all follow one especially stupid lemming who says look I can fly off this cliff! And then, despite being under some severe pressure from Wirral attacks, we did what could have been A Very Stupid Thing - we scored a bloody try! Hacking the ball up field and winning a series of quick rucks, Vic Wilson got the touchdown. Usually when players score tries to take teams in to the lead, they get congratulated by their fellows. Not so Vic. "What the fuck did you do that for?" implored the side. "now they'll want to play on." Soon after they did indeed level the scores, their kicker did the jolly decent thing and hit the post with the (failed) conversion and we all said ta very much, where's the showers. Your editor can never remember 31 men (referee included) sprinting from the top pitch to the clubhouse at the end of a game! The still playing 1st XVs looked on in palpable envy!

The Things They Say.....

Mike Penny, "I had a lucky escape the other day, I nearly got run over by the Irby Mill."

Gary Furlong, "My hands went numb after about five minutes of the game, I thought I'd put my tape on too tight so I took it off and my hands were still numb." And we thought scrum halves were an intelligent species!

The Things They Do

Dave Ball's party the Sunday after Christmas was a fine do, with several of the lads behaving very badly indeed. First they studiously took all the needles off the tree making it a Christmas Twig, then they threw cutlery out of the upstairs window and finally, Steve Wally hit upon a real jolly jape. He put a whole chocolate gateaux in the washing machine with the washing and set it going with predictable, if hard to imagine, results. Ho ho ho. Your editor is inclined to sympathise with Dave's long suffering good lady who was heard to sharply intone, "Your friends from the rugby club are so mature and so funny." It's a surprise there wasn't the odd 'fucking' in there somewhere!

Twat of the Match for the 1sts this week was again the long suffering coach, Bongo, not for what he didn't do on the pitch but for what he insisted the lads did do on the pitch. Ie, stay on and play on!

An American, a Canadian and an Australian were sitting in a bar in Toronto enjoying a few beers. The American grabbed his beer, knocked it back in one gulp, threw the glass in the air and shot it with his handgun. As he set the gun on the bar, he told the Canadian and the Australian that in the great USA, they had so much money that they never drank out of the same glass twice. The Australian then slugged back his drink, threw the glass in the air and shot it with the American's gun. Placing the gun back on the bar he said that in Australia they had so much sand that glass was so cheap he too never drank out of the same glass twice. Whereupon the Canadian drank his beer, grabbed the gun off the bar and shot the Yank stone dead. As he set the gun back on the bar he told the Australian that in Canada they have so many Americans you never have to drink with the same one twice.