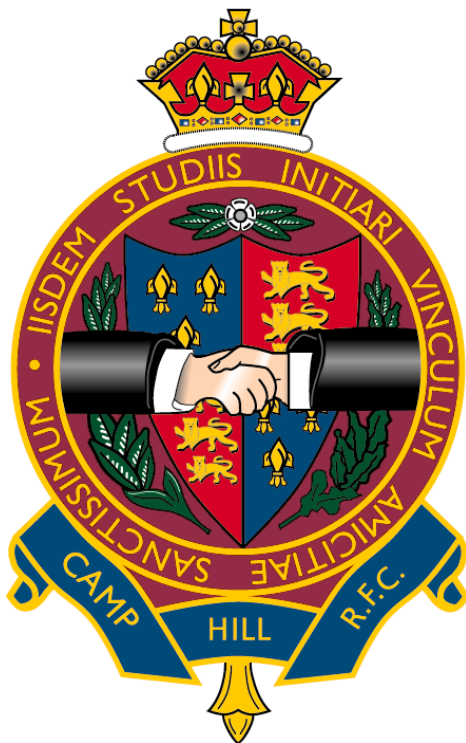


CAMP HILL RUGBY CLUB LIMITED



Annual Report
Season 2017/2018

Officers and Committees for 2017/2018

Directors

President*	Martin Garrod
Chairman*	Dave Maiden
Secretary*	Karen Gibbons
Treasurer*	Dave Maiden
Director*	Steve Terrace

Board - in addition to those marked *

Vice Chairman	Martyn Powis
Head of Playing Affairs	Simon Tansley
Membership Secretary	Neil Coy
Head of Facilities	Neil Coy
Chief Operating Officer	Nigel Busby

Team - Seniors

Captain

1st XV*	Mitch Lee
2nd XV*	Rory Lynch
3rd XV*	Russ Baker
Ladies XV**	N/A
Colts XV	Josh Hall
Ladies Touch Team***	Emma Thompson-O'Dowd

Senior Men Rugby Coaching and Management Team - in addition to those marked *

Head of Playing Affairs	Simon Tansley
Men's Fixture Secretary	Jim Looney
1st XV Head Coach	Stephen Halbert
1st XV Manager	Stuart Ruff
2nd XV Manager	Martyn Powis
3rd XV Manager	John Perrigo
Ladies Head Coach	N/A
Ladies Fixture Secretary	N/A
Press Officer	Steve Terrace

Senior Ladies Rugby Coaching and Management Team - in addition to those marked **

Ladies Chair	N/A
Finance	N/A
Playing Affairs	N/A
Recruitment	N/A
Publicity	N/A
Ladies Head Coach	N/A
Ladies Fixture Secretary	N/A

Ladies Touch Team Coaching and Management Team- in addition to those marked ***

Touch Team Head Coach	Alex Thompson
Touch Team Managers	Leanne Ashworth/Emma Thomson-O'Dowd
Finance	Deb Coles
Committee Member	Laura Murphy
Committee Member	Dominika Malinowska/Sal Crowley
Committee Member	Sal Crowley
Committee Member	Jo Dolan and Lucy Owen
Committee Member	Bek Ing
Committee Member	Emma Thompson-O'Dowd

Mini and Junior Rugby Committee

Chairman	Warren Taylor
Vice Chairman	Eugene McDaid
Fixture Secretary	Martin Lupton
Safeguarding Officer	Deb Coles
Committee Member	Simon Tansley
Committee Member	Gareth Buckley
Committee Member	Jonathan McDermott

President's Foreword

Last year I started my Foreword by reflecting on the extraordinary achievements of Graham Scutt BEM. This year, sadly, I find myself reflecting on his funeral service. That was a very moving day which seemed to me to deliver a wonderful expression of gratitude from a club to a man who had served it so extraordinarily faithfully. Before the service began, I was looking at the tremendous turnout from hundreds of people, many wearing Club blazers, representing all ages of club members. He was so appreciated and so loved. As Martin Crutchley said at the Camp Hill (school) rugby dinner, 'We will see his likes again – assuming one of you lads begins to serve the club today and is still doing so in the year 2093.'

Talking of the school dinner, I do want to underline my love of the connection between the school and the club named after it. Firstly, thanks. Thank you for providing the venue for the annual staff party at Christmas and for the school's rugby dinner. The clubhouse is ideally suited to the needs of those occasions, feeling homely enough to be family, and yet providing the space and bar that those occasions need. I particularly appreciate the fact that the rugby dinner is now at the club after a period when it was elsewhere; again, the reason that that's so important to me is the fact that it presses home the message that 'this is your club' to the boys at the school. Incidentally, I can't help noticing that the fabric of the place seems to look better every year – it really is a superb venue.

The links between the club and the school are remarkably close and seem to be thriving. For example, consider the Colts who enjoyed such a good run in the North Midlands Cup. Of the 30-man squad for that competition, 23 were current or previous pupils at the school. Wonderful!

There seem to be so many signs of a healthy club, that I feel very encouraged for the future. The minis and juniors section looks to be enjoying a revival, with record numbers of members in that age group. The ladies touch team seems to be going from strength to strength in the O2 touch league. The seniors section is regularly turning out 3 or 4 senior teams, and occasionally fields 5. It's no wonder that the club was awarded the accolades of North Midlands and Greater Birmingham club of the year.

So, once again, there seems to be so much to celebrate in a club with a great history which at the same time seems to be ideally poised for the future, with youngsters coming through and all sections of the club thriving. My thanks go to all those who are doing so much to keep the club in its very healthy state – thank you to Dave Maiden for another year at the helm of this marvellous ship.

Martin Garrod
President
2017-18

Chairman's Report

Onwards and upwards in some respects.

The 1st team was relegated due to having one of those seasons when nothing seemed to go our way. We lost most of the close ties, of which there were many, whereas one would expect to convert a decent percentage of close calls. However, no complaints about commitment; some seasons go with you and some don't.

Once again great work by Steve Halbert and the players at all levels as we managed, at times, to field 4 teams and could have managed more had we been able to find the opposition to play. In this respect, we are nearly on our own in the North Midlands and are the envy of most Clubs we play who mainly struggle to get 2 teams out on a regular basis.

The 2nd team finished 2nd in their league. Thanks to Rory Lynch and Martyn Powis for their continued guidance.

The 3rd team was ably led by Russ Baker once again with a major contribution from John Perrigo, managing to field 2 teams at times.

The Colts managed to play occasionally, due to an influx of lads from Camp Hill School.

For the first time in 23 years, the Club was unable to field a Ladies team for the 2017-18 season. But this situation will hopefully be rectified for the 125th season.

Mini and Junior continue to make a considerable input to the Club and their association with Wasps continues to everyone's advantage.

Again we acknowledge a huge vote of thanks to our Sponsors, especially Mirka Abrasives (Simon Bloxham), City Office Interiors, and Oscar Twiby and all other sponsors without whose help we would really struggle to survive.

As usual a big vote of thanks to all who served on the various Committees in the Club. Thank you for your support. The Club House continues to be improved as we accumulate more funds.

A great number of people have continued to put a lot of effort into these projects and we owe them a big vote of thanks.

Clubman of the Year was awarded to Graham Scutt in recognition of his unique contribution to his beloved Club. Graham had been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) last year for his unparalleled service to the game of Rugby. Unfortunately, Graham passed away recently and we send our best wishes to Margaret and the rest of his family.

This season we also, said goodbye to some of our other long standing members of the Club. Early in the season we lost one of the Club's great characters, Russell (the frog) Coutanche; a lovely man with a wicked sense of humour. In January, previous player and 3rd XV Captain, Dave 'Decoy' Coy, sadly passed away. Then, in June, we received the news that Club stalwart and former Chairman, Ken Birrell, had passed away.

We shall miss them all at Camp Hill and our thoughts are with their families.

Shirley Beer Festival continues to thrive although the latest was not quite as busy as last year due to the inclement weather

Finally thanks to all our volunteers at all levels and sections. Without you all we would not be able to function as an amateur community rugby club.

See you all next season

Dave Maiden

Chairman

2017-18

Senior Men - Rugby Awards

Club Colours	Jan van der Walt; Adam Pinfield
1st XV Player of the Year	Adam Pinfield
2nd XV Players' of the Year	Matt Nightingale
2nd XV Young Player of the Year	Kai Lucas
2nd XV Manager's Player of the Year	Ben Taylor
3rd XV Players' of the Year	Will Marshall Murray
3rd XV Captain's Player of the Year	Andy Blakemore
3rd XV John Perrigo Award	Ade Melhuish
Dave Hawkins Memorial Award	Will Knight
<i>Colts XV Player of the Year</i>	
TF Rogers Award	Will Wallwork
<i>Most improved senior male player</i>	
Pete Graham Memorial Award	Adam Pinfield
<i>1st XV Supporters' Player of the Year</i>	
Director of Rugby's Unsung Hero Award	Martyn Powis

Senior Ladies - Rugby Awards - not awarded this season

Ladies 1st XV Player of the Year
Laura Wicks Award
<i>Most improved senior Ladies 1st XV player</i>
Den Hogan Memorial Award
<i>The individual who has done most to support Ladies rugby</i>
The Fox Award
<i>Best newcomer</i>
Coach's Player of the Year
Ladies Colours
Life Member
Hall of Fame

Club Awards

Clubman of the Year	Graham Scutt
Victor Saville Award	Warren Taylor
<i>The individual who has done most to foster links between the Club and Camp Hill School</i>	

Ladies Touch Team - Rugby Awards

Players' Player	Emma Thompson-O'Dowd
Most improved Player	Lucy Owen

Mini and Junior Rugby Awards

The Lindsay Brent Cup	Jack Farrell
<i>Under 12s player of the year</i>	
The Wally Edwards Trophy	Under 14s
<i>The Mini and Junior team that has made the most significant progress</i>	
Tom Ulliott Award	Not awarded
<i>Under 17s players' player of the year</i>	

Representative Honours

Senior Men's Rugby

Greater Birmingham

Mitch Lee; Ryan Large; Kai Lucas

Greater Birmingham U19

Kai Lucas (Captain)

Senior Women's Rugby

No representation

Junior Rugby

Greater Birmingham U16

Jack Dawson-Sullivan; James Bradley

Greater Birmingham U15

Oran Lupton

Ladies Touch Team

Wildcats Regional Touch

Jo Dolan; Maggs Rees-Smith;

Rugby (over 35s)

Emma Thompson-O'Dowd

England Women's Touch

Maggs Rees-Smith

A View from the Touchline

Promotion to Midlands 1 West was always going to be challenging, but it was exciting to be reengaging some old adversaries as well as visiting pastures new like Melbourne and Lutterworth.

The team was very much the same as that which won promotion with Liam Taylor, a prop forward formerly at Walsall, being the only new face in the opening league game at home to old rivals Sutton Coldfield.

It was a game which, on one hand, gave encouragement that we could compete at this level. But on the other, left us with the feeling that it was a win we missed out on, as the game ended with Camps 5 points down but inches away from a pushover try.

The trip to Wolverhampton the following week, was much more enjoyable and Camps were up and running with a 38-12 victory. The two Liams, Lindsay and Taylor were prominent that day, with the former scoring a superb hat trick of tries from the wing and the latter producing an outrageous dummy before galloping 25 yards for a try. Both were to be sorely missed for the bulk of the season because of work and travel.

The fixture list then took on a distinctly difficult look and after a brave home performance ended in defeat against Bromsgrove, the trip to Burton ended in a chastening 44-3 defeat.

Another frustrating home game followed against Worcester, which again was one we should really have won. Instead it was another narrow defeat.

The following week was a break from league duty and the exciting prospect of a Friday night visit to Portway to play Birmingham/Solihull in the North Mids. Cup.

Highflying Bees ran out winners but it was a night to remember for the players and spectators who enjoyed the unique opportunity to the full. Literally, coachloads of support from the Club made it a fantastic atmosphere and the players had the satisfaction of forcing the home side into conceding a penalty try, before having the final word with an Ollie Linnett try.

Things got no easier the following week when we entertained Dudley Kingswinford on Vice Presidents' Day. Camps put up another brave performance, but the opposition was too strong and they ran out 40-29 winners.

Probably the worst performance of the season followed when the coach trip to Hereford ended in a 39-3 defeat and the fight that had been the feature of every game to date, was strangely missing.

They say the darkest hour is just before dawn, however and the best spell of the season followed.

A View from the Touchline

A last minute try and conversion, gave the first home win of the season by 15-14 over new opponents Lutterworth; with the visiting King Cayman, Harry Homer, fittingly awarding the player of the match award to skipper Mitch Lee.

The following week was a trip to another new opponent in Melbourne and for the first time this season, Camps registered back to back victories. In fact the 17-10 scoreline was not a true reflection of the superiority the visitors, especially, the forwards, held on the day.

Confidence was high, therefore, for the visit of local rivals Moseley Oak and it produced a highly competitive game which turned on the controversial dismissal of home flanker Ollie Linnett only 7 minutes into the second half. Despite being a man down for all that time, Camps gave as good as they got, but were finally edged out 26-25 for another one that got away.

The following week, Camps bounced back for probably the best win (and day) of the season so far. Once again, Camps took a large number of spectators to Rugby Lions, including the Jolly Boys Outing and totally out cheered the home support. They were rewarded with an exciting 22-19 victory over a side that were sitting in the top five of the table at the time and whose pack was big and powerful enough to give the Camp Hill forwards their biggest test of the season.

Nobody present will forget the decisive moment when debutant fly half Brandon Lea crossed kicked for Harry Garrett to pick up and score in the corner.

Unfortunately another home defeat, this time to Stoke, followed and rugby was snowed out until the New Year.

2018 started with heavy defeats at the hands of two of the league's heavyweights, Bromsgrove and Burton, which also saw the loss of the influential Barney Edwards for the rest of the season, before another disappointing close defeat at Worcester where we only started playing after conceding 20 points. Defeat at Dudley K. was followed by two games which rather typified the season and made the rest of the year an upward struggle.

Trailing by 6 points to Hereford, but having been the better side throughout, Camps finally broke through in the last minute when Jordan Oliver went over under the posts only for the referee to bring things back for a forward pass that only he saw.

The following week we were edged out 22-20 at Stourbridge, in another game that we looked to have won, having gone out to a large early lead and then fought back to regain the lead with less than 10 minutes left.

A View from the Touchline

The following week, we visiting spectators received a very warm welcome at Lutterworth and The Chairman was presented with a very nice commemorative glass. But the home side showed why they are such a formidable side at home, gaining revenge for the earlier season defeat by 44-13.

Having lost eight league games in a row, the following week was very much last chance saloon for Camps and their opponents Wolverhampton.

In a topsy turvy game, Camps went 31 points up, Wolverhampton then scored 31 unanswered points of their own before Camps ran out 57-38 winners.

There was still hope, therefore with Melbourne and Rugby Lions, both in trouble, as the next visitors to The Shrine.

Camps duly completed the double over Melbourne with a Man of the Match performance from Ian Briggs who was presented with his award by Club legend, Graham Scutt.

It was to be the last success of the season, with the final five games ending in defeat and ultimately relegation from Midlands 1 West.

It was a disappointing season, in that there was the feeling that if only we could have won a few of those close ones we could have survived and perhaps been more comfortable at this level the following season.

The effort of Coach Stephen 'Halby' Halbert and his men could not be faulted, however and the forwards were a match for anyone at this level. Ian Briggs top scored with 142 points and skipper Mitch Lee played more games, 22, than anyone else despite injuries.

Not surprisingly, the forwards dominated the Supporters Player of the Year (SPY) award with Halby, Harry Cunningham and Dan O'Grady all receiving great support, but it was the formidable Adam Pinfield who deservedly took the award.

The final game saw the retirement from first team rugby of three stalwart forwards, props Jan-Erik Anderson, and Austin Bolger along with second row Jan van der Walt.

They were all spectator favourites because of their total commitment along with a considerable amount of skill.

We thank them for their great contributions and look forward to seeing them all around the Club for many years to come.

Steve Terrace
Publicity Officer
2017-18

Head of Playing Affairs Report

On the playing affairs front, you may be mistaken for thinking that relegation for the 1st XV meant the year had not been successful. I'll make no bones about it, the promotion last year was a massive boost for the Club and my personal desire for Camps to play at the highest level they can is as strong as ever.

However, the real strength of Camp Hill goes much, much deeper than just this. I recall several conversations with various key rugby officials and some well-known figures at the Sam Doble 40th Anniversary Dinner last November. The buzz about Camp Hill externally was very much around the growth in numbers of teams and Camp Hill players, especially at a time when once proud local clubs were struggling to put two or even one team out. We had just turned out 5 senior teams that weekend. 'What is the secret?' many asked. Fundamentally it's a few guys that spend selfless hours contacting players and just knowing their stuff. But what keeps people coming back? If you've been to Camp Hill and you don't get what it is, then you probably never will.

I'm pleased to say that this camaraderie and sense of fun is also playing out strongly through our Mini & Junior section, where this year saw yet another year of growth in age groups and especially the numbers of M8s (Micros to under 8s). Our M&J section was also mentioned with admiration and a little envy throughout the year by rugby officials at many local and not so local clubs. Our M&J festival is one of the most entertaining you will ever happen across.

The other area with a big success story in 2017/18 is the Touch section. This includes, predominantly, the growth in numbers and competitiveness of the Ladies Touch Team, who will be looking to kick on from their run of bronze medal finishes in next year's tournaments. Of particular note this year were the 3 Ladies who were selected for England Under 35s training camp in preparation for the European Championships. Congratulations Jo Dolan, Emma Thompson-O'Dowd and Maggs Rees. The emergence of a mixed social touch side at the back end of this season means that we now cater for all in the touch section.

However, the news hasn't been all good with regard to Ladies rugby at Camp Hill this year. After several increasingly difficult years and in the face of competition from other clubs finally getting their act together, the Ladies were unable to field a team and did not honour their league fixtures. We hope that players once loyal to Camp Hill will consider returning in a fresh environment. But let's also remember where Ladies rugby at Camp Hill started: with committed and passionate Club members first and foremost. Wives, girlfriends, sisters and their friends who came to the Club for a good night out and awoke the next morning regretting the hangover but never the company.

Highlights for me this year were

- senior men fielding 5 teams in a weekend for first time in 30 years
- the skill levels shown, right from micros up to Ian Jamieson (Jamo!)
- fantastic Mini & Junior tour to Brean/Burnham on Sea
- new Physio room and our medical team's continued excellent TLC
- the spirit with which all teams played and especially the 1s who battled all the way through a tough fixture list
- BT Sport and Wasps visiting the club to film Rugby Tonight
- the Camp Hill Takeover day at Ricoh for the Northampton game.

Lowlight for me

- 'beating' Hereford 1st XV at a really crucial point in the league campaign only for the referee to disallow the winning last try for a forward pass.

So the future is bright on the playing affairs front and the 125th anniversary will be a year to remember. As I write, we have recently had a good discussion at M&J level about how we balance the often competing demands of inclusion, competitiveness and pitch space! The Senior men are planning the pre-season programme and coaching structure behind what I'm sure will be another successful year for the 2s, 3s and 4s and a return to dominance for the 1s. Part of this is to look at links with Bees to sharpen our professionalism whilst maintaining our amateur status. Next season promises a glorious return for the Camp Hill Vets; rumblings of interested ladies rugby players can be heard over the noise of mower blades and the mixed touch section just stares in bewilderment after 60 people turn up to play in only its second week of existence!

Head of Playing Affairs Report

I've a personal desire to see more Camp Hill people involved at representative levels from juniors upwards, which includes players, coaches and administrators. I realise not everyone shares this desire and that just knowing that we are awesome may be enough, but you can't beat a bit of wider adoration!!

Camp Hill is essentially all about the people. I've deliberately not mentioned any of the many superstars who are absolutely the bedrock for our success, partly because there are so many. You are all massively valued, perhaps not as often nor in the way that you should be and for that we can only apologise.

However, the finest accolades this year should go to that most modest, unstinting and devoted Camp Hillian, Graham Scutt BEM.
Cheers Graham.

Dog

Simon Tansley

Head of Playing Affairs

2017 - 18

Coach Report

This is my third season as Player/Coach and it was a disappointing one on the field, as we were relegated from Midlands One West.

That said, the commitment and team spirit shown by all the players has been outstanding.

I began my Player/Coach role at the start of the 2015 season with a vision to increase the playing standard within the men's senior section, as well as to enhance the team spirit and achieve the best possible playing standard. My development plan sought to achieve promotion by the end of the 2016-2017 season, which we achieved and the playing standard has increased throughout the squads. For example, the 3rd XV have had 1st team squad players playing in the team because of the competition for places.

We have this year, for the first time in the memory of many supporters, been able to get five teams out in one weekend.

The league campaign was a very difficult one but we did ourselves proud on many occasions. We used our strength in depth and were able to put out competitive, strong teams in every round. The highlights were the home and away wins at Melbourne and Wolverhampton. In all but three of the fixtures we were very competitive.

My thanks to Captain Mitch Lee and Physios Ed Knight and Chantelle Spoor for your support this season.

Congratulations to Jan der Walt and Adam Pinfield on receipt of Club Colours and to Adam on the Player of the Year and Supporters Player of the Year Awards.

Next season is a huge one for the club with the 125th year. The buzz around the club will hopefully rub off on the playing side and the atmosphere with the events that are planned will make it a memorable one.

Stephen Halbert
Club Coach
2017 - 18

Camp Hill 1st XV Fixtures and Results
Season 2017/18

CAMP HILL RUGBY CLUB					
SENIOR RUGBY men's 1st XV FIXTURES					
Date Sat.	Opponent	L/C/F	Venue	Score	W/L/D
02/09/2017	Sutton Coldfield	L1	H	22 - 27	L
09/09/2017	Wolverhampton	L2	A	12 - 38	W
16/09/2017	Bromsgrove	L3	H	23 - 31	L
23/09/2017	Burton	L4	A	44 - 3	L
30/09/2017	Worcs. Wanderers	L5	H	6 - 13	L
07/10/2017	B'ham.Solihull	C	A	70 - 12	L
14/10/2017	Dudley Kingswinford (VP's Day)	L6	H	29 - 40	L
21/10/2017	Hereford	L7	A	39 - 3	L
28/10/2017	Lutterworth	L8	H	15 - 14	W
04/11/2017	Melbourne	L9	A	10 - 17	W
11/11/2017	Moseley Oak	L10	H	25 - 26	L
18/11/2017					
25/11/2017	Rugby Lions	L11	A	19 - 22	W
02/12/2017	Stoke on Trent	L12	H	14 - 25	L
09/12/2017	Stourbridge Lions	L13	A	Postponed to 10/02/2018	
16/12/2017	Wolverhampton	L14	H	Postponed to 24/02/2018	
23/12/2017					
26/12/2017	XMAS	F	H		
30/12/2017					
06/01/2018	Bromsgrove	L15	A	47 - 17	L
13/01/2018	Burton	L16	H	17 - 69	L
20/01/2018	Worcs. Wanderers	L17	A	20 - 15	L
27/01/2018	Dudley Kingswinford	L18	A	36 - 0	L
03/02/2018	Hereford	L19	H	11 - 17	L
10/02/2018	Stourbridge Lions	L13	A	22 - 20	L
17/02/2018	Lutterworth	L20	A	44 - 13	L
24/02/2018	Wolverhampton	L14	H	57 - 38	W
03/03/2018	Melbourne	L21	H	Postponed to 17/03/2018	
10/03/2018	Moseley Oak	L22	A	Postponed to 29/03/2018	
17/03/2018	Melbourne	L21	H	21 - 19	W
24/03/2018	Rugby Lions	L23	H	10 - 45	L
29/03/2018	Moseley Oak	L22	A	12 - 6	L
31/03/2018					
07/04/2018	Stoke on Trent	L24	A	40 - 10	L
14/04/2018	Stourbridge Lions(Chairman's Day)	L25	H	33 - 39	L
21/04/2018	Sutton Coldfield	L26	A	53 - 19	L
L/C/F denotes League/Cup/Friendly					

Camp Hill 1st XV**Season 2017/18 - Midlands Division - Midlands 1 West**

P	Team	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
1	Burton	25	23	0	2	1141	292	894	116
2	Dudley Kingswinford	26	23	0	3	949	416	533	115
3	Bromsgrove	26	19	0	7	484	499	349	96
4	Stoke on Trent	26	15	2	9	653	583	70	77
5	Lutterworth	26	14	0	12	653	695	-42	72
6	Hereford	26	13	1	12	557	568	-11	65
7	Moseley Oaak	25	12	1	12	516	575	-59	62
8	Stourbridge Lions	26	10	1	15	543	741	-198	56
9	Worcester	25	10	2	13	468	653	-185	53
10	Sutton Coldfield	26	9	1	16	558	733	-175	50
11	Rugby Lions	26	8	2	16	542	711	-169	48
12	Melbourne	26	8	2	16	502	628	-126	47
13	Camp Hill	26	6	0	20	466	802	-336	37
14	Wolverhampton	25	3	2	20	409	909	-500	26

1st XV Report

<u>P</u> <u>I</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>Diff</u>	<u>P</u> <u>ts</u>
26	6	0	20	466	802	-336	37

Everybody suspected that this season would be a difficult campaign in a higher league with a new captaincy duo and new coaches on board.

We recruited well in the summer. Our new recruits, including Jesal Patel, Luke Isham, Nick West, Martin Sowerby, Bradley Shough, Lewis Beaty, Rory Luscombe, Brandon Lea and Liam Taylor, added to our crop of excellent existing players and returning players, include Ian Briggs (unfortunately), Steve Leach, Dan Robinson & Gaz Lang. Liam Taylor, an incredible player, fitted straight into the team and new league. Even though he was only with us for a short time he gave the club a massive boost.

The pre-season was burdened by injuries and unavailabilities which didn't help the team go into their first league games. We found ourselves against top of the league contenders, but we did well only losing narrowly to Sutton, Worcester and Bromsgrove.

The team bounced back from the Sutton loss with an excellent confidence-boosting win over Wolverhampton. Despite the win, we highlighted areas of improvement and picked up on a mind-set that affected us throughout the season, namely the lack of concentration for 20 minutes each game. A number of changes were needed and we highlighted our game pattern. It was unfortunate that the next game was against the league winners and a dominant team throughout the campaign.

Our next win came in October when we showed great passion and mental strength to beat Lutterworth - a top team in the league - at home, giving us the positive attitude and understanding as to what it would take to survive. This set us up nicely for November when we travelled away to Melbourne and Rugby Lions. Playing well in poor conditions, we took our chances and came away with a well-deserved

victory. The next game was at home against our local rivals, Moseley Oak. We were very unfortunate to have a player red carded half way through game. Excellent heart and determination took the game to the wire, losing by 2 points but taking a bonus point. The two games before the Rugby Lions match saw the injury list growing. New recruit, Brandon Lea, slipped in at 10. The support from the home crowd allowed us to come from behind to win the game with a moment of sheer brilliance from Brandon Lea and Harry Garratt which left the Lions' backs with nothing else to do other than to hold their heads in their hands. We were in a healthy league position going into the Christmas period.

The winter weather meant that a number of games were cancelled. Our first game back was against Bromsgrove. This resulted in a bit of a drumming away from home. We had already identified January as a month when we would struggle. But Worcester away was highlighted as a must win. We conceded all the points in the first 15 minutes. Again the team showed great resilience and came back to within 5 points. We were unfortunate to lose the game.

February was a disappointing month. A controversial decision against Hereford gave the points to them. We came away from Stourbridge Lions with a losing bonus point. And things were made even worse when we lost against a much better Lutterworth team away. Their pitch could quite easily have been one of the best pitches I have played on (excluding ours of course) given the weather at that time. The next game saw us welcome Wolverhampton to the Shrine. The start at Number 8 was given to Steven Leach, another key signing. A couple of early tries from him allowed us to get off the mark. The team was looking dominant and in control until our typical loss of concentration allowed them to come back. Once those 20 minutes were up we took control and came away with another bonus point victory. This was our first double of the season with our second coming a couple of weeks later in a rearranged fixture against Melbourne with a depleted side for us. With unavailabilities and horrendous weather conditions, the team pulled together and came away with crucial points against another team fighting relegation.

Due to other results not going our way and teams below us strengthening their sides, we found ourselves in a very difficult position. We had to pick up 15 points from our last 5 games to secure a place in the league. We finished 12 points from safety. Losses to Stourbridge, Moseley Oak and Sutton sealed our fate. I would like to add the performance against a very strong Moseley Oak side was a massive positive: a debut for Lewis Beaty gave us the opportunity to get on the front foot with a very strong defensive performance from Adam Pinfield.

Although this was a demanding season I believe we made it difficult for ourselves and I don't think we can blame officials' decisions for the narrow losses. For me Stourbridge (Home and Away), Hereford (Home and Away) & Worcester were all teams we should have put to the sword. The positives were Melbourne at home, Rugby Lions away and Lutterworth at home showing that we were able to contend at a higher level.

I would like to thank the following for their support and patience throughout the season. Firstly, the supporters. There have been times when they could have got on my back but they have always shown great support and positivity. My sponsor for the season, Chelsea Moore. The selection committee and Stephen Halbert for telling me every 2 minutes he has a new born child. Simon Tansley for the continuous effort and support to move the Club forward in the right direction. Russell Baker & Rory Lynch for all the hard work they do behind the scenes. I can say that without these two the club would struggle to field 3 teams each week. Luke Coutanche, a new recruit and a guy who I believe is that massive personality that the club needs and somebody who has grown into his role. Along with Rory and Russel, he is one of the main reasons for the club being able to field 4 or sometimes 5 sides. Alex Richmond, another new recruit to the coaching staff, with new ideas. Then there's DO'G - Dan O'Grady - our Vice Captain. The support he gave me was excellent. His performances throughout the season have been immense. He is the hardest guy on the pitch and the nicest guy off it. A big thank you to the team for all the hard work and commitment throughout the season. The excellent numbers at training and the ability to get 5 teams

out in the season was a huge positive and a benchmark the club can now build on going forward. Nick Freeman for the hours of hard work he puts in every week to get excellent food prepared for players on a Thursday night and also to him and Stuart Ruff for ensuring the kit is cleaned and arrives on time at the correct locations. Paul Moore for maintaining an excellent pitch. I would also like to thank Edwin Knight. His hard work and unbelievable talent to spot and identify an injury is second to none. He is a master when it comes to getting the lads back playing. I personally came down to the club thinking I would struggle to play another season but this guy has given me the ability to be able to extend my playing career! Last but not least to the late Mr. G Scutt, a Club Legend who has been a massive influence and put the club on the map with being awarded a BEM. Somebody who I am honoured to have met and he will be missed by everyone at Camp Hill RFC.

So the bit that everyone is interested in: what are the expectations next season? I believe the club and supporters should be looking forward to watching a better structured team with 80 minutes of dominance every week. Pre-season talks are already underway and plans are in place to improve our current playing patterns. It is still too early to comment on which players we have for next season but from talking to players on an individual basis we can be confident that we are keeping the main nucleus of the squad.

In my opinion I believe it should be a promotion season and hopefully an excellent chance to get to Twickenham in the Cup. It would be great for the club to mark their 125th Anniversary with a double!

Mitch Lee

1st XV Captain

2017 - 18

2nd XV Report

	P	W	D	L	For	Against	Pts
League	24	16	2	6	642	358	74
Other	6	5	0	1	138	141	-

Camp Hill 2nd XV gained promotion to Midlands Reserve League Div2 at the end of season 2015-16 and finished 6th in the division last year. The target for this season was to progress up the table. We achieved that and more, much more, finishing 2nd to Bridgnorth.

The team won the first six games including Sutton Coldfield twice in league (32-7) and cup (25-15), Bromsgrove (22-7) and Broad Street (25-24). Dudley Kingswinford, who at that time shared an unbeaten record, was our seventh game. In a tough encounter we lost 13-33 after conceding three tries early in the 2nd half. At the end of October we had a free weekend and picked up a friendly against Droitwich 1st XV. They beat us 10-67 (our biggest loss by far) and went on to contest a Twickenham final later in the season. The next game against Lichfield ended in defeat (14-36), the only time we suffered two successive losses; but the next four games were all won including revenge against Lichfield in a cup game (33-20).

The only game in December not postponed due to the adverse weather was a top of the table clash at Bridgnorth. In one of the games of the season we took a 14-0 lead and should have had a third try before half-time only for the referee to have been unsighted. Bridgnorth came back strongly in the second half and the lead changed hands twice with Camp Hill leading with less than ten minutes to play. A late penalty won the game for Bridgnorth (19-20). It was this game that gave the team the self-belief that we were on to something special.

We were now third in the table as we embarked on the reverse league fixtures after the Christmas and New Year break. Four of the next five games were won; the only loss being to Walsall (27-29) on a day that their 1st XV did not have a fixture and *“a number of regulars were returning from injury and needed game-time”*. I take it as a positive compliment when clubs feel they have to augment a 2nd XV with 1st XV players to have any chance against us.

Perhaps the most disappointing game of the season was away at Wolverhampton. The traffic was horrendous, and with no proper warm-up we found ourselves three tries down in the first ten minutes. It looked as if we were in for a long afternoon in front of a partisan crowd on what was their Former Players & Sponsors Luncheon. We regrouped at half time and, all credit to the team, took the game to Wolves eventually losing 31-37. In the very last play we only failed to score under the posts by millimetres.

By this time we were looking forward to the return clash with Bridgnorth in a league/cup semi-final double header. Although Bridgnorth had much the better of the first-half we defended well to be only one score down at half-time. After the break, the self-belief came to the fore and we caused them no end of problems to lead 10-7 with ten minutes to play. As in the previous game, Bridgnorth prevailed with a late penalty and even later try to win 10-17 but we came mightily close to winning.

The final two games of the season were both high scoring and drawn: Lichfield (34-34), where a young side showed a great deal of character, and Stourbridge (31-31), with credit to the opposition after we had beaten them 57-0 only weeks before.

The season has been one of learning and the realisation of just how good a team we are. The league has provided the challenge the players have been craving and has brought out the best in them. It has aided the 1st XV by offering a platform for squad players to be rotated.

2nd XV Report

It is a measure of how far the team has come when the likes of Bromsgrove and Lichfield seek to play us on free week-ends knowing that a) we will turn up and b) the game will be competitive. We played Bromsgrove three times (W2 L1) and also Lichfield (W1 D1 L1).

Every player contributed to the success of the team this season but it is no surprise that Alex Weir, Rory Luscombe, Matt Nightingale, Nick West, Gaz Lang, Ben Taylor, Sam Garrett and Mark Alderson dominated the man-of-the match awards. Also worth a mention are Luke Isham, Jesal Patel, Joe Wallace, Kai Lucas and Harry Garrett, young players who established themselves in the team. The future for the Club is bright.

Finally my thanks to Chantelle for all her work in preparing the players and to Rory Lynch for being Mr 2nd XV, Camp Hill RFC.

This has been my final season as 2nd XV Manager and when I reflect on what we have achieved since 2011-12 I feel a huge sense of pride. Thank you all.

2nd XV Player's Player of the Year Matt Nightingale

2nd XV Manager's Player of the Year Ben Taylor

2nd XV Young Player of the Year Kai Lucas

Martyn Powis

2ND XV Manager (Retired)

2017-18

3rd XV Report

Well where do I start?!!

The 3s finished 2nd in the league again. Coming behind a 1st team and losing only 7 games all season; none of which were to 3rd team opposition. We used 128 players over the season with an age range of 17 to 73.

We managed to get 4 teams out 9 times; only losing once to a 1st team. Amazingly one weekend this season, we saw the return of (Brian) Trumper's army (previously the 5th team). Which meant on one Saturday, we had 90 men playing rugby! What a great achievement and thanks to all the players who played.

With these brilliant numbers and getting so many teams out, we proved this season, that Camp Hill is the Club to be part of in the North Midlands.

With a mix of youth and experience throughout the squad, this made us a tough side to play against. Experience from stalwarts like Ade Melhuish, Ian Jamieson (Jamo), Andy Fleming (Flembo) and Danny Ingram, showed great leadership and guidance to the young and returning players.

A big thanks to our fantastic team manager, John Perrigo. Loved by all in the 3s, He is again a big reason for our success and he is getting better with his Rugby knowledge.

Our Player of Season award went to Will Marshall Murray. He lead from the front with his brilliant ball carrying and thumping hits in defence. Always a level head on the pitch and playing with a big smile on his face, he really does optimise what 3s rugby is about.

Captain's Player of the Season, was awarded to Andy Blakemore. Strong carrying from Number 8 and monster hits and turn overs in defence, made him a lynch pin of the team.

This year's John Perrigo Award went to Ade Melhuish; John awards this to someone who shows true 3rd team spirit, sportsmanship and support. Ade turns up most weeks and is happy just to be involved, run touch and get a trot out on the pitch for 20 minutes, respected by all the players, a thoroughly deserved winner.

Thanks guys for a fantastic season, and let's give it our all next season.

Finish off as always – Simon Bloxham (Bloxy) was outstanding as always.

Russell Baker

3rd XV Captain

2017-18

Colts XV Report

The Camp Hill Colts U19 team, is an opportunity for old and new Camp Hill school boys to be able to play with players from Camp Hill RFC.

After last year's success in the Plate competition, hopes were high for this season's Colts' run. Our opposition in the first round of the cup was Stourbridge RFC. After Captain Sid Sharma's valiant efforts to get a team together, a team of seasoned rugby players and rugby virgins turned up at Stourbridge's artificial pitch to attempt to progress in the competition. A closely fought encounter resulted in a (SCORE) loss with a particularly good performance from Max Lilley who scored two tries on the day.

After being kicked out of the Cup, our next fixture was in the Plate against Stourbridge RFC... again. On this occasion the likes of Ed Connolly, Tom Haddon and many other U19 boys really strengthened the team. This led to a comfortable win, (SCORE). It was a real pleasure to see such a recently formed side play real high quality rugby, despite many of the boy's only meeting for the first time on the day. Will Knight played an incredible game showing a perfect balance of speed and strength throughout the game.

Our next opposition was Worcester Wanderers RFC. Despite being able to field a strong team, Worcester proved to be too well drilled and too physical on the day resulting in a (SCORE) loss. However the boys put out a very hearty performance and really showed character throughout the whole game. This meant the end of this year's Colts' run.

Despite ending abruptly, the boys can be proud of the performances in this Cup run and the development of the team in such a short period of time. We look forward to improving in next year's Colts competition and hopefully winning some silverware.

Warren Taylor
Coach
2017-18

Ladies Touch Team Report

Touch Team Review of the Season (So Far...)

As our season runs directly opposite to the contact season, this report is something of a midterm review but what a wonderful review it is as the team continues to go from strength to strength.

October was the end of our 2016- 2017 season and saw us achieve a respectable 3rd in our very competitive league. The opposition are getting better which has meant we've had to get better too!

The season also saw us winning the Super Sunday Cup at Stratford and plate at Redditch. These Super Sundays are held three times a year and bring together all the teams from both the north and south leagues.

November saw our End of Season 'do' and the awarding of our Players' Player and Most Improved Player Awards. The former was presented to Emma Thompson-O'Dowd for the second year running after yet another outstanding season. The latter went to relative newcomer Lucy Owen. Having first attended an Inner Warrior Camp, Lucy gave touch a go and realised her skills lay there. Massive congratulations to both.

In January, we saw the wonderful John Robbins join our coaching team. He has brought with him a wealth of touch knowledge and enthusiasm. He has also successfully completed his Level 1 Touch Refereeing Course. Under Alex and John's leadership, we continue to develop and grow.

May saw us hold our annual tournament and yet again it was a huge success. The weather didn't disappoint yet again! Thanks to all who came and supported and helped out; too many names to mention individually. The results didn't quite go our way as we came third despite beating the eventual winners, but fun was had by all.

Outside of Camp Hill Touch, our players continue to succeed at both regional and national level and continue to raise the profile of the club. Congratulations to Jo Dolan, Maggs Rees-Smith and Emma Thompson-O'Dowd for their successful selection for the Wildcats Women's 35s in September. Their excellent performances led to their selection for the England Women's Touch training squad. From here, Maggs Rees-Smith has been selected for the team that will play in the European Cup. Congratulations ladies!

Overall a fantastic season to date and so much more still to come. Please continue to spread the word about us.

We welcome all ladies, regardless of fitness and rugby experiences from the age of 13.

Leanne Ashworth

Team Manager

2017-18

Minis & Juniors Chairman's Report

If you are actually reading this, what is wrong with you?

If you read this to the end; you need to get a life.

First thing to say is, don't get looking for a name check. I tend to steer clear of name checks for fear of offending anyone missed out. If you contribute to the M&J Massive in any way what-so-ever, you get a share of the big thank you. We now have far too many people to list and each of us puts in varying amounts of time and effort to keep the good ship Camp Hill M&J sailing.

Whether you did a stint slicing buns, did an hour on a stall, spent days organising an event, coached or helped to coach or administer in any way, this is your 'published' thank you. If you are a 'big ticket' volunteer, you will have had all the love and platitudes personally. If you 'do your bit' here and there, I'd hope to have said a thank you, but struggle to be everywhere at the same time. If I missed you, apologies but ta muchly. It is hopefully obvious, but we simply cannot do what we do without the help of all our wonderful volunteers however big or small a contribution.

A big global thanks also goes out to all of our members and the parents or guardians that keep bringing them back. We clearly wouldn't exist without you and it is hopefully a testament to all of the work that goes on behind the scenes and also on a Sunday that you keep coming back and our section is growing so successfully.

To illustrate the problem with singling people out. Let's say I wax lyrical about all the stuff Nigel 'Buzza' Busby has done this year and miss out on doing the same for the Neil 'Count' Coy.

Count reads the report and thinks to himself, "Hang on a minute, I poured a pint for a parent one Sunday morning; why don't I get a thank you? In fact Buzza hasn't even done anything this year and it was always Warren who did everything in previous years anyway and he still gets a thank you. This is unfair, I'm never going to serve one parent per year a pint ever again". See what I mean. I want everyone to be happy on the Camp Hill Happy Bus.

Minis & Juniors Chairman's Report

So, to the season. In nearly a decade of M&J coaching, I cannot remember such a bad season for weather. Yes we've had frozen pitches and snow before and have suffered water logged pitches but only temporarily and to be expected. This year was ridiculous! And before you jump the gun, it wasn't just us. Loads of clubs and schools all suffered longer than normal issues. We did our best to limit disruption and the Light Hall school solution wasn't perfect for everyone but allowed us to at least keep the kids running around as much as possible. The club invests significantly in the pitches but we are becoming victims of our own success. We have limited space and a massive demand. Lessons will be learned but at the end of the day Mamma Nature is a tough cookie to beat. Fingers crossed for next season, we are looking at how we can better utilise Light Hall so no-one feels isolated from the club.

Other than the weather, what another epic season. Circa 350 youngsters, running around, chasing a funny shaped ball. It really is astonishing and I hope the M&J founders will take some pride in the fact that the acorn they planted 22 years ago is now a well and truly established young oak. As a club we will be 125 years old next season. I very much doubt I'll be around to celebrate the M&J centenary but we will continue to work hard to make sure that we keep building on the success that has snowballed in recent times.

We continue to support and lead where possible with the RFU Age Grade/Kids First rugby initiatives. Sometimes it is not so obvious the benefits of doing so. For any doubters out there, let me assure you, building rugby teams takes differing amounts of time for each individual. There is no point in a team having great success if it is built around one or two, talented individuals. There is no point winning all games just because the ball is given to a kid who is much more physically mature than the others.

What do the talented or 'bigger' kids learn? How to run the length of the field, scoring tries and feeling invincible?? Rugby is so much more than that. If not encouraged from an early age, the valuable skills needed to play in such a great team sport can be missed and it shows in later life when others have caught up. Suddenly the bigger kids start eating dirt rather than bouncing off tackles. The quick footed dancers haven't learned the importance of a perfectly timed unselfish pass or offload.

Minis & Juniors Chairman's Report

What do the kids who aren't as 'big' or talented learn? How to celebrate a win that they may not have contributed to?? Do they know how to run a supporting line to take an offload through a gap? Do they want to step up and steal the ball in a ruck or maul if it is always the other kids that do the job?

I hope you get the picture, although there is a lot more nuance to this that I'm happy to discuss in detail with anyone who'd like to buy me a Guinness.

We pride ourselves on being as inclusive as possible to give everyone a chance to develop. The only thing that should supersede this is when it becomes a safety issue which is especially important as the game develops with contact. I hope you all understand our ethos and support the coaches when they are trying to balance a huge amount of pressures in developing the individual within the team... and don't forget they are all volunteers.

The events we run just seem to get better and better as we invest and learn. The regular calendar saw Halloween, Bonfire, Christmas, Wasps Take Over, Tour and Wasps Coach Class giving so much pleasure to many and the opportunity to raise some funds to re-invest back into the section and the club. The BT Rugby Tonight event and the day out at a little rugby club in Twickenham added a real big feel to the season making it even more special.

To hammer home a point, it goes without saying that we rely on the good nature of volunteers. Coaching is one thing, our *raison d'être*, but we cannot continue the success story without even more folk stepping up to share the work. We are now such a big animal that even the simplest of things become mammoth tasks. Please do shout up to help out. You may not get your name in lights, but you may get a handshake and a thank you, you may even get a pint. What you will definitely get is a wonderful sense of being part of a huge family that are all working for a great cause. You might ignore it when associated with the Tesco brand but I promise you, when it comes to Camp Hill, every little helps! (No sponsorship was offered from Tesco so I haven't paid them to nick their slogan - I'm a Morrisons' man; Sam will tell you we are a Waitrose family, I just bring the Morrisons' shopping home in Waitrose bags).

Minis & Juniors Chairman's Report

So why do we do it? Rugby is a great sport that offers so much more than just playing a sport and being active. It builds confidence and social skills that you just can't get from playing Fortnite or whatever the latest fad is. Lots of kids with challenges have come to rugby after trying other sports and find they fit in and keep at it.

Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship are the RFU core values and by golly I think they have it nailed.

Lifelong friendships, a sense of belonging, a fair play attitude, learning tolerance and respect with a healthy slice of discipline; all, in my humble opinion, highly valuable benefits that come with the game.

I can't think of a better environment for kids to grow up. When it comes to pushing boundaries, doing so in a 'safe' place where there is always someone in the extended 'family' looking out for them.

We have big club plans for our facilities. If anyone out there has or does win the lottery, please get in touch, it could be we can progress things on a much quicker timescale if you generous bone starts itching.

In the meantime we will keep plugging away at smaller developments to improve things for everyone.

Here's to even bigger and better next season.

Warren Taylor

Mini and Junior Chairman

Bar Activity Report (Previously Teddy Parker Club)

Turnover for the year was down by £26,912 (23.5%). Gross Profit was down by £13,249. Gross Profit as a % of turnover was down from 42.18 to 38.71.

The decrease in turnover, can be largely put down to a fall in activity brought about mainly by less parties on Friday nights with Saturdays being less buoyant. The Profit ratio decrease % wise is due to the drop in turnover.

Though we continue to earn a good revenue stream from the bar, the contribution to the Rugby Club was down by £13,234 from last year; which was an exceptional year.

The Shirley Beer Festival increases year on year, as it continues to grow in popularity and provides the Club with a good source of income.

The usual culprits continue to be the mainstay of running the bar and social functions. We have suffered this year, due to the missing Colts team; thus cutting down on 18th birthday parties.

As always we rely on a few people who voluntarily give their time to the advantage of everyone and I appeal (once again), to the silent majority to enquire if you can be of assistance; especially if you have any technical skills as there is always plenty of maintenance , etc. that needs doing especially during the close season .

Dave Maiden
Bar Treasurer
2017-18

CAMP HILL RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

BALANCE SHEET AT 30th April 2018

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
	£	£
As at 30th April 2017	55,643	45,087
Profit / (Loss) for the Year	12,849	10,556
As at 30th April 2018	68,492	55,643
 INTEREST FREE LOANS	 14,033	 15,501
 TOTAL CAPITAL	 <u>82,525</u>	 <u>71,144</u>
 FIXED ASSETS		
Pavilion and Drive	15,221	16,976
Ground Maintenance	2,522	1,302
Furniture , Fixtures and Fittings	5,654	4,174
Pitch & Fence (2009)	4,183	7,420
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	27,580	29,872
 STOCK	 5,570	 3,912
 CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors and Prepayments	3,466	5,617
Cash at Bank - Current A/c's	77,339	68,789
- Deposit A/c's	7,542	4,467
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	88,347	78,873
 CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and Accruals	(38,972)	(41,513)
 TOTAL NET ASSETS	 <u>82,525</u>	 <u>71,144</u>

CAMP HILL RUGBY CLUB LTD

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR Y/E 30th APRIL 2018

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
<u>INCOME</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Bar & Shop Profit	49,251	59,666
Grants & Gift Aid	7,677	9,634
Playing Members Subs & Match fees	32,434	21,024
Non Playing Members Subs & Donations	8,168	9,275
Advertising and Sponsorship	13,017	12,085
Fundraising	7,696	5,096
Sundry Income - Incl Programmes	2,375	5,002
TOTAL INCOME	<u>120,618</u>	<u>121,782</u>
 <u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Ground Expenses	14,022	14,053
Repairs and Maintenance	27,190	42,132
Administration costs	11,181	7,727
Playing Expenses	47,776	38,749
Depreciation	7,600	8,566
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>107,769</u>	<u>111,227</u>
 PROFIT / (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR	<u>12,849</u>	<u>10,555</u>

Coy, David - 'Decoy'

19th January 1963 – 6th January 2018

Decoy was born on 19th January 1963 to loving parents Queenie and Stan Coy.

Educated at Kings Heath Technical School, Decoy's rugby career started at local rivals Solihull Rugby Club, playing in their mini and junior sides.

Having been crowned Under 16 Player of the Season in 1979 Dec felt Solihull could not offer either the facilities or coaching that his natural talent richly deserved. So in 1979 Dec followed in his elder brothers, Geoff and Neil's (The Count) footsteps, stepped up a level and joined Camp Hill RFC.

Dec joined a golden era of Colts rugby at Camp Hill, marshaled by the late Gerald Houghton. His Colts career saw him playing alongside true greats of the game: David 'Glees' Gleeson, Rich and Will Abbey, Paul 'Arnie' Arneill, Graham 'Muss' Mussell, Mickey Skinner and of course Dennis 'Funky' Gibbons.

After Colts rugby, Dec moved into the senior sides but as so often in the amateur game, his work career took over. Trained as a micro-biologist, Dec worked for a succession of firms associated with the food industry. Moving from Birmingham, Dec went to live briefly in Grimsby followed by Bradford. Rugby still remained a passion and he played for both Grimsby and West Park Rugby clubs before returning back to Birmingham in 1992.

Initially as a player and later as Captain, Dec played many seasons for Camp Hill's 3rd XV and was a regular at Tuesday and Thursday's training sessions. Passing on his knowledge to anyone that would listen and memorably coaching Camp Hill's legendary former 1st XV Captain John Brown, on how to play 7's rugby and of course how to side step.

In the late 1990's, Camp Hill formed a Veterans XV and again Dec was at the forefront. His deceptive pace and agility meant he was ideally suited to Veterans rugby and he continued to play for both Vets and 3rd XV's well into his 50's.

In 2015 Dec finally hung his boots up save for the odd exhibition match but continued to support the Club , until his untimely death earlier this year following a difficult battle with Lymphoma.

Dec is survived by his wife Cath, son Richard and extended family of Glen, John and Brad.

He loved the Rugby Club and the friends he made there and we all loved him.

The Club is a sadder place without him.

Funky

Dennis Gibbons

Scutt, Graham Frederick BEM

2nd March 1930 – 28th March 2018

Graham 'Scutty' Scutt was born in Birmingham and attended King Edward VI Camp Hill School 1941-46 at the original site at Camp Hill.

Scutty played his first game for Camp Hill Old Edwardians on leaving School in 1946 and was elected to the Club's committee in 1947. Thus began an unprecedented and almost certainly never to be beaten 72 years of continuous service to the club that was so close to his heart.

National Service from 1948-1950 was with the Sherwood Foresters, serving mainly in Goslar patrolling the border between the British and Russian sectors of post-war Germany; a border that would soon become that between East and West Germany.

Graham played for the Club until 1961, mainly as a fly half, captaining the 2nd XV for two seasons 1954-56, until injury ended his playing days. At this point, he took up refereeing for the next 29 years. He served the North Midlands Society of Rugby Football Referees for many years; being Chairman of the Society 1974/75 season.

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, Graham was Secretary to Camp Hill's 1st & 2nd XVs and the Club's Match Secretary through the 1970s and 80s. In 1990, he became Fixture Secretary, a vital position that he held until 2017.

Graham's empathy with rugby people was most clearly demonstrated in his relationship with visiting referees. They would be warmly greeted before the game and shown to their changing room. Immediately after the game, he would join them for a cup of tea, served from a teapot in a china cup, then spend time with them in the clubhouse, ensuring that travelling expenses were paid promptly and sharing a pint (or two) over a de-brief.

The Club recognised Graham's already extraordinary service as early as 1989, when he was elected a Life Member.

Wider recognition came in recent years thanks, in great part, to the efforts of Chris Ruff. In October 2016, he was named as Volunteer of the Year in the Pride of Birmingham Awards and in March 2017 was presented with a Torch Trophy by HRH the Earl of Wessex. These were topped however, when Graham was awarded the British Empire Medal in the 2017 Birthday Honours list.

Away from Rugby, Graham's career was spent mainly in sales in the confectionary business, where he gained a reputation as a reliable, successful and popular professional.

Graham married Margaret on 23rd October 1965 and enjoyed more than half a century of very happy married life. Graham made no secret of the value that he placed on Margaret's unswerving support. Graham's greatest pride was reserved for his children Sarah, Richard and Libby and even more so for his granddaughters Abigail, Emily, Aimee and Olivia.

Undoubtedly, Scutty has touched the lives of more Camp Hill players and members than anyone else – ever. He was universally liked and respected and will be missed by all who knew him and especially those who had the privilege to know him for the whole of their adult lives. A man that set standards of loyalty, integrity, dedication and commitment that most can only dream of achieving.

Our Club President, Martin Garrod, wrote these words in a commemorative book that was presented to Graham in 2017.

“At Camp Hill he is unsung, only in the sense that our blood and hearts are unsung servants; unassumingly he has worked for three quarters of a century to be an essential part of the Club's life.”

Martin Crutchley

Walker, Ron

25th November 1940 to 7th September 2017

"Ron" as he was generally known by all his friends, was a happy friendly fellow, passionately fond of his family, and his rugby with a keen interest in English - the subject he taught.

Born in South Wales his family moved to Birmingham when Ron was only 13 and secured a place at Camp Hill School, then still at the "Old School" He quickly settled and made friends and gained recognition for his rugby ability being capped for England Schoolboys at Senior level.

From Camp Hill he went to Bangor University, where he gained his Degree in English. Then followed a year at Cambridge University to obtain his teaching qualification. As a fresher, his outstanding ability as a Full Back ensured that he was quickly moved up into the 1st XV and he won his Rugby Blue in his 1st year - an outstanding achievement.

After moving back to Birmingham, Ron took up his first teaching post at Moseley School, before moving on to Lordswood School in Harborne (finishing when he retired as Head of Department.)

On his return, he played for Camp Hill at both rugby and cricket enjoying the latter as a relaxation as rugby would always be his first choice. His representative honours, also included playing for Combined Birmingham Old Boys (COBS), Greater Birmingham, and North Midlands. But after he returned, it was not long before he was picked out by Coventry and Ron joined them with the Club's blessing and was very quickly moved up to 1st team level where he held his place for several seasons. After he returned to the Club, he helped "steady the ship" after a period of poor results. He was captain of the Club and as time went by he moved down the sides, captaining the 3rd XV and eventually playing in the 5th team, which he enjoyed immensely before his playing days finished.

Ron remained a member and served on the Club Committee and was Chairman for the period 1980-83. He continued to support but his time was cut short with the sudden death of his wife Angela, still only in her 50's, causing great upset for Ron. However Ron settled down and then entered a new phase in his life when he remarried. Anita, his new wife, was known to Ron and Angela for some time and they had many happy years together before Ron was taken ill supporting him right up to his death.

Our thoughts are with Ron's family.

Boss

Brian Burton

Murray, Bryan

Died 10th January 2018

Bryan joined the Club in 1986/87. With his experience in the pub trade, he agreed to run the bar, which He did until 1996/97.

During this time he gave me, as President of the Teddy Parker Club (TPC), great support and was to become a good friend of mine.

During his time as Bar Manager, the Club saw the bar turnover increase year on year.

Bryan had a wicked sense of humour and as Dave McConnell once put in his report, 'they used to send the Blarney Stone to Bryan, to kiss to recharge it'.

Bryan then went on to work with Graham Sandal until his retirement.

Unfortunately, Bryan's wife of many years, Bernie, passed away in June 2017.

R.I.P Bryan and our thoughts are with Noelene and the family.

Dave Maiden

Chairman

2017-18

Hart, Alan

29th May 1953 – 31st January 2018

Alan 'Harty' Hart was a rugby man through and through, whether playing or supporting his beloved Yardley & District or supporting his even more beloved daughter Jo.

Harty became involved with Camp Hill WRFC, when the very talented Jo needed a team to play for. 'Harty' dutifully brought Jo to and from training and matches during her time at Camps; making sure she had everything with her.

But he wasn't just Jo's 'wheels' or a supportive parent on the touchline. On a Sunday, Harty became a big part of Camp Hill WRFC. On match days, home and away, he supported the coaching staff and the touchline supporters with a swig or two from his hip flask on a cold day. But most important was the time and support he gave to the players, from providing the post match port, to a friendly arm around the shoulder, with a 'Well Played Bab', to joining in with the fancy dress themes on coach trips, to sorting us a mean BBQ for Ladies Day and supporting the Ladies' social functions.

In recognition, the section made him a Life Member of Camp Hill WRFC.

As well as a much loved father, Harty was also a much loved Husband and Grandfather – Jo's daughter, Coral, arriving last year.

He will be much missed by his family and all that knew him and the Camp Hill Ladies' Players summed Harty up with the words, passionate, cheerful, generous, kind.

Our thoughts are with Jo and the Hart family.

Cheers Bab! We'll raise a glass of port in your memory.

Karen Gibbons