

OLRFC



Saturday, January 6th 2018 | Old Leamingtonians Vs Woodrush RFC 2:15pm KO



Photography courtesy of Tim Nunan

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Crofts, home of Old Leamingtonians RFC. I would also like to welcome to the players, management, coaches and supporters of Woodrush RFC, our opponents today.

This is our first home match of the New Year so can I take this opportunity to wish you all the best for 2018. OL's finished the Old Year with a flurry of triumphs at all levels in both league and cup. This bodes well for the remaining fixtures of the 2017-2018 season.

Training has resumed and despite the weather and the post-Christmas lethargy we were pleased to see so many players attending. One or two have yet to transfer appointments across to their new diaries and calendars so we expect a few more senior players to set an example next week. Certainly it is recognised that the fitness levels of the OL First XV have played a huge part in their success in the earlier part of the season. Lets hope we can reverse the result when we travelled to Woodrush earlier in the fixture list. Whilst on the subject of calendars, write this down, our Under 16s are playing in the Warwickshire cup semi-final this Sunday, 11am KO. Please come along.

On a more serious note, I am sad to report the death of former player, referee, patron and Life-member Roger Johnston, who died early on the morning of Sunday, December 17, in Walsgrave Hospital. He was 87.

Roger was born in Coventry, and attended King Henry VIII School where he won an art scholarship in 1947 to attend Birmingham School of Art. He then secured a place at the Royal Academy Schools in London but was unable to attend due to National Service. He subsequently became both an officer in the Royal Artillery and a paratrooper. He then taught at Wolverhampton College of Art and then Warwickshire School of Art. He is better known to club members as a teacher at the Boys' College and later North Leamington School.

As a player, he played centre and wing for the Army and the Combined Services and also Nuneaton, Warwickshire and both the Old Coventrians and Old Leamingtonians. He was still refereeing games into his late 60s.

He had a long career teaching at Leamington College for Boys, where he became Head of the Art Department as well as running the school's rugby teams. Many OL's players owe their first experience of the game to him. He recently had an exhibition of watercolours at the Stour Gallery in Shipston, placing his artwork within the long tradition of English landscape watercolour painting. A calendar for 2018 featuring these works is available from rogerjohnstonart.uk with profits going to cancer support. Les Grafton has some for sale here today.

There is a Memorial Service for Roger at Rainsbrook Crematorium, Ashlawn Road, Rugby CV22 5ET at 2:00pm on Tuesday January 2nd for those who wish to attend.

So, on with the game. Thank you for your support today, for all players, and please respect the officials in the true OL spirit which Roger epitomised. Follow me to the bar after the match for a toast to a grand Old Leamingtonian.

RIP Roger Johnston 1930-2017.

Phil Eales Chairman

**BM**

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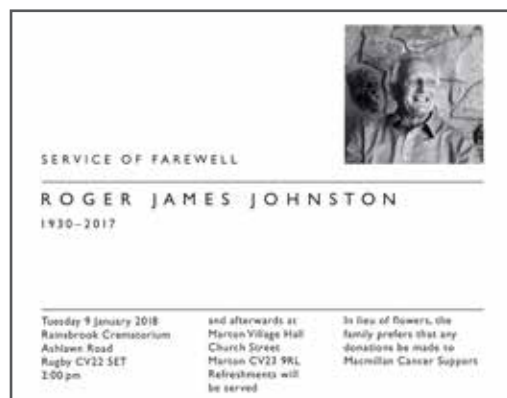
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MATCH REPORTS

League: Midlands 3 West (South)

Fixture: Old Leamingtonians RFC 1st XV v Manor Park RFC 1st XV

Venue: The Crofts, Bericote Road

Result: Old Leamingtonians RFC 1st XV 51-7 Manor Park RFC 1st XV

The game against Manor Park was a much improved performance from OLs who took the game to the visitors from Nuneaton from the kick off but after five minutes of play a long defensive clearance from Manor Park saw the ball knocked-on by OLs in front of their own posts and from the resulting scrum Manor Park won the ball and forced the ball over the OLs goal line to register the first try.

The conversion that followed turned out to be Manor Park's last points of the game. From the kick off OLs took complete control and with the home forwards dominating the set scrums the in-form OLs three-quarters enjoyed time and space to create scoring chances but it took 15 minutes of further play for the first OLs score. The only thing preventing tries was some sloppy handling at critical times in the moves. When the first try did come it followed a set piece when the OLs forwards drove Manor Park off of their own ball and quickly fed the ball out to winger Liam Wellings who shrugged off three defensive tackles to cross wide out on the right. The conversion was missed.

This was the turning point in the game as OLs continued to dominate forcing Manor Park into mistakes that allowed the OLs forwards and backs to combine to create a number of good scoring chances with one of the moves involving a series of interchanging passes amongst the three-quarters that ended with centre Simon Hemming crossing under the posts for the second OLs try. The conversion attempt hit the post but further pressure saw OLs awarded a penalty that was converted to move OLs into a 13 point to 7 lead. The domination by OLs continued and whilst some good scoring chances were squandered fly half Bradley James capitalised on more good three-quarter play to cross for try number three which he converted to give the home side a half time lead of 20 points to 7.

The second half followed the same pattern as the first with OLs dominant. The home forwards repeatedly drove the visitors backwards in the set pieces to create time and space for their backs to capitalise and stretch



the Manor Park defences but it was the OLs forwards that claimed the next three tries with back row Felix Heath touching down numbers four and five, the first of which resulted from the OLs forwards pushing Manor Park backwards from 10 metres out to cross the Manor Park goal line. His second try was from a pick up inside the Manor Park 22 metre area forcing his way through a number of defensive tackles. Neither try was converted.

OLs continued to dominate and try number 6 followed shortly afterwards when back row Joe Tallamini intercepted a loose Manor Park pass to increase the score. The try was converted by Ciaran O'Connor.

The seventh try, again created when the OLs forwards drove Manor Park backwards in a set scrum to win the ball, allowed winger Liam Wellings to cross for his second try of the game. This too was converted, this time by Bradley James.

With the match drawing to a close second row Rhys Cory got in on the act when the dominant OLs forwards again stole the ball in a set scrum and keeping it in the back of the pack, drove forward for Rhys to collect and cross the line for try number 8. This was converted to give OLs a winning score of 51 points to 7 and lift them back up to fourth place in the league.

The league has now reached the half way stage of the season with OLs next game at home to Woodrush on the 6th January 2018.

Report provided by Denis Fisher

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

A Happy New Year to everyone as we aim to kick-start the second half of our season following the Christmas break. A warm welcome to all to The Crofts today particularly our guests from Woodrush and the match officials.

It seems like a long time ago since we saw any senior rugby at The Crofts and I hope that our boys get into gear early to see off that turkey and pudding which no doubt will have had an impact on fitness levels!

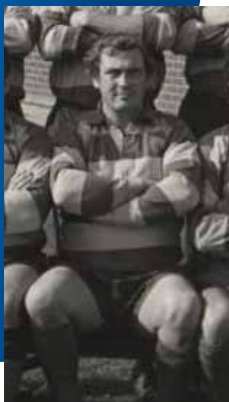
In the away fixture against Woodrush back in September, one of the few games I missed, it was reported by Dennis Fisher as a game that the OLs will want to forget as despite collecting 3 tries of our own, our defensive strategies were poor and we conceded 7 tries. Things have improved greatly for us since then and the team has strung together a good series of results which sees us lying fourth in the table, 2 points behind the second placed team. We are also ten points ahead of our rivals today although we have played one game more.

Hopefully the break has given both sides the chance to rest and re-group and we look forward to an exciting match this afternoon.

Whilst senior rugby seems to be going through a rough patch at the moment across the whole of the community game, the junior game continues to thrive. Our Colts sit top of their league after a storming first half of the season. They too will look to consolidate their position today as they are due to play near neighbours, Leamington, in their league encounter. A win for them today will give them the bragging rights round the town. Best of luck lads and keep it going.

Whatever the results today I hope that everybody enjoys their day with us at The Crofts

Mike Hemming
Old Leamingtonians President



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TODAY'S SQUADS

Today's referee is: Becky Carter

Club colours: Gold and Royal hoops

OLD LEAMINGTONIANS 1ST XV

- 1 Kai Cott
- 2 Reece Jones (Captain)
- 3 Bill Johnson
- 4 Joe Talamini
- 5 Hugh Melhuish
- 6 Felix Heath
- 7 Tom Smith
- 8 Sam Brittain
- 9 Toby Lord (Vice Captain)
- 10 Brad James
- 11 Liam Wellings
- 12 Simon Hemming
- 13 David Canning
- 14 Tom Eales
- 15 Ciaran O'Connor

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Craig Ellis
- 17 Ollie Wright
- 18 Rhys Cory

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Chairman of Rugby: | Craig Ellis |
| First Team Manager: | Currently vacant |
| Coaches: | Scott Conduit, Adam Canning and Craig Ellis |

WOODRUSH 1ST XV

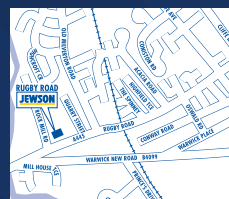
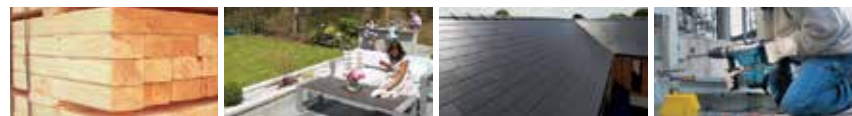
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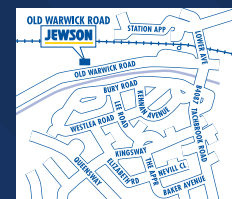
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SECTION NEWS

News from the M&J Section:



A Very Happy New Year to everyone from the M&J Section!

Our section had an outstanding close to 2017 with all our Junior teams progressing to the semi finals of the Warwickshire Cup, the highlight of which was an excellent "double header" under floodlights against Leamington where both OLs teams were victorious.

The mini's section have been busy with a visit from Father Christmas where all children received presents which were well received, they also had a section wide visit to Jumpin trampoline centre which was excellent, I was delighted to see all players working together in a non rugby setting.

This year is off to a fast start with the Under 16s in action for the first Warwickshire Cup Semi Final fixture against Old Laurens at the Crofts on Sunday 7th January, please come down and support it will be a cracking encounter which has historically been very close.

Our whole section is heading to Wasps vs Saracens on 7th January for our annual takeover day which gives all players the opportunity to go on the pitch, we are delighted to be representing Old Leamingtonians with two match mascots, Sam Richards from our Under 10s and Matthew Rome from Under 13s, this is fantastic opportunity for everyone involved and with over 300 people travelling on several coaches this is a great spectacle for our club.

Finally I would like to wish everyone a fantastic year of rugby in 2018, I am looking forward to taking the M&J section from strength to strength this year.

Lucas Wager
Mini and Junior Chairman

News from the Ladies Section:

This January 17th at 7:30 you can find your "Inner Warrior" at the Crofts.

This is a coaching session which is being supported by both Wasps and the RFU with the aim of getting more women into rugby.

Meet our current players, find out what you have to offer the team.

OL's was one of the first women's sides founded in the Midlands and has a proud history of supporting initiatives to encourage wider participation.

We have had a number of county and national players emerge from our team. You could be the next.

Jen Vermeulen
Captain, Old Leamingtonians Ladies



SPONSORSHIP NEWS

Senior Section - Player Sponsors Update:

OLRFC 1st XV Player sponsorship is gathering pace with support from many of clubs supporters.

Individual Player Sponsors are as follows:

Nick Crighton
Michael Vallance
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Den Fisher
Bill Walker
Steve Davis
Mike Hemming

Christie McNally
Clive Grundy
Steve Smith
Phil Eales
Ray Griffiths

If you are interested in sponsoring a player please see Reece Jones 1st XV Captain.

We are always looking for new support particularly for the U6s, U7s, U9s, U11s, and U15s. Please contact Jonny Shipton on 07476 405215 or Mike Vallance 07545 602029 if you are interested in supporting.

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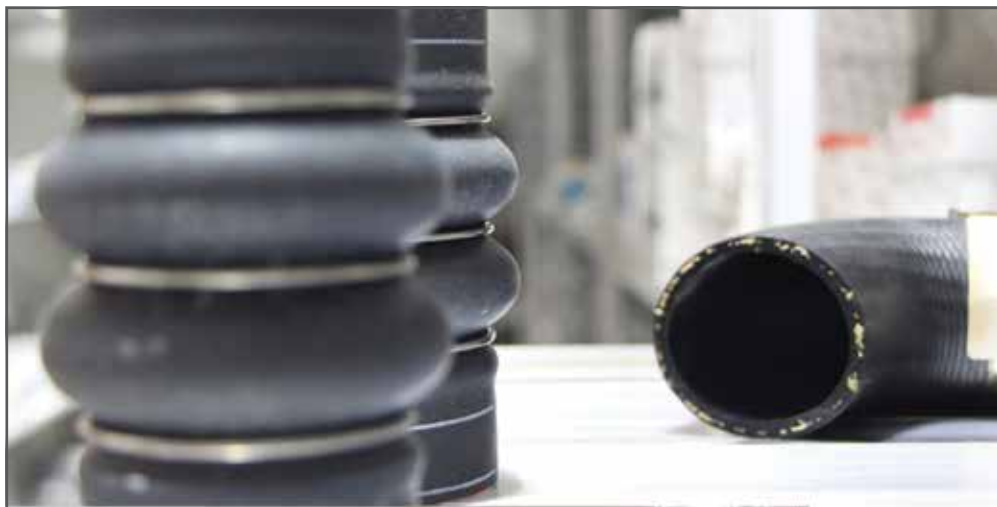
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