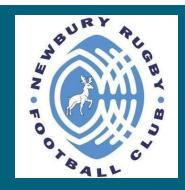
BLUES NEWS

KEEPING IN TOUCH - 4

29th May 2020



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100+ CLUB

A huge thank you to recent prize winners who very kindly donated their winnings to the Club - these have been put towards our latest Good Exchange Project - more details on all projects completed this year on Fage 10

KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you would like to contribute to the next Blues News, please email content to any of the following:

<u>David Jones</u> <u>Brian Lee</u> Sarah Thorne

For the latest club news visit the NRFC website

NEWBURY RUGBY CLUB Here is our 4th Newsletter and we hope you are finding them interesting and they give you an insight into a few other people in your club!! We always need news articles so do send them in.

We were hoping to print a team from the M&J coaches but are short of a hooker!! If you coach M&J and previously played senior rugby at Newbury, do please send me your details. We are also hoping to have a members team from the 80s and 90s for the next edition.

We trust you are all keeping safe, maintaining social distancing and staying vigilant as none of us will want a second or third wave in the autumn as we look forward to rugby again hopefully in some form . This fine weather certainly helps, for those able to enjoy it. The relaxation of social and sporting activities like tennis, golf, fishing and cycling as well as permitted small gatherings, means we are moving in the right direction. The RFU have indicated that some training could go on at community rugby clubs and the clubhouse could be open but the restrictions are huge and the Management Board have decided that it is neither responsible or safe to open up the club or grounds just yet. We will keep you posted on this. Fortunately it is the summer months and although we will be losing valuable income from weddings and parties, there would be little rugby training going on in June. It is worth remembering that the club is still helping the local community tackle the pandemic, as it is being used as a distribution centre for local volunteer groups.

There will be a virtual AGM on 30th June where we hope members will be updated on our position and have a chance to raise some questions. Details will follow from Christine soon. Elections have been delayed until the FAGM in the autumn as they were too difficult to organise for the AGM. If you have any questions or ideas you want to express now however, please do not hesitate to contact <u>Steve Gibbs</u> or <u>David Jones</u>.

The Management Board continue to meet every week via Zoom and the rugby committee and trustees regularly meet and are also playing their role in trying to plan the Medium and Long term objectives for the club, post Covid-19. Which way do you want to take our club? What would you like to see? What's important to you? Financing the club will also be a huge challenge next season before everything hopefully settles down again so we have to be creative and we may also have to take some major decisions. Fortunately the current players at senior level (men and women) [and a superb set up for youngsters] have a great attitude and love their rugby here so we must do what we can to retain that. Now is the time, if you care about the club's future, that you let us know your views.

Thanks to all those who are putting in an extra shift to keep us all safe and fed - it's hugely appreciated. For all those still working or furloughed, we hope you are getting through these extraordinary times and remember we are a Blues Family so please do let us know if we can help. Stay vigilant and KEEP IN TOUCH !!!

DAVID. SARAH AND BRIAN



NEWBURY RFC AGM

An abridged AGM will take place virtually on 30th June 2020. Information will be forwarded to all voting members in due course.

JOKES / PUZZLE PAGE



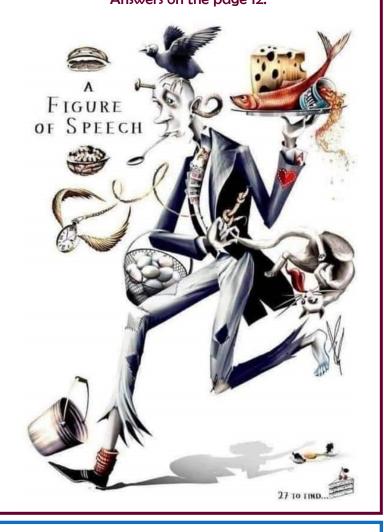
A FIGURE OF SPEECH

There are 27 figures of speech in this picture.

How many can you guess?

To get you started.....'cat's got his tongue'.

Answers on the page 12.



Sorry, I'm social distancing.



JUNIOR JOKES

Crossword puzzle question - 'Postman's Sack - How many letters?'

Answer - hundreds!!

What do you call someone with no body and no nose?

No body knows!

I'm reading a book about anti gravity - it's impossible to put down!

COLIN VARE

True rugby dedication playing rugby in 1977 while his wife was in hospital giving birth!.







Geoff Fisher is providing fruit and vegetable boxes for collection from their Hambridge Lane depot. Order online on the <u>Fishers of Newbury</u> website. Geoff has also been making weekly fruit and veg donations to NHS staff at Newbury Hospital.

Brian Lee is offering free A Level Economics tuition - There are no A Levels this summer but if Year 12 or Year 13 students would like to consolidate some analysis before going to university, Brian Lee will be offering free tuition. This could be via Face Time, Zoom, Whatsapp or email. For child protection purposes, initial contact must be made by parents/guardians. Email: brianchapel@hotmail.com; Tel: 07740351507

West Berkshire Council's Community Support Hub is available to help anyone in need. Anyone needing support from the Community Support Hub can email WestBerkshire@public.govdelivery.com.



Strategic Consulting & Resourcing Specialists

Free Career Consultation with Suzanna Adams of Varnium.

Let's make some positive career decisions, YES even in lockdown!!!

Looking for career opportunities? Perhaps you have just left School, College or University or maybe you are already working but you feel there could be something more inspiring and challenging out there for you?

Why not contact **Suzanna Adams of Varnium** for a conversation on where your future could take you.

Suzanna Adams - Recruitment Consultant Tel: 07392 842606 <u>www.varnium.com</u>

MAC Tools of Basingstoke wishes all members of Newbury Rugby Club and their families well during this pandemic. Like our great rugby club, our business activity is almost completely shut down, but we are on hand if we can assist any of you or your businesses with tools from our catalogues. All will be delivered contact free and delivery free.

In the meantime, we very much look forward to supporting

Newbury Rugby Club, and all of the

teams, when

playing resumes. May that day come quickly!

MAC Tools for Basingstoke - 07939155887

SUPPORTING THE CLUB

Two simple ways you can financially support the club at the moment are:

100+ CL()B

This costs from just £2 a month and supports resources across the whole club. Tickets can be bought online.

Voluntary Contribution

Details are available online.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES POST LOCKDOWN

If you are a Club member and would like to promote your job, do please let us know. Coming out of lockdown will be tough and for many of us it will mean relaunching our business and working life, particularly for those recently self-employed who have not had the benefit of furloughing. If you provide us with your contact details and what you do, we will include in the next newsletter - email David Jones.

MINI & JUNIOR SECTION



THE MINI FESTIVAL SEASON BEFORE LOCKDOWN

Newbury U10s travelled to the Chippenham tournament on Sunday 15th March. This should have been the first of four festivals in quick succession, so the coaching team were really excited to see the progression.

The weather was horrible, with horizontal freezing rain, high winds and heavy muddy pitches. This didn't deter the high spirited Newbury U10s.

Team A started brightly with a crushing win over Trowbridge, 6-0, with tries from Tunstall, Cullum (2), Greenland and Borvey (2). Great support play and handling skills from Morris, Mant, Corneck and Mason, passing into wide channels to set up the attack. Coaches very impressed with tackling and breakdown work.

Up next for Team A was Hungerford, the usual tough game, with some great tackling from both teams, Newbury not giving up and scoring with the last play to win 3-2. Tries from Cullum (2) and Tunstall.

Team B opened with a good win over Salisbury, some great running from the flyers Wilson, Crosse and with the power of Bray and Burgess, all players produced a good team display. Second up was Dings, with Newbury moving the ball against a large Dings team, proved the right way to go. Scoring well with tries out wide and great footwork from Roberts and Hancock. Team B were quickly on again against Trowbridge 2 and were soon very much in control of the game. With tight play runs from Dargan and Butterworth securing three quick tries, while Wilson managed a fourth from a breakaway. During our fourth game against the hosts Chippenham, Newbury B produced a very strong rucking performance, they kept the ball in their hands for long periods. The 4-0 score line reflected their dominance with and without the ball. Again, Bray putting in the tackle of the tournament, on the biggest player in the tournament to close the final play. Unfortunately, the weather deteriorated, our remaining fixtures called it a day and left the festival.

The coaches are super proud of the squad, how the players are developing skills, their attitude and the on field respect. We continued to play with enjoyment, move the ball... and the odd smash or two...Played 6 Won 6. Roll on the U11s.

Team A: Freddie Corneck, William Mason, Deacon Cullum, Ben Greenland,, George Morris, Max Borvey, Zack Tunstall, Harry Mant

Team B: Henri-Tomas Bray, Seb Crosse, Lottie Dargan, Ed Hancock, Josh Burgess, Henry Wilson, Zac Robert, Declan Butterworth





MINI & JUNIOR SECTION



UNDER 12S END OF SEASON



With the season coming abruptly to an end, how to deal with 65 frustrated U12's players has been at the forefront of the Coaches' minds. Various suggestions from watching the NZ team showing off with their passing skills (Coach Al/Pete) and quizzes set (with a natural Scottish bias) from our Head Coach Al Heath on our Mightly Newbury U12's Facebook page have been circulated with some effect! We have a fantastically talented quad, so the focus must be on the boys keeping fit for next season, keep passing a rugby ball around, watching rugby on TV so we come out of the blocks ready for action!

41 boys out of 61 turned up online for the presentation (see screenshot of some of them) and it was a resounding success with a lot of laughs, a fantastic summary of the year and also what is coming next year by the coaches..



Jason Alexander U12s Manager

PERSONAL PROFILES FROM ACROSS OUR BLUES FAMILY



SENIOR MEN

Playing history: Overton Minis; NRFC; Hampshire U20 Captain; London & SE U20; Berkshire Seniors; Harlequins U18 Rugby League

Favourite song: Not afraid by Eminem - used to listen to it pre-game.

Person most likely to invite to dinner: Winston Churchill. As a history buff, I would love to meet the man who conflicts opinions.

Most surprising fact: I don't have many surprising facts but I did once train with Jonah Lomu which was quite cool!

Best moment at NRFC: There are two - firstly winning promotion against Clevedon in the play-off; second, being voted Players' Player and Supporters' Player of the Season two years ago.

Additional Info: If you want someone who gives 100% in everything he does rugby related, look no further than Alex. If you want someone who has great respect from anybody involved with the Club, look no further than Alex. A fine young man in all senses of the word.



ALEX MILLAR

SENIOR WOMEN



ASHLEY 'ASH' **HUNTER**

Playing history: Very lucky to have had a rugby made PE teacher who introduced tag rugby at school and set up a girls/ladies team at Salisbury RFC and I played there until college. Represented SW England; played for Basingstoke after college; played for Newbury on and off since 2010; captained two seasons; played Berkshire county for two seasons.

Favourite song: anything from Sean Paul.

Most admired person to invite to dinner: Stephen Fry.

Most surprising fact about yourself: I won a competition off a bag of Royal Gala apples to have lunch and a training session with Jonah Lomu at The Stoop as a kid. Now Royal Gala are my favourite apples!

Favourite rugby moment at NRFC: every time I'm on the pitch with my Blues family. I hope they know how much they have done for me. I've very lucky!





TREVOR COLES

Playing history: .St Bart's, NRFC Colts, College, Maidenhead, Newbury and Newbury Vet's.

Favourite song: Martha & the Muffins - Echo Beach - is a regular choice. However, I would like the team bus choir to look at Toy Dolls- 'Nelly the Elephant' for next season!

Most admired person to invite for dinner: In Newbury - it would have to be at The Bell with James Macaulay because I like a decent pint with dinner and The Bell has been voted the best pub in England. Outside Newbury - Pat Pages, the French Mayor of St Bonnet-de-Joux and coach of FCDM (Digoin RFC). Wild boar, venison, Burgundy wine, etc and their last game of the season should have been away against Chablis! Most surprising fact about yourself: from 1985-87 I spent two years with my family, working with youngsters in that poverty stricken and sadly devastated country, Yemen. Those youngsters are often in my thoughts. Better times ahead....'inshalla'.

Favourite rugby moment at NRFC: There are so many. Looking like we were going to beat Western Samoa in front of an immense crowd; the U21 World Cup Australia v New Zealand; clinching promotion against Clevedon and for me....in one of my post twilight call ups, scoring a try in Blues Corner against Tadley 2nds! Additional information: Ever since retiring from rugby I have been involved to a greater or lesser extent with some aspect of rugby at NRFC and I recommend it to all past and present players and supporters.

BLUES SUPPORTER

SEE PHOTO ON

Playing history: Park House; joined NRFC Colts in 1959, playing every Saturday after having already played for school in the morning; played blindside flanker his whole rugby career, including Berkshire Schools; played for every team at NRFC from first team to Stags, As, Bs and Vet's

Favourite song: Albertros by Fleetwood Mac who he saw live at the O2 on his 70th birthday. Most admired person to invite for dinner: Ian McGeechan - Lions would have died after Woodward messed it up in NZ (Colin's words) in 2005; Colin once helped Ian park his car at Newbury when he came to watch an U21 international.

Most surprising fact about yourself: Originally worked in the Merchant Navy and was a big canoeing enthusiast in Newbury.

Favourite rugby moment at NRFC: In Nov 2019, Newton Abbot at home. Blues were two points ahead with one minute until full-time. NA took the penalty kick and missed! Blues failed to clear and there was 7.5 minutes of extra time and 35 phases of attack from NA before Jamie Futcher bundled their winger into touch. What defence! What discipline!! What excitement! What a relief!.

COLIN VARE -THE MAN ON THE GATE

Additional info: Colin has worked on the gate ever since we came to Monks Lane and encouraged two of his canoeing pals, Cliff and Alan (not rugby players), to help him on the gate and they are still there each week. Colin represents everything that is great about an amateur rugby club; a jovial character and bighearted volunteer; Colin is a great team man.. Still working 5.5 days/wk at 75 years old.

COACHES' CORNER



SENIOR MEN - END OF SEASON AWARDS

It was definitely a unique experience to undertake the end of season awards dinner over Zoom, but many of the Blues family crammed on with a dress code of 'club tie' and a gourmet menu of pizza.

It was obviously a disappointment to end the season the way we did - Super A's had a tough season having come up a league to BB02 South, with lack of players and cancellations, the highlights being two hard-fought victories over local rivals Thatcham II; the Stags having an opportunity to cement their position as 2nd in the BBO1 table and the Blues finding some form with the chance to play our way out of the relegation zone.

There was loads of good stuff to celebrate and it is important to do so. Recognising season-long efforts and consistency, we had three 'iron men' this year who had played in every game available - the rock that is **Ben Hicks**, captain **Dan Thorne** and top try scorer **Josh Winfield**. All three deserve a huge amount of credit, but special congratulations to Dan who becomes the first of this group of players to reach 200 caps - a huge achievement.

Next we celebrated the 'most improved player', which this year was Tom Cole. Although rugby is a late specialisation sport, Tom left it until the last minute to start playing. Two years in to his senior rugby playing career, he is playing one of the most tactically demanding roles as fly half, his goal kicking has become a real weapon for us and his drive to improve when no-one is watching is commendable. He has been rewarded with his Blues debut and a starting role for Berkshire U20s and I'm sure he'll continue to get better and better.

'Coaches' player of the year' was exceptionally difficult to select, but as a group we chose first and foremost to recognise effort, commitment and a 'team first' ethos and, in the end, couldn't split it between two players. The first player who we thought embodied this was Fraser Carr. Fraser has been a consistent trainer and has worked hard on improving his game. Despite his primary playing position (hooker) being one where the squad is deep and thus limits opportunities to play in this position, his attitude is excellent. The second player is Chris Bird. In Chris' first season with Newbury, he has proved himself an excellent player and squad member. The ultimate utility player, he has featured for the Blues at lock, back row and mostly at centre. He has picked up all the complexity that goes with that and has performed really well, consistently being one of the best and most adaptable players on the pitch. Mostly, his attitude to this uncertainty of where he'll be playing week-to-week is first class - he has always put the team first and has integrated into the squad really well.

'Players' player' for all three senior teams was hotly contested with over 30 squad members being nominated. The A's player of the year was Neil Owen - a real clubman who performs consistently and supports the club fantastically. The Stags player of the year was Oscar Astbury - a new player this year who has really hit the ground running and proved himself a classy operator with a bright future. He is strong in defence, evasive in attack and central to a lot of the good stuff the Stags have done this year. Finally, the Blues player of the year was Toby Holland - Toby has brought huge intensity in defence and has scored some classy tries in attack. His basic skills are really strong, from his catch/pass to the way he reads the game. Finally, he has not been scared to challenge in the right way to ensure that the team is improving.

Overall, it is difficult to recognise only a few people in a squad of many who all play their part in a team dynamic. I have really enjoyed working with everyone this year and am really proud of their efforts. I personally hope to see them all again next season and move the club forward.

PAUL ARCHER

NEWBURY BLUES HEAD COACH

SENIOR LEAGUES ANNOUNCED

The RFU are currently looking at options for next season's fixtures, given the continuing uncertainty caused by the Coronavirus outbreak. Once a way forward is announced the RFU will start work on creating fixtures.

Banbury
Beaconsfield
Bracknell
Buckingham
Chippenham
Frome
Grove
Marlborough
Newbury Blues
Oxford Harlequins
Sherborne
Trowbridge
Windsor
Witney

Berks/Bucks & Oxon 1

Amersham & Chiltern II Oxford Harlequins II

Banbury II Rams III

Beaconsfield II Reading Abbey II

Chinnor III Reading II
Marlow II Windsor II
Newbury II Witney II

Berks/Bucks & Oxon 3S

Bracknell IV Phoenix II
Didcot II Reading Abbey III

High Wycombe III Thatcham II
Hungerford II Wallingford II
Newbury III Windsor III





JOHN COTTINGHAM

When you first met John Cottingham (JC or Cott) you knew you would always remember him for his gusto for a good life with engaging enthusiasm for all that he did whether for family, business, friends and fun, which definitely included rugby. Those of you who do not know John by name would recognise him, especially amongst the band of the most loyal Newbury Blues supporters.

John was born in Manchester and lived and worked there, marrying Betty and having four children. John and his family moved to Newbury in 1980 when his business as a construction engineer brought him 'down south'. Very sadly Betty died, and their daughter Lesley also died at far too young an age.

John continued to combine his love of rugby with his business and family commitments. He had a wonderful appetite for making the most out of any position and that included his rugby journey. During his younger days he played for Sale and it was a great day, especially for John, when in 1998 Newbury 'travelled "up north' to play Sale in the fifth round of the Tetley Bitter Cup on the 24th January 1998. Newbury already travelled north and beaten Orrell in The Cup (one of The Blues very best victories) but succumbed to the might of Premier League, Sale - this was before they became the Sharks! John returned to Newbury a contented man after a very good rugby day!

He had many great rugby connections, including a great friend Syd Richardson at Harlequins. When John was Chairman, of what was then called Professional rugby, he thought he had recruited a very special player to Newbury. This was former Harlequins fly half and England international David Pears .Unfortunately for John and indeed for Newbury, David went to play for fellow National Division One challengers Wharfedale, in the Yorkshire Dales. The reason John didn't succeed, even with his persuasive skills, in recruiting David Pears was because David's girlfriend and now wife , was the daughter of the Wharfedale coach - such is life!!

John was responsible for forming a very loyal supporting group of Newbury Blues' followers as a result of the 'odd' pint or two at the Rampant Cat in Woolton Hill. John and a few friends became John and many friends, attending Newbury lunches and supporting both home and away games. At first they were called the Woolton Hill Boys but as the years passed by they became The Woolton Hill Billies!

John's latter years in Newbury were greatly enhanced when he met Mel who he married in September 2015 and they had many happy years together. They were both great supporters of Newbury although there were occasions when we all thought Mel was only supporting Mal Roberts, our classy and good looking full back, rather than all the Newbury team!! Not that JC was ever jealous!!

We look forward to his Memorial service and raising a glass (or two!) to JC at The Rampant Cat. We will all remember him and share many fond memories. Our condolences and every best wish to Mel, his children Janet, John and Michael and his grandchildren.

DAVID SMITH

THE WOOLTON HILL BILLIES

COPING WITH LOCKDOWN



DAN ELSIGOOD - SPORTS THERAPIST & PHYSIO FOR THE SENIOR TEAMS

Lockdown is impacting on everyone in different ways, and like many others the impact on my life has been hugely significant. Across two busy sports injury clinics we've been unable to carry out any face to face

appointments for over 2 months now, impacting on business and leaving an increasing number of people suffering with pain. Virtual appointments are useful, but certainly have their limitations.

There has been one huge positive amongst all of this though - the day before lockdown, our baby girl Mia was born, so this has meant a very long paternity leave. No doubt she'll be at the club supporting the Blues in the future.

There is a lot of preparation going in to returning to work, and how to manage this, as well as keeping both patients and myself safe. It is still unknown on when it will be safe to return fully and what exact measures we will have to take. Adjusting to a new normal will be hard, full PPE will need to be worn and temperature checks will take place before entering the clinics. Strict cleaning regimes will be put in place and appointment times will be altered to ensure social distancing between patients and staff can be maintained. Virtual treatment sessions may become more of the norm with regular patients, reducing face to face appointments. These measures will also have to be taken into consideration when rugby at Monks Lane returns, whenever that may be.



In the meantime I am making the most of some very special time with my baby daughter.

(For those who don't know, baby Mia is also first grandchild to Blues Manager Mick Futcher [and niece to Jamie], who like many others have sadly not been able to have any cuddles yet and only been able to see at a very safe social distance. Roll on the end of lockdown!!)

Finally......a socially distanced cycle is permitted.



Sarah Thorne and Mick Futcher pausing for a photo at Little Bedwyn

Let us know what you have been up to during lockdown - email <u>David Jones</u>

LATEST FROM THE LADIES

We've elected our Social Team committee for the next year:

- Manager Ash Hunter
- **Assistant Manager** Claire Kirby
- Captain Nicola (Vaughney)
 McCombe
- Vice Captain Emma (Button) Rowland
 & Roisin Winston
- Social Media Kelly Reeves-Williams & Zea Daniels
- Social Secretary Roxy Tola

We're currently voting for our 1st XV Captain and Vice-Captains and will be holding our Ladies' section AGM via Zoom on 1st June.

On Friday 29th June we're going to be doing an online fitness session with England International Vicky Fleetwood - keep an eye out on social media for how it goes!



NRFC PROJECTS / GOOD EXCHANGE MATCH-FUNDING

NRFC PROJECTS COMPLETED USING GOOD EXCHANGE MATCH-FUNDING

We all know how very fortunate we are to have the facilities we do - visiting teams, supporters, players and parents often comment on this, whether it be the Clubhouse, player amenities or the number of pitches.

However, over the 25 years since the Rugby Club moved to Monks Lane, finding the funding to maintain these facilities has always been a challenge and the building has suffered from a lack of investment.

Therefore, last Summer, a Projects Committee was created to identify and address maintenance needs. A consequence of this was the re-establishment of a good working relationship with Greenham Common Trust – since then, the Club has actively used their Good Exchange match-funding scheme for projects which give clear community benefit.

Over the last twelve months, funds have been raised from members donations, bucket collections, quizzes, cake and kit sales (with special mention of £5,000 from the Colefax Charitable Foundation), towards six projects as summarised below:

Description	Cost (ex VAT)	Funding raised	GE Matching
Replacement Scoreboard	£3,850	£1,830	£1,820
Replacing valves in showers	£2,548	£1,274	£1,274
Replacing CCTV throughout club	£1,041	£1,041	Nil
Resurfacing path to top pitches	£5,544	£2,789	£2,755
Motion Sensors in toilets, corridors and changing rooms	£5,060	£4,290	£770
Replacing & repairing fire doors throughout club	£4,141	£2,671 *	£1,171
Total	£22,194	£13,885	£7,790

^{*}Due to be completed shortly

Special mention must go to Nigel Thorne for identifying many of the above and the efficiency savings that can be achieved.

Fundraising will continue next season (whenever that may begin) as we aim to create and maintain a Club which provides excellent facilities for all. Future projects for the coming year include more health and safety upgrading to the building and the balcony, along with major items like replacing the lift. Donations can be made for any club project via the following link:- https://thegoodexchange.com

None of the above would have been possible without positive contributions from the Club's members and supporters – a huge 'thank you' to you all!

ROB HARRIS

PUZZLE PAGE



FIGURE OF SPEECH ANSWERS

27. Time flies

26. From Rags to riches

25. Cold feet

24. Pull your socks up

23. Kick the bucket

22. The cat's got your tongue

21. No room to swing a cat

20. Shadow of your former self

19. Walking on egg shells

18. Put all your eggs in one basket

17. To tie the knot

16. Red herring

15. Big cheese

14. Spill the beans

13. On a silver platter

12. Heart on your sleeve

11. Ace up your sleeve

10. Joker in the pack

9. Keep your Cards close to your chest

8. Ear worm

7. Born with a silver spoon in your mouth

6. Stiff upper lip

5. A Screw loose

4. Bald as a coot

3. Cherry on the cake

2. Piece of cake

1. In a Nutshell