



# TOC NEWS

ISSUE 8 SUMMER EDITION 2022



## PRESIDENT'S END OF SEASON MESSAGE

Members, supporters, players and Sponsors of TOC H,

Many thanks to everyone who attended the Dinner on Saturday - As usual it was organised chaos that was the order of the day/evening and a great time was had by all. Thanks to everyone who helped put the evening together.

Thank you all for being so generous. We raised a phenomenal £2,100.00 through the raffle and wine barrow auction on the night (monies will go towards funding the juniors pre-season open day, kit for the men's and ladies team and a charity donation, to be voted for by the committee).

Many thanks to this years club and team sponsors (GO, So West Didsbury, Women in Law, M20PT and The Good the Bad and the Rugby podcast).

We are very lucky to be part of such a great rugby and sports club. Our success, the strength and depth of our teams and the quality of coaching is all down to a dedicated team of volunteers. Thank you to each and every one of you. We are always looking to recruit new volunteers and coaches so please come forward if you would like to know more.

For those who missed the detail of this years awards the full list is below. A massive congratulations to all the winners. Also, congratulations to Harry Rigby who won this years ADM player of the season and bragging rights for being undefeated in the league with 22/22 wins. Harry has been the 1st XV captain for the last 5 seasons, leading by example and from the front in every game. Hesteps down as one of Didsbury's most successful captains, succeeded by his Vice Captain Josh Vice. (Continued on pg.2)

BY OLIVER THOMAS

DIDSBURY TOC H  
NEWSLETTER

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A special mention again to Eve Murphy and Laura Riches, who have been recognised by England RFU for their efforts this season with the Girls (post under 11's) team. Also, last week Arthur won the Lancashire Rugby Honda Volunteer of the year award and has been shortlisted for the National Awards at Twickenham in September.

Please stay tuned to social media during off season for details of forthcoming social events over summer, preseason training and opportunities to volunteer to help tidy, maintain and improve the club facilities ready for next season.

Thank you again for your support during the 21/22 season, I look forward to catching up with you all preseason or throughout the 22/23 season.

Cheers, Oliver Thomas - El Presidente

## CLUB AWARDS 2021/22

- CLUB COLOURS 2018/2019-** Tom Bunn, Conor Crowe, Rory Gibson  
**CLUB COLOURS 2019/20-** Dave Russell, Ailish Sinclair and Seb Sheratte  
**CLUB COLOURS 2021/22-** Ben Manley, Josh Hearn, May Coffey, Eden Whiteside and Laura R
- RORY CHEETHAM PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD-** Harry Jones  
**THE GORDON HUNTLEY GOAL KICKING AWARD-** Rory Gibson  
**THE HARRY BETTENY AWARD Most Improved Player-** Rory Bowman-Shaw  
**THE KEMSEY-BOURNE AWARD Most promising young player-** Niall Broderick  
**LADIES FORWARD OF THE YEAR-** Helen Bayram  
**LADIES BACK OF THE YEAR-** Niamh Hopkins  
**THE PHIL LONGSHAW MEMORIAL AWARD-2nd XV player of the year-** Ben Rothwell  
**3rd XV PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD-** Martin Galton  
**THE PHIL HAMNER MEMORIAL AWARD Front row player of the year-** Tom Talbot  
**THE WILDE AND HOLLOWAY CLUB PERSON AWARD-** Laura Riches  
**NON-PLAYING MEMBER FOR SERVICES TO THE CLUB-** Eve Murphy  
**VICE PRESIDENT-** Gareth Oakley, Jamie Peacock, David Hoare





# UNBEATEN IN LEAGUE 22/22 GAMES

BY NAME IN THE ALCOCKS did I consider going into coaching. Not for a moment - way too much hassle; I just didn't care enough.

I played for some awful coaches and had no interest in emulating them - but I also played for some brilliant coaches whose standards I felt I would never reach. So in a weak moment, when I agreed to take over as Director of Rugby at Toc H, I was always determined to try and do things the right way.

The initial deal I struck was for two seasons, on the understanding that the club paid for my coaching badges. In the end, they agreed to pay for half. It always struck me as a strange negotiation bearing in mind I was, quite literally, the only option they had. But maybe the club knew something I didn't: that two seasons would become eight and Toc H would end up playing a hugely influential role in my life.

My wonderfully patient fiancé, Selina, has witnessed first-hand the pervasive nature of coaching this rugby club. From the unrelenting mood swings after a defeat to interrupting her on holidays to try and prise players from the grasp of other teams (Jonny Naish). There's more - the midweek coach development courses all over the region, the bouts of self-loathing and tantrums, the tapping up of players during games (Andy Alexander) and the seemingly uncontrollable, equally unedifying behaviour on the sidelines. But all that is part of the process.

Coaching the 1st XV this season has been a joy. The players are receptive to ideas, hard-working and care about each other. There are too many people to thank for the success of the season but there are some notable mentions. JB has been a massive help to me, not least for the 'triple threat' he offers in most positions on the pitch. Josh Vize has played every minute of every game. He has big shoes to fill next season but I am sure he will be an excellent and respected club captain. Chris Morgan has played out of position for most of the season - all for the good of the team. His has the sort of selfless attitude - "I'll play wherever you need me" - that is essential to winning teams. Our best players have worked hard to incorporate and develop all the players who attend training. Their communication is unrecognisable from the start of the season. Our new players have raised the standard, while our existing players have kicked on and exceeded all expectations. There is a mix of youth, experience and intellect, in the best possible way. As a club we are very lucky to be able to select from a talent pool that is evidently above the level we're playing at. And we are also lucky to have the two Harrys - Jones and Rigby - whose performances in that shirt have set an incredibly fine example.

It is for those reasons that I can say in all sincerity that this Toc H team would have gone the league season unbeaten, regardless of who was coaching them. It was just a privilege to be asked along for the ride.

#	Team	Pl	W	D	L	Diff	Pts
1	Didsbury Toc H	22	22	0	0	468	106
2	Widnes	20	15	0	5	247	75
3	West Park St Helens	21	15	0	6	137	70
4	Aldwinians	22	13	1	8	54	64
5	Liverpool St Helens	22	13	1	8	98	63
6	Fleetwood	22	9	2	11	-2	50
7	Liverpool Collegiate	21	10	0	11	-44	49
8	Eccles	22	8	2	12	-121	46
9	Ormskirk	22	8	0	14	-347	40
10	Oldham	22	8	0	14	-190	39
11	Wigan	22	6	0	16	-300	31
12	Burnley - WITHDRAWN	22	0	0	22	0	0



# PUSHING FOR TOP 3

BY CONOR CROWE

The 2's season had plenty of positives mixed with some disappointments. Returning after a year off as a result of Covid and with so many new faces, there was an element of the unknown as the season kicked off. It became clear from early on however, that the new cohort of players that joined us added real strength and depth to the squad. In fact, in a break from previous seasons and traditions, we were regularly able to field a reserve front-row player which felt like a luxury at times. Thankfully, Mark Chambers can cover anywhere from 1-15 so could fill in wherever the need was greatest. In fact, not many can boast a 100% record off the kicking tee this year (albeit 1/1).

As the season progressed we were rarely outside the top 4, and in a competitive league with some big clubs, that was something to be pleased about. At one point in January, it looked like promotion was a real possibility but a shambolic 21-21 draw with lowly Manchester and a narrow 7-14 loss away to Warrington (who eventually won promotion) put paid to any hopes of going up. The season ended with a flourish with four wins from four and only the 290 points scored across those games. It was also nice to ruin Broughton Park's perfect season with a hard-fought 102-5 win on the final day.

From a personal standpoint it brings a close to my three-year stint as captain. Highlights have been so many new players coming on board and making immense contributions, Tom Talbot, Henry Jenkins, Spencer, big Niall, Jimmy Hughes, Rob Cheets and Army Rory to name a few, as well as the comradery that has developed between the group. The lowlight is easy to pin point and involved getting berated by Tommy Dunn for missing a straightforward shot at goal hen, listening to him explain how it should be done in the bar that evening. Our players of yesteryear always know best J.

Next season should see us building on the foundations in place and with a bit more buy in there's no reason why we can't compete to win the league.

I also want to give a big shout out to everyone who commits their time and effort to allow us to play and compete every Saturday, in particular Ian Mass for his work on the grounds and Jamie for his phenomenal work coaching us.

And lastly, to anyone who has mentioned retiring I say two things. One, look at how Jeff Burn prolonged his career and he was a front rower. Secondly, to paraphrase a pre-match speech by the great Dave Hoare, there's only so many Saturday afternoon trips to John Lewis one can fit in before the itch to pull on the boots comes back. Have a good summer everyone and see you next season.

	Team	P	W	D	L	+/-	Pts
1	<a href="#">Broughton Park 2nd XV</a>	19	19	0	0	507	95
2	<a href="#">Warrington 2nd XV</a>	19	15	0	4	307	81
3	<a href="#">Anselmians 2nd XV</a>	19	14	1	4	135	78
4	<a href="#">Didsbury Toc H 2nd XV</a>	19	12	2	5	340	71
5	<a href="#">Knutsford</a>	19	8	0	11	-154	51
6	<a href="#">Manchester 2nd XV</a>	19	6	1	12	-127	47
7	<a href="#">Eccles 2nd XV</a>	19	6	2	11	-39	45
8	<a href="#">Altrincham Kersal 2s</a>	19	6	0	13	-196	43
9	<a href="#">Crewe &amp; Nantwich 2s</a>	19	6	0	13	-401	43
10	<a href="#">Bowdon 2nd XV</a>	19	6	0	13	-202	39
11	<a href="#">Liverpool Uni Vets</a>	20	3	2	15	-170	37
12	<a href="#">Macclesfield 3rd XV</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0





# SEASON OF UPS AND DOWNS

BY DAVE RUSSELL

It's been a solid season for the 3s with some excellent results along the way in a league with plenty of 1s and 2s teams. I've been impressed by the amount of new faces joining the squad and delighted that so many lads came back after a year out, some surprisingly fitter than ever. A major difficulty for any 3s team is consistency and making sure we keep the same players around week in, week out. Although we have struggled for players some weeks, more often than not we have had a solid foundation to build the team on. This consistency helped us win 4 of our last 5 games this season, form we can take into next season.

Some notable moments from this season;

Doing the double of Bedes 2's (Didsbury 2nd finest club)

Putting 50 points on Stockport with 13 men on the pitch

Putting 30 points on Glossop with 11 men on the pitch...

Gaining a functioning line out that delivered 2 tried from driving mauls against Glossop that have universally been described as 'sexy'

Brooko proving that he had been working on his kicking during lockdown and having a great year with the boot

I think everyone will agree that it has been great to get back out on the pitch and under Tim's stewardship next year this team can really push on.



	Team	P	W	D	L	+/-	Pts
1	<a href="#">Hope Valley</a>	20	18	0	2	267	92
2	<a href="#">Marple 2nd XV</a>	20	13	0	7	193	73
3	<a href="#">Bury 2nd XV</a>	19	11	1	7	154	70
4	<a href="#">Burnage 3rd XV</a>	19	12	0	7	89	68
5	<a href="#">Village Spartans</a>	19	11	0	8	143	64
6	<a href="#">Ashton-Under-Lyne 2s</a>	19	8	0	11	13	56
7	<a href="#">Stockport 3rd XV</a>	19	9	1	9	-83	56
8	<a href="#">Glossop 3rd XV</a>	20	5	1	14	-180	44
9	<a href="#">Didsbury Toc H 3rd XV</a>	19	6	0	13	-220	42
10	<a href="#">Congleton 2nd XV</a>	19	5	1	13	-137	41
11	<a href="#">Old Bedians 2nd XV</a>	19	6	0	13	-239	34
12	<a href="#">Bowdon 3rd XV</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	<a href="#">Macclesfield 4th XV</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0

# FROM ROLLER DERBY TO RUGBY

BY LAURA RICHES

As I sit and write this summary as Captain of the Didsbury Toc H Ladies, firstly I laugh at my one game captaincy, after my leg lost a battle with the Eccles Ladies Captain, but I must highlight that this is one hell of a team.

Watching the team build and build even from the sidelines has been a true honour. From those pre season games last Summer, when we were a team made up of 50% new players, to now, 12 months on, watching the graft week in week out on the pitch. Beating teams now, who put a hefty score on us at the start of the season, is truly amazing, and has been outstanding to watch. This is owing to the commitment and drive everyone has put in at training and during matches.

The 2021/2022 season was one of many highs and lows. After losing the majority of the team through lockdown, it took a significant effort from everyone to build the team both in experience and numbers. Those "new" players are now a core part of this solid group of ladies. Starting the year with what was to be the closet yet toughest game of the year against Sale Ladies. The weeks that followed weren't the kindest on the Toc H ladies, who at times struggled to put points on the board, and field a full 15 each week. However, with the hard work from all those within the team, the team went from strength to strength. The New Year brought the return of many past players who came with fresh legs, and most importantly, the experience to make an undeniable bond within the team.

Once the second half of the season got underway we managed to gain many points, both away and at home, which gave us great momentum, finishing the season off in fine form. What was to be a building year, was no doubt a success. Bringing in new players, with little to no experience, and making them part of this great community with a collective goal.

I will stop the rambling now, but back in February, another coach asked me "why on Earth are you nervous, it's just rugby" but it's not just rugby to me or anyone on this team. It's a community, a community of great bloody people, who make everyday life feel so much better. This season wasn't ours to be at the top of the leader board or fighting for those top 2 spots but I see great things coming from these women.



#	Team	P	W	D	L	+/-	Pts
1	Bishop Auckland Ladies	16	15	0	1	448	74
2	Sale 1861 Ladies	16	14	0	2	386	67
3	Sheffield Ladies	16	13	0	3	489	66
4	Birkenhead Park Ladies	16	7	1	8	80	39
5	Manchester Ladies	16	7	0	9	-42	34
6	Didsbury Toc H Ladies	15	5	0	10	-200	28
7	Crewe & Nantwich Ladies	16	4	1	11	-203	24
8	Eccles Ladies	15	2	0	13	-531	12
9	Darlington Ladies	14	2	0	12	-427	11



# INVESTMENT INTO THE FACILITIES

BY ARTHUR CRABTREE

As most of you have already read, it has been a strong season for the club, especially when some local clubs have been struggling to get two teams out. This is due to the hard work of the players and all of the volunteers behind the scenes - from Mass on his tractor to JP and Ailish coaching on a Tuesday night.

The 1s have moved to the RFU Level 7 league, which will hopefully give the lads more competitive games on a weekly basis. The rest of the club have also got less travelling to do next season in the restructured leagues (below).

DSG has already started its investment into the facilities this week. Total- play have replaced the cricket strips with some tarmac-based cricket strips, which are designed to withstand the flooding. Next on the agenda is the changing rooms, which have taken a battering over the last few years owing to the flooding. More information on this is to follow.

Our aim for next season is to continue to grow, from the minis to the u16s all the way up to the Vets. So can I ask you all to try and bring 2 friends down over the summer? Whether it be kids wanting to get involved in rugby or 50yrs old wanting to get back involved with the Vets.

The Summer internationals start on the 2nd July, so i look forward to seeing you all then, if not before.

- July 2nd      Fiji vs England
- July 9th      Australia vs England, South Africa vs Wales, Argentina vs Scotland
- July 16th     New Zealand vs Ireland, Australia vs England, South Africa vs Wales, Argentina vs Scotland
- July 23rd     New Zealand vs Ireland, Australia vs England, South Africa vs Wales, Argentina vs Scotland

ADM NW	Halbro 2S	Halbro 4E	Ladies CN2
Aldwinians	Altrincham Kersal 2s	Ashton-Under-Lyne 2s	Waterloo
Aspull	Anselmians 2nd XV	Broughton Park 3rd XV	Sefton
Bolton	Chester 3	Bury 2nd XV	Sale
Didsbury Toc H	Congleton 1	Congleton 2	Sheffield
Leigh	Crewe & Nantwich 2s	Didsbury Toc H 3rd XV	Birkenhead
Liverpool LSH	Didsbury Toc H 2s	Glossop 3rd XV	Manchester
Sefton	Holmes Chapel	Heaton Moor 3rd XV	Didsbury Toc H
Tarleton	Knutsford	Knutsford 2nd XV	Crewe and N
Warrington	Leek 2nds	Marple 2	Driffield
West Park St H	Manchester 2nd XV	Old Bedians 2nd XV	Preston Grasshoppers
Widnes	Sandbach 3rd XV	Stockport 3rd XV	
	Wilmslow 2	Village Spartans	





Widnes RUFC @WidnesRufc · 1d  
That man jack 🥰. #heartbreaker







# 2021/22 SPONSORS



Women in the Law **UK**