



Datchworth Rugby Football Club

MINI MATTERS – Week 35



Sun 29th April 2018 – County Festival

Hello Datchworth, Mini Section Coaches, Managers, Players, Parents and Supporters,

Last weekend saw the final age group fixtures of the 2017/18 Season. The U7s and U8s were at Hertford playing in an unseasonably cold County Tag festival. Meanwhile back at the Club the U6, U9s and U10s had a final session before the summer break. The U11s and U12s were not training although some of the players and parents were at Allianz Park supporting our First XV. The fixture reports and news from our final round of fixtures are detailed below...

U6s Training at Datchworth

It was another chilly morning this Sunday at Datchworth but as always, the U6s were undeterred and 21 members of the squad turned up with loads of energy and ready to get stuck straight into the session.

Following some initial relays we continued the warm up with some tag stuck in the mud before progressing into a unit passing drill and then straight into match practice. This is only the fourth week we have had the under 6s playing actual tag matches and whilst there is still a steep learning curve to climb, there is definite progression each and every week. This is obviously great to see and very encouraging for next season. The team has now pretty much mastered tagging and returning tags and their other skills in relation to ball control, agility and evasion have really improved since the turn of the year. This gives us a great foundation for next year and will hopefully allow us to progress to focus on more difficult 'game understanding' activities and things like spatial awareness and decision making when the new season starts. This is clearly on the premise that they don't come back after a long summer off wondering why the balls in the training bag are egg shaped and asking where the bats are!

We finished the session off with the usual game of bulldog which gets more and more competitive every week. At the start of the season we always used to play to the last player standing. Now however, due to the squad size increasing, the team all being a bit bigger, and their eagerness to win and increased confidence (which is a good thing but sometimes



needs to be managed! ☺), we play to the final five, well done to this week's winners! Individual honours went to Aiden this week. Aiden has been a regular with us all season and has shown huge improvement in a number of areas and this has shone through as we have started playing matches. Whether attacking or defending Aiden is always eager to get involved and he showed some great footwork and agility this week as he moved around a trio of the opposition to score a well deserved try. Great work Aiden.

Only one week left! Where has the season gone!

U7s County Festival at Hertford RFC

After the lovely sunny morning of last week's training, it was back to the norm of a freezing cold Sunday morning, but despite the change in temperature, 18 u7s made the short trip over to Hertford for the County Festival.

The mighty Datchworth Whites won all their matches. The game with Old Albanions Lions was the closest with only one try in it. George played his socks off and Max managed to score a few times which he sometimes struggles with the confidence of pushing through to the line. James P had a great game all round and Bailey was outstanding again with fast feet and hands scoring lots of tries.

Well done to all the boys from Datchworth Greens who all had a great day. The 'Greens' of William, Ted, Bo and Charlie played some superb rugby with great tagging, passing and running; managing to score 43 tries over the five games and a record of Played 5, won 4, drawn 1.

Datch Blue "Sharks" made up of Harry P, Nathan, Lenny, Tommy and Reece played 5 tough games winning 3 and 2 loses that were very close. All of them took great tags with Reece being a key tag killer. Nathan and Harry dominated in midfield snuffing out players as they tried to come forward and then going on the hunt. Lenny was our play maker constantly keeping everyone moving also showing a good step ably supported by Tommy who had his best game for Datch constantly involved and scoring key tries to win matches. Special shout to coach-at-large Gold DP for coaching, reffing, and not sending his boy (Harry) off.



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The awesome Datchworth Red's made up of Martha, Felix, Jasper, James S and Finlay played some superb rugby. We played 5, won 4 and drew 1 (8-8, 11-8, 10-6, 5-3 & 6-5) which is a great result and it was clear in some matches how far ahead we were than the other teams. Even with a bump on the head for Felix and some really cold hands for Jasper, the team even managed a win with only three people on the pitch. Highlights were Felix's side stepping to score a try, Martha's running down the wing, James' tagging (pushing the team back to their own try line), Jaspers' straight line running, and Finlay's great handling really did bring the team together to make a tough competitor.

A huge thank you to all the parents for braving the cold and providing great support, especially when it came to the last-minute sugar rushes to get the kids "energised" ahead of each game. We have a fantastic bunch of supporters who really gel and these games wouldn't be half as fun without you all. The kids were all amazing. They kept their humour up despite the cold and played some brilliant rugby. They are really coming together as a team and the coaches are really proud of what they have achieved as u7s.

U8s County Festival at Hertford RFC

21 U8 players met at a very cold and windy Hertford RFC [Sunday morning](#) for their last ever Tag Rugby Festival.



The players, who looked fantastic and professional in their new shirts, split into three teams, with

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Coaches Pip and Nick each looking after a team, and Coach Andrew and Waterboy Mark looking after the other team – we are very grateful for their help. Our teams were each in a different pool and played 5 games throughout the morning. They used everything they have learned during the season and played some fantastic tag rugby! All players received a well-deserved medal and badge at the end of the fun festival.

The Festival was well organised (although the queue for the hot drink stall was particularly long!) and, despite the weather, was enjoyed by players, coaches and, hopefully, parents!

Many thanks to Coach Nick for bringing along the gazebo ... not sure what we would have done without it!

U9s Training at Datchworth

We made the most of the extra space today to continue with the rucking work we had been doing on our Wednesday sessions. Focusing the players on the more technical aspects and also positional play, but keeping things simple. Really positive progress seen today which we will build on next year. We took this work, as well as practising our 'passing down the line' skills into our first full 'U10s' rucking game - a really positive way to finish off our season.

We are all looking forward to next week's fun, games and awards to celebrate a successful U9's season.

Sunday 6th May Pitch Allocation @ Datchworth:

Next weekend is the final session of the 2017/18 Season at Datchworth.

All age groups will be training at Datchworth; (the U12s will be holding a transition to Youth Meeting) before hopefully having some fun.



End of Season / Summer – Club News & Event Information:

Misc Club Dates for your diary:

- Friday 25th May – Beer / Gin festival + LIVE MUSIC
- Saturday 26th May – Beer / Gin festival all day, 2 cricket games, PIG ROAST from 7.30pm
- Sunday 27th May – Beer / Gin festival all day, 6-a-side cricket fun-day from 10am
- Monday 28th May – Beer / Gin festival all day + 1st XI cup match
- Friday 15th June – Race Night
- NatWest “Rugby-Force” weekend will take place on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 June 2018
- Friday 13th July – Junior Cricket Awards, fun-night and pig roast
- School Holidays – Wk 1 / Wk 2 (Dates to be finalised) – Summer Rugby and Summer Cricket Camps
- Rugby Registration Day and our First Training Session of the new 2018/19 Season will take place on Sunday 2nd September at 10AM.

Rugby Taster Session for local Scouts Thursday 24th May

Can all coaches who are able to support this session please meet at Datchworth by 6:30 on Thursday 24th May.

Datchworth Rugby Club AGM – Monday 30th April 2018 @ 8:30PM

The AGM took place on Monday evening and was well supported by most age groups in the Mini Section. The meeting recorded thanks to Phil Solomon for the work he has done to kickstart Girls Rugby at Datchworth. We also reflected on the performances of all age groups from our U6 squad to the First XV. The Election of Officers saw no substantive changes in key roles as we look towards the 2018/19 Season. It is likely that both the Senior Section Chairman and Mini Section Chairman roles will change at the end of the next Season and people interested in either role should make themselves known to the Club. Looking towards the new season there are a number of different roles where additional volunteer support would be much appreciated.

Section Fixtures Plan – 2017/18 Season:

Week	Date	Datchworth RFC Mini Section Provisional 17/18 Season	DRFC Parking Duty
36	Sun 06 May	Final Training / Awards Day / End of Season BBQ	Minis

2017/18 Datchworth End of Season Survey

Many of you will know that over the past few Seasons we have sought feedback about your experience of Mini Rugby at Datchworth. We really value this input so we can plan over the summer



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months; take on board suggestions and in-cases implement positive changes. I am grateful to Paul Ward for setting up this simple and short survey for us and I would be delighted if you could all spare a few minutes to offer your thoughts, suggestions and ideas about how we improve the Mini Rugby section at Datchworth: The all-important 2017/18 Season Datchworth Rugby Survey link is as below:

<https://goo.gl/forms/NYEDi3arnQORDozo1>

Awards Day Plan

The outline plan for Awards Day is set out below; I look forward to seeing you all on Sunday. All timings are approximate:

Time	Activity
9:00am	Car Parking Duty / Setting Out Awards / Chairs in Marquee
10:00am	Fun Training Session Starts U6 to U11s
	U12s Youth Transition Meeting 45mins (Club House Lounge area)
11:15am	U6 to U11 'Fun' Training ends / age-groups return to Club House / Marquee
11:30am	Chairman's Welcome and Season Summary
11:40am	U6s – All Players Presented with Medals / Coaches comments
11:50am	U12s – Award Presentations & Medals / Coaches comments
12:05pm	U11s - Award Presentations & Medals / Coaches comments
12:15pm	Girls Rugby Award Presentations
12:25pm	U10s - Award Presentations & Medals / Coaches comments
12:35pm	U9s - Award Presentations & Medals / Coaches comments
12:45pm	U8s - Award Presentations & Medals / Coaches comments
12:55pm	U7s - Award Presentations & Medals / Coaches comments
1:00pm	Mini Merit Award Presentation
1:05pm	Coach of the Year Presentation
1:15pm	Thanks & Volunteer Recognition Awards
1:25pm	End of Season Photograph – All Players in New Shirts (weather dependent).
1:35pm	Mini Section Awards Day and 2017/18 Season Close

Awards Day Notes:

1. Aside from U6s all Age Groups to Stay together and watch all other age-group Award presentations in their Section.
2. Age Groups to sit together to make it easy to make presentations run smoothly



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3. Age Group Head Coach, (or nominee), will say a few words about each award winner and the experience / performance of their age-group over the Season
4. Club Captain to present Awards to winning players; alongside Chairman and Age Group Head Coach
5. Each Award Winner will be photographed when presented with the award
6. Award Winners and other players to return to seats to watch further Awards.

Closing Notes & Roundup...

Well the season is more or less done now..... I hope everyone is looking forward to some fun on Sunday and the award presentations before a well-deserved summer break. It has been a good Season with lots of progress and lots to be proud off from across all the age-groups. It was great to see two more U7 and U8 age groups giving a great account of themselves, (and the Club), on a cold morning at Hertford. Well done to all from the Mini Section who ventured down to Allianz Park on Sunday afternoon for the Herts Tankard Cup-Final against Hemel Camelot. Sadly, this Season the boys couldn't get on top of Hemel but they gave a great account of themselves.

I will look forward to seeing everyone on Sunday for our end of Season Awards...

Have a good week and see you next weekend,

Best wishes,

Andrew

Andrew Howard

Chairman – Mini Section

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