



Datchworth Rugby Football Club

MINI MATTERS – Week 25

Sunday 18th February 2018



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

It was another busy weekend for Datchworth; the enjoyable ladies lunch on Saturday was followed by a good away fixture with Letchworth, (and Watford in some age-groups), on Sunday morning. The weather was mild, the pitches were muddy and as you can see below most age groups had a good competitive morning of rugby....

Datchworth U6s Training:

It was sunshine and blue skies at Datchworth this week and finally the ground is showing some signs of drying out. Spring is around the corner!

Due to the February half term and most of the teams playing away it was a smaller group of 14 at under 6s training this week. Nevertheless, it was a packed session full of the usual energy and enthusiasm we are used to seeing every Sunday from the under 6s.

Following some initial ball carrying relay work the team went for a mass cross country run up the field to ensure the blood was well and truly flowing. Based on some of the rosy cheeks we had scattered around the team when we got back to the training pitch I think it's fair to say the team were well and truly warmed up! The squad then jumped straight into the drills with some crossover work and passing and moving in units. This was a new drill for the under 6s which they picked up very quickly and executed brilliantly. More of this in the coming weeks! The team then went on to finish things off with some ball retrieval relays, an assault course and bulldog, obviously!

It was a packed and competitive session as always and inevitably a couple of the team took an occasional knock along the way. Well done to Hugo, Lewis and Henry for dusting themselves off and just getting on with it. Good work!

Once again there were a number of great performances this week. It was nice to see the squad starting to work in units and well done to Jamie and Archie for taking this week's bulldog honours.

Player of the week was well deserved this week and went to Thomas B. Thomas has barely missed a session all season and always tries his hardest at each and every session. Thomas has been improving week on week, always trains with a smile and is a pleasure to coach. Well done Thomas!



A separate thank you to Joe, Wes and Jeremy for their support in the drills this week. Thanks gents. See you all next week. Hopefully for some more sunshine and blue skies!

Datchworth U7s Away Vs Letchworth

The under 7s were at Letchworth today with everyone enjoying the sunshine. We started off with a joint warm up with our opponents and broke into four teams to rotate around the slightly larger Letchworth squad.

All teams performed brilliantly today, and were far more organised than Letchworth. Charlie, Harry P, James and Jasper had three brilliant games, one so brilliant they played for twice as long as they should have. Some incredible running lines from Charlie, some unbelievable side steps from James, great all-round tagging and running from Harry and Jasper had some magnificent dives and tries.

Lenny, Jack, Nathan and Ted all showed good running forward and passing quickly when tagged. Defensive line was good with the famous Datch Bedrängen causing multiple mistakes from Letchworth. Good tries from Jack and Lenny with Nathan and Ted providing defensive cover and set up.

Reese, Kyran, Finlay, Felix, George and William all played well as a team. Great running and scoring from Will, George, Felix and Kyran, and tagging and passing from Reese and Finlay.

Max, Bo, Bailey and James also had a great morning, staying within the lines and some great tagging and passing.

Across the board there is work still to be done on running forward, supporting the player with the ball and grabbing those tags but an excellent effort all round today across the whole of the under 7s.

We had two players of the week today - Nathan and Ted who showed excellent paired work in defence and attack. Ted changed from scoring himself to setting other players up whilst Nathan organised the defence showing bravery, teamwork and positivity.



Datchworth U8s Away Vs Letchworth

Enough players for two under 8 teams made the journey to a sunny Letchworth. After coach John took the teams through a few ballet inspired warmup drills... we did a few quick reminders on the defensive lines we practiced last week in training.

As we see most weeks both teams did some fantastic attacking play - most pleasing was the great support play on the big pitches we were playing on. It was great to see and hear the teams talking to each other in the games making sure everyone was involved in the play. There were some great team tries scored!

Our defensive work is improving each week - however still remains the main challenge for us to work on. Some great one on one tagging, however we still need to keep our line.

Thanks to all the parents for bringing the kids today - was great to have them shielding their eyes from the sun rather than turning blue with cold!



Datchworth U9s Away Vs Letchworth

3 U9 teams of 8 players plus subs rolled into Letchworth to play two opposition teams. Unfortunately, due to space we only had two pitches so some drills for one team while we rotated.

The coaches challenge to the players was to keep up the same standard they had achieved over the last couple of months. We are pleased to say they did. Again, commitment, effort and discipline have become the norm its weeks since we have had to question that. Fitness and our fast style of popping the ball around was lovely, just need to let the players know its ok to go to the ground sometimes and reset rather than throw the ball away.

Some great tackles and some missed but that's ok as long as we are trying to tackle the right way. The defensive line could be better but we shouldn't be worried it will come with age. Using the width when we attack, it's getting better as the weeks go by but again it will all come with age. Its great these are the only things to worry about.

Big credit to the coaches. Over the last few months we are letting the players manage the game with coaches only speaking before, halftime and at the end of each game. Great results and really empowers the players and find leaders all over the pitch.



A number of small knocks today, we hope all recover over the week. Great team performance and thanks to our hosts Letchworth and Mark and his team of coaches.

Datchworth U10s Away Vs Letchworth

The U10s played against two Letchworth teams:

The U10 Blue team played 3 games losing the first but winning the next two well. The first game we tried to arm wrestle a bigger side when we should have been getting the ball wide to use our pace and move their big guys around. The boys did well to adjust in the next two games and play to our strengths and play with more width. Theo T and Will S both had great games and worked their socks off for the team all morning. Both were awarded well deserved men of the match!

The U10 Green team played with some amazing rucking today with Mackenzie starting where he left off from Saracens along with Theo T also in amazing form as well Sebby now getting into a run of form this was a 6-1 win but it was a lot tougher than the score suggests! Will G was great in the middle with Owen and Finlay N helping-out. Our 2nd game was a great game with us having to battle for everything we were playing against a good team and could have won but the boys showed great character and Theo W scored a great try. The boys lost 3-2 but learnt some big lessons about having to deal with everyone against you well done. The 3rd game we played the same team as in our first game. Again, it was a good physical game with all our boys including Fin M getting his tackles perfect.



Datchworth U11s Away Vs Letchworth and Watford

Despite a few players missing having half term fun, the U11's turned out today and just about managed to field two sides in a surprise three-way also with Watford. Letchworth and Watford only had one side each so we managed to get both our sides to play both teams.



First up the greens took on Watford, who we recently played and lost to. The first half was pretty tight, with Matty putting in a strong performance including a score from a run down the middle, but then Watford countered by turning us over at a ruck after our penalty and counter-attacked. However, the second half we really stepped up across the team and got our back line flowing, giving us a clear win at the end. Then the greens played Letchworth in a feisty match up against a physically bigger side. However, we repeatedly managed to get through their defence with our backs passing moves and in particular we scored a great team try from a ruck in our own half with a couple of phases of passing followed up with a great wing break and side step of the last defender from Troy. Overall, we chalked up another clear win.



Our blues struggled today against two good teams. First up was Letchworth and we had a slow start, with the defensive line hanging back and missing tackles, allowing Letchworth to run in several tries.

However, the second half saw a marked improvement with a lot more effort being put in across the team and whilst we didn't manage to score ourselves we limited them only to a couple of scores. Then the blues took on Watford and despite the first result were not too down-hearted.

We carried on where we had left off at the end of the last game and a lot of grit was shown by George, Tom P, Ross and everyone else. Despite having a couple of tries scored against us, we demonstrated a much better pressure in defence, support at the ruck and chasing kicks. We lost but it was much narrower against a much bigger team and they all did really well.



Finally, well done to players of the week Lucas Knapp and Oliver Ward for a huge effort throughout both games.

Datchworth U12s Away Vs Letchworth and Watford

A rugby season can be full of highs and lows and it is fair to say that the U12s experienced a low on Sunday morning. Notwithstanding a fair few half term absentees we still had plenty of players available to give Letchworth and Watford a good game.... However.... I think most players, parents, (and definitely the coaches), would agree that the '*basics*' deserted our U12s today. The Datchworth team looked like they had just come back from a half term break in Holland given the number of Windmills on show! Our defensive structure and line speed was poor in both games and we really only played in short passages this Sunday, our weak tackling was of particular concern. We were beaten by an excellent Letchworth team who tackled, rucked and moved the ball very well indeed and were also fitter around the pitch than our squad. We then had a very close fought battle with Watford which ended in confusion with a high tackle on Nelson being missed that resulted in a break away try for Watford. The referee did apologise after the game and agreed a mistake had been made.



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There were a few brighter moments in a difficult morning; it was good to see Myles enjoy his first game-time in Datch green, Kobie was excellent as Captain and did his best to lift the team on a difficult morning and Nelson did take the ball forward with guts and power when he had the opportunity to do-so. We will have much better morning than this one and fingers crossed they start next weekend when we face our local rivals Welwyn in the Charles Morris Cup.



Datchworth Youth Rugby – Round Up:

Two good home wins today, well done to the U13s and U15s:

U13s vs Tring result: 50 - 20 win

A hard earned and well deserved first win of the new year for the Datchworth team. Without wishing to take anything away from the boys, the score line does, if we are being brutally honest, slightly flatter the boys, as Tring did put in a spirited performance and pushed Datchworth hard.

The first half was a quite closely fought affair, with two evenly matched teams scraping it out. The Datchworth scrum were again stronger in the set piece, pushing Tring back off their own ball on more than one occasion. The Tring backs were well organised and moved the ball well, stretching the Datchworth defence with nail biting regularity. In the second half, the advantage of having an almost full squad to rotate through showed, and as Tring tired, a regular supply of relatively fresh Datchworth legs took their toll. Having said that, once a healthy lead was built up, Datchworth did relax a tad and let Tring score two late tries. It was good to see the boys putting into practice the drills Phil has been teaching them for the past six weeks. The vast majority of the tries today were team efforts, they came from boys running good supporting lines, being on the shoulder of the boy making the line break. Once again, the boys put in a tremendous effort and worked really well as a team. As in previous year's write ups, I will not name the try scorers, as it is a team effort to score the tries, also, seven boys scored tries today, so I would run out of space! Man of the match went to Myles 'Chunder' Barringer, for his non-stop effort and commitment to the cause, especially as he is the only forward not substituted for the last 3 games!! Well done 'Chunder', as for obvious reasons you will be known as for the rest of your Datchworth career.

U15s vs Harpenden: 27-12 win

Datchworth ran out winners in a bruising contest in a game versus a combative Harpenden Development side. The start saw us drop the kick off, concede possession and then not touch the ball for 5 minutes, Harpenden eventually scoring in the corner.

This woke the whole Datch team and they started to put some solid passages of play together and play some good rugby. Will Gibbard capped another strong performance with 2 well taken tries.

Datch moved the ball nicely all game and Tayden scored a well worked try in the corner. Ollie B scored 2 tries with a solid performance which earned (the MoM as voted by the oppo) and Angus added a conversion to complete the scoring. Our Man of the Match was Brandon for solid defence and dealing with the pressure he was put under.



Girls Rugby Update:

The Datchworth u10s and u11s girls headed over to Fullarians today for another girl's rugby festival. We were represented by 5 players plus our honorary training guests from Hertford and OAs, Ruby and Savannah. As you can see from the photo we have one of the biggest contingents of girls playing rugby at u10s/u11s and that's with several of our girls away this weekend. It's great to see and bodes very well for the future of our new Youth teams from September this year.

A big well done to Francesca, who is showing great progress after her first contact game and also to Reece, who made a big step up in play today with praise coming from several coaches for her tackles and runs.

The coaching team for the girl's section also expands this week as Peter Wood, aka Grace's dad, joins us and will be heading over to the next Rugby Ready course. Welcome Pete!



I'd like to see how many girls would be interested in doing a midweek evening training session. The likely day and time for this would be 6.30pm on a Wednesday for 1 hour but we may be able to move this depending on availability of players, parents and the floodlit training pitch.

Please can you let me know if your daughter would like to attend this session. We would need a minimum of 6 girls to make it worthwhile so this will only go ahead if we achieve that. We have 3 confirmed already so almost there...

I'll be in touch again during next week about the upcoming girl's events but in the meantime here are a couple of new dates for your diary:

- Sunday 18th March - u10s/u11s Girls Festival at Welwyn
- Sunday 25th March - Girls training at Datchworth (all ages from u10s upwards)



Ladies Touch Rugby:

The Ladies Touch Rugby sessions on Monday evenings are starting to gain some traction and great fun is had by those who attend. I'd like to encourage the mums and older sisters from the club to give them a try. You can either get in touch with Lynne beforehand (lsolomon@btinternet.com) or just turn up. It's a 7.30pm start.

Other Club News & Event Information:

Senior Rugby

The First XV had a big home clash with Old Streetonians on Saturday afternoon at Datchworth; despite some good support from the Ladies of the Club and a strong late come-back we were unable to haul in Old Streetonians finishing up with a 20-30 home defeat.

Ladies Lunch 17th February 2018

The Ladies luncheon on Saturday afternoon was a great success, (I am not sure who that *rogue* bloke is at the bar though) ...? We were delighted to welcome a good cross section of players' wives, mothers, partners, members and volunteers! I think the ladies all enjoyed the meal and wine...there was a certainly a good deal of support for the First team game and from what I understand a few of the ladies outlasted everyone else at the bar... thanks to Jon Watt, Neal and the Catering team for putting on a great afternoon...



2018 Datchworth Rugby Club - Mini and Youth Dinner and Dance:

For those wishing to come to the 2018 Dinner and Dance Payments all outstanding payments need to be made this week please. Payment of £55 per ticket to be made either by Cash or Cheque

passed to you age group manager or directly to Nicola Howard, (made payable to Datchworth RFC), or a bank transfer to the Datchworth RFC club account (with reference Name age group and dinner dance);

Club Payment details:

- Datchworth RFC
- Sort code: 16-00-30
- Account No: 10019884
- Reference – 'Dinner Dance' and age group

Following confirmation of payment tickets can be collected from Nicola; any special dietary requirements to Nicola by Friday.

Holt Tour Final Payment:

The Final Payment for the Holt Tour is due on the 6th March payment details were detailed in the tour letter. The total cost per person is £135, (plus £7.50 per set of bedding where requested), minus deposits paid.

Mini Mid-Week Training: Continues - Wednesday 21st February

- The first sessions are approx. 6:30 till 7:30 and the second session 7:35 till 8:35. Details and locations as below:

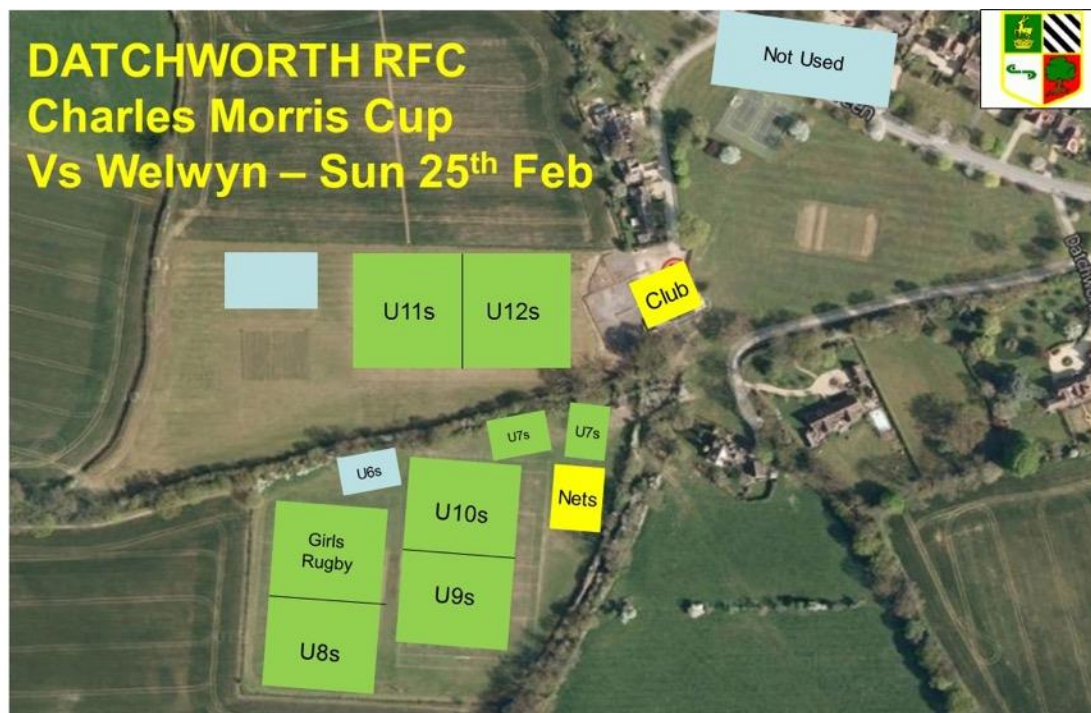
Age Group	Time / Date / Location	Notes
U10s	6:30 till 7:30 PM – Flood lit training pitch	Wed 21 st Feb Confirmed Session
U11s	6:30 till 7:30 PM – Flood Lit training pitch	Wed 21 st Feb Confirmed Session
U12s	7:35 till 8:35 PM – Flood lit training pitch	Wed 21 st Feb. NO U12 SESSION DUE TO COACH AVAILABILITY

- ***Mid-Week Training Pitch Space Allocation as usual***



Next Weekend's Rugby arrangements: Sunday 25th February

Next weekend all Mini Match Playing age groups, (U7 to U12), are playing Welwyn RFC at Datchworth in the Annual Charles Morris Cup Tournament please can all age groups be set up and warming up at 10AM for a 10:30 Kick-Off;



The rules and scoring of the Charles Morris Festival have been shared amongst the Manager and Coaching Community who will be able to answer any questions; please do stay for the presentation which typically will take place about 12:30 on Sunday morning after the last games have finished.

Charles Morris - Sunday 25th February Parking Arrangements:

Next Sunday - the U9s are on Parking Duty at Datchworth; for the Charles Morris Weekend it will be very busy indeed and anyone who can help ease the parking burden by car-sharing, walking, biking or be dropped will be much appreciated.

Mini Section Fixtures Plan – 2017/18 Season:

Week	Date	Datchworth RFC Mini Section Provisional 17/18 Season	DRFC Parking Duty
26	Sun 25-Feb	Charles Morris Cup Weekend Vs Welwyn RFC @Datchworth	U9
27	Sat 3-March	Hertford Spring Flood Light Festival U10s / U11s / U12s	N/A
	Sun 4-Mar	DRFC Minis Vs Chess Valley <i>at Datchworth</i> (U7 to U11)	U8



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		U12s Training at Datchworth	
28	Fri 9 th March	Datchworth Mini & Youth Dinner and Dance at Knebworth Barns	N/A
	Sun 11-Mar	DRFC Minis Vs St Albans at Datchworth	U7
29	Sun 18- Mar	DRFC Minis Vs Old Grammarians at Datchworth	U12
30	Sun 25- Mar	Hitchin Festival U7s, U8s, U9	
		Training at Datchworth, U10, U11, U12	TBC
31	Sun 1-Apr	Easter Sunday - No Rugby	Easter Sunday

Closing Notes & Roundup...

Another busy weekend with a few ups and downs for our First Team... and our U12s... overall though a good weekend for the Club with the Ladies Lunch working really well, some great Youth results and some good match reports from the Mini age-groups visit to Letchworth. Next weekend is another big one, there is a Sports Club Quiz on Friday evening, the Scotland V England game on Saturday afternoon and then the big one on Sunday morning... Datchworth V Welwyn for the Charles Morris Shield....

Have a wonderful week and see you all next weekend,

Best wishes,

Andrew

Andrew Howard
Chairman – Mini Section
Datchworth Rugby Football Club

