



AMPTHILL & DISTRICT COMMUNITY RUFC



End of Season Team Reports
2010 / 2011

GRANGE Waitrose



WELCOME

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Dear Ampthill & District Community Rugby Club supporter,

This past year has been yet another very successful season both on and off the field. There are too many contributors and helpers to thank and mention here but we appreciate everything that you have all done.

We have had another excellent season from every age group with some good games and successes, despite the fact that the current playing facilities are still woefully inadequate. We are pleased to report that the building of our new pitches has got under way and we are now making good progress, despite all sorts of delays and last minute additional costs.

Our fund-raising to continue financing this project is still vitally important – we are now committed to get this completed and have more big bills to pay.

Without FOAR and POAR the club could not have pursued this, the contributions have helped pay the fees incurred so far, but we need to keep adding contributors to our boards and find other ways of continued fund raising.

The good news is that the pitches should be ready to play on during the 2011/2012 season – if we get a good grass-growing summer.

Off the field the club has been awarded the Whole Club Seal of Approval – the first club in Bedfordshire to receive this accolade, a big thank you to all who have helped us achieve this.

Everyone should be rightfully proud of the club and its collective achievements this season and we look forward to bigger and better things to come.

Thank you.

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U6 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY ADRIAN DEWEY

In true Ampthill style we've again been fortunate to gain a strong intake of U6 players that can be characterised by the huge smiles that they shared throughout the season. Whether they were picking daisies or leaping for a tag, their continuing good humour made them a pleasure to coach and ensured the perfect environment to develop their rugby skills. It is unusual for a group so young to master tag rugby sufficiently in one season to be able to competently play a competitive game. However, the difference in this year's U6s between the start and finish of the season was phenomenal; during our 'joint training session' with Olney RUFC, the squad demonstrated that they will be a force to be reckoned with once the tournaments start next season.

U7 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY FRANCESCO FERRARI

It has been a real pleasure coaching the little darlings this season. We really do have a great and talented bunch of kids. The numbers have hovered at around 40 for the whole season. Scott and I are also very lucky (as are the kids) to have a great set of coaches so thanks to them all.

This is my 3rd year with many of the kids (having had 2 years with the U 6's) It has been amazing to see the improvement in all of them over the season. We have many naturally talented runners and ball carriers, but I take greater pleasure in seeing how many have really come on during the season. Also come rain or shine, attendance is high and all the kids play and train with a smile. They really seem to enjoy their rugby.

The years honours include...Runners up in the Mobbs preliminary rounds. Winners of Beds cup (beating our arch rivals Bedford in the final), Winners of the Kingswood Festival on tour and during the season we also beat Saracens in a friendly game.

This year was the first tour for many of us. We had a great time (the parents....or most of them behaving) and again thanks to all those at the club who helped organise this. We are looking forward to next year when we hope to introduce some Italian/Northern flair into the coaching sessions. Have a good summer and see you all next year.

U8 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY HUGH CHRISTEY

Pre-season – we kicked off with a trip to Saracens' tournament on the Saturday of the 'Triple-Header'. Despite coming up against sides from all over the South of England, one of our teams even made the afternoon finals in front of 70,000 at Twickenham itself!

Season – the measure of our success wasn't simply taking home both Bedford and East Midlands cups (an achievement in itself), it was doing this in a way that the kids of all abilities developed together, had fun and felt an equal part of the squad. It would be impossible to pick out any one outstanding player as all in the squad had a great season. All the coaches agreed that everyone had improved significantly over the course of the year – a credit to the efforts put in by the players in all weathers.

Tour - we capped the season off with a sun-soaked tour to Norfolk (see picture), where we fielded the largest number of players from any Ampthill age-group. We even managed to avenge our early-season 8-7 defeat by Stamford by beating them in the Plate final at Holt! Thanks to the club for the superb support and well done to all coaches, parents – and most importantly – players!



U9 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY JOSH STONE

This has been a tough season with the transition from tag to contact but all the players have adapted well.

We have had another good year on the pitch starting with a semi final finish at the Peterborough festival and a Mobbs regional runner up finish. Unfortunately the Beds cup evaded us this year despite a spirited effort from both teams entered with one team not conceding any points in the pool stages.

We put in very good performances during all the fixtures the season, certainly winning more games than losing.

We had another good tour, our second visit to Yarmouth, the weather and the caravans being 100% better than 2 years ago.

We made a couple of trips to Saracens this season, being part of the partner parade and getting to be the guard of honour at the last home league game at vicarage road.

We are all looking forward to next season, and the challenges that contested scrums & lineouts will bring, but most of all we're looking forward to the new pitches.



Remember when Robbie left Take That, Gerri left the Spice Girls and Alvin left the Chipmunks ?, well if you do you will know that the follow up albums were always going to be difficult and that's how the U10's started for this season with Coach Kiwi McTavish leaving the squad to go onto bigger and better things, leaving it in the hands of a novice Englishman.



The season started slowly, with 42 registered players all getting to know each other again and the introduction of contested lineouts and contested scrums. The squad soon settled down, and a natural break of A,B and Developmental players was formed.

Our first tournament of the season fell foul to the weather, so the U10's rocked up at the Peterborough festival and were met by a little bit of unexpected physicality in one of the games which knocked their confidence a bit. However, the boys stormed back to pick up the plate and the first piece of silverware for the season.

More encouragingly was the development of our B squad, who entered a Bedford tournament to be met by very strong opposition from other teams A squads, and despite defeats, showed much promise which would prove to bear fruit later in the season.

Coach Blakey started his midweek training regimes, if anyone was near Ampthill on a Thursday evening the shouts of 'Five Press Ups' and 'Stop talking' could be heard consistently. So much so, that the Vet's team took an interest and even roped old Blakey into coach them for some sessions.

The winter months saw good results against our local opposition, and a win for the A's in the Mobb's qualifiers and excellent performance by the B's saw us end 2010 in good form.

Despite all the cold weather, and missing training sessions, the boys continued in good form at the start of the year with wins over Buckingham (after a very slippery drive up to the club) and Harlow saw all squads developing well.

Our A's attended the Bed's cup, and again met with some unexpected physicality, however they came back and made the final only to be beaten by a Bedford squad. The first time since U7's that this team had lost a Bed's cup match. Our B's attended Market Harborough festival, yes it is a long way to travel !, and gave an excellent performance coming up against strong squads from around the East Midlands area.

So into March, Banbury visited and taught the squad a lesson in how to play rugby at this level. Quick hands, great backs moves and sheer speed was the difference. Pleasing however was the fact that we had learned how to ruck and gained great praise from the Banbury coach, who were undefeated all season, in our forward play – big shout out to Coach Garwood for that one !. Our B's attended the Olney festival and ended up an excellent 3rd place by one point. Again, testimony to the coaching staff who worked very hard with this squad.

U10 TEAM CONT...

Onto tour, and a nice mix of players went through the weekend undefeated and picking up the plate at the Kingswood festival, missing out on a final place on tries scored. Playing so well, it was overheard by one team that they didn't want to play Ampthill as they looked such a strong team. Usual tour antics occurred, with the notable absence of Coach Denton at the Saturday evening get together because of a 'poorly tummy' after an afternoon sampling local ales in Wymondham.

Our final piece of action for the season was to play our close neighbours ON's in the Mobb's final at Goldington Road. A very special occasion and an excellent performance by the team saw us share the trophy with ON's after a 1-1 draw. All the players took part and gave their all, winning the game on possession, territory and sheer hard work – the second try just wouldn't come.

So all in all, a good season, the follow up album is in the bag and well received by the critics. Life without the lead singer is suddenly a bit easier, and every now and again we may look to invite him back for a reunion concert or perhaps a world tour!

U11 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY JOEY EVANS

The Under 11's season was one of highs and lows. As the Rugby Lions Tournament was cancelled we quickly entered a team into the Bedford festival but didn't give ourselves much hope, especially after watching the first match between Old Albanians and Bedford B teams. However, we gelled together and made it to the final with ease. We lost to Old Albanians A squad by one try with Brendan Venter cheering his son on who was their captain!



We had lost a number of players over the summer and our squad was depleted, so it became a challenge at times ensuring that we were competitive in all the tournaments and matches. However everyone pulled together well which ensured we were not overwhelmed by any club.

After Christmas we were all shocked to learn that Richard Carr had tragically died. Richard was a fantastic guy who was fully committed to supporting his son David and the U11 to any lengths. Richard will be missed by all.

The weather played its part again and we missed a number of training sessions and matches, however everyone remained enthusiastic and although we didn't produce our best at the Mobbs, we did win the Plate at the Beds Cup festival.

In January we were lucky to be part of a great training session at the club taken by England players Andy Gomarsall and Will Skinner all courtesy of James Hind of the Under 12's.

Tour was a great success yet again with good rugby played and the sun beating down.

We look forward to the 2011/12 season as the Under 12's and having an extra player on the pitch!

U12 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY NIGEL MACKLIN

The last two years have been a fast track for all coaches, rugby players and parents. We have 5 new coaches to start the Youth season, all seasoned and rugby orientated, who have set the scene for next season by coaching the closing Mini years with great success at tournaments, fixtures and tours. Gary Taylor is Head Coach supported by Para Terry, Phil Footer, Terry Kiwi and Paul Sidestep. Accordingly, the rugby players have improved their skills in all aspects of the game; forwards with Gary and Para, backs with Kiwi, Sidestep and Footer.



Parents have contributed by organising a committee to look after the interests of the team. They have raised funds through various functions to provide equipment and kit to further the skills of coaching rugby. Where we are today is due to the past endeavours of James the voice Hind, Tim the Tyre, Roger Dodger and Jeremy nice smile plus all the players who have come and gone. It is pleasing to see the squad increasing in size at the latter stage of this season. No advertising just word of mouth from the rugby players to their peers; come and join my rugby team it's fantastic and brilliant. That speaks volume for the last two years.

U13 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY PAUL HICKEY

2010/11 was a very satisfactory season for the U13's, the transition from mini to youth rugby was navigated with ease, there was continuing success on the field of play and we were delighted to be able to put out two squads, one participating in Herts Middlesex League 1 and the other in Herts Middlesex League division 4. In addition there was the important matter of East Midlands and Beds County Cups to be defended.

Herts Middlesex League

Amps U13's dominated HML 1 securing victories over all of the other 7 participants en route to winning the league, scoring 300 points and conceding just 24. The winner's trophy will be presented at the beginning of next season at Wembley Stadium during one of Saracens Premier League fixtures

In HML 4 Amps U13's second squad played 8 games, winning 5 and finishing the season in a very credible 4th position after a memorable and stirring 19 – 29 victory over Tabard (who finished in 3rd place) in the final round of league fixtures. Amps were the highest placed "2nd" team in the whole of the 6 division HML league

U13 TEAM CONT...

East Midlands Cup

Amps U13's retained the East Midlands Cup with a 0-46 win over Northampton Old Scouts in the final. Overall in the competition Amps scored 204 points and conceded none on the way to securing the winner's trophy for the fourth successive season.

Beds County Cup

The County Cup campaign provided us with the opportunity to field teams drawn from a mix of the HML league division 1 & division 4 squads. Amps U13's progressed smoothly to the final in which Leighton Buzzard were dispatched 39 - 5 and the Cup retained by this age group for the 7th successive season from U7 to U13 inclusive.

U14 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY IAN BARCLAY

The previous 2009/10 season had been a challenging one, where the hurdles thrown up by the full 15 a side game and a full size pitch, proved to be more difficult to negotiate than expected, particularly given the relative success of the squad over the preceding years. The focus of the 2010/11 season was therefore about laying the tactical and skill foundations to enable the squad to compete effectively at youth level. Two new coaches were added to the coaching team - Jonny Cresswell and Luke Radley - both fresh from university and both providing a sense of challenge and change to move the squad forward.



Playing in Division 3 of the Herts and Middlesex League, the team put in some excellent performances, eventually just missing out on promotion by finishing third. In the East Midlands Cup early success was stalled by being drawn against Towcester, the eventual finalists. However, this was compensated for by the team reaching the final of the Bedfordshire Cup for the second time in three seasons, where it lost to a very strong Bedford Blues team.

From a playing perspective the squad has progressed from last season, although a couple of heavy losses made sure its feet remain firmly on the ground and the players understand there is much yet to do.

From a social perspective the end of season tour to Cheltenham was an unqualified success, although the sight of 40 odd people wandering through the shopping centre in search of a pub (an obvious location for one!) dressed in jockey outfits, masquerading as tick tack men, or simply carrying pink hobby horses, did disconcert some of the locals. A big thanks to Messrs Cresswell (snr and jnr), Thomas, Holt and Madame (sorry, Mademoiselle) Barker for their hard, and much appreciated, work in putting the tour together. A big thanks also to all the players, coaches and parents for their commitment this season. We look forward to the next.

U15 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY SAM ENGINEER

2010/11 was a season of consolidation for the U15's. During the year we played in two leagues the 'Hertfordshire and Middlesex' and the 'East Midlands'. To support both leagues we really needed a squad of 40 to 45 and we started the season in good shape with the numbers required.

However, a spate of injuries put the squad on the back foot at the start of the season making for some particularly tough games in the 'Hertfordshire and Middlesex' league in which the team showed great commitment. Some good results followed in the 'East Midland' league with wins against BBOB's and Bugbrook and reaching the semi final of the East Midlands Cup. Nine players from the squad represented Bedfordshire at County level putting in some very strong performances.

The season came to a close with a comprehensive win against Ruislip at home followed by the tour to Ipswich. Day 1 of tour was a friendly against Ipswich which the Ampthill boys won fairly easily and was played in a very good spirit. Day 2 of tour was a high level tournament at Colchester where the team did the club proud with close games against both Colchester and London Irish and ending with wins against Clacton and Shelford.

Well done to the whole squad and good luck for next season!

U16 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY SIMON HERBERT

The season started well with five of the squad, (Hooker Josiah Herbert, Flanker Lewis Ludlow, No8 Will Hunt, Centre Charlie Esam and Full Back Brandon Lewsey) being selected for the East Mids squad. Sadly a knee injury to Will Hunt during Bedford School's tour to Australia meant that Will would miss most of the season.

The squad played in three competitions. The campaign in the Herts/Middx League Division 1 started well with a win over Harrow, but the campaign was to eventually fizzle out due to a number of season-ending injuries to key players and others being unavailable due to representative rugby. In the East Midlands Cup, after an administrative error saw us demoted to the plate competition, we moved easily through the rounds and eventually ran out 38-0 winners against BBOB's of Northampton. In the East Midlands League, having topped our table in the pool stages and beating BBOB's again the quarter finals, a team severely weakened through injury went down 15-5 to Kettering in the semis.

Despite these disappointments, the season ended on a high with a good win against top Warwickshire outfit Nuneaton, followed by a hard but successful tour to South Wales, eventually going down 2 tries to nil against Porthcawl in the final.

The squad has seen a number of boys play at various representative levels. 7 boys made it into the County side. Charlie Esam, Brandon Lewsey and Josiah Herbert went on to represent Midlands, with Charlie going on to play for England Blues and scoring the winning try against France. Charlie and Josiah have been promoted to the Junior Saints Academy at Northampton Saints for next season.

We are hopeful that the bulk of the squad will remain together for the U17 National Cup campaign next season. A number of players have recently joined the team and we are hopeful that all the boys carrying injuries will be ready for pre-season.

GIRLS TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY RICHARD REDMAN

This season we have combined with the girls teams at Luton and Bedford to field a combined "Bedfordshire" team and both Under 15 and Under 18 in the Midlands South League. This meant that the Under 18's had six league games and a couple of friendlies which was a great improvement on last season. The Under 15's didn't fare as well due to some clubs only fielding an Under 18 side. Both age groups enjoyed wins in close games and across the board the standard of play continues to improve.

At U18 we had two girls make the East Midlands team, with Kristie Watson being selected for Regional trials. At U15 we had one representative in the U15 East Midlands team.

For the coming season we will be looking to repeat the playing arrangements with Luton and Bedford and are keen to continue to recruit girls to the club.

U17 TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY DEREK CROWHURST

What a season!!! Back in July 2010 there were serious questions about the ability of Ampthill to field an U17 side at all for the 2010/11 season. Nevertheless, the decision was made to enter the East Midlands U17 League and see how it went.

Following a positive pre-season, the boys won their opening fixture against Buckingham (27-19) and then followed that up with victories over Bedford Swifts (52-7) and St Ives (20-15). Having been awarded a walkover against Long Buckby and forced to concede the match



against ONs through injuries and absences, Ampthill finished second in the Division and faced Leighton Buzzard in the East Midlands 3rd/4th Place Play-Off. The boys then defeated Leighton Buzzard 33-19 for 3rd Place and went forward as the East Midlands representatives in the RFU National U17 Bowl Competition. Momentum and belief were beginning to build.

The first round of the National Bowl saw the boys travel to Newbold-on-Avon where they notched-up a superb 32-19 win and the right to take on Lincoln away in the next round. A great performance yielded a 17-11 victory and a place in the Midlands Division Final against Lichfield. On a fine but windy day at Broadstreet, Ampthill then defeated Lichfield 14-5 in a hard-fought game to take the Midlands Division title. The journey continued.

The National Bowl Semi-Final matched-up Ampthill against the North Division winners, West Park Leeds, played at Doncaster Knights. After a tense first-half, which saw the boys go behind early and holding a slender 14-12 lead at the break, the second-half went much more strongly in Ampthill's favour, resulting in a final score of 31-12. The boys had made it through to the National Bowl Final!

The winners of the London and South East/South West National Bowl Semi-Final were Reeds Weybridge. On yet another fine and windy day and a sun-baked pitch at Stourbridge

U17 TEAM CONT...

Amphill never managed to find the form that had carried them to the Final and a very strong Reeds team ran out worthy winners on the day. The hurt, mental and physical, was huge.

Looking back, however, it should be with great pride and an enormous sense of achievement at what was an epic journey. What a season!!!

Players: Connor Barry, Chris Bateman, Jordan Beresford*, Alex Crawford, Jamie Crawford, Rob Crowhurst, Chris Diamond, Haydn Edwins, Scott Fitzpatrick, Mikey Fox*, Will Goodge, Tom Gouldesbrough, George Hill*, Nathan Horn*, Daniel Iannantuono, James Kearns, Tom McLaughlin, Chris Moore (Captain), James Rochester, Jimmy Rowles*, Jack Stearn, Tom Swarbrick and Stephen Wood (*=U16s)

Head Coach: Gary Kearns; Assistant Coaches: Keith Bateman, Clive Stallwood and Keith Belcher; Team Manager: Derek Crowhurst

COLTS TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY CLIVE STALLWOOD

Amphill under 18's competed well in the newly formed East Midlands Colts League finishing 3rd on points difference to Kettering's 2nd, despite having beaten Kettering in the league. They also reached the semi-finals of the Referees Cup narrowly losing by two points to Old Northamptonians having what would have been the winning try disallowed 5 minutes from the end of the match.

The season was decimated by the bad Weather in February when no games were played at all.

Of the 8 games that were played 5 were won and three lost.

The Colts (Under 19's) were beaten in the National Colts competition by Bedford Academy, who have reached the Final.

Our intention for Senior Youth (Under 17-19) next season is to compete in the National Colts (Under 19's), East Midlands Under 18's League and Referees Cup, and The National Under 17's Competition.

THE VETS TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY DAVID WHEELER

For all those who think that their rugby career is over, think again. If you are moderately fit and still have the urge, the Vets are for you. We have consolidated on previous years with success built on success. We have won 5 out of 9 games this year including retaining the Silsoe Shield and we won on Tour for the first time against Crediton. We scored 190 points on the way. This season was marked by new recruits and a solid core



of regulars who have made it the best year yet. After a number of social events through the year (which included photo opportunities with various Rugby celeb's at the Mobbs match – see photo), the "On The Run Tour" on the Ale Trail in Devon topped it off magnificently – a band of escapees travelling through the countryside drinking and suddenly freezing to the amusement of the locals. Check Youtube for the latest Sunshine Mountain – see AmpthillVets.

We will be back again next year with more fixtures and more social events to ensure that Ampthill Rugby truly runs from the cradle to the grave.

THE 4TH XV TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY DAVID BURNS

The second season of the 4ths has been another very successful one, not only did the team gain promotion from the mighty Waggledance League but ended the season with a point difference of 753 for and 118 against! In fact we only lost three games all season two of these losses to Kempston 1st both within 1 point!

The games have been fast flowing and furious, and the quality of rugby very high, and a pleasure to play in and watch on most occasion. But as the season has progressed, so has the injury list which now includes compressed spine, broken arm, snapped achilles, two broken shoulders, but most of all liver damage. The team is meant to be made up of fit youth but it seems they don't make them like they use to. So next year we hope that others will join us and make next season even better and still huge fun.

Special mention goes to Captain 'Smashing' Simon Jones who has kept the team on course all season, mainly to the bar.

EXTRAS TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY LIAM DUFFIN.

The Extras have enjoyed another successful season in finishing fourth in the Eagle IPA Merit Table. Some new faces young and old have strengthened the squad. Ian Bell and Craig Shelley have bolstered up the forwards. A few new youngsters coming into the backs has helped increase the depth of the squad. The addition of Corey Lewis into the squad has made many of the senior players, who played alongside his father Nick, start to feel their age.

January saw a reunion Extras lunch marking 10 years since Roy Duffin, founder of the Extras, passed away. A good turnout and an old school rugby night resulted in this probably becoming an annual event although the club might consider reinforcing the rafters if some of the characters that were perched up there this year might try to do the same next year.

An end of season tour to Eastbourne included a win over Heathfield & Waldron Rugby Club who were it should be noted fine hosts.

The Extras spirit was summed up with their last game of the season at home to Dunstabians. Despite being 19-0 down after fifteen minutes, the Extras fought back to win 43-33.

THE 2ND XV TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY NICK STEVENSON

Having started the season strongly and playing against some new opposition like Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Old Albanians, we also defeated some strong sides like Luton and Old Nothamptonians. However, after Christmas and the poor weather, combined with the loss of five key players we struggled for the rest of the season to complete our fixtures.

We have already started to build up our side for next season for the Wells Bombardier League and look forward to returning to our former glory.

THE 1ST XV TEAM REPORT SUBMITTED BY MARK LAVERY

This season has seen the 1st Xv level transferred to National 3 London & South East and found ourselves competing against some excellent teams of which Barnes were the outstanding team in the division. It is apparent that London & South East is certainly a lot stronger than the Midlands Division and after a dreadful start to the season with a big loss to Barnes at home the 1st XV went on a strong run until they lost by 3 points to Hertford away.



They bounced back and had another strong run including a 50 point plus destruction job of Dorking at Dillingham Park but once more lost again to Hertford at Dillingham Park.

We finish 4th in the league and have found the year stimulating and challenging. We believe we will be competing in London & South East division next season and look forward to the challenges ahead.

NATIONAL NOTORIETY THIS SEASON

We have lots of excellent players at the club and in the past, many have gone onto bigger things in the Rugby World. This season has been no exception and there are more details are on our website. Here are a few of this season's players.

Charlie Esam – England Reds U16's. Voted England's Player of the Festival

Henry Staff (Saracens) becomes the fourth graduate of Ampthill's mini & youth system to play for their Aviva Premiership club this season after **Joe Burton** (Wasps), **James Ingle** (Saints) and **Jordi Pasqualin** (Gloucester).



Charlie Esam



Henry Staff



Joe Burton



James Ingle



Jordi Pasqualin