

SPORT RELIEF DAY

Saturday 13th JULY 2002

The National Rugby Supporters' Association are organising a Touch Rugby Competition at Sunbury. Most of the Premiership and First Division Clubs through their Supporters are entering teams.

BRSC have duly entered their side and we are inviting support on the day. We shall be running a coach to the ground. Please contact Gordon Hall for further details on 01225 742661.

It is expected that this tournament will be included in the Television coverage for Sport Relief Day so you could be famous if you are there!

NEARLY NEW SHIRTS

Have you or any members of your family outgrown your Bath Rugby kit? Would you be interested in trading in your old shirt for another one? The Supporters Club is looking into setting up a second hand shirt sale, and at this stage we are looking to establish what sort of demand there would be, and how many shirts would be made available. Full details will be announced over the coming weeks, but in the meantime if you think you could help, please call Lesley Steeper on 0117 973 4206 or Rowen Whittle on 07712 843 038.

SHIRT RAFFLES

The shirt raffles this season have been a resounding success. So far, the Supporters' Club has raffled shirts of each of the first team squad, and a framed shirt signed by the European Cup winning squad. We have already passed the target of £7,500 and the final draw of the season will have an unlimited number of tickets, so let's end on a high note. Close followers of the raffles will have realised that the final home game of the season, against Wasps on 12 May, has been saved for Dan Lyle's shirt. As usual, tickets will be on sale at the Supporters' Club Desk and throughout the ground.

NEW FACES

Michael Foley, Bath Rugby's head coach and a former Australian international, has begun the re-building process for the 2002/2003 season by signing two new players to bolster the squad in vital departments. Foley has long maintained that many of Bath's problems this season have stemmed from the fact that there is insufficient experienced cover in the front row and, while the search for a World class prop continues (Franck Tournaire being linked with the club), Foley has supplemented the hooker's role by signing former Welsh Captain Jonathan Humphreys.

JONATHAN HUMPHREYS



Humphreys comes to the club with a wealth of experience having made 33 appearances for Wales at the top level of the game, leading the side in over half of those matches. Born in Cornelly, South Wales, on the 27th February 1969, the 6 foot, 16st. 8lbs hooker joins Bath from Cardiff where he had been a loyal servant scoring 120 points for the Blue and Blacks. It was while at the South Wales giants that Humphreys leadership abilities were noted and, after making his full international debut in the rarefied surrounds of the Rugby World Cup against New Zealand, he was appointed captain of his country in only his third capped match. That honour befell Jonathan in an 11-40 defeat against the then reigning World Champion Springboks in Johannesburg, thus achieving the strange statistic of his opening three caps all being played in the South African capital.

Having scored a maiden test try in his second appearance, the 23-24 defeat to Ireland during the 1995 World Cup, Jonathan had to wait until his twelfth cap for a second score, this time in the 31-10 win over the Barbarians in a full cap match in Cardiff. Little was he to know that they would be his only scores at test level. 1996 saw Humphreys cement his place in the Welsh line up, but after losing the captaincy, the emergence of Barry Williams and Garin Jenkins checked his international career somewhat and he had to be content with a replacements berth for the majority of his last ten caps.

A quality player, Jonathan will add some much-needed experience and bulk to a Bath pack that has immeasurably improved over the course of the campaign.

CHRIS MALONE



Chris Malone is name not as instantly recognisable as Humphreys, and yet the former Australian under-21 outside half has been making big waves in National League One for the Exeter Chiefs. The Chiefs, who finished the league season in third place behind Rotherham and Worcester and also were runner's up in the Powergen Shield, have impressed this season and Malone has pulled the strings from fly half. Chris who stands at 6ft and weighs in at 14st was born in Australia on 8th January 1978, and he previously played for Sydney University and Manley in his native country.

In the recently completed National One season Malone weighed in with 311 points in 28 appearances, including sixteen points in the Shield Final at Twickenham from two conversions, three penalties and a drop goal. His final match for Exeter was in the 32-14 win over Otley at the County Ground where he kicked two conversions and a penalty. Malone's talent was easy to spot ever since he made his Exeter debut back in September 2001 as a replacement in the 21-6 win at Moseley. He contributed a conversion and penalty to the win and continued to kick accurately and with distinction throughout his time with the club. Chris had to wait however for his first try, eventually breaking his duck in the 15-16 loss to Coventry at Coundon Road on December 1st.

It remains to be seen whether his style will adapt to the rigours of the Zurich Premiership, but both his former employers and current coach Michael Foley are in no doubt that Chris Malone is a name that we will be hearing much more of in the near future.

Russell Gibbs

SKITTLES MATCH V OLD PLAYERS

The Supporters' Club played skittles against the Old Players Association on 15 April at the Royal Oak on Pulteney Road. We put up a good turnout against them, so much so that we were even able to lend them our "secret weapon," Kelvin Brunton, who unfortunately played rather too well to be of use to us!

With two teams each, sides were reasonably level. Technically, the Old Players won with their teams winning 11 legs overall and BRSC winning a very respectable 9. Looking at it differently though, we were the better side as we knocked down 610 skittles to their rather feeble 568. Not that we're bitter! They are the sportsmen after all – it would have been rude to beat them.



BATH RUGBY SUPPORTERS' CLUB

May 2002

MEMBERSHIP

Congratulations to all our members for being part of the most successful Independent Supporters' Club in the Premiership.

Thank you for your support this season. Bath Rugby may have had a season they would rather forget, but BRSC continues to grow. Our membership closed at just under 800 and we were delighted to welcome so many new members.

Did you know that our membership is not just national but international as well? We have members in Germany, France, USA and Ireland. Our members in the UK cover the whole of the country from Cornwall to Cumbria, Kent to Gwent, Lancs to Lincs and even the off-shore islands! Strangely though we have no members admitting to live in Leicestershire!

For next season the membership fee remains unchanged and as a member you can benefit from a range of offers and discounts as well as reduced entry to our events.

Pass it on. "Bath Rugby Supporters' Club is a success." Support our events; make the most of the offers and discounts available; wear the badge with pride! Have a great summer. See you next season!

'ONE TO GO'

One Match to play and One Club to be Relegated

It's a beautiful Sunday Morning(May 5th) and with the sounds of the Cherry Pickers singing 'Going Down, Going Down' still lingering in the ears, the eye skims quickly over the Sunday Headlines,

'Bath teetering on the Brink' -Mail on Sunday
'Leaky Bath plumbs Depths'- Sunday Telegraph
'Bath swamped in Try Deluge'-Sunday Times

No comfort here for the Bath Supporter although Mr Ackford, not the biggest of Bath fans, did give credit to the team for keeping on trying.

More Press rumours about a 'fix' if one of the founder Clubs ie Bath and Quins were to be the ultimate Relegation candidate rather than Leeds. Your average Bath Supporter particularly one who went to the away fixture against Rotherham last Season would reject the No Promotion/No Relegation scenario being talked about. There must always be an opportunity for a Club to progress.

So the Final Scene for Bath in this turbulent Season in the Zurich Premiership unfurls on Sunday 12th May here at the Rec with the match against London Wasps. Few will forget the semi-final play off last Season at Loftus Road when once again Supporter power played a hand. Our last home game here was the victory over Leeds and the support was truly magnificent. Thanks to those of you who travelled last week to Newcastle and made their presence felt. Commiserations to all those who went to Kingsholm and suffered the taunts from those whose memories are short on detail. They forget the 71-21 drubbing we gave them in April 1997 when we scored 11 tries. Dan Lyle and Nathan Thomas probably can remember as they were playing and both scores tries.

Yes that was five years ago and now its crunch time so...

COME ON BATH -- BATH BATH BATH and again BATH BATH BATH

STOP PRESS

Congratulations to the Bath Under 19's in winning The National Youth Knock-Out Cup at Northampton on Bank Holiday Monday. They beat Bristol 29-19.

An evening with
Robbo
Friday 10th May
7.30pm at the clubhouse
Members free - Non members £1



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SUPPORTER'S COACH TRAVEL

After our first half season 2000/01 which we felt had been quite successful, this season we have been able to run a coach and in some cases more than one to every away game, excepting the Heineken Cup game in Biarritz.

Mea Culpa! Only one away win and that was the Heineken in Edinburgh! Should "we" continue the coaches next year or are we the jinxers?

Anyone fancy another half-day to York?

We have now collected a permanent band of optimistic supporters, which makes all trips a pleasure to organise. Perhaps there are more people than just us two who are equally committed to what appears (this season only we pray) to be a lost cause. Should there be anyone else out there with these same feelings, then please feel free to join us next season.



A raffle is held on all of our coaches, prizes are donated by Bath Rugby and many of our enthusiastic supporters. Much of the wine and spirits are from parts of the world not normally associated with the brewing and growing areas! (Afghanistan and Iceland for example). So many thanks to all those who have both donated and given freely.

The proceeds of the raffle will be

shared between Dorothy House Hospice and M.S.Nerve Centre (Alastair Hignell). We have to-date raised a fantastic sum of £1,170. We cannot thank our fellow travellers enough for this magnificent effort. We are hoping to present these cheques on the last home game against Wasps.

Also a big thank you to Stones Coaches and their drivers who have always looked after us. Finally and by no means least, our thanks to Russell Gibbs for producing 'Blue Black and White' - a great read and always something to talk about.

Again, those of you who would like to join us next season, the coaches run videos, raffles, good company and sometimes - the right result!.

It would be great to see more than one coach per game!

Mike & Jan

NEWCASTLE BALCONS AWAY (SORRY THAT SHOULD BE FALCONS)

Another newsletter, and another piece on the Newcastle trip, though this time the game went ahead. In the end, the rugby was poor, the weather even worse; before half time, I was rained on and pelted with hailstones. Welcome to the north-east!

"Welcome" also to a number of imposters on the team, names that sounded familiar as the team list was read out, but were yet not quite right. **Steve Barthwick**, for example; unclear handwriting, maybe? Careless, but forgivable. But surely everybody knows the Bath, England and Lions player, **Liam Balshaw**?! Anyone who allegedly follows rugby, anyway. This sort of sloppiness really does annoy me, especially as the names were correct in the programme, save for a couple of typos. There were six incorrect names read out over the tannoy in total: six out of twenty two. Perhaps they do things differently up north.

They certainly don't appear to pay much attention to events in the rest of the country, unless it was just an attempt at getting a psychological advantage. The carrier pigeon telling them JC has left Bath obviously got lost en route as they listed him, and some of his achievements, as

Coach at Bath in their "Introducing Bath" section in the programme. At least they spelt his name correctly. On the subject of that page, they mention that there were "no big name signings over the summer." After a storming Lions tour, how much bigger than Danny Grewcock do they come?

I was optimistic at half time with the scores at 10-9, and genuinely thought we would head south with a different result from last season at Kingston Park. I haven't decided yet whether it's worse to lose by a single point as was the case then, or to lose by rather more so at least it's convincing. As I recall, both made for a very quiet drive back! Those of you that were there saw what the problems were in the second half, (somewhat akin to the second half at Vicarage Road a few weeks back) and by now I expect that those of you who weren't there have heard, so I won't dwell on it. I won't be sorry to see the back of 2001/2002, but as they say, any experience is good experience. Let's hope we can put it down to that and make more of an impression early on when we start with a clean slate in September.

Rowen Whittle

FUTURE EVENTS

The **Annual General Meeting** will be in the 1st week of September, the actual date has yet to be confirmed pending fixture lists for the 2002/03 Season

Club Supper
September 11th in the Clubhouse

Website

www.alliez-bath.co.uk Please keep logging on for up to date news on Bath Rugby and our Supporters' Club

The site has lots of pages and photos.

FANTASY TEAM SUMMER CAMPS

With the season drawing to a close, it seems everyone is talking about who has achieved what this year, and the various award ceremonies start taking place. The Bath Rugby supporters' Club has their own version, too, and you should have received a voting form with this newsletter.

I thought I'd take a minute to create my own fantasy team of the season based on performances this year. Doubtless it would have been different if some of the key players had not sustained injuries. You probably won't agree with all my choices, you may not agree with any, but obviously some were easier choices than others.

15 JASON ROBINSON

A great season with Sale and England.

If Jonny Wilkinson thinks he's worth emulating, that's good enough for me!

14 DAN SCARBROUGH

The top try scorer in the league this season with 11, from 18 starting appearances and one as replacement. Not all that well known yet, but certainly one to watch. Showing great promise.

13 WILL GREENWOOD

I can't help but agree with Stuart Barnes' ravings here...

Tim Horan might have been a contender, except that he won't wear the "unlucky" shirt!

12 MIKE TINDALL

No explanation required, matter closed!

11 BEN COHEN

Ben has always managed to lift his game for England, and that's why I chosen him here. His performances in the white jersey have made some of the club efforts look more average, but he is still a class player. I was glad he had a relatively quiet day at the Rec though!

10 JONNY WILKINSON

I almost made a controversial choice here till sense got the better of me; how can you have a "best of" team without Jonny?!

9 AGUSTIN PICHOT

One of the more difficult ones to call. He's recently returned from injury and appears not to have lost his flair. Whether he would be as impressive without half-back partner Contepomi remains to be seen.

1 GRAHAM ROWNTREE

What a comeback for England! You have to admire his perseverance. As solid as he ever has been in all his years at Welford Road.

2 MARK REGAN

Few players have been more dedicated over recent seasons, and Mark's determination this season has not faltered, despite morale being somewhat lower in Bath than it has been!

3 PHIL VICKERY

The Gloucester captain has made a huge impact again this season and has played a sizeable part in getting his club to the current 2nd spot in the league.

4 STEVE BORTHWICK

Another good season for Bath and more recently captaining the England 'A' side. Frustrating that the 'A' team didn't perform better, but Steve hasn't let it get to him.

5 BEN KAY

Ben's had a storming season for both club and country, and this has helped him secure his spot in the England second row.

6 RICHARD HILL

So long the unsung hero for England, Richard has been consistent, again, throughout.

7 LEWIS MOODY

Another Leicester forward that's been on fire this year. Thoroughly deserves his nominations for Players' Player of the Year and Best Young Player.

8 JOE WORSLEY

Joe has proved to be a more than adequate replacement for Dallaglio at both levels, and Wasps have relied on him a great deal this season, that is when he wasn't out with the much talked about injury!

And I'd give the award for Most Forceful Refereeing to **Martin Johnson!**

Rowen Whittle

As part of the Bath Rugby in the Community scheme, there will be rugby summer camps for the first time this season.

The cost per person is £75, to cover the four days of activities. Also included in the price:

- Full Insurance
- Bath Replica Rugby Ball
- RFU Qualified Coaches
- Tag Rugby
- Sporting Activities
- Certificates signed by the Players

The camps are open to children between the ages of 8 and 12 years old and will run from Monday 12th to Thursday 15th August, and Monday 19th to Thursday 22nd August.

For your chance get involved, or for more information, contact Pam Burke or Jimmy Deane on 01225 325200 or email pam.burke@bathrugby.com for a booking form.