



**SUPPORTERS' CLUB**

## MEMBERSHIP

As the season draws to its finale, I'm not expecting too many more new members for this season. The final number has been just below 1100, a respectable number, but still down on previous years. The push is now starting for next season, so please make sure you remain a member of the biggest and best Supporters' Club in the Country! Our membership is certainly not confined to Bath, so if you know of Bath fans that have moved away, suggest to them that they join the club too.

Also, don't forget the huge range of discounts available to you with your Supporters' Club membership card. Mine has paid for itself several times over, and not just when I'm buying the beer. It's worth every penny at just £5.

As always, I'm available on the Supporters' Club desk next to the Clubhouse on match days, for your subscriptions and queries. It's always nice to be able to match faces to the many names on our membership lists. I can also be contacted by telephone on 01225 834435, by e-mail at [georgina\\_barratt@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:georgina_barratt@yahoo.co.uk), or the old-fashioned way at 162 North Road, Combe Down, Bath BA2 5DL. I look forward to all those new forms coming in soon!

**George**

## DISCOUNTS & BENEFITS (all for just £5)

**Caffé Uno** The Empire, Grand Parade, Bath, Tel: 01225 461140

**The Green Park Brasserie** Green Park Station Bath Tel 01225 338565 • At both restaurants, a massive 15% discount off meals and accompanying beverages for up to 8 people. Every day of the week, except after 7pm on Saturdays. See our website for certain exceptions.

**The Litten Tree** 23 Milsom Street, Bath, Tel: 01225 310772 • £1.50 per drink (excluding spirits), Monday-Saturday, 11am to 11pm and Sunday 12 noon to 10.30pm (members only, not guests). Show current membership card when you order.

**Nigel Dando**, Jeweller & Goldsmith 11 Pulteney Bridge, Bath BA2 4AY Tel/Fax 01225 464013 [www.nigeldando.co.uk](http://www.nigeldando.co.uk)

Preferential terms to all members of the BRSC, on production of current membership card.

**Test Stationers** 18 Union Passage, Bath Tel: 01225 444224/ Fax: 01225 311871 • 10% off Purchases over £10 (with some minor exceptions)

Only for Bath Rugby Supporters' Club Members, throughout Season 2004/2005. To obtain the discount, the member must show his/her current Supporters' Club membership card at the time of purchase.

**Spanish Villa to Rent** [www.our-spanish-villa.co.uk](http://www.our-spanish-villa.co.uk)

John 'Tuk-Tuk' Taylor has a villa in Spain for rent. 10% Discount to members. Telephone 01225 445754 for further details.

**Zoe Kenway Prints** [www.zoekenwaypublica.co.uk](http://www.zoekenwaypublica.co.uk)

Discount of 20% off all Zoe's exceptional prints which include prints featuring Bath Rugby.

**Bath Rugby Shop** 12 Argyle Street, Bath, Tel: 01225 311950 • You do not have to be a season ticket holder to receive your 5% discount at the Bath Rugby shop, just produce your membership card at time of purchase.

**YAK YETI YAK** Nepalese Restaurant, 12 Argyle Street Bath BA2 4BQ Telephone 01225 442299 • 10% discount for Members and up to 3 guests Monday to Thursday on production of Membership Card.

**Bath Organic Farms** 6 Brookside House, High Street, Weston, Bath [www.bathorganicfarms.com/index.html](http://www.bathorganicfarms.com/index.html) Tel 01225 421507 • 5% discount on production of current Membership card at above address and at Farmers Market Green Park on Saturday mornings 9-1

**Abbey Ales & Star Inn** Paragon, Bath • 10% Discount on 36 pint pack of Bellingier to all BRSC Members - Show current membership card and also on Home Match days, 4 pint jug of Bellingier for price of 3 pints at Star Inn (Guinea Lane/Paragon)

**Pulteney Arms** 37 Daniel Street. 01225 463923 10% discount on all food throughout the week; plus matchday discounted specials (10% does not apply) off food + a pint together with other special offers. These matchday offers are to members and visiting fans (on production of their match ticket). See our website, or phone them, for particular matchday offers.

**Plus**

Reduced cost of coach travel to away matches.  
Free or reduced admission to all BRSC functions.

# BATH RUGBY SUPPORTERS' CLUB

## May 2006

## BA2 TO TW1 - THE POSTCODE ROUTE?

By the time anyone reads this article, it is likely that the will he/won't he saga of whether or not Brian Ashton will leave the Rec to head off to southwest London again will have been publicly resolved. Writing this just before setting off to San Sebastian I suspect that my sense of frustration with the whole situation merely reflects that which many Bath supporters will be feeling at this time. Although quite surprised when Brian was announced as the new Head Coach last autumn, as I had no indication that he was itching to get back from running the National Academy to a more hands-on coaching role, I was amongst many who were delighted to see him back at the Rec. It is with no lack of respect for what John Connolly achieved that I saw Ashton as the best way to allow the team to develop into one which would win games rather than one which would be hard to beat.

Now the lid has been taken off of the melting pot once again, and the odour of uncertainty is back in our nostrils. It is all very unsettling. It is not even as though, like last year, when mediocre names were being bandied about, we can console ourselves with the thought that whilst waiting for an announcement was unnerving there was at least a chance that eventually we might just get the best man for the job. We already have him and now do not want to lose him, even to England.

I am not quite sure what it is about coaches and Bath. It was always clear why the RFU took Jack Rowell from the Rec. He was, after all, the most successful club coach in the history of the game. Andy Robinson, too, was the first English coach to win the Heineken Cup, so it was no great surprise when his former short-term assistant at Bath, Clive Woodward, recruited him to Twickenham, where BA was backs coach

during the period when England played their best, and most successful, rugby in living memory in the couple of years before the 2003 World Cup.

After Jack Rowell's reign and immediate legacy had passed, however, Bath's history could hardly be described as glorious. The 98 Heineken Cup was very much the last hurrah for an empire in decline, and the club which was the most professional in the last decade of the amateur era has hardly made a dramatic impression upon the first decade of professionalism. Our coaches continue to be in demand, however, and JC2's coronation as Australian national coach will have had as much to do with the resurgence he managed during his recent time at Bath as with his Queensland days in Super 12s that and the ability to bring Michael Foley with him to hone the Australian pack as he has done so effectively with the Bath forwards.

Time will tell indeed it may already have told by now just what the coaching line-up will be at the Rec next season. I am hopeful that Brian will stay long enough to lay some long-lasting foundations for the future, although I can understand the allure of being seen as a national saviour ahead of just a West Country one. No doubt the specific nature of the job on offer in TW1 if indeed there is one will have a large bearing on the outcome. That, and the amount of time available with the players always an issue of course for the England management. There are more problems at HQ than the appointment of Ashton alone will solve, however, and his opportunity to leave an indelible mark on Bath and English club rugby may yet win the day.

**Glyn Edwards**



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# FOLES SAYS GOODBYE



Doug Gibbs caught up with Michael Foley recently to talk about his time at Bath and his future in Australia.

**DG** How far do you think that your aims and aspirations have been achieved in your time here?

**MF** When I first arrived my aim was to fully embrace the role of forwards coach, to make the Bath forwards a force in Northern Hemisphere rugby, and to improve my coaching skills. I have been fortunate to be working with some great guys and we have achieved a big improvement in our forward play. When I came it was evident that the club was not in a very good state, and the aim was to build a squad that could compete for major honours. Whilst I, along with you guys, am disappointed that we have no silverware in the cabinet, reaching the Finals of the Premiership, Parker Pen, and Powergen Cups were notable achievements. Now reaching the semi-final of the Heineken Cup is further progress. I have been very lucky and very thankful.

**DG** Have you, Marnie, and the children been happy in Bath, and was it a wrench to leave?

**MF** It was hard initially. However, Marnie and the kids have integrated well, especially in the school community in Saltford. Of course having other Aussie wives here has helped us in supporting each other. From my perspective for the first three years I really missed Australia, but recently, let's say this season, I haven't missed it at all. That's unusual. The position I've been offered is fantastic, and people have said "you've got to take it".

Ultimately I have, but a huge amount of thought was put into the decision. Marnie even went as far as saying that if it wasn't for the outdoor life for the kids back home, she would prefer to stay. We have made a really nice life here, and everyone has been really friendly.

**DG** Of course you had two boys over here, Jacob and Isaac. How would you feel if they play for the land of their birth rather than the land of their father?

**MF** Well they are both built like little front rowers, so you never know. There may one day be a Foley in the England pack. I guess this is just another reason that makes Bath so special to us. We've had half of our family here, so there will always be an attachment. Marnie and I talked long and hard about the job in Australia, and we definitely haven't ruled out a return to the U.K. one day. If that opportunity ever arose, then I'd like it to be back here in Bath.

**DG** Let's turn to rugby for a moment. It's sometimes said "*forwards win matches, backs decide by how many*". Do you agree with this theory?

**MF** I only heard that saying for the first time recently, and I suppose to a certain extent I do. Look, it's a fifteen man game, but let's look for example at England v The Wallabies recently. England have suffered in their back division, but have won matches because their forwards dominate. So yes, if your flow of primary possession is good, and you can disrupt your opposition's ball, they will be under pressure. There are teams who have fantastic backs, but they will not win big matches and trophies unless they have the ball. It's the forwards who must win it for them to use it effectively.

**DG** That being said, Australia have good backs, but the set-piece is a farce. You appear to have your work cut out!

**MF** Yes it is a great challenge. When I first came here we built our pack around the mentality of a few guys - Danny Grewcock, Borthers, Shep Mallet, and Humps. The first thing you have to do is address the mentality. In Australia the set-piece is seen as a way of restarting the game, but here it is viewed as a means of exerting pressure on the opposition. I think Australia have good forwards, and I have work with the players to create a pack mentality and build on that.

**DG** When you get home, do you have to relocate, or will you stay in Brisbane?

**MF** Knuckles is living by the sea so "what's good for the goose, etc." We are going to move back to our home in Brisbane. When I discussed the job with the ARU it was made important that Marnie and the kids were able to settle within a support network that was familiar to them. That means family and friends in Brisbane. We did not want to bring up the kids in a huge city like Sydney, so I am prepared to do the commuting so that my family can be where they are happiest.

**DG** Well thanks Foles. Everyone I know is sorry to see you go. On a personal note, after having worked closely with you, I would like to place on record how friendly and approachable you have been whenever I have wanted to "bend your ear". All that remains is for you to say Goodbye.

**MF** Thanks Doug. When I first came here we went through a difficult period and I remember that you organised some Fans Forums that I really enjoyed. The thing that clearly came out from these, for me, was that there is a passionate group of people here who really care about this club. I really hadn't seen this before, and I realised that great supporters are actually pretty rare animals. I received e-mails and faxes during our relegation seasons saying "just give it your best shot Foles. Whatever happens we're behind you all the way". We were already motivated not to go down, but when you receive support like that you just KNOW that you can't fail these people. I feel so fortunate to have come to a club with such an overwhelming base of supporters. Some I have got to know really well. People like you, Big Jock, Jerry, and Penny, who gives me a Good Luck kiss before every game. These relationships build bonds that are very strong, and you feel honour bound to do the right thing by them. I feel really lucky to have been a part of that.

All I can say is keep up the good work, it is really, really appreciated.

GOOD ON YOU ALL. THANKS FOR EVERYTHING.

**DG** GOOD LUCK FOLES FROM EVERYONE AT BRSC.

**PS** Love to Knuckles.

# AWAY TRIP ON A HEINEKEN CUP DATE

Here we go again - same draw - same trip to Bourgoin - almost the same merry band, one or two new faces, and one or two couldn't make it.

Eurostar to Lille - time for a swift lunch in a fine French café on Lille Station (Murphy's Bar). Then on to Lyon in Britain's equivalent from Lands End to John o'Groats. We arrived Lyon 3 hours later.

Quick charge to the hotel by 1830hrs, on to coach at 1900hrs for trip to Bourgoin. Welcomed by our jovial French driver who greeted us with a "Good Morning". Couldn't get our knuckles out of our mouths to reply "I was pissing past your hotel....."

Fabulous game in Bourgoin. Managed to get to their local supporters bar for several quick ones before boarding the coach back to Lyon. Same lovely girl on the wall, difference pose this year (that's for those of you who couldn't make it this time).

Saturday am - normal sightseeing trips all round.

Saturday pm - spent in bar howling, cheering and groaning, amidst a little drinking, whilst watching the remaining Heineken games.

Then 20 or so of us to a meal in the old town. A steady walk back to our hotel was the order of the day to finish off with a few night caps.

During the walk our party became slightly detached! Four of us made it back to the

hotel some 20/25 minutes later meeting up with several others for a drink. After 20 further minutes the remainder of the party had not arrived. It would appear that one of the chaps, who will remain nameless, (Charles) remembered the way back - "follow me" was the rallying cry. Thirty minutes later, and some two miles or so on, the cry became "I didn't come this way this morning, I think we may be lost".

Meanwhile, back at headquarters people were beginning to worry. Out came the maps (all in French) to try and decide where our missing party could be. A two man search party was detailed off.

Then someone with some intelligence said "why not use the mobile and find out where they are". Colonel Woodman and wife set up control room with maps and mobiles and made contact with said party.

*Headquarters:* Where are you?

*Answer:* Haven't got a clue but near the station.

*Headquarters:* No problem station is only five minutes walk from hotel.

Twenty minutes later.

*Headquarters:* Where are you now and why aren't you here?

*Answer:* Completely lost, station is not the one by the hotel.

*Headquarters:* Can you give us a road name nearby?

*Answer:* There are no bl....dy road names.

Have asked in a small ethnic shop and they have gasped at how far we are away and how far we have to walk!

Search party leaves hotel in direction of second station approximately two miles away.

A Doctor Livingstone encounter finally takes place about half a mile from hotel by which time 2hrs 30mins had elapsed since leaving the restaurant.

Needless to say search party who should have brought the party back to the hotel in the first place were not exactly met with joy and laughter (well not until the next morning anyway), but with curses and frivolous excuses of being cold and tired and about to be abducted to god knows where!

Monday - we started on the homeward journey. French trains never late; well only this once! Forty minutes late arriving at Lyon, therefore missing our connection at Lille. We managed to "bum" a lift on the next Eurostar and having a carriage to ourselves, we arrived Waterloo safe and sound.

"When" we make the Heineken Cup next season it would be nice not to go to Bourgoin a third time. Although there was no charge for the late night tour of Lyon, several of our party who partook in the walk were not impressed by the itinerary and the lack of information given on the tour, and the aimless wandering by the guides.

## TWO IN A BATH MAKES A BIG SPLASH

Thanks to Doug Gibbs hard work we have had another successful season with our "Two in a Bath" competition, raising a total of £3560 for the Bath Rugby Community Foundation.

Lucky Winners so far have been:

<b>Francis North</b>	Framed Lions Shirt	<b>Jim Bromham</b>	Corporate Day - Bath v Glasgow
<b>Chris Matthews</b>	Framed England Shirt	<b>Janis Wilson</b>	£150 Voucher to spend in Club Shop
<b>Lee Witts</b>	Commemorative brick in Twickenham Walk of Fame	<b>Wayne Ridgeon</b>	Framed Signed Team Sheet - Bath v Gloucester
<b>Jeanette Pascoe</b>	Framed Signed Team Sheet - Bath v Leeds	<b>Tom Richmond</b>	2 Tickets to Bath Rugby Awards Dinner (Value over £200)
<b>Bob Carlton-Porter</b>	Cased Signed Ball		

Still to come a Framed Lions Shirt signed by the Leinster Lions.

**Sign up early for next season's competition, and be in for a full season of exciting and unique prizes.**





# SUPPORTERS' CLUB RACE NIGHT

Our annual Supporters' Club Race Night was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, with all proceeds on the night going to the Ellie Brown Appeal. As usual, the evening proved a resounding success and the magnificent sum of £1000 was raised for Ellie, whose parents attended on the night.

Due to the first team squad having been given a long weekend break (no game on the Saturday), we were very well supported by the attendance of a group of the academy players. Frazer Cliverd, Sam Alford, Luke Cozens, and Gary Holmes really entered into the spirit of the occasion and presented trophies to all of our winners.

Sponsorship of the various races was provided by Abbey Ales, Helphire, Bath Chronicle, Riverside Café, Bath Organic Farms, Abbey Ales, Moon and Sixpence, and Mowbray Woodwards. Our thanks to them for their continuing support of our Club events.

## PROGRAMME COLLECTORS

One of our members has a substantial amount of programmes from Bath matches, but no longer has space for storage. They span a period from September 1996 to around 2002, and include league, cup and European games. Also available are special one-off games and testimonials, plus some away games. He also has a few England programmes available. The collection totals around 115.



You can contact Andrew Crutchley on [andrewc@waterman-cpm.co.uk](mailto:andrewc@waterman-cpm.co.uk) to discuss taking this collection off his hands.

## IN MEMORY OF IVAN STANTON

Penny Dale recently sent a condolence card, on behalf of everyone at the club, to Ivan Stanton's family on the sad occasion of his death. She has received a thank you card with some memories we would like to share. It reads as follows:-

"Just to say thank you for the support following the passing of our dad, Ivan. It means very much to us.

Supporters at the club often asked after Dad since holding up the game at the Rec when we played Gloucester; the last time Dad watched a live game. He really enjoyed following Bath both home and away.

We made many trips on the coaches with our friends, watching a great team in their highs and lows. Sometimes we went by car to West Hartlepool and Wales, to name just two. Trips up to Twickers for both Bath and England games were also one of our joys. Dad saw some of the best players at Bath.

Dad's short rugby career in the 30's was in the Midlands, so in his youth he would have followed teams from that area, but Bath was the club who gave him much enjoyment as a supporter, and when unable to go to the Rec, the TV was the next best option.

Thank you all for the memories."

**Anne, Neville and Andrew Stanton**

## SUPPORTERS' CLUB TELEVISION/VIDEO SET

If you know a Bath Rugby supporter who is ill and in hospital, come and speak to a member of the committee; we have a TV/Video Combi set, plus a TV licence, specifically for fans who cannot come to the games because of illness.

For practical reasons, we anticipate lending it to Supporters' Club members whose stay will last at least a week, though we are happy to hear about anyone you think could benefit from it. The set is available to be lent out to any Supporters' Club Member in hospital or a nursing home.

See us at the desk before home games or call a committee member. Telephone numbers are listed on the website.