



## Reeds Weybridge RFC Newsletter - August 2023.

### **Welcome & Thank You**

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, as we come to the end of our first season at level 6 in Regional 2 South East and look forward to yet another successful season.

If you have any suggestions as to how we might improve this newsletter please let me know.

### **Playing Update**

On the playing side of things, we suffered one of our worst ever seasons injury-wise with up to 18 players being injured at one point in time. As a result, no less than 37 different players represented the 1<sup>st</sup> XV over the course of the season. This had a knock-on effect on our ability to field other sides and also meant that the 1<sup>st</sup> XV had to draw upon a large number of U22 players - 13 in fact - to represent the Club and so effectively we were able to accelerate our progress in integrating U18 - U21 alongside the Seniors to maintain the player path-way we are so proud of and which is key to sustained success. In doing so, we unearthed a number of younger, talented players, from within our own ranks who performed with panache for the 1<sup>st</sup> XV and who we are really excited about. Underlining this, Rhys Day at 19 years of age, won our Coaches Player of the Season award.

Despite these challenges, the 1<sup>st</sup> XV did incredibly well to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> in a very competitive Regional 2 South East that saw 3 of the top 5 sides in the league make the finals of the Papa John National Cup & Plate Competitions which is for level 6 sides. This league finish represents our highest ever placing.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> XV also reached the finals of the Papa John's Plate competition which was held at the Stone X stadium, the home of Saracens, but unfortunately the side, which had 8 U22 in it, had a rare off day and lost 18 - 3 to a well drilled Battersea Ironsides team who were deserved winners.



Our 2<sup>nd</sup> XV did well to absorb the pressures of our injury crisis to finish 4<sup>th</sup> in their league with our U22's making the finals of the Surrey U22 tournament. Both our 2<sup>nd</sup> XV and Vets were also runners up in their respective cup competitions.



We were also proud to continue our association with the Grace Dear Trust Charity and by dint of a lot of hard work led by Josh Brown and the team from Henley Shipping we were able to host a great touch rugby event on 13<sup>th</sup> May that was well attended and which raised a significant sum of money for the charity.

Next season, it has been confirmed that our 1<sup>st</sup> XV will be remain in Regional 2 South East, our first game being on 2 September. The league will allow us to lock horns with some of our local rivals including Cobham, as well as face sides who were relegated from level 5 including Sidcup, Medway, and Sutton and Epsom, as well as good quality existing opposition such as Old Reigatians and Battersea. The full list of sides in the league is below:

**REGIONAL 2**  
**SOUTH EAST**  
Battersea Ironsides  
Beckenham  
Cobham  
Gravesend  
London Cornish  
Medway  
O Alleynians  
O. Colfeians  
O. Reigatians  
Reeds Weybridge  
Sidcup  
Sutton & Epsom  
12

Whilst the challenges don't get any easier, we are targeting to secure promotion from this league into level 5 (old National 3) which would represent a remarkable journey for this Club were it to be successful.

To support our ambitions, we have reviewed our coaching set up to establish a framework that can take us forward over the next few seasons and allow for succession planning. More on this from Nigel below. A number of off-field improvements have also been agreed - again see below.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> XV meanwhile will continue to play in the Surrey Championship against some very strong sides.

Positively, our U22's will once again play in Surrey's U22 competition this season.

A fixture card will be created for those who would like one but in the interim, you can also access the fixtures for our 1st XV via the link below.....links for fixtures for other teams will follow once published

*First XV*

<https://www.englandrugby.com/fixtures-and-results/search-results?team=17645&season=2023-2024#fixtures>

### ***Coaching Framework for the Next Season***

We have freshened up our coaching set up by moving away slightly from the traditional coaching structure. In practice, the DoR / Lead Coach remain responsible for the overall coaching framework, direction, mentoring etc however the large parts of the coaching itself is largely delivered by a small pool of specialist coaches made up of recent ex-players and current pro players, who are able to draw on the very latest drills, skills, game planning etc and engage accordingly.

It is an exciting model that recognises the importance of experienced / knowledgeable coaches in the group but at the same time invests in a new breed of coaches, allowing them to express themselves in an environment aimed at bringing the very best out of our players. Underpinning the development of this new breed of coaches is a commitment to their coaching qualifications and ongoing CPD's.

Nige Connell (DoR), and Rod Jermy (Club Coaching Lead), will provide the necessary coaching framework for Luke Edwards (Head Coach), Jack Musk (Set Piece), and Lewis Gjaltema (Attack), to deliver as above. Pete Rowe continuing to support all our coaching efforts. It is important to mention that in line with his title, Rod will also coach up and down the player pathway, providing the all-important link between Youth and Seniors.



## Pre-season Friendly versus Brighton

On 12 August we took a squad of 17 players to Brighton who play at level 5 and played 3 x 25 min games against a squad of over 30 players eventually losing 21-19 with both sides scoring 3 tries apiece. This was a very encouraging performance especially considering we had 5 new debutants with a number of those players putting their hands up for 1<sup>st</sup> XV starting positions.



## Player Recruitment

If we are to succeed in our goal of securing promotion to level 5 it is clear we need to invest in improving the current playing squad especially as the current league is likely to be even more competitive this season. The coaches have clearly identified gaps in the current the playing current squad where we lack depth and / or capability. Recruitment this season has comprised a mix of

- (i) social media advertising
- (ii) advertising in The Rugby Paper – a national publication – over the 3 months leading up to the start of the season, with the added attraction of offering to help players find jobs through our sponsor network and contacts
- (iii) 7's circuit contacts and
- (iv) player led recruitment.

News Sunday, June 11, 2023 **The RUGBY Paper** 13

# Abendanon: French rugby is far more fun

**By Tommy Seymour**

FOR THE FIRST TIME, England's first-class rugby has been revealed to be as exciting as the high level of competition in the rest of the world. As the former captain of the England 7's team, Seymour writes about his experience of playing in France.

It was a surprise to me when I was asked to write this column. I had spent the last few years of my life playing rugby in France, and I had always been a fan of the game. But I had never written about it before. And now, as a former England 7's player, I am asked to write about the differences between the two countries.

Well, the biggest difference is that French rugby is far more fun. In England, we play a very structured game. We have a set of rules that we all follow, and we play in a very organized way. In France, on the other hand, the game is much more relaxed. The players are more carefree, and they play with a lot more flair. It's a much more enjoyable experience, and it's one that I would highly recommend to anyone who is looking for a new challenge.

Another difference is the way that the game is played. In France, the players are much more physical. They are used to playing in a much more competitive environment, and they are used to playing against much better players. In England, the game is much more tactical. We play a lot of scrums and lineouts, and we are very organized in our play. In France, the game is much more fluid. The players are used to playing in a much more dynamic environment, and they are used to playing against much better players.

Finally, there is the difference in the way that the game is viewed. In France, rugby is a much more popular sport. It is played by millions of people, and it is a major part of the culture. In England, rugby is much less popular. It is played by a much smaller number of people, and it is not as much a part of the culture. This is a shame, as it is a very exciting and enjoyable game, and it should be played by much more people.

So, if you are looking for a new challenge, or if you are looking for a more enjoyable experience, then you should consider playing in France. It is a much more fun and exciting game, and it is one that I would highly recommend to anyone who is looking for a new challenge.

**Winger Zheng on his way to Quins**

Having spent the last few years of his life playing in France, Zheng is now looking to make a move to the Quins. He is a very talented player, and he is looking for a new challenge. He is a very hard worker, and he is a very team player. He is a very good player, and he is a very good person. He is a very good player, and he is a very good person.

**Reeds Weybridge RFC are recruiting new players of all levels and abilities ahead of the 23/24 season.**

**What you will get from joining:**

- Level 4 / Regional 2 South East rugby at one of the most successful Club sides in the country - 5 promotions in 7 playing seasons
- Professional coaching team and programme
- A senior side
- High quality medical, physio, and S&C facilities
- Free access to weights room
- A great social vibe and Reeds Weybridge including the chance to tour
- Player stash and match day kit

**We can also potentially help you find work through our sponsor connections should you meet have the right to work in the UK.**

**If you want to hear more, please contact our Director of Rugby Hugh Connell at [reedsrfc@reedsrugby.com](mailto:reedsrfc@reedsrugby.com)**



This seems to have paid some dividends and we have seen at least ten or so new / returning players attend pre-season training.

### ***The Seniors Committee***

The current committee has remained largely unchanged for a number of seasons and with a view to both succession planning and breathing new life, ideas, and impetus into the Committee we are delighted to announce 2 new appointments to the Committee from the playing group, namely Toby Blyther, and our outgoing Club Captain, Josh Brown. Both these players have made strong contributions to the Club since their involvement and collectively will be able to represent the views of the playing community re priorities and issues as we go through the season, help us get more things done, and bring a stronger commercial mindset to the Club at a key phase of our journey whilst sustaining the Reeds social vibe.

We will also invite the new Club Captain to join the Committee and this will form a formal part of that role going forward.

Simon White has decided to stand down after a number of years on the Committee and does so with our thanks for his inputs, especially in helping to forge our relationship with Grace Dear Trust.

### ***Clubhouse Update***

As you are aware, members of the Club's Board have proactively entered into discussions with Whiteley Village about a range of strategic options for the Club going forward in response to the Village's own strategic review. As a result, any future investments in the Clubhouse and ground facilities will be limited for the foreseeable future to essential matters. This will not impact our planned scoreboard and floodlight investments - see more below.

We also plan to (i) improve the current Clubhouse through repairing the roof, (ii) improve the transition area between the changing rooms and 1<sup>st</sup> XV changing area and (iii) improve the current 1<sup>st</sup> XV changing area.

### ***Floodlights***

The Club signed a contract worth in excess of £30,000 with an RFU approved contractor to upgrade our floodlights to meet modern lighting standards using a new energy efficient LED system. As part of this, two further floodlights have been installed to extend the training acreage available to sides in the evenings through use of the "cabbage patch" area near the allotments with that area also being levelled to improve conditions underfoot. This project will be completed shortly.

### ***Scoreboard***

A suitable electronic scoreboard has been identified and funds have been secured for its purchase however we are required to secure planning permission from EBC before we can proceed. In advance of this we also require to the agreement of our landlord, Whiteley Village. To obtain this we have had to have separate plans drawn up and a full-size mock-up of the scoreboard. Conversations regarding a suitable location for the scoreboard are ongoing with the Village's Property Director. After this we will have to apply for planning permission (min 12 weeks) and place an order for our scoreboard (approx. 6 weeks) so unfortunately this will take some time to get over the line.

Please note that the coaching team have decided it is not appropriate to purchase a scoreboard with a clock for the simple reason that it is not possible to link scoreboard timing to the referee's watch (he is the only arbiter of when play concludes) and there is a risk of taking the wrong decision on the field of play based on erroneous timings.

### ***Keeping in touch with the Club?***

The Club is currently reviewing its contact listings to ensure these are up to date. If you know of anyone who would like to receive periodic e mails and newsletters from the Club but who currently does not, please ask them to drop a



with their contact details, including email and mobile phone, to Trishca Rae @ [trishca.rae@googlemail.com](mailto:trishca.rae@googlemail.com) and she will be sure to add your details to our systems!

### ***Some dates for your diaries***

Esher AWAY on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 – ***note this will be a full-on game.***

Also see Fixtures list below for other socials on 2, 16, & 23 September which includes a ladies lunch on 23 September!!

The 1<sup>st</sup> XV first block of 5 fixtures are listed below which contains a very interesting mix of new and old opposition and 3 great socials:

2 September – Sutton & Epsom @ Home and \*Player post-match social day\*

9 September – Colfians @ Away

16 September – Cobham @ Home and \*Presidents & Patrons lunch\*

23 September – Beckenham @ Home and \*Ladies Lunch\*

30 September – Reigatians @ Away

In all cases, please look out for more details nearer the time.

### **‘Saturday Club’ Membership and Patrons Schemes**

The Club is introducing a new ‘Saturday Club’ membership that will give all members including patrons and paid-up players access to preferential bar prices upon production of their membership card when attending Seniors Home matches or events.

Saturday Club membership costs £60, and additional benefits also include:

- Full membership of Reeds Weybridge RFC and use of facilities.
- Access to the 6 Nations and International Ticket Ballot.
- Free Entry to all HOME league and Cup games.
- Right to vote at the Club AGM.
- Invitation to all pre-match lunches.

Patrons Membership - costs £250, and provides members with additional benefits over and above Saturday Club membership including:

- One free annual Patron’s lunch.
- A Patron’s Tie. Note, any ladies wishing to become a patron will receive a Reeds branded golfing umbrella.
- Free travel on the Players’ coach when operated for League or Cup games.
- Your name on the Patrons section of the Club website.

If you are interested in becoming a patron, please email [ReedsRFCpatrons@gmail.com](mailto:ReedsRFCpatrons@gmail.com).

### **Playing Membership & Player Sponsorship**

Given the current economic situation and despite double digit inflation we have decided to consolidate membership types for ease of administration and once again not to increase playing membership fees.

Additionally, this season all players, upon payment of their subs (or their first instalment if paying in tranches), will receive a new pair of shorts, socks and dark blue training top. New members will additionally also receive a free Club polo top.



Please also note that any playing member is able to secure FREE playing membership for the season if they are able to secure player sponsorship for themselves – see below - at a cost of £350 per player on / before 29 September.

Players who secure sponsorship for themselves will enjoy full membership benefits which this season will include preferential bar prices upon production of their membership card.

Player sponsors will automatically become members of the “Saturday Club”, have access to free coach transport to those matches where a coach is laid on, get website billing, plus a free beer on home match days if their sponsored player scores a try and a bottle of prosecco if their sponsored player wins Man of the Match and finally have their name listed against their player(s) on the match day squad social media announcements\*

*\* if there are insufficient numbers of player sponsors the Club reserves the right to include details of every playing sponsor as part of every social media match day team announcement throughout the season i.e., meaning the sponsor would be positioned as a team rather than a specific player sponsor.*

Any questions please contact Jes Isaacs ([jeremy24.isaacs@gmail.com](mailto:jeremy24.isaacs@gmail.com)).

The various playing and social memberships can be accessed via this link:

<https://reedsweybridgerfc.co.uk/seniors/membership/>

### Transport

As in previous seasons, subs will be used to fund transport costs for players coming back from University to play for Reeds.

Given demand and interest in use of coaches on match days (other than in Cup games) has been very patchy we will not be increasing the number of coaches laid on for matches over the course of the season. Instead, we have decided to fund the operation of an uber taxi for players travelling from London to from Walton station to get to the Club for training nights.

### Off field Clothing



Adult KIRIN Hoodie



Men's KIRIN Tech Polo



Ladies KIRIN Tech Polo

Finally, if any player or member would like to order off field items for the new season including hoodies, mid-layers, training tops / bottoms etc. then they can do so from our online Akuma shop which can be accessed via the link below: <https://akumashops.com/rwrfc/shop/>

As ever thank you for your support – we look forward to seeing you on the touchline in the very near future!

Go Reeds!

**Ed Peters - Chairman Reeds Seniors**