



THE HERTFORDSHIRE RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

75th Anniversary Season

2010-2011 SEASON ENDING **NEWSLETTER**



ABOUT HERTS





Herts Coaching Conference



SARACENS

Herts Rugby Coaching Conference

Saturday 9 July 2011

University of Hertfordshire (De Havilland Campus)



Only
£20!
Includes
Lunch



Herts Rugby Coaching Conference

Saturday 9th July 2011

Hertfordshire Sports Village, University of Hertfordshire AL10 9EU

Theme: Coach Development

9:00am - 10:00am	Registration & Refreshments (Hertfordshire Sports Village Cafe)
10:00am - 10:30am	Welcome by Peter Engledow Matt Davies – Player Recruitment Fundamentals, what we look for
10:45am - 11:30am	Session 1: A – Scrumhalf Skills; B – Centre Play; C – Breakdown Skills <i>(Select one)</i>
11:45am - 12:30pm	Session 2: As above
12:30pm - 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm - 1:30pm	Session 3A: Paul Turner - Indoor Session
1:45pm - 3:00pm	Session 3B: Paul Turner – Practical – Understanding the Game - Attacking Philosophy
3:15pm - 4:15pm	Session 4: A - Strength and Conditioning (U16); B - Strength and Conditioning (16+); C - Scrum Development <i>(Select one)</i>
4:30pm	Conference Close

Message from the President



About Herts Summer 2011



Since the last edition we have seen a fantastic number of events take place in the county both on and off the field. The HRFU Xmas Lunch organised by John Vain took place for the first time at The RAF Club, Piccadilly where we drank them dry of beer. The Returning Students Festival run by Peter Engledow and his team in late December started it all off and what a great evening of rugby that was. It also included two teams battling it out in the clubhouse in a "Boat Race" rather than play their final game, great rugby spirit!! On the 21st January the first ever HRFU Former Players Dinner was held at Hertford with 120 in attendance and great visits down memory lane held everyone captive till the early hours. The Annual Dinner was once again well attended with guest speaker Aaron James keeping us amused.

With the weather creating backlogs in the fixtures we have managed to complete virtually all playing commitments including the school festivals including their 7's, Youth age group competitions plus all the County Cups, Trophies and Tankard along with the representative fixtures throughout, the latter being the highlight with the Senior XV. What an extraordinary talented bunch of guys we have in our county along with their coaches, Paul Turner, Michael Owen, Paul Gustard, Mick Lloyd and James Shanahan. To beat Cornwall away at Redruth and to put up with 'Hell Fire Corner' and The Trelawny's Army Drum Band, then Kent so decisively at Westcombe Park followed by the complete overhaul of Gloucestershire at Woollams was unbelievable. Then to see our boys run out of the tunnel at Twickenham to take on my old county, Lanarkshire!!, oops sorry, Lancashire!!, was just a dream come true. Yes, we came second, but we did ourselves proud and seriously put Hertfordshire (not Herefordshire!!) on the map.

Incredibly fantastic.

All the above takes all sorts of organising and loads of volunteers to help so may I sincerely thank every single one of you involved both at club, school and county level for your magnificent efforts in helping to grow this wonderful game of ours in Herts.

Your very proud President

Colin J P Haslam



A Farewell



With the AGM approaching it will soon be the time that my committee status will be zero. The past 30 years in our great county have left me with a myriad of fond memories.

From the early days of mini and youth rugby to the recent incredible feat of facing Lancashire in the Bill Beaumont County Championship Final at Twickenham it has been an incredible journey which Marion and I have enjoyed immensely.

To the many hundreds and thousands of players, volunteers, parents, committees and everyone else involved can I say a huge thank you?

Your achievements will not be forgotten.

Now we are off to Devon but..... We will be back!!!!!!!!!!

Best wishes from John and Marion Drew.
Good luck Hertfordshire.

The Secretary writes:

Thanks to all the clubs who submitted their Applications to Tour in good time before actually travelling. The County did not have one late application, which was very pleasing, and I did not have to make frantic phone calls etc to the RFU.

For a small rugby-playing county Herts rugby is in good shape and all the volunteers who give up their time to coach, administer clubs etc deserve our thanks for making the County successful.



On 27th June the AGM will take place at Welwyn RFC at 7 30 pm. I hope that there will be a full attendance with all the clubs being represented as I regard it as essential that clubs have close contact with the County Executive. Enjoy this edition of **About Herts**, and if you wish to contribute to future editions please contact Richard Milnes.

John Sargeant.

Message from Our Chairman



It's the end of the season - I think - it's only June after all. So we begin gearing up for next season, preparations for which begin in Herts with our AGM at the end of the month. Please come along.

Next season. How will Herts teams throughout the age groups fare without two of its great supporters? Will we ever hear 'Come on Herts' boom out again soon? I'm going to miss big JD along with his help and advice. Likewise, I shall miss the acerbic wit and stupid one liners of Rob Hardwick. Best wishes to both and thanks.

We believe we have recruited able replacements for the two of them. I am so lucky to be Chairman of a committee consisting of such dedicated workers/ volunteers for rugby in Herts. I thank them whole heartedly for their time and commitment.

My thanks, too, to everyone who gave up time this past year willingly to help Herts - from coaching and administering teams to organising leagues, cups and tournaments. Herts RFU could not survive without your help.

I always say that we are a small CB who punches above our weight. It is all down to you, the volunteers and once again I thank you and urge you to continue your good work. Now go find an assistant!

Our Day Out

We met up at 11am at Woollam's, the home of OA's for breakfast and the dishing out of kit. OA's again provided a fabulous breakfast of bacon, eggs, beans, toast and fresh fruit.

At 12 Mark Elliott presented the squad with their playing kit and we got on the coach. We set off and I was going to put on a DVD of the match v Cornwall, but the head coach, some new guy on the block called Turner insisted we watch something more stimulating. So we watched 'Twin Town'.

Twickenham is like a fortress on a match day, we weren't allowed in until 3pm and then they organise you with military precision. So we went to Old Deer Park as guests of London Welsh. The boys were 'strapped' at leisure by Kev and Bethan. Others watched cricket and Vainy had a pint!

3pm allowed in, straight into kit.

3.15 Official team photo.

3.20 Stud check and briefing by match officials

3.30 team frenzy as Shanners discovers post match stash of shirt and hoody.

3.35 - 4.15 warm up

4.20 into the tunnel. Weird, lining up to go onto the pitch whilst Toby Flood and some south seas islander are being interviewed by Sky. Who cares, this is our time.

4.25. Brett leads the team out. I am so proud of all of them.

4.30 Kick off. We lose. Bugger!

6pm Following the match and presentations we get a chance to look into the 4 rooms that comprise the England changing room - the fabled baths - now full of ice - to the indoor warm up area. The boys love it, eating the left over sandwiches and pinching the unused beer from the Baa Baas changing room!

7.30. Official function. Food and beer. Just like any rugby club on a Saturday, and no less crowded.

9.30 The boys leave. My last text of the day is from the skipper, Brett who is in bed with one of our wingers (!) and wondering how I groom my moustache...

A great day out, there are things I will organise better next year, but overall I think it was better than a trip to the seaside! Gwyn Williams



2011 County Championship Match Reports

Lancashire dash Herts hopes

Hertfordshire 23 Lancashire 32

Hertfordshire came away from Twickenham with their heads held high, but without the Bill Beaumont Cup having lost the final to a strong Lancashire side, 32 - 23. They competed throughout the game and when 27 - 6 down with 10 minutes to go did not crumble but hit back with three tries to close the final gap to 9 points.

Whether it was the quality of the opposition or the stage of rugby's HQ, probably a bit of both, Hertfordshire did not show quite the same composure as in the previous weeks as there were more unforced errors, more penalties conceded and even the goal kicking showed more fallibility than previously.

However all played their part in an exciting game in which both sides, and Herts in particular, attempted to use the ball positively on all occasions. Prompted once gain by some brilliant half back play, particularly from scrum half Stefan Liebenberg, the Herts forwards sought to take the ball forward and create space for the backs. Lancashire's defence was stronger than the earlier opposition and they also were quicker to pounce on any Herts mistakes to take try scoring opportunities.

Herts started positively, won the first line out against the throw and within three minutes Lancashire conceded a penalty 40 metres out and Richard Greg gave Herts an early lead. Lancashire immediately took play into the Herts 22 where under pressure Herts concede penalties on three occasions Lancashire opted to kick for touch and drive from the line out. Herts held each drive, but then Lancs gave the ball to fly half Alex Davies (Plymouth Albion), whose deft kick beat the defence for centre Matthew Riley (Sedgley Park) to touch down. Davies added the conversion.

For the next 15 minutes play went from end to end as each side tried to break through, but both sides made handling mistakes in the face of fierce tackling. Just before the half hour, Gregg and Davies exchanged penalties and then the last ten minutes saw some frenetic action. Wing, James Tirrell (Letchworth) went close with a kick and chase and a penalty and a drop goal attempt went astray from Herts. Then on the stroke of half time, Liebenberg sprinted along the right touch line but was cut down by a brilliant try saving tackle by full back Adam Armstrong (Barking) as he was about to score. So at half time Lancashire had a narrow four point lead, 10 - 6.

Herts had the early initiative in the second half and a series of forward drives forced Lancs to concede a penalty, but unfortunately the kick hit the post. Minutes later Lancashire ran the ball out of their own half and created space on their right for wing Thomas Hughes (Preston Grasshoppers) to score. Play became a little unstructured as Herts tried to catch up and mid way through the half Lancs appeared to take control of the game. A series of forward drives near the Herts line were held by the defence but eventually a penalty was conceded. Another kick, lineout and drive this time resulted in a try for lock Louis McGowan (Rotherham Titans).

Moments later Herts has a chance to close the gap as Tom Newton made a dah along the left touch line, but his inside pass was grasped by a defender. But it was Lancs who scored next following more enterprising play from within their own half, replacement James Moore (Vale of Lune) touching down and Davies converting.

Lancs now led 27 - 6 with 10 minutes left, but here was still time for plenty of action. From the restart, the forwards and backs ran the ball along the right touch line and Lawrence White took the flishe doff the movement. Two minutes later Lancs replied, spinning the ball along the line to make room for left wing Oliver Brennand to score.

Herts were undaunted and found the way to score twice in the closing minutes. Firstly anther combined move between forwards and backs put Ollie Cooper-Miller over the line and Gregg added the two points. Then on the stroke of the final whistle, Cooper-Miller made ground on the right and Jack Micans was on hand the complete the scoring.

So ended Hertfordshire's best County Championship campaign ever in this their 75th year. A proud moment for all concerned.

Scorers: Hertfordshire:

Tries - White 70m: Cooper-Miller 77m; Micans 80m: **Conversions** - Gregg 77m: **Penalties** - Gregg 3m, 25m

Lancashire:

Tries - Riley 8m; Hughes 47m; McGowan 60m; Moore 69m; Brennand 72m: **Conversions** - Davies 8m, 69m; Penalty - Davies 30m

2011 County Championship Match Reports



Herts Dismiss Gloucestershire to Reach Final

Hertfordshire 53 Gloucestershire 8

Hertfordshire dismissed Gloucestershire with an outstanding second half performance, in which they scores six tries, to win by 53 points to 8 and so take their place in the Bill Beaumont Cup Final at Twickenham next Sunday. There they will play the winners of the Northern group, Lancashire, who also came through the pool stages with a 100% record.

The first half was a tight affair and although Hertfordshire had made the most of the wind to take territorial advantage and score two tries, a late Gloucestershire rally brought them to within 7 points and it looked like all to play for in the second period. However the home team gave a near perfect performance as the forwards and backs combined with great understanding, prompted once again by half backs Shanahan and Liebenberg, to run the ball at the visitors from all parts of the pitch. Gloucestershire failed to use the wind and kicked away possession, whilst Herts kept the ball in hand, using forward drives to keep possession. And the result? 38 points and in the end Herts were almost scoring at will.

The foundations to this success were laid in the first half where the Herts forwards got the upper edge in the lines out, were solid in the scrums and combined well in the loose. All this gave the backs freedom to move the ball and although more mistakes were made in the first half than in the whole game the previous week, the basis was laid for the fine second half performance.

A good crowd was in attendance at Old Albanian's ground, Woollams, when Hertfordshire kicked off with the wind behind them. Hertfordshire had slightly the better of the opening exchanges with most play in the visitors half and after seven minutes play, they were awarded a penalty 20 metres out and Richard Gregg opened the scoring for Herts. In the next few minutes Gloucs twice lost possession from their own line out throw ins and their clearance kicking lacked any distance, so Herts were able to keep up the pressure.

After quarter of an hour Herts went close to scoring but were penalised near the line. Gloucs cleared for a line out which Herts disrupted and from the following scrum they ran the ball and created an overlap for right wing Chris May to cross the line for a try, converted by Gregg. The visitors gradually got more into the game and it took a crunching tackle by Liebenberg to snuff out one Gloucs attack. Play remained mainly in the visitors half though and on the half hour Herts had a chance to go further ahead, but Gregg's halfway line penalty attempt hit the posts.

The final ten minutes of the half saw the visitors break out and score twice. Firstly right wing Chris Hawkins (Hartbury College) went in in the corner for an unconverted try and on the stroke of half time Craig Jones (Lydney) kicked a penalty after he himself had made a good break. However between those two scores the home side had scored a try of their own when Crompton went over after May had made an incisive break in mid field.

The touch line pundits thought that with the wind advantage to Gloucestershire in the second half the 15-8 lead may not be enough. The Herts players had other ideas. From the kick off they put the visitors under pressure and when they lost the ball, Gloucestershire kicked direct into touch and then misread the wind and kicked a penalty dead. Herts forwards then took control and a series of driving mauls kept possession as they moved up field though numerous phases until eventually the ball was released for Shanahan to score a try converted by Gregg.

Herts had used the rolling replacement law judiciously and lock Torran Macdougall in particular made a great impact in the loose. Mid way through the half Stuart Smart broke from the half way line, was supported by Craig South, then Wes Cope. Finally Shanahan was in hand to cross for his second try. Five minutes later it was May's turn to score a second try as he completed a move started by replacement full back Tom Newton. Smart converted with a curling kick into the wind from the touch line.

It was all Herts now as they moved the ball from all parts of the field running Gloucestershire ragged. With ten minutes to go Chris Lombaard capped a fine game with a try converted by Smart and two minutes later May completed his hat trick of tries following another fine Herts three-quarter movement. Smart added the two points. Finally, on the stroke of the final whistle prop Alex Brown crashed over from a ruck following a good run by Gregg.

Scorers: Hertfordshire: Tries - May 17m, 63m, 72m; Crompton 36m; Shanahan 52m, 58m; Lombaard 70m; Brown 79m:

Conversions - Gregg 17m, 52m; Smart 63m, 70m, 72m: **Penalty** - Gregg 7m

Gloucestershire: Tries - Hawkins 31m; **Penalty** - Jones 40m



2011 County Championship Match Reports

Herts Hammer Kent

Kent 7 Hertfordshire 48

Hertfordshire continued to set records in the Bill Beaumont Cup last Saturday when they recorded their biggest win over Kent. This win sets them up for a top of the table clash against Gloucestershire next Saturday, with the winner taking its place in the Final at Twickenham on 29th May.

Herts built on their performance at Redruth to outperform Kent in the key areas of defence, counter attack and support work. Honours were pretty even in the set pieces, but the aggressive tackling of the Herts back row and backs constantly disrupted the Kent possession to snuff out the attacking potential of their backs. And when Kent did have a spell of sustained pressure on the Herts line their defence was up to the task.

In contrast the Herts backs and forwards, led by excellent performances by the half backs, James Shanahan and Stefan Liebenberg, combined well to utilise their possession to attack or counter attack at almost every opportunity, which resulted in three tries in each half.

Herts kicked off with a strong wind at their backs and soon realised its strength as Richards Gregg's first touch kick attempt from the half way line went dead. Within five minutes Herts took the initiative when they ran a free kick, Kent did not retire and Gregg opened the scoring with a 20 metre penalty. Herts had the better of the next exchanges and went close when firstly an Ian Crompton kick and chase went over the dead ball line and then the forward were held up over the line. However this pressure was soon rewarded as from the resulting 5 metre scrum a succession of drives created space for Chris Lombaard to cross the line. Gregg converted from near the touch line to give Herts a 10 point lead after 15 minutes.

Five minutes later Shanahan made a half break on the half way line, making space for Gregg who then gave Chris May an easy run in from the 22. Gregg converted to make it 15 - nil.

Kent tried to get back into the game, but although they got close to the line, their support play was lacking and, in the face of strong Herts defence, mistakes were made and they were unable to finish any move. Play fluctuated up and down the field as Herts counter attacked whenever a Kent attack broke down, but there was no more scoring until the last couple of minutes of the half.

Then Shanahan superbly picked up a low pass off his toes, gave a good pass to Lombaard who had Gregg in support. Finally when Gregg was stopped short of the line, Crompton appeared in mid field to score under the posts. Gregg converted and then on the stroke of half time added a penalty to make it 27 - nil at the break.

Kent now had the benefit of the wind and soon set themselves up near the Herts line. There then followed a siege of the visitor's line that lasted some six or seven minutes, during which the Kent forwards were held up over the line twice and also lost the ball in goal attempting to score. However Herts defence held without conceding a penalty and eventually the siege was lifted when the visitors found space to run the ball from their own line.

With quarter of an hour gone and Herts back in the Kent half, Kent made a poor clearance kick and Tom Newton, who had replaced Gregg at half time, ran the ball back in typical fashion, gave the ball to Liebenberg who ran in from the 22. Taking up the kicking duties, Stuart Smart duly converted. Minutes later Newton again counter attacked from within his half and the forwards and backs combined to give space for replacement hooker Wes Cope to score. Smart curled the ball into the wind to convert from near the touch line.

With a lead of 41 points Herts made more changes under the rolling replacement rule, but this did not reduce their attacking potential. With five minutes left Lombaard scored his second try and Smart completed Herts' 100% kicking record. There was just time left for Kent to score a consolation try via Toby May (Westcombe Park), converted by Paul Humphreys (Blackheath), when for once the Herts defence lost concentration.

With Gloucestershire beating Cornwall with a bit to spare it should be a hard fought game in the final pool match at Old Albanian RF next Saturday, kick off 3.00 pm

Scorers: Hertfordshire: Tries - Lombaard 15min, 75 min; May 20 min, Crompton 39 min, Liebenberg 56 min, Cope 59 min.
Conversions - Gregg 15m, 20m, 39m; Smart 56m, 59m, 75 m. **Penalties** - Gregg 5m, 40m

Kent: Try - May 79m. **Conversion** Humphries 79m

2011 County Championship Match Reports



Historic Win for Herts

Cornwall 18 Hertfordshire 25

Hertfordshire made history on Saturday at Redruth with their first ever win in the Duchy in the opening match of their quest for the Bill Beaumont Cup, beating Cornwall by 25 points to 18. A magnificent defensive performance in the last 20 minutes of play, with the Cornishmen attacking down the slope into "hellfire corner", prevented Cornwall from scoring and preserved firstly a four and then a seven point lead.

The new look Herts side soon gelled under new skipper Brett McNamee (Hertford) as they were confronted with a strong Cornish side, the core of which was drawn from the Redruth Club. The Old Albanian half back pairing provided a good link between the forwards and backs, who attacked when they could and snuffed out the Cornish backs on most occasions.

The forward battle was pretty even at the set pieces though the scrum took a while to settle. In the loose the work rate of all the forwards was tremendous and the back row in particular tackled almost everything that moved.

Hertfordshire got the best start possible with a try in the first minute. Cornwall were off side as they cleared the Herts kick off. Herts took a quick penalty, ran the ball left and Ian Crompton (Hertford) touched down. With Richard Gregg (Old Albanian) converting Herts were 7 - nil up. Herts continued to have early possession but could not break the gain line and it was the home side that had the next scoring opportunity. Herts were caught offside 20 metres in front of their posts but the simple penalty went astray.

After the Herts forwards had combined to take play to the Cornish 22 only for the last pass to go astray, the home side opened their account. They gathered loose ball and two forwards made the break through to put right wing Tom Notman (Redruth) over the line for an unconverted try.

Remarkably 15 minutes had passed before the first line out of the game and from that Cornwall had a good opportunity but knocked on. Both sides had their opportunities but it was not until the best part of 30 minutes had gone before Herts put sustained pressure on their host's line. The Herts forwards set up a ruck on the left and McNamee found his way over the line in typical style. Minutes later Cornwall conceded a penalty and Gregg made it 15-5 to Herts.

Cornwall rallied and for the last five minutes or so of the half put Herts on the defensive. Although a try was prevented, on the stroke of half time Herts conceded a penalty at a ruck and Adrian Winnan (Penryn) reduced the deficit to seven points.

With the slope in their favour Cornwall started the second half strongly and within a couple of minutes No 8 Sam Hocking (Plymouth Albion) crashed over after a Herts player had lost the ball in a tackle. Shortly afterwards, flanker Lawrence White (Old Albanian) was carded but Cornwall failed to take the points so the visitors retained their two point lead.

Cornwall gradually took control of possession and after 15 minutes got their reward when a clever cross kick fell into the hands of right wing Trotman, who scored in hellfire corner. Herts were not to be deterred and four minutes later scored in a similar fashion. This time Crompton gathered a cross kick passed inside to Gregg who, when stopped short of the line slipped the ball to the supporting David Shotton (Tring) who touched down. Gregg converted to regain the lead for Herts.

Cornwall again pressed but excellent Herts defence meant that they were recycling the ball in mid field rather than near the Herts line. Then there was a surprise addition to the Herts lead when James Shanahan (Old Albanians) casually dropped a goal from some 40 metres. There was now about 15 minutes play left and the Cornishmen threw everything at the visitors'. With five minutes left wing Chris May (old Albanian) was carded for killing the ball and with two minutes to go Cornwall were held up over the line. But the Herts defence held and at the final whistle were the deserved winners 25 - 18.

Next Saturday Hertfordshire play Kent at Westcombe Park RFC and then in the final pool match, host Gloucestershire at Old Albanian RFC on 21st May.

Scores: Cornwall: Tries - Notman 12 min, 56 min; Hocking 42 min. Penalty - Winnan 40 min

Hertfordshire: Tries - Crompton 1 min; McNamee 29 min, Shotton 60 min. **Conversions** - Gregg 1 min, 60 min.

Penalty - Gregg 32 min. **Drop Goal** - Shanahan 66 min



Representative Honours

England Counties



Rob Schillaci has capped an outstanding season for Hertfordshire and his Club, Hertford, by being selected for the England Counties XV, the representative flagship of the County Championship and the game outside the Premiership. Prop forward Rob, who will celebrate first 21st birthday next month, has been a regular selection for Club and County for the past two seasons and previously played for Hertfordshire's U16, U18 and U20 XV's. The England Counties tour includes games against a Madrid XV in Madrid, a Castilla Leon Union XV in Salamanca and a match against a Spain XV in Valladolid.

In March, Hertfordshire had two representatives in the England Counties XV that played the Ulster Bank Club International XV in Dublin. Prop Aaron Liffchak (Barking and formerly Hertford, Saracens and London Welsh) was in the starting line-up and scrum half Sefan Liebenberg (Old Albanian) came on from the bench in the 16 – 8 defeat.

England U20s

Two former Hertfordshire age group players were in the elite squad for selection for the major England U20 matches. In the event Owen Farrell (Saracens and formerly St Georges' Harpenden) made his England U20 debut when he played in the 58- 8 win over Scotland at Newbury in March. This was the only game he could start due to Saracens commitments, but he did come off the bench in Grand Slam winning match against Ireland. Jake Sharp (Bedford, Saracens and formerly Sheredes School), who was capped at U20 level last season was in the squad but did not play in the spring matches.

London & SE U20

Wing **Simon Wasley** (Bishop's Stortford) played for the London & SE U20s for match against the South West U20s at Cleve in April. Then in May he was joined by centre Jimmy Spears (Luton) in the team that beat the Midlands U20s 35 – 28. Simon scored the last try of the match, but in doing so damaged his knee and was not available for the final matches in the County Championship having been on the bench for the first game against Cornwall in Redruth.



England Deaf

England Deaf, including Hertfordshire's back row player **Josh Corcoran** (Hertford), battled hard but were still left seeking their first ever win over Wales after a 21-9 defeat in a Deaf International at Pontypridd's Sardis Road ground, last Saturday. Josh had played with the blessing of Hertford's Director of Rugby, England Saxons cap Nick Lloyd, and his team-mates, despite Hertford having a vital league match against Ampthill the same day.

Representative Honours



England U18s

Second row forward, **Tom Jubb** (Hitchin Boys/Oaklands Coll/Fullerians/Letchworth/Saracens) played for England U18s throughout the season. His first match was Against Ireland in Dublin in December. Then he scored two tries in the 65 – 0 defeat of Italy at Sale in February and came off the bench during the 21 - 26 defeat at the hands of Scotland in March at Headingley. In April Tom took a full part in the FIRA/AER Championship in France, which included games against Wales and Ireland.

London & SE U18s

Ollie Walliker (St Columba's College and Old Albanians), Bry White (Oaklands College, and Bedford Blues) and Rory Young (Bishop's Stortford HS and Bishop's Stortford) all played in the Divisional side at the Divisional festival

England U16s

No 8 **Charles Kingham** (Felsted Sch, Bishop's Stortford & Saracens Academy) and wing Joss Linney (Uppingham Sch, Bishop's Stortford & Saracens Academy) were selected for the England U16 squad for their spring matches. Charles Kingham started in the matches against Italy U17, at Macclesfield (won 16 – 6) and against Wales at Fylde (won 31 – 10), whilst Joss Linney came off the bench in both games

At the Wellington Festival, **Josh Sharp** (Sheredes Sch, Bishop's Stortford and Saracens Academy) played at fly half for the England Blues side, scoring a try and converting two others against England Division North. The Blues had a successful festival, winning two of their three matches.

London & SE U16s - Divisional Festival

London were stronger and better organised than the Midlands and eased to a 32-5 victory in the opening match of the Divisional Festival at Broadstreet. Amongst the scorers were left wing Joss Linney (Uppingham School and Hertfordshire) who scored a try which fly-half Josh Sharp (Sheredes School and Hertfordshire) converted. London completed a successful tournament by crushing the South West 23-10, their second successive victory in the Festival. In the second half, winger Joss Linney scored two tries in three minutes, first popping up on the left wing then the right.

Following the Festival the Following Hertfordshire players were selected for the England Development camps:

Benjamin Calder (Mill Hill School and Hertfordshire), **Joss Linney**, **Josh Sharp**



HERTS RUGBY



County Cups

Presidents' Cup

Although 5 Clubs were eligible for this season's Presidents' Cup only Hertford, Tring and Old Albanian entered with Hertford running out winners in the Final against Tring on a hot, sunny afternoon at Harpenden RFC.



Hertford RFC winning Presidents' Cup



Presidents' Tankard

Prelim Round:	Welwyn 49 beat Datchworth 0
Quarter Finals:	Hemel 50 beat BarnetEliz 0
	Hitchin 13 beat Cheshunt 11
	Harpenden 26 beat St Albans 8
	Welwyn 45 beat Fullarians 15
Semi Finals:	Welwyn 39 beat Hitchin 10
	Harpenden 8 beat Hemel 5

A keenly contested match with Welwyn appearing to have the edge in the first half in particular in the loose were ahead at half time. In the second half Welwyn had got the bit between their teeth now and exploited the bottom right corner of Verulamian's pitch scoring twice through their pack. Their winger Ofori scored a spectacular try by springing forward and high in the air to take the ball and completely negating the covering defender before racing away and over the line to score.

Final: Harpenden 13 Welwyn 29

Presidents' Trophy

Ten teams were eligible to enter this Competition and seven entries were received, namely Borehamwood, Chess Valley, Cuffley, Black Horse, Hatfield, Royston and Verulamians.

Regrettably, the early rounds were dominated by walk overs, and only two teams, Royston and Verulamians, played a match prior to the Final. Indeed, Chess Valley progressed to the Final without playing a game, and this apparent disinterest in Cup competitions over League fixtures needs to be addressed before next season.

The Final, played at Harpenden RFC on Sunday 1 May, was competed for by first time finalists Chess Valley from Merit Table HM3 and defending champions Verulamians, HM1, and whilst Verulamians won 67 points to 5 points, the game was more keenly contested, and it was only in the latter stages of the game that Verulamians scored a number of tries in quick succession.

Our thanks go to Harpenden for their wonderful hospitality in hosting the Finals day.



Sabbath Cup

In view of the disappointing entry for this years Competition – there were only 3 Teams – (OK, it is accepted that the date – Mother's Day – probably had an adverse effect on entries), we need input from Clubs and players.

Is there a demand/desire for a Competition for players who have reached the venerable age of 35? Should we, perhaps increase the qualifying age? This was considered at Committee level in the early part of last season and it was decided that we should stick to the original age criteria.

There is also the question of when it should be played. Many believe it should be played when the ground is more likely to be forgiving. Please let me have your thoughts.

Would it help if player numbers were reduced to e.g. 10 a side? It would be a great shame if this Competition were to disappear as I believe there is a place for ensuring that players recently retired from the every weekend commitment have an opportunity to show that they still have what it takes.

In addition, it ensures that ex – players are not readily lost to the Clubs. Feed back to R. McClement or any member of the Competition Committee please.

Hertford won the Competition.

Herts 2011 7-a-side Winners

Hertfordshire RFU held their annual 7-a-side competition on Sunday 22 May at Fullerians RFC, Watford.

With some excellent running rugby on display, those, who turned up to watch, had a great day out.

Our thanks go to Fullerians for hosting this popular competition, with their excellent Burger cooks and Bar Staff, all the Officials, especially the Referees, the Spectators and, of course, the Players themselves.

HRFU 7's Cup Winners **Letchworth RUFC** / **HRFU 7's Plate winners** **Fullerians RFC**



COLTS SHIELD FINAL ... Letchworth 30 - Datchworth 13

Letchworth outscored Datchworth by five tries to one, yet that doesn't really tell the full story about what turned out to be a very competitive match. Letchworth lead 22-3 at half time, four tries coming from their talented back division, Tom Ansell, Attend Gorier, Ryan Hockley, and Dan Roberts the scorers. Datchworth however refused to give in though and came back hard second half to get within 9 points by literally starving Letchworth of possession. However, it was Letchworth who ended the game on the offensive to seal the match with a Ben Cave try and then to close out the match with a Dan Roberts penalty.



Merit Tables – Season 2010-2011

Club of the Month for Hertfordshire Rugby for Season 2010/11

Sept 2010	-	Hertford
Oct 2010	-	Barnet/Elizabethans
Nov 2010	-	Fullerians
Dec 2010	-	No award
Jan 2011	-	Watford
Feb 2011	-	Datchworth
March 2011	-	Verulamians
Club of the Year	-	Hertford

The Hertfordshire RFU Golf Day Mid-Herts Golf Club

MONDAY 18th July 2011
1pm onwards

Hertfordshire / Middlesex Merit Tables 2010 / 2011

Each season brings its own challenges and 2010-2011 was no exception. In September, 68 teams began the long road towards April 2011, but by the end five teams had fallen along the wayside. Was this due to over optimism by clubs or the fact that the number of players committed to playing from September to April is gradually reducing?

However, 63 sides competed in the seven merit tables through a season that was plagued by pitches covered in snow and ice during December and January, which created havoc for the fixture schedules. Thanks to a mighty effort from all the clubs in re-arranging their matches, all the games were completed, with the last game being a double header on Knock-Out Finals Day between Cheshunt 3rd and Hackney 2nd.

Last year, Middlesex teams won the most Merit Tables 4-3, but there has been a strong swing to Hertfordshire 5-1, with the other going to Buckinghamshire. The winners were:-

Table 1 – Hertford 3rd	Table 5 – Tring 4th
Table 2 – Ruislip 3rd	Table 6 – Old Albanians 5th
Table 3 – Tabard 2nd	Table 7 - Chesham 2nd
Table 4 – Welwyn 3rd	

There have been some notable success stories with Ruislip 3rd and Cheshunt 2nd repeating the one/two in Table 2 that they achieved in Table 3 last season, while Tring 4th repeated the same feat in winning Table 6 and then Table 5 in successive seasons, losing only one game in two seasons.

In the Knock-Out Competition, the season ended on the Saturday before Easter, with magnificent weather and firm pitches at Barnet Elizabethan's and Saracens Amateur's grounds. Twenty-eight teams, just over five hundred players, around thirty Hertfordshire Society Referees and a host of spectators enjoyed a rousing end to the season.

Knock-Out winners and Plate winners were:-

Winners

Table 1 - Tring 3rd
Table 2 – Cheshunt 2nd
Table 3 – Tabard 2nd
Table 4 – Welwyn 3rd
Table 5 – Hackney 2nd
Table 6 – Watford 2nd
Table 7 – Harpenden 4th

Plate winners

St Albans 2nd
Finchley 2nd
Borehamwood
Mill Hill
Hatfield 2nd
Hertford 6th
Welwyn 5th



Honours Table - 2010-2011



Hertfordshire RFU Jack Marshall Honours Table														
Final Table Season 2010/11														
Now	Club Name	L'gue	P	W	D	L	For	Ag'n	% Ratio	Were	Last Result	PRIZE		
1	Hertford	Nat3L&SE	26	24	0	2	1067	353	92.31%	3.02	1 Away v Tring	Won 38 - 26 £700		
2	The Mount *	HMMT4	16	12	1	3	472	123	78.13%	3.84	2 Away v Old Albanians IV	Lost 5 - 31 £400		
3	Fullerians	L3NW	22	17	0	5	577	248	77.27%	2.33	3 Away v Wasps	Won 28 - 10 £300		
4	Barnet Elizabethans	L3NW	22	15	2	5	460	293	72.73%	1.57	4 Away v Hitchin	Lost 20 - 34 £200		
5	Datchworth	L3NW	22	14	1	7	364	340	65.91%	1.07	5 Away v Old Ashmoleans	Won 24 - 23 £100		
6	Royston *	HEM2	19	12	1	6	370	229	65.79%	1.62	6 Away v Old Millhillians	Lost 17 - 20 £100		
7	Harpenden	L2NW	22	14	0	8	550	331	63.64%	1.66	7 Home v Imperial Medicals	Won 44 - 17 £100		
8	Hatfield †	HEM3	17	10	1	6	439	230	61.76%	1.91	9 Away v Harrow	Lost 0 - 31 £100		
9	Old Albanians	Nat2South	30	18	1	11	1080	668	61.67%	1.62	8 Home v Hinkley	Won 64 - 7		
10	Verulamians	HEM1	22	12	2	8	512	420	59.09%	1.22	10 Home v Harlequin Amateurs	Won 41 - 10		
11	Watford †	HEM3	17	10	0	7	333	313	58.82%	1.06	11 Away v Thamesians	Lost 17 - 19		
12	Borehamwood *	HMMT4	16	9	0	7	359	179	56.25%	2.01	12 Home v Tabard II	Won 19 - 13		
13	Hitchin	L3NW	22	11	0	11	480	372	50.00%	1.29	13 Home v Barnet Elizabethans	Won 34 - 20		
14	Bishop's Stortford	Nat3L&SE	26	13	0	13	621	715	50.00%	0.87	14 Home v Diss	Won 67 - 5		
15	Welwyn	L2NW	22	10	1	11	371	412	47.73%	0.90	15 Away v London New Zealand	Won 20 - 19		
16	HH (Camelot)	L2NW	22	10	0	12	411	487	45.45%	0.84	16 Away v St Albans	Won 36 - 30		
17	Tring	Nat3L&SE	26	11	0	15	584	668	42.31%	0.87	17 Home v Hertford	Lost 26 - 38		
18	St Albans	L2NW	22	9	0	13	419	558	40.91%	0.75	18 Home v HH (Camelot)	Lost 30 - 36		
19	Letchworth	L1N	26	10	1	15	490	529	40.38%	0.93	19 Home v Tabard	Won 31 - 5		
20	Cheshunt	L3NW	22	7	0	15	398	341	31.82%	1.17	20 Home v Old Haberdashers	Lost 0 - 31		
21	Chess Valley †	HEM3	16	5	0	11	291	330	31.25%	0.88	21 Home v Northolt	Won 19 - 7		
22	Tabard	L1N	26	6	0	20	411	652	23.08%	0.63	22 Away v Letchworth	Lost 5 - 31		
23	Stevenage Town	L1N	26	6	0	20	438	719	23.08%	0.61	23 Away v Sidcup	Lost 24 - 48		
24	South Oxhey *	HMMT6	11	2	0	9	121	288	18.18%	0.42	24 Away v Old Ashmoleans II	Won 26 - 19		
25	Black Horse	GK2Super	18	2	0	16	286	597	11.11%	0.48	25 Away v Shelford IV	Lost 10 - 42		
26	Old Ashmolean	L3NW	22	1	0	21	183	962	4.55%	0.19	26 Home v Datchworth	Lost 23 - 24		
27	Cuffley *	HEM3	7	0	0	7	61	384	0.00%	0.16	27 Home v Hatfield	Lost 17 - 57		

The John Macfarlane Bowl: Hertford top the table, ahead of The Mount.

The Jimmy Little Trophy: The Mount claim the points ratio challenge, marginally ahead of Hertford.

Trophies and winners' prize cheques will be presented at the Hertfordshire RFU Annual General Meeting to be held Monday 27 June 2011 at Welwyn RFC commencing 7-30PM.

The John Macfarlane Bowl is the prize for winning the Jack Marshall Honours Table. The Jimmy Little Trophy is awarded to the team with the best points ratio. *Only games played qualify for the table, walkover wins and losses are excluded. †Expunged league matches included.

Organiser: John Gregory, 4 Caldecote, Near Stilton, Cambs., PE7 3SG. Tel: 01733-246209 e-mail: johngregory326@talktalk.net

Original concept by **Jack Marshall**

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County Dinners



County Members Dinner

Hertfordshire RFU continued its 75th Anniversary celebrations with the County Members Dinner at Mid Herts Golf Club. Some 80 members and guests attended and a good time was had by all.

Once again the Golf Club caterers provided a fine meal, which was washed down by a selection of wines, beer and in some cases, port. This got the party in the mood for the more formal part of the evening, which was presided over by Mark Elliott in his usual inimitable manner.

There was only one presentation this year, the Morrie Morris Trophy, as Hertfordshire had not produced any 16 or 18 group internationals in 2009-10. The Trophy was presented to Oli Walliker of St Columba's College, by RFU Vice President Willie Wildash. Oli played at tight head prop for the London & SE Division in the recent Under 18 Divisional Festival at Broadstreet, having previously played for the Division at U16 level. Oli has also represented Hertfordshire at all age groups from U14 to U18.

Hertfordshire President, Colin Haslam then welcomed the guests with an overview of the County's activities. Willie Wildash responded, not only giving the members a view from HQ but also noting the close relationship between Dorset & Wilts, his CB, and Hertfordshire, especially during the early years of each CB when they competed regularly in the old Southern Group of the County Championship.

Finally the assembled company were well entertained by comedian Aaron James, who sent them laughing into the night.

Former Players help Celebrate Hertfordshire's 75th

Hertfordshire RFU continued its 75th year celebrations last Friday evening with a Dinner for Past Players at Hertford Rugby Club.

Well over 100 past players, coaches and administrators attended an evening full of nostalgia. Some of the faces were a little more worn and the hair thinner and/or greyer, but the memories were not dimmed. However, just in case people needed reminding of their younger selves, the walls of the Herford club house were adorned with old photograph and programmes recalling County Championship feats of yesteryear.

Players from every decade since Hertfordshire joined the County Championship in 1952 were in attendance, including one, Bill Hodges who actually made his debut, pre Championship in 1950. Five of Hertfordshire's most capped players, all with more than 30 appearances, were present, including Andy Jaszczak, who played 48 times. Also, nine former captains were reunited with their players, including County Championship Shield winning captain, Dave Hesketh.

After some liquid preliminaries everyone enjoyed an excellent meal, during which the President took wine with various groups including the captains, most capped players and the three attendees who had represented Hertfordshire at both cricket and rugby.

The formalities were opened with a toast to absent friends from John Wackett, Welwyn, Rosslyn Park and England. Hertfordshire President, Colin Haslam, then welcomed everybody and brought to company up to date on the state of rugby in the County.

County Vice President, Mark Elliott, who was the inspiration behind the evening and who MC'd the proceedings with his usual aplomb, took the opportunity to read out a number of apologies from players who were unable to attend, before Michael Gibson, the former Ireland, Barbarians, London Irish, Surrey etc back row, proposed the toast to Hertfordshire with typical Irish humour.

Finally guest speaker Ian Irving had the company rolling in the isles with a very funny speech.

That was not the end of the evening however, as tales of yesteryear rang around the bar until the early hours of the morning.

RFU Whole Club Seal of Approval



We are delighted to announce that Hitchin has become the first club in Hertfordshire to be awarded the Most prestigious accreditation available in the Game, **the RFU Whole Club Seal of Approval**.

This accreditation requires clubs to provide evidence of good practice throughout the club - not just in our section. The Whole Club Seal of Approval award recognizes the effort and achievement of volunteers in achieving the standards needed in developing and sustaining Rugby Union in our club.

It's taken a year of hard work to ensure we had the correct procedures and training in place as a club and we will always be grateful to Glenn (and Sam) Cooper who drew our submission together and pushed many of us to improve or document what we do.

The WCSoA was introduced in 2009 and builds on established Seal of Approval awards for provision of youth rugby, the new accreditation requires clubs to provide evidence of good practice in areas including club management, player development and recruitment, child protection, sports equity, coaching and refereeing, as well as the recruitment and management of volunteers. It means that all of our parents can be reassured that we are a well run club that provides rugby in a safe and positive environment.

Peter Engledow RDO for Herts" It is a fantastic achievement by the club and in particular Glenn Cooper, he has done so much work on the project and I was delighted for him, once the award was confirmed. The entire SOA process is currently under review and details will be released shortly on the changes going forward. The club should be proud of their achievement, and it is a great way for Tim Jeffries (Tuna) to step down after 8 years of volunteering and developing mini and junior rugby, he was a great volunteer for Hitchin Rugby Club.

No fees increase for Herts Refs (yet again)

At their recent AGM the Hertfordshire Referees Society agreed to hold their charges at the same level as for previous years. The last time an increase was applied was in season 2006/7 and the match fees which are amongst the lowest in the country have remained at this level ever since. These fees are charged on a per game basis covering referee and advisor equipment, travel costs and the administrative costs of running the Society, who deliver suitably qualified referees to some 1800 games in the course of a season.



HERTS RUGBY

www.hertsrugby.co.uk



Youth update – coaching update.

The last few weeks have seen the season's representative programme for the junior Herts teams come to a close. This update is not so much about the results as the issues that have come up this season.

The Under 17 squad is really next season's Under 18 squad 'in waiting'! These days, we think in terms of preparing the squad throughout the calendar year for the Under 18 games in the winter, which can lead to international selection. The coaching team reported that fixture congestion is becoming a real issue for players in these two age groups, and the injury rate has worsened.

We still hear occasional complaints that players have to play at certain clubs or schools to get selected, so it may be of interest to note that players from 27 different schools and 15 different clubs represented the Under 17s. A bigger problem is that both clubs and schools still persist in nominating players who are not of county standard – this is unfair to the players, as it raises their expectations and can only end in disappointment. Again, the coaching team reported that overall there was a lack of both tactical awareness and individual positional skills.

The Under 16s also reported that there seemed to be a lack of work by both school and club coaches on positional skills, particularly for key positions such as hooker and scrum half. Players also need to be better developed in decision making under pressure, reading the game and their ability to beat people when appropriate.

Despite having a smaller squad, the Under 16s still had players from 17 schools and 7 clubs. One player went on to represent England U16s with another two playing for England Blues. After 10 years, Steve Robins is stepping down from his post of Head Coach with the Under 16s and our thanks go to him for all of his efforts. On a personal note, Steve was one of the first school coaches that I worked with at county level, and he has never been anything other than dedicated and impartial.

The Under 15s looked at a total of 135 players, suggesting that some nominations may have been unrealistic! Again, overplaying is an issue (along with overtraining) and the response of our excellent coaches at this level was to minimise the amount of contact work, thus reducing the effect of any impacts. The key areas for development were decision-making and game understanding.

Even the Under 14s reported a lack of basic skills in the players that the coaching team saw! At this age group, we use a system of regional trials and games to select a squad and there was a good consensus on the players who were picked. The team drew their only competitive game, with one game being lost due to a failure of communication within Twickenham – it's a long story! At both this age group and the Under 15s, there was an issue with losing players who were injured playing for the School of Rugby.

We've got a dedicated team of coaches throughout the county junior teams, and thanks to all of them for their time and commitment. Coaching at county level does offer a different perspective and the comments that they've passed on, as set out above, should provide food for thought. Are we (still) overplaying and overtraining, after all of these years? Are we still coaching to win, at the expense of skills?

Finally, news that Dave Hesketh is standing down as Head Coach of the School of Rugby. Dave, who many of you will recall for his magnificent time as captain of Hertford and the county, has been the lead coach since the School of Rugby started. He has been instrumental in establishing the Herts SoR as an exemplar of how Schools of Rugby should run, and setting a standard that other counties envy. Thanks, Dave.

This will be my last piece for About Herts – it's been a pleasure!

Rob Hardwick

Chairman, Herts Rugby Development Partnership

Success for Festive 10's



Huge Success for returning students' festive 10's

Despite the foggy conditions huge numbers of supporters turned out yesterday evening to watch the HERTFORDSHIRE RETURNING STUDENTS' FESTIVE 10's at the Woollam Playing Fields (home of OA Rugby). Student teams from 10 Hertfordshire Clubs came and played some extremely entertaining & exciting rugby to keep the "fans" on their feet, warm & happy.

The emphasis for the event is on festive fun with beer and food provided for all teams as well as 'stash' for all the players taking part. 10-a-side, 10 minute games with no kicking from penalties allowed, kept the whole event at a cracking pace. Congratulations must go to all the players for providing some highly competitive rugby and for playing the games in such good spirit.

Huge thanks also go to the Hertfordshire Society of Rugby Football Union Referees for providing all the excellent match officials. Even the evening's most efficient organiser, the enigmatic Harry Harrison, donned his rather long shorts to perform his refereeing skills ... as only he can !!! Jamie Simpson and Rod Hardwick kept everyone abreast of the action on both pitches with their effortless announcing skills ... (their attempted jokes getting close to competing with Bruce Forsyth !!!). The Herts Exec thank Neil Dekker & his Woollam's Team for ensuring this delayed event actually happened despite what the weather has thrown at us all in recent weeks.

FOR THE RECORD ... here are the details of the competition & THE RESULTS

The 10 Teams were placed into two league groups:

League Group A comprised Cheshunt, Fullerians, Hertford, Old Albanian & Stevenage.

League Group B comprised Bishop's Stortford, Harpenden, Hitchin, Tring & Welwyn.

In each league group, each team played each other determining their position within the group. Following the league group results, there were a series of Play-Offs with the Teams in fifth place in each group playing each other, 4th playing 4th etc etc culminating with the winners of each group playing for the Festive 10's Trophy.

In Group A, Fullerians edged a very close encounter with Old Albanians 5-0 to win the group; and in Group B, Bishops Stortford won an equally nail biting affair against Harpenden (again 5-0) to win this group. After a cracking evening of 5 games for each team, that set up an excellent Final played between FULLERIANS and BISHOP'S STORTFORD, with the "Guys in Blue" STORTFORD running out worthy winners against a somewhat depleted FULLERIANS who had endured some extremely bruising encounters in their group games. The Festive 10's Trophy was duly presented to the STORTFORD team by "our" Herts RFU President, Colin Haslam ... also of STORTFORD !

A number of other TROPHIES were awarded at the end of the tournament and the respective winners were :

"The Best Player" of the evening ... won by Matt Chambers of Bishop's Stortford.

"The Biggest "HIT" of the evening ... won by Wayne Brand of Hitchin.

"The Best Try" of the evening ... won by Carling Colfer of Old Albanian.



Herts Boys Schools Festival

Report on Herts Boys Schools Festival - 18th March

The Hertfordshire Boys Schools Finals Festival took place on Friday 18th March – again kindly hosted by St. Albans Boys School.

The festival involved 5 separate tournaments with 5 teams competing in each tournament – 25 teams in all and approximately 400 boys attending. Each of the 25 school teams attending these finals had qualified by winning a local area league based competition this season. There are two levels of competition – the SHIELD for the less experienced schools, and the TROPHY for the more experienced schools. In total, 56 Hertfordshire schools have taken part in these local leagues to produce the schools who qualified for the finals. This level of activity reflects the significant work being carried out by PE staff, coaches and support staff.

On the day itself, students from Richard Hale School acted as Referees and all did excellent jobs working alongside RFU staff on each pitch. Despite the almost non-stop rain, some fantastic rugby was played and everyone enjoyed a great day. The prizes were presented by Alex Brown and Jackson Wray of Saracens, and by Colin Haslam – President of Herts RFU.

All of the detailed results can be viewed at www.hertsschoolsrugby10-11.wikispaces.com

Year 7 SHIELD:

- 1st – Barnwell (Barnwell went on to come 2nd in the London North Regional Finals on 1st April).
- 2nd – Goffs (Goffs went on to come 4th in the London North Regional Finals).
- 3rd - Hertswood

Year 8 SHIELD:

- 1st - Greneway.
- 2nd - Kings Langley (Kings Langley went on to come 4th in the London North Regional Finals).
- 3rd - Goffs.

Year 9 SHIELD:

- 1st - Goffs (Goffs went on to come 3rd in the London North Regional Finals).
- 2nd - Kings Langley (Kings Langley went on to come 2nd in the London North Regional Finals).
- 3rd – Barnwell.

Year 7 TROPHY:

- 1st - Sir John Lawes.
- 2nd - St Mary's Catholic.
- 3rd – Queens.

Year 8 TROPHY:

- 1st - Nicholas Breakspear (Nicholas Breakspear went on to come 3rd in the London North Regional Finals).
- 2nd – Parmiters (Parmiters went on to come 4th in the London North Regional Finals).
- 3rd – Chancellors.

U14 & U15 Trophy



Report on Herts Schools U14 & U15 Trophy

A feast of rugby was served up to supporters at Old Albanian RFC on Wednesday 23rd March when the U14 and U15 Herts School Trophy finals were played out.

All the schools involved had won their local area league and then went on to win semi-finals against Freman College and Sandringham in the U14 tournament, and against Leventhorpe and Parmiters in the U15s. The Trophy leagues are designed for schools that relatively experienced at rugby but are not traditional rugby playing schools. A total of 22 schools competed in the local Trophy leagues earlier in the season.

U14 Trophy Final: Hockerill 22 – 17 Parmiters.

This was a cracking game that could have gone either way with the final play of the game deciding the result. The score had swayed one way and then the next until, in the dying minutes, the outstanding Parmiters left winger broke clear and seemed to be heading under the posts for the winning score only for the Hockerill centre to pull off a spectacular match saving tackle yards short of the line.

The quality of rugby on show by both sides was fantastic and both schools can be proud of their efforts.

U15 Trophy Final: Sir John Lawes 26 – 7 John Henry Newman.

This was a re-match of last year's U14 Trophy Final in which John Henry Newman had been triumphant. Sir John Lawes duly got their revenge and ran out deserving winners of this match with their forwards dominating possession and their well drilled midfield backs posing a constant threat to the JHN defence.

In truth, the score line slightly flattered Sir John Lawes, but they undoubtedly deserved their win.

The Chair of Herts Youth Rugby Rob Hardwick was on hand to present the Trophies to the winning captains, and our thanks go to Old Albanian RFC for the use of their magnificent facilities to host these finals.

Parmiters win first ever Herts Schools U18 Trophy

In front of a very noisy and enthusiastic crowd of 550+ supporters at Old Albanian RFC on Wednesday 30th March, the first ever final of the Herts Schools U18 Trophy was played out between Parmiters and Sir John Lawes.

23 schools had entered the tournament at the start of the season, and the format was a straight knock out with no seeding. Each team had won through 3 or 4 rounds to earn their place in the final.

The game itself was a tense affair with the Parmiters pulling away in the final 10 minutes to win 22-7. Parmiters were worthy winners and used the ball very well putting their wide players into space time and again. Sir John Lawes had offered stern opposition throughout especially in the forwards where some of the exchanges were brutal.

The work done by the boys and PE Staff of Sir John Lawes deserves special mention as the school had only played their first ever rugby match at senior U18 level just two seasons ago.

Harry Harrison

Herts RFU Community Rugby Coach



U15 & U18 Trophy

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Harry Harrison

Herts RFU Community Rugby Coach

Kings Langley School win first ever Herts Schools U15 Shield

Old Albanian RFC on Wednesday 30th March, the first ever final of the Herts Schools U15 Shield was played out between Goffs and Kings Langley. Each school had won their local area league and then went on to win semi-finals against Barclay School and Stanborough School respectively. The Shield leagues are designed for schools that are less experienced at rugby, and a total of 34 schools had taken part in the local leagues earlier in the season.

The game itself was dominated by Kings Langley who possessed some very talented and strong runners in the backs who posed a constant threat to Goffs. The score quickly moved to 22-0 at half time, but to their credit Goffs rattled Kings Langley with a strong comeback at the start of the 2nd half scoring two unanswered tries to take the score to 22-10. Kings Langley fought hard to regain control and ended up comfortable 37-10 winners of the Herts Schools U15 Shield.

As ever, the Herts RFU President Colin Haslam was on hand to present the Shield to the winning captain from Kings Langley Sam Griffiths.

Our thanks go to Old Albanian RFC for the use of their magnificent facilities to host this final.

Harry Harrison

Herts RFU Community Rugby Coach

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Next Generation of Men in the Middle



Daily Mail RBS Schools Finals Day at Twickenham saw a group of 14 smartly dressed young men enjoy the event as VIPs from the prestigious vantage point of the Royal Box.



The young officials were from Richard Hale School in Hertfordshire and have become enthusiastic and proficient referees thanks to the school's referee training scheme. With them was Tim Saunders, the school's Master in Charge of Rugby and Director of Sport.

"We have been running the Entry Level Referee Award (ELRA) for more than three years now," said Tim, "and I would absolutely urge other schools to do the same. Our boys now referee all our house fixtures and it has made them better players because they can appreciate the law variations and what they can and cannot do when playing."

"It also gives the boys skills they can take with them to college or university and it has been tremendous for bonding, they not only play together but referee together, with an excellent knowledge and understanding of the game."

"Pupils can get involved at the start of Year 11. They receive training, take the exam and if identified as having potential they can go on to ref for the Referee Society as well."

The school further supports referee development by hosting ELRA courses each year and helping out with the officiating of Emerging Schools Festivals, the Emerging Schools' League and Tag Festivals in the county.

One of the boys hoping to take his officiating further is 17-year-old Tom Bryan. "I have recently joined Herts Referee Society," said Tom. "After I suffered several injuries it was a way to stay involved. It's great to see the level of respect you get, especially from younger age groups and I've enjoyed helping the Year 7s out until they learn how to play safer and get to enjoy it more."

"Although I've recovered from injury and started training again as open-side flanker and would like to carry on playing, I'm really loving refereeing and want to take it as far as I can. Wayne Barnes is a real role model and, like him, I'd love to one day represent my country as a referee."

"I really think other schools should train their own refs. It has given us so much more than skills on the pitch. It has improved my confidence and my communication skills and my plan is to go to university and to carry on refereeing there."

The training at Richard Hale School was organised by Paul Freestone, the RFU Referee Development Manager for Midlands East, in conjunction with Hertfordshire RDO Peter Engledow. "Richard Hale School is an excellent example of a school growing their own referees and giving them a wide set of skills," said Paul. "Watching the refereeing today and talking to other officials will help their development and is a small reward for their efforts. They are a great bunch."

If your school would like to set up training and develop your own referees, contact the referee department via the RFU website www.rfu.com/takingpart/referee.



BSSP Tag Festival Report



BSSP Year 5&6 Tag Rugby Festival 2011

On Friday 25th March, Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club held the annual Birchwood School Sports Partnership Year 5 and 6 Tag Festival. Thirty-nine (39) teams from nineteen (19) Primary schools arrived at the Silver Leys playing fields looking forward to a good day of tag rugby. The weather being especially nice with a clear blue sky and light breeze, the scene was set for a fantastic festival.



After a welcome and introduction for all the schools and parents, the pool games started at 12.15pm. Three pools of five and four pools of six gave all the children plenty of pitch time, as teams fought it out to qualify for the knockout stages. Seven pitches all named after famous rugby stadiums witnessed some free-flowing rugby, with great skill and team work on show. The games being officiated by local secondary school sport's leaders, as well as support from the Saracens Sport Foundation and Herts. RFU community team.

To keep all the teams involved throughout the day, a Rugby Olympic area was set out to test the children at running, hurdling and throwing events. Sports leaders with stopwatches in hand, kept the results and encouraged the children to have 'a go' whilst waiting for their next game to start.

Results:

Sprint: Brendon (Reedings) 8.44secs

Hurdles: Nathaniel (Mandeville) 9.50secs

Throwing: Phillip (St.Michaels) 16.2m



After all the group games had been completed, all the schools gathered around to find out the teams which had qualified for the knockout stages. The teams were read out and they headed to the pitches to play the games. Teams which hadn't qualified then had the opportunity to play friendlies against other schools, which proved a huge success with all the schools playing a number of games. The knockout games played to a very high standard threw up some fantastic encounters, with Albury, Thorn Grove 1, Northgate 2 and Summercroft 2 making it through to the semi-finals. Thorn Grove proved a little too strong for a tiring Albury side, and Northgate had too much for a battling

Summercroft side. Summercroft then edged out Albury in the 3rd/4th place playoff. Then all eyes turned to the final between Thorn Grove and Northgate. In a tense and at times scrappy affair, Northgate took an early lead, which they held onto with some great defending in the final minutes of the game to win the BSSP Tag Festival.

Overall a superb day with over 370 pupils playing in over 100 matches of tag rugby. Many thanks must go to Bishop's Stortford Rugby Club for the facilities as well as the teachers for bringing their teams to the festival, in what proved a great day out. Don't forget Friday 8th July at BSRFC for the Year 3&4 Tag Festival!!!

BSSP Year 5&6 Tag Festival Groups



Pool A – Pitch A Murrayfield

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
Summercroft 1	4	4	0	0	100	35	12
High Wych 1	4	3	1	0	80	40	10
Mandeville 2	4	2	2	0	70	65	8
Hillmead 1	4	1	3	0	60	75	6
All Saints 2	4	0	4	0	10	105	4

Pool B – Pitch B Millenium Stadium

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
Thorn Grove 2	4	3	0	1	80	60	11
Manor Fields 1	4	2	0	2	75	55	10
St.Michaels 1	4	2	2	0	85	55	8
Hillmead 2	4	1	2	1	70	80	7
High Wych 2	4	0	4	0	30	90	4

Pool C – Pitch C Lansdowne Road

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
Northgate 1	5	5	0	0	90	35	15
Summercroft 2	5	2	1	2	70	50	11
Mandeville 1	5	2	2	1	65	65	10
All Saints 1	5	2	3	0	75	70	9
St.Andrews 2	5	1	3	1	70	80	8
High Wych 3	5	1	4	0	35	105	7

Pool D – Pitch D Twickenham

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
Northgate 2	5	4	0	1	55	15	14
Thorn Grove 1	5	4	1	0	65	30	13
St.Andrews 1	5	3	1	1	80	45	12
Manor Fields 2	5	2	3	0	45	50	9
Reedings 2	5	1	4	0	20	60	7
High Wych 4	5	0	5	0	10	75	5



Knock-Out Stages

Pool E – Pitch E Stade de France

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
Albury	5	4	0	1	115	50	14
Northgate 3	5	2	0	3	70	45	12
St.Andrews 4	5	2	1	2	70	65	11
Windhill 2 5	1	1	3	40	50	10	
St.Josephs 1	5	1	3	1	55	90	8
Spellbrook 1	5	0	5	0	30	90	5

Pool F – Pitch F Ellis Park

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
St.Josephs 2	5	5	0	0	85	20	15
St.Andrews 3	5	4	1	0	80	35	13
Windhill 1 5	2	2	1	65	40	10	
Furneux Pelham	5	2	2	1	60	45	10
Northgate 4	5	1	4	0	15	75	7
Spellbrook 2	5	0	5	0	10	90	5

Pool G – Pitch G Eden Park

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Agg	Pts
Little Hadham	4	3	0	1	70	45	11
Richard Whittington	4	2	1	1	55	45	9
Spellbrook 3	4	0	1	3	45	50	7
Reedings 1	4	1	2	1	40	60	7
St.Michaels 2	4	0	2	2	50	75	6

Knock-Out Stages

Round 1

Summercroft 1 30 vs 25 Manor Fields 1
 Northgate 1 20 vs 25 Thorn Grove 1
 Albury 20 vs 0 Mandeville 2
 Little Hadham 15 vs 20 St.Andrews 3
 St.Josephs 2 30 vs 15 Richard Whittington
 Northgate 2 20 vs 0 Northgate 3
 High Wych 1 15 vs 20 Summercroft 2
 Thorn Grove 2 15 vs 20 St.Michaels 1

Quarter Finals

Summercroft 1 30 vs 35 Thorn Grove 1
 Albury 30 vs 25 St.Andrews 3
 Northgate 2 20 vs 15 St.Josephs 2
 Summercroft 2 15 vs 10 St.Michaels 1

Semi-Finals

Thorn Grove 1 35 vs 25 Albury
 Northgate 2 25 vs 20 Summercroft 2

3rd/4th Place Playoff

Albury 25 vs 30 Summercroft 2

Final

Thorn Grove 1 5 vs 10 Northgate 2
 4th Place – Albury
 3rd Place – Summercroft 2
 2nd Place – Thorn Grove 1
 1st Place – Northgate 2

A Season to be Proud of



WELWYN UNDER 17s – A SEASON TO BE PROUD OF

For the coaches of the Welwyn under 17s the highlight of the season was not winning division two unbeaten on the back of promotion from division three. Nor was it beating the winners of division one. It wasn't the B squad coming second in division four having started the season in division five. It wasn't giving all 30 tourists equal playing time in the win over the Portuguese national champions. Nor was it narrowly losing to the impressive Portugal national side. The major success was getting 49

registered boys turning out to play in two squads every Sunday and keeping boys participating in rugby at an age when they normally drop out and when other clubs have folded.

The season, as touched on above, was a great success. The B team came second in the Herts Middlesex division 4, winning 7 out of their 8 league games as well beating a number of the areas A teams. The B team selection policy is one of "inclusivity" where all of the boys get to enjoy an equal amount of game time. This clearly has its pros and cons, however the coaches believe that this was one of the reasons that so many of the players have continued to be committed to the game.

The A team have gone from strength to strength. During our pre-season programme, we invited the Cheshunt squad to join us (as we knew a few of their players and coaches), they had lost a number of players and so would be unable to field a full side for the season. This was a great success and the players all decided to join Welwyn for the season. The integration has been seamless and the team spirit that we have enjoyed has improved, with the players now close friends. In addition, Mike McKay, the Cheshunt head coach has become an invaluable member of our coaching team.

Additionally we had some other new members join us, from clubs such as Barnet and Old Albanians, also fitting in well and enjoying a season of success. The A team won Division 2 (remaining unbeaten in the league) as well as playing against several teams from Division 1 and winning most of them.

This performance was recognised by the Hertfordshire selectors, with a number of the squad being selected for the U17 development squad. Of those, 5 of the ex Cheshunt players represented the county as did 4 of the Welwyn squad. As such, a total of 9 lads played for Hertfordshire against East Midlands this weekend. The combination of the 2 squads has proved to be a great success, with the two clubs working together for the benefit of the players, the club, the county and rugby in general.

Welwyn have entered 2 teams into the Herts Middlesex Colts leagues for next season as all 49 players have committed to play for Welwyn Colts. The future of the club is very bright and our aim to deliver a strong squad of players into senior rugby is close to fulfilment.

**The Hertfordshire RFU Golf Day
Mid-Herts Golf Club**

**MONDAY 18th July 2011
1pm onwards**



HERTS RUGBY



Hertfordshire Women & Girls Section

TWO INTERNATIONALS for OA SAINTS Congratulations to both Sarah and Caroline.

Sarah McKenna

Four clubs have helped Sarah McKenna along the way into the England Elite squad. She has been with Old Albanians for the past four years after playing for Harpenden (1995-2002), Scorpions (2002-05) and Fullarians (2005-06).

A product of Roundwood Park School and Grove School, both in Harpenden, she began playing when six at the town club and is a first year Construction Management Foundation student at Bedfordshire University. Her previous educational achievements were 11 GCSEs and A levels in psychology, physical education and general studies.

Sarah's rugby mentors have been Dave Sharp, her first coach at Harpenden, her father Neil and England U20 coach Giselle Mather. Welwyn-born, she helped England U20's to win the Nations Cup and at the end of the 2009 season, was part of the Old Albanians' squad that beat Camp Hill in a play off to win promotion to the Premiership. Her side had won 13 of their 14 games, scoring 75 tries, a staggering 30 more than any other team in their league with Sarah amassing 122 points.

Her playing record also includes 12 matches for England U20 with whom she has toured Canada twice while her hobbies feature music and travel. Carlos Spencer, the legendary All Black, is her favourite player. She has moved between the No 10 and No 12 shirts, having started in the backs before playing as a flanker in girls' rugby.

Caroline Collie

Scotland international player

Caroline was born in Irvine and attended Largs Academy; during 1st year playing rugby 2009/10, she was the 3rd top converter and 5th top try scorer in the league. She made her Scotland debut in the friendly against Spain, Jan 2011, kicking 2 penalties and the conversion.

After my schooling I was heading to Brighton to go to university so I decided to move to Chelsea. It is another amazing club and I had four years there. At Chelsea you are paired up with players from the men's team so I was lucky enough to work with Petr Cech, while we also played some of our bigger matches at Stamford Bridge."

In her last few weeks studying at Brighton University, Collie lost a bet with some male friends which meant that she had to turn out for the university ladies rugby team against big rivals Sussex University.

"I wasn't really sure what I was doing, but I just got the ball and ran with it. I managed to score five tries and get some kicks and I was hooked on the sport from then," she explained.

When a teaching post took her to Buckingham, Collie joined the local club, the OA Saints, and was a big hit in her first season. She then trialled for Scotland last September and debuted for the full team just after new year against Spain.

"It has all been a bit of a whirlwind but I am loving it. As it is a new squad, a lot of us are learning all the time but the likes of captain Susie Brown are great at helping us along and we have built up a good team spirit.

Caroline Jane Collie was born in Irvine and attended Largs Academy prior to studying a BA (Hons) in physical education at Brighton University.

During her first year playing rugby, in season 2009/10, she was the third top converter and 5th top try scorer in the league. She made her Scotland debut in the friendly against Spain in January 2011, kicking two penalties and a conversion.

Caroline has also represented Scotland in football at national level, Scotland A, under-21, under-19, under-17 and under-16 levels, and played for Arsenal, Chelsea and the Arsenal Academy.

Hertfordshire Women & Girls Section



Welwyn Saints became the first Hertfordshire team to win the RFUW National 7's - the Premier Girls Rugby Tournament - since Scorpions lifted the title in 2002. Martyn Voyle reports:

On Saturday May 14th the RFUW National Sevens competition was held at Lichfield RFC. Welwyn Saints U18 Girls team played some excellent rugby against the top teams in the country and emerged having won all their 5 games to take the honours at this prestigious tournament.

Welwyn found themselves in a tough group with Exeter Saracens and Lichfield at the start of the tournament. In the first game, Exeter started strongly and scored first in the opening minutes. This rallied the Welwyn girls who eventually ran in convincing winners 24-5. The next game was against Lichfield and based on the earlier encounters in the East-Midlands League, Welwyn knew that the opposition would be a physically strong team. This certainly proved to be the case and the flowing rugby that we saw in the previous game was now being disrupted. Lichfield dominated the contact areas and were deservedly ahead 12-7 with only a minute to play. Welwyn were pinned down well inside their own 22 and it looked like the game was lost. Suddenly though, Welwyn broke through the solid defence and released their backs into space. A few timely passes later and Welwyn had scored to draw level at 12-12. A difficult conversion was to be the last play of the game. Courtney Arberry stepped forward to strike a perfect drop kick. Welwyn took the game 14-12 and proceeded into the top -tier cup competition. Lichfield were rewarded for their excellent play by going on to win the Plate competition.

The Cup was to be played as a round robin style competition involving 3 other teams: London Irish, Worcester and Paviours, alongside Welwyn. The first Welwyn game was against London Irish, possibly the strongest outfit in the country. Bob Dawson, the Welwyn coach seemed unfazed by the Lichfield affair and planned the tactics for the forthcoming game while most of the supporters and the team managers went for a lie down!

From the kick off, Welwyn's strategy of keeping the ball alive and maintaining constant support for the ball carrier seemed to mesmerise the opposition. London Irish struggled to get their hands on the ball and, when they did, Welwyn forced errors by early pressure. Welwyn ran in comfortable winners 24-0. The London Irish girls showed great sportsmanship throughout; a game played in great spirit. In the next game, Welwyn took to the pitch and put in a gritty performance to beat Paviours 17-0 and with Worcester winning all their games, a final showdown was set up between Welwyn and Worcester for the Cup. This game was a contrast to the earlier flowing London Irish game. It was a close, tough physical encounter. Both teams showed great tackling and defensive qualities. In the end Welwyn's determination paid off and they ran in winners by 17-5. The celebrations started and Welwyn Saints took home the RFUW National 7's Trophy.





Hertfordshire Women & Girls Section

Herts Girls 7's

36 teams took part this year, at Hemel Hempstead RFC where the very first Herts 7's competition began 8 years ago. There is one girl who played at that very first festival and went on to play at them all until she went to Cambridge University this year, and became the only first year student to play for the women's Varsity team-Nikki Alcock, Letchworth RFC. Nikki presented the medals and trophy, at the Herts 7's to Royston U15's, who won the Herts U15 league.



England Caps

the following Herts players received England their first U20 England caps this season:

Geri Thomas-OA's, Herts and L&se

Georgia Peedle- Worcester, Herts, L&SE

Divisional Competition-the RFUW did away with the Regional programme and this was the first season for the Divisional Competition. Herts players played for L&SE and at senior level Herts was represented by 8 players, at U18 5players and at U15 3 players. L&SE division were victorious at every age group!

Rugby Awareness Week

For the second year two young volunteers Oren Blindell and Rachel Mccullough organised Rugby Awareness Week, providing speakers from a number of clubs with a powerpoint and a speech, in order that the young speakers might, during assembly tell fellow students about rugby at their clubs. This project is welcomed by schools, not just because it helps to develop presentation skills in students, but also because schools are trying to instil the same core values that form the cornerstone to our sport: Respect, Discipline, Fun, Teamwork and Sportsmanship. This year during the IRB 6 Nations, 6 clubs sent 17 girls and 22 boys into 11 schools. The RAW project will run one more time just before the start of this years RWC.

Hertfordshire Women & Girls Section



Herts County U18 Girls

A squad of 27 was selected representing Welwyn, Saracens and Letchworth. The Girls County U18 team completely overwhelmed their opposition in the two games they played against Leicestershire 78-0 and Kent 60-0. 14 Herts U18 Girls went to trial for London & South East Division and 5 were selected: Alice Nee and Claire Shutler (Saracens), Georgia Peedle, Sam Voyle and Shira Kilgallon (Welwyn). All 5 Girls took part in all 3 of the Divisional matches with L&SE U18 being the only unbeaten Division. Sam Voyle, Claire Shutler and Georgia Peedle were also in the RFUW U18 talent development group this season and trialled for England Women U20. None were initially successful, but Georgia Peedle was subsequently called into the Squad and made her Try scoring debut from the bench against Wales Women U20 in April, which England Women U20 won 32-19.



Herts County U15 Girls

A squad of 25 was selected representing Welwyn, Stevenage, Hertford, Letchworth and OA's. The Girls County U15 won all three of their games against NLD 20-5, Leicestershire 32-5 and Kent 12-5. 13 girls Herts U15 Girls went to the Divisional Trial and 3, Bryony Pomfret (Welwyn), Sydney Gregson (Letchworth) and Harriet Austin (Hertford) were selected. L&SE were winners of the U15 Divisional Competition.

Summary of Herts Girls 7's 2011:

It was the turn of Hemel Hempstead Camelot to host the 7th Annual Herts Girls 7's Tournament on Sunday 8th May. This is an Open Tournament and 36 teams from Herts, Bucks, Berks, Dorset, Surrey, Middx, Oxford, Leices and Worces Clubs and Schools took part in the 3 Age Group Sections. After competing in the Group Stage the U18 and U15 split into Cup, Plate, Bowl, and in the U15 Section also a Shield and Egg Cup. The U12's played in a round robin league format to decide the Champions.

The Tournament was possibly the largest Girls Club Rugby 7's Tournament held in the UK last Season.

Under 12

Competition	Winner	Runner – up
Cup	Oakmedians	Royston

Under 15

Competition	Winner	Runner – up
Cup	London Irish	Welwyn
Plate	Litchfield	Oakmedians B
Bowl	Letchworth	Royston
Shield	Ealing	Grove
Egg cup	Faringdon	Oakmedians A

Under 18

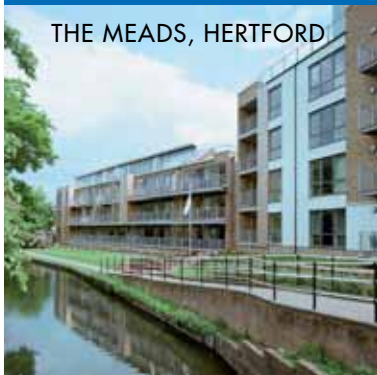
Competition	Winner	Runner – up
Cup	Welwyn	Berks Ba Baas
Plate	Worcester	Herts Ba Baas
Bowl	Saracens/Chesham	Aylestone St James



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