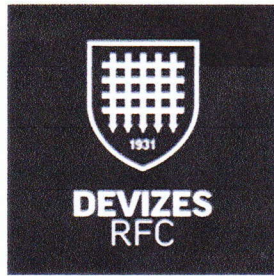


From: Chris Long, Chair of Devizes RFC Juniors



Devizes Rugby Football Club
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DL

Email: ChrisLong.Rugby@outlook.com

13th August 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

JUNIOR CHAIR'S NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2024

I hope you are all having a good summer. As we look ahead to the new season, here is a quick update on a few matters.

It is with great pleasure that I start by welcoming three new coaches. Beginning with our youngest players Jonny Goldsmith, 'Goldy', is going to be coaching the U6s. Stepping up from assistant coach, Scott Strickland will be leading the U8s. Lastly, and as part of a very exciting new development which will hopefully see senior girls playing at the Club once more, Harriet Pearsall will be coaching our U12 girls. A huge thank you to everyone who is continuing with their roles from last season whether as coaches, Team Managers (TM), team medical support and of course your Junior Committee. As ever not every post is filled, so if there is an obvious gap please step forward and help out: we all recognise that not everyone can commit to each week but if you can find someone to share a role, such as TM, every contribution really helps.

RFU Regulation 11 identifies the start and end dates for a season. We start back on Sunday 8th September and will run through to Sunday 4th May 2025. Your TMs have again done a fantastic job with their colleagues at other clubs and as a result we have a full calendar of matches. These are scheduled around the tournaments, numerous festivals and the county cup competitions the stalwarts at Dorset & Wilts RFU have reintroduced this season.

Over the summer we have been through all the kit. The match shirts have been away and have now been returned with the logos updated. We have thrown out and replaced where appropriate countless balls that were little more than bars of soap, disposed of bibs that were held together with threads, and redistributed other kit. A stock of new shorts and socks has arrived for new players and for purchase should your off-spring need replacements. We also have a considerable stock of second-hand rugby boots which will be on sale again in the clubhouse the first couple of Sundays: as previously, this is an opportunity for you to save some money by giving a donation to our funds for a used pair instead of paying for the cost of new ones.

In and around the Clubhouse there has been a lot of work too. The Club is advertising for people who could run the kitchen and the bar in paid roles on Saturdays and Sundays. The aim is to get enough people to cover the season and, if available, to support weekday events. Ideally kitchen applicants will have a Level 2 Food Hygiene certificate but training can be funded if necessary. So, if you or any older teenagers are interested in some part-time work, please email facilityltd@devizesrfc.org.uk. Interviews are planned for the week commencing 19th August. Parents will still need to help serving food and cleaning up on a Sunday but if we can get the staff, the arrangements will be a significant improvement.

We are holding a training day for coaches and TMs on 1st September. On the same day we want to do a few other jobs to spruce up the Club ahead of the new season, cleaning windows, etc.; so, if you can spare an hour, please lend a hand at the Club from 9 o'clock.

The first three weeks will be training for everyone. To make best use of the pitches available, throughout the season we will again be occasionally running three sessions on a Sunday: two in the morning and the Colts in the afternoon. There may be occasions when we have to run older age group matches in the afternoons too, most notably once the Dorset & Wilts RFU competitions start fully; details of those occasions will be published when needed.

Our first day back, Sunday 8th September, the U6s to U8s will be starting at 0930. I will confirm timings for the older age groups shortly through the TMs. Car-parking will as usual be a challenge during the first weeks, so if you live locally it would be really helpful if you could walk or cycle.

The registration of players will be a priority for the first couple of weeks. The subscriptions for the new season are shown below, which reflect the Club Main Committee's efforts to keep the increase as slow as possible whilst managing some significant increases in costs.

U6-U8 Tag	£72
U12 Girls (Introductory season)	£72
U9-Colts	£140
Coaches and Team Managers	£50

All the above memberships receive a 10% bar discount for adults. Membership cards will be made available soonest.

On Sunday 22nd September the RFU's insurers, Howden, will be joining us for the whole day. For those who are not aware, Howden are expanding into the domestic market and as part of it are developing relationships with a number of clubs: we are one of the selected few and the relationship will hopefully bring us some valuable additional support going forward. Details will be known shortly but the expectation is that staff from their Bath office will be meeting people at the Club and they will be bringing along with them an ice-cream van or similar, amongst other things. That day is also the first ladies' match in the afternoon.

You will recognise the positive changes that have been introduced over the last two seasons with respect to player concussion. Of course, the effects may be delayed until after a training session or match, indeed may have been induced by some other activity at home or school. One valuable lesson last season was the benefit of parents having a little more knowledge about concussion, so they can spot symptoms at home then tell school and/or coaches. An open access HEADCASE eLearning module promoted by the RFU for parents and guardians of age grade players is available here: [HEADCASE eLearning Study \(Parents & Guardians\): Pre-eLearning Questionnaire \(qualtrics.com\)](https://www.qualtrics.com/headcase/) and well worth a listen.

The 2024/25 season promises to be a really exciting year for Devizes rugby. The Juniors and the Club as a whole are moving forward with good upward trajectories that we aim to maintain. Your Junior Committee and I cannot do it without your support though, for which we are extremely grateful. It would be great if we can build our numbers further this year, especially in the girls and the age grade squads with the smaller numbers; so, please continue to spread the word about the fun and great opportunities for players at the Club. With that final point we look forward to seeing everyone again in September. In the meantime, enjoy the weather and if you have any thoughts about how we might take things further forward, please contact me or any of the Junior Committee.

Best wishes

Chris

