



## **BOURNEMOUTH RUGBY CHAIRMANS REPORT 2020-21**

Well not quite how I saw my first season as Chairman of Bournemouth Rugby rolling out. On a positive note no relegation!!! (albeit little rugby)

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to everyone involved in the club for all their support throughout what can only be described and hopefully not repeated as a nightmare of a year.

That includes the fantastic team that has assisted me in keeping afloat and steering this amazing club in the right direction, all those members, players, parents and sponsors that have dug deep without resistance to support both financially and functionally to maintain as much rugby as we were allowed.

Hopefully we are now able to get out and see our beloved sport return to full glory, with the introduction of our Little Lions (2-5 year olds) from September and the formation of our very own Senior Ladies side this season. We have been very fortunate to have had a large number of new senior players join us over the last 12 months which will all play a big part within the Lions squad this coming season.

I would also like to welcome Matt Sturgess back to the senior coaching team along with Dan Connolly and Jack Hennings and Joe Rees has stepped up as our 1st XV Player Manager to assist the team in their day to day duties.

Last but not means least I would also like to say a BIG THANK YOU to Wendy King for all her hard work over the last 5 years and wish her all the success in her new career and also to Gemma Buchanan for carrying on where Wendy left off. I have full confidence in Gemma's ability to keeping the club moving in the right direction.

Looking Forward to seeing you all pitch side soon.

Regards

Simon Carkett,

Chairman, Bournemouth Rugby Club Ltd

### **Senior Rugby Report**

Firstly, I would like to start off by saying thank you to our sponsors, members and players who have supported us through the pandemic and put us in a position to be able to continue doing what we love for the club that we love. After such a long time

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of uncertainty, I can't quite believe we are actually here! It has been an absolute rollercoaster, and although I know we are not quite out of the woods yet, I am absolutely delighted to be getting the 21/22 season underway.

Although I do not really like the term 'rebuilding phase', that is in fact exactly where we find ourselves. We are in the process of implementing a new set of principles for both sides of the ball with the end goal of creating a Lethal Attack and a Suffocating Defence. However, without a Dominant Set-piece, we know how difficult rugby can be which is why the forwards are working hard to provide us with the best ball possible. Combine that with the departure of players and the introduction of new, we know it is going to take time to get to where we want to be - the term Rome wasn't built in a day comes to mind.

Although we are sad to say goodbye to the players that have literally put their bodies on the line for this club, we are very excited about the young talent we have gained from other clubs as well as from within. All have added great value to the squad in such a short space of time and have bought in to what we are trying to achieve. We look forward to supporting them in their rugby journey! I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those players leaving us for all their hardwork and commitment both on and off the field over the years - the club is in a great place because of you and we wish you all the best for the future. Please don't be strangers!

Fingers crossed there aren't too many disruptions as we all try to navigate our way out of the pandemic and back to normal rugby life. Thank you for your time, and we can't wait to see you all back at Chapel Gate for a good old chinwag and a beer or two.

Stay safe,

Mike Pope Bournemouth Rugby Head Coach

***New players (from what I have on my list - have probably forgotten people):***

Jake Guildford (BR) - Weymouth & Portland RFC, Birmingham University

Ash Taylor (W/C) - Redruth RFC

Joe Desmond (BR) - Swanage & Wareham RFC

Ben Kimber (BR) - Wimborne RFC

Jack Young (C) - Wimborne RFC

Ryan Morrell (W/C) - New Milton RFC

Lewis Waugh (C) - New Milton RFC

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Oli Granger-Williams (W) - Cirencester RFC, Gloucester PDG, Hartpury College Academy

Henry Turner (FR) - Trowbridge RFC

Ciaran Smyth (BR) - Barnes RFC

Alex Peel (FH) - Lydney RFC, Dorchester RFC

Tristan Trehan (BR) – Royal Marines

Seb Noble (BR) – BRFC

Joe Prior (FR) - Taunton Titans

James Dunn (FR) - Sutton and Epsom RFC, Bournemouth University

Cormac Meade (BR) - Old Alleynians, Bournemouth University

Rich West (FH) - London Scottish, Newbury Blues, Bournemouth University

Josh Rees (SR) - Bournemouth University

George Walley (FH) - Bournemouth University

Josh Wickens (FB) - BRFC Academy

Ralph Tarpey (W) - BRFC Academy

Dean Hill (FR) - BRFC Academy

### **Wheelchair Rugby Report**

With Covid impacting all sport, we saw no competition throughout the whole of the 2020/21 season. However, this did not dampen our spirits. We started the year with the exciting announcement of our partner Grinning Dog Records coming on board to support us as overall team sponsors. Their support has been invaluable and meant that our wheelchair rugby team could remain engaged throughout lockdown, ready for return when the restrictions lifted. Players stayed committed to maintaining their fitness levels, taking part in virtual training sessions and made use of the free court space offered by Branksome Recreational Ground last summer when indoor sports were prohibited. This meant that once restrictions were lifted and our steering committee had completed our training requirements our team was the first nationwide, to resume training back indoors last September at the earliest possible opportunity.

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Our over-riding success this year has been the growth of our fledgling youth squad which has been boosted by 10 new players. We were delighted to receive valuable funding to support this and further growth ambitions from the Bruce Wake Charitable Trust and the Vitality Community Fund for WCR youth team development.

With festival and league fixtures back in the diary for the year ahead we look forward to getting back on court again and testing ourselves against our rivals.

Becky Hill

Chair, Bournemouth Wheelchair Rugby

### **Youth and Mini Report**

The 2020-21 season has certainly been full of challenges with the backdrop of COVID impacting our ability to play rugby, as well as our personal, family and working lives. However, despite these significant challenges we have faced, the Academy, Girls, Youth and Minis age groups have continued to amaze us with their collective support, positivity, and dedication to our great club.

Despite the challenges put in front of us, the age groups have been able to adapt to the constantly changing rules and regulations required to keep our players, coaches, and parents as safe as possible. They have been able to continue to grow and develop their skills, with several age groups being able to re-engage with a level of adapted friendly fixtures towards the end of the season which was very encouraging to see. In addition, we have seen four players from the U16s represent Bath Academy in their win over Bristol at the end of the season – and will continue in the Bath Academy U18s squad next season – a fantastic achievement!

The support from the parents and members of the club across this difficult period has been greatly appreciated. Their support for fundraising initiatives and flexibility on constantly changing training times across the season has allowed us to continue to function and to deliver rugby to the players, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved for their dedication, commitment and understanding.

I would also like to thank the fantastic support team we have had in place that worked tremendously hard behind the scenes – including Wendy King, Gemma & Dave Buchanan, Dan & Janet McKrill to name but a few. Without their dedication, commitment and support we would not be able to operate at the level we do.

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We do have several role changes in effect for the coming season – with Gemma Buchanan moving into the role of Operations Director and myself moving back into the role of Y&M Chairman with support from Paul Senior and Chris Gould as my Vice Chairs. Thank you to Dan and Wendy for all their hard work across last season and helping to navigate us through what was a unique and unprecedented season.

We are very much looking forward to next season and the opportunities that it will bring. I hope to see you all back up at the club and the players engaged and playing the sport they love, with a big smile on their faces.

Yours in rugby,

Greg Pike

BRFC Y&M Chairman