

LEIGHTON BUZZARD

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



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The views offered in this publication do not reflect official LBRFC policy. I don't know who you are. I don't know what you want. If you are looking for ransom, I can tell you I don't have money. But what I do have are a very particular set of skills, skills I have acquired over a very long career. Skills that make me a nightmare for people like you. If you let my daughter go now, that'll be the end of it. I will not look for you, I will not pursue you. But if you don't, I will look for you, I will find you, and I will kill you.

Still there

Three wins from three in the League matches since the last issue plus the win over Newark in the Intermediate Cup sees the 1st XV trundling along nicely. We also have a game in hand following the mass postponement of the matches slated for the 21st December. The other clubs played the re-arranged matches on the week we were engaged in Cup action.

The 2nd XV are also riding high in their East Midlands League. The 3rd XV have also re-appeared this season. Amazing what a bit of success can do.

League table after 14 rounds. Full details: www.rfu.com

	Pts
Leighton Buzzard	57*
Leicester Forest	55
Belgrave	53
Market Bosworth	50
Bugbrooke	47
Northampton Old Scouts	40
Northampton Casuals	30*
Vipers	30
Long Buckby	26
Melton Mowbray	15
St. Ives	13
Stewarts & Lloyds	6

2020 Vision

So here we are. Another year, another decade. Not an awful lot to report. Thanks to Taff Jenkins we have one new subscriber in Jon Ilic, however a couple seem to have dropped away. Over the last couple of communications the email addresses of Russell Bailey and Tony Unsworth appear to have become un-reachable. Should any of you have an updated details for either, please let me know. Also, the last email advising of the Newark match didn't reach Adrian Carne, though the last newsletter did. As far as I am aware there were no naughty words in the email so I can't imagine it breached the Yeo Valley naughty words algorithm.

Tools

Oh those 1970s!



From Beefy Burchell's collection comes this little nugget. Mike Turner, Tarby, Rod Giltrow and Kelvin Healy at The Swan in 1974. I know second rowers traditionally have big hands but Mike and Kelvin's drinking vessels look suspiciously like half-pints. Explanation please.

Upcoming fixtures

Only 2 1st XV matches coming up at Wrights Meadow, but what a lovely pair! As the table stands, the first will be 1st versus 2nd which of course is also the day of the Former Players Reunion. The second, on the final day of the 6 Nations (kick off time to be advised) will be another biggie. Malvern will be the visitors with a place in the Intermediate Cup semi-finals the reward. The winners will play the qualifiers from the Northern Division for a place in the Twickenham final in May. To date Malvern, like us, have lost just one match this season. The only excuse for non-attendance will having a ticket for Italy v England ... (Phew! That's me covered)

1 st Feb	Bugbrooke (A)
8 th Feb	Northampton Casuals (A)
15th Feb	Leicester Forest (H)
22 nd Feb	Vipers (A)
29 th Feb	Long Buckby (A)
14th Mar	Malvern (H) – Intermediate Cup Midlands Final

The Nous of Fraser

(That's nous as in 'nowss', not the French for "we")

Long time readers will be aware of the font of material that has been our erstwhile skipper, John Fraser. From vegetarian chicken through pitch maintenance tips ("You can't do that, it'll kill all the dead grass") to inquiring if a try bonus point had been acquired as we went 55-0 up, John has been a rich source of copy. Even the old programmes contained regular tales of John's chortle-inducing moments.

Like drinking beer after matches and the singing of The Medley it looked as if the tradition started and maintained so splendidly by the one-time Handsome Harvester was withering on the vine. However, I can reveal that the art of saying dumb stuff is thankfully alive and has crossed the generational divide. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Louis Beer, son of Dave, nephew of Richard and Chris.

Unluckily for young Louis, I arrived at his specific area of the touchline seconds before he uttered the following about one of the St. Ives players:

"The thing about that small winger is that he isn't big enough"

Walking back to happiness

After previous revelations about the links Russ Conway, Frank Ifield and Matt Monroe had to the area, worry not. I'm not about to reveal that Helen Shapiro was part of the working party that built the Leighton by-pass. That would be ridiculous seeing as it wasn't started until the late 80s (she was actually a hod-carrier working for the company that built the Planets estate). No. This is notification that in the upcoming months the Club are going to introduce the summer activity of Walking Rugby.

Paul Evans has spent time studying and taking notes of the existing scheme run by Reading RFC which has proved so popular that they now run three sessions a week.

It gives a chance for those whose hips, knees etc have given out to still enjoy a competitive game of rugby without the impact on those joints. The Club is looking for a small team (3-4) to help set up and run Walking Rugby at the club with the support of the RFU and other local partners. The club will be fully supporting this team and we hope to make it another rugby offering at Leighton Buzzard so that all ages and skills are catered for.

If you think you or you and a few of your friends, can help please contact Gordon Fletcher at rugby@buzzardrugby.co.uk or Stuart Trotter at dor@buzzardrugby.co.uk. For more info, check out a short film produced by Reading on YouTube. Just follow this link: [Walking Rugby - Playing Demo & Rules](#)

For some of us there won't much difference from the way we used to play 25 years ago!

Matters arising

Well who would have thought it? My attempt at supplying the names to the photograph of the 1970s Sevens team in the last issue was 100% wrong!

This was particularly galling because after having to correct Peter Wheeler at least three times during his Club Dinner speech some years ago, I've always seen myself as an unashamed rugby union anorak and have been proud to be regarded as such (Eriakpo). To prove the point what follows is the transcript of a telephone call I received one Sunday lunchtime a few years back and told from the perspective of the other person that was in the room with me at the time:

Brrring, brrring "Hello? Once. 1948 ... OK, cheers Dave. Bye".

Said roommate then asked *"What the f*ck was that about?"* to which I replied *"It was Reevesy. He wanted to settle an argument about many times Ireland have won the Grand Slam"*

Luckily in the matter of the photo Tarby was straight on to his keyboard to correct me. The line-up was actually as follows: Steve Tearle, Bossy Bosworth, Terry Williams, John Fraser, Richard Dillamore, Tim Skevington and Chris Gibbons. As Bossy, Terry and Tim had never played rugby before, the team was given a plus 19 handicap. Result? They stormed the competition. Tarby added that this was *"probably due to Chris" ... No shit Sherlock!*

Anyway, to keep the theme running here's another photo of a successful LBRFC Club Sevens squad.



No problem naming these chaps: Andy Mic, Stuart Darlington, Murts, Steve Wilkes, 'Damage' Cowan, Paul Wilkes, Neal Summerfield and James Ruault.

P.S. Eriakpo is Victor Ubogu's middle name.

P.P.S. I've just shown this photo to Sylvia. She said *"Doesn't Murts look cute"*. I pleaded the fifth.

PROGRAMME REPEATS

The Blower Years

Gray Family antics

Not content with simply having her husband in the programme, wife Myra has to get in on the act as well. On Wednesday night at a committee meeting Myra was discussing forthcoming attractions, the Stag Nite etc and announced that the ladies had expressed interest in holding(!) another Hen Nite. The last one was well supported and raised a lot of money, but even better according to Myra “Yes. At the last one I came with my daughter” Fortunately this was not minuted by Jim McCormack who just sat spluttering in his chair trying to recover his pipe which had gone sideways down his throat. So then Myra, is this what a water bed does for you?

James Loosely Drug Probe

It was all happening at the meeting. The normally quiet, calm James, our club treasurer was behaving in a strange manner which caused concern amongst those present. A state akin to that displayed by Dave Franklin and Pete Ellam was visible and Chairman Dillamore was concerned that a drug test may have to be rendered to see if he was fit to continue. Then the reason for his condition emerged. It was not through any substance abuse, save for the sniff of his typist’s Tipp-Ex at lunchtime, James had just received a rebate from the VAT man!

Beaver Patrol

Not a Wildlife on One documentary, but just a warning that the Club is not the place to be on Monday night at 7.30. The Women’s Rugby squad will be up training. Be warned, the place will be swarming with sweaty bodies all giggling in and out of the showers ... not a pretty sight. You are advised! Still, if like some you are into a bit of beaver spotting, you are advised that Dave Reeves is offering bar stools for rent for the first four customers.

Where is she now?

What has happened to the woman who was down the Club last season taking care of her boy? Yes, where is Hazel Cato? Could it be that she feels now is the right time for Mikey to be out on his own? We await news.

Last week

Our very own Cantona, Auburn Turney, showed in midweek that it is not just Eric who can conjure up a complete mystery with a few words (“When the seagulls follow the trawler etc etc). Not to be outdone, the Bard of Leighton was discussing a player and his attitude problem and came up with “*We can all put our boots in the oven, but they don’t all come out as biscuits*”. What the **** is he on about?, I hear you say.

7th October 1995

Council Tax Shocker!

Farmer John Fraser could hardly believe his eyes when he opened his South Beds Council bill which included a Community Charge for one of Fraser’s employees. Nothing odd about that you may think until you realise that the employee concerned is none other than John’s faithful Border Collie, George.

“I was flabbergasted. Its bad enough having to pay for me, the wife and the rest of them but with another £315 for the dog we simply couldn’t afford to make ends meet”

John decided that the only way to avoid paying the bill was to shoot George in the back of the head. *“It broke my heart, but it was either that or paying up”*

The next day the local authority wrote cancelling the bill which had been raised in error. They apologised for their mistake. *“The mistake occurred because Mr. Fraser entered the dog’s name on the Electoral Register”* said a council employee. Fraz is now contemplating suing the Council for damages together with the cost of the dog and six shotgun cartridges.

29th April 1995

LBRFC Former Players Day

Saturday 15th February 2020

12:00 pm – Lunch

2:15 pm - Leighton Buzzard v Leicester Forest

3:45 pm onwards – Drinkies

Faites-moi Plaisir (“Indulge me” in French)

We’ve all been given a famous player’s autobiography as a Christmas present. You plough through it and then you get to the bit where they announce their greatest team of all time. I don’t know about you, but I always think “he’s obviously running low on pages so the publisher has asked him for something to pad it out”.

As I am currently between work appointments I’m unable to scan in interesting snippets from the LBO and Citizen from years gone by, so I am in a similar position so will use the same tactic. I may hand-select one or two of you to do the same for future issues, so if you don’t want such an approach, buy me a scanner!

To make this a bit of a departure from the norm I will not argue the merits of Mark Ella or Dan Carter but am going to list my favourite Buzzards team. Be aware that inclusion is not based solely on playing ability. Off pitch expertise is just as important. The only rules are: I must have played in a match with them and I’m playing fly half!

FULL BACK

As with most positions there are a number of contenders. Grahame Wild, John Quigley and Ralph Harper come close but working on the premise that any disparate group should have a Jay from *The Inbetweeners* I’m plumping for **Mark Rayfield**. Despite his loping gait he always seemed to take a fizzed DD and make yards. He is also sure to do something stupid in the clubhouse.

WINGS

Didn’t even have to think about one of them. **Nobby Clark** gets the right-wing position. Always good value in the changing room with some truly outrageous stories, on the field his tackling was legend. I remember a prop forward once advancing towards Nobby obviously thinking he was going to knock this skinny streak of piss into next week. Of course the opposite happened. Nobby hit him so hard that when his victim got up he was looking to punch someone as he couldn’t believe he’d been taken out legally. On the other side I’m going to plump for **Phil Eddy**. He preferred to play centre but he was so smooth a runner he looked like he was on casters. A downside was that he never shut up but there will be plenty of others in the team to keep him quiet.

CENTRES

Didn’t have to think. **Andy Micans** and **Ian Connew**. Played matches with them individually and once for 40 glorious second half minutes together in a tour match against Tiverton. You could call any move, improvise any type of pass and they would deal with it. Ian was also a superb “Grand Old Duke of York” singing partner. Ice cool and unperturbed by the arsenal of water pistols pointed at his head.

SCRUM HALF

I ummed and ahhed over this one bouncing between Jon Chapman and Carl Siddon before deciding on **Phil Kitchen**. Made of India Rubber and indefatigable against opponents twice his size. He also gave me the ball every time I asked for it. Every fly-half’s ideal scrum half.

PROPS

There's only one contender for tight head but he's in by a hair's breadth because in my 11 seasons with Leighton I only played one match with him. Of course it's **Chris Pearson**. That one match was a 2nd XV game against Westleigh. At one point, playing down the hill, Mark Penwell was wrestling his way towards the line but was temporarily stopped. Then Pearson arrived at the maul. Penners just managed to ground the ball before he landed in Liptons car park. At loose head I've worked on the premise that every team needs an enforcer so **Graham Jarman** gets the jersey. I was once about 10 yards upfield of Graham when a bit of biff started behind me. I turned to see Graham fists at the ready and eyes almost popping out of his head as he approached the miscreant and dealt some surreptitious retribution.

HOOKER

Nearly as difficult as back row. Only played one game with Ben Irvine as a hooker but I reckoned that as I haven't selected Alban he'd feel a little lost. Graham Meller's value off the pitch was equal to his value on it. Gary Low was a cracking player and the ultimate test of a captain's man-management skills where you had to have the accumulated talents of Mike Brearley, Alex Ferguson and Kim Jong-Un. When Eric Cohen tunnelled into a maul it almost deserved a commentary by Sir David Attenborough but in the end I've gone for **Hugh Davies** but on the condition that he is still working for Courage brewers. A minibus needs beer and perhaps I should also have selected Johnny Wray so he could drink some of it very quickly, but the various stopping places on the way home need someone that can perform magic tricks.

SECOND ROWS

I guess we have to have a singer, so step forward **Jonathan Chinn**. To partner him I could have chosen John Colenutt, John Fairweather or Richard Sear. The latter once won our 3rd XV match against Vauxhall 1st XV on his own so many line outs did he take but in the end I've gone for someone few of you will remember. **Willie Cooke** was an absolute star. During one season he bobbed between the 3rd and 4th XVs, always because someone above couldn't or wouldn't play away from home. Between one November and March he played every week never knowing what it felt like to turn up at 2 o'clock for a home game.

WING FORWARDS

As with any club, where to start? There are too many names to mention so I'll just mention the ones I've selected. The aforementioned **Mark Penwell** is one. When I was 2nd XV captain he'd bounce between the 2nds and 3rds. Every time he played for me he was outstanding and I would say so at Sunday morning selection. I got so repetitive that eventually Shep politely inquired if I was shagging him! Though also an openside I'm also selecting **Paul Evans**. Let's face it, this team is never going to take the pitch so it doesn't matter. As geriatric as Penners was youthful, and whereas Jarms was an "out there" enforcer, Evvo was horrible! A sly, nasty, dig in the ribs, smiling assassin. Every team should have one!

NUMBER 8

Again, so many to choose from. Richard Sear, Bunt, Neal Summerfield or Purry? Though his playing days with us were comet like I once got to play a match with Kev Byard who was true class but as mentioned it's mainly about the hours before and after the game so I've gone for **Neale Murton**. Summerfield is of a similar ilk but I remember a trip back from Gaytonians when his language was so decorous that the landlord demanded he dial it down in no uncertain terms. I'd like us to leave the pub stops on the way home when we want to, not when the proprietor does.

MANAGER AND MINIBUS DRIVER**Shep**

So. There you have it. Just a bit of fun. By 9 o'clock tomorrow morning I will probably have selected a totally different side. That's why it's called padding out.

See y'all on the 15th

I'm off to Paris in the morning to watch the France/England game with Purry, Hugh, Rayfield, Adey Linden, Cameron Davis, Dave Beer, Walshie, Penners, Jimmy Davidson, Rod and John Colleran.

What on earth could go wrong!!!