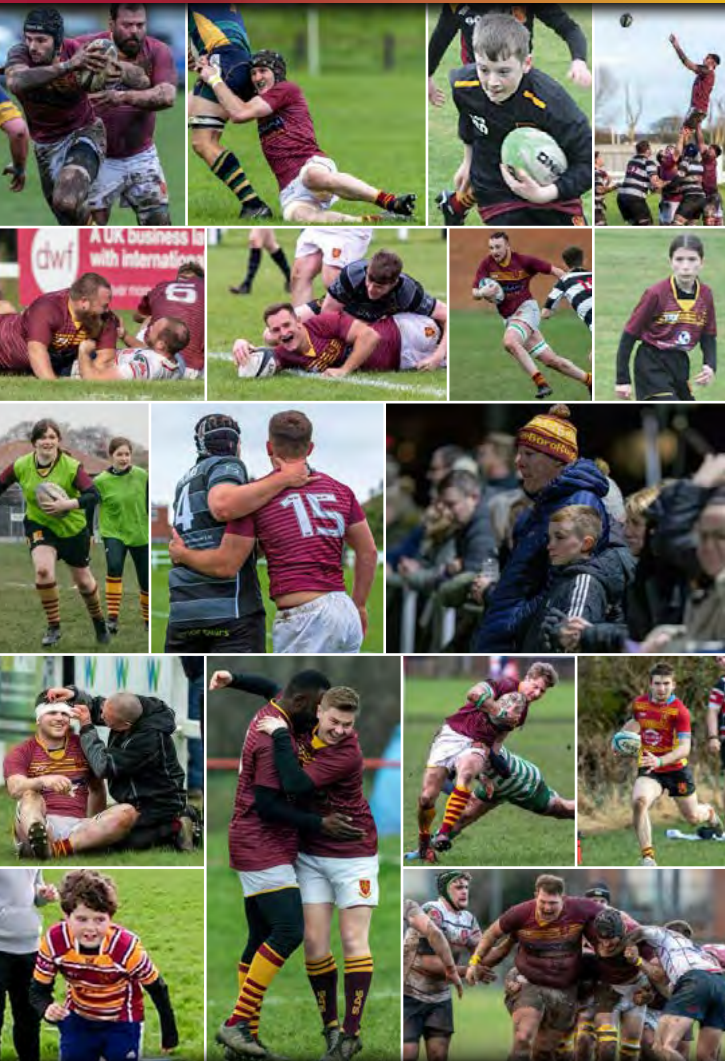




MIDDLESBROUGH RUGBY CLUB

SEASON 2026/27



**MIDDLESBROUGH
V
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**Saturday
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Middlesbrough Rugby Club

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President:

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(M) 07706 074043

email: tom.argument@gmail.com

Chairman & SVP:

Phil Tilson

(M) 07884 077141

email: tilphilson@yahoo.co.uk

Hon General Secretary:

Ross Webber

(M) 07511 089073

email: rossw.mrufc@gmail.com

Vice Chair:

Lee Richardson

(M) 07817 670694

email: leerugbyricho@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer:

Mike Wood

(M) 07425 903633

email: mikewood66@hotmail.com

Director of Rugby:

Steve Todd

(M) 07381 677911

email: stodd_scp@outlook.com

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Rugby Contact

	Name	Email	Phone
Head Coach	Ollie Hodgson	olliechodgson@gmail.com	07504 334806
Wasps	Mark Willis	markwillis3@sky.com	07515 521953
A Team	Steven Hoare	stehoare@hotmail.com	07842 069360
Colts	Rob Kensey	kenseyrob@yahoo.co.uk	07761 028599
Juniors	Ross Jeffries	ross_jefferies@hotmail.com	07834 454248
Minis	Nico Dewhirst	ndewhirst@hotmail.com	07908 951350
Sports Therapist	Eric Leach	eric_brian61@yahoo.co.uk	07951 214883

Admin contacts

	Name	Email	Phone
Data Protection Officer	Dan Houchen	mrufcdpo@gmail.com	07949 751187
Entertainment Secretary	Simon Orchard-Moore	simon-moore7@sky.com	07766 011106
Match Secretary	Andy Murray	andymurray088@gmail.com	01642 951668
Membership Secretary	Mark Willis	markwillis3@sky.com	07515 521953
Press Officer	Sarah Webber	press.mrufc@gmail.com	07935 329086
Safeguarding Officer	Peter McPhillips	mrufcsafeguarding@gmail.com	07718 628420
Schools Liaison	Bernie Coyne	berniecoyne1@gmail.com	07991 839413
Sponsorship Secretary	Walter Hibbert	walterhhibert@gmail.com	07703 395790
Volunteers & Lions Park	Gemma Richardson	gemmarichardson549@gmail.com	07841 034827
Webmaster	Michael McMahon	macca.mrufc@outlook.com	07986 435848



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A Welcome **FROM OUR CHAIRMAN: PHIL TILSON**



Welcome to Acklam Park, the home of Middlesbrough RUFC.

After a long, and sometimes very hot, summer, it is brilliant to be able to welcome our supporters and friends to Acklam Park for our first home game of the Regional 1 North East Season. We also welcome the players, officials and supporters from Scarborough RUFC. We are looking forward to some great North Yorkshire Rugby today.

Those who travelled to Sandal for last week's season opener were treated to some fantastic back-and-forth rugby, with the lead changing hands a few times. It really could have gone any way right up until the final whistle. And it was great to see a couple of home-grown talented 19-year-olds, Brook Powner and Jake Pemberton getting their first team debuts, alongside Paddy O'Brien who came off the bench for his first taste of level 5 rugby at 38 years old! The entire team showed enormous fighting spirit, and this must be a sign of wonderful things to come this season.

I must take the opportunity to pay tribute to the awesome volunteers and supporters who have been working overtime during the off-season, making for a memorable summer. We had some brilliant fundraising days with the beer festival, car boot sales at Lions Park, as well as a hugely productive Volunteers Day. Thanks must go to AV Dawson for additional help with container storage and continued promotion of our facilities and Club. The Juniors played T1 every week at Lions Park before preseason training started, which is in large part thanks to Gavin Field and his crew. We now have American Football playing on our fields during the summer, and possibly cricket as well next year. We have good numbers in our mini and junior rugby sections, as well as competitive girls' and women's rugby sides. This is all due to the supreme efforts of so many people who step up and help. Bonfire Night looms large; it's a successful event thanks to the continued dedication of our rugby family, and their efforts to keep our club growing from strength to strength.

Thank you,

Phil Tilson

Chairman



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TODAY'S OPPONENTS: SCARBOROUGH RUFC



To belatedly launch our first home kick-off of the season, we welcome Scarborough RUFC.

Scarborough enjoyed a very successful season at Silver Royd Stadium, Scalby, topping Regional 2 North East last season, winning 19 of their 22 games and finishing a full 15 points clear of second placed Pocklington. And Scarborough kicked off their R1NE season in style, dispatching Ilkley 36-27. This will be a tough game for the Boro.

Scarborough RUFC germinated a century ago following a meeting of rugby enthusiasts at Scarborough's Pavilion Hotel in 1926 and moved to the J. M. Guthrie Clubhouse in 2009.

Scarborough can boast some impressive alumni amongst their ranks, including Zoe Aldcroft, current captain of England's Red Roses.

According to Stat Masterson (Peter Wright), our playing history dates to 1946 when the Boro won a friendly 20-6. The most recent encounter saw Scarborough victorious at Acklam Park on November 27th, 2018. Kieran Clark and Myles Colvin crossed the line for the maroons and Andrew Baggett bagged a couple of kicks.

*We also extend a warm welcome to today's referee **Tom Howard** of the Central Society of Yorkshire Refs. Tom is a director of a Mechanical Engineering Company and played front row for West Park Leeds and Old Otlesians. Tom is a frequent visitor to Acklam Park. Tom recently reffed our pre-season game at Pocklington as well as our season opener versus Sandal.*

A big thank you today for our match day sponsors **THE STIFFS**. Welcome back to Acklam Park and thanks to the Stiff organisers, today's match ball sponsors, **Andy Murray** and **Stuart Richardson**.

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MATCH REPORT

SANDAL V MIDDLESBROUGH

Sandal - September 26th - 3pm

Middlesbrough fell to a narrow defeat in a closely fought season opener at Sandal this weekend.

The team was without a few key players, including player/coach, Ollie Hodgson, who was sidelined with an injury. The visitors had a slow start, with Sandal quickly going 10-0 up, thanks to a converted try and a penalty.

Middlesbrough eventually started to fight back, with the attacking possession alternating between the two teams. Boro backs, Brendan Hill and Matthew Marsay put in some impressive runs, as did the Sandal fly half, Mihali Joannou. It was a move from Boro scrum half, Sam Gaudie that finally broke the defence, cutting through a gap with pace, and feeding the ball to number eight, Marcus Lang to score the try. Hill converted (10-7).

Sandal was next to score, with a penalty from Joannou taking the half time score to 13-7.

Middlesbrough got off to a better start in the second half, with Boro's Man of the Match, Gaudie wreaking havoc. Hill nailed a penalty given for a high tackle, and then captain, Jack McPhillips bundled over the line for a deserved Boro try, taking them into the lead for the first time. Hill converted, with a beautiful kick from out wide (13-17).

Sandal bounced back immediately, winning the ball from the kick off and feeding on-rushing support to score a converted try under the posts (20-17).

After another period of back-and-forth possession, a gorgeous inside pass from McPhillips to Harry Bryce saw the winger surge over the line. Hill pulled the conversion wide, to leave the visitors 20-22 up with 15 minutes to go.

Sandal grabbed the lead back with a penalty kick minutes later (23-22), setting the stage for a sizzling finale, with Boro pushing to take back the win, and Sandal hunting down a bonus point for four tries. Neither team wanted to kick the ball out of play when regular time was complete.

In the end, it was heartbreak for Boro when Sandal finally crossed the line to confirm the win and gain the bonus point. Middlesbrough's consolation was a losing bonus point when Sandal's conversion attempt failed, leaving the score at 28-22.

Captain McPhillips said, 'We missed some opportunities in key moments, which ultimately cost us the game. But there are a lot of positives to take away. The debuts of homegrown 19-year-olds, Brook Powner and Jake Pemberton were pleasing. Paddy O'Brien also made his debut at the age of 38, and was impressive off the bench for his first taste of level 5 rugby. We will have some key players returning next week, so selection will be a headache, which is what we want.'

The result leaves Boro in ninth place in Regional 1 North East. Boro will host their first home game of the season at Acklam Park on Saturday October 3, with kick off scheduled for 3pm.



Scrum Half, Sam Gaudie (Man of the Match)



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UNDER 16s



Middlesbrough U16s enter the season with strong squad numbers and plenty of confidence built from recent success. The team has enjoyed an impressive journey over the past two seasons, suffering just two defeats at U14 level and narrowly missing out on a place in the Yorkshire Final, before going on to lift the U15 Yorkshire Plate with an excellent victory away at Heath.

Continuity has been a key strength, with more than 90% of the squad having played together since U13s, while several valuable additions over the past two years have further strengthened the group.

The coaching team has set ambitious goals for the season, challenging the players to continue their development as they prepare for the transition into Colts rugby and, ultimately, the senior game.

This squad takes great pride in upholding the core values of rugby, but above all, in representing the traditions, standards and community spirit of Middlesbrough Rugby Club.

Boro 49– 20 Stockton. Sunday, September 20 at Acklam Park.

Boro U16s welcomed Stockton RFU to Acklam Park on a beautiful autumn afternoon, with bright sunshine accompanied by challenging windy conditions. In a game played in the right spirit, Boro demonstrated the core values of rugby by sharing several players with Stockton to ensure a competitive and enjoyable contest for all involved.

Boro emerged as 49-20 winners after producing some excellent attacking rugby. Harry Thompson led the scoring with an outstanding four-try performance, while further tries came from Haemla Pemha, Joe Deighton, Reilly Watson and George Cann. Austin Elliott added two conversions to complete the scoring.

Despite the difficult conditions, both sides played with determination and commitment, providing an entertaining match for players and spectators alike. Stockton battled hard throughout and were grateful recipients of Boro's shared players, reflecting the respect, teamwork and sportsmanship that sit at the heart of the game.

Boro 55 – 0 Houghton. Sunday, September 13 at Lions Park.

Boro U16s hosted Houghton in excellent conditions and produced an outstanding team performance, running out convincing 55-0 winners.

The tries were shared across the squad, with Charlie Evans opening the scoring. Archie Brent crossed twice, while Harry Thompson, Jack Meadows, Seth Naughton, Lewis Boyes and Reilly Watson all added their names to the scoresheet. Noah Roach and Austin Elliot contributed with the boot, adding the conversions.

Despite the scoreline, Houghton competed well throughout and played their part in a well-contested match. The game was played in great weather and was well supported by spectators, creating an excellent atmosphere for both teams.

A strong all-round display from Boro U16s saw them maintain their intensity from start to finish and secure a deserved victory.



A note from the President

On behalf of Middlesbrough RUFC I would like to extend a warm welcome to Scarborough, our guests today. After winning their league last season they have made a great start this year by beating Ilkley.

To our supporters I hope we enjoy the season as much as we did last year, perhaps without the nail-biting relegation play offs, which, while exciting, can fray the nerves. Anyone who travelled to Sandal will have been impressed by the resilience of the team against a very large Sandal pack and a good set of backs. The team was unlucky not to have sneaked a win with a good performance.

We will be entertaining several new teams in the league this season, some of which entail longer coach journeys. To help us to meet this expense, and our increasing costs in general, the Club hopes that we can call on you to support the club financially (if you are able to).

You can:

- Sponsor a game
- Sponsor the match ball
- Take out a bond to help with the cost of the purchase of Tollesby
- Join the 250 club
- Help with fund-raising for cash for kids.

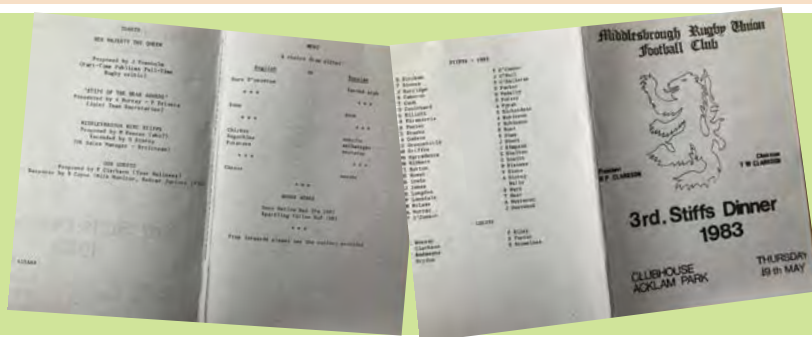
Contact me; the Treasurer or the Hon Gen Secretary for further information on any of these. I mention the Treasurer here, which is a nice segue to thank Joe Secret for his amazing work over the last few years and welcome Mike Wood as out new treasurer. Nice to have you back on-board Mike.

On a lighter note, it is great to see the number of former players who have signed up for the "Stiffs Table" this should be a great day for one and all, and I am sure a glass will be raised in fond memory of Derek Laidlaw and John Redmayne who left us this summer.

Finally, please enjoy today's game and remember we do this for fun. *Regards Tom*

We welcome back THE STIFFS.

We wonder how many present today were at the 1983 dinner featured here...



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Respect the Ref...

Very pleased to report that MRUFC supporters down in Sandal last week maintained impressive levels of dignity and respect towards the officials. This is what we expect and demand. Let's keep it going...

It can be extremely frustrating to witness calls we may deem dubious, or to even see calls that seem inconsistent. By all means, have a little moan to your nearest sideline neighbour - and have a healthy debate about it in the Clubhouse over a beverage - but please let's try and keep our vocal frustrations to a minimum when the game is afoot. Instead, let's replace it with very audible encouragement for our team.

Many thanks, and I will make sure I try and take some of my own medicine.

Respect the Ref *Ross* 😊



Derek Laidlaw The good people of Middlesbrough Rugby Club were hit with another hammer blow over the summer with the passing of our great friend Derek Laidlaw.

The 'Jinking Jock' was a wonderful player, and a legendary tourist. Derek would lead the post-match song sessions. He had a magnificent singing voice, a gentle wit and a lyrical soft Scottish brogue. On away trips on the buses, he would front the percussion section playing on the shelf rack. Derek will never be forgotten by Middlesbrough RUFC.

Laws of the Game – MYTH BUSTER

This season, referees at grassroots have been asked to manage negative defensive play at the maul—primarily, swimming.

What? I hear you ask.

Picture elite players acting out a front crawl motion to reach over the maul to disrupt the back man/ball carrier. Or side swimming along the maul to the hindmost foot of the attacking team, attempting to dupe the referee that momentum has miraculously brought them around to the ball carrier.

Collapsing the maul shall still be managed.

So, keep your eyes and ears open. You may hear lots of proactive management of illegal play at the maul—at least that is the objective.



John Redmayne

During the close-season, John passed away peacefully in hospital.

John, a stalwart of the Club for decades, was a much-loved teammate, committee member, friend, colleague, husband, dad and grandad. He will be very fondly remembered.

Aside from his impressive performances on the pitch, John was Club Chairman '91-94 and chaired our selection Committee for many years during the '80s and '90s.

A clubman through and through, he will be greatly missed by all associated with MRUFC. Our sympathy, love and support to the family.



AV Dawson & Lions Park

We were delighted to have the Chairman of AV Dawson / Port of Middlesbrough visit our minis and juniors during their training session at Lions Park, Tollesby Road, on Sunday, September 27.

Gary Dawson was able to see the impact of his company's investment as he inspected the facilities and chatted with the coaches and players. His physical presence underlines his hands-on approach and shows that Port of Middlesbrough's commitment to the club is more than just financial sponsorship.

We are loving this partnership...

REGIONAL 1



MIDDLESBROUGH

Saturday 3rd October

TOT	DROP	PEN	CON	TRY	No		
					15	Aedan Moloney	
					14	Brendan Hill	
					13	Charlie Bourne	
					12	Jack McPhillips (C)	
					11	Harry Bryce	
					10	Rob Carney	
					9	Sam Gaudie	
					1	Josh Lynas	
					2	Joe Sawdon	
					3	Harley Wright	
					4	Paddy O'Brien	
					5	Ali Lang	
					6	Joe McNeil	
					7	Rohan Brown	
					8	Marcus Lang	
					16	Patrick McArdle	
					17	Myles Colvin	
					18	Elliot Ward	
					19	Toby Tremlett	
					20	Matthew Marsay	
					21		
					22		

Referee: Tom Howard, C



NORTH EAST

ber 2026 - 3.00pm

SCARBOROUGH

		No	TRY	CON	PEN	DROP	TOT
	Jonty Holloway	15					
	Nat Parker	14					
	Drew Govier	13					
	Euan Govier	12					
	Olly Wells	11					
	Jack Glansfield	10					
	Jordi Wakeham (C)	9					
	Ropeti Ropeti	1					
	Ted Barker	2					
	Jake Lyon (VC)	3					
	Aaron Wilson	4					
	Seth Bodill	5					
	Eddie Erksine	6					
	Harry Pett	7					
	Rufus Pollard	8					
	Vytautas Mudingis	16					
	Jubilee Soloa	17					
	James Long	18					
	Jordan Holloway	19					
	Kahu Craig-Te-Ranga	20					
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VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Middlesbrough Rugby Club is supported by a large team of volunteers who quietly and diligently dedicate hours of their own time. They complete the massive amount of administrative and community-service tasks which must be done so the club can function, executing them without fuss or expectation of recognition. This work enables MRUFC to turn out three Senior Teams, a Colts Team, a Women's Team and 11 Junior/Mini teams.

This new programme series seeks to pay tribute to those who have given so much to the club off the pitch!

ANDY MURRAY

Andy Murray is one of the club's longest-serving volunteers. He said, 'I have now completed 46 years, and would be happy to complete another 46 years if Middlesbrough wants me!'

Andy first joined the club as a player in 1980, and was quickly persuaded to become Team Secretary by Tommy Clarkson and Don Brydon. 'This was in the days before emails and mobile phones, with five or six teams playing every Saturday. I had to work daily with all the team captains and the chairman of selectors ensuring we could fulfil our club commitments. Changes could be made right up until Saturday morning!'

Since 1987, Andy has held the position of Match Secretary. Each week he coordinates with home and away club officials, and the Yorkshire Referees Society, ensuring the games can go ahead. Andy reminisced about one time when an exchange referee was brought in from the West Country, who was an Army Brigadier, 'He turned up with four heavily armed paratroopers to protect him from any terrorist attack!'

Outside of his Match Secretary role, Andy has also been involved in several other major projects. Among his many accomplishments,

he organised pre-season Squash Tournaments to enhance player match fitness, successfully nominated former Middlesbrough Player, and England and British Lions International, Rory Underwood for an Honorary Degree at Teesside University, coordinated a variety of events to raise funds for cancer charities after the passing of a club member's wife, secured a substantial grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fun to help finance the 150th anniversary celebrations, supervised the production of two short films about the club which were featured on BBC Look North, and prepared a detailed Community Outreach Programme involving schools and other organisations in the area. His endeavours led to him being named as MRUFC Clubman of the Year in 2022/23. At the time, late Club Secretary, Don Brydon said, 'No one is more dedicated or dynamic than Andy.'



Rory Underwood & Andy Murray

Avoiding any hint of self-aggrandisement, Andy said, 'I am very proud of the work I have done for MRUFC, a club which means a great deal to me. I believe in doing all we can to make sure this club can be as good off the pitch as we hope to be on the pitch.'

The Club is extremely grateful for Andy's hard work over the decades, and we look forward to this continuing for several more.



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THE UNDER 13s

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR CAN MAKE!

Last season began with some significant challenges. With only five regular players available, we managed to field a full Middlesbrough team just once before Christmas. It would have been easy to become discouraged, but everyone involved showed incredible determination and belief.

From January onwards, our squad began to grow, welcoming a fantastic influx of new players. The hard work and patience shown by our players, parents, and coaches started to pay off, and we finished the season with some outstanding performances that demonstrated just how far the team had come.

The commitment shown throughout the year was remarkable. Players turned up week after week, parents continued to support the team, and coaches kept the faith. Together, they proved that perseverance, teamwork, and a positive attitude can overcome even the toughest starts.

That momentum has carried into this season. We have worked hard throughout pre-season and continued to expand our squad, welcoming both experienced players and complete beginners. It has been wonderful to see every new player embraced by the group, reflecting the values, inclusiveness, and team spirit that make our club so special.

We are also delighted to welcome Charlie Bourne to the coaching team. As the squad takes its next steps towards full-pitch rugby, we look forward to drawing on the experience of both Quinny and Charlie to help develop not only the players' skills, but also their understanding of the club culture and what it means to represent Middlesbrough.

The opening fixtures have certainly tested us. Many of the teams we face have been playing together for years, and that experience shows. However, what has been most encouraging is the progress our boys have made every single time they have pulled on the Middlesbrough shirt. Their effort, attitude, and willingness to learn have been outstanding, and they continue to improve with every game.

Most importantly, this is a group of players who enjoy being together, support one another, and are proud to represent their club. We are excited to see what the season holds and look forward to watching this talented squad continue to grow in confidence, develop as rugby players, and mature into great young people both on and off the pitch.





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THE MINIS

Mini's end of season celebration

On Saturday 13th June, the minis took to Lions Park for their annual End of Season Celebration. Teams from under 7 up to under 12 joined to celebrate and collect their trophies. It was lovely to see families set up for the day and the children enjoying themselves. We had bouncy castles, games and plenty of pizza. All of our players performed so well during the season, and they were all worthy winners.

We look forward to doing it all again next year!



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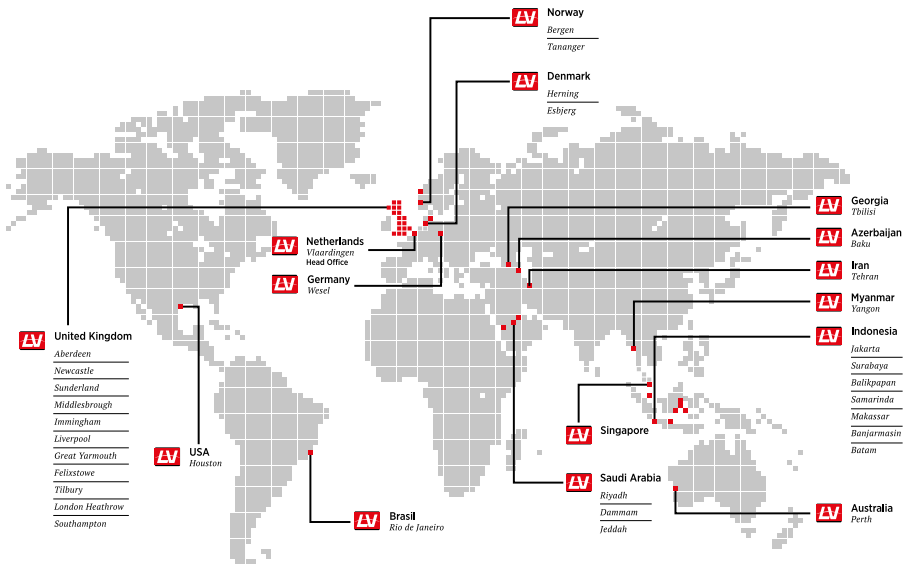
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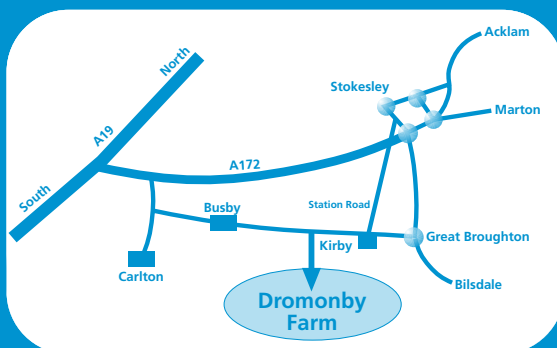
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First Team Fixtures & Scorers

Date	Opponent	Venue	Result	For	Against	Scorers	PoTM
Sep 26th	Sandal	Away	L	22	28	T: Marcus Lang, Jack McPhillips, Harry Bryce. C: Brendan Hill (2) P: Brendan Hill	Sam Gaudie
Oct 3rd	Scarborough	Home					
Oct 10th	Northern	Home					
Oct 17th	Scunthorpe	Away					
Oct 24th	Alnwick	Home					
Oct 31	Blaydon	Away					
Nov 7th	Driffield	Home					
Nov 21st	Hull	Away					
Nov 28th	Ilkley	Home					
Dec 5th	York	Away					
Dec 12th	Northern	Away					
Dec 19th	North Ribblesdale	Away					
Jan 9th 2027	Sandal	Home					
Jan 16th	Scarborough	Away					
Jan 23rd	Scunthorpe	Home					
Feb 6th	Alnwick	Away					
Feb 13th	Blaydon	Home					
Feb 20th	Driffield	Away					
Mar 6th	Hull	Home					
Mar 13th	Ilkley	Away					
Apr 3rd	York	Home					
Apr 10th	North Ribblesdale	Home					

Regional 1 North East

		P	W	D	L	PF	PA	+/-	TB	LB	Pts
1	Alnwick	1	1	0	0	44	19	25	1	0	5
2	Northern	1	1	0	0	27	12	15	1	0	5
3	Scunthorpe	1	1	0	0	38	24	14	1	0	5
4	Scarborough	1	1	0	0	34	27	7	1	0	5
5	Sandal	1	1	0	0	28	22	6	1	0	5
6	Blaydon	1	0	1	0	25	25	0	1	0	3
7	York	1	0	1	0	25	25	0	0	0	2
8	Ilkley	1	0	0	1	27	34	-7	1	1	2
9	MIDDLESBROUGH	1	0	0	1	22	28	-6	0	1	1
10	Hull	1	0	0	1	24	38	-14	1	0	1
11	North Ribblesdale	1	0	0	1	12	27	-15	0	0	0
12	Driffield	1	0	0	1	19	44	-25	0	0	0

First Team Scorers

Player	Tries		Kicks				Total
	No	Pts	Con	Pen	Drop	Pts	
Brendan Hill	0	0	2	1	0	7	7
Marcus Lang	1	5	0	0	0	0	5
Jack McPhillips	1	5	0	0	0	0	5
Harry Bryce	1	5	0	0	0	0	5

Regional 1 NE

Results

Saturday 26th September

Alnwick 44 v 19 Driffield

Northern 27 v 12 North Ribblesdale

Sandal 28 v 22 MIDDLESBROUGH

Scarborough 34 v 27 Ilkley

Scunthorpe 38 v 24 Hull

York 25 v 25 Blaydon

Regional 1 NE

Fixtures

Saturday 3rd October

Driffield v Blaydon

Hull v Alnwick

Ilkley v Scunthorpe

MIDDLESBROUGH v Scarborough

North Ribblesdale v Sandal

Northern v York

Wasps: Counties 2 North East (South)

Date	Opponent	Venue	Result	For	Against	Scorers	PoTM	Table
Sep 26th	Acklam	Home	L	28	59		Rich Kensey	7
Oct 3rd	Sunderland II	Away						
Oct 10th	Darlington Mowden Park II	Away						
Oct 17th	Hartlepool Rovers	Home						
Oct 24th	Sedgefield	Away						
Oct 31st	Peterlee & Hordon II	Home						
Nov 7th	Yarm Eagles	Away						
Nov 21st	Redcar	Home						
Nov 28th	Billingham II	Away						
Dec 5th	Stockton II	Home						
Dec 12th	Darlington Mowden Park II	Home						
Dec 19th	West Hartlepool II	Home						
Jan 9th 2027	Acklam	Away						
Jan 16th	Sunderland	Home						
Jan 23rd	Hartlepool Rovers	Away						
Feb 6th	Sedgefield	Home						
Feb 13th	Peterlee & Hordon II	Away						
Feb 20th	Yarm Eagles	Home						
Mar 6th	Redcar	Away						
Mar 13th	Billingham II	Home						
Apr 3rd	Stockton II	Away						
Apr 10th	West Hartlepool II	Away						

A Team: Counties 3 North East (South)

Date	Opponent	Venue	Result	For	Against	Scorers	PoTM	Table
Sep 26th	Bishop Auckland II	Away	HWO	0	0			9
Oct 3rd	Darlington II	Home						
Oct 10th	Newton Aycliffe	Home						
Oct 17th	Guisborough II	Away						
Oct 24th	Hartlepool II	Home						
Oct 31	West Hartlepool III	Away						
Nov 7th	Hartlepool B. B. OB.	Home						
Nov 21st	Upper Eden II	Away						
Dec 5th	Newton Aycliffe	Away						
Dec 12th	Bishop Auckland II	Home						
Jan 9th 2027	Billingham III	Home						
Jan 16th	Darlington II	Away						
Jan 23rd	Guisborough II	Home						
Feb 6th	Hartlepool II	Away						
Feb 13th	West Hartlepool III	Home						
Feb 20th	Hartlepool B. B. OB.	Away						
Mar 6th	Upper Eden II	Home						
Mar 13th	Billingham III	Away						



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