

Barnstaple RFC Junior Section

In touch...



Ways to get involved -
fancy being a coach,
coordinator or volunteer?

As you will know, all the coaches, assistant coaches, team coordinators, first aiders and other helpers in the club are all volunteers, who give their time freely so all our children can participate – and for that we thank you all! But we are always keen to hear from anyone else who would like to help out.

So whether you have previous rugby coaching or playing experience, and think you could help out with coaching; are a first aider (or would be happy to take a first aiders course) or are happy to be on a bank of willing volunteers who could be called upon for the bigger sporting days we have at the club, such as festivals, we would love to hear from you.

Should anyone wish to put their name forward to help out in any way,

Welcome from the Chairman

Welcome to what we plan will be the first of a regular newsletter to help everyone involved with the Barnstaple RFC Junior Section to be kept informed.

You may or may not be aware, that the Junior Section is overseen on your behalves by a committee who meet regularly to discuss how the section is run, address any issues raised, and generally try to ensure that the club functions smoothly for the benefit of everyone.

As a committee we felt that we could do more to ensure that parents, volunteers and friends of the junior section are kept up-to-date on what is going on; whilst you and individual teams do receive information via your team coordinators and Facebook pages, we felt that a regular newsletter would be an efficient way to ensure that everyone is kept informed.

We have had a fantastic first half to the season, with record numbers of players in each age group, (many with waiting lists), and as a committee we endeavour on your behalf to make the experience for all our boys and girls an enjoyable and rewarding one. But if there is anything further you feel we could be doing, or indeed if you would like to get more personally involved in the running of the club, please do contact a member of the committee.

Here's to a great rest of season!

Darren Cloke

then please contact Rozz Algar the Junior Section Volunteer Coordinator email rozz@herne.org.uk or 07866 387756.

Parents are asked to play their part

As well as the more formal ongoing volunteering mentioned above, there is always something that needs to be done to make sure that rugby runs smoothly for our children.

This is particularly important on match days. Many of you may not be aware, but each age group is responsible for marking out their own pitch, cordoning it off etc. as well as for feeding the team (and away team) after the match. It is not the responsibility of the coach and team coordinator to do this alone and therefore we would ask that everyone plays their part in helping out as and when you can.

Feel the Barnum Spirit



In touch...

Club Contacts

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Safeguarding issues

With the weather becoming wintery and wetter, can parents make sure your child/children arrive with the appropriate clothing. We know some do not like to train in jackets, but when they stop they can soon chill, so they do need to bring a top.

Please also make sure they bring a drink and their gum shields, as recently we have had a number of players arriving for training having forgotten both. It is also worthwhile for them to bring both trainers and boots!

Can we please remind parents, especially the younger age groups, that they need to remain with their children during both training and games. If another parent takes your child to either, please be aware it is they who remain responsible for them and not coaches or TCs. Please, in this instance, make sure the person responsible for your child has your contact details in case of an emergency.

Head injuries remain a high concern for all, and the safety and welfare of all our players is paramount. Therefore we ask parents to keep us informed if your child receives a head injury away from BRFC club activities, however small you feel it may be. This is so we can support your child and assess any knocks which could affect them.

As a Club, we will be informing both parents and schools of any child who receives a head injury, so both parties can take appropriate safeguarding measures.

Tony Wasley, Safeguarding

Maintaining the pitches and training off site

This year we made the decision to train off site in what can be the wettest and worst months for churning up the pitches; with training on a Friday night at Bideford College and on a Sunday at Pilton College. As a result of making this decision, teams have managed to practice every week – whereas in the past many training sessions have been cancelled due to un-playable pitches. We are grateful to everybody for supporting this decision, and turning up in great numbers even on the darkest and stormiest of nights and cold Sunday mornings!

It was brought to our attention that some of the senior teams had been using Bridge Field for training, even though we had vacated the pitches to keep them in good condition. As a result the committee raised this with the club, who have assured us that they will no longer use the pitches for practice, so when we return to them they will be in a good condition.

The club do a considerable amount to keep the pitches in a good condition and inspect them regularly, the Groundsman is constantly monitoring all of the pitches and sometimes has no option but to restrict their use. This is only done to ensure that the pitches are playable for as much of the season as possible.

The club as a whole does have a challenge in that the grounds are not completely private, the general public can get on to them at any time; with many exercising dogs on the fields and using it as a recreational area. This can result in dog waste and other rubbish being on and around the pitches. We have taken a number of actions to try and resolve this: the club inspects and clears up the pitches regularly; we have informed the police and action has been taken to minimise misuse of the area; we have been in touch with the local authorities and dog warden who are looking for possible solutions; as well as having CCTV that is monitored to ensure everyone's safety. But we would ask that everyone is mindful of the potential risks, letting children know that they shouldn't pick up anything unsavoury and washing their hands thoroughly if they do. If you can also let a member of the committee, or one of volunteers know if you do spot something, we will ensure that it gets cleared away.

Feel the Barrow Spirit



In touch...

Communication to Parents

Your TC should be your first point of contact for all communications with the club and your age group, this should be supported by the following, which we encourage you to use as much as possible:

BRFC Website – You should have a login and password to be able to access fixtures, team news and match reports for your age group, as well as being able to view the general club news and information on the club's main website. The website address is barnstaplerfc.co.uk, if you do not have a login and password please see your TC.

Facebook – Each age group has its own closed Facebook page, which can be used by coaches and TCs to relay any information to you. Parents' input on this page is very welcome, as are photographs of matches, outings and training etc. However, regarding this please can we ask that if you do wish to upload any photographs, then email them to your TC, as he/she will be able to confirm that they are ok to be used on the page. It maybe that there are children in your age group whose parents do not wish them to be photographed and the TC will have information on this. Also, when photographing matches it is important that the away team has given their consent for pictures to be taken. Your TC will mention this to the away coach and will be able to give the ok for picture use. Your help with this would be very much appreciated by the club.

If you aren't a member of your age group's Facebook page, just ask your TC for details, then you just ask to join the group. We realise not everyone has Facebook and this is just another means of communicating; all important information will be relayed through your TC and the website anyway, this is more a source for parent input and a bit of fun!

Emma Smith

Training ↗ Matches

As we have already mentioned, trying to keep the pitches in a good condition is a key focus of the club and at this time of the year the most sensible option is to train off site, but this doesn't stop training being a vital part of rugby as a whole. Training can be viewed as an optional extra, it is in fact quite the opposite. No matter how talented your child is, training together as a team is vital. We all understand that it can be really difficult to commit to every training session and match, but it's worth remembering that the coaches do... We are all volunteers

(almost 100 in total), and as the kids go up through the age groups, being a coach is a huge time commitment.

As our squads grow (which they are year-on-year, with roughly 300 kids and almost 15 teams!), the coaches have to decide who to select for games, and it is of course only fair that they focus on giving game time to those who show a high level of commitment. As the players get older, most coaches implement a 'train to play' policy, and it's important that both players and parents understand this.

Your appreciation can be shown

Match Day Protocol

Just a reminder of various match expectations for home and away games:

Kit – players should be seen in BRFC kit as far as possible when playing games, e.g. club socks, black shorts, along with their provided match shirts. If possible, club hoodies or training tops for warm ups, and polo shirts for after the game. If there are any issues obtaining or ordering kit then please let us know.

Match Fees – are £1 for home games and should be paid at the beginning of the session to your TC. If your child is coming to the session with another parent etc, then please send them with their money. Please don't wait to be chased for this money, have it ready and pay on arrival.

Changing – The changing rooms are available, so please do not let children in to the club house in muddy match kit at home, and especially when you are at away clubs. We are trying to encourage the wearing of club polo shirts in the younger age groups when eating their after match meal. Rugby boots must not be worn in the clubhouse.

simply through making the best effort to get your child to as many sessions and games as possible, this makes it better and easier for the coaches, and the rest of the team. Fingers crossed for some drier and warmer weather, and roll on the Easter and summer rugby festivals!

Russ Copsey

Coaching Coordinator

Feel the Barun Spirit

