

# Bedford Rugby Followers

April 2021  
Volume 2, Issue 2



## Followers' News

### Editorial

It has been great to see some rugby at last, although I am sure we all miss being there in reality. Still we may still hope to get to the last game of the season. Certainly those of us at a certain age will have had their second injection by then. With figures like only 32 in 75,000 being admitted to hospital who have had one injection the obvious conclusion to draw is

that with two injections the figures should be so much more in our favour and might persuade the country to really open up.

Lets hope that we can get back to a full season starting in September!

We have had quite a testing time against the top two in the league Doncaster and Ealing Trailfinders. Hopefully Nottingham will be a little bit easier and we all want to be at Goldington Road to cheer on the Blues when we meet Ampthill again. Bedford will definitely want bragging rights but Ampthill did just get a good result against Pirates.

Mel Grover

### Future of the Followers

Lastly the committee are considering how we can take the followers forward post-covid. We need to know what the Followers want and it would be great if you could take a few minutes to email us with your thoughts about what events we could run or how we could attract some more members. *A survey form is also attached together with an answer sheet for the quiz so do both at the same time.*

Historically we have run Summer Balls, Annual Quizzes, a 40s Night with full swing band, race nights, brewery trips, curry nights. We have also had Blues staff such as Paul Larkin taking us through the role of the analyst. Big Jon Phillips did a talk and film of his trip to play rugby at Everest Base Camp. Referee nights also seemed to be popular and we had to cancel one last year due to Covid.

Also consider what sort of things you would like us to run. Perhaps we could try to tempt some former players who have gone on to achieve great things either in the game. Premiership players like Josh Bassett, Billy 12trees, Mike Le B, Chudders for example. We could approach coaching greats like Ali Hepher or Ian Vass or maybe a referee such as Carl Dickson.

Maybe another session with the Blues coaches or a Local bands night. Should we have more than 1 quiz a year. Maybe we could have a general knowledge quiz and or something on the theme of a Question of Sport. Do we make our annual quiz more of an event - maybe with

#### Inside this issue

Editorial.....	1
Future of the Followers.....	1-2
Rugby anecdotes.....	2-5
House of Games.....	6-10
Members Forum.....	11
Our aims.....	11

an entertainer (comic/singer) at the break and a meal. Rugby themed treasure hunt around Bedford and surrounds. The Followers have a tie in with Marston's now so something like a beer and curry tasting. Marston's own countless brands and Bedford has dozens of curry houses competing for post-match business after a match. Can you think of anything else or even offer to run something.

Any money raised by the Followers over and above our costs goes to the Blues. We want to run smaller events that people want to attend so that the events are a great crack and also some much needed revenue is generated for the club. The club will run the bigger events with their greater audience and corporate sponsors.

We will also be considering holding the AGM as it may be possible to have it at the earliest on the 24th of June or in July, stage 4 of the roadmap permitting. Finally we desperately need another person on the committee who would be prepared to be the secretary. Please if you have the necessary aptitude for the job please put your name forward for election at the AGM. For further information see the article below. Please contact us initially by email ([bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com](mailto:bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com))

Martin

*BRFA Secretary (taken from article from Newsletter 3)*

*As Secretary I take the Minutes at Committee meetings, type them up and distribute them and try to ensure that all actions are done. I'm responsible for making bookings for meetings/events and ensuring that facilities/equipment are booked correctly. I deal with all correspondence on behalf of the Committee and liaise with our Charity of the Season. I create the membership form and any other forms that we as Followers use and collect and collate the Player of the Season votes. I've been involved with the Committee for over 15 years. I do remember being approached and invited to join the committee being told that "there isn't much to do - it's only half a dozen or so meetings a year". Mmmm - it's turned out to be a bit more than that, but I did enjoy it and feel that "I'm doing my bit" for the Followers and the Club by being involved. It's a hugely supportive organisation and I'm very proud to be a part of it.*

*It may be possible to reduce the tasks above to reduce the workload. The obvious ones are making the bookings, producing the forms and collating the Player of the season votes. We might have to send Sean, Tui and Will around to some of the other committee though. Mel*

## Rugby Anecdotes

### Gaston Vareilles

According to legend, French rugby player Charles Vareilles contrived to miss his international debut against Scotland in 1911 thanks to the lure of a sandwich.

It's no less than the very first victory of France in the international arena (to be honest, the Scots were exhausted after a long a difficult journey).

When his team's train stopped at Lyon en route to Paris, Monsieur Vareilles decided to hop out to the buffet. Unfortunately, however, the queue at the cafeteria was rather long and he returned to the platform, sandwich in hand, to find the train disappearing over the horizon. Vareilles was replaced in the French team that day by sprinter André Franquenelle, (later coach of ASM in Clermont) -he was scheduled as a substitute but he had also missed the train to Colombes stadium and arrived late, after the kick off. Vareilles was never selected to play for France again. Franquenelle, meanwhile, won two more caps for France. Being a player short at kick off, a spectator who was a player from Bordeaux, had started to remove his army uniform to play when Franquenelle eventually arrived.



## Stray Dog

In November 1886 in a match between Portsmouth Victoria and Southampton Trojans the ball was kicked into the Trojans' in-goal area where it rebounded off a stray dog.

One of the Victoria players gathered the ball and touched down for a try. Quite understandably, the Trojans' players protested, insisting that the ref should have ruled "dead ball", the ball having struck a "spectator". The objection was referred to the RFU who (surprise, surprise) backed the referee and ruled that the try should stand because, technically, the dog was not a spectator.



## John Hopoate

Hopoate claimed in front of a panel of judges that he was simply attempting to give three players wedgies with his fingers, when he was found guilty of sticking his fingers up opponents' backsides. Denying he had done anything wrong he said he was "a great believer in what happens on the field should stay there".

## Daft Welsh Forward

During their 1978 tour of Australia, the Welsh team of that era tried all sorts of devious methods to get freebie phone calls through to their wives and loved ones back home. The players resorted to tricks like asking restaurant proprietors if they could use the phone — and then calling the other side of the world when the proprietor thought they were ringing a local number.

Prop forward Charlie Faulkner — a not-so-bright member of the legendary Pontypool front row — opted for a different tactic at the reception that followed the first Test match in Brisbane.

He picked up the house phone, got through to the hotel switchboard and barked out his home number in Newport. "To whom do I charge the call?" asked the operator. "Err... Mr Dawes. John Dawes," mumbled Charlie, figuring he could get the tour coach to pick up the tab. "Please remain by the phone for a moment, Mr Dawes, and I'll call you back," came the reply. Charlie replaced the receiver and got back to the business of drowning his sorrows after a rare defeat. By the time the call came through a few minutes later, he was in another world. "Ullo," said Charlie. "I have a call to South Wales for Mr John Dawes," confirmed the operator. Charlie took a quick look around. "He's not here," he barked - and hung up.



## Gum-eth the Hour

Cliff Morgan, the rugby maestro who later became a commentator and eventually head of BBC TV sport, vividly recalls his first broadcasting experience. Wales had just beaten Ireland 14-3 in Dublin on their way to the Triple Crown and Grand Slam when BBC radio commentator Sammy Walker asked the great man what he remembered about the match.

"My father losing his teeth," said Cliff. "When Ken Jones scored our second try, dad was so excited that his dentures flew out of his mouth into the crowd and he hasn't seen them since." Some years later, Morgan was recounting the tale to Tony O'Reilly, who played 29 times for his country before becoming a mega-rich international businessman and head of the Heinz empire. O'Reilly, who was renowned for his great wit, feigned surprise at the news.

"Your father's, were they?" he said.

"That's amazing. I know the guy

in Cork who's still wearing them."



## HEAD IN THE GAME

Wales coach Clive Rowlands was giving his customary pre-match talk before an all-important international at Cardiff Arms Park. As usual, the players were locked into Room 338 at the nearby Angel Hotel - and the emotive Rowlands was pounding them with reasons why they had to grind the opposition into the dust. By the time he had finished working on their emotions, the wound-up stars were ready to die for their country - literally. "What are you going to do?" Rowlands bellowed as the electric atmosphere reached fever pitch. "WIN!" yelled the players. "What are we going to do?" echoed Clive. "Win, win ... WIN!" It was all too much for second-row forward Geoff Wheel. The big man from Swansea worked himself into a frenzy and, screaming "Kill, KILL!", he charged at the door to Room 338 - and butted a hole clean through it.



## THE LONG GAME

After four years in the England team, veteran prop Paul Rendall had seen it all. So it was only natural he should want to put new boy Paul Ackford's mind at ease as they prepared to face Australia at Twickenham. "Don't worry," Rendall assured police inspector Ackford in the changing room before the match. "The game will fly by. You'll find the first half seems like three minutes and the second half four minutes." England went on to produce a dazzling performance and were within five minutes of a memorable victory when Ackford staggered up to Rendall during an injury stoppage. "You're a f\*\*\*ing liar!" gasped the 6ft 6in second row. "I've been out here for four-and-a-half hours and the game's still not over."

## LATE TACKLE

The British Lions were given a fearful run around by the Orange Free State outside half during a particularly traumatic 1980 tour match. In the end, Lions centre Ray Gravell could stand no more. As the South African danger man made yet another break, the Welsh tough guy hit him with a fearful tackle long after he had parted with the ball. The referee angrily called the Llanelli star over and proceeded to dish out the severest of reprimands. "That was the latest tackle I've ever seen!" he stormed. Replied wisecracking Gravell: "Sorry ref, I got there as quickly as I could."



## I TOLD YOU HE'D KICK IT

It certainly wasn't the weather that took York Rugby League coach Bill Reilly and Aussie scout Arthur Clues to Batley. The Mount Pleasant ground was anything but pleasant as the wind howled, the rain sheeted down - and the teams made a forlorn attempt to play rugby in a mud bath. With scarcely a minute left to play, neither side had scored a single point.

Then Batley, playing up the hill and into the gale, won a penalty way out on the touchline. As their fullback lined up an ambitious pot at goal, Yorkshireman Reilly turned to Clues and wagered: "I bet you a dollar he kicks it." "You're on," replied Clues. The kicker squelched through his run-up, only to slip in the quagmire at the moment of contact - and the ball trickled just a few inches forward as he plunged onto his back in the mud. "I told you he'd kick it," said Reilly, holding out his hand for his winnings.



## Being Chaired Off.

There was no question of injured Tommy Martin making his own way off the field. The Leigh and Great Britain second row needed a stretcher after taking a bad knock on his ankle - but the one and only St John Ambulance stretcher was already occupied by another player. As Martin lay writhing on the ground and the fans bayed for the action to restart, desperate officials grabbed an office chair from the clubhouse and dashed on to the pitch with it. Martin was lifted gingerly into the seat, and with one embarrassed committee man either side, the chair was hoisted into the air by its arms. With the crowd roaring their approval,

Martin was steered tentatively towards the dressing room.

Five seconds later, there was a huge crack and the committee men were left holding a chair arm each as the seat and legs tipped Martin out - straight onto his damaged ankle.

- \* Tough-guy Eddie Szymala was in the wars. After the beefy but intellectually-challenged Barrow forward broke his jaw in a match against Oldham, coach Frank Foster was quick to pay tribute to the wounded hero. "Eddie doesn't know the meaning of the word fear," Foster told the assembled press. "Mind you, there are a million other words he doesn't know the meaning of, either."
- \* Ian Robertson\* recount this true tale. When England were in Scotland to play the Calcutta Cup it is always difficult to find somewhere to stay and impossible to book a table in any restaurant. This particular year Ian was entertaining some journalists and former players before the 'big match'. He knew of a small place just outside Edinburgh to which he hadn't been for more than 30 years. On arrival at the pub he was greeted by the owner who said, 'How marvellous to see you again, Mr Robertson. I imagine you have come to pay the 1s/6d [approx. 8p] you owe us for the single malt whisky you drank when you were last here and forgot to pay for?'



- \* Remember that rugby is a team game; all 14 of you make sure you pass the ball to Jonah.  
(FAX to the All Blacks before the 1995 World Cup semi-final)

- \* It's seconds before the Wales players are due to leave the dressing room before the game with England in 2005, everyone is pumped up and skipper Gareth Thomas calls for a huddle. Gareth Thomas noticed one person was missing. It was Gavin Henson — he was in the toilet. One player, Martyn Williams, was sent to get him. Martyn stuck his head in and there was Gav looking in the mirror carefully putting his hair into place. "Gav, come on!" Martyn said. Martyn went back out and a few more moments passed and there was still no sign of Henson. Another player, Alf, went back in and told him to get a move on. Gavin just looked at him and said: 'Alf, your mother and father have come to watch you play today but there's 72,000 out there who have come to watch me!' Henson went on to kick the winning penalty from 44 metres to secure a dramatic 11-9 victory for Wales.
- \* The 1974 Lions tour to South Africa, the most successful Lions tour ever with no matches lost and the first in which a touring side came out victorious in a test series in South Africa. On a tough tour, the third test is remembered more for its ferocity than the fine play of the Lions that saw them win 26-9. During one of the many rumbles, Scotland lock the late Gordon Brown, hit opposite number Johan de Bruyn. Bruyn was hit so hard that the South African's glass eye flew out, landing in the mud. All proceedings were halted while all the players and the referee searched on their hands and knees until it was found, upon which de Bruyn immediately replaced it - mud, grass and all - and the game resumed. Years later, de Bruyn presented the glass eye, now specially mounted, to Brown as a memento.
- \* Referees get plenty of stick and in the old days, when referees were provided by the home side even for internationals, away teams often had to put up with a degree of bias. In New Zealand in the 1920s, Hawkes Bay were defending the Ranfurly Shield when local referee Bill O'Neill caused alarm in the opposition ranks by calling a scrum and announcing, "Okay boys, we'll scrum it here ... and it's our ball in!"



## Quiz Pages

The pictures are former Bedford Blues players. Just smash the answer to the clue into the surname of the player.

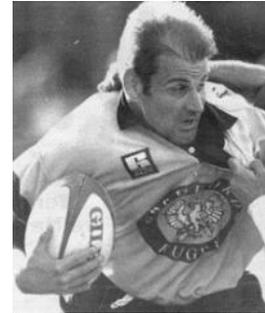
Answers by email please to [bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com](mailto:bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com))

Question: A penetrating form of high-energy electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength ranging from 10 picometers to 10 nanometres.

ANSWER: X-RAYER

Answer to the question is X-RAY

Picture is of course (Mike) RAYER



1984 hit for WHAM

ANSWER:



Morven Christie stars as DS Lisa Armstrong in Morecambe-based crime drama

ANSWER:



A large strepsirrhine primate and the most recognized of its type due to its long, black and white ringed tail.

ANSWER:



A 1982 play by the English playwright Michael Frayn. The idea for it came in 1970, when Frayn was watching from the wings a performance of *The Two of Us*, a farce that he had written for Lynn Redgrave.

ANSWER:



Favourite phrase of the infamous Eddie Waring, voice of Rugby for 30 years, often called the GARRYOWEN



ANSWER:

---

Boxer LEONARD who lost to Roberto Duran in the Brawl in Montreal 1980



ANSWER:

---

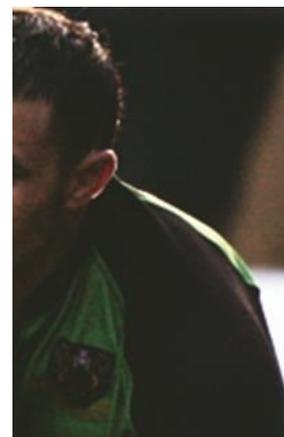
I met him on a Monday and my heart stood still.



ANSWER:

---

A dress worn as a costume in a classical ballet performance, often with attached bodice.



ANSWER:

---

Swedish luxury automobile marque headquartered in Torslanda in Gothenburg, Sweden. The Group was founded in 1927 as a subsidiary of the ball bearing manufacturer SKF.



ANSWER:

---

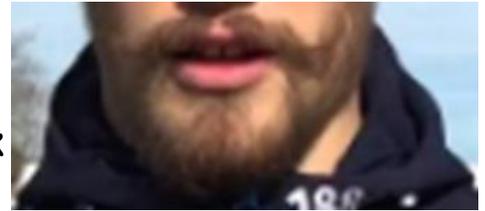
11:45

ANSWER:



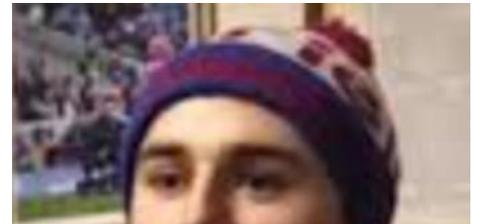
Fictional English heavy metal band. Michael McKean (as lead singer and co-lead guitarist David St. Hubbins), Christopher Guest (as lead guitarist Nigel Tufnel) and Harry Shearer (as bassist Derek Smalls).

ANSWER:



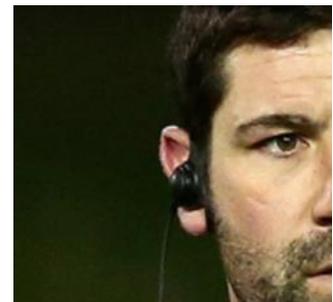
Created characters:- Zaphod Beeblebrox, Ford Prefect and Marvin The Paranoid Android

ANSWER:



The political, cultural, and economic centre of Slovakia. It is the seat of the Slovak president.

ANSWER:



Port/City from where Titanic made its maiden voyage, 15 miles west of Portsmouth and close to the New Forest.

ANSWER:



German confectionery company. The name of which is an acronym formed from Hans Riegel Bonn who formed the company. Created the first gummy candy in 1922 in the form of little Gummy bears.

ANSWER:

English country house and estate near Luton in



Bedfordshire which has appeared in many films including A Shot in the Dark, Never Say Never Again, Four Weddings and a Funeral, Eyes Wide Shut, The Secret Garden, The World Is Not Enough.

ANSWER:



Place in Cambridgeshire, "Dennis of this place" was a fictional creation of the singer-songwriter Pete Sayers who appeared in weekly visits to this place on Radio Cambridgeshire for almost 20 years.

ANSWER:



The second book in C. S. Lewis's classic fantasy series—the magical kingdom of Narnia, entered through furniture.

ANSWER:



The largest and lowest-pitched bowed string instrument in the modern symphony orchestra.

ANSWER:



Major character in the 1951 Disney animated feature film Alice in Wonderland. He is a mysterious, pink-and-purple-striped feline.

ANSWER:



Motto of the Three Musketeers.

ANSWER:



The world's oldest active sports car race in endurance racing, held annually since 1923 in France.

ANSWER:



Norwegian synth-pop band formed in Oslo in 1982. Founded by Paul Waaktaar-Savoy (guitars), Magne Furuholmen (keyboards, guitars), and Morten Harket (vocals).

ANSWER:



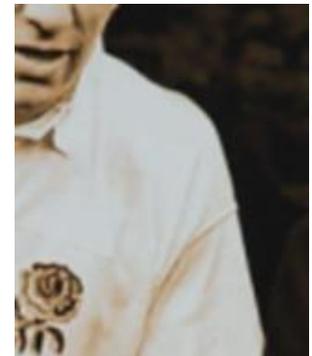
Fastback coupé built by Ford Motor Company between 1968 and 1986 designed by American Philip T. Clark. It used the mechanical components from the Mk2 Ford Cortina and was intended as the European equivalent of the Ford Mustang.

ANSWER:



Jim Henson's most famous Muppet creation, was the star and host of The Muppet Show and played a significant role on Sesame Street.

ANSWER:



## Help fill this space for our Next Issue

### Members Forum

We would like to include articles submitted by members on this page. Please send any contributions by email to:-  
[bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com](mailto:bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com)

We reserve the right to edit any contribution to make it suitable for publication.

### Bedford Blues fixture list

Nottingham	v	Bedford Blues	23rd May 2021 15:00
Bedford Blues	v	Amphill	29th May 2021 15:00

The Followers aim to support and assist Bedford Rugby in various ways as determined by the Committee and by proposals carried at an AGM.

- We run coaches to mainland away games to provide support unequalled in our division.
- We run a Jackpot at home games to provide funds for the club and as cash prizes.
- We assist with ground maintenance each summer and support when necessary to clear snow and the debris left behind after our fireworks displays.
- We organise social events and help promote events held by the club.

[Email](mailto:bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com) [bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com](mailto:bedfordrugbyfollowers@gmail.com)

[www.bedfordrfa.org](http://www.bedfordrfa.org)

[Twitter](https://twitter.com/BRFA_1949) @BRFA\_1949

[Facebook](#)

