



## 2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT OLD REIGATIANS RFC

After the trials and tribulations of 2007-2008 where we narrowly avoided relegation it was hoped that the new season would bring a more consistent level of achievement and so it proved with the prospect of promotion remaining a viable proposition until after the end of the league season. In the event it was events off the field that denied us the play off opportunity. The late withdrawal of Lordswood from the league and the decision of the Divisional Organising Committee to expunge all of their results had meant that we finished second in the league and in the play-off position. However Aylesford Bulls successfully appealed that decision to the Rugby Football Union on the basis that there were "exceptional circumstances" as they had beaten Lordswood whereas we were beaten by them. Aylesford having taken the play off place were beaten by Wimbledon who had finished second in London South West 3 thus remain in London South East 3. In the Surrey Cup Sutton & Epsom proved too strong for us in the semi final winning by an eventual margin of 34-10 but not before we had given them some alarms and had held them at 10-10 until well into the second half.

| Team                 | P  | W  | D | L  | F   | A   | Diff | Pts | Adjust |
|----------------------|----|----|---|----|-----|-----|------|-----|--------|
| Old Elthamians       | 22 | 19 | 0 | 3  | 841 | 167 | 674  | 38  | 0      |
| Aylesford Bulls      | 22 | 17 | 0 | 5  | 440 | 283 | 157  | 34  | 0      |
| Hove                 | 22 | 16 | 1 | 5  | 662 | 300 | 362  | 33  | 0      |
| Old Reigatians       | 22 | 17 | 0 | 5  | 480 | 276 | 204  | 32  | -2     |
| Warlingham           | 22 | 14 | 0 | 8  | 543 | 341 | 202  | 28  | 0      |
| Sevenoaks            | 22 | 9  | 2 | 11 | 395 | 457 | -62  | 20  | 0      |
| Deal & Betcheshanger | 22 | 9  | 2 | 11 | 358 | 467 | -109 | 20  | 0      |
| Purley John Fisher   | 22 | 8  | 0 | 14 | 370 | 540 | -170 | 16  | 0      |
| Lewes                | 22 | 6  | 0 | 16 | 317 | 476 | -159 | 12  | 0      |
| Old Dunstonians      | 22 | 5  | 0 | 17 | 276 | 643 | -367 | 10  | 0      |
| Eastbourne           | 22 | 6  | 1 | 15 | 280 | 723 | -443 | 9   | -4     |
| Lordswood            | 22 | 3  | 0 | 19 | 142 | 431 | -289 | 6   | 0      |

The season started inauspiciously with the departure of coach Dave Wiggins. South African Stephan Theron stepped into the breach but despite enjoying a successful series of pre season fixtures and early league victories over Aylesford and Old Elthamians he stepped down in October. New Zealander Khan Greig then became our third coach in as many months.

The contribution of the South African trio of Mervin Manus, Alrich Muller and Jonathan Schalkwyk cannot be underestimated and the quality of performance of the centre partnership of Jonathan and Alrich was arguably the best that has been seen at Park Lane. However backs can only flourish if they have the ball and to this end they were appreciative of the efforts of the forwards. In the front row Luke Martin, a Swazi international, Marc "Jacko" Jackson, part of a quartet of former housemates at Exeter University and Aaron Simmons were the mainstay of the front row before Pete Slaughter was able to return from injury toward the end of the season and bolster the scrum. Khan Greig added considerable strength and ballast to the second row where Mark Reid again proved the epitome of consistency. Charlie Merry also featured in "the row" and made some impressive impact performances from the substitutes bench, notably against Purley John Fisher and Mark Chesterton demonstrated his quality and versatility with eye catching performances in the second row and in his preferred position in the back row.

The back row continued to be an area of strength with Captain Tyrone Long regularly putting in match winning performances. He was ably supported by Mark Chesterton, James Podbury, Gary Baker and Simon Reid.

We welcomed Phil Williams formerly of Exeter and Worthing at scrum half. Phil demonstrated how to boss the forwards and to make best of the platform they provided. Injuries limited the number of games Phil could play but Richard O'Hanlon proved an able deputy. The number 10 shirt was worn by Jimmy Espin, Tom Collard and latterly by Mervin Manus. The centre partnership has already been commented upon. On the wings the remaining Exeter contingent of Micky Ellis and Alex Forsyth played regularly and relished the space and opportunities created inside. David O'Hanlon continued to show what a talented and versatile footballer he is by making contributions in the centre and on the wing as well as at full back.

The performances over the course of the season were undoubtedly a considerable improvement on last year. We beat every other side in the league, had the second best defensive record in the league and would have finished second irrespective of the Lordswood issue but for an administrative error in playing an unregistered player (hopefully lessons learned). However as a reflection of the season it might be argued that we regularly played well for 60 minutes but infrequently played well for 80 minutes.

It was no surprise that Jonathan Schalkwyk won player of the year, though the performances of Mark Chesterton pushed him close. Most improved player of the year went to Alex Forsyth.

The AXV under the skilful guidance of Stuart Mills enjoyed another successful season and secured promotion for the second successive year. They finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the league and provided the only significant opposition to runaway league winners Old Wimbledonians.

Over Christmas and Easter the under 21s competed with Dorking, Old Alleynians and Sutton and Epsom. The undoubted highlight was a very physical encounter with Dorking which finished 14 points each as we came back from 14 points to nil. We regard this competition and the players that are associated with it as extremely important if we are to develop our home grown player base.

It is disappointing to report that despite having a potentially talented 7s side we failed to enter any 7s competitions.

After many years of planning and a number of applications to the local planning authority Peter Harrison cut the first sod for the development of the new Club-house on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2008. Work commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and it is hoped that the building will be completed in the New Year. Peter Harrison has also authorised work to be undertaken to level the 1<sup>st</sup> team pitch. Old Reigatians are one of only 5 Surrey Clubs to own their own land free from mortgage. To add to this a contribution of £850,000 from the National Sports Foundation and a contribution of in excess of £1,000,000 from the Peter Harrison Foundation places the Club in an enviable situation for the future. We should be enormously appreciative of the perspicacity and far sighted attitude of the founding members of the club and of the generosity of the Peter Harrison Foundation in enabling the dream of the new club-house finally to come to fruition.

The new club-house presents a multitude of challenges for the club and the management of the club. The role of the committee can no longer be regarded as a hobby, there is a business to be run and we will be judged upon our success and/or failure in years to come. The selection of key personnel within the club-house - Facilities Manager and Bar, Kitchen and Gym managers is vital to the long term stability of the club. The process is ongoing and the challenge is to ensure that all is in place by the time the facility opens.

The formation and the success of the Minis and Juniors Committee under the Chairmanship of Hugh Serjeant is indicative of the direction that the club wishes to go with groups of sub committees reporting back to the Executive Committee. It is gratifying to report that during the course of the season we have increased the number of volunteers helping at the club dramatically and the individual efforts of all of these volunteers is greatly appreciated. A "thank you" event for volunteers is planned for the end of June 2009 and we are grateful to the 150 Club for supporting this initiative.

On the social side a number of social events took place during the year, the Ball organised by Mandy Todd and her enthusiastic team was the undoubted highlight. Bruce Chapman organised regular pre league game lunches and orchestrated a B1 XV reunion which saw a return to ORs colours for many of the Paul Heber vintage; and an apparent enthusiasm to arrange a similar get-together this year.

We are, of course, hugely appreciative of our sponsors and thank Savills, SOS, Endenbrook and Bond Davison for their continued and valued support.

Reigate Priory Athletic Club continues to use our facilities and their membership continues to increase and the club to flourish. In addition our facilities are used regularly by Reigate Priory Football Club and Reigate Priory Cricket Club.

Finally, Sue Colquhoun retires as Treasurer after 4 years in this crucial role and a similar period as Assistant Treasurer and David Payton retires from the role of Fixture Secretary after a remarkable 16 years in that position. We owe them both enormous gratitude and appreciation for their unstinting efforts on behalf of the club.

With regret I have to report the passing of 4 great supporters of Old Reigatians RFC who died during the course of the year. Jenny Jinks, Pat Pratt and Clive Sassarath died after long illnesses and Patrick Evans died following a skiing accident. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and friends at this difficult time.

*David Forsyth* - Hon Secretary

### **1<sup>st</sup> XV – Tyrone Long**

The season started with huge optimism and with many new team players that added to our depth. We however had a few issues around coaching as David Wiggins moved on and when we found a new coach in Stephen Theron things looked good at first but many players felt that for technical reasons it would be better to let him go.

In the first few warm up games we obtained some great results and the squad played some great rugby on the hard ground. The first few league matches however did not start as well as we expected maybe due to the fact that we had not come up against many teams in our new league London 3SE. We won the first 3 league games but did not play the standard of rugby we had achieved pre-season and only managed narrow victories.

From there on our season seemed to pick up and we started playing the type of running rugby the squad love playing. We won the following 7 league matches before Christmas, more comfortably bar 1 or 2 close matches. The only match we lost during this period was to Tottonians in the Cup in a high scoring match. We then lost our first league match to a well drilled Hove side in the first return fixture of the season. We responded well to the loss and the following week played the eagerly awaited return fixture against Warlingham, which we won relatively comfortably along with the following match against PJF.

Next up was the match against the front runners Old Elthamians losing 24-14 and a much closer match than the score line suggests. The only other match which was a big hiccup in our campaign for promotion was the narrow 10-8 loss to Sevenoaks, where nothing seemed to go to plan on the day.

From there on in our destiny was in our own hands and we needed to win every one of the remaining 4 league matches in order to finish in 2<sup>nd</sup> place for a playoff spot. We managed 3 wins from the last 4, losing only to a very good Aylesford Bulls side 20-14 in a very hard fought encounter. So promotion was not meant to be this season.

The last game of the season we played Sutton and Epsom in the semi-final of the Surrey Cup. They were two leagues higher than we were and to everyone's amazement were tied 10-10 at half time. Midway through the second half they were 13-10 up and got an intercept try which broke our defence before they ran in a further two tries to finish on 34-10. It gave everyone great comfort that maybe we could have survived a league higher so next season we will learn from our mistakes and everyone believes with hard work, dedication and enjoyment we will achieve our goal.

On the whole it was an extremely successful season and it will be sad to see a few players leaving, with Jonathan in particular, who is an awesome player and one of the nicest people you are likely to meet. The whole squad that played gave everything and we learnt that by playing together we can achieve our goal in progressing up the leagues.

Special mention has to go to Alan Reid and Chris Hammond who helped coach us through the season and keep us inspired to play winning rugby. There is a real buzz around Old Reigatians at the moment with the building of our new clubhouse and I am sure we will attract many new players in the new season. With new players, new coach and dedication I believe we can pick up

where we left off and play some inspiring rugby, achieve our goals, make new friends and propel Reigatians forward as a real force in the South East.

### ***A XV Captain: Stuart Mills - Manager: Chris Morgan***

The A XV had laid down their gauntlet to the teams in the Surrey Alliance league, from the back of a momentous 2007/2008 season which saw Chris Morgan's swansong construct an incredible A XV of a standard not seen at the club for many a year. They won 17 games on the bounce and had formed a closely knit team who would fight for a place in the 22 man squad.

After Chris Morgan, in front of a crowd of some several hundred at a Twickenham dinner, collected his team's battle honours, promotion into a higher league was not only deserved but long awaited for the boys of the Champagne 2s.

The captaincy passed to the player of the season, ex-Reigate Grammar boy and the smooth operator himself, Stuart Mills. As September dawned and the season began the boys returned back, from near and far they came, some fit and some a little bit fatter from a big summer over the BBQ and on the beers. Everyone from the previous season made themselves available, with the mothers' favourite Matt "Teaser" Millbank playing his 125<sup>th</sup> season at the club. Anticipation and anxiety seemed to be the feelings at the forefront of many people's minds, but this was not necessary as their first opponent of the season, Mayfair Occasionals came to Park Lane, an outstanding performance resulted in an Old Reigatians 79-10 win. Then came along a tougher fixture against Kingston, who were dispatched with a comfortable 19-0 win, and then followed London Irish who were stylishly beaten 64-10. The season had got off to a great start, with players such as Dave Fry, Andrew Diggles, Steve Peck, Dave Luson, to name a few, playing brilliant hard hitting rugby to win by such big score lines.

Of course Old Reigatians were magnanimous in victory, as the momentum of victory gathered so did the quality of play and the recruitment of new players, such as Peter "The Bus" Sellick, Chris James and Oli Vaughan who all played their hearts out on the field week in, week out.

The side suffered the biggest shock of the season against Old Wimbledonians. Having turned up with far too much confidence and lack lustre, on a blistering day in the English sun, the Old Reigatians were quickly on the back foot. Fielding a weaker than normal squad, the visiting Reigatian side conceded early doors and the floodgates never closed, though they did put together some good phases together the score ended at 54-0. Despite the disappointing loss the team rebounded with great effect and played some lovely fluent rugby, the backs supported by a strong forwards pack, Dave Fry had an exceptional season making the hard yards on the field.

As the season wore on the 2<sup>nd</sup> XV had blown all their opposition off the park, sitting in 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the league with one loss to Old Wimbledonians. When the return fixture arrived, our boys were confident that with the strong squad which had amassed we could beat what was to be said a Springbok XV. A crowd of some several hundred massed at Park Lane to watch the match, with the score at 70 minutes being 10-10. Unfortunately in the dying minutes a couple of inopportune breaks allowed the visiting Springboks to touch down twice and after a long game it ended in a 13-20 loss. The disappointment was huge yet the Old Reigatians took great solace in their performance with supporters clearly aware that the rugby ORs played was far superior and the side really matched the opposition in every phase of the match.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> XV finished the season having scored 428 points and only conceded 223, with automatic promotion into the Surrey John O'Neill premier league. Next year there are going to be some tough fixtures, playing against local rivals Dorking 2s and Chobham 2s, but with the momentum from the last two seasons, no fear, once again I have every confidence the boys can go on to achieve big things.

I urge anyone to get involved in this fantastic team and play exciting quick rugby with a great set of blokes.

### ***Extra A XV – Stuart Ware***

The 2008/09 season saw the re-emergence of the Extra A XV once again seeing 3 XVs fielded by ORRFC on occasions through the season. The squad saw many youth players from the club making appearances for the senior team set up, and it is fair to say that without the continued commitment of these players the team would have not had any fulfilled fixtures during the season – for that alone they should all be heartily congratulated. The balance of the squad saw a mixture of senior players as well as several Nondes – providing many years of ‘experience’ to the younger players.....if not too much pace. Once the team completed early fixtures this saw the arrival of further youth and school players, new recruits as well as returning ‘retired’ members of the club tempted back to the turf.

The beginning of the season saw back to back drawn fixtures, no disgrace for a squad in its infancy – whilst also meaning a 100% undefeated record. Latter games saw traded fixtures with the A XV with victories and defeats in equal measure. Whilst it was disappointing not to have fulfilled all the fixtures hoped at the beginning of the season the fact that a competitive side emerged in its first year I hope has laid the foundations for continued progress and success in years to come.

In the 2009/10 season the Extra A XV will be lead by James Snelling and I am sure the core of the current squad combined with new recruits will provide him with a competitive team and a great squad ethic. I wish James, the Extra A's and all the teams fielded by ORs in the 2009/10 season continued success and am sure they will ensure that Park Lane becomes a fortress to all comers.

### ***Under 21s – Alex Forsyth***

For the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year since its creation, Old Reigatians under 21's competed in the Surrey Cup Competition hoping to recapture the success of 2005/6 where we won the competition. This year Reigatians were drawn in a group with Dorking, Sutton & Epsom and Old Alleynians. First up was Dorking at Park Lane on Christmas Eve. The appeal of this old rivalry saw the sidelines packed with supporters from both sides in anticipation of a ferocious game. They were not to be disappointed as both sides threw everything at each other early on. A well drilled Dorking side however started to impose themselves on the game more and more and by half time had taken a 0-14 lead. The second half started much the same as the first with Dorking having the better territory and possession, however the Reigatians defence stood strong and a brilliant individual try from fly-half Mike Canty seemed to give OR's the belief they needed . Soon after this Mike Canty added and converted his second of the game and a great comeback saw honours end even at 14-14. Man of the Match went to Oliver Serginson who really led from the front with some fierce tackling in defence and the team deserve great credit for the way they defended against a strong Dorking side.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> group game was away against Old Alleynians on 27<sup>th</sup> December. Unfortunately because of the time of year there were many players unavailable, and last minute dropouts meant that we were only able to field 14 players. Credit to those who did play and gave it their all against a strong Alleynians side (eventual winners) but unfortunately it was not enough and OA's ran out comfortable winners.

The final group game was at home to Sutton & Epsom just before Easter. Reigatians started strongly and early pressure was rewarded with tries from first Ewan Black and then Tom Peddie. Jack Wheeler converted one of these after previous failures from 3 others. Unfortunately OR's could sustain this pressure and injuries to players in key positions (Fly-half and Centre) let S&E back into the game and we went into the break trailing 12-14. 2 early tries at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half all but killed off the game as a contest but OR's showed great spirit and determination to end the game well, resulting in Ed Forsyth going over in the corner to make the final score 17-28. Were it not for missed kicks (13 points in total) things could have been very different.

That result meant a trip to Chobham for the semi-final of the plate competition. This was again a feisty affair which saw great defensive efforts from both sides; however Reigatians drew first blood when Seb DuJardin went over for the first try of the game. Chobham drew back level soon after with a try of their own but another flowing Reigatians move saw full-back James Hudson cut a brilliant line to take Reigatians in at the break 7-10 to the good. Unfortunately with both conversions missed all it took was an early penalty at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half to draw Chobham back level and that is exactly what they did. With time running out, it seemed that OR's may scrape through to the final on tries scored, but some poor handling errors gave Chobham

the possession the required late on in the game and with less than 5 minutes to go, they breached the strong OR's' defence. The game ended in a disappointing 17-10 defeat, but there were many positives to take out of all the results. Many of this years squad will still be eligible to play in next year's competition, and with a bit more structure and game planning, Reigatians Under 21's will be a real force to be reckoned with in years to come. For what some regard as a 'scratch' side with little training together, the squad performed very well against sides that have been playing together for years, and we hope to try address this problem in the years to come.

This years squad comprised of players from Universities all over the country including; Exeter, Loughborough, Sheffield, Nottingham and York (to name but a few) and with the invaluable contribution from schools such as Reigate Grammar and St Bedes, the future of not only the Under 21's but also the more senior sides looks very bright. Special mention must go to both James Lindley and Jack Wheeler who as captain and vice-captain respectively led the side very well as well as some of the Under 17's and 18's who stepped up to Under 21 level without any problems and were a real benefit to have in our side. The Player of the Season Award went to Oliver Serginson who barely missed a tackle and carried well, however he was pushed very close by Will Godwin who was outstanding in all the games he played.

### ***Under 18's***

With the numbers of U18's not quite sufficient for a team we were reliant on the 17's to make up the squad which they did admirably. We had a good warm up friendly against Raynes Park, who were in our league, and won comfortably.

In the run up to the league season a number of teams withdrew and unfortunately the division reduced from 10 to 6 teams. Our only home game of the season was against Esher B it quickly was apparent that OR's were too strong for Esher. All the forwards worked well as a unit and when the ball went to the backs they were able to move it quickly down the line for some good scores.

Eventually OR's ran out 44 - 10 winners.

Old Whitgiftians were a different proposition, they were extremely well organised and had us on the back foot for virtually all of the first half scoring 2 converted tries. In the second half OR's pushed and were for long periods having the better of the possession, however indiscipline cost us two penalties to wrap up the game at 20 - 0.

Raynes Park was forfeited as we could not field a team with the 17's having a match that day, very annoying as we had given them a good beating in the pre-season. Haslemere forfeited as they could not field a team, I'm glad it happens to others; at least it saved us a 80 mile round trip!

So to the final match against Old Alleynians; we caught completely cold and were down 4 converted tries in the first 20 minutes. The guys never gave up and started to fight back and got 2 tries either side of half time. As the second half wore on OA's were able to bring on a number of subs which brought a fresh impetus to their game eventually winning 45 -10.

It was very pleasing to see the guys never give up attitude and they kept going to the final whistle.

Through the season the whole team made improvements in their performances and a special thanks must go to Euan Grimstone, the coach.

We now look forward to seeing many of these players progress into the Senior sides and playing for the Under 21s next season.

### ***Honours***

|                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Most Valuable Forward      | <b><i>Jon Chitty</i></b>        |
| Most Valuable Back         | <b><i>Seb Dujardin</i></b>      |
| Clubman of the Year        | <b><i>Nathan Jones</i></b>      |
| Most Improved Player       | <b><i>Martin Minear</i></b>     |
| Coaches Player of the Year | <b><i>Stewart Colquhoun</i></b> |

## ***Under 17's – Paul Dungate***

### ***Players***

Whilst various injuries laid low several players for some lengthy spells, the active numbers of the U17's squad stayed between 23 and 25 for the season. This included various newcomers, adding to the strength and guile of an already above average team.

Like last season, whilst the hard core of the squad are RGS boys who play for the senior Reigate Grammar School teams, there are a significant number of players from elsewhere. There is an excellent team/squad ethic, strong integration and the whole squad mix happily and well together, having gelled as a single unit with no cliques. The positional balance of the squad is good, many players being able to slot well into other positions if required.

### ***Coaches and Management***

The duties between coaching and management were at the start of the season initially split with Phil Smith continuing to be the Head Coach, assisted (especially with regards to forward play) by Jonathan Burbidge. Unfortunately for the lads but good for him, Jonathan left around the turn of year to progress a new career near Chicago in the USA. Jan Diedericks, a first team prop, stepped in to help with a few training sessions. Both training sessions and match days' business was all conducted in the right spirit and frame of mind, depending on the circumstances.

As regards administration and management, the tasks were apportioned in the same manner as the previous season between a team of four, being Paul Dungate (match reports, management reports, general administration), Paul Godwin (squad communication and arrangements - an awkward task at the best of times), Roger Addison (match day formalities and results submissions) and Mark Eley (a strategic view and occasional shirt cleaning services – although it helps to not leave them a the Clubhouse after a match).

The coaches and management worked well together, allowing the boys to concentrate on their matches. All are CRB cleared. It is likely that this set-up will continue into next season.

Thanks also go to Kay Wheeler for her gratuitous unstinting first aid assistance.



Photo courtesy of Ed Wheeler

### ***Matches and Team/Squad Performances***

This squad had been promoted twice as champions at U15 and U16 level, having only lost one match of all descriptions in the two years (and that was the day after half of them had completed an overnight Duke of Edinburgh trek). There was a little

trepidation but generally confidence that the squad would still progress as even League 2 seemed unlikely to be their peer level; this is a squad that has been destined to go up through the League each year since they started at U15's.

An early season warm-up session was held with Hove as a pre-cursor to League matches but they were unfortunately delayed until later in the season.

The squad knows how to play entertaining, intelligent and winning rugby, including showing the spirit to dig deep and fight hard when under pressure. Unfortunately, due to weather and pitch conditions and various teams being unable to muster match teams, there were not as many matches played as everyone would have wished.

The first match against and at Chipstead on 12 October 2008 was won 22 -10. A friendly was arranged against Old Rutlishians, a League 1 side. Whilst it was lost 22 – 19, with only 14 players (13 for last 5 mins) against 15, the simple fact that quite a few players were missing and that everyone treated it as a fun training game (judged by the fact that few played in their proper positions) meant that this turned out to be probably the most enjoyable match of the season. Some of the moves were terrific.

With League matches being cancelled before Christmas, on 21 December the U17's entertained Longlevens RFC from Gloucester in a return of their tour match from March at Gloucester. In another highly enjoyable game the U17's ran out 32 – 12 worthy winners. The Longlevens players stayed overnight with many OR's players and their behaviour was exemplary and good friends were made.

January and most of February was a weather wipe-out, although the U17's were able to play a League match at London Irish. Another good performance and a 28 – 10 victory ensued. In March the next League game was home to Chobham and the winning streak continued with a comfortable 25 – 0 victory.

The final match of only six in the entire season was a home victory of 31 -10 against Leatherhead & Effingham.

Consequently, the Club should be proud of the U17's not only the winning of League 2 undefeated, but that this continued the winning streak over the last three years. To get this into perspective, over the three years about 30 matches have been played with only the two losses, the reasons for which have been outlined. It is not only this continuing record but also the way and the spirit in which the U17's play the game. They are hard but always fair and conduct themselves commendably with the opposition both during and after games.

The statistics for this season are six played (League 2 – five games, Club friendlies – one) and two 40 – 0 awards for no-show opposition. In the matches played the total points scored were a considerable 157 with only 62 against. This includes full squad rotation as several players picked up injuries along the way as well as being unavailable because of competing School events.

All matches were well supported by parents. Opposition coaches often led the praise of the team's ethic and certain outstanding individuals in the team.

#### **Honours**

Player of the Year ***Will Sharp (players confidential vote)***

Most Valuable ***Matt Dinnage***

Most Valuable ***Hamish Elsey***

Clubmen ***George Wheeler and Will Godwin***

In addition, too many of the players to mention were in demand for U18 games, and even those who are old enough, for the occasional U21 game. This shows the level of dedication to the Club by this group of individuals and how much they enjoy rugby generally and with each other.

George Wheeler (Captain and hooker) continued to make the U17 Sussex team, Simon Dungate played for Surrey U17's and Will Sharp made the Surrey U19 7s squads, winning the National Under 19 County 7s.

### **Reports**

The U17's Team Page on the Club website shows a full report for every match. This allowed the local press to take those reports and abridge them for the Surrey Mirror and its associated publications. Additionally, one particular parent was always on hand to record action shots in most matches and some of these made the local press too. Thanks go to Ed Wheeler for making the U17's gallery on the website the best one there.

### **Generally**

The Club should be proud of this group of players both for what they do on the pitch and off it. Many of them were waiters at the Club's ball; one has started his coaching badges and has helped out at lower age groups.

The management think they will more than hold their own in League 1 U18's next season, although winning a fourth straight title in a row will be an extremely tall order but must be achievable. Much will depend on any drop-outs through other matters, such as injuries, hard School senior matches less than 24 hours before, A level School work activities etc. The U17's of this season will approach their U18 season with a steely glare and the management know they will put their heart and soul into every match.

### **Under 16's**

A year of improved confidence and strength

The year started off a bit like last year with lack of confidence and no consistent coaching. However, once the coaching was sorted with Simon Walsh agreeing to take this on, things started to improve. We also gained some new players who have been a big bonus to the team this year. With the consistent coaching and growth in confidence the team have developed in to a well-focused squad who are keen to win. Training is now seen, as an important part of the game. Looking forward, the squad is keen to take on extra training sessions in the new season to retain this form.

However, it still took until the return match in December against Longlevens to get back in to the form the squad had found towards the latter end of the last season. Prior to this they lost a couple of friendlies and the first two league matches, though the league match against Cobham was through no fault of their own! Once they started on their round of wins, these did not stop: leading to seven in a row of both friendlies and league matches. All of these were hard fought matches, and not in the best of conditions. The squad have retained their position in the league contesting right to the end their place at third and second position in the league and therefore the possibility of promotion. However, promotion has not happened this season but with the strength and team spirit that the squad have developed this season, they have a strong chance of this in the next season.

The team also sent a squad to the Weybridge Vandals Sevens Tournament, which they had not played before. Their strong play and good tackling put them in to the finals as they won their section on a points basis. This meant playing Chipstead and Effingham, with predictable results!!

Much of this strength and improvement has been due to the strong coaching they have received from Simon Walsh, as well as Mark Reid, the extra sessions from Tim Button and of course the parents who are always there to help. Thanks should go to all the parents who attend the matches and training sessions with a very special thank you to our team photographer, Rick Carter.

We look forward to an even better year next season and hopefully will have a more focused start to the season.

### **Playing record**

Played - 11, won 7, lost 4  
Points for - 204 against - 192

### **Honours**

|                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Squad Player of the Year | <b>Will Hughes (Captain)</b> |
| Most Improved Forward    | <b>Julian Landauer</b>       |
| Most Improved Back       | <b>Kier Jobling</b>          |
| Clubman of the Year      | <b>Ben Carter</b>            |

### **Under 15's**

For the third season running we played in league 2 and tried hard to improve on 4<sup>th</sup> place achieved at U14 level. League 2 is the biggest of the four with eleven teams so we looked forward to ten league fixtures. With the core of the squad remaining from U14 we were pleased to welcome Jack Snaith who made an immediate impact at prop and we were fortunate also to welcome back Jordan Poultney, Josh McKeachie and Billy McLaren all returning after self-imposed exile. Initially we worked hard on fitness and skills by running some gruelling sessions on the hill in Priory Park and this effort paid off as the season progressed.

Following friendlies with Horsham and Winchester (Hampshire 1 Champions) our first league match was against old rivals KCS. Having never beaten them it was gratifying to record a well-earned 17-0 victory with a great display of controlled attacking rugby. Newly promoted Wimbledon came to Park Lane in November and were despatched 24-5. However, progress was halted in the wind, rain and cold by a big Weybridge Vandals side gunning for promotion. Although we finished the stronger we sustained injuries to key forwards and went down fighting 15-22.

The fourth league match was not played for another ten weeks due to disruption caused by adverse weather conditions and the Christmas / New Year break. By 8<sup>th</sup> February the snow had melted and we travelled to Esher to play a well-drilled team in the sun but on a pitch virtually under water. Although the conditions did not suit us, the boys would be the first to admit that they didn't do themselves any justice by losing composure and the match 10-31.

Following a one week break to re-group and with a playing record standing at won two, lost two we embarked on a four week campaign that saw us record four thumping victories over Farnham 31-0, Camberley 50-7, Warlingham 38-5 and Sutton & Epsom B 20-12.

A depleted team played against a well organised Chobham side at the end of March and were unable to avert defeat by 7-22. However, normal service was resumed in a thrilling final match against Effingham that the visitors were desperate to win to guarantee league 2 survival. Effingham threw everything they had at us but we defended bravely and, at two tries apiece, the difference between the sides boiled down to accurate goal-kicking with OR's securing a well-deserved 15-10 victory.

The final league statistics read played 10, won 7, lost 3, for 227, against 114. We scored 35 tries and conceded 19. We beat all the teams below us and only lost to Esher, Vandals and Chobham who battled it out for promotion.

The side, led from the front once again by the abrasive Sean Dayman, can be proud of a successful season in which they played some exciting rugby. With a smaller pack than most we struggled in the line out sometimes but probably won more ball than we should have due to the accurate throwing of hookers Chris Kennedy and Ryan Smith. However, we held our own in the scrums and often bossed the breakdown at both ruck and maul. The team's style is to play fast, expansive attacking rugby and they are at their most dangerous when attacking from deep. Many tries have been scored through turnover ball and through fielding the aimless kick ahead which has been run back with interest.

### **Honours**

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Most improved forward | <b>Tom Ward</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------|

Most improved back            ***Dominic Smith***  
Clubman of the year         ***Billy McLaren***  
Player of the year            ***Will Todd***

The squad have been lucky to have a team of five, pretending to be coaches, teaching them the tricks of the trade. Ted Kennedy has once again coached the front row in the dark arts, Simon Todd has looked after the second row with Sean Talbot (still playing, so it is said) taking the back row. Meanwhile Danny Haine and Andrew Smith have persevered with the backs. A big thank you to Gary Stehrenberger for managing the team behind the scenes and dealing with mounds of admin. Finally a special thank you to physio Dona McNiven for all the running repairs to both players and coaches and in particular for personal best performances at Sutton & Epsom and Effingham where the attrition rates were particularly high.

### ***Under 14's***

The OR Under 14s started out in Surrey 1 with a mixture of hopes, expectations and fears.

The management team had also changed slightly as had the approach to training and games. It was decided that a tougher more hard-nosed approach was required for Division 1 rugby. The boys responded well to this and worked hard in all sessions. A mid table position and Division 1 consolidation was a reasonable reward for the efforts of all concerned, and an outcome one would probably have accepted if offered at the start of the season! Winning the Weybridge Sevens, and a respectable third place in the Guildford 10s was a well-deserved bit of icing on the cake.



*Photo of 10s squad at Guildford RFC by Ralph Travers*

There had been some player losses from the previous season as players moved to different schools. There were also some gains, with a number of the newer players forcing their way into the team and a growing grammar school contingent providing some much needed depth to the squad. Depth remained an issue, however, particularly in the more pivotal positions of the team.

The ORs had some stability in the vital middle section of the team (back row, half backs, and centres). The back row functioned well throughout. Ryan Travers, an inspirational captain, and Otto Tinn Williams performed consistently well at 8 and 7 and the combination was at its best when completed by the dynamic Jamie Russell at blind side.

Scrum half started as a problem position with Ollie Pease eventually taking the role in time for the league season. When Pease was injured against Richmond Jonny Sampson took over and held the position. Both gave good service to Kern Bush-Nelson at fly half, whose passing game and centre Olly Hutson's fine running proved complementary skills. Josh Hampson, when not injured or pressed into emergency full back duty, provided the ideal link (at inside centre) to free up Hutson to terrorise

opposing defences. All three of these midfield backs kicked some useful goals – eventually Hutson’s range and improved consistency/confidence enabled him to take over the job full time.

A number of players played in the back three as form and fortunes fluctuated. Kieran Choate gave his usual 100% whether at wing or centre; Joe Sheldrick improved greatly as both an attacking and defensive full back after a brief spell on the wing. Nick Allen and Harry Dickens both showed attacking potential, respectively starting and ending the league campaign with tries. Jonah Bennett Walsh, George Marguet Pew and several players mentioned elsewhere made contributions on the wing when required.

The front 5 of the scrum was an area greatly improved from the previous season. Morgan, Grant and Plowman (sounds like a firm of accountants!) may have appeared an unlikely front row to start the league season but it rarely went backwards. Rory Morgan showed his versatility by playing in the backs on occasions; Harry Plowman was an excellent line out thrower who did well at both hooker and prop, and Joel Grant provided some useful touches in the loose. Aedan Trozado came back from injury with some explosive spells, particularly off the bench, and James Burrows proved a solid prop and effective ball carrier on his return from boarding school. Seb Noller gave sterling service whenever called upon

The most regular second row pairing was Finn McLoughlin and George Mullen, who took on the role of enforcers and aggressive ball carriers. Refinements to both their games will come with experience. Max Baart also contributed well with his athletic style of second row play, as did Dougie Fraser.

There were other squad members whose opportunities were limited, although all made contributions in their own way and had their moments in some of the friendlies, among them: Fraser Pickin, Jack Hyde, Josh Brown, William Dunstan, Benedict Landauer and Aleks Michlowski.

A 50% record of 4 wins, 1 draw and 4 losses was a fair reflection of the league season. Two games (Haslemere, Battersea) were won comfortably and in some style. Two wins (Rosslyn Park, Chobham) were quite hard fought, where opposition pressure forced OR errors for large parts of the game. The draw (Dorking) and two narrow defeats (Cobham, Richmond) were all games OR could have won but came up just short, possibly due to lack of experience at the level. The London Irish and Reeds games were lost heavily although it was only in the latter where heads dropped temporarily. Unfortunately the squad was at its most depleted for the two toughest games.

The whole group has learned much from the season. The OR’s can have confidence that they are a talented side that’s capable of scoring tries from all parts of the field and defending resolutely when required. The increased intensity of the Division 1 was not the shock it might have been. What the boys now needed is to kick on even further: deal better with the good sides when under pressure and create more pressure of their own. They can look forward to next season with some confidence.

All of this requires effort, patience and plenty of practice – roll on August training and 2009/2010!

#### **Honours**

|                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Most Improved Forward | <b><i>Finn McLaughlan</i></b> |
| Most Improved Back    | <b><i>Joe Sheldrick</i></b>   |
| Clubman of the year   | <b><i>Kieran Choate</i></b>   |
| Player of the Year    | <b><i>Ryan Travers</i></b>    |



*Photo of the winners at Vandal 7s by Ralph Travers*

### ***Under 13's Derek Holme***

Our first season in the Surrey League (3). Our first season playing on a full size pitch. Our first season playing 25 mins each way. Our first season where we could hand-off. Fitness and stamina were to be key. After a couple of friendlies against Caterham we headed into our first League Match. We won - we were top of the league!

Unfortunately only one way to go from there! Despite a great team morale, a solid pack up front, and some very able backs, we just could not convert possession and territory into tries. In fact this season we came away with more disallowed tries, dropped over the line, held-up and thought to be held-up, than actual tries themselves.

One of our highlights was the day with the Wasps, where the lads and families had a great day out, with the squad getting some very useful training, just a shame we left it so late in the season.

Throughout the squad itself we have seen boys growing into young men, both physically and mentally, facing our many defeats with a mature and positive attitude. We look forward to bringing all we have learned this season into a more productive one next season. It's been tough but enjoyable.

Well done to the whole squad, new and old, fit and injured. Chris Marks, Ciaran Ryan, Ryan McLean, Oliver Kerr, Harry Galliano, Hugo Evans, Philip Pangalos, Robert Jamieson, Roland Carter, Nick Bowkett, Alex Salmon, James Mc Niven, Joseph Meakin, Jacob Holme, Ben Smith, Shane Dayman, Will Appleyard, George Mason, Dan Girdler, Jamie Hannigan, Dominic Turner, Connor Richardson, Bertie Edwards, Michael Sheldrake, Jack Ball, Michael Preston, Harry Kernick, Kieran Hammond

#### ***Honours***

Player of the Season

***Chris Marks***

Most Improved Forward

***Joseph Meakin***

Most Improved Back

***George Mason***

Clubman Award

***Shane Dayman***



## **ORRFC MINI SECTION END OF SEASON REPORTS 2008-09**

### ***Under 12s - Gary Cann***

Finishing the 2007/8 season with 35 on the register meant the U12's needed to recruit players to ensure we had sufficient depth to mount a meaningful campaign this year. During the season the registered players increased to the mid 40's, however the number we could count on to turn up regularly for training and fixtures remained at 35; made up from a good spread of local schools including Reigate, RGS and St Bede's. With a plentiful supply of backs a deficit in size and weight meant that our forwards were limited in number resulting in a struggle to field consistent squads to form discrete A and B teams.

The move to 13 man rugby and additional rules changes were well prepared for by the season start. Coaching objectives were set and maintained throughout the season; to develop core skills, build team cohesion and play 13-man rugby in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Overall results for the season were credible despite the number of matches cancelled due to adverse weather. The season got off to a significant high in October with wins over Grasshoppers, Pulborough, Old Alleynians, Wimbledon and Farnham resulting in securing the Guildford Festival trophy, despite some challenging weather conditions. The win was made more significant through scoring 17 tries to none conceded, a result of some excellent team play and individual skill. In March the B squad / development players also gave an excellent account of themselves at the Mitcham B festival where they won 2 and lost 2. Other highlights included wins against Dorking (on their home turf!), Effingham & Leatherhead and Sutton & Epsom. The latter a very enjoyable win played at OR's, 15 a side on a full size pitch where it was clear our squad of mobile and skilled runners could rise to the opportunity for open style play afforded by the additional space.

The season concluded however with a disappointing performance at the Dorking A Festival where the team recorded no wins and no tries scored, although 2 games were only lost by a single try margin.

The coaching team was strengthened during the season with the addition of two former forwards; Kevin Richardson and Matt Crane with Allen Murrough joining the team in the new year. Our objective for next season is to get as many of our coaches to at least Level 1 as possible.

One of the highlights for the squad during the season was the attendance of a First XV player, lending his experience and help to a very productive coaching session. Whilst welcome it was felt that a single attendance in what is a very long season could be improved upon given the size of the senior squad.

We have been allocated League 3 for next season, which is generally accepted as being appropriate based on results against those teams to date. We will only be in a position to field one league team due to the lack of squad members, in particularly forwards. Our challenge is to be competitive whilst also providing an environment for the developing, non first team players, to feel included and see that there is a route to places in the first team squad.

## **Honours**

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Player's Player      | <b>Liam Jardine</b>     |
| Most Improved Player | <b>Tim Lafosse</b>      |
| Best Newcomer        | <b>John Boal</b>        |
| Sportsmanship        | <b>Joe Messe</b>        |
| Leadership           | <b>Harvey Boothroyd</b> |
| Coaches' Player      | <b>Liam Jardine</b>     |

## **Under 11s - Simon Peacock**

After initially struggling to come to terms with the introduction of two additional forwards and kicking, it was fair to say 2008/09 was another good and enjoyable season for the boys and they can be extremely proud of what they achieved. Not only did we see a big improvement in their individual skills, but more importantly both squads began to play more as a team and for each other, which is what rugby is all about and very encouraging for next season.

For the A side, every member of the squad can be pleased with their performance over the season and I can honestly say everyone made a positive contribution to the team. What was good to see was when the guys went out of the Surrey As on the lottery of a penalty kick shoot-out was how they all stuck together, no moaning, finger pointing or arguing. Great team spirit and maturity that bodes well for the new season.

We saw a massive improvement in the B side, which is a great credit to their hard work and perseverance but also to Clive and Ian, as well as Andrew, Robert and John (three very welcome additions to the coaching team). Under the excellent leadership of **Toby Jones**, the boys ended the season playing for each other and as a team. Notable victories were recorded against Warlingham, Chipstead and Mitcham, while being very competitive in all the Festivals. Also, against Dorking, a number of the players ended up playing for the A side and none looked out of their depth. With a larger than usual squad, the boys showed good maturity and did not show their natural frustration when not picked to play or were substituted in a match.

## **Honours**

Whilst every member of the squad had a good year, **William Shackel** deservedly won Player of the Year for the A side. Wills has consistently been our best forward for the last two seasons, and this year started putting in some big tackles, which really lifts the side. Wills very rarely misses a training session and always gives his all. Particular praise must also go to **Jack Baart** who played a key role throughout the season and is turning into a very fine player. Jack always tried his best in games and practice, while his work rate in matches was outstanding.

**Oliver Driscoll** won Player of the Year for the B side reflecting the immense improvement in his all round game. His decision making on when to kick, run or pass was spot on and he is another who has started to use the wide men more effectively. Most pleasing was the improvement in his tackling and despite taking a few knocks the difference this year is that he did not want to come off the pitch and got straight back into the fray. A strong contender was **Tobias Thorpe**. The big guy is a very important member of the team and when he plays well so does the team. Tobias will push for a place in the A side next year I'm sure.

**Marcus Hodgkinson** was voted the A side's Players' Player. Whenever Marcus has the ball everyone gets a little excited in anticipation of seeing him run pass the opposition. Nevertheless, in addition to being a very talented individual player, he is level headed and developing a good understanding of the game and when he has to pass, run or kick. Not only is Marcus an excellent balanced runner his tackling has improved and he is more than willing to get stuck in. **Ed Stephen** was the B side's Players' Player and it was nice to see his team mates recognising the massive improvement Ed has made this year. He has consistently tackled well and is now running straighter at the opposition, while his ball distribution benefited from a summer of touch rugby.

Most Improved Player deservedly went to **Ross Digby-Patel**. Ross stepped up from the B squad last year and took on his new role as Fly Half with huge enthusiasm. His commitment, concentration and tackling were excellent all year, while his skill

level has improved significantly, testament to his positive attitude and hard work. Other strong contenders were **Harry Powell, Robert Cheal, Ben Maslin** and **Ben Hoad**.

The boys remain an easy bunch to coach and all credit must go to them for their enthusiasm and dedication over the season. Many thanks must go to all my fellow coaches for their ongoing commitment and making the atmosphere at training very enjoyable for the kids. Special mention and thanks go to Jo Hodgkinson for taking on the role of manager and for all her hard work off the field. Jo has a difficult job and answers countless e-mails, so we are very grateful for all those that consistently offer to help with various duties in the kitchen and car parking, as well as supporting the coaches during the season. Finally, a thank you for all the parents who gave up their Sunday mornings and stood on the side lines in all sorts of weather to support their sons. I know it means a lot to them.

### ***Under 10s - Paul Walsh***

On behalf of all the coaches I would like to extend our sincere congratulations and gratitude to a group of young rugby players who have produced rugby of the highest standard this year at each squad level.

We are pleased that our squad has increased this year to approaching 50 players and we will be working hard next season to retain each and every player, by promoting hard work, courage, fair play and team spirit. We are proud that the U10s have shown these qualities in abundance this year.

We have enjoyed great success this year in the Surrey A, B & C Festivals, each squad achieving Semi Finals at their respective festivals. We have enjoyed other successes with our A Squad winning the Chipstead A Festival early in the season and our B Squad winning the plate at the Mitcham Development Festival. Although very proud of these successes we expect even better things from these players next year, as we know how much potential these boys have coming into the U11's next season.

Rugby is very much a team effort but in all teams there are those who excel that little bit more and bring something special to the cause.

Our Role of Honour this year is as follows:-

#### ***"The Lions": A Squad :***

Our cutting edge, our engine room and our passion to win is personified by Angus Dahl, our Player of the Year.

New to Old Reigatians with little competitive rugby experience, Tyler Meyer having improved all season from our Development Squad ended the season as a valued and integral part of the Lions and our Most Improved Player. By a very similar path, Max Coyle must be congratulated for his performances as he progressed from the development squad into the Lions. Max should be proud of his contribution this year.

A very special mention is also due of contributions from **George Head** and **Lucas Overtoom** who have performed consistently with purpose and skill and were merited candidates for the Player of the Year award this year . Great performance boys!

To all the lions, especially those not specifically mentioned, well done on a brilliant season and maybe that coveted prize of the Surrey A Festival win will be ours next season. Keep the faith gentlemen!

The Lions:

Toby Satchwell, Angus Dahl, Lucas Overtoom, Alex Skinner, Alex Chalder, George Head, Max Coyle, Tyler Meyer, Louie Bennett Walsh, Cameron Davis, Lawrence Pickings, Tom Riddick, Joseph Gregson, Olley Simms.

#### ***"The Tigers": B Squad :***

Our chief playmaker, tackler and try scorer, the Tigers' determination and competitiveness is personified by Henry McCann, our Player of the Year.

St John's Ambulance support will undoubtedly agree that Alex Paul has had an eventful first year in rugby! He certainly lacks nothing in courage or endeavour and we name him as our Most Improved Player. Remember Alex, Cheek to Cheek!

To the Tigers not mentioned in this year's role of honour, be proud of this year's achievements. This is truly a squad team and will be formidable opponents for any who challenge them. **Believe!**

The Tigers :

Max Oakley, George Colvin, Niam Walsh, James Ingram, Alistair Knight, Alex Edwards, Henry McCann, Joshua Bristow, Charlie Bennett, Isaac Hammerton, Wooster Bawden, Toby Chesser, Thomas Deeks.

**"The Cheetahs": C Squad :**

The maestro around the scrum and this year's player of the year is Zach Evans. A rocky start to the year, but Zach made a tremendous conclusion. Well done !

It was his first year in rugby but a steady and impressive progression throughout the season meant that the versatile and very talented Lewis Gregory is the Cheetah's Most Improved Player.

To the Cheetahs, we have to say that the progression throughout the year has been truly staggering. With fantastic guidance by Scott and Phil, these boys have shown their metal and we look forward to next season to see even greater things.

The Cheetahs :

Zach Evans, Connor Weaver, Alex Weiss, Charles Lee, Sammy Coulthard, Jordan West, Lewis Gregory, James Hadfield, Isaiah Richardson, Patrick Duke, Harry Finch, Gabs Orengeowalter, Harry Swan, Jo Wills, Samuel Pye.

We must say a grateful thank you to Scott Evans who will be stepping down to a younger age group next season. Scott's commitment to our coaching team has been fantastic. His enthusiasm and very positive approach has inspired these young players to achieve great things. He won't be a stranger to us, but our loss will be another squad's significant gain. Well done Scotty!

As a small Club we feel that our U10's punch way above their weight at all levels when we compare our resources with other clubs in Surrey. Much bigger clubs have always found this group of boys formidable opponents at every level and we are proud to say that our players have earned the respect of their contemporaries and carry a reputation that larger more prestigious clubs would envy.

The coaches are looking forward to the new season and we hope to build on the foundation of this year as we move to the U11s.

Well done boys

### ***Under 9s - Hugh Serjeant***

We U9's have been fortunate to win some silverware this season, but we are far more pleased that we have ended the season with 40 regular attendees which is what we started with in September. I hope they are at least as enthusiastic about their rugby now, as they were back then.

We struggled early-season with Festivals at both KCS (for the Tigers) and Guildfordians (for the Sharks and Wasps), straight after our Festival of Fun, showing that we hadn't quite found our feet in the new world of contact rugby. It was particularly pleasing, therefore, that when we travelled only a week later to the Chipstead A and the Wimbledon B Festivals we were runners-up in both. We now have a Plate won by the Sharks and a runners-up trophy won by the Tigers to put in the new clubhouse. The Tigers were actually unbeaten and didn't concede a try, but lost out on points-difference to Effingham & Leatherhead (as there was no final played) while the Sharks went down 2-1 to Guildfordians in the Wimbledon final. Adam was player of the Festival at Chipstead for excellent clearing-out while John and Angus also got special mention for strong tackling and running respectively.

The mid-season was interrupted by all that snow and several Sundays where sledges were more use than rugby boots, but when we returned in February the boys had not lost any of their verve. The Mitcham B Festival saw the Sharks in action again and while they were unfortunate not to qualify for the latter stages of the Cup they came up against our neighbours

Reigate RFC in the semi-final of the Plate. This was a nervous affair but great running by James Robinson, Joseph Ireland and Sebastian Paul ensured that we won not just the semi-final but the final too!

The Surrey B and C Festivals should have seen both the Sharks and Wasps in action in March but an administrative mix-up meant that the latter simply didn't take place. We are still to learn the ramifications of this but the Sharks at least did get to compete. Three victories and just one defeat to Reeds is a good record even if it meant that they did not progress to the quarter finals. William Driscoll and Josh Clark shone strongly in the sun. The Wasps subsequently competed in the Sutton & Epsom C festival. Despite putting together some attractive passages of play, they struggled against strong opposition.

The final competitive weekend of the season saw the Sharks and Wasps in action in our own U9 Festival at the same time that the Tigers were competing in the Surrey A Festival in Dorking. The Sharks came third in their group with two wins out of four. Strong running from George Cull and hard tackling from Josh Clark was evident throughout. The Wasps again came up against some strong squads but kept their heads up and showed how much they have improved with some good passages of play. Harry Robertson and Mark Pangalos in particular were ever-present in both defence and attack. We received many appreciative comments from our visitors and some of the credit for this must go to those on the cake stalls and barbeque as well as those in the control tent! Most importantly, I hope that the boys enjoyed the opportunity to play hosts to our visitors.

In Dorking, the Tigers won their group without conceding a try in the Surrey As but then drew the no.1 seed and winners of the last two years, Cobham, in the quarter-final. A close contest could have gone either way and despite playing above themselves the Tigers lost 2-1. Player of the tournament was Suanu with special mention also going to Harrison and Harry S.

To wrap up, we enjoyed an end-of-season fun and games and barbeque at the end of April and gave out Player of the Season, Most Improved Player and Sportsman of the Year awards for all three squads. The recipients of these were: Suanu, Troy and Fin for the Tigers; Josh C, Seb and John for the Sharks and Harry R, Hamish M and Josh P for the Wasps. All thoroughly deserved.

Thanks as always to all who have volunteered in any capacity this season. The club could not run without you.

## ***Under 8s***

The U8's have had a great 2008/2009 season. The season began with the introduction of streaming of the children for the first time. Registrations of 30+ children gave us the opportunity to try for 3 squads: the Jaguars, the Pumas and the Lions. This gave the children the chance to play with others of a similar ability. The very active parents of the U8's gave us 8-12 regular coaches.

Early October gave the squads their first chance to play in these groups with festivals at KCS, Guildford, Chipstead and Wimbledon. Whilst there were no festival wins, all teams showed that the summer break had not dulled their spirit and some great rugby was played. A spate of away fixtures in November and December gave the coaches a chance to see how our teams were progressing against other clubs. It was clear that they could hold their own against all of them, and even in 'friendly' mode gave few games away.

December and January were a little disjointed due to a number of cancelled sessions and some truly awful weather, but the children's love of rugby on a Sunday morning became clear when watching 25+ brave the sleet and driving rain to carry on playing! As we progressed through February and March two things created a focus for the age group; however, one, the end of season festival preparation, was clearly overshadowed by the second, the transition to 'proper' rugby! Tim Button, our Director of Rugby, spent a lot of time with the U8's towards the end of the season to help the children make this important move. The coaches all commented on the extreme improvement in concentration the children showed when these sessions began.

The end of season festivals provided a 'farewell to tags' for the teams, and whilst there was no silverware the improvement in both attitude and performance that the teams showed over the season did them credit! For the under 8's the season went on a little longer than others with a few of the children going on tour to the Vectis Festival on the Isle of Wight, prize giving in May and a summer contact session.

All in all everyone had a positive 2008-9 season, and I don't think we could overstate how much we are looking forward to adding some extra physicality to the game next season!

The U8's gave out a number of awards this season. Below is the full list:-

### ***Lions***

Most Improved Player      ***Dan Westley***  
Player of the season      ***Flint Kedgley and Jacob Newcombe***

### ***Pumas***

Most Improved Player      ***Archie Hudspith***  
Player of the season      ***Michael Wield***

### ***Jaguars***

Most Improved Player      ***Max Evans***  
Player of the season      ***Toby Brann***

### ***Overall***

Supporters' trophy      ***Thomas Woodford***  
Sports person of the Year      ***Gemma King***  
Most Improved Player      ***Anthony Deasey***  
Player of the season      ***William Dahl***

### ***Under 7s - Tim Bostel***

Having started the season with about 35 U7's we were exceptionally happy with the turn out and although we lost a few and gained a few we had a regular attendance of close to 30 children.

Stepping up from the U6's in regards to skill sets and different training procedures was a great challenge of both the kids and the coaches, but as it turned out one that was taken on board very smoothly. Help from Tim Button at the beginning of the season gave us some very good pointers and was much appreciated. Throughout the season we have seen a tremendous improvement in all the children and not just the usual suspects, as the coaches made a point of not streaming too early and allowing those that needed some extra help to benefit from that and get some game time as well.

We saw impressive displays in all our tournaments and consistently reached the semi finals. We were runners-up at the Chipstead A Festival, having beaten Chipstead, but coming in behind Effingham & Leatherhead. With our final surge at Dorking for the Surrey A's tournament, we beat our nemesis Effingham & Leatherhead and had a fast and furious game that resulted in a fantastic draw with Rosslyn Park (who went on to win the plate). Once again we were unfortunate not to reach the final of the plate, but this was by no means a reflection on the excellent rugby played by all, with some amazing passing and speedy breaks.

A big thank you to all the parents that turned up on the touchline every Sunday and special mentions have to go out to all the children. Throughout the season they have showed consistent improvement and we have a formidable U8's squad for the '09 / '10 season coming up.

Congratulations to the winners of the end of season trophies, Alex Kowal – Most Improved Player, Joe Parrot – Sportsman of the Year, Kyran Bostel and George Kowal – as joint winners of Player of the Season.

### ***Under 5/6s - Steve Jenner***

Another successful and busy season for the combined U5/U6 age group with regularly 20 plus children from over 35 registered. Good to see a healthy number of new faces making a big impression this year to go with the already "old timers", some in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of rugby at age 6!

Many thanks all round as ever to the parents who provided much support and help throughout the season both on and off the pitch and especially to the regular coaches, Nic Musgrove, Owen O'Hara, Graham Knowles and Tara Shave. Special playing

mention must go to Sebastian Driscoll, Felix Vaughan, Roman Kedgley and Connor Patterson, all regular, enthusiastic and talented players who as U5's this year will be back for more next year and should form the nucleus of a good side to come.

This year's playing awards went to Most Improved - Ethan Monk another U5 and Player of the Season - Sam Flatt. Thanks again to all, it's been great fun, again, and I finally get to move up a group and go on away trips!!!! Does anyone have a spare A-Z?