

Newsletter



Welcome to the March 2026 Edition of the Bridgend Athletic RFC Newsletter

As the 2025/2026 season continues to unfold, this edition of the Bridgend Athletic RFC Newsletter highlights the progress, achievements and community spirit that continue to drive our club forward.

On the pitch, it has been another exciting period for the Ath. Our 1st XV have once again reached the Principality Cup Final and continue to compete strongly in the Championship, while the Generals are building momentum in their second season in the National Leagues. Across the club, our Mini & Junior sections continue to thrive, with strong participation, cup runs and development across all age groups, while the newly re-established Youth team has enjoyed an impressive return, topping their group and competing strongly in the Ospreys competitions.

Beyond the senior and junior game, the club continues to grow in exciting ways. The Ogwr Hawks programme continues to develop girls' and women's rugby in our area, Bridgend Knights are enjoying another successful season of touch rugby, and the wider club community continues to flourish through initiatives such as the Warm Hub and the installation of a community defibrillator at the clubhouse.

There has also been significant progress in strengthening the club's facilities and long-term future. Work on the A48 pitch development is set to begin this spring following successful grant funding, while discussions around the future of Newbridge Fields continue to move forward as part of a wider community sports partnership.

Perhaps most importantly, this newsletter reflects the spirit that defines Bridgend Athletic – from players achieving milestones on the field, to volunteers improving our facilities, to the incredible support shown for one of our young players and his family through the U14s "Brave the Shave" fundraiser.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our players, coaches, volunteers, committee members, sponsors and supporters. This newsletter captures just a snapshot of the commitment, pride and community that make Bridgend Athletic RFC such a special club.

We hope you enjoy this edition – and as always, thank you for being part of the Green and Gold.

Newsletter



[Chairmans Letter by Paul Hearne](#)

[Senior Rugby Season Update](#)

[Rugby Update - Mini & Juniors](#)

[Rugby Update - Youth](#)

[Rugby Update - Ogwr Hawks](#)

[Rugby Update - Bridgend Knights](#)

[Rugby Update - Ladies Darts](#)

[Rugby Update - 50 Years of Youth Rugby](#)

[Rugby Update - Superman RFC](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - A48](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - Warm Hub](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - Newbridge Fields](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - Community Defibrillator](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - U14's 'Brave the Shave' for Ethan](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - Blast from the past](#)

[Bridgend Athletic RFC - Other Club News - New Darts and Pool Team](#)

[Club Lottery](#)

[Membership Communication](#)

[Membership Application Form](#)

[Senior Mens Player Sponsorship Opportunity](#)

Newsletter



Chairmans Letter

Dear members, players, supporters and friends of Bridgend Athletic RFC,

This is my first season as your elected Chairman, and I've been asked what the role, and the club, mean to me.

Having been involved with Bridgend Athletic for nearly 30 years, the club has been a huge part of my life. I started coaching in the minis and juniors, went on to coach the Youth team with Phil Rees and have served as Fixture Secretary and Team Manager for the 1XV for the past 17 seasons. I've also supported the club as Operations Manager and Integrity Officer, including throughout the challenges of the Covid period.

That was a difficult time for everyone, but we came through it together. Since then, after a slow return, I truly believe we are now thriving again, both on and off the field.

To serve as Chairman is therefore a real honour. I'm proud to continue the excellent work of my predecessor, Philip Rees, who stood down at the end of last season. I'm fortunate to work alongside a fantastic committee and board, a healthy mix of experience and youth, whose commitment and knowledge across all aspects of the club are invaluable.

On the rugby side, we have so much to celebrate. Our mini and junior section is one of the strongest not just locally, but across Wales. The Youth team are back and performing superbly at the top of their league. The Generals reached the quarter-final of their Welsh Rugby Union cup competition and continue to push for a higher league finish. Meanwhile, our First Team are competing strongly again and have reached their cup final – giving us all a special day to look forward to in April at the Principality Stadium. This is a tremendous achievement for the players and coaching staff and one that should not be underestimated.

Overall, I firmly believe we are heading in the right direction and that the future of the club is bright.

There is also plenty happening away from the pitch. The A48 field development will begin this summer, with plans being shaped alongside the council and other users to improve facilities for everyone. We are also planning a long-haul tour at the end of the 2026/27 season – another exciting step forward for the club.

Newsletter



Our “one club” ethos is growing stronger each year, and I encourage everyone to get involved in any way they can. We always need matchday stewards, first aiders, volunteers and sponsors at all levels. Supporting the club through membership, the lottery or the 100 Club also plays a vital role in helping us build sustainably for the future.

As we head into the second half of the season, let's continue to pull together, support one another, and represent Bridgend Athletic with pride. Let's show respect to teammates, opponents and officials alike, and keep building the friendships and community spirit that make this club so special.

Thank you for your continued support.

Paul Hearne
Chairman
Bridgend Athletic RFC



Newsletter



Senior Rugby Report – September 2025 – January 2026

1st XV Season So Far...

The 1st XV season began with a change to the coaching set-up. Head Coach Rhys Williams stepped down and was replaced by Stuart Morris. Backs Coach Jonathan Phillips and Forwards Coach Nathan Holman remained in post, with Michael Powell joining as Conditioning Coach. Jonathan Phillips also continues as Club Captain. Club Chairman Paul Hearne serves as Rugby and Fixture Secretary.

Following promotion to Championship East, the Ath got off to a flying start with bonus-point away and home victories over Mountain Ash and St Peters, before current runaway leaders Bedwas ended the winning run. The Ath then defeated Mountain Ash 28–10 in the first round of the Championship Cup, with tries from Ben Cording, Gabe Brown, Rhys Ward Jones and Joe Patterson, all converted by Evan D'Adamo.

Cup competitions seem to bring out the best in the Ath. A superb 29–8 away victory followed against newly promoted Championship West side Aberystwyth. Try scorers were Jonathan Phillips (2) and Gabe Brown, with Evan D'Adamo adding one conversion and two penalties. Next up was an impressive 20–9 home quarter-final victory against Treorchy, Try scorers were Lee Murphy and Kalafi Molitika, with a conversion and 2 penalties by Evan D'Adamom. The game was played at a new trial venue, Brynteg Comprehensive School, and , subsequently, the Ath have arranged to play all home fixtures there for the remainder of this season.

Newsletter



Senior Rugby Report – September 2025 – January 2026

The semi-final was against Championship East side Newcastle Emlyn at Ammanford on 24th January. Emlyn had defeated Glamorgan Wanderers away in the quarter-final, but despite playing into a gale-force wind, the Ath trailed only 6-0 at half-time. Seventeen unanswered second-half points, from tries by Jonathan Phillips and McKenzie Grey, both converted by Evan D'Adamo, saw the Ath progress to a successive Principality Cup Final.

The Cup run record stands at:

Played 4 / Won 4 / Points For 94 / Points Against 33 / Tries For 11 / Tries Against 2

Notably, no tries were conceded in either the quarter-final or semi-final.

They now face a formidable challenge in the Final against undefeated Bedwas on Sunday 12 April (kick-off 3.15pm). Further details about the Cup Final will be sent out via Membership email and our social media channels.

In the league, the Ath have:

Played 11 / Won 7 / Lost 4 / Points For 279 / Points Against 242 / Tries For 38 / Tries Against 30

The wins have come against St Peters (twice), Mountain Ash, Abertillery, Aberdare, Ynysddu and Penallta.



Newsletter



Senior Rugby Report – September 2025 – January 2026

1st XV Season So Far...

Personal Milestones this Season

- Ben Owen = 100 Apps
- Jonathan Phillips, Jacob Williams, Iestyn Merriman, Gabe Brown, Rhys Ward Jones, Joe Patterson and Evan D'Adamo = 50 Apps.

Nathaniel Car Sales Players of Month

- September Iestyn Merriman
- October Ollie Olds
- November Hakeem Mumine
- December Kalafi Molitika

This Season to date:

- **Most Apps** – Cameron Thomas 17, Gabe Brown, Evan D'Adamo, Ollie Olds, Ben Owen 16, Iestyn Merriman, Joe Patterson 15, Adam Evans, Dan O'Sullivan, Kalafi Molitika, Lee Murphy, Hakeem Mumine 14, McKenzie Grey, Tom Morgan, Jonathan Phillips 13.
- **Most Tries** – Jonathan Phillips 9, Joe Patterson 8, Gabe Brown 6, Kalafi Molitika 5, Rhys Ward Jones, McKenzie Grey 4, Lee Murphy 3.
- **Most Points** – Evan D'Adamo, 130, Jonathan Phillips 45, Joe Patterson 40, Gabe Brown 30

Newsletter



Senior Rugby Report – September 2025 – January 2026

2nd XV (Generals) Season Review

The 2nd XV (Generals), in their second season in Division 6 East of the National Leagues, again have Liam Griffiths as Team Manager, with Aled Thomas and Keir Ennis as coaches. Charlie Ashpole was appointed captain, with the previous four-season captain, Aled Pilliner, stepping down.

As with the 1st XV, the Generals enjoyed a strong cup run before eventually succumbing to unbeaten Division 5 East side Bargoed at the quarter-final stage.

The first round saw a 32–12 home win against Penallta Athletic. Ath points came from tries by Rhys Hyde (2), George Tellem and Rhys Hockings, with two conversions and one penalty from Scott Govan, and two penalties from Aled Thomas.

The second round involved a long trip to North Wales to face Bala Athletic, where the Ath emerged 29–14 victors. Tries were scored by Owen Thomas (3), Harry Griffiths and Josh Carey, with Scott Govan adding two conversions.

The third round pitched the Generals against Division 5 East promotion favourites Cardiff Met Athletic. In an epic, muddy battle on the A48 Newbridge Fields pitch, the Ath prevented the students from scoring, with a Rhys Heard try and Scott Govan conversion securing a memorable passage to the quarter-final.

Newsletter



Senior Rugby Report – September 2025 – January 2026

The quarter-final saw an away tie against unbeaten Division 5 East side Bargoed, who had won all their matches with bonus points. Played on the Ystrad Mynach 4G pitch, the Ath went down 41–15. They had pulled back a 24–3 deficit to 27–15 before Bargoed added two late converted tries. Ath scores came from a penalty try (after Bargoed prevented a scrum pushover), a Rhys Hockings try and a Scott Govan penalty.

Their Cup run record was:

Played 4 / Won 3 / Points For 84 / Points Against 67 / Tries For 12 / Tries Against 10

Unfortunately, league form in Division 6 East Central has been less consistent:

Played 7 / Won 2 / Lost 5 / Points For 150 / Points Against 169 / Tries For 25 / Tries Against 23

Both wins came at home – 40–13 against Sully Sports and an emphatic 73–3 victory over Whitchurch.

2nd XV Season So Far...

Personal Milestones

- Owen Thomas, Charlie Ashpole, Brandyn Fooks and Luke Griffiths all reached their 50th Ath appearances.
- Club record scorer Wayne Fooks joined his son Brandyn in the front row, extending his senior appearances to an incredible 556.

Newsletter



Senior Rugby Report – September 2025 – January 2026

This Season to date:

Nathaniel Car Sales Player of the Month

- September: Archie Brent
- October: Keegan Thomas
- December: Charlie Ashpole

Most Appearances:

- Harvey Tooze, Charlie Ashpole, Ethan Bevan, Luke Griffiths, Dan Osarigie, Keegan Thomas (11); Wayne Fooks, Rhys Hockings (10); Harry Griffiths, Cam Hicks, Lucas Kenny, Lewis Jones, Rhys Heard, Aled Thomas, Josh Carey (8).

Most Tries:

- Owen Thomas (8), Rhys Hockings (4), Dan Osarigie (3), Harry Griffiths, Rhys Hyde, Michael Gillette, Ethan Bevan, Harvey Tooze, McKenzie Grey, Rhys Heard (2).

Most Points:

- Owen Thomas (40), Scott Govan (22), Rhys Hockings (20), Josh Carey, Aled Thomas and Dan Osarigie (15).

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Mini and Junior Sections

Under 7s

The Bridgend Athletic Under 7s have shown outstanding commitment and enthusiasm in their very first season of tag rugby. It has been a real pleasure to watch the children develop week by week, growing in confidence, teamwork, and understanding of the game while continuing to improve their skills at every session. They have competed superbly against other clubs, showing great resilience, sportsmanship, and enjoyment throughout. Most importantly, they have embraced the values of rugby and clearly love being part of the team. The future of the club is undoubtedly in very safe hands.

Under 8s

Bridgend Athletic Under 8s Tag Rugby: A Brilliant Start to the Season

The Bridgend Athletic Under 8s tag team has enjoyed a fantastic start to the season, with every player showing huge progress. The boys have been competitive in every game, playing with energy and enthusiasm.

One of the most rewarding sights has been seeing new friendships forming week by week. The players are supporting one another on and off the pitch, building strong bonds that are just as important as the rugby itself. Their teamwork continues to grow, with improved passing and some excellent team tries on display. The pride in representing Bridgend Athletic is clear for all to see.

Tackling will be introduced over the coming months, and the boys are excited and ready to take on the next challenge together!

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Mini and Junior Sections

Under 9's

It's been a busy and successful season for the u9s in their first season of mini rugby. The boys have really taken to the rough and tumble of tackling after 2 successful seasons of tag.

The boys are working hard every week in training to improve their skills in contact, their handling and teamwork and enjoying their games at the weekend. We are also looking forward to another fun filled tour to Tenby in April along with the U7's.

From May we will start preparing to transition into rucking ready for U10's. With so much to learn we are really proud of how they are progressing on their rugby journey with the Ath.

We would like to give a big thanks to our sponsors for their continued support;

- Watts & Morgan estate agents
- Screed Solutions South Wales liquid screed specialists
- Ventcon ventilation and air con specialists
- JPW Heating Services
- JH Apsee Removals & Storage
- U- Test Diagnostics
- Spring Design

Under 10s

It's been a good start to the first half of the rugby season for Bridgend Athletic RFC Under 10s. This year has seen a small but important change with the introduction of rucks, and the players have adapted brilliantly, picking it up quickly and with great enthusiasm. We've also welcomed a couple of new players to the squad, some with previous rugby experience and others completely new to the game. All have settled in really well and fitted seamlessly into the team environment. We're looking forward to the rest of the season and watching the continued development and progression of this exciting young squad.

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Mini and Junior Sections

Under 11s

It's been a good start to the first half of the rugby season for Bridgend Athletic RFC Under 11s. This year being district year, has seen 12 of the squad selected, 8 for Bridgend and 4 from Vale.

We've welcomed a couple of new players to the squad, they've come with no experience and hit the ground running with a friendly atmosphere picking up the game well.

Looking forward to finishing the season strong with 4 festivals booked in.

Under 12s

The U12s have enjoyed a formidable start to the season, successfully transitioning to Junior rugby and mastering the challenges of a full-size pitch. We are delighted to have welcomed four new players to the squad; despite two being completely new to the sport, all have integrated seamlessly and are thriving in our "competitive yet collaborative" environment.

The foundations for this success were laid during a three-day pre-season residential camp, where the boys bonded and defined their collective goals for the year. This unity is evident every week as the team develops into a powerful unit both on and off the field. A particular highlight has been our spectacular Cup run; showing immense grit and heart, the boys navigated several hard-fought battles against tough opposition to secure a place in the Ospreys District Cup Final. The coaching team is incredibly proud of this group and we look forward to seeing what the rest of the season holds.

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Mini and Junior Sections

Under 13s

The first half of the season has seen our Bridgend Athletic U13s hit the ground running in real style. The boys have enjoyed an outstanding start, testing themselves against some of the very best teams across the Scarlets, Ospreys, Cardiff and Dragons Regions. Each fixture has highlighted the hard work, commitment and growing confidence of this talented group as they continue to develop week by week.

One of the standout strengths of this squad is its stability and togetherness. We are incredibly proud of our player retention, with 85% of the squad having been part of the club since Under 7's. This continuity speaks volumes about the environment, coaching and culture within Bridgend Athletic, and it shows clearly in the performances on the pitch.

Excitement is already building as the squad looks ahead to the Marbella Festival Cup in April, where they will compete against teams from the UK, Ireland and Spain, an unforgettable experience both on and off the field. Closer to home, we are also extremely proud to have progressed through to the District D Cup Finals, which will take place at Tommawr RFC, a fantastic achievement for the players and coaching staff alike.

The coaching team would like to extend a huge thank you to all our players, sponsors, parents and supporters for the incredible backing you continue to give our little green and gold men, it truly makes a difference.

With Special Thanks to Our Team Sponsors:

Dale Maintenance • Forces Fitness • Apsee Removals • The Brickability Group Foundation • Bridgend Pro Tilling Services • Greyfield Property • Professional Sprinkler Services • Cox Demolition

And a Special Mention to Our Tour Kit Sponsors:

SJ Fuller & Admiral

Up the Ath! 🍀🍀

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Mini and Junior Sections

Under 14s

Bridgend Athletic U14s have had a positive start to the 2025/2026 season.

With high expectations after winning last years District & Ospreys Cups priority this season has been about player development. The U14s are fortunate to have a large squad so managing game time for all abilities is key. We have another District Cup final to look forward to in April and an end of season tour to Somerset in May.

Under 15s

Bridgend Athletic u15s are a fantastic group of players and have had an amazing season. The team have travelled all across south wales playing against competitive teams.

They have even flown to Ireland to play a game! The team flew to Dublin to play against Ratoath RFC, visit to the aviva stadium and then watch Leinster v Munster in Croke Park. A great experience!

The players have trained hard and have earned a place in the district cup final following victories against Maesteg Celtic and Tonmawr. They look forward to the final against a strong Kenfig Hill team in April.

Hopefully it stops raining so we can get back on the field and continue to play exciting rugby! The team will finish the season on rugby tour in the south of France! This promises to be an awesome trip where the team will experience a different culture on and off the pitch.

All the coaches and parents are proud of the players and wish them good luck for the rest of the season!

Under 16s

Bridgend Athletic U16s season so far has been a bit of a stop-start affair. We proudly had 17 players selected to represent Bridgend Schools U16s competing in the Dewar Shield. With availability and injuries this has left us short on match days. We've recently also had 13 players selected for Ospreys East. We are extremely proud of everyone's achievements and are looking forward to our District Cup Quarter Final in the next few weeks.

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Youth

With no youth team in season 2024-2025 BARFC are grateful for the efforts of Team Manager Dean Brown, Secretary Laura Hemming, Coaches Mike Punter, Chris Davies, Rob Wilson, Kyle Hemming who is also 1st Aider. Also, Mohan Ganineni for matchday 1st Aid assistance. Romeo Berezai was appointed captain for a squad assembled by the officials. The Youth team also appreciate their Kit Sponsors:

Nathaniel Car Sales, J.H.Apsee & Sons, Precision Engineering Ltd, Gareth L Edwards, U Test and AI Group. Gareth L Edwards also kindly sponsored Sub Suits – much appreciated in cold and rain. Also Coach Mike Punter "The Mowerman" and his wife Shelley of "Headworx" lady's hairdresser, for presenting squad with great quarter zips.

The Ath Youth team were allocated to a group stage of the Ospreys Shield U18 group stage along with Nantymoel, Bonymaen, Birchgrove & Pontrhydyfen – playing each side either home or away.

The Ath topped the group stage winning 3 of the games with bonus points to top the group with 15 points. Their one set back was against Nantymoel losing 31-15.

They will play 4th placed Birchgrove in one SF of the Ospreys Shield, with 2nd placed Nantymoel and 3rd placed Bonymaen contesting the other semifinal – both on April 25th, with the final on May 2nd. A great achievement for a side starting the season from scratch.

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Youth

Post Xmas they have been put in the Ospreys U18 Division 1 along sides along with Skewen, Dunvant, Bonymaen, Mumbles, Nantymoel and Bridgend Sports – each side playing each other once – either home or away. They have got off to a flying start scoring 6 tries in a 34-7 home local derby win against Bridgend Sports. They then avenged their Shield loss to Nantymoel in a thrilling 38 -26 away win – again crossing for 6 tries and top the group with 10 pts, from Skewen on 9.

The Squad: Liam Hopkins, Charlie Richards, Ben Reid, Stan McEvoy, Chaitu Gangineni, Rhys Punter, Ollie Wilson, Romeo Berezai (Capt), Monty Quinn, Jackson Mutlow, Jack Hemming, Oliver Williams, Josh Gabrilson, Jack Barrass, Tomos Carter, Harry Mallinson, Lewis Ward, Cameron Littlejohn, Dylan Motley, Theo Tooze, Harry Hier, McKenzie Scales, Matthew Bailey, Daniel Coupland, Regan Davies and special mention to tinjured Rhodri Hopkins who has photographed the games. Laura and Ed McEvoy have also contributed photography and videos. Thanks to all parents for their support.

Congratulations to following players: Romeo Berezai representing Welsh Academicals, Harry Hier – Boys Clubs of Wales and Ospreys Academy player McKenzie Scales – Wales U18. Oliver Williams Gloucester Academy / Hartpury College,



Well done @romeoberezai_1 our youth captain on his debut with Welsh academicals today against Llandoverly, well played and came away with a win 💪💚💛

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Ogwr Hawks

Celebrating milestones, growth, and community spirit

With pride and gratitude, we look back on a fantastic start to the season at OGWR Hawks. Our club continues to go from strength to strength, thanks to the dedication of players, coaches, and supporters alike. The sense of community and teamwork shines through every event, match, and milestone.

International Collaboration: Saints Visit

We're thrilled to announce that OGWR Hawks, in partnership with BARFC, recently hosted the Canadian team Saints for the first time. This memorable milestone not only celebrated our club's progress but also strengthened our international ties. The Saints were extremely complimentary and have invited us to join them in Canada for an OGWR Hawks tour, marking a fantastic opportunity for our players.

U16s Growth and Barry Islanders hub Partnership

Our U16s continue to thrive, thanks to a fantastic collaboration with Islanders. This partnership ensures every girl enjoys maximum game time and development, helping build skills and confidence both on and off the field. Together, we're creating a supportive environment where every player can reach her potential.

U12s & U14s 16's: Resilience and Teamwork

Despite the unpredictable weather, our U12s and U14s have shown remarkable resilience. Their teamwork and passion for the game remain strong, and they continue to foster partnerships that make a real difference. Participation in Ospreys matches has been a highlight, with our girls taking on roles as team announcers on TV and mascots for the day – experiences they absolutely loved.

Recruitment Window Now Open

The recruitment window is officially open across all age groups! We warmly welcome new U8 and U10 players looking to join the Hawks family. Whether you're new to rugby or looking for a fresh challenge, there's a place for everyone at OGWR Hawks and our 10's are amazing.

Newsletter



Rugby Update – Ogwr Hawks

WUKA Partnership: Supporting Girls in Sport

We're proud of our partnership with WUKA, which now supports over 5,000 girls in grassroots communities throughout England, Scotland, and Wales. This collaboration spans five sports – including OGWR Hawks – and helps ensure that girls have the resources and encouragement they need to stay active and engaged.

Entering Year 11: Commitment and Strength

As we move into our eleventh year, the Hub's commitment and strength remain stronger than ever. We're excited to continue building on our achievements and look forward to new successes and memorable moments together.

International Women's Day at Tondy Titans

Supporting International Women's Day, our U16s will play at 13:30 at Tondy Titans. We invite all club members, supporters, and families to come along, cheer on the team, and be part of this special celebration. Your encouragement makes a real difference!

Thank you to everyone who contributes to the Hub's success; from coaches and organisers, to parents, players, and supporters. Let's continue to build a vibrant, inclusive community, and celebrate every achievement together.



Newsletter



Rugby Update – Bridgend Knights

🎉 This season marks two years of the Bridgend Knights 🎉

What an incredible second season of touch rugby it's been!

From our fearless Squires, to our history making Shield Maidens, flying Seniors, and gloriously chaotic Vets, every part of the Knights family has made this season one to remember

Season Stats:

- Games Played: 97
- Tries Scored: 361+
- 9 pieces of silverware
 - 4× Cup Champions
 - 4× Cup Finalists
 - 2× Plate Winners
 - 3× Bowl Winners

Highlights:

Squires (U12–15): Summer Bowl Champions, two Touch Cup finalists & 68 tries in their debut season

Shield Maidens: A brilliant first ever season full of passion and progress

Seniors: Spring Champions, Touch Cup Winners & Summer Plate Winners with regional and Welsh honours earned

Vets: 47 games, Gibraltar Touch Cup & Tonna Tussle winners legends on and off the pitch



Newsletter



Rugby Update – Bridgend Knights

To our players, coaches, families, fans, sponsors, and Bridgend Athletic RFC you are the heartbeat of this club

WE'RE BACK TRAINING

From Monday 2nd February
Brynteg School
8:00 – 9:00pm (under the lights)

Open to all abilities former players and newcomers welcome. We run Vets (35+), Seniors, Ladies, Mixed & Junior/Youth teams under WRU & WTA rules.

Junior / Youth (12+) Newbridge Fields (from April 13th)
FIT Touch: 6–7pm
vets WRU Touch: 7–8pm

Here's to more tries, more trophies, and more unforgettable moments in 2026!!

The Bridgend Knights family just keeps getting stronger

Interested in playing?

Get in touch with Sean 07891 402 326 or sean@forcesfitness.co.uk



Newsletter



Bridgend Athletic RFC Ladies Darts

Last season's Bridgend & District League runners-up, Bridgend Athletic RFC are enjoying another strong campaign from September 2025 to June 2026 and currently sit 2nd in the league.

There have been some great individual and team achievements too: Sheena Lewis recorded a bull checkout, while Annette Lynes, Estelle Ward and Captain Anne Jones were part of the Charity Fours winning team. Anne Jones and Estelle Ward also reached the finals of the Captains Cup.

New members of all abilities are always welcome to join our friendly, sociable darts nights, with next season's league starting in mid-September.

For more information, contact Captain Anne Jones on 07769 291449.

Newsletter



50 years of Youth Rugby at the Ath

The 2026–2027 season marks the 50th anniversary of the formation of the youth team at Bridgend Athletic RFC.

To celebrate, a reunion dinner for former players and officials will take place on 5th September 2026, with additional events planned throughout the season. Further details will be shared soon. The evening is being organised by first Youth Secretary David Davison, alongside club founder Phil Rees and current Youth Team Manager and M&J Chairman Dean Brown.

How it began

Following the club's formation in 1972–73 by former Bridgend Youth players Brian Lewis and Phil Rees, supported administratively by Jeff Jenkins and Clive Easterbrook, the first Athletic youth side was established ahead of the 1976–77 season.

While the senior team trained at Bryntirion, a group of local youngsters regularly played nearby. Led by Terry Pemberton, they approached the club to ask if a youth team could be formed — and the Ath Youth was born.

Terry Pemberton became the first Youth Captain, David Davison served as Secretary, and Lyndon Young was appointed the first coach.

Growth and success

The youth section quickly flourished, winning District Cups and creating a strong pathway into senior rugby. Many players progressed to clubs such as Bridgend Ravens, the Ospreys, and Wales national under-18 rugby union team.

A standout year came in 2005–06 when five Ath players – Kyle Maiden, Jonathon Jones (captain), Lee Sims, Haloti Molitika and Rhys Webb – featured together in the same Wales U18 side.

Newsletter



50 years of Youth Rugby at the Ath

Former youth players have gone on to achieve the highest honours, including selection for the British & Irish Lions, as well as Welsh internationals Lee Byrne, Rhys Webb, Matthew Morgan and Scott Baldwin.

Major milestones

- 2002–03: Welsh Youth Cup finalists (coaches Paul Hearne & Phil Rees)
- 2006–07: First Welsh Youth Cup winners
- 2008–09: Unbeaten season, Welsh Youth Cup and League double
- 2009–10: Welsh League champions

Coaches during this successful period included Phil Rees, Mark Davies, Steve Penry-Ellis, Anthony Woodward and Mark Watts.

Further success followed in 2016–18 under Lee Grabham, Kevin Gamble, Stuart Morris and John Doherty, with a Welsh Youth Cup win (2016–17) and Welsh League Cup victory (2017–18). The club also fielded a Rags (2nd XV) side that reached a Welsh Plate final.

Looking ahead

The 2024–25 season was the only year since formation that the club did not field a youth team. However, the section has been rebuilt from scratch and is thriving once more.

Under coaches Chris Davies, Mike Punter, Kyle Hemming and Rob Wilson — supported by Secretary Laura Hemming and Team Manager Dean Brown — the new 2025–26 side has already reached the semi-finals of the Ospreys Shield and currently tops the Ospreys Division 1 league.

A fantastic achievement and a fitting start to this milestone year — congratulations to all players, officials and volunteers who continue to drive the Ath forward.



Bridgend Athletic Youth



Saturday 5th September



Bridgend Athletic Rugby Football Club Youth XV 1956-57



1st Youth Team Photo 1997-98

Two Course Meal

Ex Players and Guest Speakers

Heronston Hotel 6pm Sit Down

£35 a ticket.

Use link below or QR code to pay

[https://buy.stripe.com/00w7s](https://buy.stripe.com/00w7sN7f41Dr7vc85KgA80G)

[N7f41Dr7vc85KgA80G](https://buy.stripe.com/00w7sN7f41Dr7vc85KgA80G)



Scan to book



Buses back to Bridgend Athletic RFC afterwards
for live entertainment.

Newsletter



Superman RFC 50th Anniversary

At the end of November, Gary Dalton, Kelvin Leyshon and I travelled to Tokyo for nine nights to help our old friends, Superman RFC, celebrate their 50th Anniversary and 40 years of a wonderful friendship that has endured ever since they visited us in 1985.

Superman RFC was born out of the Wales Tour to Japan in 1975 where the great Welsh team of that time impressed Ken Ohkubo and his friends so much that they decided to form their own rugby club and appropriately named it Superman in the image of the Welsh players and adopted the Welsh jerseys as their own.

Their tour to Wales and England in 1985 was to celebrate their 10th Anniversary and we hosted them for five nights in what turned out to be a lifetime's experience for both clubs as neither knew what to expect. The two quite different cultures blended in with remarkable ease despite the almost complete lack of a common language, other than rugby. Koko Kikuchi and his Canadian wife Betsy were there as translators if needed and Koko readily acknowledged to me in Tokyo that the 1985 trip was the defining moment for Superman as a club, as Bridgend Athletic showed them what rugby was really all about, off the field as well as on.

Two months later we received a letter inviting us to Japan along with a generous cheque to kick-start our trip. Many thought it not possible, including the Welsh Rugby Union, but we thought we had to give it a go after such a gesture and in 1988 our efforts were rewarded with our three-week World Tour encompassing Hong Kong, Japan, Hawaii where we played a Tongan side, Laie Rhinos, and California where we played Belmont Shore who came to us as well in 1985. The late, great JPR Williams played for Belmont Shore for a year or two while studying there earlier in his career. Club Patron and great character Dave Williams was the Tour Manager on that trip and it was fitting that his wife Vera was able to make this pilgrimage 18 years later to experience a country that she must have heard so much about.

In 2000 Superman returned to Bridgend and specifically made the Athletic Club their only destination such was the impression from their first visit. This time they came more prepared, having studied English and Welsh, and knew Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau better than most. Several even came all that way for just two days of the six-day trip and we even organised a wedding for one of the visiting couples and scattered the ashes of Mr Kobayashi who unfortunately passed away after a long battle with cancer. He specifically requested this as he felt Bridgend was his second home. Many old relationships were strengthened and many new ones were made.

Newsletter



Superman RFC 50th Anniversary

On 5th October 2006, myself as Club President, Phil Rees, and Vera Williams, widow of former Patron David Williams, travelled to Tokyo, Japan, on the invitation of Superman RFC to attend their club's anniversary celebrations.

'The decision of Superman to provide us with this opportunity to share their celebrations for five nights was a fantastically generous offer on their part and testament to the strong bond that has existed between the two clubs since we first played each other in Bridgend in 1985. Their hospitality is something special and the warmth of the welcome has to be experienced to be believed.

The Japanese winger who marked the great JJ Williams from that 1975 Welsh Test Match was at the Anniversary Dinner as a special guest.

From the time we landed in Tokyo, seven hours late from circling and diversions due to a raging Typhoon, we were treated to outstanding hospitality from dawn to dusk and much later. I think we ate the contents of the Pacific Ocean both raw and cooked, superb fare. And we didn't let anything beat us despite our lack of skill with chopsticks.

Faces change over time in all clubs but it was great to see so many familiar faces still there. The overwhelming feeling was one of continuing friendship and the desire to meet up again. It is our turn to tour Japan again and we must return, they expect us to return. I can assure you that they will spare no effort to ensure that we are well looked after.

We parted on the final night with arms full of presents from our hosts and the chants of Burridgend, Burridgend, Burridgend ringing in our ears. I for one could not wait to return, and did so with Tim Wood in 2013 to coincide with the Welsh Tour.

Superman visited us to play again in 2015 for the World Cup and we managed to get six of them on Scrum Five, as a complete surprise, where Jason Mohammed interviewed us live about our fascinating history. The remainder watched from our clubhouse unaware of what was about to reveal itself.

In 2019 ten of us, including Gary Dalton & Suzanne and Tim Wood, returned to Japan for the World Cup, travelling around Japan to Kyoto, Beppu, Oita, Hiroshima and Osaka before returning to Tokyo, in another Typhoon, where we were hosted by our friends Yoshiro Ohashi (President) and Toshihisa Ijiima (Player), having another great trip.

Newsletter



Superman RFC 50th Anniversary

Superman had arranged a tournament for this trip to include sides from NZ, Canada, USA and us to coincide with the World Cup but we were unable to travel with a team at this time of the year as it was in season for us. Nevertheless, we participated in a fantastic final night dinner where each club had to get up on stage and sing, wowing them with 'Sunshine Mountain' which brought the house down and almost the massive stage, as we got so many to join us on it.

Unfortunately, this proved to be the last time we saw Kuriyama, team manager in 1985, a truly wonderful, funny character.

Our trip in November was another success, renewing old friendships with Shinji Inoue, Captain of the first tour to us, Moto Youasa, Michio Saito, Kenichi Ohkubo, their joint founder, and many others, staying once again with Toshi and Yoshi. We had the usual fantastic time, enjoying, for example, volcanic spring baths at the base of Mount Fuji, a different experience, and lots of food and drink and another drunken 'Sunshine Mountain' to finish off.

We should go out there as a club again, it is not expensive.

I consider some of the long-standing people in Superman to be among my best loved and cherished friends. Speak to anyone who has been involved with Superman as players, hosts or just members joining in the festivities and you will hear the same tales of friendship and absolute joy gained out of our long-standing, special relationship, which I doubt has any equal in the rugby world.

But until we meet again.

Kampai!!

Phil Rees

Newsletter



Other Club News...

A48 Pitch & Asset Transfer Update

Late November 2025 the club received confirmation from Be Active Sport Wales that it had been awarded a grant of £20k to supplement the £25K grant already received from Bridgend County Borough Council under the authorities Asset Transfer Scheme.

The total of £45k will enable the club to commence work in April 2026 subject to weather, to regrade the A48 Pitch, remove surface grass vegetation, strip the topsoil, regrade to even surface, return topsoil and cultivate topsoil and prepare seed bed. This will enable the club to play on a full size 100m x 70m playing surface fit for Championship level rugby as well as supporting games for other senior teams, youth, mini and junior and Ogwr Hawks ladies' team.

The work will be undertaken by specialist ground contractors Shapewright Services and project managed by the Oolong Sports Consultancy. The club acknowledges the help and assistance provided by the WRU, BCBC, BAVO and the National Lottery in finalising the grant applications.

Phase two of the project will begin immediately with a further capital asset transfer grant to BCBC for up to £10k to purchase maintenance equipment including a ride-on mower with attachments and white line marking equipment. The club are grateful to club member Mike Punter for advising us with the technical specifications.

This will all be stored in new ventilated shipping containers which will be sited on the halfway line on the southern boundary. Formal planning permission for this and to install spectator barriers, spectator hardstanding areas and a pathway linking the pitch to the car also included as detailed in the drawing below.

Newsletter



Other Club News... A48 Pitch & Asset Transfer Update



Warm Hub at Bridgend Athletic RFC

Back by popular demand!

7th January until 18th March 2026
Every Wednesday Between 10am and 2pm

FREE LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

BRING YOUR OWN ACTIVITY

CHILL AND CHAT

BOARD GAMES

FREE WIFI

POOL TABLE

BRIDGEND ATHLETIC RFC
12 EWENNY RD, BRIDGEND, CF31 3HP
01656 652263

Newsletter



Other Club News...

Newbridge Fields – Update

The BARFC Newbridge Fields Sub Committee — Adrian Burt, Gareth Davies and new Athletic Chairman Paul Hearne — continue to lead efforts to improve the long-standing poor facilities at Newbridge Fields. After years of negotiation with Bridgend County Borough Council, progress is now being made:

1. Changing rooms: BARFC became the first club locally to work directly with the council on a facility upgrade, completing a £27k internal refurbishment of the South Pavilion ahead of the 2023/24 season.
2. Parks review: The club contributed to a wider Parks review, previously paused but now being revisited (see point 7).
3. Pitch lease: To meet Championship standards for all BARFC teams, the club secured a 10-year asset transfer lease for the A48 pitch on 13 August 2025 after a lengthy process.
4. Pitch improvements: Since securing the lease, BARFC has obtained £45k funding via BCBC and Sport Wales to regrade and widen the pitch to full size (100m x 70m). Work is scheduled for April 2026, delivered by Shapewright and overseen by project manager Peter Jones (Oolong Sports).
5. Phase 2 plans: Funding will be sought for improved access, hard standing, pitch barriers, storage containers and portable training floodlights.
6. Maintenance: A £9k grant application is in place for equipment to allow BARFC to maintain the pitch directly (cutting, marking, aerating and rolling). In the meantime, coach Mike Punter continues to manage cutting and marking.
7. Partnership approach: Following the Parks review, a site visit with BCBC's CEO in October 2025 highlighted current conditions. This led to a proposal for a joint approach with other south-side users.
8. Community hub: In January, winter users (Ogwr Hawks, Broadlands AFC, Bridgend Town AFC and now Bridgend Town Cricket Club) agreed to form a consortium. BCBC has proposed a legal partnership to manage improved facilities through a community, multi-sport hub model. Discussions are ongoing, with clear signs of stronger long-term council support for upgrading and managing Newbridge Fields for the benefit of all users.

Newsletter



BARFC COMPLETE BCBC SOUTH PAVILLION UPGRADE
Back Row L-R Richard Edwards (Bridgend Town AFC) Richard Staton (Parks) Antony Barnes (Parks)
Mark Bayliss (Parks)
Front Row L-R Dean Brown (BARFC M&J Chairman) Guy Smith (BCBC Asset Transfer Officer)
Adrian Burt (BARFC Negotiator & Spokesperson) Mohammed Ibrahim (BCBC Quantity Surveyor)
Chris Davies (Contractor Dev. Property Services).

John Canon.

Other Club News... Community Defibrillator

BARFC were approached by Cllr Ian Williams on behalf of Bridgend Town Council to install a community defibrillator on the front of our clubhouse to serve the upper end of town.

The committee agreed immediately, and the defibrillator has now been in place for several months.

As a CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club), we are committed to supporting both our members and the wider local community through the use of our clubhouse and facilities.



Newsletter



Other Club News...

U14's 'Brave the Shave' for Ethan

The Bridgend Athletic Under 14s held a fundraiser for one of their much-loved, truly talented and inspirational players and friend, Ethan Griffiths, who has sadly been diagnosed with lymphoma in the last month after becoming unwell before Christmas.

Brave the Shave took place at the Athletic Club on Sunday 8th Feb. The boys all wanted to show their love and support for Ethan by braving the shave so he didn't have to be alone in doing this. A massive turnout meant the club was packed with teammates, school friends and other local teammates, along with parents and family, all showing so much unity and togetherness at this tough time.

Harvey, Sam and Tristan from Cropped, Cameron Littlejohn from Faded, and some kind mum hairdressers got stuck in and started to shave heads! We are very thankful to all those who helped on the day. We couldn't have done it without you.

We held a huge raffle and auction to help raise funds for Ethan and his family at this terrible time. So many local businesses helped by donating prizes for the raffle and auction, which raised just over an amazing £4,400 on the day. We can't thank these businesses and people enough for their generosity and kindness.



Newsletter



Other Club News...

U14's 'Brave the Shave' for Ethan

Parents of the U14s sold lots of tickets and gathered raffle prizes; everyone played their part in this greatly successful day.

So many people turned up to the club to brave the shave, show support or buy raffle tickets and give generous bids in the auction; the day was overwhelming, emotional and most of all showed Ethan and his family they are not alone and they have an army of people in the team, club and the wider community all with them every step of the way. Ethan and his family have been so overwhelmed with the support they have received and showed this in an emotional speech and video on the day. They are truly grateful.

Ethan's treatment is going well and we all wish him all the best with his ongoing treatment. We know he is strong and will come through this stronger, back in his Ath kit in no time. If you wish to donate, the link is below



Newsletter



Blast from the past...



Back row left to right – Andrew Williamson, Simon Apsee, Paul Webb, Guy Evans, Kelvin Leyshon, Alan Hitchins.

Front Row –Mike Miller, Paul Rees, Martin Morris, David Perry.

The photo above is of the club sevens team that won the Welsh Districts Tournament at Newport Saracens in May 1985.

BRIDGEND ATHLETIC RFC!

~ JOIN OUR NEW ~
POOL & DARTS TEAMS!



WHO IS INVITED

Club members, friends & family, local community players, beginners & experienced players alike!

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

Players of ALL abilities, enthusiasm & good sportsmanship, commitment to weekly fixtures.

WHAT YOU'LL GET

Friendly team atmosphere, regular practice nights, competitive league matches, a great way to get involved with the club.

INTERESTED??

Email Gareth Davies on :
garethjamesdavies@gmail.com

LET'S BUILD SOMETHING GREAT TOGETHER
Join us

Newsletter



Club Lottery

Join the Bridgend Athletic RFC lottery and help us make a real difference in our community. We're committed to inspiring and empowering people of all backgrounds through sport. By taking part, you're not just backing grassroots rugby - you're investing in the future of our players and the wider community

Join via the QR Code below:



**BARFC WEEKLY
LOTTERY**

Subscribe to our joint
BARFC-Ogwr Hawks lottery
using the QR Code



Newsletter



Membership Communication

Once a Green & Gold, Always a Green & Gold

As the club continues to develop and grow, the need for member support is more than ever. Our success as a club over the years has been fuelled by the dedication of current players, coaches, volunteers, and social members.

But with success comes challenges:

- ⚡ Higher standards on the field
- 📈 Increased running costs
- 👏 A greater need for support from our wider club family

That's why we're reaching out and inviting you to become a Member of Bridgend Athletic RFC. You can select a membership category that suits your circumstances.

Your membership will:

- Directly support the running and development of the club
- Help both senior and junior teams compete at the next level
- Reconnect you with old teammates and the club community
- Give you access to match day hospitality, exclusive events, and club news

It's a small gesture – but one that will have a lasting impact.

Join as a Member today by completing the attached form and returning it by email, post, or in person at the clubhouse. Alternatively, use the link on the PDF to set up your Direct Debit or go to the website by clicking on this link:

<https://bridgendathletic.rfc.wales/club-memberships/>

Let's continue this journey together.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the club soon – whether at a match, an event, or simply for a drink and a catch-up.

Yours in rugby,
Bridgend Athletic RFC

Bridgend Athletic RFC Ltd - Membership Application

Form 2025/2026 Season



Type of Membership

Type	Amount	Payment Type			Payment Link
Gold Membership	£250	Cash	Cheque	DD	https://buy.stripe.com/cNifZjarga9X3eWeu8gA80r
Silver Membership	£125	Cash	Cheque	DD	https://buy.stripe.com/6oU9AVgPE81Pg1IbhWgA80t
Bronze Membership	£96	Cash	Cheque	DD	https://buy.stripe.com/6oU3cx56W95T7vcbhWgA80s
Full membership (Couple)	£96	Cash	Cheque	BACS	https://buy.stripe.com/9B628teHwci52aS3PugA80u
Full membership (Single)	£72	Cash	Cheque	BACS	https://buy.stripe.com/28EbJ3czo3LzaHo85KgA80v
Senior Player membership	£24	Cash	Cheque	BACS	https://buy.stripe.com/bJecN7fLa9X4j0dq4gA80w
Youth Player membership	£10	Cash	Cheque	BACS	https://buy.stripe.com/aFa8wR1UKfuh8zgdSgA80p
Full OAP membership (Couple)	£48	Cash	Cheque	BACS	https://buy.stripe.com/fZu9AVdDsdm97vcadSgA80x
Full OAP membership (Single)	£36	Cash	Cheque	BACS	https://buy.stripe.com/4gMbJ30QGfuh7vc0DigA80y
M&Js Member	For Membership card and contact purposes only – this is supplementary to the M&J membership process				

Direct Debit and BACS payments made to: Account No 00975475 - Sort Code 30-91-18

Member Details

Applying Member or Parent Name

If Parent add children names

Address Line 1:

Address Line 2 Postcode:

Mobile Phone Number: Email

Date of Birth

CASC Participation – how do you assist or contribute to BARFC.

Gold Membership

- Guaranteed pair of tickets for every home international match to be purchased at face value.
- Free entry for two people to all BARFC home matches
- You and your company name in every home match programme
- You and your company name with link on BARFC website
- Invitation to two match sponsorship buffets during the season

Silver Membership

- Guaranteed single ticket for every home international match to be purchased at face value.
- Free single entry to all BARFC home matches
- Your name in every home match programme
- Invitation to a match sponsorship buffets during the season.

Bronze Membership

- Free single entry to all BARFC home matches

All Membership Levels

- Access to home and away international ticket allocation draw - Discounted access to club house conference and event facilities - Membership Card

Please Return completed details to: Membership Secretary, Bridgend Athletic RFC LTD, 12 Ewenny Road, Bridgend, CF31 3HP
or Email: barfcinfo@gmail.com

DataProtection StatementforBridgend Athletic Rugby Football Club MembershipForm

This statement can be amended and used by The Club on their membership form. It will show members whatthe club will do with the data that it holds about each member and will allow members to consent to this use.

In completing and submitting this membership form I understand that Bridgend Athletic RugbyFootball Club will use my personal data for the purposes of my involvement in club activities.

That I am consenting to receiving information about The Club, including my BARFC membership details and requirements by; post, email, MMS, online or phone unless stated otherwise by myself.
That my data will not be shared with any third party and the principles of the Data Protection Act 1988 will be adhered to.

Newsletter



Senior Mens Player Sponsorship...

Want to support local rugby and gain exposure for your business?

We're looking for player sponsors for the upcoming season at Bridgend Athletic RFC – a proud club with strong community roots and a history of developing top talent.

As a sponsor, you'll receive:

- Business promotion across our social media
- Logo featured in matchday programmes & website
- Opportunity to connect with our growing supporter base
- Association with grassroots sport in the heart of Bridgend

Whether you're a local business or just a passionate supporter, backing a player is a great way to show your support!

To sponsor a player or find out more, message or ring Rhys Jones on 07920 724323 or rljonsey@googlemail.com.