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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – Keith Brierley

Hello, welcome to Preston Grasshoppers to today's opponents Tynedale and to visitors, guests, sponsors, coaches, players, ex-players, supporters and spectators for our second home game of 2020.

It gives me immense pride to be President of Preston Grasshoppers in our Sesquicentenary year and it seems only yesterday that I was celebrating our Centenary year as a 1st XV player, which has provided me with life long friendships and many happy memories.

We have always had competitive games against Tynedale and I am sure that today, Hoppers will be doing all in their power to take advantage of the home fixture with a win to help towards our move out of the relegation zone.

Hopefully, today's game should offer some entertaining and competitive rugby, each team looking for the win to improve their position in the table for the rest of the season ahead.

This is my second year as President and I have been to some new destinations and met lots of new and interesting people from the various clubs that we have visited. Our success after promotion to League 2 North last season left us in a creditable 7th position in the league but this year, although hoping to improve on that position, we find ourselves struggling to find our form of last season at the moment which leaves us in the relegation zone.

Thanks also to Paul (Arnie) Arnold and his excellent coaching staff and not least the players who are all playing their part this season.

It has been a great honour and privilege to have served as your President and I am looking forward to carrying on in the same vein through this and next season. I would also like to thank all the army of staff and volunteers for their great work during the current season.

Keith



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Front cover photo features a bruised, bloodied and battered Ally Murray and Ryan Carlson at the end of our 26-26 draw with Wharfedale recently.

To see more 'Hoppers photos visit www.flickr.com/photos/mickcraig

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Each year our ground attracts in excess of 70,000 visitors so this gives businesses the opportunity to raise awareness of their products and services to an extremely wide audience.

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PRESTON GRASSHOPPERS TEAM BUILDING TRAINING

Just to break the monotony of fitness training on the field, the squad recently took advantage of a team building and fitness session courtesy of Professional Boxing Coach Karl Ince and one of his trainers Jay. Karl put the squad through their paces which without exception the squad found was really tough but very satisfying.



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TODAY'S VISITORS - TYNE DALE RFC

Preston Grasshoppers entertain Tynedale today at Lightfoot Green and will want to both put last weeks dismal second half behind them and avenge what was their heaviest defeat of the season back in October in the North East.

It came as no surprise after the game at Lockwood Park that the Huddersfield Full Back was announced as the home side's Man of the Match, not the first present he was gifted that afternoon!

Looking forward to today's game, and the Tynedale game will be viewed as a possible 'W' by the Hoppers coaches, which can only be achieved if their charges stick to the game plan worked on throughout the build up.

Tynedale are currently sitting comfortably just below mid table with eight wins to their name and bring to Lightfoot Green a recent record which has seen them concede then score themselves fifty points in successive games. A fifty points to ten defeat at the Woodlands was followed last Saturday with a fifty four points to five victory over bottom side Scunthorpe on home soil.

Our visitors Tynedale first gained promotion to Level 4 in what was then National 3 North during the same season Hoppers were demoted from National 2 back in 2002.

The first meeting between Preston Grasshoppers and Tynedale was in Corbridge on the 9th of February 1980 after a game the previous season at Lightfoot Green had been cancelled. The victors that day were the home side by twelve points to three.

All told there have been twenty nine meetings between the two clubs plus a pre-season game at Lightfoot Green prior to the 2012/13 season, with a further five fixtures being cancelled including the proposed initial game. Currently Tynedale hold the upper hand with eighteen wins to Hoppers eleven. Amongst these there are twelve league wins to our opponents and just five to Hoppers with the spoils of the pre-season game going to Hoppers.

Digger (Mike Forshaw)



← TOMORROW

If you and your family are at a loose end tomorrow afternoon then get yourselves down to the club house at 3.00pm for the Hoppers Big Fat Family Quiz of the Decade. The quiz is free to enter.

Prizes will be presented to every team taking part, food and drinks will be available from the bar and kitchen and we are anticipating a great afternoon of family fun.

GET WELL SOON

The club sends best wishes to the Lamprey brothers who are hopefully both on the road to recovery. 1st XV forward Matt is recovering from an infection following a brief spell in hospital and brother Jonny broke two bones in his ankle and two bones in his foot whilst playing for the 2nd XV against Chester earlier this month.

Get well soon.

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MATCH SPONSORSHIP

Unfortunately, due to a late cancellation, we have been unable to secure a replacement Match Sponsor for today's game. Although sponsorship opportunities for the rest of this season are rather limited, we are already looking forward to securing sponsorship for next season.

If you would like to become a Match Sponsor, be an Associate Match Sponsor or Match Ball Sponsor please do not hesitate to contact the office:

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RAFFLE PRIZES

Today's star raffle prize comprises one night's stay in an executive room at one of Accor Hotels. The prize includes Dinner, Bed and Breakfast. (Subject to availability). If you are lucky enough to draw the winning ticket, please contact Chris Ford from Accor Hotels to claim your prize. Tel: 07810 757678.

Other prizes today include a variety of hospitality packages for Hoppers 1st XV home matches.



Ex Hoppers player Chris Ford, the Meetings & Events Key Account Manager, UK & Global Sales & Distribution from Accor Hotels has provided star raffle prizes for almost all home games both this season and last. The Club appreciate the generosity and loyalty of Chris and look forward to him continuing his overwhelming support.



ON OTHER TABLES TODAY



Mike and Catherine Forshaw are entertaining a special guest this afternoon in **James Arnold** who is the History Curator at the Harris Museum. James is an experienced curator with over 14 years' experience in the museum sector and he is extremely skilled at community engagement, curation, museum collections, research and history. James has been invited for a pre-match lunch as a thank you for his help over the last couple of years in both setting up the Preston Grasshoppers exhibition which is currently running there, and assistance with the first committee meeting of 1869 re-enacted back in September, which James kindly facilitated at the Harris. (If you haven't yet seen the exhibition time

is running out so make a date in your diary and visit the Harris Museum.)

President Keith Brierley is entertaining our guests from **Tynedale RFC**.

Andrew Rogerson and friends take another table and **Chris Heywood** is entertaining his guests on another table.

Dave Brooks from **Bromak** who sponsor the shirts for the 3rd XV, 4th XV and the Colts takes another table today entertaining his guests.

David Little is heading up a table entertaining his guests as does **Stewart Ashton** who meets up with retired work colleagues on an annual basis.

Long-time supporters of the club **Moore and Smalley** are entertaining their guests today. Regular diner and one time 1st XV captain **Bob Thompson** from **Shire Consulting** complete the list of diners today.

HOPPERS MANAGEMENT HOPE YOU ALL ENJOY THE HOPPERS HOSPITALITY, THE GAME AND THE APRÈS MATCH BONHOMMIE.



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Rugby Operations



Gareth Dyer

1st XV
Head Coach



Paul Arnold

1st XV
Assistant Coach



Donny Sutherland

1st XV
Coaching Support



Craig Steel

1st XV
Kicking Coach



Steve Kerry

1st XV
Conditioning Coach



Alex Hurst

1st XV Manager
& 4th Official



Ade Jebb

Player Registrar
& 4th Official



Ian McFarlane

Head
Physiotherapist



Mark Taylor

2nd XV
Manager



Bill Kin

2nd XV
Coach



Steve Tiernan

2nd XV
Coach



Mark Murray

2nd XV Sports
Rehabilitator



Kathryn Stevens

3rd – 5th Team
Coordinator



Mick Mortimer

TODAY'S OTHER LEAGUE GAMES

FYLDE	V	HINCKLEY
HULL	V	LOUGHBOROUGH
LUCTONIANS	V	SHEFFIELD TIGERS
OTLEY	V	CALDY
SCUNTHORPE	V	STOURBRIDGE
SEDGLEY PARK	V	CHESTER
WHARFEDALE	V	HUDDERSFIELD



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**Head of Rugby Operations,
Gareth Dyer**

HEAD OF RUGBY OPERATIONS Gareth Dyer welcomed our visitors this week and said

"Good Afternoon and a warm welcome to the players, coaches and supporters from Tynedale for today's National Two North fixture.

Tynedale have had a steady season to date and claimed some solid wins in tight games throughout the season. That ability to grind out wins is vital in this division given how tight the margins are between the teams.

Our January return was disappointing and should have been so much better given the position we got ourselves into during the last three games.

However, we have not turned those positions into results and that is proving costly.

Clearly we are deep in trouble at the wrong end of the table and last weekend's second half performance was beyond disappointing. Leading at half time we looked in good shape to go on and win the game but our second half display was abject.

The game plan that had worked in the first half seemed to go out the window and there can be no excuse for the implosion after half time.

The players were given a clear game plan to play to and the reasons that we went away from that can only be answered by them.

It is fair to say that they were left in no doubt about their performance at the final whistle. I have never been so disappointed by the collective mentality of a team I have involvement with.

Yes, confidence is low and yes we continue to be dogged by injuries but I cannot accept that either of those factors was behind some of the decisions that were taken during the game or our continued inability to defend properly.

So, on behalf of the team I want to apologise to the supporters who travelled last week. That second half display was not acceptable.

The challenge now is to get a reaction. Now it's a case of turning up.

Clearly I want to see the group roll up their sleeves and put right the wrongs that were clearly explained post match last week. If there are those who want to turn up their noses to that or worse, don't turn up at all then that will tell me all I need to know about their mental strength and how much they want to pull on the shirt in the future.

There remain 50 points to play for but we have got to stop beating ourselves if we want to start beating others. "

HEAD COACH Paul 'Arnie' Arnold had this to say this week



**Head Coach,
Paul Arnold**

"Firstly I'd like to welcome the Tynedale coaches, players and supporters to Lightfoot Green this afternoon.

I'd like to start by saying we were all very disappointed with last week's result and the result against Wharfedale the week before. We know exactly where we are in the table and last week's performance in the second half wasn't acceptable.

Me, my backroom staff and players will not be throwing in the towel just yet. There are still 50 points up for grabs before the end of the season and we all know how important today's result is if we have any chance of survival in Division 2 North.

Again I'd like to thank all the fans who come week in week out to support the team.

I know this season hasn't quite been what everyone had hoped for, but trust me when I say that everyone who pulls on a Hoppers shirt cares and is trying their hardest out there on the field.

On the injury front, the news has broken about PJs retirement and I'd just like to say as his coach and friend that he has been a fantastic and inspiring leader on and off the field and he will be sorely missed every week by all of us. At least he's now got his commentary career to fall back on. Up the Hoppers."

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MICK SMITH 1949-2020 TRIBUTES FROM CLUB MEMBERS



"Best header of a ball that I can remember. If he couldn't get his foot to the ball in the scrum he put his head down and knocked it back. No wonder he broke his neck! Great at line out throwing. First game back at Wigton, first line out and he threw it perfectly. I wasn't expecting such a good throw and I missed the catch. He said sorry! We didn't make any mistakes after that."

Graham Cox.

"I remember Mick's welcomes at the rear gate, always a smile and a bit of a natter on the way back to the club house after parking up. He always asked me if I was playing as I drove in, for the last 10 years the answer was no, he still asked me though which I enjoyed because it was nice that he bothered to ask an 'old' guy like me!!

Cheers Mick!" **Paul Carroll.**

"What a shame. He made me feel welcome when I started playing in the seniors. He was a gent."

Ray Robinson

"I have fond memories of playing with Mick .

R.I.P. Mick." **Ian Foster**

"He made everyone so welcome, I am grateful to have known him and saddened by his passing.

He was a gentleman." **Helen Thompson**

"I have some fond memories of Mick, so very sad news." **Jim Martin**

"So very sad. We're beginning to see the core of an era leaving us – and those passing are certainly more honoured and remembered." **Gregg Butler**

"Mick was a great club man." **Geoff Tomlinson**

"Very sad news. I enjoyed playing along side Mick. RIP." **Martyn Hughes**

"Very sad news. Mick has always been around as far as I can recall.

He ran the line when the 1st team got stuffed by Rugby in 1995 (I was part of that ill-fated team).

Mick twisted his ankle and had to be substituted! I often joked about that with him. He will be missed." **Simon Parisi**

As a young, naïve, wing I was playing in a 2nd XV match at West Park and made a try scoring tackle after corner flagging to cover a pitch length West Park break. Lying on the ground panting I was pleased when an older player came over, I assumed to congratulate me and help me up, but was promptly grabbed by the throat, told to stay down to give said older player a rest and not make him have to cover so much ground in future. Needless to say "older player" was Mick Smith."

Martin Hothersall

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - STEPHEN MAWDSLEY



David, James and I would like to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and messages following Steve's passing and those who joined us at Preston Crematorium and then Preston Grasshoppers Rugby Club to help us celebrate Stephen's life.

To William Houghton Funeral Directors, Fulwood for the care, thought and support given to Steve, me and the boys, thank you.

To the specialist staff of Rosemere Cancer Foundation and St. Catherine's Hospice, thank you doesn't seem enough for the wonderful care and support we have received throughout Steve's illness.

Thank you for the kind donations received for these two charities. Thank you to the staff at Preston Grasshoppers for making our afternoon special.



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STARTING XV

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 15 Scott Jordan | <i>Sponsored by</i> |
| 14 Jordan Dorrington | <i>Barton Grange</i> |
| 13 Alex Hurst | <i>Atlantics Geomatics</i> |
| 12 Nick Gregson | <i>S Jones Hearing</i> |
| 11 Jacob Browne | <i>County Insurance</i> |
| 10 Tom Davidson (C) | <i>Poly Crew</i> |
| 9 Jake Squirrell | <i>Gainsborough Flooring</i> |
| 1 Oga Mabaya | <i>Horsfield Bldg. Serv's. Engs.</i> |
| 2 Olly Trippier | <i>JSI Krempel</i> |
| 3 John Blanchard | <i>Westland Horticulture</i> |
| 4 Ally Murray | <i>Hadyn Gigg</i> |
| 5 Adam Howard | <i>Blue Wren</i> |
| 6 Toby Harrison | <i>Ainscough Training Services</i> |
| 7 Ben Dorrington | <i>Gary Stanley</i> |
| 8 Ryan Carlson | <i>Hosokawa</i> |
| | <i>Tieman A & D Systems Ltd</i> |

GAME CHANGERS

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 16 Noah Miller | <i>George Erdozain</i> |
| 17 Dan Madden | <i>Noblett's Fish & Chips</i> |
| 18 TBC | |
| 19 James Gough | <i>Nicky Donnelly Associates Ltd</i> |
| 20 Sam Stott | <i>Lloyds South Lakes BMW</i> |

Referee:

Ass't Referee 1:

Ass't Referee 2:

4th Official:

Medical Officer:

Ball Boys and Girls:

Ben Rayner

Brendan Fitzmaurice

Alan Hughes

Ade Jebb

Mark Taylor

Jake Blackhurst, Soren Walton, Max Richards, Harvey Barton, Tom Barton, Jack Battersby

TYNEDALE

STARTING XV

- | |
|---------------------|
| 15 Rob Parker |
| 14 Tom Bramwell |
| 13 Liam Checksfield |
| 12 Will Miller |
| 11 Guy Pike |
| 10 Jake Rodgers |
| 9 Mat Outson (C) |
| 1 Mike Hughes |
| 2 Dave Batey |
| 3 Ben Haigh |
| 4 Charlie Richards |
| 5 Jonny Cousins |
| 6 Ben Bell |
| 7 Finlay Magowen |
| 8 Ethan Clarke |

GAME CHANGERS

- | |
|-----------------|
| 16 Dan Lowden |
| 17 Oscar Caudle |
| 18 Joe Mills |
| 19 Jon Clarkson |
| 20 Jonny Burden |

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OTHER SPORTS AT PRESTON GRASSHOPPERS

CRICKET

Hoppers has its own cricket team which take part in the Boddington's Village Cricket League every summer. For more information please contact Ken Moore 01772 863546 or email the Hoppers office: info@pgrfc.co.uk

SQUASH

Members can book courts from 9.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week. Coaching is available from junior level to expert level by Mike Farrington, one of the top coaches around. For more squash information please contact Gary Jackson 07775 753968.

ARCHERY

There are two archery sections at the club; conventional shooting and long bow via the Samlesbury Longbow Archers. For further information please contact David Howard 01772 744009 or Alan Cowie 01772 743916.

RIFLE SHOOTING

Preston and District Rifle and Pistol Club currently use the Hoppers facilities for small calibre shooting disciplines. For more information visit www.prestonshooters.org

HOPPERS ROLLERS

Hoppers Rollers provide a platform for cyclists to participate and/or compete in road cycling to a level that suits their aspirations. This varies from social cycling in club runs through to elite racing. Throughout the summer the club runs social rides on a Wednesday evening. To keep up to date with departure times and routes visit @HoppersRollers on Twitter, through the Hoppers website, or contact Ben Hedley 01772 863546.

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MINI JUNIOR AND COLTS RUGBY AT LIGHTFOOT GREEN



Hugh Duckworth

Welcome back to players and parents alike to the forty sixth season of Mini Junior Rugby at Lightfoot Green. A particularly warm welcome to those registering for the first time.

In terms of registered players, 2018/19 saw 400 plus youngsters enjoy the rugby experience at Hoppers. Not only did the number of volunteer coaches and managers increase by 20%, but also there was a planned and effective focus on achieving the England Rugby Coaching Award. This in itself is a tremendous platform for future growth. Two Junior age groups with high numbers played double fixtures throughout the season, thereby ensuring all youngsters enjoyed game time.

The Artificial Grass Pitch, entering its fourth year, has proved to be an invaluable asset, not only allowing more rugby to be played by an increasing number of youngsters but also leading to improved management of the grass pitches. The RFU now appreciates the challenge of providing mid-week training for over two hundred youngsters and has arranged for the club to pre-book two hours on the AGP every Wednesday evening. This represents a tremendous concession and can only lead to an improved standard of Junior Rugby here at Preston Grasshoppers.



Charlotte Kenny Mcinally

The Colts demonstrated tremendous team spirit throughout the season, which culminated in a successful end of season tour to Bristol. Several of the ex-Colts are currently enjoying pre-season training with the first and second team squad. Phill Mills will be lead coach for 2019/20, supported by First XV player Ryan Carlson and Ollie Hoban, a former Colt.

The local Land Rover retailer has sponsored Mini Junior Rugby at Preston Grasshoppers since 1997 and last season saw the fourth name change - to Inchcape. In celebration, our sponsor funded the purchase of brand new kit for the Under 7s to 16s inclusively and for the first time the playing shirts reflected the dual brands of Jaguar and Land Rover. These were not only a great source of pride to the youngsters but also the envy of the opposition!



Ryan Carlson

The club is particularly indebted to UCLAN (University of Central Lancashire) for providing First Aid cover on a Sunday throughout the season. The students have achieved an extremely comprehensive and professional standard, and generated favourable feedback from visiting teams.



Simon Seekings and the catering team deserve a special thank you for serving approaching three thousand portions of sausage and chips to visiting teams. This fact alone reflects the scale of Mini Junior Rugby at Hoppers.

Finally a big thank you to Dave Preston and Derrick Cray for their outstanding commitment to preparing and maintaining the pitches to such a high standard.



In terms of representative honours in 2018/19, fourteen players from the Under 15s and Under 16s were selected for Lancashire, and four for the Sales Sharks Junior Academy. Four ex Preston Grasshoppers players were selected for the Sale Sharks Senior Academy and all played for Sale Sharks during last season. Arron Reed played for England in the Under 20s World Cup in Argentina, and Kieran Wilkinson in the Under 20s Six Nations.

New milestones were achieved with the Hoppers Festivals, the long-standing and successful one day events for the Under 7, Under 8 and Under 9s and separately for the Under 10, Under 11 and 12s were repeated. For the very first time these were supplemented by an Under 13s Festival, the success of which providing the platform for a much bigger event in 2019/20. The club is indebted to Vivienne Davenport of Westholme School for confirming the continued sponsorship of the Hoppers Festivals in 2019/20.

The Sportsman's Dinner, with Jason Leonard as Principal Speaker, was a sell out. The monies raised contributing to the ongoing pitch improvement programme.

The Presentation Dinners at the end of the season were successful events and achieved record attendances. The Masters of Ceremonies, Ian Gaskell and Daniel Weed deserve a particular vote of thanks. Alex Carson, captain of the Under 16s, presented the awards at the Junior Dinner, he himself receiving the Founders Cup for 2018/19 towards the close of the event.

Oga Mabaya from the First XV proved a popular choice at the Minis Dinner.

The Hoppers Tours go from strength to strength and reflect the scale of Mini Junior Rugby here at Lightfoot Green, with approaching five hundred departing on six separate tours.

Looking forward, the plans for 2019/20 will be threefold.

- Firstly, aim to achieve an improvement in skill levels in the Junior age groups, based on the increased availability of the AGP for midweek training.
- Secondly, retain the focus among the volunteer coaches on achieving the England Rugby Coaching Award.
- Finally, improve the availability of professional coaches to the Junior age groups.

Commitment to these three areas will not only assist in the management of our numbers but also improve the standard of Mini Junior and Colts Rugby offered by Preston Grasshoppers.

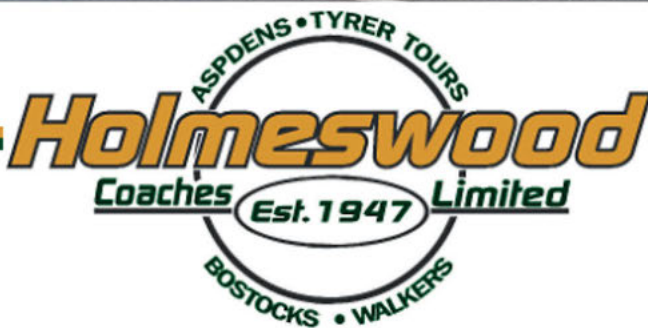
HUGH DUCKWORTH

Chairman– Mini, Junior and Colts Rugby



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This weekend sees the start of the 2020 Six Nations Championship. As ever the tournament will be eagerly anticipated by supporters but as in previous post World Cup tournaments, some teams will suffer a hangover whilst others will be determined to build on their showing in Japan or put right the wrongs of a poor performance. In 2008 and 2016, Wales and England won Grand Slams after poor World Cups the previous autumn. All teams will be starting a fresh new four-year cycle to the next World Cup so throughout the next four years there will be one eye on development whilst trying to ensure results remain positive. So what should we expect from each team over the next two months?

ENGLAND

After reaching the World Cup final, England start as favourites particularly given they face Ireland and Wales at Twickenham. Eddie Jones has freshened up his coaching staff with the additions of Amor and Proudfoot and the squad has also been changed with a number of new faces involved.

However perhaps Jones could have been even more robust with his selections, particularly at scrum half where England still seem to be lacking a bit of X Factor and also at Number 8 where once again Billy Vunipola is ruled out. It will also be interesting to see who of the new caps actually get any game time come selection.

The Six Nations is always a momentum tournament so the first weekend is always important. Playing away in Paris against a youthful but powerful home team may not be the place to introduce a number of new caps but go with the tried and tested and then look to introduce new faces once a winning start is secured.

Minimum Return: *For England given their resources, any season without a Championship win is a poor return. England need to show the Semi Final performance is a regular standard rather than a flash in the pan. Their set piece also could do with a shot in the arm after their struggles in the final.*

FRANCE

The game in Paris could be a huge opportunity for France. They had a steadily improving World Cup and with a new coaching team they have put their trust in youth. Given that France have been very prominent in recent Junior World Cups that seems a statement of intent and they are clearly looking long term having jettisoned a number of senior players. If Shaun Edwards can add discipline and a watertight defence to a side loaded with talented footballers then they could be the real deal after many years of false dawns.

Minimum Return: *Three wins would hint at progress, four wins would suggest something special is building.*

WALES

I like the look of the Wales squad and that there seems to be a move towards a more Welsh style of play under Wayne Pivac. Clearly this won't happen overnight but there are some outstanding footballers in the Wales squad who have been constrained by a one dimensional style of play for too long. I expect the likes of Tipuric, Adams, Liam Williams et al to reach a new level in attack. Some more ball carrying clout and a greater trust in letting the talents of Tomos Williams and Jarrod Evans have more game time would also hint that things are continuing to move in the right direction.

Minimum Return: *Still have to strike the balance between winning and developing a greater attacking threat. Three home wins would be a solid return, four wins excellent but scoring far more tries would be the biggest improvement.*

IRELAND

Ireland are an interesting one. The World Cup was a disaster and the appointment of a new Head Coach from within seems a gamble. A number of their senior players have had a poor twelve months and despite having glittering careers perhaps have something to prove. The Irish regions continue to do well in Europe but are the likes of Conor Murray, Jonny Sexton, Peter O Mahoney and Cian Healy have to show that their form in the World Cup was only temporary.

Minimum Return: *The retention of many of the old guard adds to the pressure. They need to be in contention going into the final round to justify their favour.*

SCOTLAND

Scotland need to find some wins or time might start to look up for Gregor Townsend. Defensively they are far too porous and that is the major issue that needs to be addressed if they are to win games. Attacking wise they seem to be capable of scoring tries but the untimely spat between Finn Russell and coach Townsend hints of deeper issues and shorn of their playmaker, their defensive improvement needs to be instant.

Minimum Return: *Beating Italy alone is not enough. Given the off field issues, a minimum of three wins and two competitive showings in defeat would seem to be the minimum to keep the Scottish support on board.*

ITALY

Italy have a new coach in Franco Smith who has a good track record in making teams greater than the sum of their parts. He will need to be able to make good on that if he is to end a dreadful run of Six Nations defeats for the Azzurri. Two away games to start in Cardiff and Paris would seem to make this even more difficult but in post World Cup seasons, those teams who fared worst at the global tournament sometimes have a greater edge in their Six Nations performances. The long suffering Italian fans will be praying that is true for their team.

Minimum Return: *It has to be firstly getting a win then ideally another. Two wins would be a huge return given recent seasons.*



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What looked to be a wet and windy afternoon turned into a bright afternoon with 22 women deciding to find their Inner Warrior, 6 of whom were new to Hoppers Women's Rugby.

Campaigning for the event began at the beginning of January to increase participation with Social Media Posts, an Article in the Lancashire Evening Post and even a live radio Interview for BBC Radio Lancashire by coach Mollie Paling and captain Emma Pooley.

What ensued was a fun afternoon of playing rugby themed games led by Coach, Kai Burns from the RFU. With games including Rugby Netball and an Obstacle Course,



Inner Warrior has been created to encourage women aged 17 and above who may not have considered Rugby before, or women who have hung up their boots to help find their way back.

Over 18,000 women across the country have attended Warrior Camps to date, with many going on to join women's touch and contact rugby teams. Rugby is becoming one of the fastest growing female sports in England.

The ladies team is always looking for new players to join them at any point of the season.

Training is Tuesday 7pm - 8.30pm and Thursday 7pm - 8pm with matches played on Sunday afternoons.



Report by Emma Pooley. Photo's by Pete Steele.

Kai Burns, RFU Coach.

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FIXTURES/RESULTS 2019/20

1st XV

2nd XV

2019	OPPONENTS	H/A	RES	WLD	OPPONENTS	H/A	RES	WLD
7 Sept	SEDGLEY PARK	H	20-30	L	Chester 2	A	78-14	L
14 Sept	Fylde	A	24-24	D	CALDY 2	H	31-38	L
21 Sept	SCUNTHORPE	H	48-24	W	Fylde 2	A	33-27	L
28 Sept	SHEFFIELD TIG'S	H	10-9	W	ROSSENDALE 2	H	12-31	L
5 Oct	Wharfedale	A	20-19	L	Sedgley Park 2	A	53-7	L
12 Oct	HUDDERSFIELD	H	22-27	L	Lymm 2	A	39-17	L
19 Oct	Tynedale	A	34-5	L				
26 Oct	STOURBRIDGE	H	20-17	W	Macclesfield 2	A	Postponed	
2 Nov	Hinckley	A	27-17	L				
9 Nov	CHESTER	H	10-27	L	BLACKBURN 2	H	24-28	L
16 Nov	Caldy	A	49-21	L	Caldy 2	A	57-17	L
23 Nov	LOUGHBOROUGH	H	21-34	L	FYLDE 2	H	17-11	W
30 Nov	Luctonians	A	29-3	L	Rossendale 2	A	Postponed	
7 Dec	HULL	H	13-18	L	SEDGLEY PARK 2	H	32-5	W
14 Dec	Otley	A	0-0	D	LYMM 2	H	52-31	W
21 Dec	FYLDE	H	3-28	L				
2020								
4 Jan	Scunthorpe	A	7-30	W	MACCLESFIELD 2	H	14-18	L
11 Jan	Sheffield Tigers	A	11-10	L	Blackburn 2	A	28-10	L
18 Jan	WHARFEDALE	H	26-26	D	CHESTER 2	H	24-8	W
25 Jan	Huddersfield	A	25-15	L	Rossendale 2	A	24-10	L
1 Feb	TYNEDALE	H			Macclesfield 2	A		
8 Feb	Stourbridge	A						
15 Feb	HINCKLEY	H						
22 Feb	Weather Weekend							
29 Feb	Chester	A						
7 Mar	CALDY	H						
14 Mar	Weather Weekend							
21 Mar	Loughborough	A						
28 Mar	LUCTONIANS	H						
4 Apr	Hull	A						
11 Apr	Weather Weekend							
18 Apr	OTLEY	H						
25 Apr	Sedgley Park	A						

NATIONAL LEAGUE 2 NORTH

Green background is the promotion place. Blue background is the play-off place. Pink background are relegation places.

		P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	TBP	LB	PTS	ADJ
1	CALDY	19	19	0	0	745	234	511	14	0	90	
2	FYLDE	20	15	1	4	637	348	289	13	3	78	
3	SEDGLEY PARK	19	14	0	5	521	430	91	9	4	69	
4	HINCKLEY	20	12	0	8	486	414	72	9	5	62	
5	LOUGHBOROUGH	20	11	0	9	582	470	112	9	5	58	
6	SHEFFIELD TIG'S	20	11	0	9	446	454	-8	5	3	52	
7	CHESTER	19	9	1	9	442	482	-40	9	4	51	
8	STOURBRIDGE	20	8	0	12	493	529	-36	10	8	50	
9	TYNEDALE	20	8	2	10	486	484	2	7	6	49	
10	WHARFEDALE	20	8	2	10	444	459	-15	4	5	45	
11	HULL	20	8	2	10	365	394	-29	3	5	44	
12	HUDDERSFIELD	20	7	3	10	438	519	-81	7	3	44	
13	OTLEY	20	8	3	9	384	474	-90	2	3	43	
14	LUCTONIANS	20	7	1	12	404	488	-84	6	7	43	
15	HOPPERS	20	4	3	13	337	466	-129	3	4	29	
16	SCUNTHORPE	19	0	0	19	284	849	-565	4	2	6	

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