



PAVIORS R.F.C.

PAVIORS RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

FOUNDED 1922

Headquarters and Ground:

The Ron Rossin Ground

Burntstump Hill, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PQ

Tel: 0115 963 8527

Paviors History

It was way back in 1922 that a few guys from High Pavement Grammar School in Nottingham had the gem of an idea to establish an Old Boys Rugby Club. Little is known of the first few years of High Pavement Rugby Club and their maroon and green strip but in 1927 a split occurred and from this came Nottingham Casuals. In 1929 High Pavement Rugby Club affiliated to the Rugby Football Union and to Notts Lincs and Derby the following year. The name was changed to Old Paviors Rugby Football Club in 1930 and a further change to our current name occurred in 1976. Till then we had led a fairly nomadic existence playing games at the Nottingham Rugby Club on their railway pitch, the Nottingham Old High Pavement School playing fields in Strelley, on Highfields and Melbourne Park Nottingham. In 1958 we finally put down roots at Dale Road, on the top of Carlton Hill. There was a clubhouse of some stature and two pitches that undulated wildly and would have caused many an injury to the super fit players of today. Then though, hamstrings were something you had at Christmas, drinking water during a game gave you stitch and a warm up involved cupping your hands round a lit Woodbine. There are still plenty around who remember, be it rather vaguely, some cracking nights up there but sadly it was sold to property developers in 1972. We were kicked out before our lease expired so it was back on the road for Pavs. The School in Bestwood Nottingham beckoned so back we went, back because we had had a previous spell there in 1955/6. During the time we enjoyed the hospitality of the School much was happening in the background to secure a permanent home.

That home is where we are today and we took up residency in 1974/75, there was a football pitch, a cricket square and outfield plus a redundant hockey pitch, now the bottom floodlight area. Structurally, in the top corner of the main pitch, we had a timber shed, two outside toilets, very unpopular with the ladies and a splendid kiddie's playground. Posts were obtained and erected, a bath was dug in one corner of the shed. Water was heated by log fire in an outside tank, usually full of all kinds of creepy crawlies, and syphoned into the bath, there was many a scolded tongue as the hot water stubbornly defied gravity! A "Baby Belling" adequately provided after match meals and a couple of trestles and a few planks facilitated a generous beer supply. Our first full season in 1976 was disrupted by a drought and with bleached pitches no games were played until the rain came.

Rightly, we had big plans and there was a buzz about the place. There was no lottery and the like just a small interest free loan from the RFU but everyone knuckled down to raise some cash. Another clubhouse (second hand) was built; it stood on the top left-hand corner of the middle pitch. We had to get services across to it and for what seemed like an age there was a trench left open waiting water pipes etc... Just about everyone fell down it at one time or another as they stumbled there way in darkness, possibly inebriated, back to their cars. We were still using the shed to change but as our playing standards rose, we were desperate for improvements. Youth Opportunity Schemes had by now taken off and we were fortunate in securing their help in building the changing rooms we use today. It was indeed fortunate as there was no other way we could afford to get it started, although the vagaries of the plumbing and electricals still haunt us to this day. Our clubhouse was becoming shabby and after a few beers one night a suggestion was made to extend upwards above the changing rooms. We did and eventually added two more changing rooms and the end room upstairs.

All of this was spearheaded by the "Old Paviors Sports Club", an organisation that pulled together the rugby, cricket and later the Ladies Hockey Club. They were and remain the owners of all at Burntstump, without them, nothing could have happened. During these days of the eighties success was heaped on success and we were running out of room, sounds familiar. We had two rugby and one hockey pitch but acquired permission from a neighbour to utilise an adjacent field as a third pitch. With five regular senior sides and occasionally a 6ths/Vets, this was vital but regrettably in order to comply with a planning restraining order, served by the Local Authority, we had to give that up. The hockey girls left to an artificial pitch so by demolishing the kiddies playground and the old changing rooms, recovering some land from the woods and shifting the main pitch we were able to create a third, good sized rugby pitch. This was the



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second time the main pitch had been nudged up to the top of the ground; the halfway line was once opposite the balcony. Just to remind you that the Sports Club engineered all the work that has gone into Burntstump and they know there is still much to do. They have plans on the drawing board as we speak and their continued role in our long-term development is key.

We had always enjoyed quality Colt's rugby at Paviors but late in the eighties an explosion in Mini and Junior rugby was triggered at the Club. In their wildest dreams, the few who organised that first Sunday morning could never have envisaged the numbers and quality involved today. From day one the M/J grew and grew with success following success and today is the envy of the Three Counties and beyond. The quality of the coaching, organisation and the immeasurable part it plays in the wider education of all the youngsters only enhances the reputation of Paviors Rugby Club. All involved can justifiably be very proud of their achievements. Ironically during the first few years of the M/J boom rugby at Senior level went into decline, a common trend in the game. The eighties were a halcyon period following Three Counties Cup triumphs. The unforgettable day at London Welsh when with a tad more luck we could have gone through to the fourth round of the National KO Cup meant we were well placed in the newly formed league structure. In those early days, we had the likes of Rotherham, Doncaster, Birmingham & Solihull and Worcester on our fixture card, and beat them. We held our own in Midlands One for several years, were relegated but fought back. Sadly, relegation again followed into Midlands Two and a few depressing seasons of relegation, aggravated by re-structuring of leagues, followed.

Two things could have happened, fortunately the persistence and belief of those involved pulled us through and we are again on the up. This is in no small part due to the pipeline of quality players being fed from Mini and Junior rugby into the Senior sides. The bond between the two grows in strength, as it should, and the recent constitutional changes only serve to cement that union.

There are names behind all these events and they know who they are, regrettably some are no longer with us. The Club owes them all, both old and new.