



'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH'

July 2021: Issue 1



England Rugby

UNIVERSITY PARTNER

The Official DURFC Newsletter

INSIDE

A note from Steve Colwell...

Steve Colwell reviews the previous year.

An introduction to the new Captains

Fred Davies and Rhys Belcher are announced as First Team and Club Captains, respectively.

Updates

Updates on the charity work, social news and alumni.



A NOTE FROM THE HEAD COACH...

- By Alex Keay

I am delighted to see the first edition of 'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH' - the official Newsletter of DURFC and the start of termly newsletter from the Club to all the stakeholders of the famous Palatinate shirt.

Whether you are Alumni, Parents, Sponsors or Friends of Durham University rugby you would be, as I am, so proud of what the Club members have achieved in the last 18 months despite the pandemic difficulties.

On the field BSR Champions is a fantastic achievement and to win the RFU Student Core Values Club of the Year 20-21 reflects our strength and togetherness in our culture, charity work and community support.

The Durham University Rugby family have excelled beyond anyone's imagination - well done everyone!!

'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH!'

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Despite the lack of Rugby throughout the term, Rugby as ever, has moved forward. We are always looking at ways to further develop our club and while a reactionary approach to the Covid pandemic has been the only way forward at times - we remain positive that we can return in an improved manner.

During the lockdown, our students worked tirelessly in the City to assist local charities and our friends at Durham City RFC charitable fundraising and maintenance projects. Activities such as these led to DURFC receiving national recognition from the RFU as the best example of "Core Values" in the country.

Fundraising is always a priority and I am delighted to say that the 1875 club initiative has now raised enough money to announce our first scholarship which will be made in memory of our past president Fergus King MBE. The work is now underway to maintain that in perpetuity and add to it with a scholarship in the name of Ted Wood - who has given so much to Durham University RFC over a long period of time.

I would encourage any former player, parent or supporter who feels able to support these incentives to contact me on stevencolwell@gmail.com.

The club wishes to extend its congratulations to Paul Baty who was awarded the Vaughan Parry Williams award for outstanding contribution to Student Rugby. Quite rightly so! Paul is an amazing person who is very dedicated to Durham University RFC and also to the England Students programme where he serves as the National team manager. Congratulations!

As we look forward to 2021/22 season, we hope to welcome you all back to Durham and hope we can count on your support. If there is anything positive to come from the most difficult year in our history, it is that we appreciate further that our club is built on solid foundations and is full of people who value each other on and off the field. On that basis, I firmly believe that the future is bright and we look forward to meeting our freshers and returning players with a positive outlook.

Steven Colwell

President

Durham University RFC



'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH!'



INTRODUCING THE NEW CLUB AND FIRST TEAM CAPTAINS...

Following our AGM in May, the members of DURFC have elected a new committee. Taking on the role of Club Captain will be Rhys Belcher who commented: "I am very proud to have been elected Club Captain for the coming season, I look forward to contributing to the enduring success of the club".

1st XV stalwart Fred Davies has been chosen as captain for the 2021/22 BUCS Super Rugby season and had this to say: "It's a massive honour to be given the opportunity to captain the side and carry the mantle that Ben has set so high. The last 6 weeks have been a real bonus for getting to know the new boys and embed what DURFC is all about. It will be really exciting year to be in palatinate."

Everyone at DURFC would like to thank outgoing captains Dan Blackman and Ben Fowles for everything they have contributed to the club during their time in Durham, they have led the club through arguably the most difficult year in its history with the impact of the global pandemic and will be sorely missed as they move onto the next phase of their lives.



SOCIAL NEWS...

The relaxation of Covid restrictions has meant that after a long absence DURFC are able to socialise as a club again.

The near future sees the return of one of the Rugby Club's most revered social events, the Lash World Cup. This year, Bishop Auckland Rugby Club graciously offered to host this legendary contest that will test the teamwork, determination and sheer will of those involved as nations big and small come together to compete for the coveted championship.

The 12th of June saw Durham City host a 10's tournament followed by a BBQ to finally celebrate the winning of the BUCS Super Rugby Championship in the University's history, we welcomed back many of the players who were so integral in that season to Durham in order to fully celebrate their success.

Former DURFC head coach and legend of the club Ted Wood honoured us with his presence and helped to give out the awards to the many recipients. We also welcomed back Diane King, to congratulate the award winners.



'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH!'

DURFC'S 2019/20 AWARDS...

It was a pleasure to welcome Steve Colwell, Diane King and Ted Wood to congratulate the recipients of this year's awards. The awards were presented at the End of Season BBQ - as described in the social news - in front of alumni, parents and current players. The awards were given as follows:

Scotland U20s Cap: Jack Hill

Presidents Player of the Year: Josh Basham

Presidents Player of the Year: Henry Paremain

BUCS Super League Player of the Year: Ben Fowles

5th XV Coaches' Player of the Year: Harry Ledger

4th XV Coaches' Player of the Year: Tom Huckle

3rd XV Coaches' Player of the Year: Will Pritchard

2nd XV Coaches' Player of the Year: Rawdon Daws

1st XV Coaches' Player of the Year: Toby Woods

Club Captain 20/21: Dan Blackman

Club Captain 19/20: Fergus Hamilton

1st XV Captain: Ben Fowles

2nd XV Captain: Rhys Belcher

3rd XV Captain: Ben Harrington

4th XV Captain: Peter Francis

5th XV Captain: Dan Teare

Clubman of the Year: Anthony Morris



'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH!'

CHARITY NEWS AND AWARDS

This remarkable season has seen the club starved of its ability to perform on the pitch, however this has not stopped our willingness to positively impact our community off it. DURFC have continued their commitment to charitable causes, even through the pandemic and lockdown restrictions.

Some of our charitable highlights this year include the raising of over £9000 as a part of our Movember campaign to raise awareness of mens' mental and physical health issues. Over 60 members of the club took the opportunity to grow some questionable facial hair for the cause as you can see in the pictures below.

The tragic passing of our friend Tom Miller of Nottingham Trent University saw the rugby community band together to raise money for the Oddballs foundation to honour his memory.

During the first national lockdown, DURFC organised a university-wide charity quiz weekly to raise money for both NHS charities and for the Sockstar Project, a student run charity seeking to support anti-poaching rangers in Africa.

We also tried to help out the local community. Our partnership with Durham City RFC has been one that has grown stronger and stronger as years pass, and we felt like we needed to give something back. Volunteers from DURFC helped to repaint the changing rooms at Durham City and also helped to install a number of new benches overlooking the famed Hollow Drift turf.

The actions of the club in this exceptional year have not gone unnoticed. DURFC were awarded Core Values Club of the Year by English Rugby Universities. This award is to celebrate the university club that has demonstrated an outstanding and consistent commitment to the values of the game and we were honoured to accept.

We are also proud to announce that our very own Paul Baty was awarded the Vaughan Parry Williams Award for outstanding contribution to student rugby, an award that all who know Paul will agree he thoroughly deserves.

DURFC'S CONTRIBUTION: IN NUMBERS

In the last 12 months, DURFC have:

- Donated 335kg food to Durham Food Bank
- Hosted a weekly quiz night for all Team Durham Sports Clubs, through the first lockdown.
- Raised over £9000 for Movember
- Raised over £2000 for NHS Charities
- Updated the facilities at Durham City RFC, painting changing rooms and putting up bench seating
- Supported the Tom Miller Oddballs campaign, raising over £500
- Promoted and attending a Workshop detailing Women's safety and risk.



'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH!'

THE PALATINATE AWARDS...

We were delighted to receive the 'Club of the Year' award, from Team Durham.

In their announcement, Team Durham drew particular attention to the initiatives and fundraising efforts that the club have engaged in. Under the leadership of Dan Blackman and Ben Fowles, the club has had a far-reaching effects - all whilst driving forward the rugby programme itself.

Team Durham were quoted as saying:

'The impact has been immeasurable both within the local community and also nationally... This season the club courageously changed the game, playing by their own rules to overcome adversity and positively impact those around them.'



On an individual level, Ben Fowles was awarded 'Sportsman of the Year' for all his efforts both on and off the pitch.

Team Durham said: 'As well as being an exceptional rugby player during this last 18 months, Ben's leadership qualities off the field have shone through. He was at the heart of nearly every initiative and action that the rugby club took, be it organizing a university wide charity quiz on zoom to raise the money for NHS charities or organizing the installation of memorial benches at Durham City RFC Ben is ever present organizing, leading and putting a smile on the face of all those around him. Ben is incredibly well liked both within the Rugby Club and amongst the university community and truly embodies the attitudes and culture expected of a Team Durham Athlete.'

PROMOTING THE 1875 CLUB...

We would like the opportunity to promote the 1875 Club. Membership of the 1875 Club allows you exclusive access to a monthly newsletter and entry into the Fergus King Prize Draw. The 1875 Club will help maintain the high standard of the 'Durham Experience' throughout the whole club by contributing to the sustainability of club finances. It will also help us to invest in player development and both physical and mental wellbeing with physiotherapy, S&C Support, and analysis technology. If you are interested in joining the 1875 Club, please follow [this link to the subscription form](#).

'I JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH!'

ALUMNI NEWS

The pathway from university to the professional game gathers momentum year upon year and Durham's list of alumni in the professional game continues to grow.

One of the stars of our BUCS Super Rugby winning team Fitz Harding has been a stand out performer for Bristol Bears in the Gallagher Premiership, earning multiple starts and impressing Head Coach Pat Lam.

Elsewhere in the Premiership, alumni Simon Hammersley and Josh Beaumont have been performing outstandingly for the Sale Sharks who have recently qualified for the play-offs for the first time in over a decade.

The strong link with the Newcastle Falcons continues as alumni Adam Brocklebank, Sean Robinson and Ben Stevenson have been performing strongly with current student Josh Basham recently signing a contract extension with the club.

Fresher Ewan Murphy has been involved with the England U20 setup and looks to play in the Six Nations Championship this summer. When asked about his major source of inspiration, Ewan cited Hammersley and Beaumont, remarking on the efforts they had made with him, both on and off the field.

Current student Marijn Huis made his international debut in the Netherlands's thrilling victory that sees them promoted to the Rugby Europe Championship to face off against teams such as Georgia.



LOOKING AHEAD...

Looking towards the future, DURFC welcomes the return to play as part of the RFU roadmap which should see us back to competing in BUCS Super Rugby in October. Both Rhys Belcher and Fred Davies are confident and optimistic of the return to rugby and hope to defend DURFC's BUCS Super Rugby title next season. Pre-season begins with a vengeance on the 30th of August and will see the new intake of freshers bolster the DURFC ranks and pull on the legendary palatinate jersey.

Watch this space - next edition of 'I Just Can't Get Enough' is due September 2021...