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Hitchin 1XV
VS
St Albans RFC

15 December 2018

KO 2.00pm

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A welcome message from the Club President

An extra warm welcome to our friends from St Albans. Whilst we're very much looking forward to the game, it will be a poignant one. We lost three good friends of the club this last month — our Chairman says more about each below.

But on the passing of Peter Baines, the first ever Chairman of St Albans RFC, on behalf of Hitchin Rugby Club I offer our condolences to St Albans and of course to his family and friends.

Gerallt Morgan, President



Absent friends

As club Chair, much of my time is spent on the day-to-day administration and organisation of the club. Other volunteers generously give their time, things seem to work and we take for granted what was built on the time and efforts of those who came before us.

Today I wish to honour friends and supporters who have died in the last two months. It has been a sad time for our club and the wider rugby community as a whole.

At Hitchin we lost Tony Walker, a parent and VP who supported from the touchline for many years, joined club tours with zest and spent many a happy lunchtime in the bar. He was the exemplar of the behind the scenes VP, a splendid man whose presence filled the club with fun and mischief, whether he was holding a pint glass or a paint-brush. His presence at this lunch today is sorely missed.

On a broader front, ex-Hertfordshire and RFU president Peter Baines, a great servant of the sport, regular guest at Hitchin and stalwart of St Albans Rugby Club is also remembered. His commemorative celebration at St Albans Abbey, saw the nave full of bursting with a diverse people from professional, sporting and civil corners of society.

It was a testament to the reach of a man bursting with energy and a love of life. He was a great influence on the game and in particular the growth and recognition on women's rugby, something that is very close to our hearts here at Hitchin.

I do however save my final thoughts this week to one of our own life members. At one time or another he held virtually every position that exists in a rugby club, I speak of course of Brian Chapman – our

BAJ, who died peacefully in his sleep at the beginning of the month.

BAJ saved our club from oblivion in the 1960's and with the help of other like-minded men such as Adrian Haigh, George Chance and later John Bennett grew the club in numbers and in strength.

When not saving club, he introduced youth academy rugby at Hitchin at a time when most professional clubs had not even considered the idea, he helped to form an alliance with our local college to teach rugby and later took rugby to the villages by starting mini rugby in Codicote.

His influence and contribution to the club from the 1960's into the new millennium is difficult to overstate. He was a great lobbyist for the club and the sport as a whole. For us he was the prime architect of the management agreement with NHDC that later allowed us to build the new facilities that we benefit from today. Somehow, while doing all this he also found time to compile and publish a 50th Anniversary Commemorative book to celebrate the history of the club and more, so much more beside.

BAJ never stopped supporting Hitchin, he was always well informed and constructive about new initiatives. His love of club never seemed to diminish. He was one of our very small band of life members who regardless of fortune give or gave decades of unwavering support. He was truly a Hitchin great; he will be sadly missed but fondly remembered. So today, before the kick-off I ask you to pause in silence for a minute in tribute to BAJ and while doing so also take a few moments to think of and remember our other absent friends.

Peter Tasko, Club Chair



Photograph by Pat Dunne

Top of the league

Hitchin 1XV's great start to the season continued with a hard fought win in the top-of-the-league clash against Finsbury Park earlier this month. With just a single bonus point separating the two sides, it was the must-win game of the season so far for both teams.

With both sides averaging about 30 points per match, it was the defences that held the day — with just one try each. Hitchin were 13-8 winners to take a three-point lead at the top of the table.

The difference between the sides was probably the Hitchin pack, who dominated most of the set pieces, with excellent scrummaging often pushing back their opponents by 10m or more — a sure sign that the scrum coaching is paying off.

And a 3-12 away win against Staines RFC last weekend consolidated Hitchin's place at the top — with a first half try from 'Doc' Jon Whitby and one in the second half by former captain James 'Nuts' Bolter extended Hitchin's unbeaten league record to nine straight victories.

London & SE Division

Home/Visitors: 1 2018-2019

Teams/Matches: 1		Results										Table		
Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	+/-	TR	CB	PK			
1	Finsbury Park	7	6	0	1	202	82	120	0	1	00			
2	Windsor	7	6	0	1	229	110	119	0	0	00			
3	St Albans	7	5	0	2	170	162	8	0	0	00			
4	Weybridge FC	7	5	0	2	180	170	+10	4	0	24			
5	Berk of England	7	4	0	3	147	210	-63	2	2	27			
6	Thamesian	7	4	0	3	181	164	17	0	1	20			
7	U.C.S. Old Boys	7	3	0	4	137	195	-58	4	3	18			
8	Staines RFC	7	3	0	4	140	103	+37	0	1	14			
9	Staines	7	3	0	4	112	194	-82	0	0	11			
10	Wendon	7	2	0	5	166	167	-1	2	3	12			
11	Surrey Heath	7	1	0	6	120	233	-113	2	0	6			
12	Actonians	7	0	0	7	102	206	-104	4	0	4			



Photograph by Pat Dunne

1XV Squad

(Announced so far)



Shirt	Player
1	Stuart West
2	Thomas Tidey (Captain)
3	James Bolter
4	Jonathan Welsford
5	Matthew Trussell
6	Pierre De Rancourt
7	Rory Blackburn
8	Thomas Spratt
9	Daniel Wiggins
10	Ben Wiggins
11	Adam Howard
12	Will Clifford
13	Carwyn Morgan
14	William Rooney
15	Alistair Southward
16	James Akrill
17	Chris Martin
18	Samuel Willoughby
19	William Evans
20	Sean McGinnity (Vice Captain)
Manager	Mark Tidey
Physio	Mark Hoffman
Coach	Adam Shaw



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