



MISTLEY RUGBY
PASSION, SPIRIT, STRENGTH

Mistley RUFC annual report April 25-26

I am reminded when I write my annual report of the history of the club set down in our website www.mistleyruffc.com under the heading Role in the Local Community, and I quote "Mistley Rugby Club is more than a sporting organisation - it stands as a proud pillar of the local community". Yes we are a proud village side and regardless of the larger clubs in Essex we continue to provide a family orientated club creating a friendly society where sport, friendship and community spirit flourish side by side. This was certainly the case over the last 12 months.

Our 1st XV have continued to compete with vigour in Counties 2 Eastern Counties League and presently are 3rd in the table with 2 games left till the end of the season. The Marauders having been promoted last season to Eastern Counties Div One South have battled hard against some challenging opposition and with one match left are 5th out of 10 teams. They also successfully won the final of the Suffolk RFU Bronze Cup against Harwich & Dovercourt RFU last April.

Our youth teams - the future of the club have thrived this season going from strength to strength with increased recruitment and participation with all age groups (Under 6 to Under 16). The commitment of the volunteer coaches and those behind the scene has been immense. The youth section has excelled in the quality of rugby across the age groups with players development in their skills, teamwork and sportsmanship. These successes and recognition has helped strengthen social interaction amongst players and families and their contributions have been widely recognised by all within the club. Over 160 children/youth attend our Sunday training sessions and this is growing.

Our Ladies team known as the Swans has also grown substantially with some 35 players now competing in full contact rugby together with an expanding group taking part in mixed T1 non contact rugby, this is suitable for all ages and skill levels. With an ambitious fixture list the Swans have travelled far in the Inner Warriors series. One of the outstanding moments of the season came when the Swans at home delivered a dominant 55-0 victory over Maldon. This performance highlighted the team's growing cohesion, confidence and depth. Looking ahead the Swans are preparing to enter the NC3 East League next season and reflects the ambition and commitment shared by the players, coaches and the wider club community. Mistley RFC will continue to invest in expanding the women's and girls sections and remains committed to providing opportunities for players of all ages and ability to discover and enjoy rugby in a supportive environment.

Another area of expansion is our Veteran players (35 and over) who have enjoyed a series of games with Suffolk RFU and other clubs. Regrettably our annual Thorn Cup match traditionally held on Boxing Day against Harwich was postponed and a Veterans game was arranged against Suffolk Men's Vets with Mistley winning by 33-12. Everyone agreed this was a most enjoyable event. It is the intention now to set up a Veterans League for the future.

On the social side Mistley Marauders won the Tug of War for the second year running at the annual regatta held in July and the Pram Race in August was again a resounding success. The Club also instigated Mental Health sessions together with Prostate screening and Health and Sport Nutrition. The Club also hosted the Mayflower walk on behalf of the Rotary club and all these events are very much part of our commitment to the local community.

We were also honoured to participate in the Mistley annual Remembrance Service and our younger members helped out. We were also delighted to welcome Marie Read our Life President for our Club

Lunch in December and her late Son, Simon had made a generous donation for our youth which we gratefully received.

One very sad moment for the club was the unexpected death of Dave Smith back in February husband of Lynne Smith our Secretary. Dave who would lend his hand to any task was also our Bar Manager. This success and running of the bar was very much down to him and as with any club the income derived is paramount to its financial success. He will be a great loss to the Club and will be fondly remembered.

Finally, and I make no apologies for repeating myself as with previous annual reports, the above could not happen without the tireless work from all our very committed volunteers and supporters. They strive in all aspects to improve and better the successes of the Club on and off the pitch in whatever capacity however great or small. Without them the club would not survive. Their work is unmeasurable. Also to our generous sponsors who help to provide new kit and equipment. We can't thank you all enough.

Finally our President Richard Percival welcomes you all to our Presidents Day on Saturday 2nd May - further details will follow nearer the time.

Willy Meston
Past President.

10th April 2026