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Club Committee Update

Happy New year to all of our members. A huge thank you to all those who attended our Members Social Night before Christmas, it was great to see the bar so busy with people from all sections of the club. As we kick off 2019, we have an exciting time ahead. With the Provincial Towns Cup competition kicking off shortly, Youth Cup Finals and lighting up our 1sts pitch, it is going to be a busy few weeks!

Naming of New Dressing Rooms

Athy RFC has erected name plates on each of the new changing room doors in the clubhouse. This is to recognise the many members who have been a part of Athy RFC's long history and also those club families who contributed to local and provincial rugby competition through the donation of cups bearing their names. These are the Anderson Cup for Leinster J3 competition, the Hosie Cup for North Midlands J1 competition and the Speirs Cup for North Midlands J3 competition.



Lotto

The Weekly Club Lotto draw takes place every Tuesday night in the Clubhouse. Tickets are only €2 each and are available from the Lotto Committee every Tuesday or you can sign up for Direct Debit. Match 4 correct numbers are you could win the Jackpot which currently stands at €3,400. For more information contact Nigel Holland at ngholland@gmail.com

Club News

Keep up to date on happenings around the club.

Leinster Junior Rugby Hall of Fame Roger Anderson

Saturday 5th January was a momentous occasion for one of our club stalwards Roger Anderson as he was inducted into the Sean O'Brien Leinster Junior Rugby Hall of Fame today. This is a huge honour for Roger and a very fitting tribute to all the hard work he has put into both Athy RFC and junior rugby across Leinster! Well done Roger!



Floodlights

The new floodlights are now fully installed and the generator has been delivered so we are very close to lighting up the Firsts pitch. Keep an eye out on our Social Media channels for updates for the Official Opening!

Referee Course

The Leinster Rugby Referees will be running a new referee's workshop at the end of this month. If you are interested in attending, please click on the link below.

Date: 26 January 2019

Venue: TBC at 9.00am

Register your interest: <http://tinyurl.com/y9qus2uu>

Athy RFC Camp Out 2019

The 2019 Camp-Out has been set for the 27th & 28th of April (subject to approval by Leinster Branch). For more information, check out the Facebook page = Athy Rugby Camp-out or email athyminisrugby@gmail.com



Senior Rugby News

What's happening with senior teams.

1st XV

It has been a mixed bag of results for the 1st XV since the Christmas break. A good win against Garda on Sunday 6th January was followed by a hard-felt 15-26 loss against Arklow on Sunday 13th January. The League takes a break this weekend to make room for Towns Cup action. Next league fixtures include - away to Edenderry on 27th January and then away to Portarlinton on the 17th February.

Provincial Towns Cup

Bank of Ireland Provincial Town Cup first round takes place this Sunday 20th January. Athy have drawn a home fixture for the first time in recent years and will take on Dundalk at 2.30pm at The Showgrounds. We encourage all club members to attend the match and support our senior men!

2nd XV

The 2nd XV are still sitting nicely at the top of Metro League Div. 8 with 28 points however Terenure Collage are not too far behind them with 26 points. 2019 has got off to a good start for the 2nd XV with a very good win over Stillorgan on Sunday 6th January. Stillorgan started strong and took the lead early on but Athy pushed back to bring the final score to 25-17.

Next fixture for the 2nd XV is away to Edenderry on Sunday 27th January for a double header with the 1st XV. Seconds Towns Cup also kicks off with a home fixture against Longford on Sunday 3rd February.

Senior Womens XV

The senior women's team resumed their league on January 13th with a tough encounter against local rivals Portlaoise. Although the match resulted in a loss for Athy the women are rapidly closing the gap on stronger opposition with improved game performance and close results.

There are 3 remaining league fixtures on Jan 20th (CYM Away), Feb 10th (Naas Away) & Feb 17th (Greystones Home). Following this will be cup fixtures at dates to be confirmed.

The team welcomed two new members since Christmas and are happy to welcome more, from beginner to experienced. The only age barrier is that you must be over 18 to play senior rugby – NO UPPER AGE LIMIT!

If you would like to give it a try then contact coaches Mark Bergin or Nigel Holland or any member of the team. Training is on Tuesdays and Fridays at 7.30pm.

All support is welcome at all matches.

Minis & Youths

Cubs, Minis and Youth Sections in Full Flight

Youths Update

The Youth Area Finals due to take place on Sunday the 30th December have been moved to the follow dates:

Saturday 19th January

- U14 v Naas Kick-off at 11.00am

Saturday 9th February

- U15 v Naas Kick-off at 11.00am
- U16 v Naas Kick-off at 11.00am

Best of luck to all players and coaches involved.

Day Out – Leinster v Ulster

Over 200 Youths & Minis players plus parents travelled to the RDS on Saturday 5th January to watch the Leinster v Ulster game. This was a huge undertaking and the club would like to sincerely thank the coaches for their help in organising the trip and for their assistance on the day.

U12 Half Time at Leinster v Ulster

Athy RFC's U12's had a very memorable evening when playing in the half-time game during the recent Leinster v Ulster match at the RDS. Over 30 players from the squad made the journey along with their parents and the lads got to meet some of the Leinster players such as Devin Toner and Scott Fardy before the match.

The game passed by very quickly but saw Athy playing with great intensity and skill against a strong Suttonians team. Ruaidhri Lawlor scored the only try of the game to give Athy the victory but this occasion will live long in the memories of all who attended. Thanks also to our helpers who captured these memories on photos and videos of the night.

U14 Girls Fundraiser

The U14 Girls are organising a fundraising clothes collection through Liberty Recycling. Money raised will be going towards an end of season trip. If you have any clean clothes, bedding, curtains, towels,

linen & shoes that you would like to donate, please place them in a black bags and drop to the Clubhouse between 7 – 8.30pm on Tuesday 26th & Thursday 28th February. This is a perfect time to clear out the hot press, attic & wardrobes!

U15 Match Report

Athy welcomed Enniscorthy to the Showgrounds last Saturday 12th January for a well contested U15 fixture. Athy started brightly and ran in some well worked tries early on. Enniscorthy regrouped and secured more ball and punished Athy with some well worked moves to secured some tries from deep positions and finished the half the brighter of the two. HT: 31 - 17. Athy started the 2nd half with the higher tempo and secured good ball and put some early scores on the board. As in the first half Enniscorthy were allowed too much ball and finished strong. Athy were good for their win on the day, but the score line was too close for comfort. Full time score: Athy 43 – 34 Enniscorthy.

U16 Match Report

Athy U16s hosted Skerries on Sunday 6th January and started off the new year and the premier league in fine fashion, eventually prevailing 29-19. Athy got off to a promising start and lead by an Aaron O'Donohoe penalty after five minutes. However for the next 20 minutes it was Skerries in the ascendency and they lead 14-3 after two excellent tries. Athy wrestled back the initiative with the last play of the half when Culann Carbery showed great strength to score. O'Donohoe stroked over the extras to make the half time scoreline Athy 10-14 Skerries. The second half was tough going as two very well matched teams continued the unrelenting pace. Athy struck next, the backs breaking to release Lochlann Kelleher to dot down with the extras again added. Athy 17-14 Skerries. Skerries surged back into the game but a pivotal intercept and gallop saw David Downey touch down under the posts. Athy 24-14 Skerries. Back came Skerries and scored a well-deserved but unconverted try to setup a grandstand finish. Athy 24-19 Skerries. Kelleher received a yellow card to add to the drama and it was all hands to the pump thereafter. Great attacking play gave Athy a scrum on the Skerries '22 and scrum half Caoilte Kelly picked from the

base before beating the backrow and full back to score. Athy 29-19 Skerries. Kelleher returned for the final minutes where his place in the bin was taken by Fiachra Scully. No matter, the 14 men held out for an excellent victory.

Clubhouse during training

In the Clubhouse during minis training there is an opportunity for the parents to meet up over a cup of tea, coffee or hot chocolate. It is somewhere warmer and drier than the side of the pitch to catch up and you are not too far away from the action. The Clubhouse has always been a good spot to make friends and hear what is going on in the club. Don't be stuck for a gum shield, as Catherine has always got some to sell. They are cut and molded while you wait but the child is required to be in attendance also. The cost of this is €5. This is also the point where a player will normally be when they come off the pitch and the parent is called for.

In The News

The club profile.

Martin Moloney starts Blindside Flanker for Leinster A v Munster

<https://www.leinsterrugby.ie/leinster-rugby-a-munster-thomond-park/?fbclid=IwAR38n1TzWjN4H2TZ9OtH3zBDDjbbw1zWfq5JMGMcV6E6wmWQEE7FTeykVXg>

Athy RFC's U 12's play Half-time at Leinster v Ulster

<https://www.leinsterrugby.ie/gallery/half-time-minis-leinster-ulster/?fbclid=IwAR0lxrbKWe1Dk3ue5Ib-UOhCwaUTCEOnH2X2yG9Mxq4YrBnYFHRj1JICBRE>

Athy RFC's Anderson Wins Sean O'Brien Hall of Fame Award

<https://www.leinsterrugby.ie/athy-anderson-hall-of-fame-award/?fbclid=IwAR3YqocSwG6NkgDCKrVksqIrltdmD9Jl1i1rRNljEyIXzCk9qDcl1jBQ5Gc>

“Ask the Ref”

Hello, Brendan Conroy here, Honorary Secretary of the Club and Leinster Branch Referee since 2003. My intention this article is to set the facts straight about some obscure myths that have crept into the game over the years. I will look at some of the myths that supporters, players, coaches and even sometimes new referees believe are law. Surprisingly there are quite a lot of them, so I have tried to choose the most common.

1. The referee must stop the game for injuries.

Most games in most leagues will have some sort of medical staff, be it a physio, doctor or first aider. These persons are normally told by the ref before the game that if there is an injury to come straight on and deal with it.

If the injured player is not in the way of play, then there is no need to stop the game, the team concerned has the option to replace the player at the next stoppage, the referee will normally stop the game if play moves to close to the injured player, for their safety. The same is true for an injured player that can walk, if the game has been stopped, then they can walk off the pitch and be treated so the game can carry on.

2. The ball is out when the player has their hands on it.

Whether it be a scrum, ruck or maul this simply is not true. The ball is out when the ball is clear of the last players' feet, what the player cannot do is dummy to deceive the defending team into thinking it's out (free Kick).

3. A Kick-off or restart must travel 10m in the air.

Nope, the ball must travel 10m before touching another player of the kickers team. Simple as that, if it bobbles around at 9.9m and both teams stand around it waiting for the ref to blow and it then touches the 10m line, it's play on!

4. You can ruck a player providing the studs are going backwards

No you can't, you are not permitted to deliberately place boots on a person, you can however ruck the ball, which can be seen being done by scrum-halves quite often in high level.

If you have any questions that you would like to ask Brendan, please email pro@athyrugbyclub.com and we will answer them in the next newsletter.

“Man In The Middle”

For as long as remember, I always wanted to play rugby. My earliest memories of the game are watching Ireland getting hammered in the early 80s every second Saturday from late January to mid-March! My Uncle was playing for Ireland at the time and this gave me a great love of the game.

Playing rugby was always with me, from school to 3rd level education and on to when I entered work full time. In fact, it was a great way to get involved in new communities, meet people and make friendships. At one stage I was studying in Scotland, was skint broke and rugby was the only free activity I had. Having played a match in Inverness, my teammates and I returned to the club but, to my relief, it was closed (5 hours on a bus with only Scottish Ale as refreshments isn't a healthy life style choice!). As I was about to head back to my digs, I was suddenly bundled into a taxi and squashed between two of the biggest Royal Air Force engineers you could ever imagine.... they had free time before returning to barracks and I was their student pass for cheap beer at the local club!

With job changes came new locations but rugby was always my first call. Eventually my playing career came to an end while in Hanover, Germany. I was getting old and frustrated with the decisions of the 'younger' referees. I challenged a referee one day after a match about his decisions and he suggested that "if you're so good at decision making, you should become a referee yourself". HELL NO!

When I returned home to Ireland, rugby training wasn't possible with work and family commitments and I had to finally realise that my playing days were over. I wanted to stay involved in the game, but coaching was not possible for the same reasons as playing. I felt I still had a lot to offer the game, which had given me so much over the years and the only avenue open to stay involved was the dreaded role of referee ... and me a flanker through and through!

I took up the whistle and learnt the laws (I really should have done the laws bit when playing!) and that was 10 years ago. I started with youth games and quickly progressed to adult games. Work often got in the way but when I would return home after a

week away, refereeing was a great way to forget work and life's other stresses. I now found myself wanting to do a match on a Saturday and Sunday.

Having a supportive family (the 4 kids now come to matches as body guards) is great help. Advice and training from the ARLB makes running on to the field a great thrill. I have refereed Leinster Cups, Area Finals and do or die derby matches and the buzz of enabling the game to be played and getting the decisions correct is very rewarding. I now know that refereeing offers the best seat in the house to watch the game I owe the German referee massive thanks... but he was wrong about that penalty!!

William Murphy
Athy RFC Referee

Club Information

How to find out more about your club

The club will be publishing this newsletter every month in order to keep members and supporters better informed of the very wide range of club activities. Should any member need information on any aspect of club activities please contact the club PRO Sinead Kelly (pro@athyrugbyclub) or Hon Secretary Brendan Conroy (honsecathyrfc@gmail.com) or any committee member.