



Michaelmas Term 2019

A “thank you” to our sponsors

As you’ll read later on we’ve a lot to be excited about this year. However, the thing that’s got us all buzzing the most is the announcement of our new sponsors!

Morgan Douglas

We’ll be seeing lots of this lovely lot as they’ve joined us for a 3-year sponsorship package- which means many of our freshers will be sporting Morgan Douglas kit for the entirety of their time at DUWRFC! The eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed the branding on the new 1st team kit from photos of the Charity Match (more on that later). The MD team were up on the balcony in prime position to see the new strip in its’ inaugural run-out.

Picnic Basket

If there’s one thing rugby players like, its’ food- and DUWRFC have been feeling the benefit of a year-long deal with this local business already, with free sandwiches and discounted lunches to many of our players as well as support at the 1st team games. Recent Instagram action from the club celebrated our new training shirts, proudly displaying the logo of our ladies’ favourite lunch spot.

MORGAN DOUGLAS
STUDENT LETTINGS

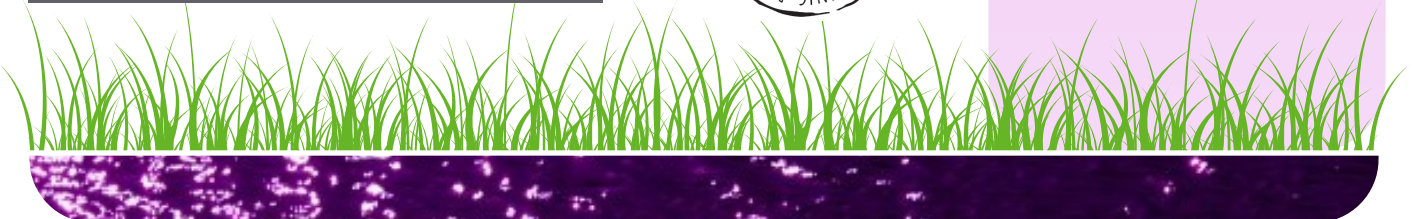


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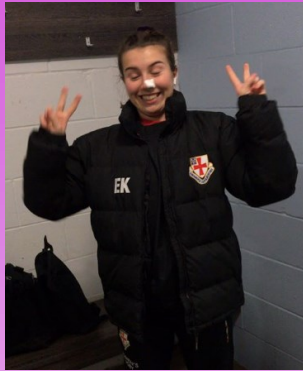
Important Dates

1-2.5.2020	Hill vs Bailey Weekend & Old Girls Weekend
7.6.20	End of Season Ball



Player Profile– Erin Kelly

Every year, the club captain has their work cut out running a student led club in a professional manner. This year, continuing with an ambitious program is no different. Luckily, at the helm we have Erin, who joined DUWRF as an experienced fresher and took on secretary duties in second year.



Describe your leadership in three words: organized, proactive, adaptable

What's your favourite thing about leading the club?: seeing everyone as a happy family and succeeding because they're enjoying themselves!

What would you do with your time if you weren't involved in the club?: Probably sit and be lonely!!

What is the biggest challenge with leading this year?: Dealing with situations where people don't pull their weight is tricky.

What's your favourite flavour of ice cream?: Ooo, has to be cookie dough

Any messages for the alumni?: A huge thank you for all the support you've given us so far! It's been great to see you at games and

Preseason

That month that many of you will remember with a variety of memories- good and bad! Waking up on the second morning unable to move your legs is a sensation familiar to all we're sure. A fair few of the women were struggling to begin with but with tailored strength & conditioning plans and meticulous training schedules from Head Coach Lydia Crossman, it wasn't long before the fitness was back up to speed. One of the best parts is always meeting the freshers, showing them around our beautiful city and watching them come out of their shells- not that all of them started out shy in the first place..!

The culmination of the month-long program was the Cambridge match on 25th September. The game, featuring Durham alumni Coreen Grant, Ella Halcrow & Rose Scowen playing in the blue and white hoops this time, was a great test for a very new mix of people. The deal was sealed with a 21-11 victory to Durham, who returned home with plenty to think about and lots to work on in preparation for the first game against Edinburgh.

Charity Match

Back for its' 2nd year, the Charity double header was a much-anticipated event with ticket sales beginning in earnest in Freshers Week and culminating with some huge on-the-door queues. Fans for the players in palatinate were not disappointed with wins from both teams (Women: Durham 1st XV 44-12 Northumbria 1st XV). As with the previous year, proceeds went to Sport in Action Zambia, a charity important to all Team Durham sports.

Whilst we were unable to have a presence at this year's Big Match in London, the organization and commitment was more than channeled into this event to make it a fantastic showcase of Women's rugby and especially that played here at Durham.

Team Round Up

The results, displayed on page 4, show promise for an exciting 2nd term of fixtures.

1st XV

The 1st team have seen the development of a very new side- with a mix of freshers, 2nd team and even 3rd team girls being called up to play for the squad. They have not disappointed, with some hard opposition and the challenges of a new team, the 1st XV never fail to provide an excellent example of the skill we are so proud to develop in the DUWRF program.

This year's Captain- Beth Blacklock shares her thoughts on this season:

"This season is different to any other in the history of DUWRF. Changes are significant and have come threefold: New players, New management set up, New league.

Out with the old and in with the new has never been so true. With over half of the squad leaving at the end of last season, huge changes in coaching structure and members and the national league being created, there has literally never been a season like this one. Lots of things are being put in place to set up for future seasons of

excellence, yet Durham University is still painting the pitch palatinate with a huge amount of aggression, try scoring and racking up points to see a third place seat by the Christmas break.

With leaving last season with new records broken, students leaving and a new leadership team in place, 2019 was inevitably going to be a different season for Durham University. Everything has changed to create a new Palatinate era.

This year there was huge intake of some very talented players and therefore a very big change within the team and the perfect chance to restructure everything and start afresh. Youth is definitely one of the biggest positives about our squad this season because there is so much room for growth to meet the immense amount of potential across this squad. The future is looking bright! This season has been brilliant so far, with the last change of it becoming national, and every match has been competitive and helped develop the squad huge amounts week by week. The league becoming national has increased the quality of every single game, the quality of teams across the country and this competitiveness has never been matched in the history of women university rugby.

There is so much buzz around women's rugby, and there is a huge excitement for the great things that are inevitably coming in the new year with Durham, specifically, but with women's rugby in general in the future!

At the end of the first round, the improvement from the squad from the first game to last was immense, the second round is going to be a round to watch. With a fantastic win over the southern champions from last season, Exeter, the improvements in defence, aggression and intent were clear on the pitch and the 2020 half of the season is going to be one to watch.

Time is crunching and we are getting closer to the cup, training is becoming more intense, the attitude of our players is getting more serious, and we are seeing more and more of what this team's potential really is. This season is one to remember for so many reasons, and being able to be a part of it is such a privilege.

Watch out for 2020 and our route to Twickenham, the girls are ready!"

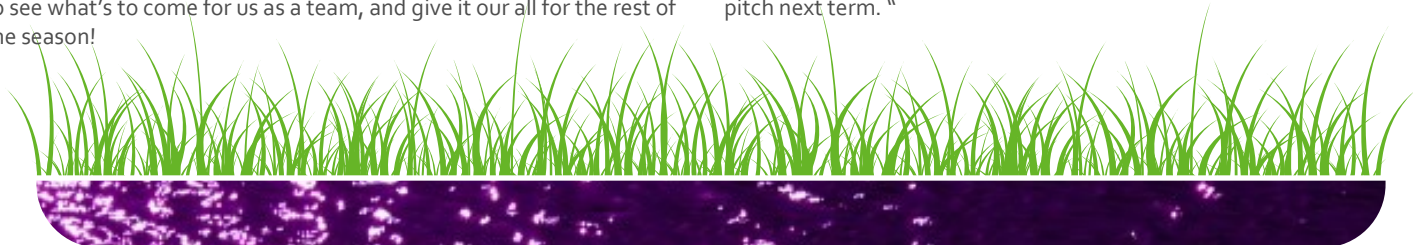


2nd XV

The 2s, ever cheerful and this year showing grit to match the smiles, Under the captaincy of Olivia 'Liv' Amura the 2s have developed closely with the 1's, with a great many players training in a "Performance Squad" that promotes intense and skilled training to maintain excellence across all three teams. Liv has lots to say about her girls: "After being promoted last year, the 2nd XV have thrived under the new pressure of playing against tougher teams than we have ever faced before, and have had some fantastic results along the way. Whether it be our comfortable 71-15 win against Edge Hill Women's 1s, or the resurgence of energy and desire that led to a victory of 30-15 against Liverpool John Moores Women's 1s, the team this year has never failed to provide intensity and passion for the ball and the win. Despite a 27-5 loss against Lancaster Women's 1s, the experience enabled us to pull together as a unit to motivate each other, as well as identifying personal and team works ons that we need to carry through the rest of our matches. The 2s have a special quality in that we have both performance and development squad members, so this creates a lovely dynamic where experienced players get to take on a coaching role on the pitch to help newer girls learn the game, whilst being pushed to a higher level. Going into the next round of games will pose new challenges as we know the strengths and weaknesses of each team, but we also have the benefit of knowing their style of play, which will allow us to carry on improving on our own strategies and techniques. I can't wait to see what's to come for us as a team, and give it our all for the rest of the season!"

3rd XV

The 3s came out all guns blazing, beating Sheffield twice in a row despite both teams fielding teams consisting of only freshers or complete beginners. Poor weather since then and tough opposition have made the results a mixed bag, but the progression of this brand new team is impressive, with a skill set that makes it hard to believe they'd never picked up a ball before October. Elected by the team at the start of the season, captain Hebe Grout has proved a vocal leader with plenty to say here: "The 3s started the season with a BANG! The team was formed predominantly of girls who had never played a game of full contact rugby before, but the speed at which they picked up the game with such enthusiasm was unbelievable. Their first match was at home with a huge supporting crowd, and this combined with high energy levels and excitement lead to a massive win - 42-0 against Sheffield. The following week they took on Sheffield again. It was clear they'd brought out an even stronger team but the 3s girls took it in their stride and pulled out another incredible win (20-5). From this point on the games began getting tougher and tougher. In the last three weeks, they battled it out against Newcastle 2XV, Leeds 2XV and Northumbria 2XV. Sadly they didn't come home with a win but despite all odds (numerous injuries, end-of-term illness, the appalling weather) they've done Team Durham proud and played some truly wonderful rugby. The progression, enthusiasm, determination and commitment of these girls is admirable and we can't wait to see more of them on the pitch next term. "



Women's National

National						
Position	Name	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points
1	Edinburgh Women's 1	7	7	0	0	33
2	Cardiff Met Women's 1	7	5	2	0	24
3	Northumbria Women's 1	7	3	4	0	17
4	Durham Women's 1	7	3	4	0	14
5	Hartpury Women's 1	7	2	5	0	12
6	Exeter Women's 1	7	1	6	0	8

"Despite all odds... they've done Team Durham proud and played some truly wonderful rugby." Captain Hebe Grout on the 3rd XV season so far

Women's Northern Tier 2

2A						
Position	Name	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points
1	Lancaster Women's 1	5	5	0	0	26
2	Liverpool John Moores Women's 1	5	3	2	0	15
3	Durham Women's 2	4	3	1	0	14
4	UCLan Women's 1	3	0	3	0	1
5	Edge Hill Women's 1	5	1	4	0	1
6	York St John Women's 1	4	1	3	0	0

Women's Northern Tier 4

4B						
Position	Name	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points
1	Leeds Women's 2	3	2	0	1	11
2	Durham Women's 3	4	2	2	0	11
3	Huddersfield Women's 1	2	1	1	0	5
4	Sunderland Women's 1	2	1	1	0	5
5	Northumbria Women's 2	3	2	1	0	5
6	Sheffield Women's 2	4	0	3	1	2





Phoebe Blencowe (wing) making a characteristic break during the victorious Charity Match against Northumbria 1st XV.

The Support Team

No team could develop without a strong coaching team. This team boasts the largest team of coaching and support staff to date.

Full Coaching Crew:

Head Coach : Lydia 'Kiwi' Crossman

2nd Team Coaches: Will Withyman & Charlie Mack

3rd Team Coach: Erin 'Eric' Collins

Development Team : Jack Weeks-Greener

Forwards Coach: Heather 'HK' Kerr

Fitness Coach: Cam Henderson

Strength & Conditioning: Ellie Christon

Team Manager: Colin Davison



The difference between Forwards & Backs!



Eric Collins– 3's Coach

This year we welcome 3rd year ex-player Eric to our coaching team to run the 3rd XV. Bringing buckets of enthusiasm and lots of compliments, she's jumped into a coach/mother-hen role very easily!



Why'd you decide to start coaching?:

I've never had serious rugby injury so I thought I'd quit whilst I was ahead!! No, seriously though, I love sharing the fun I've had with rugby with new players!

What's your fav thing about coaching DU:

When I see my girls telling each other what they did well after games— sharing their personal success!

What would you do with your time if you weren't coaching? :

I did qualify as a referee so probably that. Or take up rowing properly

What is the biggest change this year with coaching:

Trying to coach girls on the pitch, teach the rules, manage subs and act as physio and sometimes linesman all at the same time!

What's your favourite flavour of ice cream :

I once had a really great dark chocolate and cherry one



Meet your Exec

Another team of dedicated women who make DUWRFC a possibility and a success!

If you want to contact us please email

alumni.duwrfc@durham.ac.uk

A plea from me- please fill out the questionnaire on the Alumni Network Facebook Page. It'll help make sure you get exactly what you want from our fabulous club!

