

Newsletter 2010

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Rugby Fives returns to its spiritual home

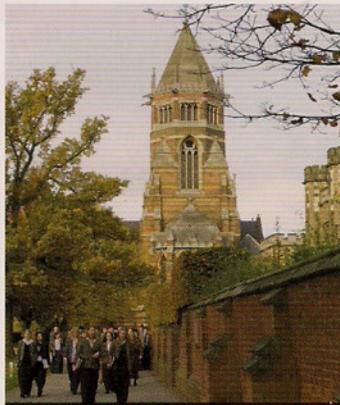
Work has already begun on Britain's newest set of courts – at the school that gave the sport its name

We're just a matter of months away from Rugby Fives making a return to Rugby School.

After announcing in October last year that it would build two brand new Fives courts, in December Rugby School began the construction work, which is expected to take some 36 weeks to complete. After the long drying-out process for the structure, the first games on the new courts should be played in September this year.

The courts themselves will be the first new courts to be built in the UK since the four were put up at Oundle School in 2007, and marks the first time Rugby has had courts for many years.

Crucially, they are to be at the very heart of sporting life in the school, in the sports centre, with a viewing gallery and next to the squash courts. The school has already nominated Trevor White to be Master-in-Charge of Fives, and the sport will be an option for pupils from September.



Rugby will play Fives this year

Before then, there will be an opening ceremony, although the date for that is yet to be confirmed, and both the RFA and Jesters plan to take teams to the school next season.

The news marks the end of a successful appeal to raise £200,000, which has been contributed to by many Fives players, as well as by the RFA and the RFA Charitable Trust.

One major turning point – when the appeal seemed to

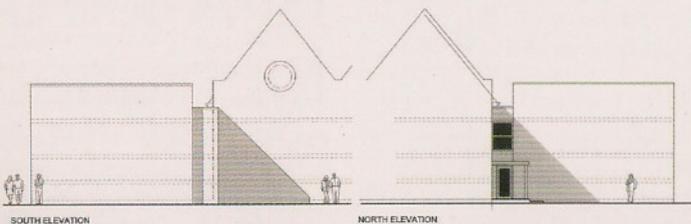
have stalled three-quarters of the way to its target – was the offer from OR John Harland to match any new donations, along with another major donation from an OR in Hong Kong.

The school paid particular tribute to Old Rugbeian – and now RFA Deputy President – Dick Warner, whose efforts in the 2008 Crick Run at the school raised more than £10,000 alone. John Evans, a former housemaster at the school and one of the leading lights of the fund-raising campaign, also paid tribute to Kerry Wilson, the school's Development Director, as well as to the many people whose gifts had enabled the target to be reached.

"We are all thrilled to think that our game will be played again, and this time by girls as well as boys! For those of you who still have children or grandchildren at the School (as I do), this is a tonic, but for all who have been so amazingly generous it is a just reward and inspiration.

"Over 300 Old Rugbeians, parents and Fives players (and not just the Rugby version) have banded together in a wonderful spirit of bonhomie to bring us to our target. Court games, clubs and organisations have joined in and the final hurdle has been cleared with a magnificent donation by the Rugby Fives Association Charitable Trust.

"This has been a triumph of generosity, cooperation and camaraderie over the demons of doubt and pessimism. Thank you so much and here's to next September!"



Game on: work on the planned courts (above) began in December