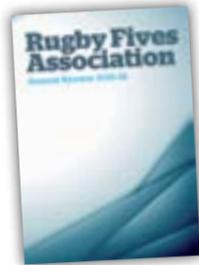


Rugby Fives Association

Annual Review 2015-16



Rugby Fives Association Annual Review 2015-16

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A welcome from the President

Bernard Atkinson reflects on those who have served our game



"Let us now praise famous men..."
 Never have those resonant words from Ecclesiasticus seemed more appropriate than when we look back over the history of endeavour shown by the many,

many great contributors to the world of Rugby Fives.

As we have been drawn by the fascination of the Olympic Games in the summer, we have heard a simple message again and again: success for the few depends upon the huge efforts of the coach and the team in support, without whom there can be no success. So it is with Fives, where the 'famous men' have been both plentiful and dedicated – not that you will find any who would apply the term 'famous' to themselves – and we owe it to them to recognize that it is on their dedication that the past, present and future of our sport is built.

My predecessor has rightly pointed to the need to safeguard our courts, but I look here at the succession of our famous men, so vital also to the safeguarding of the game. We lost another of my predecessors, Jerry Cooper, earlier this year; he was in charge of Fives at Bedford School for 30 years, securing in that time seven Schools' Singles and two Doubles titles. A great servant of the game.

If we look at retirees in recent years, the list inspires both awe and admiration: Colin Stewart, Bloxham 41 years, Mike Cleaver, Sherborne 36 years, Charles Swan, Merchiston Castle 24 years, Spencer Beal, Eastbourne 23 years, Laurence Catlow, Sedbergh and Charles Brookman, Edinburgh Academy, each 21 years, Peter King, St Paul's 17 years, Ian Torkington, Christ's Hospital 14 years, Rick Bodenham, St

Dunstan's 13 years, Ian Fuller, Alleyn's 12 years, Tony Burrows, Oundle 10 years and Mike Case, Oundle six years – in all 268 years of combined experience and commitment to our cause. Special mention has to be made here of Ian Fuller, who has served the RFA for 44 years as coach, mentor, sage, General Secretary, Treasurer and President, all done with quiet efficiency, not to mention his resolute acquisition of pots and gongs. There is not one among these who is not worthy of a Gold Medal.

To all our 'famous' men we give our thanks, (less so to "their fathers that begat them"), but equally so to their successors who carry on where they left off, and daily continue to secure our future.

But it is not just 'men' who play this

'If we look at retirees in recent years, the list inspires both awe and admiration'

game: we have just had a record-breaking year of Women's Fives. If you read Alexandra Steel's account of the success of various tournaments throughout the year you will see why we wish to keep the momentum going by introducing an U23 competition for Ladies.

We hope this will encourage the small but growing number of female students who play Fives to enter, along with some of the impressive schoolgirls who we saw in action at some of those tournaments. Hopefully next year we can report on the success of that initiative.



TOP Peter King receives the King Cup from Dan Tristao to mark his retirement; **CENTRE** Spencer Beal at his retirement match in 2015; **BOTTOM** The winners of the Doubles Plate at the Ladies' Championships 2016

Men's Season Review

Andy Pringle reviews the men's, students' and U25 game

Yet again, we can look back on a vintage season; and, yet again, we're looking at a year where engravers spent an awful lot of time engraving the names Ellison and Tristao on the RFA's silverware.

Just as they did in 2014-15, Dan and Will dominated the season. Between them, they picked up all but one of the main open singles titles, and the only reason they perhaps missed out on that one – the Scottish Open – was that neither of them could attend the event.

However, it seems fitting that the big prize – the National Singles championship – should go to Will, who won six singles titles to Dan's two.

What's perhaps most remarkable is that neither ever seems to suffer an 'off day'. Over the course of the season, Dan or Will only ever lost to each other; and every time either of them entered a singles tournament, they reached the final. That's seriously impressive stuff – and all the more so when you consider the quality of the youngsters nipping at their heels.

Of course, that's not to say Dan or Will are old, but it says something for the youthful state of the top of the game at the moment that we tend to look on the pair as seasoned campaigners – despite neither having yet reached their 30th birthday.

Indeed, if you scan the list of semi-finalists throughout this season's competitions, precious few of them are older than the top pair – and these are the players we can expect to challenge the top two's dominance.

David Butler, still a Durham student, won the only singles title not to go to Will or Dan, and Cambridge's Ed Kay and Ben Beltrami again had excellent seasons. Ed was runner-up at the North West and South West Opens and a regular semi-finalist (including in the Nationals), while Ben was runner-up in Durham and a semi-finalist in Manchester, Clifton and Tiverton.

Dan Grant, too, was a consistent challenger; and, although he didn't reach a singles final during 2015-16, he frequently earned a place in the semis. Instead, it was as a doubles partner that he really made his mark, reaching the final of every doubles event he entered, going on to win three titles, in Durham, Manchester and Clifton.

As you may already have predicted, though, it was Will and Dan T who dominated the doubles, and Dan G's wins came when partnering one of them. Overall, Will picked up five titles

'Over the course of the season, Dan and Will only ever lost to each other'

– including the National title with Charlie Brooks – while Dan T took three.

You can read Dave Hebden's article on the season's rankings on page 28, but his work was made all the more difficult by the fact that every combination of the top three won at least one event. Will teamed up Dan T to win in London, and with Dan G to take the titles in Durham and Manchester, while the two Dans won the West of England title in Clifton.

Again, we have to look to the likes of Butler, Kay and Beltrami to see the closest challengers to this elite group and all three reached finals during the course of the season, with David B winning the Yorkshire Open doubles.

These northern events at least proved that there was life left in the game's older guard: John Minta reached the final of the North West Open, while Hamish Buchanan was



runner-up in Durham and Giggleswick.

They continued their form to the Veterans' Championships, where John was runner-up to the newly qualified Veteran Matt Cavanagh in the singles before winning the doubles title with Andy Pringle in a classic three-game final against multiple national open champions Hamish and Robin Perry.

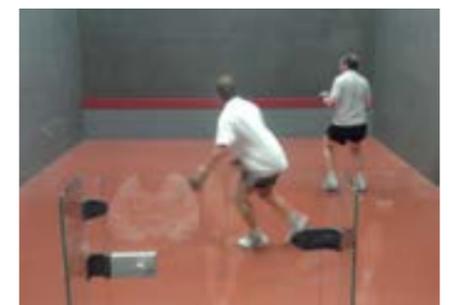
Elsewhere in the age categories, it was a repeat story: Ian Fuller retained his Vintage singles title and Dave Hebden repeated his remarkable feat of holding the Vintage and Masters doubles titles at the same time – with Ian and Martin Wilkinson, respectively.

What some keen observers of the game will notice is that all the national doubles titles have a Cambridge connection. Not only did the current students dominate the Students and Under 25s championships (Ed Kay winning both singles and Matt Shaw both doubles titles: one with Ed, the

other with Ben Beltrami), but with Charlie Brooks taking the national title, Andy Pringle the Veterans, David Hebden the Vintage and Hebden and Wilkinson the Masters, there was a light blue colour to the major doubles titles this season. To cap it, Ed also won the Winchester Fives doubles. It perhaps goes without saying he was partnering a certain Mr Ellison!

With such a strong showing from their current students, it was no great surprise that Cambridge were again winners in the Varsity Match, but it was two other powerhouses of the game that retained their titles in the season's main club competitions: the Old Paulines took the Owers Trophy, while the Wessex Club was victorious in the Club Championship.

You may be one step ahead here, but who were the two clubs' leading players? Will Ellison and Dan Tristao, of course.



MAIN The victorious Cambridge University squad
ABOVE (from top) Will Ellison wins his second National Singles title against Dan Tristao; Ian Fuller retains his title in final against Neil Roberts; Mark Kiteley and Dan Grant win the President's Cup;
LEFT Matt Cavanagh wins his first Veterans Singles title at Marlborough



T-shirts at Sedbergh

Ladies' Season Review

Alexandra Steel reports on a record-breaking year for Ladies Fives in 2015-16

What a year it has been for Ladies Fives. Once again the game has flourished, with record-breaking entries across all ladies tournaments throughout 2015-2016.

A special mention has to go to Kathleen Briedenhann, who has completed a 'Grand Slam' of titles this season. In addition to being mixed doubles champion, she is also singles and doubles champion in both Rugby and Winchester Fives – a feat that has never been achieved before, not even by the great Paula Smith in her prime.

This season saw the launch of the first official rankings for Women's Fives. If you are over 18 and play in one of the ranking events you will join the 45 players currently enjoying a position on the rankings table. Kathleen's phenomenal season sees

her deservedly take top spot in the first end-of-season rankings.

The Lady's Cup was a highly successful day, drawing in 28 players of all abilities for the second playing of this event. Competitors came from Rugby, Christ's Hospital, Aldenham, Eastbourne, Edinburgh and Cambridge and comprised pupils, students and adults of both sexes ranging in age from early teens to nearly senior citizenry. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day with many games played by all, and the goal is to increase the number of participants once again next year.

The new January date for the Ladies Nationals turned out to be a wise move as it attracted many new and exciting players onto the courts at St. Paul's. There were a record-breaking 25 participants showcasing their skills,

including girls from Christ's Hospital, Aldenham, Rugby and Blundell's who joined the adults for a full day of Fives. As so often said in these reports, the standard of Fives improves every year and the love of the game is extremely clear. I can't recommend enough attending the Ladies tournaments to gain experience on court with other players and visit lovely venues.

Next we had the first ever Varsity Match between Oxford and Cambridge Universities, with teams of four ladies playing alongside the men's match at St. Paul's. Cambridge emerged victorious and won the Pol Roger champagne and now look to build on their success by developing a squad of lady players on the fine new courts at their university.

The Winchester Fives Nationals were

held in Sedbergh on a Saturday this year instead of a Sunday to try and increase attendance. It is pleasing to report that a brave troop of nine ladies made their way through the snow-covered Yorkshire Dales to attend the tournament, which was thoroughly well organised by Maddy Raynor, with super t-shirts thanks to Kathleen.

In May came the Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles tournament at Bradfield. It was contested by a record-breaking field of 11 pairs, fighting to hold that most revered trophy, the Bradfield Cup. As always, it was a day full of laughter and camaraderie with many achieving personal goals. The competition was played in good spirits all round and a Plate competition was held for the first time in many years. Congratulations go to Kathleen Briedenhann and Ben Beltrami for winning the title after a very close final against the pair who had held it for the previous three years, Alexandra Steel and Andy Pringle.

I've been playing and promoting Ladies Fives for many years now and I've been thrilled to see the love of the game grow and mature with each player I have met on and off court. The game is so versatile for players of all abilities. I implore you, if you haven't played for a while, find your local court, come on down and get back into the swing of the game. I promise you will love it.



ABOVE (from top) Competitors at the National Ladies Championships; The National Champions with the President; The Cambridge Ladies IV with their champagne; TOP RIGHT Briedenhann and Beltrami win the Bradfield Cup



End-of-Season Women's Rankings May 2016

Position	Name	Points
1	(1) K.Briedenhann	84.59
2	(2) T.Mills	77.15
3	(4) A.Steel	68.16
4	(3) M.Raynor	63.18
5	(6) S.Zhang	54.25
6	(5) L.Mathias	53.78
7	(7) A.Law	43.98
8	(8) M.Wong	42.90
9	(9) L.Harbottle	41.37
10	(10) P.Thornhill	40.64
11	(11) B.Crinnion	36.06
12	(12) L.Tilley	33.97
13	- G.Shepherd	31.83
14	(13) I.Boddy	29.14
15	(14) P.Bell	28.11
16	(15) C.Bedford	26.33
17	- A.Lumbard	25.77
18	(16) E.Shilina	25.33
19	(17) K.Martin	21.17
20=	(19) M.Richards	19.60
	(41) K.Hird	19.60
22	(18) M.Nugent	17.26
23	(20) M.Whitehead	16.49
24	(21) K.Broad	14.65
25	(22) L.Browne	13.26
26	(23) C.Henderson	13.15
27	- L.Simpson	11.35
28	(23) S.Haco	10.41
29	(25) D.Treloar	8.18
30	(26) L.Dan	7.42
31	(27) M.Ivanova	7.32
32	(28) J.Jones	7.30
33	(29) T.Gordon	6.90
34	(30) A.Flood	6.71
35	(31) F.Porter	6.58
36	(32) L.Calman-Grimsdale	6.25
37	(33) J.Morton	4.56
38	(34) N.Ross	4.36
39	(35) R.Patel	3.95
40	(36) D.Black	3.91
41	(37) M.Ward	3.84
42	(38) V.King-Forbes	3.42
43	(39) K.Rolls	3.37
44	(40) W.Carling	2.46
45	(41) M.Cole	2.06



Christ's Hospital at the Lady's Cup

Schools Season Review 2015-16

Bob Dolby looks at a season in which boys' and girls' Fives flourished

Schools Fives is in good shape, with courts in regular use for matches and tournaments from Tiverton to Edinburgh. Talk among those in charge at the National Schools Tournament and at the Girls' National Championships revolved more around the excellence of play, the encouraging numbers and plans for the future than at any time in my memory. Even where Fives is an 'activity' rather than a school sport there has been positive feedback, and one of them, Bedford Modern School, proved that champions can still emerge under those conditions.

One school has dominated boys' tournaments: Winchester. In November we saw an all-Winchester final in the Schools Winchester Fives Doubles, but not before defending champion John Halligan and new partner Bally Singh made the eventual winners work hard and the Malvern pairing of Andrew Tudor and Lucas Nelson put the other Winchester pair under pressure before injury hit.

It was no surprise that, at the West of England Schools Championships, Winchester walked away with all the gold medals, though Monty Evans from St. Paul's did his best to thwart Albert Song. In the doubles the Malvern pair performed well against Winchester I. In the Colts it was all-Winchester in the singles between Tom Kidner and Seb Byers, who then paired up to beat Blundell's in the doubles.

At the National Schools at St. Paul's there was a new factor: the heavily favoured Edinburgh Schools U18 champion Andrew Boyd. The singles went according to expectations, with Andrew experiencing real pressure only in the first game of the final against Albert Song. In the doubles, however, Harveer Mahajan and Archie Taylor of St Paul's came through to beat both Andrew and partner Ben Jourdan and Winchester I. At Colts and

U14 level Winchester swept all before them, as did St. Olave's in the U13s.

Not to be outdone, the girls produced a record-breaking entry for the seventh National Girls' Championships. Four schools did the double: Malvern in the U18s; Rugby in the U16s; Bedford Modern in the U14s and Christ's Hospital in the U13s. Those playing in the U18s gained a National Women's ranking as a result. I've no doubt the two finalists, Malvern's Amelia Law and Maggie Wong, will feature successfully in senior competitions soon.

'Talk revolved around excellence of play, encouraging numbers and future plans'



TOP Three National Champions: Percival, Kidner and Boyd
CENTRE Winchester's successful squad at Sherborne
BOTTOM Rugby's U16 champions Fagan and Harrison

Around the schools 2015-16

Individual schools report on their Fives season over the last year

Alleyn's School

It has been another enjoyable year of Fives at Alleyn's, with an encouraging numbers of both boys and girls playing. There is a great deal of enthusiasm amongst our Year 7 and 8 pupils, and successes to report. In the National U13 Boys' competition Gwydion Wiseman was singles runner-up, as were Gwydion and his partner Sonny Mahandren in the doubles, where three of the four semi-final pairs were from Alleyn's. In the National U13 Girls' Championships Martha Nugent was runner-up in the singles and Katie Innes and Martha



Players from Alleyn's display their medals

were doubles finalists. Katie was also runner-up in the Under 13 plate.

The teams in the middle school enjoyed successful seasons and worked hard throughout the year. The notable

achievement was by Alex Cochrane, who won the B singles plate at the National Colts.

The senior boys have been very committed and successful. A year young, they performed well in the Nationals and are looking to do even better in 2017. The senior girls played in the Girls' championships and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, with Laura Dan finishing as runner-up in the senior plate.

We are grateful to Howard Wiseman for his coaching and to the RFA for providing such wonderful opportunities for our players.

Rob Ody

Bedford School

The Bedford 1st IV this year has most regularly consisted of Year 12 boys Logan Jones, Jack Hutchings, Dylan Cox and Year 11 Harry Beard, and their game has matured and improved with experience over the course of the season. It has, however, been a tough year, with defeats by Bedford Modern, Cambridge University and Oundle in the autumn and losses to the RFA, Rugby, Whitgift and Merchant Taylors' in the spring. Of the three wins in the year against the Jesters, Derby Moor and St. Paul's, the victory against the latter was one to savour as it is the first time Bedford have won this fixture in a number of years. In the Midlands Schools tournament it was the junior team who made the most significant progress, with Kamran Awan and Jamie Sorensen winning the Doubles plate. In the Nationals at St Paul's Dylan Cox played well in the plate, always a tough, exhausting but enjoyable experience. The junior and senior singles competitions – the Mellor and Dawes cups – were won by Leon Williamson and Jack Hutchings.
Michael Croker

Bedford Modern School

It's been a solid year for the Fives team of Bedford Modern School with a couple of match wins and strong representation at a number of tournaments. Unfortunately, we rarely had the numbers to put out a junior team, but the group of eight players in Year 11 makes up for the low numbers further down the school. We were pleased with wins for the seniors against Bedford School and Rugby, only to be humbled later in the year by Oundle and Merchant Taylors'. Currently, the Year 11s are the eldest in the squad, but they played well in the Midlands Schools U18 Championship against players two years older. First pair Joseph Sumner and Oliver Colbert reached the semi-finals, losing out to a very powerful Rugby pairing.

However, our best results came in the Girls' National Championships. Bedford Modern has just two girls who regularly play Fives, but Katie Sumner did extremely well to win



BMS's National U14 champions

the U14 Singles, and, together with her partner Maddie Kent, the girls retained the Doubles title.

The highlight of the fixture list was the match against the Old Bedford Modernians team. It's fair to say this wasn't a youthful OBM side, yet they still managed to see us off with their wiliness (and some subs on standby), losing only two games in the process.

We look forward to continuing our success in the girls' game and to becoming a greater force as the majority of our players move up into the Sixth Form.

Joseph Sumner

Bloxham School

This was very much a year of rebuilding for Bloxham Fives after the departure of an able and committed group of players from last year's Upper Sixth. There was still a lot of Fives played, with the younger year groups showing special promise. The most encouraging feature was the fact that almost all of the First Form, both boys and girls, played the game at some point in the year, and it is to be hoped that many will be enthused to keep playing as they go on up through the school.

Simon Batten



Bloxham girls learning the game

Bradfield College

This season saw Fives being played across four years and next season will, hopefully, see competitive Fives being played in every year in the College for the first time in a while. The U14s struggled somewhat, often pulled by conflicting commitments, but a keen core played through the winter. The other junior years were largely competitive: James Gibson and Conrad Hudson both entered the Nationals, where they gained valuable experience. Seniors Jack Denison and Will Stevens were also able to hold their own, especially on the Bradfield courts, and Will also gave a good account of himself at the Nationals. Next year, I hope we will be able to build on the recently laid foundations.

Jeremy Ball

Christ's Hospital

The Christ's Hospital squad had an enjoyable season, slightly more successful for girls than boys.

In the Lent term the boys' squad managed good wins against St. Dunstan's and Eastbourne. Other

matches were harder going but played with positivity. In February the school hosted the South East Regional Championships. Notable performances came from Freddie Norris and George Boyle (U18 doubles plate finalists), Arron Shaw (U16 singles semi-finalist) and Stephen Marsh and Arron (U16 doubles plate finalists.)

In January senior girls Beatrix Crinnion and Phoebe Thornhill travelled to the National Ladies Championships, where they played outstandingly to reach the semi-finals. Phoebe also won the singles plate.

In April CH girls competed in the National Girls' Fives Championships at Marlborough. Aiysha Alli successfully defended the U13 singles title: her pace around the court, alertness and ability to hit the ball deep and even off the back wall was remarkable. Lisa Thwaites, playing in her first tournament, successfully combined with Aiysha to win the U13 doubles.

Stella Saunt-Hills and Caroline Kloepfer did well in the U16 section: they were convincing winners in their early doubles rounds and runners-up in the final to a strong pair, while Mary Ward showed energy and experience and court awareness to cap her Fives career with the U18 singles plate.

Ed Hatton

Edinburgh Academy

Edinburgh Academy Fives has had one of its most successful years in its history. Andrew Boyd, Ben Jourdan, Sandy Drennan and John Sellar were unbeaten as a 1st IV in Scotland this year. The 1st pair came first in the Scottish Schools Championship with the 2nd pair runners-up.



The Academy IV at the National Schools

Derby Moor Juniors

After last year's success, this year was about keeping the Club functioning while we waited for work to be completed on enclosing the courts. With John Halligan concentrating on Rugby Union it was up to Lewis Keates, Bally Singh and Hasan Rehman to drive the Club forward.

A lot of Eton Fives was played – and enjoyed – at Repton over the winter, but our Rugby Fives suffered and we weren't the force we once were at the Schools Winchester Doubles, the West of England or the Nationals, though John and Bally gave the Winchester 1st pair a decent game in the quarter-finals at the latter.

We also played fixtures against Cambridge, Bedford, Rugby, Oundle and Malvern and hosted Sedbergh on their way to the Winchester Doubles.

Stuart Kirby and Lewis Keates kept the Saturday and Sunday Clubs ticking over but lack of court time took its toll on attendance.

Bob Dolby



Derby Moor 1st pair off for their last match as schoolboys

The 1st pair also represented the school at a number of senior events, notably the North West Open, the North of England Championships and the Scottish Open at Loretto where Ben reached the final with Mike Kemp of the Caledonian Club.

The highlight of the year occurred at St. Paul's during the National Schools Championships. For the first time in our history our top player, Andrew Boyd, won the Singles Championship in convincing fashion. Ben Jourdan also won the Singles Plate. In the doubles Ben and Andrew lost in the semi-final to the eventual winners from St. Paul's.

We have seen over 30 new players experiencing Fives for the first time this year, a highlight being the school's first ever girls' match versus Fettes.

Hector Macfarlane



Success for Archie in the Scottish Open

Fettes College

Club membership now runs to the top of the school, including girls.

In the Edinburgh Schools Championships Fettes secured the Colts plate and gave the eventual winners of the Senior Doubles a good match in the semi-final.

Archie McC competed in the North of England Open and the Nationals in Singles and Doubles, reaching the quarter-finals and Plate semis respectively, and at the National Girls' Championships Catriona S. won bronze in the U16 Singles competition and Scarlet G and India M were runners-up in the U16 Doubles Plate.

In the Scottish Open our three entrants in the Doubles competition, Archie, Grant and Evan, were drawn in the same group. The knock-out matches saw Archie's pair win through to take the title and Evan's pair struck bronze in the plate.

The inaugural Girls' House Fives competition was a raucous affair with a very heavy emphasis on enjoyment and loud support.

Peter Worlledge

Loretto School

Fives players were thin on the ground this season although we managed fixtures against the other Edinburgh schools and the Caledonian Club.

We greatly enjoyed the visit of the Jesters and of the Scottish Open. We also took part in the Edinburgh Schools' Championships in the spring. Richie Murby continues to drive the sport forward and standards of play are very much improved, particularly among the Seniors Gary Lemmon, Matt Sinclair, Patrin Maddison and Jonny Cunningham. We look forward to moving up the ladder next season.

Roger Whait

Malvern College

This has been another successful season. Andrew Tudor won the U18 Colquhoun Trophy for West of England Schools and he and Lucas Nelson played well at the Winchester Schools Doubles before succumbing to injury.

At the West of England, they reached the final, going down to their usual Winchester opponents. Malvern hosted the Barnes Bridge this year and it was great to have four players entered, with Andrew and Lucas beating Winchester to win the Plate.

At the National Schools they lost to the same pair in the semis, while Andrew reached the singles semis, losing to the eventual winner. Juniors Alex Nelson, Matt Bruce and Will Brodie also played well at both events.

In April, six girls entered the Nationals. Amelia Law beat Maggie

Wong in the U18 singles final and as a pair they won the doubles. In the juniors, Ann Doroshenko and Lucie Gonder were doubles runners-up and Laura Browne (U14) partnered Cassie Bedford (U18) to the U18 Plate.

Chris Thomas



The successful Malvern contingent at the Girls' Nationals

Marlborough College

The patterns of past years were repeated this season with a small but wholehearted group of boys, not matching the top players, but good enough to win Plates. Archie Wheeler and James Barrows won at Sherborne and James and Rupert Shingleton won at Winchester. Oscar Waters won the singles Plate



Marlborough at Warminster School in June

at the Colquhoun Trophy.

We also came close at the Girls' National Championships where Ibbey Lee lost to Rugby in the U16 semis, and Kirsten Bell and Rosie Sykes went down to Bedford in the U14 semis and final respectively.

Another highlight was James Toop's coaching masterclass. His tips helped the juniors win at Bradfield and Sherborne. The U18s enjoyed fixtures with Malvern, Winchester, Radley and Sherborne and games against Wessex, the RFA (a thrilling 95-95 draw) and the Old Marlburians, who gained a narrow victory.

It was great fun to visit Warminster School at the end of the year and join their attempt to get their ancient and distinctive Fives wall back in action.

Tom Kiggell

Merchiston Castle School

The senior side this year was made up of Lewis Baird, Benn Morris, Angus Hinton and William Richardson. They trained with enthusiasm and there was much competition to be first pair. Although they beat Loretto and Fettes, they fell short against a strong Academy in the Edinburgh Schools.

The Colts had a successful season, winning all their games, with Sean Yuille and Douglas Tidy winning the

Edinburgh Schools Doubles, the first time Merchiston has won this cup for a number of years. Chris Bell and Matthew Currie will join Douglas in the Colts next year and they promise to continue their success.

A talented and enthusiastic group of juniors began their Fives careers this season and finished unbeaten. They will be pushing for spots in the Colts next year, which makes the future of Fives here very exciting.

Matt Hillier



MTS's Plate winners at the Nationals

Merchant Taylors' School

I've been immensely impressed with the excellent spirit in which all our fixtures were played. Equally impressive has been the dedication and commitment of all players.

The 1st IV had some very encouraging performances, particularly in their successful defence of the Centenary Cup against Bedford School. With all four returning next year they will look to become a force to be reckoned with. Every year group has been able to field at least one side and there has been success across all teams.

The Nationals provided a great chance for the boys to improve their Fives quickly. Some conspicuous success came at junior level, as Jamie Graham won the U14 Plate competition. In the Colts, Sarthak Garella played excellently to make it through to the quarter-finals of the singles and Ethan Taberham and his doubles partner, Joe Savage, took victory in the U18 Doubles Plate.

Simon Hardman

Oundle School

Members of the Oundle School Fives Club have had an excellent year. Senior players trained hard throughout the winter and performed strongly in pre-season matches against Cambridge University, Rugby and Bedford. During the Easter, the 1st IV coped manfully with a challenging list of fixtures against Merchant Taylors', Derby Moor,

Bedford Modern and St. Paul's.

Once again we were very pleased to host the National U25s, and the Oundle boys learnt much from their inclusion in the tournament. Seniors also put in some thrilling performances at this year's Midlands Schools tournament, where captain Jeremy Manger and Tom Barlow won the senior Doubles in a thrilling final against a strong pair from Rugby. Manger also took the Singles title, beating Barlow in an all-Oundle final. The team greatly enjoyed taking part in the National Schools tournament at Easter. This year the club says goodbye to a strong cohort of senior players and we wish them well.

Michael Case

Pilgrims' School

This was another excellent pair of terms with full courts, new players and much progress. The autumn term was primarily one where old hands guided new boys, where new techniques were considered and where internal competitions created excellent rivalries.

We played matches and enjoyed meeting players and coaches from other schools. We entered the Nationals and did well.

More significantly, Fives at Pilgrims' remains a sport where the good game is more important than the won match, where enjoyment comes before victory and behaviour is impeccable.

My thanks go to other Pilgrims' staff, for playing, encouraging and enjoying Fives, and to our WinColl coach, Giles Munn, without whom we would play Fives less well, enjoy Fives less and beat no one.

Geoffrey Hammond

Radley College

Fives at Radley has flourished this year, with last year's senior players continuing to grow in maturity and experience. Captain CAJ Rothbarth has led from the front, organising a new inter-social competition, which proved to be a tremendous success. Some very high-quality Fives was on display, even from inexperienced boys, and a wonderful atmosphere of amiable competitiveness permeated the courts. The traditional Shell Singles Tournament also produced some great games, the standard of play

much higher than in previous years.

Fixtures against other schools have proved to be educational once again for our boys, although it was very pleasing to see two senior match victories, against Bradfield and Malvern. With injuries and choral commitments reducing the numbers, our performance at the National Schools was sadly not as strong as it might have been, but reaching the Plate final was a great success for our senior pair. A new addition to the calendar this year, the matches against Old Radleians have been invaluable for honing skills and pushing the standard ever higher.

Finally, the programme of court renovation has been completed, with a new roof and the slippery floors coated with (rather bright) paint: it has been marvellous to have both courts in regular play. Looking ahead, the club is looking rather thin as the most enthusiastic and experienced players will be leaving, but I hope we can maintain the momentum they have built up over the last couple of years.

Dave Cox

Rossall School

It has been a good season for Fives at Rossall this year, with the courts filled during the scheduled sessions and boys taking the opportunity to play in their own time as well. We've not been short of internal competition, with both singles and doubles matches played on a weekly basis across the year groups.

It looks as if we have a promising U12/U13 team for next year, as the enthusiasm and skill shown by our newest players has been encouraging.

The boys played our regular fixtures against Sedbergh, and home and away matches with Oswestry has been a welcome addition. We again made the long journey to St Paul's for the Nationals. Although it is always a challenge for our boys, they enjoyed the event and the atmosphere as ever.

There is always a degree of sadness at saying goodbye to the 1st team at the end of the year, and the player that will be missed the most is captain Jonathan Lee. Having played Fives since his juniors, he's been an excellent ambassador for the sport.

Lee Hodgetts

Rugby School

This has been another very successful year and with more pupils benefitting from the courts.

The highlight of the year was the development of the two novice U15 girls who took to the game quickly and were very successful in the Girls' Nationals. Harriet Fagan became U16 singles champion, and she and her partner, Freya Harrison won the doubles. Highly competitive in the same competition was Anastasia de Clermont who lost the singles final to Harriet. In the seniors Kirsty Martin and Lottie Harbottle made the final of the Girls' U18 Doubles but didn't have quite enough to



Rugby's U16 Plate winners

see off a strong Malvern pair. Lottie is ranked in the top 10 women – a remarkable feat.

The boys were a little less successful and met a number of opponents who

Sedbergh School

It was a season spent largely on the road for the Sedbergh boys, not least because the courts underwent a deep clean in preparation for the Barnes Bridge in March. The 1st IV experienced plenty of good Fives on trips to Edinburgh (enjoying a win at Merchiston), Scarborough and Malvern. The game against Derby Moor on their newly enclosed courts was a good addition to the fixture list. It was good to reinforce links with Rossall, whilst an evening contest at Giggleswick, against a 'Yorkshire Select IV', perhaps paves the way for further action on those courts.

The girls enjoyed their biggest competition at home, as we hosted the Ladies' Winchester Fives Championships. This proved a big boost: our girls are on the way up, as exemplified by an encouraging performance at the Girls' Nationals.

Jonathan Lidiard



Sedbergh's players at the Girls' Nationals

Sherborne School

This season at Sherborne has seen many players make great progress. The junior squad won half their matches and there is promise for the future here. In particular Benedict Mercer has shown himself to be a player with an eye for the ball and an ability to play some powerful shots; he was able to hold his own against older players from various schools. He was ably supported by a number of others in their first year here, most of whom, along with Benedict, only started playing the sport last September.

The senior team had a very healthy fixture list, which included four matches against adult sides. Edward Pyman, Alastair Findlay and Will Shardlow were more than capable of coping with such a challenge and had some very competitive games. These three played in almost every match and although few were won, some were lost by just a handful of points.

A highlight of the season was the revived match against the old boys – 'The Pilgrims'. It was a highly enjoyable and close contest, with the old boys taking victory by just eight points. A few of them had to dust off their gloves after 15 years, but we hope they will be back next year.

We say goodbye to our U6th leavers, Alastair and Edward, but hope they will continue to play in the future wherever life may take them.

Nick Scorer

had simply moved to a different level. The best side settled as George Romain, Michael Suddaby, Myles McKay and Vlad Shirokiy. Wins against Bedford and a strong Oundle side were the highlights and Romain developed well; he won his group at the Nationals before defeat in the last 16. The U15 IV showed promise and Arun Mehta and Jacob Drabble won the U15 Midlands Doubles. Unusually a pupil who isn't a regular player, Noah Martle, won the U15 singles and we hope he finds the time to play some Fives over the coming years. The OR match saw the first female OR player, Milly Richards, and the ORs ran out victors in a close match.

Trevor White



Rick Bodenham and co.

St Dunstan's College

It's been a season of rebuilding at St. Dunstan's. Captain Sam Rieb-Smith played with determination and vigour; his enthusiasm was excellent and he promoted all that was good about the game.

We had our usual fixtures but the revived match against the ODs was a real highlight.

At U15 level, we managed to bring new blood into the squad and they can create a vibrant senior squad next year. It was at U14 and U13 level that we saw promise: both age groups showed real interest, which bodes well. The U13s had a good Nationals in both Singles and Doubles. Finally at U12s the club is overflowing with a strong number of boys and girls and I have great hopes for them.

Rick Bodenham

St. Paul's School

The season started at the West of England Schools, where Monty Evans managed to find reserves of energy and calm focus to sweep past Winchester's Kullavanijaya in the U18 semi-final, but he couldn't find the same form for the final. In the Senior Doubles Taylor and Mahajan narrowly lost a fantastic semi-final against Winchester.

During the Spring Term, we played 26 fixtures, with over 60 players representing the school: the last to be coached by Peter King. Peter was Master in Charge from 1993 to 2010, and then coached the U14s until 2016. As was fitting in his last year, the U14s were outstanding and were undefeated in 11 fixtures

The Junior Colts were keen to learn and determined to improve. The Colts had a good season, losing only once, versus Whitgift. Julius Davies picked up the Most Improved Junior award – a new King Cup, given by Old Paulines to mark Peter's retirement.

At the National Schools Championships, we very nearly won both the U14 singles and the doubles. Teddy Monro-Davies lost the singles final by an agonisingly small margin. In the doubles final Teddy, and his partner Jack Griffiths, again lost in the deciding game after a titanic battle.

In the Colts, Cheveley was runner-up in the singles and played well against the top seed. In the Open tournament, Mahajan and Taylor played clinical doubles to beat Edinburgh Academy in the semis and Winchester in the final.

Sam Roberts



Open Doubles champions from St. Paul's

Tonbridge School

Tuesdays at Tonbridge in the Lent term sees all seven Fives courts in use for the leagues: seven leagues each with seven to 12 players. The bottom two play first and the winner stays on to challenge the next one up. The next opponent arrives and on it goes until the winner of the last game tops his league and moves up a league for the next week. This allows top juniors to take on the less good seniors who are rarely willing to give in easily.

This year was pleasing at the Nationals with four plate finalists: Teddy Toalster and Seb Piggott lost on the finals of the U16 and U14 B plates while Will Hanley and Chris Hughes won the U16 doubles plate and Seb Piggott and Charlie Crooke won the U14 doubles plate.

Ian Jackson



Winners of the U16 Plate with Deputy President David Bawtree

Winchester College

Fives at Winchester has never been stronger. The club has been blessed with some very talented and enthusiastic boys who have been a pleasure to coach. Our U17 captain, Albert Song won three trophies, two with the help of Pete Kullavanijaya, taking the captain's total to six and making him the most successful schoolboy in the club's history. Albert, however, was not the most successful player of the club this year. That accolade went to Tom Kidner, who won all four Colts trophies, pairing up with Seb Byers and the U15 Alex Poyntz in the two doubles competitions. Meanwhile in the U14s Dominic Percival came from 8-0 down in the final set to win the National Schools singles before pairing up with Seb Fraser to win the doubles in another closely



Whitgift's unbeaten Colts side

Whitgift School

An unbeaten Colts and some great individual successes in both the Colts and U18 teams make this a vintage year. Two outstanding players, Cameron Low and Sarath Prakash, were the secret behind our Colts' success, but Hajane Anbukumar developed strongly and Reece Etwaroo was the best number four we've had in years. Winning the Regional U16 singles and doubles even without our best two showed our depth of talent.

The U18s were a little less successful, but James Mabbutt almost made it to the National quarter-finals and Jussi Grut won the B Plate. Mabbutt did, however, win the Regionals singles and the doubles with Jussi. Talha Aziz won the Regional U18 Plate, so almost a clean sweep of available silverware!

Nick Morgan



All-Winchester final in the Schools Winchester Fives Doubles competition

fought three-set final.

In all, Wykehamists won nine of 11 trophies, six runners-up medals and were involved in all 11 finals, making it our most successful season ever!

I'd like to thank my fellow coaches at Winchester as well as a growing group of Old Wykehamists and the Wessex Fives club.

Giles Munn

The History of Fives at Sedbergh School

David Barnes looks at Fives at the Cumbrian school

Sedbergh has always taken sport seriously, yet it took a while for the school to decide which variety of Fives to play. In the 1880s, Fives challenges and ties were played within and between houses, and in 1880 there was a challenge match between housemasters Mr Wilson and Mr Hutt, and two schoolboys, C Toppin and RA Shepherd. Surprisingly, the result is not recorded, nor the court on which the match was played.

Soon, school singles competitions were arranged for seniors and juniors, and HG Hart, headmaster from 1880, gave a Challenge Cup, won in 1882 by School House. Soon Old Sedberghians were playing competitive Fives, too: in 1896 AG Wilkins won the Fives Challenge Cup at Owen's College, Manchester.

But the issue of which courts were the right ones for Sedbergh persisted. We have been unable to establish whether the covered court built in 1903, and reserved for the use of masters and members of Mr. Lemarchand's house, had a buttress or

BELOW Cambridge University 1958 - JNH Smith (back right) and BWJG Wilson (to his right)



a back wall. It was certainly popular with its users since play was possible come rain or snow, but the only possible hint of its shape comes from the fact that CW Gooch, an Old Blundellian cricketer and assistant master at Sedbergh, was the moving force behind its construction.

Two of the Blundell's three-walled courts built in 1885 during his time at the Devon school had since acquired a back wall and were probably closer to the Rugby pattern than the Eton – despite the ledge round the walls.

Winchester courts in the 1920s

Finally, in 1922, two new courts were built "on the Winchester pattern". The Sedberghian reported in its March 1923 editorial: "An innovation has been made in the shape of a Fives match between the Staff and the School. The Staff won by seven games to two. This is another step in the direction started by the New Fives Courts and the House Cups. In a few years we shall have Fives Colours and School matches."

Incomplete records

The four present covered Winchester



ABOVE An unidentified Fives player poses on the Evans House court in the early 1920s

Fives courts, were built in 1925. This was the time when Fives was waking up nationally: the RFA was founded in 1927 and the circulation of approved court dimensions and rules was approved in 1930.

It is hard, however, to establish how long the various house courts lasted at Sedbergh alongside the school ones. Sedgwick, School, Hart and Evans Houses certainly invested some energy and money in improving their courts in the early 1920s, but there is no mention in The Sedberghian of their eventual passing. The one at Evans House is suspected to be the last one standing in 2016.

It is difficult, also, to determine the identities of the masters-in-charge in the early days. Masters at Sedbergh were certainly involved in umpiring inter-house matches, and one name mentioned is GH Todd, who retired in 1929. The Sedberghian wrote in tribute that he was "a prime mover in all the improvements and additions to our Fives-courts" and Todd himself had >>

written in his 1918 tribute to another master, Brian 'Puggy' Harrison, that he had been his Fives partner for 15 years.

Soon, Sedberghians were making their mark at University. AMcA Robertson and JA Steven were in the Fives VIII at Glasgow as early as 1925, while GA Bell played for Cambridge in the 1927 and 1929 Varsity Matches. The first time Sedbergh took on a University was in a Rugby Fives match at Leeds in 1930, an encounter which became a regular fixture despite the differing codes.

Remoteness a barrier

In the 1930s, a period when Rugby Fives was expanding in schools, Sedbergh's remote location inevitably meant that almost all of its Fives was played within the School. The Senior and Junior knock-out doubles competitions were keenly fought each year, with Sedgwick winning the Senior trophy every year between 1932 and

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT Dick Lyon (tallest of the three) discussing matters with Tom Wood and Chris Heron 1970; Laurence Catlow at St. Paul's in 2009, the year of his retirement; Ed Hickey and James Brown (right), National Schools finalists 1993



'The school had a long way to go before they could master doubles'

1938. In 1939, The Sedberghian reported: "The two old courts near Lupton House have been pulled down and are being rebuilt on more modern lines." The work was completed by November, costing £550.

Apart from matches versus Leeds, where three Rugby Fives courts had been built in 1930, the occasional encounter with the Common Room was the only opportunity to play adult opposition. When the Masters were played in 1940, the School lost but gave a good account of themselves.

Post-war revival

The Senior Fives competition was revived only in 1948, but The Sedberghian said in 1949: "Interest in the game is spreading, and Houses are beginning to take considerable trouble over the training of their Fives teams." The Junior competition was revived in 1950 after an interval of eight years.



Strong brotherhood

Sedberghians began to make a mark in National competitions during the 1950s, as brothers, JNH and D Smith, emerged as top-class singles players. In 1955, D Smith won the Public Schools' Singles Championship at Whitgift. JNH Smith, who had left Sedbergh the previous autumn, won the 1955 Scottish Open and went on to win the North of England Open in 1956 and 1958. In 1959 he became the first (and so far only) Sedberghian to win the National Singles title. In the meantime, his brother had repeated his Public Schools triumph in 1956. You would have thought that between them they might have won a Doubles title, but it wasn't to be.

Despite the achievements of Sedberghians in the later 1950s, the school had a long way to go before they could master Rugby Fives Doubles, and this is where Dick Lyon's coaching came in.

"Mr. Lyon is patiently teaching us the rudiments of Rugby Fives," read one captain's report. It was a slow process, as there were few suitable schools to play against, Giggleswick being the only relatively reachable one. Leeds University were useful opponents, but



the other regular school opponents were Rossall, with their open-backed Winchester-style courts.

The concentration on Rugby Fives brought success for Sedberghians at University. SP Berry played for winning Cambridge sides in 1969, 1970 and 1972, while AF Rees represented Oxford in 1971. Such was the desire for success at Rugby Fives at Sedbergh that it led to the unusual practice of playing a let on the buttress when visiting sides were unused to it. It was well-meant, but it looked like a vote of no confidence in Winchester Fives. Fortunately, Winchester Fives was still played internally in House matches and other competitions.

A focus on Rugby

1970 saw visits from Durham University, the White Rose Club from Halifax and the UCS Old Boys. The School team that year was the best for several years, but none of them came to the Nationals. The next year, three of the best players were back, and the team was undefeated in all matches, beating not only the RFA and the UCS Old Boys, but also the Masters. The top Sedbergh pair (AWA Outhwaite and MTD Budge) won the North Of England Schools' Doubles at Durham School that year, and four players went to Whitgift, where Outhwaite and FJM Carr reached the Doubles semi-final, losing narrowly to Merchant Taylors', the top seeds.



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT Headmaster Chris Hirst, a former Cambridge captain of Fives, thanking John Guthrie for his generosity in 2008; Courts enclosed in 2007-08; Dave Fox (with Dave Hebden) serving to John Minta (with Hamish Buchanan) 2012

The policy of training the top players for Rugby Fives meant that a wider range of teams featured on Sedbergh's fixture list in the 1970s: Merchiston Castle, Durham School and the Manchester YMCA all provided good opposition. The middle of the decade saw the rise of RN Barr, who went increasingly far in the National Schools Singles, reaching the semi-final in 1975 and the final in 1976. He and DHW Mount also got to the Doubles semi-finals in 1975. Barr and his fellow Old Sedberghian JJ Rogers went on to play Fives at Oxford and were both selected for the Varsity Matches in 1978, 1979 and 1980, with Rogers staying on for a fourth half-blue in 1981.

The last five years of RJ Lyon's long stint as master-in-charge continued to produce good players.

RD Middleton won the Senior Singles plate at the National Schools in 1982. An impressive player, he was selected for Oxford from 1985-87, while his Sedbergh contemporary, WH Stoddart, was in the Cambridge side for the first two of those years. DA Fox, Sedbergh captain in 1984, was later to become a stalwart of the Rugby Fives scene and a

'A wider range of teams featured on Sedbergh's fixture list in the 1970s'

Winchester Fives Doubles champion. He is still playing to a high standard 30 years later and co-founded the Executioners Rugby Fives Club with AG Wilson. The name was derived from Exeter University, which Fox attended. Despite some mutterings from the RFA, it stuck.

Varsity success

1986/87 was the year when Sedbergh's name was again inscribed on the National Schools' Singles trophy. MA Mellor had reached the National Colts' Singles semi-finals in 1985 and the fourth round of the 1986 Senior Singles, but nobody expected him to perform quite as well as he did in the 1987 Singles, where he lost only 12 points in five matches. Mellor sadly made no further mark upon the game, but another Sedberghian, JW Gribble, who was captain of Fives the next year, certainly did at Cambridge. He hit the ground running in 1990, playing good singles and top-pair doubles in a narrow victory for the Light Blues, repeated the act in 1991 and then, as captain in 1992, led the last Cambridge side to win the Varsity match for a decade. He also had a hand in winning the British Universities Doubles title >>



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
Ben Lawry and Jonathan Lidiard with the Barnes Bridge plate in 2013 at Malvern; Sedbergh Girls at the Ladies Winchester Fives championships 2016; Taylor Maguire 2015



'2007 saw the four courts enclosed, with heaters installed'



in 1991 with his partner PD d'Ancona. Fives continued to flourish under the next master-in-charge, LW Catlow. In 1990, J Lamb and F Stoddart were reported to be the best first pair for some time, with Lamb making it to the semi-final of the Schools Singles. S Lewis and J Brown, the top Sedbergh pair, reached the final of the National Winchester Doubles (at Sedbergh) and the final of the National Schools.

In 1993, it was Sedbergh's turn to win the National Schools Doubles title – for the first time in the school's history – when Brown and J Lancaster confirmed their quality and resilience. They had also played beautifully to reach the National Winchester Doubles final three weeks earlier at Malvern. The next year, JM Edington became the third Sedberghian to win the National Schools Singles title, and had he not sustained a serious bruise in doing so, he and his partner T Barraclough would have had a chance of winning the Doubles final against Sherborne.

By now, the only 'local' school opponents for Sedbergh were Giggleswick and Merchiston Castle and Loretto of Edinburgh, Durham School having given up the game in 1993. The visiting clubs, containing

many top players, thus became an ever more important part of the fixture list if Sedbergh were to keep up its challenge for National Schools honours. 1996 proved that this was the case, when Sedbergh's top pair, J Lofthouse and I McKerrow, won the National Schools Doubles, defeating Bradfield in the final.

Court enclosure

In the early to mid-1990s the courts at Sedbergh seemed increasingly prone to sweating, and the younger players suffered from a lack of suitable school matches to give them experience.

In 2007, a generous gift from John Guthrie saw the four Sedbergh courts enclosed, with heaters installed in an effort to reduce the sweating. This has not been entirely successful, alas, as the interruptions to play in subsequent competitions have shown.

No doubt partly in response to the enclosure of the courts, the numbers of Sedberghians playing Fives increased in 2008. No school matches were lost to the weather, and there were no periods when practice was impossible due to sweating courts. More players came to persevere with the game, and the fixture with Rossall was reinstated after many years.

In 2008/09, A Elletson and M Pimlott won the Winchester Fives Northern Doubles, the first schoolboy pair to do so; Elletson went on to win the Singles plate at the National

Schools Championships. These achievements were important given the number of relatively fallow years after the heady days of the 1990s. Fittingly, Laurence Catlow bowed out at the end of the season to hand on the Fives to his former pupil Jonathan Lidiard. Since 1964, there had only been two men in charge of Fives at Sedbergh, and in their very different ways they had served the game and the School magnificently.

Present day promise

In the last six years, Lidiard has already made his mark. He has brought good players to the Schools Winchester Fives Doubles and to the National Schools, and Sedbergh girls have entered their Nationals and the Ladies Winchester Fives event. The senior girls are now in the new National Women's Rankings.

In 2015, Taylor McGuire won the National Schools U14 Boys' Singles title, a fine achievement for a player brought up on a Winchester court.

Fives at Sedbergh is in good hands. This coming season sees the Winchester National Doubles return to the school, which will give Sedberghians a chance to play against or watch top players. For all schools planning a Fives tour, Sedbergh is a leading contender by virtue of the quality of its Fives and its hospitality.

A full version of this history is to be found at: <http://bit.ly/2bfJz1b>

RFA Club Report

Hamish Buchanan reports on the RFA's Club matches in the 2015-16 season



With 19 wins and two draws from 26 matches played, the Club has had a successful year. Close matches were a recurring theme, with a 95-95 tie at Marlborough, a two-point win at

both UCS and Alleyn Old Boys and a seven point loss against the Old Paulines. In the Winchester VIII fixture the score was 266-257, a loss with a 49.1% share of the points!

Tonbridge was again the venue for Tony Hamilton's team to push the age boundary, beating last year's effort by an aggregate four years (this may seem highly likely, but the team has changed) and an average of 66.

There may have been a case of too many captains on court in Durham when James Tilston's team of alumni included Peter Hanton and Julian Aquilina, and the home side fielded Dave Butler and Sam Russell, making it the five most recent Durham captains present. It appears that three is better than two as the visitors edged to a narrow win.

The President's Cup was organised in almost bombproof fashion by Gareth Price, with great pairings, delivering highly competitive Fives.

The Cup was won in an epic final (16-14,14-16,15-6) by Dan Grant, showing a rare determination on home courts, and Mark Kiteley, who achieved an almost lifelong ambition in winning, as he's been playing in the tournament since before Dan was born.

Next season I hope to have even more matches played. With more Fives comes more fun, more friends made, more food consumed and perhaps more beer drunk. There is a new weekend tour planned of the Edinburgh schools in February, so sign up early to avoid disappointment.



Five Durham captains out of eight

RFA CLUB RESULTS 2015-16

Opposition	Manager	Other players	Result
Alleyn's	A. Hanton	A.Bowden, T.Hebblethwaite, R.Sulkin	Win
Alleyn Old Boys	R.Perry	B.Brookes, T.Hebblethwaite, E.Ronan	Win
Bedford	J.Denham	P.Atkinson, S.Endersby, H.French	Win
Blundell's	M & M Whitehead*	C.Brook, D.Hill, A.Rew, A.Steel	Win
Cambridge	A.Pringle*	A.George, R.Mathieu, A.Meek, D.Tristao	Win
Cambridge	B. Dolby*	J.Abecassis, L.Keates, S.Kirby, B.Singh	Loss
Deep West Club	S.Watson*	D.Hill, K.Kennerley, B.Hitchings, J.Webber	Win
Durham	J.Tilston	J.Aquilina, P.Hanton, T.Wakelam	Win
Eastbourne	T.Hamilton	N.Arnott, M.Hole, P.Ross	Win
Executioners	E.Ronan*	A.Bowden, H.Buchanan, E.Carr, T.Hebblethwaite	Win
Jesters: Strawson	D.Warner	Revolving cast of many.	Tie
Jesters	W.Ellison	J.Aquilina, H.Buchanan, R.Perry	Win
Malvern VI	H.Buchanan	R.Christie, S.Kirby, S.Roberts, S.Zhang	Win
Marlborough	T.Maconie*	Various	Tie
Old Paulines	M.Bate*	J.Bristow, A.George, T.Maconie, C.Waller	Loss
Old Tonbridgians	A.George	Various	Win
Old Whitgiftians	H.Buchanan	A.Bowden, E.Carr, B.Hanton	Win
Oundle	A.Smith	Various	Loss
St Dunstan's	T.Hamilton	N.Arnott, J.Higgins, G.Norman	Win
Sherborne	A.Passey	B.Atkinson, B.Boag, B.Gunyon, D.Shepherd	Win
Tonbridge	T.Hamilton	B.Atkinson, E.Clarke, P.Ross	Win
UCS Old Boys	J.Ensor	P.Chopra, K.Kantoria, A.Sangani	Win
Winchester	W.Ellison	N.Geere, G.Munn, A.Passey	Win
Winchester VIII	D.Tristao	O.Arnold, H.Buchanan, C.Burrows, T.Dean, A.George, T.Parker, S.Roberts	Loss
West of England	E.Carr	A.George, S.Lewis, R.Sulkin	Loss
White Rose Club	R.Christie	L.Keates, S.Kirby, L.Taylor	Loss

* denotes non-playing manager

Around the clubs in 2015-16

The past season, as reported by the many Fives clubs around the country



33° on court and still they play at Alleyn's!

Alleyn Old Boys

Another solid year at Alleyn's: numbers are increasing and the average age is dropping, which must surely be a good sign. A handful of matches were played, all were good fun with some competitive Fives. We reached the Plate final in the Owers Trophy with 'prodigal son' Nick Geere returning from the Deep West to partner Ed Carr and Rocco Sulkin. They won both their group matches in the Plate by one point, truly taking it to the wire.

We play all year round on Tuesday evenings from 2 degrees C. in January to 33° in July. Come and join us.

Hamish Buchanan

Bristol University

Bristol University Fives has had another successful year and is on the rise. Over the course of the year a number of students have come along to play, and everyone is welcome at no charge!

With newcomer Schools champion Tom Watkinson and Inigo Ackland staying on an extra year, plus the top pair of Theo Parker and Ollie Arnold, Bristol had a strong contingent for the BUSF championships, though sadly Guy Davies and David George-Carey had to withdraw at the last minute. Ollie had a great win against second seed David Butler to make the semi-finals, and Tom won a three-game epic

against Sam Russell. Theo and Ollie then reached the final of the doubles. Bristol now sits first in the chasing pack behind Cambridge!

Next year Ollie will be taking over as captain, though Theo will still be around as he studies for a Masters.

Theo Parker

Derby Moor

This year was memorable for the fact that we finally managed to realise our dream of enclosing the courts. It was frustrating to see a supposed six-week job take eight months from the first shovelful of earth to the fitting of the water fountain, but we got back in the courts the moment the render dried on the new walls! Meanwhile it felt a bit like the pioneering days of 2003-04 when we played in roofless courts with halogen lights strung from beams and knees bleeding from contact with the dilapidated concrete floor. But we are

Cambridge University

Once again CURFC's 'superstars' had a stellar season. Ed Kay, Ben Beltrami and Matt Shaw took home a variety of titles including the Universities and U25s singles and doubles. They also helped the men's 1st VIII to a convincing victory in the Pol Roger Varsity Match. The 2nd IV's encounter with the Oxford Beavers was arguably the least predictable match of the day and it was great to see our players show strength as they claimed the win.

The most pleasing development this year has been the arrival of a strong ladies' team. They went from beginners to threatening the top 10 of the National Women's rankings. Captain Cassi Henderson played the game of the Varsity match, and Georgina Shepherd fought to victory despite a shoulder injury. Ably supported by Lottie Simpson and

a resilient bunch, so much enjoyable Eton Fives was played at Repton during our enforced absence from our courts and visits were made to tournaments whenever possible.

Lawrence Taylor and Craig Baxter kept up club traditions by winning the Second Plate at the Yorkshire Doubles; Lewis Keates won the Mate's Plate with Will Ellison; Rob Whitehorn took both the Singles and the Doubles Plates at the U25s; Lewis and Bally Singh secured the U18 Doubles Plate at the Midlands Schools Championships, and then Lewis capped a wonderful year by winning the Derby Moor Invitation Doubles with Hamish Buchanan. Surely the most deserved success was Stuart Kirby reaching his second successive Doubles final in the Vintage Championships, this year with Neil Roberts. We owe Stuart immeasurably for his work on our courts enclosure.

Bob Dolby



Ladies IV with the Varsity champagne

Sasha Haco, they led the team to a 147-83 victory. All four are staying next year and will only improve. They challenge any school or club ladies' team to take them on!

The only blemish of the year was a first defeat for several years by the Past but all enjoyed a very convivial dinner. One player joining the Past this year, and one we'd like to thank, is Jacob Brubert, who played in seven Varsity Matches and captained us to our record victory last year.

James Pinder

Exeter Fives Club

Once again the Exeter Fives Club has been very busy, with the Wednesday sessions regularly bringing in 10 people, both men and women.

In March we held our annual tour to Winchester and Marlborough. We travelled to Winchester on the Friday night and played against the Wessex Club, where Alexandra Steel and Alex Rew retained their undefeated title to the annoyance of the Wessex Club, who were desperate to dethrone them. Once enough Fives was played we departed to our hotel to get ready for our traditional Indian



The Exeter Fives Club at Winchester

meal. Speeches were given by Harry Akerman and Tim Lewis, who awarded Jim Hughes and Alex Rew their Exeter Colours (in the form of a blazer).

Durham University

In August 2015, the future of the Durham Fives seemed bleak, with just David Butler, Tom McCahan and captain Sam Russell left to fly the flag.

The team received a boost when Tom Wakelam and Adam Wordley rekindled their love of the sport. This, combined with a successful recruitment campaign, meant Durham had quantity, if not quality, on hand.

A narrow loss to Old Durham proved perfect preparation for the BUSF tournament, where the eight-strong team won both Plates. Buoyed by this, 18 entered the National Championships qualifier on home courts. David Butler took victory and then made the quarter-final in the finals. Another Plate was added at the U25s. The North of England Open also proved a success, where Christian Blackaby won the Plate.

Practice sessions regularly featured 10 or more players and development sessions saw more take up the game.

At the end-of-season Palatinate Dinner, Dave and Sam received awards from Team Durham, and the feeling was the future wasn't so bleak after all.

Sam Russell

Executioners

Oscar Wilde famously said that work is the curse of the drinking classes. This year it's been the curse of the Fives-playing classes, too. All too often, our weekly email would go out, only for at least one of our number to say they were chained to their desk and would miss that evening at St Paul's.

Nevertheless, there were enough willing bodies every Wednesday evening. Among the most regular were Alex and Archie Wall, Simon Stokes, Malcolm Borthwick, Tony Julius, Richard Dyke, Jon Peterson and Tom Webster, and Old Wykehamists Ben Hale and Seb Woollard.

Dick Warner and Guy Matthews were among the club's most decorated players this year. Guy again employed his tactic of ensuring a good President's Cup partner by barely playing in the run-up to the event – this year he partnered Tom Dean to win the Love Mug. Meanwhile, Dick showed his fighting qualities, claiming the Vintage Singles Plate, coming back from 13-5 down to win 16-15.

Club stalwarts Andy Pringle and Alex Steel carried the club's colours in national competitions. The pair fell just short of retaining their Winchester Fives mixed doubles title, losing in the final. Alex also finished as runner-up in the Ladies National Rugby Fives Doubles with Maddy Raynor, ending the season third in the new rankings.

Andy can look back on this as the season he claimed his first regional title (the South East Doubles, with Ed Hatton) and his first national title (the Veterans Doubles, with John Minta.) He also retained the Executioners Singles ladder, taking top spot from Ben Hale a week before the end of the season.

Sadly, we have to record some disappointments this season – being unable to raise a team for the Club Championship, not having more club matches and failing to play an

On the Saturday we trekked to Marlborough where we played against the local team, with Jim Hughes swapping over to give the home side a close-run victory. All in all a very good tour – we are all looking forward to next year!

We are the leading club in the country for mixed Fives: during some sessions, more women than men attend! We welcome all on Wednesdays at Blundell's courts at 6pm. Feel free to join us at our club house, The Butterleigh Inn, for a social drink afterwards.

Alex Rew

end-of-season tournament. So, we're considering adopting a new club motto for next season (with apologies to Mars): 'Work less, and play.'

Andy Pringle

Jesters Club

We've had another successful season on the Jesters front, with the usual Jesterly spirit thrown in to some competitive and well fought matches around the country.

In the Strawson match, an early start allowed the teams – Jesters and the RFA – to contest a superb match and arrive first at the dinner to enjoy the hospitality at Queen's. In a remarkable turn of events, and thanks to Dick Warner's considered team selection, the match was tied. The Cambridge weekend was a wonderful addition to the fixture list in November on the new courts. We look forward to it becoming a regular season highlight.

The tour to Edinburgh continues its great success, expertly guided by the Akermans. 25 fixtures over three days, played by an enthusiastic, but increasingly knackered touring party of more than 30 players, with lunches, drinks and dinners – what an incredible way to promote our sport and encourage future generations!

At the start of the year, James Tilston joined the Jesters Committee to help out with the Rugby Fives world. Please do get in touch with either of us if you would like to play or volunteer to organise a fixture – we rely on the RFA members to keep the Jesters active.

Charlie Brooks

Malvern Town

A mix of schoolboys and girls, leavers and new recruits congregate on Monday evenings for friendly Fives and a compulsory pint. The few fixtures we had were fiercely contested and there will hopefully be a few more next season with the introduction of some more Jesters games.

Highlights for the season were watching the top Malvern schoolboy pair of Andrew Tudor and Lucas Nelson take the Winchester Fives Doubles plate when the competition was held at our own courts, and Stephen Coffey and Shinan Zhang making the semi-finals of the Winchester Fives Mixed Doubles tournament at Bradfield. Congratulations must go to Shinan for reaching number five in the newly introduced Women's Rankings.

Stephen Coffey

Old Bedford Modernians

The handful of usual suspects ensured that club nights continued to run on a regular basis between September and May. Ongoing problems with the court lights meant that some fixtures could not be played; however, the school has indicated that new fittings will be installed in the near future. One match that did take place was a hard fought affair against the talented and energetic school team. Eventual victory by the OBMs meant little in that the real pleasure was the prospect of the boys developing into formidable players during their final two years at school. The OBMs also provided the RFA team that defeated Bedford School in January. As ever, club members entered the Veterans and Vintage tournaments, whilst Mark Kiteley became probably the oldest player to win the coveted President's Cup at the umpteenth time of trying.

Sadly, Jerry Cooper died in December. Jerry had been secretary of the OBM Fives Club for more than 30 years as well as being a former RFA President and master in charge of Fives at Bedford School where he produced a number of National Schools champions. His funeral was well attended and his lifelong friend David Hebblethwaite delivered a very moving tribute.

Philip Atkinson

Marlborough Town Fives Club

The club has enjoyed an excellent year, with a good attendance three sessions a week, and both codes played. Tom Kiggell and Jim Hughes remain our star players, however, the rest of us battle on, with a definite, if imperceptible, rise in standards evident over the last year.

We held our usual competitions within the club over the year. These included a doubles competition with two teams (led by Tom and Jim), and the Hughes Cup Rugby Singles competition. Whilst the number of entries for the latter was slightly down on the previous year, the quality of the field was every bit as strong. The winner, Harvey Bishop, produced an excellent display in the final, against a marvellously talented runner-up...

The annual dinner was a great success, and one of the highlights of the year for many of our players was



Pringle and Steel at the Mixed Winchester

Old Blundellians

The Fives season started back in September with the annual Reichwald Trophy. It was a very successful day featuring a good turn-out of OBs of all ages, with the strongest OB paired with the weakest pupil; this made for some extremely competitive games throughout the day. Chris Hedley-Dent took charge of organizing the



Marlborough Town on court

taking part in both the Vintage and the Veterans tournament.

During the year one of our leading lights, Tim Brown, took several pairs of gloves and a ball with him to Kenya and introduced the game to a number of his local friends, using an old squash court. This autumn he is taking more players out to play a Marlborough v. Kenya match.

As a club you could say we lack any semblance of leadership, direction, focus or ambition. And I think this is why it works.

Richard Clark

complicated round robin, which led into a knock-out finale where Nick Cumberlege and his Blundell's partner emerged as the winners. It was a really fun event and how great it is to see such good support for Fives within the school. The day was rounded off with tea in the Beal Centre, followed by the presentation.

It has been a busy season in competition Fives, with particular success for OBs Alexandra Steel and Maddy Raynor, who are both seeded in the top four of the new Women's Rankings. Both participated valiantly in the Winchester Mixed Doubles, with Maddy and Alex Rew finishing third and Alexandra and Andy Pringle making the final! Also we are proud that Alexandra is the first lady to enter the National (Men's) Doubles rankings.

Although the participation of Old Blundellians had increased this year we would like to encourage more to play in competitions, where they can showcase skills learnt from their school days. If you would like to participate in OB Fives please contact Nick Cumberlege on nicholas.cumberlege@gmail.com

Alex Rew



Dave Butler in action against Richie Murby

Old Bradfieldians

Being a largely peripatetic club we had just the one fixture this year, against the Jesters at Bradfield College. This was a close fixture; however, home advantage gave the Old Bradfieldians the edge to narrowly win the match.

Our greatest successes came the farther away from Bradfield we got. Our star player of the moment, Dave Butler, journeyed to Giggleswick to win the Yorkshire Doubles with Dan Tristao, and to Loretto to win the Scottish Singles title. Dave also partnered Ollie Arnold in the South West Doubles at Blundell's, coming runner-up. Jez Sinton was carried to victory in the Scottish Doubles by a Fettes sixth former, but only after the points-difference vagaries put them ahead of Adam George and partner, who beat them in the group.

Having failed to enter a III for the new-style Owers Trophy we're determined to take part this year.

Jez Sinton

Old Merchant Taylors'

The weekly OMT Fives sessions run throughout the year on Wednesday nights at Merchant Taylors' School. The informal club is attended by a regular, warm and welcoming selection of OMTs and non-OMTs of varying ages, all with a common passion for the game, and courtesy for each other mixed in with some competitive banter. Singles, doubles and trebles are all played and a Whatsapp group is used to advise attendance. We gladly welcome players, whether you are passing through or have moved to the area, and if you would like to come along, contact Prashant Chopra on 07824 399 571 or pc@autogem.co.uk.

Gareth Price

Old Paulines

The Old Pauline RFC continues to be extremely active, with a pleasingly high number of young members. The club runs two internal tournaments each year: the Cunis Cup, a handicapped singles tournament, and our own President's Cup. The round-robin style singles tournament was won by Julian Aquilina by just four points from Theo Parker. The doubles was won by Jack Malde and James Tilston who won a close game against Jonny Baker and Henry Jefferies.

The 2012 Leavers – Parker, Thomas and Russell – did well to make the final of the new-style Owers Trophy but weren't able to beat our 1st team of Aquilina, Beltrami and Tristao. The Club ended the year as runners-up in the Wood Cup for the second consecutive year – the aim for 2017 will be to go one better.

For many, Peter King has been ever present in St Paul's Fives, overseeing many who've gone on to higher things. To mark Peter's retirement the Club held a dinner bringing together OPs spanning 50 years. We presented Peter with a few bottles as well donating the 'King Cup' to be presented to the most improved junior player. Retirement from the OP Fives committee is thankfully not on the cards!

Tom Dean

Old Whitgiftians

The formula for another enjoyable Old Whitgiftian season: nine matches, a South West tour, one 40th birthday Fives celebration, a School v.OWs mix-and-match tournament, a team entered in the Owers Trophy plus lots of enthusiastic members!

Competitive matches with RFA, Whitgift Schoolboys, Christ's Hospital, Old Tonbridgians, the Jesters, plus the OWs' annual foray to the South West for games at Sherborne, Tiverton and Clifton resulted in four wins and five losses. The tour was well attended, including tour virgin Nick Morgan, master in charge at Whitgift. Plentiful Fives justified plentiful liquid refreshments, food and socialising.

Also memorable was the sunny mid-October Sunday when a dozen



OWs v. School - a game for all ages

OW and Fives-playing friends gathered to celebrate the Hon Sec's 0.4 century with a day of Fives, food and drink. Massing from across the South East and also boasting an overall age of approximately 600 years, a thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all.

Nick Woolfenden



An Old Tonbridgian IV

Old Tonbridgians

Fives at Tonbridge has gone well and although not stars on the performance tables we are regular players with a few wins to celebrate.

It's been pleasing to welcome Rupert Mathieu – a current parent and old boy. Also Robert Harrison and Alfred Ainsworth, both recent leavers providing a much needed youthful enthusiasm – and adding some strong shots to our games.

Robert and I appeared at a friendly Winchester Doubles event in Malvern, managing to enjoy the plate competition. Martin Wilkinson remains our star with his fifth consecutive win in the Masters Doubles, this time with David Hebden.

Local games against Eastbourne, Whitgift and the school took place.

As always, players who may be in the Tonbridge area are most welcome.

Neil Arnott

Oxford University

Last year saw us suffer the heaviest Varsity loss on record, and we all saw this year as an opportunity to right last year's wrongs. This positive attitude was aided by a crop of talented new players, most notably Sid Bhushan, Tom Owen and Harry Hutchinson.

Match highlights included a resounding away victory over the Executioners and a well-fought narrow loss against St Paul's.

The Club put in an impressive performance at the Universities tournament, with captain Thomas punching above his weight to knock out the eighth seed. We struggled to show the same conviction at other tournaments, though, where we failed to progress to the later stages.

That said, these tournaments proved invaluable in helping us to prepare for the Varsity Match and levels of intensity at this year's contest were particularly high. The odds were stacked against us, given that three of Cambridge's side were ranked in the top 10, but that didn't stop some admirable performances. Notable contributions came from former captain Whitney, who took seven points off his opponent, and Bertie Mills and Will Yates, who were indefatigable in the doubles. The 284-120 loss was a disappointment, even if it was a vast improvement on last year. I'm extremely proud of the spirit displayed by the team and wish the Club all the best for next year.

Francis Thomas

West of England Fives Club

The WoE Club has enjoyed a buoyant season with a mix of regular Wednesday evening club nights, a handful of fixtures, the traditional Christmas Doubles (with a first-time outcome) and a semi-final appearance at the Club Championship.

Club membership is around 22, evenly split between Bristol University players and locally based, more senior members. It is an ongoing concern that the only remaining Fives-playing school in Bristol – Clifton College, where we play – is only playing the game as an 'activity'.

Matches were held against the

RFA, Winchester College, UCS Old Boys and Old Whitgiftians, and only the UCS match was lost.

Five pairs contested the Christmas Doubles round robin. There was added interest in that, for the first time, we had a mixed pair of Ollie Arnold and Louise Mathias. To add to the excitement Ollie and Louise made it to the final against Kevin Brice and Alex Mullan. The trophy appeared to be in the grasp of the all-male pairing at 14-13, when Ollie produced an amazing series of winners for a 16-14 victory.

The Club qualified for the quarter-finals of the Club Championship in London and was represented by a very strong IV of Ollie Arnold, Theo Parker, Tom Watkinson and Kevin Brice. We overcame the challenge of the RFA to reach the semis – but met our match in the Wessex Club, who went on to win the competition.

Thanks are due to our enthusiastic captain, Kevin Brice, for his tireless involvement throughout the season. We wound up with an enjoyable curry evening well attended by players past and present. Hopefully a tradition for the future?

Lionel Lawson

Wessex Club

Another good year at the Wessex Club when we were delighted to welcome our first lady member, Shinan Zhang, who played Fives at Malvern College and brought with her three fellow Southampton University students, all new to Fives but keen and talented sportsmen. With these players taking to the game so quickly, and with the boys from Winchester College so strong at the moment there were few gentle games, regardless of who is on court. Battles seem to go on later and later into the evening, but we've not lost sight of the fact that sausages and the Whykham Arms remain a core part of our evenings!

Other highlights included a great match of the 'Winchester Fives Association' against the RFA, where we came out narrow

The Letchworth Bowl



White Rose Club

It's been a poor year for the White Rose Club, with a shortage of members making it difficult to get a IV out for many club nights. Most existing members are over 60 and the lack of support is causing concern that we may be unable to cover court fees. We negotiated a rent freeze for this year, but the intention appears to be that it will increase by 10% next year.

On a happier note, we attended the Veterans, Vintage and Yorkshire Open tournaments, though failing to win silverware. Hawke and Sandie, however, did win the Bottle of Beer at the Veterans Doubles. One new player has also appeared at recent club nights. Although a mature novice, he makes up for inexperience with enthusiasm.

I hope this isn't the final White Rose report!

John Hawke



The White Rose Club take on the RFA aka Derby Moor

winners by a 266-257 margin. We also had an enjoyable Curry-and-Fives evening with the Exeter Fives Club, winning 211-173 (though Alex Rew and Alexandra Steel remained unbeaten for the second year running), and in April we retained the Wood Cup, although we doubled our chances by entering two teams! Our biggest ever end-of-season tournament saw 36 players competing for the Letchworth Bowl: this year Ed Hawke and Nigel Gainsborough came out as winners.

Thanks go to Mike Crompton and his team at Summit International for so generously giving of their time to create our brilliant new website. www.wessexfivesclub.org.uk.

Harry Akerman

Derby Moor Fives goes indoors

Stuart Kirby's photo diary charts the transformation of the Derby Moor courts



26 OCT 2015
The diggers move in and remove about 300 tons of earth



<< 27-31 OCT 2015
The original back wall was found to be unstable, so the decision was taken to remove it and start again

5-12 NOV 2016 >>
Foundations in, the walls start to be built, but bad weather makes work tricky



<< 13 NOV 2015
The floor goes in just days before the walls are built



<< 18 DEC 2015
No roof yet, but we headed into the Christmas break with things starting to take shape



25-28 APR 2016 >>
Bob Dolby makes his mark on the courts as the viewing floor is stained



<< 1-3 JUNE 2016
Windows go in and the end is in sight



JUNE 2016 Fives returns to Derby Moor, in courts to proud of - thanks to all who helped!

Memories of a lifetime in Fives

Ian Fuller looks back on his 44 years at the heart of the RFA in many varied roles



Ian Fuller has completed 44 years' service to the RFA. In that time, he held all the important offices: Hon. Sec. 1976-83; Deputy President 1993-95; President 1995-97; Gen. Sec. 2003-08 and 2011-15, Treasurer 2003-16. He attended more than 140 RFA Committee/Board meetings, and we asked Ian for his memories.

"My first Committee meeting is etched in my memory. Shortly after leaving school I was told I'd been elected as an RFA Committee member and on the day of the first meeting I was advised by one of the younger members that it was "the done thing" to meet beforehand in the 'Bunch of Grapes'. More than a few beers later we walked, slightly less nervously in my case, to the meeting to be greeted by a sea of faces shrouded in a cloud of pipe smoke. More than half smoked a pipe – it almost seemed a pre-requisite to being on the Committee!

"Discussions were quite genteel in those days – "I don't think we need do anything about that," "Let's leave things as they are" and the classic "Well, of course in my day..."

"The hours discussing the detail of the Incorporation of the RFA and the move to Charitable Status sticks in my mind. The involvement of all Board members to ensure both were put on a proper footing was exemplary and ensured a successful transition.

"My involvement in three defining moments in the history of the Association

LEFT (FROM TOP) Ian winning the Vintage Singles in 2015; taking over as General Secretary from Michael Beaman in 2003



will be a source of pride:

- Re-drafting the Constitution with Lionel Lawson and Peter Dunscombe in the 1980s to recommend, among other things, the creation of a paid Gen. Sec. This was revolutionary at the time but was agreed by the AGM and has continued to this day.

- The merger of the RFA and RFA Club in the 1990s. This tricky and sensitive issue could not have been achieved without the co-operation of David Barnes, then RFA Club President, and the way the memberships welcomed the initiative was a delightful surprise.

- The creation of the 'Fives Forum,' which was hatched over a beer with the then EFA Chairman, Michael Constantinidi. Through the later involvement of John East, the Forum became the Fives Federation and the signing ceremony between the EFA and RFA seemed like a historical occasion.

'A major highlight for me was being elected President in 1993'

"A major highlight for me was being

elected President. During my term I played in virtually every tournament and it was exciting to see the enthusiasm for the game at local level.

"I've been privileged to work with over 20 Presidents – some adopted more of a hands-off approach, chairing meetings and attending tournaments, others more of an executive role. Each had at least one or two initiatives they wished to introduce, which always brought a freshness to proceedings. I couldn't count how many Board members I've worked with, but the energy and enthusiasm they all brought helped the RFA to become the successful organisation it is today.

"The Association is far healthier and more professional than ever before and seeing the strength of the current younger membership on and off the court bodes very well for the future."

Obituaries

This year we've lost three significant figures in the history of the RFA and RFA Club

John Howe (1943-2015)



John Howe in 1994 with Dave Hebden

In November we learned of the death of John Howe. John was National Singles champion in 1966 and 1968 and won the National Doubles in 1967 and 1968 with Stan Holt. He won the National Veterans Singles from 1988 to 1993, and the Veterans Doubles three times with Geoff Sherratt and once with David Barnes.

An Old Dunstonian, John was a creative left-hander who left his opponent wondering where the next shot might come from or, indeed, where it might be going. He possessed brilliant hand-eye coordination, quickness of movement and an athleticism that set him apart as a sportsman of the highest calibre. He was as colourful a character on court as off, and many a young player aspired to play the game as John did, with skill, fairness and a sense of enjoyment.

Stan Holt said: "I was lucky enough to partner John on many occasions – all games were a pleasure because he played with such enthusiasm and enjoyment. He was scrupulously fair and would pit his skills against all types of opposition with a great sense of fun. Of all the activities that John took part in I'd suggest he was never happier than when playing Fives."

Jerry Cooper (1935-2015)



Jerry Cooper chairing the RFA Board in 1998

Just before Christmas we lost Jerry Cooper, aged 80. Jerry was President of the RFA from 1997 to 1999, having been in charge of Fives at Bedford School from 1963 to 1993, during which time Bedford won the Schools' Singles seven times and the Doubles twice.

For many years Bedford has been a hub of social Fives in the best sense of the word; Jerry was very much at the centre of that. He was a staunch supporter of Fives at all levels and throughout the land, and his name will live on in the trophy he presented for the Midlands Schools Regional Open Singles: The Cooper Cup.

David Dance, one of Jerry's 'products' said of him: "I was really sad to hear of his death, but I thought back to Easter terms at Bedford School and very happy memories of Jerry, usually with a fag in his mouth and a wry grin on his face, offering us some piece of sage advice. As a coach he achieved the most extraordinary run of success with a minimum of fuss and none of the 'protein shakes' and 365-day training that seems to characterise schools sports nowadays! When he did offer suggestions about how to improve one's game, it was always spot on."

Reeve Wood (1955-2016)



Reeve Wood holding the 1987 President's Cup

In January RFA members were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of Reeve Wood, son of Tom and Joan and Honorary Secretary of the RFA Club from 1991-95. Reeve was only 60 but had been undergoing treatment for a brain tumour. He and his wife Reggie had lived in County Wexford in Ireland for the past 16 years.

Reeve greatly enjoyed his Fives – he was a President's Cup winner in 1987 with Jeremy Schroeter – and his huge loyalty to his parents was shown by his willingness to travel great distances to play across Britain and in the USA, and by assuming responsibility for the RFA Club in 1991. He helped Reggie and his sister Cherry to achieve a good standard of Fives, too: they had success in both a National Doubles and a Winchester Ladies' Doubles. Reeve and Reggie teamed up to win the Winchester Mixed Doubles in 1998.

All three will be greatly missed and the thoughts of the RFA are with their families.

End-of-Season Rankings

Dave Hebden looks at the risers and fallers in the 2015-2016 rankings

Will Ellison heads up both the singles and doubles rankings at the end of the season following some great results over the year, including wins in both the National Singles and Doubles – a fine achievement.

Although Will has previously topped the singles rankings mid-season, this is the first time he's been number one at the end of the season, having been pipped by Dan Tristao in both of the last two years. In doubles Will remains the dominant player, having held the top slot in four of the last five seasons.

In the singles, Will picked up six of the nine open trophies on offer, only losing twice, both times to Dan Tristao, in the London and the West of England. The other event, in Scotland, was won by David Butler. This was his first senior win, and the first by a Bradfieldian since Roger Layton won the North of England in 1992. Ed Kay (at four) picked up the University and U25 titles, while Ben Beltrami continues his progress, moving to five.

Julian Aquilina is the highest riser in the top 10, moving up 15 places to nine. James Toop's absence from the tournament circuit sees him drop to eight. Ollie Arnold, Matt Shaw, Andrew Boyd, Peter Hanton and Henry Jefferies are among a crop of improving players featuring in the top 20. We have 12 new entries, Giles Munn the highest at 29.

The seven open doubles trophies were shared around a little more. Will Ellison picked up five titles, Dan Tristao and Dan Grant both took three, a fit-again Charlie Brooks took two and David Butler one. The two invitation events were won by Ed Hatton and Andy Pringle (South East) and Jez Sinton and Archie McCreath (Scotland). Matt Shaw won both the University and U25 Doubles, the former with Ben Beltrami, and the latter with Ed Kay. Outside of these winners Ollie Arnold, Theo Parker, Julian Aquilina, James Tilston and Adam George make good



‘Julian Aquilina is the highest riser in the top 10, moving up 15 places’

progress in the top 20. Ben Jourdan from Edinburgh Academy deserves mention for moving up to 22, whilst the somewhat more experienced Alex Rew moves up to 24 after his semi-final appearance in the West of England. We welcome as many as 24 new entries into the doubles rankings this season, including Louise Mathias, who joins Alexandra Steel as the second female player in the rankings.

It's encouraging to report that 2015-16 produced an all-time record for singles entrants, and by some margin. One factor in this was the record National Singles entry (59), whilst maybe the current young profile of tournament attendees is reflected in these good singles numbers.



TOP Singles medallists at the Scottish Open, Dave Butler's first senior title
CENTRE Ed Kay in full flow at BUSF
BOTTOM Matt Shaw and Ben Beltrami, BUSF Doubles champions again

RFA rankings at end of season 2015-2016

Singles

Current	Previous	Name	Pts
1	2	W Ellison	97.3
2	1	D Tristao	94.5
3	3	D Grant	63.6
4	6	E Kay	61.8
5	10	B Beltrami	53.1
6	5	M Cavanagh	42.4
7	7	D Butler	41.4
8	4	J Toop	34.9
9	24	J Aquilina	34.4
10	9	R Murby	33.1
11	15	M Shaw	29.9
12	37	O Arnold	29.7
13	8	J Minta	28.6
14	12	T Maconie	26.5
15	27	A Boyd	26.1
16	38	P Hanton	23.1
17	17	T Parker	22.2
18	30	H Jefferies	21.1
19	11	H Buchanan	20.6
20	19	A George	20.0
21	20	M Bate	18.9
22	18	E Hatton	18.5
23	14	C Brooks	18.4
24	16	T Kiggell	16.8
25	21	J Brubert	15.1
26	28	S Russell	14.6
27	21	G Price	14.0
28	23	C Waller	13.2
29	13	T Dean	13.1

Current	Previous	Name	Pts
31	-	G Munn	13.1
32	26	J Tilston	12.3
32	25	C Burrows	11.2
32	32	A Goodwin	11.2
34	-	A Bowden	10.5
35	-	C Blackaby	10.0
35	-	E Hawke	10.0
35	-	S Kirby	10.0
38	34	B Jourdan	9.3
39	-	T Watkinson	8.9
40	40	N Roberts	8.5
41	46	F Thomas	7.7
42	-	R Whitehorn	7.1
43	34	T Widdop	6.7
44	45	A Hamilton	5.4
44	39	J Pinder	5.4
46	42	J Halligan	4.8
47	40	M Kemp	4.4
48	-	S Bhushan	4.3
49	51	J Sinton	4.1
50	-	J Smith	3.2
51	-	M Spillane	2.2
52	-	J Sellar	2.0
53	43	D Fox	1.5
54	50	B Ashraf	1.4
54	-	B Chua	1.4
54	51	C Kent	1.4
57	49	R Houlden	1.3

Doubles

Current	Previous	Name	Pts
1	2	W Ellison	98.0
2	1	D Tristao	91.1
3	3	D Grant	86.9
4	4	E Kay	74.8
5	8	C Brooks	70.7
6	9	B Beltrami	67.1
7	5	H Buchanan	60.0
8	6	T Dean	56.6
9	10	M Shaw	55.7
10	12	D Butler	51.5
11	15	T Parker	46.4
12	7	J Minta	45.8
13	19	O Arnold	44.7
14	17	J Aquilina	39.4
14	16	J Tilston	39.4
16	13	R Perry	34.6
17	25	A George	31.6
17	20	E Hatton	31.6
19	14	C Burrows	28.3
20	33	J Sinton	27.2
21	-	A McCreath	26.5
22	24	A Boyd	25.5
24	59	B Jourdan	25.5
24	65	J Hughes	25.0
26	21	A Rew	25.0
26	34	M Kemp	24.5
28	26	A Pringle	24.5
29	23	R Murby	24.0
30	18	S Russell	23.5
30	18	M Bate	22.4
32	26	J Beswick	22.4
33	11	G Price	21.2
34	29	N Roberts	20.6
34	80	P Hanton	20.0
35	21	J Brubert	17.3
35	26	B Chua	17.3
35	65	N Geere	17.3
38	38	A Goodwin	16.6
39	36	E Hawke	15.8
41	30	C Waller	15.8
41	65	T Watkinson	15.0
43	43	R Whitehorn	15.0
44	48	F Thomas	14.1
44	41	I Ackland	12.2
44	-	C Baxter	12.2
44	36	T Chase	12.2
44	48	H Jefferies	12.2
44	38	G Lemmon	12.2
44	38	M Spillane	12.2
50	54	O Quarry	11.2

51	-	S Bhushan	10.0
51	-	C Blackaby	10.0
51	-	E Carr	10.0
51	-	C Davey	10.0
51	-	T Hebblethwaite	10.0
54	54	S Kirby	10.0
54	-	T McCahon	10.0
54	-	J Singh	10.0
54	-	T Wakelam	10.0
54	54	T Widdop	10.0
61	65	B Ashraf	8.7
63	-	E Castillo	7.1
63	54	R Christie	7.1
63	-	L Cook	7.1
63	43	R Dyke	7.1
63	30	W Enstone	7.1
63	-	H Fry	7.1
63	59	J Halligan	7.1
63	-	A Hamilton	7.1
63	-	Z Jopling	7.1
63	48	T Lewis	7.1
63	-	B Mills	7.1
63	-	G Munn	7.1
63	-	M Nunes	7.1
63	-	T Raikes	7.1
63	48	A Smith	7.1
63	80	B Smithson	7.1
63	-	L Taylor	7.1
63	48	R Warner	7.1
63	48	S Watson	7.1
63	-	N Whitney	7.1
63	-	A Wordley	7.1
84	62	S Hodgson	6.1
84	47	T Kiggell	6.1
84	62	N Woolfenden	6.1
87	62	J Ader	5.0
87	65	A Esin	5.0
87	65	M Hale	5.0
87	65	W Harrison	5.0
87	65	D Hill	5.0
87	65	T Hoskins	5.0
87	65	C Kent	5.0
87	59	J Malde	5.0
87	-	L Mathias	5.0
87	65	O Sale	5.0
87	65	R Sandie	5.0
87	65	G Sperling	5.0
87	65	A Steel	5.0

Current shows position following: End of Season, May 2016; Previous shows position following: Start Season

Room for more in the 100 Club!



The 100 Club started in the early 1980s to provide funds for the renovation of courts, and for other expenses associated with the promotion

of the game of Rugby Fives, at the discretion of the RFA Committee – now the RFA Board. Over the years funds have been made available to many schools to assist with projects; for example £2500 was donated to Rugby School for their new courts. We are presently contributing towards the cost of coaching at the Edinburgh Academy. Currently we have around 80 members but are looking to increase this number and if we can exceed 100 then the prize money can be increased.

Membership costs just a minimum of £12 per annum, which gives you one 'ticket' in the draw. The more tickets you buy, the better your chance of winning! There are three prize draws each year:

Spring Draw
1st Prize £50
2nd Prize £35

Summer Draw
1st Prize £150

Winter Draw
1st Prize £50
2nd Prize £35

The winner of the 2016 summer draw was Bev Boag.

The 100 Club is not in any way in competition with the RFA Charitable Trust and the scale of the Fund is, of course, significantly smaller. Nevertheless the Board believes that this different vehicle can provide meaningful support to schools across the country – as well as a possible return on your contributions!
Ian Fuller

The Rugby Fives Association Charitable Trust

(Registered Charity No. 1087264) (Trustees: J. East, F. Akerman, B. Hanton, D. Hebden, I Fuller, C. Niven, A. Pringle and R. Warner)

John East reports on the Charitable Trust's activities



During its last financial year to 30 September 2015 the Trust received an income of over £27,500 – a very high figure by recent standards. It made one

grant of a little over £1100 to reimburse Derby Moor Fives for the costs of running the Club there and another of some £23,000 to Alleyn's School to renovate the floor at the school. A further payment of over £32,000 has been made towards the cost of enclosing the courts at Derby Moor. There is currently an outstanding commitment to help towards the cost of reinstating a court at St. Andrew's Prep School in Eastbourne and a further payment will be due to Derby Moor, as its building programme reaches its conclusion.

The Trust is ever willing to consider applications for grants for both large and small projects, although its funds are winding down after some significant projects in recent years and a new appeal may be necessary before long to build up funds for future ventures. Its ability to support recent substantial projects has been reliant on a few very generous donors giving funds to support those specific projects, while the Derby Moor Club has been a model organisation in terms of collection, saving and managing its court fund over more than a decade of careful stewardship.

The ability of the RFACT to provide support to many projects has been an important factor in helping various initiatives come to fruition over the last decade. With that ability now somewhat reduced, if you feel able and



The enclosed Derby Moor courts

willing to contribute to the Trust's funds please do get in touch with me through the RFA website. Equally, if you're willing to leave a legacy to the Trust, then please consider using the template below as a codicil, suitably adjusted if you are writing a new will.

As ever, I'd like to thank all my fellow Trustees for their support over the past year and I should also thank Peter de Winton for his continuing assistance with the accounts.

I'd also like to express my thanks to our contributors over the years, without whose generosity the Trust's ability to support the game would have been very constrained.

2015-16 results round-up

Full details of all these events on www.rugbyfivesassociation.net

SOUTH WEST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015

Singles: W.Ellison
Doubles: C.Brooks & W.Ellison

SOUTH EAST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015

Singles: W.Ellison
Doubles: E.Hatton & A.Pringle

LONDON OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015

Singles: D.Tristao
Doubles: W.Ellison & D.Tristao

OWERS TROPHY 2015

Old Paulines

THE LADY'S CUP 2015

L.Mathias & R.Stuart

YORKSHIRE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015

Singles: D.Tristao
Doubles: D.Butler & D.Tristao

WEST OF ENGLAND OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015

Singles: D.Tristao
Doubles: D.Grant & D.Tristao

SCHOOLS WINCHESTER FIVES DOUBLES 2015

Winchester College (P.Kullavanijaya & A.Song)

NATIONAL STUDENTS (BUSF) CHAMPIONSHIPS 2015

Singles: E.Kay
Doubles: B.Beltrami & M.Shaw

NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP 2015

W.Ellison

PRESIDENT'S CUP 2015

D.Grant & M.Kiteley

WEST OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

U18 Singles: A.Song (Winchester)
U18 Doubles: Winchester (P.Kullavanijaya & A.Song)
U16 Singles: T.Kidner (Winchester)
U16 Doubles: Winchester (S.Byers & T.Kidner)

NATIONAL LADIES' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: K.Briedenhann
Doubles: K.Briedenhann & T.Mills

NORTH WEST OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: W.Ellison
Doubles: W.Ellison & D.Grant

NATIONAL U25 CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: E.Kay
Doubles: E.Kay & M.Shaw

THE VARSITY MATCH 2016

Men's: Cambridge beat Oxford 284-120
Women's: Cambridge beat Oxford 147-83

NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: W.Ellison
Doubles: W.Ellison & D.Grant

NATIONAL WINCHESTER FIVES DOUBLES 2016

Doubles: W.Ellison & E.Kay

LADIES WINCHESTER FIVES CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: K.Briedenhann
Doubles: K.Briedenhann & T.Mills

NATIONAL VINTAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: I.Fuller
Doubles: I.Fuller & D.Hebden

NATIONAL SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

U18 Singles: A.Boyd (Edinburgh Academy)
U18 Doubles: St. Paul's (H.Mahajan & A.Taylor)
U16 Singles: T.Kidner (Winchester)
U16 Doubles: Winchester (T.Kidner & A.Poyntz)
U14 Singles: D.Percival (Winchester)
U14 Doubles: Winchester (S.Fraser & D.Percival)
U13 Singles: I.Jochim (St. Olave's)
U13 Doubles: St. Olave's (Y.Bleunven & I.Jochim)

NATIONAL CLUB KNOCK-OUT (WOOD CUP) 2016

Wessex Club

NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP (CYRIAX CUP) 2016

C.Brooks & W.Ellison

NATIONAL GIRLS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

U18 Singles: A.Law (Malvern)
U18 Doubles: Malvern (A.Law & M.Wong)
U16 Singles: H.Fagan (Rugby)
U16 Doubles: Rugby (H.Fagan & F.Harrison)
U14 Singles: K.Sumner (Bedford Modern)
U14 Doubles: Bedford Modern (M.Kent & K.Sumner)
U13 Singles: A.Alli (Christ's Hospital)
U13 Doubles: Christ's Hospital (A.Alli & L.Thwaites)

NATIONAL VETERANS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: M.Cavanagh
Doubles: J.Minta & A.Pringle

NATIONAL MASTERS' CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Doubles: D.Hebden & M.Wilkinson

SCOTTISH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

Singles: D.Butler
Doubles: A.McCreath & J.Sinton

MIXED WINCHESTER FIVES DOUBLES 2016

Doubles: K.Briedenhann & B.Beltrami

DERBY MOOR INVITATION DOUBLES 2016

H.Buchanan & L.Keates



Winners of the Derby Moor Doubles Buchanan & Keates

I _____ (Name)
Of _____ (Address)
Declare this to be a _____ (first/second as appropriate) Codicil to my last Will dated the ____ day of _____ 19 ____ /20 ____ ("my will").
My Will shall be construed and take effect as if it contained the following clause:
I give free of inheritance tax to The Rugby Fives Charitable Trust, registered charity number 1087264
a)* _____ per cent (_____ %) (percentage in words and figures) of my residuary estate for the general purposes of said charity.
b)* The sum of _____ pounds (£ _____) (sum in words and figures) for the general purposes of the charity.
The receipt of any Trustee or other officer for the time being of the said charity shall be sufficient discharge to my Executors.
In All other respects I confirm my Will _____ (and Codicil dated) (date of Codicil)
In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand on this ____ day of _____ 20 ____
Signed by the said _____ (Name)

(Signature of testator)

As and for a _____ (first/second etc) Codicil to his/her Will in our presence. And by us jointly attested and subscribed in his/her presence

FIRST WITNESS

SECOND WITNESS

_____ (Signature of witness)	_____ (Signature of witness)
NAME _____	NAME _____
Address _____	Address _____
Occupation _____	Occupation _____

* Delete as appropriate



**Rugby Fives
Association
2016**

www.rugbyfivesassociation.net