

## Senior rugby report

1st XV League Champions and promoted to North West 1 2nd XV 6th 3rd XV 7th  
Academy XV Lancs Cup Finalists

Overall it has been another positive season with the overwhelming success being the 1st XV's 14 successive league victories to secure top-spot in the league and automatic promotion. The side has been led well by Captain James Brodie and vice-captain Tom Fantom - both of whom have been in great form this season. In a side primarily made-up of former M&J and Colts players - it has been an unforgettable season for all involved and a real squad effort with no less than 47 players involved.

The 2nd XV have contributed significantly to the success of the 1st XV and the league position of the team has suffered as a result. One game had to be conceded following an error made by FlyBe which meant us having to field 3 senior teams on short notice on a weather weekend which in all likelihood cost the team 2 league places come the end of the season. Overall though the squad will be stronger next season for this year's experience. Throughout it all the team has again been very well led by Captain Paul Farrington who signs-off from this role to support Xander Munro as vice-Captain next season. I'd like to thank Paul for all of his support and for his leadership of the 2nd XV over the last 3 seasons when I have been DoR.

When the 2s have been supporting the 1s the gentlemen of the 3rd XV have stepped-up to support the 2s, and this combined with an awful run of injuries, seriously impacted their final league position when at Christmas we were well placed in 4th. However the 3s have been a real success story over the last few seasons and I'm confident that they'll bounce back positively next season. Ian Richardson has been at the heart of the development of this squad and I'd like to thank him for all of his time & effort in building-up this team over the last 3 seasons.

Finally and by no means least - the Academy XV have recovered from the disappointment of not being able to complete the league campaign to make the final of the Senior Colts Cup Final (to be played this weekend) and to put plans in place to field a regular Junior Colts team next season. This again has been led by Darren Lewis, supported by Anne-Marie Booth and the current U16 Coaching Team. A victory this Sunday is the least that they deserve and they continue to support the development of the senior section by working so hard to keep colts rugby going at Manchester.

I would like to thank all the coaches and captains across our 3 Senior Teams - Simon Ogdon, Chris Gough, Neil James, James Brodie, Colin Webb, Paul Farrington & Ian Richardson - without who's help we'd be unable to prepare and support the 3 teams that we field each weekend.

Finally I'd like to thank all the members for their support this year, particular thanks to Andrew Bridgman, Jonathan Sheard and the members of the rugby committee who have provided a great foundation for us to work from.

James Beane

# **MANCHESTER 3rds AGM BRIEF**

## **Season 2016-17**

Following an initial foundation year in Division 4 East, Manchester 3rds set a number of progressive objectives for the 2016-17 campaign; these were

1. A top 5 finish in the league
2. Win 50% of their league games
3. Maintain and develop a squad of approx 35+ players
4. Fulfil a number of 4<sup>th</sup> team fixtures to help develop inexperienced players and to allow for social players to be included in playing rugby at Manchester RFC

Pre-season numbers and experience within the squad led to much optimism in the 3<sup>rd</sup> team and confidence that these above objectives could be met. After an opening poor start to the season against a strengthened Old Aldwinians team, Manchester 3rds quickly re-grouped and prior to the Christmas break the 3rds statistics were 7 wins, 1 draw and 5 losses. These statistics would have been improved had Manchester 3rds not have been in the position where they had to play against strengthened teams from Old Aldwinians, Littleborough and Glossop due to their 2<sup>nd</sup> teams not having fixtures (their 2<sup>nd</sup> teams play one league higher than Manchester 2nds in Division 2 North and South). It was clearly evident in these games and from previous form that these clubs had strengthened their teams. Undoubtedly though, Manchester 3rds gave a good account of themselves particularly against Glossop.

Following the Christmas break the 3<sup>rd</sup> team initially picked up on their pre-Christmas form but the fixture schedule after January appeared to have an impact on the momentum that the 3rds had previously created. This was compounded with an increasing injury list consisting of some key players and positions and a lack of consistency on regular availability. This resulted in the 3rds stats showing 3 wins, 5 losses and 1 concede from January until the end of April. The 3rds conceded the game against Glossop due to Glossop's 2<sup>nd</sup> team not having a fixture again and all evidence suggesting that Glossop would again turn up with a strengthened team.

In summary the 3<sup>rd</sup> team fell just short of their 50% target for wins and eventually managed a position of 7<sup>th</sup> in the league. Considering the strength and depth of the squad during the early stages of the season it is fair to say that the 3<sup>rd</sup> team slightly under-achieved against their potential this season. Nevertheless there were a number of key factors that contributed to this which included having to play a number of strengthened teams, a growing injury list and inconsistency on availability. Taking these factors into consideration it is easy to conceive that the 3rds could and would have finished 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> in their league this year. Although it is was disappointing not to achieve this target it nevertheless gave the opportunity for a number of new and inexperienced players to start to develop within the squad.

It is important to recognise that there were around 10-12 players who committed regular to the 3rds over the course of the season and without these players, it highly probable the 3<sup>rd</sup> team would not have achieved what they did during this campaign.

With regards to the development of the 4<sup>th</sup> team there were only 3 fixtures played and this was disappointing.

## **2017-18**

Ian Richardson has taken the decision to stand down as Manager & Captain of the 3rd team for the 2017-18 season due to ongoing work commitments but is expected to remain actively involved in supporting the 3rds from a coaching and playing perspective. However, with a number of players leaving the Manchester area in the coming months, a number of long term injuries and the issues surrounding availability, it is vital that the team recruit around 5 -6 new players prior to pre-season in order to sustain a regular 3rds team at Manchester RFC during next season. Failure to develop and maintain a regular league team could potentially impact on the 2<sup>nd</sup> team in a number of ways and it is therefore vital that the club supports the 3rds in this endeavour.

# Sale Sharks Division 4 East 2016-2017

## League Table

League Table | [View Matrix](#) | [Last Week's Results](#) | [This Week's Fixtures](#) | [All 2016-2017 Fixtures](#)

	Team	P	W	D	L	CC	Wo	Co	Nfw	For	Agst	Diff	Pts	+/-
1	<a href="#">Broughton RUFC 1</a>	22	19	0	1	0	2	0	0	807	213	594	85	0
2	<a href="#">Didsbury Toc H 3</a>	21	14	0	5	0	2	0	0	649	431	218	69	0
3	<a href="#">Aldwinmans 3</a>	22	14	0	7	0	1	0	0	787	351	436	67	0
4	<a href="#">Ashton on Mersey 1</a>	22	11	0	10	0	0	1	0	533	392	141	54	0
5	<a href="#">Heaton Moor 2</a>	21	10	0	9	0	1	1	0	471	584	-113	53	0
6	<a href="#">Glossop 3</a>	22	8	1	10	0	2	1	0	471	450	21	52	0
7	<a href="#">Manchester 3</a>	22	10	1	10	1	0	1	0	461	624	-163	52	0
8	<a href="#">Littleborough 3</a>	22	9	0	10	0	1	2	0	476	482	-6	50	0
9	<a href="#">North Manchester 2</a>	22	8	0	13	0	0	1	0	472	717	-245	45	0
10	<a href="#">Burnage 3</a>	22	6	2	12	1	1	1	0	338	475	-137	44	0
11	<a href="#">Marple 3</a>	22	4	1	14	0	1	2	0	323	678	-355	36	0
12	<a href="#">Oldham 3</a>	22	2	1	14	0	2	3	0	270	661	-391	32	0

## M&J – Tim Holmes

I have now completed my third season as M&J Chairman.

Membership numbers stand at just under 200 paid up players. It is fair to say we are managing M&J through a transition period with lower numbers in the older age groups (no U15s this season) and increasing numbers at the lower age groups. We continue to operate in a region with strong competition for rugby players with many local clubs nearby whose 1XV play in higher leagues and are “perceived” to be better.

MRC 1XV promotion this season and impressive run of wins will be noted by new parents wanting to enter the sport locally and with MRC, playing in the same league as Stockport and Wilmslow next season we have at least parity with our nearest rivals for players.

The reduction in the girls section, following the loss of their section leader, has also hit our membership numbers hard. This section has formulated a plan to regenerate and has seen some strong numbers return to training and with help from the RFU we are hopeful this will increase and be strong again. Credit has to go to Alex Farrow for his work and commitment in this area.

The Academy has been a struggle this season with a cycle of players not coming through the previous season. We have managed to play a number of games both U17&U18 but these have all been friendlies after we could not consistently raise a team. The Academy Coaching Staff and management along with the 16s coaching staff and management have done an excellent job across the 16-18 age-group to keep players engaged and playing games when they can. We have a plan to play a Barbarians style team next year in conjunction with Stockport. Anne-Marie Booth, Darren Lewis, Suzanne Morton, Mark Grahamslaw along with the rest of the team involved deserve high praise for their efforts.

We have some concern over player numbers in the current under 10s and Alison Kelly stepping down as a coach. We will be talking with Alison and the group as the season closes to keep the team together, and begin a strong recruitment plan.

This reduction in membership has meant MRC M&J has worked with a reduced budget this season, with strong revenues from the Festival being essential for the section to be able to meet its fiscal commitments to the club.

We have a strong promotion program planned to aid recruitment. RugbyTots being at MRC is beginning to bear fruit as this season's Under6s & 7s have over 30 players on a regular basis. However I must flag that if membership does not begin to increase and we get back to having over 250 members then financial commitments maybe need to be reviewed in the future.

The success of the various England teams also proves to be a success for the whole game in general and the Lions tour will hopefully again drive more inclusion in the sport.

MRC M&J continue to over perform on the field and with representative honours which all helps drive our communication to prospective members. This season has seen a high number in the Sale Sharks U18 Academy team, some seven ex-MRC players, with hopefully two going on to get permanent contracts. The U13s provided 8 players into the Sale DPP program as well as a strong number from the U16s in Lancs, Cheshire and Sale DPP. Sam James' inclusion in the England squad gives us another platform to promote our section

On field both the 16s and 13s made the Lancs Cup semis with narrow losses. The 14s will compete in the bowl final, the 12s topped their group to make it to the Finals Day as top seed along with winning the Preston Festival last weekend. This Sunday also sees the Academy compete in the Cup Final as well.

M&J would like to thank the Grounds Staff for their continued hard work in maintenance of the playing and management of playing areas, and also always trying to get games played where possible.

Since the last meeting, M&J have funded a number of club initiatives, primarily the erection of a new fence Over The Brook that now completely secures that area along with clearing the grounds in anticipation of being able to utilise the ground at the top end for playing purposes in the future. M&J has been trying to raise funds to develop the area along with behind the Pacemakers but this year has not been able to fund any further projects. M&J also completed the fence around the Training Pitch. This area, along with Devil's acre, is now more secure and there is a much reduced incidence of dog mess on the pitches.

M&J continues to work closely with Senior Rugby and continues to operate with a "one club" mentality, whilst maintaining that the M&J committee focuses on its primary needs on the development of children's rugby at MRC. One of the key elements of M&J and Senior Rugby working together is for M&J to mirror the Senior coaching philosophy and methods. Our aim is to continue to build young rugby players that can seamlessly slot into senior rugby and further support the senior section via the Academy

Running the M&J section costs over £35k a year which M&J will cover through fees and the success of the Festival in October. As highlighted revenue has reduced in 2016/17 with the loss of the Girls and Academy. This was marginally offset by the success of the festival and other fund raising activities but also a reduced cost program in the year, primarily in coaching development. We are mindful of this as a section and continue to look for ways to increase revenue without pricing ourselves out of a very competitive local M&J market.

Our M&J aim for 2017/18 will be firmly focussed on player recruitment and coaching. We now have our own Twitter account (@MRCMandJ) and we hope to look at Facebook as well in the off season. We will continue to engage with local schools at primary and secondary level, but use other methods to try and attract new players to the club. We will continue to work closely with senior rugby and our aim is to have at least one senior rugby player or Academy player coaching from age U12-U16. A successful Senior 1<sup>st</sup> XV will also help when attracting parents to the club and M&J will continue to support Senior Rugby to achieve their aims.

M&J survives because a large number of individuals give their time and energy to coach, manage and be committee members for the section. M&J parents also contribute to club funds and actively involve themselves in club events. M&J is a constantly evolving entity as players graduate from the section and in recent years we have lost fervent members and supports of the section. We need to ensure we constantly bring new helpers and supporters into the section to maintain and build on the excellent standards and philosophies the M&J at MRC is known for.

TH-25/4/2016

## End of the Season

Manchester Ladies have had a good end to the 2016/2017 season finishing on 35 points in the table, 17 more than this time last year. Since the last update Manchester defeated Birkenhead 17-10 with tries from Hattie Gaunt, Pam Hallworth and Hannah Goddard in a fiercely fought match. It was clear to see the improvement in the squad since the away fixture. Manchester then faced both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league, Darlington and Kendal respectively, narrowly losing both matches 10-5 and 29-10. Both opposition captains were surprised at how much Manchester Ladies had improved their playing style and commended the whole team on this.

The last three games of the season were at home to Sunderland, Preston and Kendal. In one of the muddiest fixtures of the season Manchester hosted Sunderland ladies in early March. There were two very different styles of play with Sunderland hammering the guard channel and Manchester making use of the wide pitch and spreading the Sunderland defence. With some of the best plays of rugby from Manchester all season, tries from Bea Hopkins, Amy Lees, Hattie Gaunt and Suzi Hobday secured a win of 34-22 and a winning bonus point. Sunderland did not make it an easy game for Manchester with 4 tries from them securing them a losing bonus point.

\*insert muddy picture\*

Manchester welcomed Preston Grasshoppers to Grove Park for the penultimate game of the season. This was a closer game than the ladies had hoped with only 10 points between both sides at the final whistle. A strongly fought team try by Hannah Goddard ensured that the home team managed to get some points on the board albeit finishing the game with an unfortunate loss of 17-7. Kendal travelled to Grove Park for Manchester's final game of the season with hopes of securing a double win over Manchester for the season. However, Manchester pulled it out of the bag making Kendal use the game as 'tackle practise'. Tries from Jane Wells, Chrissie Leahy, Hattie Gaunt Jess Pugh, Kate Bailey, Mel Dalrymple, Kate Barker and Laura Dudbridge secured a 55-0 win! What a way to end a season.

James Armstrong, new Head Coach of Manchester Ladies, should take the credit for fully developing the squad this season with innovative training techniques and motivation to succeed. Manchester Ladies have improved this season and this can be seen from a comparison of statistics from the 2015/2016 season:

	2015/2016	2016/2017
Position in Table	8	6
Overall points in table	18	35
Wins	3	6
Losses	12	10
Points For	161	373
Points Against	443	330

Special mention to our top try scorer of this season...Hattie Gaunt with 14 tries!

Thank you to all members of the squad for a fantastic season and pre-season training will start at the beginning of July 2017, open to all abilities!

## **Manchester Girls Section annual report 2016/2017 Season**

This season teams have played at u15 and u18 age groups. Due to necessary reorganisation of coaching with the Girls section attention to the u13 group did not take place until after the Christmas break.

At u15 and u18 the team linked with Ellesmere Port to play as North West Sirens. This link finishes at the end of this season with Manchester being supported by the RFU to become a 'full house' club fielding teams at all age groups and open age.

In order to achieve this recruitment at all age groups needs to be a priority. A successful schools event led by Bryan Fisher and Jules Gilding was attended by over 60 players with 10 players now attending training at Manchester. Bryan and Jules continue to provide coaching in local schools. We are confident, with the help of the RFU Coaching team that we will continue to build on our recruitment of players for our Under 13/15 age groups. The Club has established routes/contacts into local schools and these are producing a steady stream of potential players. The RFU has also supported an Inner warrior event at Manchester in order to aid recruitment of players.

In conjunction with MMU a training session has been held for players from across Manchester who are looking at opportunities to play rugby at university and to study sports related courses at Degree level.

Three coaches have been recruited from the parents of the current players to work with the existing coaches next season. Ideally a manager will be recruited by the start of next season.

In the last 5 years only two girls have come through the mini and junior section to play in the women and girls and this is an area that needs to be developed. Over the next two/three years a short fall of Under 18 players is anticipated and we are actively looking at ways to minimise the effect on the number of players graduating to our Women's Team in the future.

Attention needs to be given to the changing facilities in order that they are of an appropriate standard, meet safeguarding requirements and are comparable with other clubs in the area.

Playing as NW Sirens the u18s were able to field full teams in most games and were competitive throughout the season. They came within one point of qualifying for the bowl final and went on to beat Littleborough in the Plate final.

10 players represented Cheshire at u18 level and for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running the captain came from Manchester.

4 girls had trials for North of England with one player being successful.

For the U15s again clustering under the Sirens' banner the girls truly competed against some very strong teams from Yorkshire and Worcester to the extent they reached the semi-final in the Cup. This was despite the problems clustering U15 & U18s with teams with such a physical distance between them had on the ability to train as a "team" and therefore the instinctive play that comes when you train together on a regular basis.

Several of the girls were selected to represent Cheshire at u15 level.

### **Coaching set up**

Bryan Fisher- Head Coach

Mark Knight – U18s

Alex Farrow U13 & 15s

### **Support**

Olivia Farrow ex MRC player

Steve Payne (Parent)



**RUGBY INCOME/EXP 1/09/2015 to 31/08/2016**

	INCOME		Budget	EXPENDITURE		Budget
	£			£		
OPENING BALANCE	9945					
SUBSCRIPTIONS	11960		12000	1897		1000
M & J CONTRIBUTION	14500		15000	2976		2500
DONATIONS	1260		1000	800		1000
INTERNATIONAL TICKETS	1954		2000	904		1200 Beers etc
SPONSORSHIP/ADV	17240		15640	10559		14000
PITCH HIR/EMISCELLANEOUS	717		200	4231		3000
RAFFLE	871		1000	8194		7000
GATE	1712		2000	115		0
EVENTS	4066		5000	2097		1000
RFU	1440		100	45		180
MATCH FEES	3185		2500	556		750
FUNDRAISING	3900		2000	777		850
ADDITIONAL M & J FUNDING	8160			1147		2000
M & J VAT	1000			6303		5000
				136		200
				3137		3000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81910</b>		58440			
				836		850
				15000		15000
				8129		
				6750		
				2365		
CLOSING BALANCE	4956			<b>TOTAL</b>		58530
				<b>76954</b>		