



Director of Mini Rugby Report – July 2024

- Overview.** The 2023-2024 season has been hugely successful. The section has seen a growth of more than 20 players across the 6 age grades with an average of 4 enquiries a week even through the off season. This is due to the reputation of our club forged by the unwavering commitment, passion and pride our coaches have; projecting TREDs through our players and providing the opportunities for players to develop on and off the field. To many, rugby is more than the game and here at Salisbury we endeavour to ensure all members embody this ethos, creating lifelong friendships, sportsmanship, and camaraderie. The current Membership per age group is in the table below:

Age Group	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	Total
Number 2023/24	23	37	48	36	39	42	225

- Minis Festivals.** Due to the popularity and success of the mini festival held in the October of every year, it was decided to brave a second event in the spring. This year saw the first iteration of running two festivals. The Autumn festival welcomed over 950 players from 12 clubs. The day was organised chaos and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The spring festival was less well attended and downgrade to a tri nations event. This was welcomed by the smaller clubs and has stayed in the calendar for this coming season to see if there is more appetite. Invitations for both events have already been circulated with clubs already securing their places. The festivals will continue to develop and with the introduction of the Tournify App, we hope they will be far easier to organise and communicate the information.
- Halloween Party.** This is a hugely popular event with the younger age grades, and I hope for it to remain within the calendar. This is also a way of providing a social setting for all the children and raise some money to support other mini endeavours.

4. End of season events.

- a. **Dinners.** The Minis all celebrated their team successes through a series of end of season dinners. The format sees two age grades attending a dinner on a Friday night followed by the presentation of awards voted by coaches and children. It is a lovely setting for the children to close the season. Looking forward the formats may change to see a more relaxed forum for the younger age groups and for U9-11 and formal dinner remain. We will develop this idea over the season.
 - b. **Funday.** This is a firm favourite in the calendar for all coaches, players, and parents. The whole section come together and formed mixed teams to partake in a round robin of rugby related games. Water guns maintain order and act as a temperature control! We may tag this on to the Salisbury fun day as a precursor to the main event or remain separate and follow with awards.
5. **Fixtures.** The minis section has looked to reduce the number of hosted training, matches and festivals attended to ensure that we get a better balance of training and travelling. Noting the size of SRFC, we have also made the decision to be more selective in the club visit and ensure we host the much smaller clubs at home. We will focus on festivals where the most benefit is seen. This year, we will also be more proactive in utilising the Bath coaching scheme to support both coach develop and players.
 6. **Parking.** Parking continues to be a contentious issue. Salisbury Council have been engaged with the exploration of grass parking options being investigating. The club has two options which are: 1. To remain as is and parents to continue to provide parking marshals; or 2. We split the training times to reduce the footprint of players at the club. Both option present both positive and negatives and we invite parents to provide useful feedback.
 7. **Sponsorship.** There are areas that the section would like to improve and with improvement comes the requirement for funds. Sponsorship is always welcomed to ensure we can deliver the very best at the club. We encourage parents to seek sponsorship opportunities to support the minis section. The main initial focus would be to supply the coaches with a full branded kit to ensure we project a professional image. Secondly, we want to explore the possibility of providing every player with a playing top so we can flood the pitches with white and green. Thirdly, we would like to ensure there are funds available to replenish kit and resources to enable rugby. Fourthly, sponsorship of the festivals would be welcomed. And finally, any sponsorship which supports the club overall will be gratefully received. We are developing sponsorship packages as a guide.
 8. **Volunteers for coaching and other roles.** Rugby is provided by a series of excellent volunteers who are generally parents of players within the club. They dedicate their own time to provide the quality rugby that all children get to enjoy. As the new season starts, we always struggle in the younger age grades to have enough volunteers to get the season started and before we can recruit the new parents into various roles. Please can we urge parents to consider supporting in one of these roles to enable rugby to continue for their child. If you are regularly attending on a Sunday

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and wish to stay warm in the cold winter days, volunteer to become a coach or parent helper! Incidentally, there are other ways in which you can contribute to the overall club effort and that is by supporting the coaching team to fulfil one off requirement when requested or if you have expertise in an area that would benefit the club, please offer assistance. Every little bit helps! If you would like a more influential role within the club, shaping the future of the club and your child's experience, you may volunteer for a director's role.

9. **U11's graduation.** Finally, I would like to bid farewell to the U11's who move from the Minis section to the junior section with their wonderful coaching team. They have provided so much to the mini section over the years and wish them well with the juniors. We will follow your journey and continued success.
10. Thank you to all those that have contributed to the season. Your time, effort and patience is hugely appreciated and I am proud of the team we have created. I am very much looking forward to the next season, building on the success we have had this season. I am open to change and therefore encourage all to voice suggestions to improve the experiences of all.

Mrs G M Mawbey
Director of Minis

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