



RAMPAGES WINTER 2020



Thank you for all your emails to the First Edition of Rampages. I know it brought back many happy memories both on and off the field. The best team that I played with seems to have struck a chord with you so it's only fair that I include several that have been sent in. I'm not showing any favouritism but the first one is from Gavin Loveday and then there is Ray Ball and Jonny Hewlett comes later.

Any older members XV choices please?

Gavin Loveday XV

1. Steve Pope
2. John Locke
3. Michael Nutt
4. Mark Kent
5. Reggie Crafton
6. Richard May
7. Anthony Hopkinson
8. Mark Bruford
9. Lee Harron
10. David Hurley
11. Lee Smith
12. Rhys Loveday
13. Alan Price
14. Keith Handscombe
15. John Gregory

Subs

David Tatman
Locklan Riddell
Julian Heath

Ray Ball XV

1. Peter Claridge
2. Phil French
3. Julian Heath
4. Mark Kent
5. John Minchin / Alan Rodwell
6. Barry White
7. Richard May
8. Peter Keeling
9. Lee Harron
10. David Hurley
11. Lee Smith
12. Richard Drage
13. Alan Price
14. Jim Parsons
15. John Price

Subs

John Lewis
Malcolm Leese / Jeremy Poyser
Alan Harmes / Simon White

Gavin suggested that I ask you for your best **Dead Ants Call** (and by the way does anyone have or know where the Dead Ant Trophy is today?)

Lovely to hear from Gary Phillips

Subject: Harlow, I thought I was going to Harrow

When I think of my generation playing at Harlow RFC one name comes immediately to the fore. 'SPOONER, KEN SPOONER'. His rugby lifetime at the club far exceeded my meagre 17 seasons, and I leave it to someone better informed to voice the praises of a man who was Harlow RFC. Instead I'll relay the events that took me to Harlow and the uncanny link between HRFC, BMS (Burnt Mill School) and CCPE (Cardiff College Physical Education).

It was May 1974 when I sat at a bus stop bench close to Cardiff City swimming pool, and reflected on how best to secure a P.E. teaching post in Cardiff and surrounding areas. With jobs few and far between, I would be struggling without a Schools International Cap, plus an offer from one of the first-class rugby sides in the area. With that, a fellow student, John Owen, walked by. He had been to the railway station across the way to secure transport to Essex the next day. He was scheduled to be one of a pool of students being interviewed for jobs by a certain Gwyn Harris P.E. Inspector for Essex. Unlikely as it seems, I managed to get myself signed up for such an interview and met up with John for the Cardiff Paddington train early next morning.

Stepping out of Harlow railway station, there is of course nothing of any great interest to see

'Harlow, where is that? I thought I was going to Harrow'

Little did I know at that stage, Harlow town, Harlow RFC & Burnt Mill School were to have such a gigantic impact on my personal and professional life to come

The job interview went well. Gwyn Harris was there, together with Jack Tillotson and the Headteacher Ray Sterling. He appointed me with a rider that I should ensure that a Burnt Mill student should gain the first English Schools International Cap within five years. This, in the school where Glenn Hoddle had been a star pupil just a few years earlier.

Within five years a certain BMS student, Jonathan Locke, who went on to Captain Harlow RFC in years to come, won his International Cap. Jonathan was to return to BMS in later life as a teacher of Math's. Jonathan went on to become a Headteacher. His brother David became Head of PE and their father Chris Locke, who worked as a Housemaster at BMS when I first arrived, went on to be President of Harlow RFC. Collectively, what a family contribution that was. BMS students Darren Addicott & Richard Drage also went on to captain the Club

BMS staff who played for the club:

Jack Tillotson, Geoff Hargreaves, Jerry Townsend, Gary Phillips, Paul Clague, Ian Dunbar, Bob Pendleton, Dennis Parry and Clive Shell. He was Jack's first PE appointment, another CCPE student and Wales Rugby International.

BMS students who played for the club: Too many to mention but some notable names include....

Andy Evans, David Parsons, David and Keith Handscomb, David Trevor & Chris Ray, Andrew and Barry Jenkins, John and Alan Price, Ashley and Richard Drage, Martin and Colin Payne, 'Sylvester' Campion and Julian Heath, Ian Brown, Andy Bray, David Hurley, Mark Kent and Steve Wheeler.

Two outstanding Students who played for Harlow RFC died prematurely, still young men Mark Bice & David Lamoon

Jack Tillotson was to take me to my first Tuesday training session where I was introduced to the triumvirate of Colin Jenkins and John Hurley, Welshmen abroad, and of course Spooner, Ken Spooner. As I recall this was the first occasion, I met a certain (Algy) Alan Price. Scrum-halves both of us, it was the beginning of a 17-year weekly confrontation on the training ground. At the time Algy was Head of P.E. at Mark Hall School having left CCPE two years earlier

Notable players in 1974:

Don Harrigan. Captain and hitman, (gentle giant, sports-centre instructor during the week)

Ian Gallantree ... hard as nails, The silent assassin

Ross Loveday. Consummate Clubman, Artist, Author, ex 1st XV Scrum-half who sadly 'never learned to spin pass'. Forgive me indulging in an in joke!!!!

Gwyn Harris and the CCPE Connection:

The following should illustrate the depth and importance of the CCPE contribution to Harlow RFC:

1975/6 season, second game of the season Brentwood away. Of the 15 players who took the field that day no fewer than 7 were CCPE ex -students

CCPE students Who went on to play for Harlow RFC:

Alan Price, Gareth Jones, Martin Polkinghorne, Jim Parsons, Paul Clague, Kelvin Evans, Michael Hall, Steve Orwin, Tony Thorpe, Courtney(Spike) Saunders (OBE), Steve Drake, Gwyn Walters, Clive Mills , Ray Harris , Nigel Jones, Steve Griffiths, John Sands, Terry Lowther, Hayden Davis, Mark Wallbyoff, Phil James.....these include those from memory who played in the mid-70s

I draw to a close now, thank God I hear you say, but not before I acknowledge the huge contribution that CCPE, BMS & HRFC, plus individuals like Jack Tillotson made to my personal and professional life.

Clearly the Essex Schools Inspectorate rated CCPE students. By the time I arrived the club colours changed from green to red in light of the huge migration of said students/players.

Highlights of my time at HRFC ...

Selection to the 1st XV during Don Harrigan's Captaincy

Appointment as 2nd XV Captaincy

Essex 7's plate winners (5 of the squad of 10 were CCPE men)

County Over 35's Winners

Awarded Harlow Saints tie

Reffing the Junior teams on a Sunday

Being displaced from the second team scrum-half position by Adam Mace, a BMS student Coached by yours truly

Notwithstanding Jonathan Locke & Darren Addicott, the most gifted BMS Student I taught and coached was a young man called Richard Drage. The most improved student during my time at HRFC, was Julian Heath.

The warmth and camaraderie offered to this 21-year-old 'tuff' from both BMS and HRFC over 17 seasons was terrificand I only ever got sent off three times for overenthusiastic play

It seems you can't take Harlow out of the boy.....

Gary Phillips 1974-1991 HRFC Scrum-half

Email: g12ruf@icloud.com



You seem to have enjoyed the great photo of two of our Harlow legends - Keith Handscomb and Terry Macnamara.

These are some of the best printable captions that I received.

- Phew! I worked hard to score there!!!
- That was the best Fiver I ever spent.
- Is he SPALLING for a fight or sex?
- The accused arrives in court with his solicitor in a confident mood.

My neighbour and good friend was asked to judge which was the best and he chose

Keith Baker's - Phew! I worked hard to score there.!!!

A bottle of wine over the bar for you Keith when you go next.

An Article and Photo from Joe McGill of the new housing on the old Ram Gorse Site with the sign Huntley Close named after our benefactor and Ex- President Dr. John Huntley.

I was Harlow Council lead officer on this project and worked with club reps and Kier. I was on site again last week to check progress. The site is entering the final stages of delivering 127 new homes, 34 % of which are provided via a registered social landlord. Residents on the Council housing list are offered tenancy.

The street names are being installed as soon as phases are completed after Dave Taylor, Ron Bracewell, Dr. Cliff Bishop and Dr. John Huntley.

I am working with Kier to ensure the official unveiling of the estate names is carried out in consultation with Harlow Council, the Rugby Club and families. The site should be completed early January 2021.



My Season by Ray Ball

Captain, Ray Ball

Coaches, Ray Harris and Marcus Russell

1984-85 P 36, W 20, D 3, L 14, F 557, A 370

Won Essex 7's and Hertford Floodlit 7's. Essex Games and Essex Cup runners up.

1985-86 P 40, W 30, D 1, L 9 F 705, A 355

Won Saffron Walden 7's and Thurrock Floodlit Comp, Essex Cup runners up.

What a great two seasons...

I had played first XV rugby for a number of years and watched captains sweat blood organising everything from training to kit washing. I phoned players during the summer asking for a level of commitment that was greater than had been in the past. That is really as far as my master plan for a new era had got when a number of strokes of luck happened.

Ray Harris and Marcus Russell, who had had such success with the Colts, were invited by the club executive to move up to senior level. Straight away the onus of organising training was off my shoulders. They worked us hard and opened our horizons and we changed drastically as a team.

We started out with a good squad made up of the 'last of the Welsh P.E. teachers' and home-grown talent from a number of previous Colts teams. Out of the blue we picked up several players who were to make a huge

difference to the team. There was, in no particular order; Paul Jenkinson who formed a formidable strike partner with Jim Parsons, Paul Terry and Brian Pow who provided vital calm and experience, Duncan Bathe came to town and made an immediate impact, Bruce Whitmill did the same, Colin Hodge literally parked on Edinburgh Way and walked onto the training pitch one night, Kevin Byard whose girlfriend lived in Harlow commuted from an RAF base in Oxfordshire to train and play twice a week and occasionally visit her. How could we not win matches when fitting these guys in around the Whites (Barry, Simon and Trevor), Jem Poyser (ex-Capt.), Alan Lee, Dave Gordon, Trevor Ray, Peter Keeling, John Lewis, Richard Drage, Dave Candy, John Price and a very young Scummie. I was especially pleased that Alan Harmes, who had worked so hard for the club as the previous First Team Captain, got another season in before he emigrated. To help keep all of these in check was the quiet Welshman (yes there is such a thing) Martin Polkinghorne. We trained hard as a first and second team squad and Vince Ferrie and then Alan Booking supported brilliantly with their second teams throughout. Apologies to those I have not mentioned who shared these heady days. The truth is the list goes far beyond those who turned out for the two senior teams. There was huge support from Noel Younger, Graham Drage and the executive. On match days there was a buzz that always went on well into the evening. This included the whole club. The teams returning from away games, Peter Keeling's dad, John Lewis' dad, Keith Handscomb's mum, Bill Davies' and Carol's clans, the list goes on, what a family.

We shared many special moments on the park, far too many to recall here. The outrageous tricks that John Lewis pulled off, complemented by Richard Drage's equally outrageous sidestep paved the way for many a try. Jim's clinical finishing. John drop kicking a goal from receiving the kick off for the start of sudden death extra time in the Hertford seven's final. It was great seeing the Hertford committee's faces when I told them that the lovely wooden trophy they had just presented us was floating nicely in the bath! Dave Candy and John Lewis competing to kick for goal from penalties awarded in our own half! More outrageous dummies and side steps from Dave. A visit to Ipswich for an Eastern Counties Cup Match, a closely contested game. A nineteen-year-old, playing for them in the centre, was to spoil our day in the final minutes of the game by dumping Richard as he got the ball away to the wing. Jim always scored in these situations. The youngster got up and chased Jim down just inches from the line. Martin Offiah's first class career started the next season.

As extravagant as the backs were, they knew that it all happened because of the forwards! The rock-hard Barry White and the unsung Alan Lee to name but two. We drew Southend in our opening Essex Cup game following our previous season's final with them. That final had been a physical affair and they very much won it. On this day however just as one of their ugliest forwards was about to remind us how they had done it, Alan put him on his backside before his clenched fist had even moved. We didn't see much more of this guy after that and we eased through to a comfortable win. A second consecutive Essex cup Final was a great achievement but was again disappointing for us. Green King was however sponsoring the league and pledging a can of beer for every point scored above 50 in games throughout the season. I was pleased to be able to present all seven senior sides and the colts a tray of beers, one for each player, for the final game of the year. This sums up my two years as captain for me. Loads of fast and furious rugby, some of the most talented backs I have ever seen and lots and lots of nights when we took the opposing team's club houses by storm and even more at Ram Gorse that went on and on. Does anyone remember that we used to have a piano in the club house before Colin Hodge...?

Perhaps, at the end of the day, I have to concede that we underachieved but I defy anyone to deny that it changed Harlow Rugby Club's attitude to what could be done. Thanks guys for some very special times.

Jonny Hewlett's XV

My best 15 players are somewhat schizophrenic as I'd use the Colts (1987/88) and the Vets team (2009/2015) as the base - I was lucky enough to play for Harlow 'full time' at those times!

- 15: Stuart Hannam
- 14: Glen Atchison
- 13: David Stradling
- 12: Dave Oastler
- 11: Kevin Matthews
- 10: Kevin Harman
- 9: Barry Jenkins
- 8: Darren Addicott
- 7: Chris Guyton
- 6: Andrew Skinner
- 5: Reggie Grafton
- 4: Mark Kent
- 3: Chris Ray
- 2: Jon Locke
- 1: Mark Coombes

Jonny sends his best wishes to everyone at the Club.

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I know these are difficult times for everyone but if you are in a position to pay your subs now it would really help the Club's very precarious finances, especially in light of the latest catastrophic lock down.

Please keep your articles coming in; your favourite Harlow XV; Dead Ants Memories and stories and memories both on and off the pitch.

In the next issue I'd like to include a feature on Ken Spooner - Mr. Harlow Rugby Club.

Send us your memories and thoughts of him.

Ross Loveday: rossloveday@btinternet.com

ps. Please forward this Rampages to any past players or members that you are in contact with.