

FEBRUARY 26

DEVON RUGBY REVIEW

What's on this month at Devon RFU?



Check out further updates here: devonrfu.co.uk/



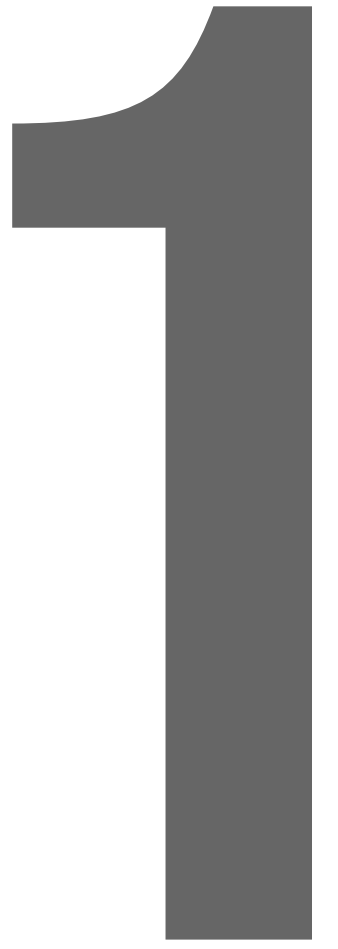


Club Development Support

Devon RFU would like to welcome Abbie Watkin, the new England Rugby Club Developer for the area.

Abbie has begun contacting Devon clubs to arrange online meetings, allowing her to gain a clear understanding of each club's profile and ensure the most appropriate support can be provided moving forward.

Abbie is a passionate and experienced rugby player with 13 years of playing experience, currently representing Bath Rugby Ladies 1XV. A graduate of the University of Bath with a degree in Health and Exercise Science, she worked at the Bath University Student Union as the Sports Officer, overseeing 52 sports club to create a thriving environment for University Sport. She then moved into work as a Growth Activator for England Rugby in the Southwest region, focusing on Exeter and Bristol before and during the Rugby World Cup 2025, driving participation and community engagement in the sport.



Club Updates

In recent weeks, North Tawton RFC have received financial assistance to address a significant drainage issue, while Plymouth Argaum RFC have also been supported following storm damage to their goalposts.

Clubs are reminded that a small emergency fund is available to support urgent facility-related issues. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis and are subject to funding availability. For further information or to discuss potential support, please contact Glenn Channing – Director of Development via rugby@devonrfu.com



Check Out Upcoming RFU Courses!

As we move into the business end of the season, now is the perfect time to develop coaching knowledge and ensure players are operating safely and effectively at set piece.

The RFU will be delivering a series of Scrum and Lineout courses across Devon over the coming weeks. These sessions are ideal for coaches working with contact age groups who want to build confidence, technical understanding, and best practice in two of the most critical areas of the game.

Scrum Courses - Devon

Torrington – Thursday 5th March

Book here: <https://tinyurl.com/2dustucc>

Newton Abbot – Monday 9th March

Book here: <https://tinyurl.com/3yyvhcwg>

Devonport Services – Monday 30th March

Book here: <https://tinyurl.com/d6w9xpyd>

Lineout Course – Devon

Kingsbridge – Wednesday 1st April

Book here: <https://tinyurl.com/3482dtjc>

Why attend?

- Improve technical understanding of the set piece
 - Ensure safe and effective coaching practice
- Support player development and match performance
- Build confidence in delivering scrum and lineout sessions.

Places are limited and demand is always strong, so early booking is encouraged.



Transition Funding Available

We all know that one of the challenges we have is the transition that our players have when moving from Colt's to Senior Rugby.

This is always a challenging time for our players and clubs, to encourage and support this sometimes-difficult time.

To help and support this, Devon RFU have put funding aside for clubs to be able to apply for and to provide opportunities for a smoother transition.

Clubs can apply up to £750 for help towards specific under 21s festivals that will support the transition and inclusion of our second-year colts into our senior teams. These can be a 7's or 10's tournaments, or a special event within a club that will help the coming together of the colts and senior teams.

We are also open to other ideas and suggestions that will help the transition and sustainability of this crucial change.

Applications should be made to Chris Forster, Director of the Male Game at Devon RFU at cups@devonrfu.com or call on Mobile **07831287530** for an initial conversation.

Applications are open until 31st March 2026 **Chris Forster**, Director Male Game via cups@devonrfu.com



Devon Colts League #56 – The Knockout Stages

The Devon RFU Colts competition, proudly sponsored by Ashburton Motor Works, has reached the knockout stages in its 56th year.

After a competitive season across the merit table, clubs from across the county now enter the business end of the campaign. Knockout rugby brings added intensity and opportunity, providing memorable experiences for young players while strengthening club identity, teamwork and community spirit.

Fixtures are now confirmed across the Cup, Shield, Plate and Bowl competitions. Supporters can look forward to high-quality matches displaying the depth of emerging talent within Devon.

The current merit table and upcoming fixtures can be found here: <https://devonrfu.co.uk/age-grade/colts-merit-table/>

For further information, please contact Merit Table Coordinator **Steve Alexander** at snjalexander@gmail.com.



6

College Rugby Festival

Ivybridge recently hosted an AoC Colleges Regional Rugby Festival, supporting colleges that are not currently competing in formal leagues but are actively developing rugby within their institutions.

The festival offered playing opportunities ranging from T1 adapted contact through to full contact, ensuring a safe, inclusive environment focused on learning and progression.

Participating colleges included South Devon College, North Devon College, and Yeovil College, with previous festivals also welcoming Bicton College, Richard Huish, St Brendan's and Callywith College.

The festivals are organised and delivered by Glenn Channing, South West Regional Coordinator (ECRFU), as part of ongoing work to strengthen links between colleges and the wider club game.

Pictured: Yeovil College.



Devon Cup Finals 2026

This year's planned Cup Finals have been severely affected by the severe weather we have experienced, with all but the Senior Cup final having to be moved from its original dates!

We must consider the changed dates, and that the league games WILL always take priority, the potential impact on clubs with possible upcoming Play-off's, also the impact of County games and the number of games we are trying to play.

We are working hard with all the clubs to try and arrange new dates and will keep you all informed.

Current information

- Senior Cup – Brixham V Exmouth – Saturday 14th March at Brixham
- Senior Shield – Tiverton V Topsham at Tiverton – TBA
- Intermediate Cup – Barnstaple Seconds V Okehampton at Barnstaple – TBA
- Intermediate Plate – Newton Abbot V Cullompton at Newton Abbot – TBA
- Junior Cup – Exeter Saracens V Withycombe or Honiton at Exeter – TBA
- Junior Bowl – New Cross V Totnes or Plymouth OPM's – TBA
- Second Team Cup – Devonport Services V Topsham at Services – TBA
- Second Team Shield – Exmouth V Paignton at Exmouth – TBA

Please contact **Chris Forster** Cup Administrator on Mobile **07831287530** or cups@devonrfu.com

7

Launching a New Women's Competition

We are delighted to announce the launch of the Devon Women's Cup and Shield competitions for 2026 — creating exciting, local and competitive opportunities for women's teams across the county.

The competition has been designed to provide meaningful fixtures without the same level of commitment required by larger national competitions. Teams will be entered based on current league level to ensure balanced and competitive matches.

- Devon Cup – Championship 1, Championship 2 and NC1
- Devon Shield – NC2 and NC3F

Fixtures will take place between April and May, with semi-finals and finals planned for late May or early June at neutral venues.

Clubs can enter via the online entry form. For more information, please contact **Keisha-Ann Down** – Director of the Female Game via femalegame@devonrfu.com

Are Your Golden Roles Up to Date?

Keeping your club's Golden Roles updated on GMS is a small task that makes a significant difference.

Golden Roles ensure that vital information — including safeguarding updates, competition details, funding opportunities and deadlines — reaches the right people quickly. If roles are out of date, your club may miss important communications.

We encourage all clubs to log into GMS and confirm that roles are assigned correctly, with accurate contact details. This only takes a few minutes but supports good governance and smooth communication throughout the game.

Please make this a priority action for your committee this month.

8

Ocean City Rugby Inclusive

Launched in June 2025, Ocean City Rugby Inclusive (OCRI) is a non-contact tag rugby club in Plymouth for children with SEND, welcoming boys and girls aged five and upwards.

Based at Weston Mill Oak Villa Sports & Community Hub, sessions run every Sunday from 10am–11am and are tailored to suit the needs of each player. Parents and carers remain present during sessions, collaborating with volunteer coaches.

The season begins in September, with the first two trial sessions free. Players are celebrated weekly with a Player of the Week medal, and every child receives a trophy at the end of the season.

For more information or a Parent Pack, email oceancityrugbyinclusive@yahoo.com or contact **Julia** on **07887 244472**.

9

10

Building on the World Cup Legacy

The RFU's Women and Girls Recruitment campaign is supporting clubs to grow the female game and build sustainable playing opportunities.

The campaign encourages clubs to think creatively about recruitment — from taster sessions and festivals to flexible formats and neutral venues such as schools or community spaces. The focus is on creating welcoming, low-pressure environments that turn interest into long-term involvement.

By using RFU guidance and resources, clubs can strengthen community links and help ensure the continued growth of women's and girls' rugby.

Find out more here: [Women and Girls Recruitment | Rugby Football Union](#)

11