

DEVON RUGBY

New RFU Partnership Agreement

Devon RFU will shortly enter into a new four-year Partnership Agreement with the RFU, placing a strong focus on player retention, volunteer support and sustainable club development. A new annual Player Retention Plan will help shape how Devon RFU supports clubs and participation across the county.

Barnstaple Crowned Devon Vets Winners

The second Devon RFU Wooden Spoon Vets League reached an exciting conclusion as Barnstaple Vets defeated Teignmouth Vets 22-15 to lift the title and cap another successful season of vets rugby.

Discounted SmartWater Security System

Devon RFU is supporting a new crime prevention initiative with Devon & Cornwall Police, offering rugby clubs access to heavily discounted SmartWater security systems to help protect valuable equipment and deter theft. Clubs can purchase the system for £50 + VAT, reduced from the usual £250 + VAT.

See page 2 for more Info.



Rugby Safe: Important Actions for Clubs Ahead of the New Season

Devon RFU is reminding clubs of the key Rugby Safe actions required ahead of the new season, including completing risk assessments, updating emergency plans, and ensuring qualified first aid provision across all teams. Clubs are also encouraged to keep Rugby Safe volunteer details up to date within GMS.

See page 3 for more Info.



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Devon Rugby Clubs Offered Discounted SmartWater Security System

Devon RFU is pleased to support a new crime prevention initiative, backed by Devon & Cornwall Police, aimed at helping rugby clubs better protect their facilities and equipment from theft.

Over the past 12 months, sports clubs across the region have seen an increase in break-ins and the theft of high-value machinery and equipment. In response, Devon & Cornwall Police have worked with SmartWater and DeterTech to create a heavily discounted scheme designed to improve security and act as a strong deterrent to criminals.

SmartWater is a unique forensic marking solution that enables valuable items to be marked with an invisible liquid, only detectable under UV light. Each kit is registered to the owner, allowing police to identify recovered property and link stolen items back to the club they belong to.

Alongside the forensic marking itself, participating clubs also receive signage highlighting the use of SmartWater on site — an important deterrent effect that has already been embraced successfully by cricket clubs across the region.

Thanks to support from Devon & Cornwall Police, Devon rugby clubs can purchase the SmartWater Business Pack for just £50 + VAT, significantly reduced from the normal retail price of £250 + VAT.

This initiative represents a proactive “strength in numbers” approach to protecting community sports clubs and reducing opportunities for organised theft.

Clubs interested in taking part or finding out more should contact:

Tim Warren
Secretary, Devon RFU,
secretary@devonrfu.com

CHARITABLE TEIGNMOUTH SCALE THE PEAKS

A team of Teignmouth RFC vets players took on the 3 Peaks Challenge of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon to raise funds for three Charities close to them. The Money raised will be going to the Wooden Spoon

, Cancer Research UK and Alzheimer's UK. They all conquered the energy sapping climbs to the summits in under 30 hours. Their efforts meant that each charity will receive £4,500+ each once all the donations

have come in. The group then went onto play in the Wooden Spoon Veterans' Cup final vs Barnstaple Vets with Barnstaple taking the trophy winning 22-15.

Rugby Safe: Important Actions for Clubs

As preparations begin for the 2026/27 season, Devon RFU is reminding clubs of the importance of maintaining strong Rugby Safe standards to help keep the game safe, compliant and enjoyable for everyone involved.

All clubs are required to complete the Howdens Risk Assessment Tool via the Rugby Safe & Player Welfare section within GMS, alongside updating their Medical Emergency Action Plans (MEAPs) and ensuring volunteer details remain current.

Clubs are also reminded that every team — both training and playing — should have access to a qualified first aider, with the RFU minimum standard being Level 3 First Aid at Work. In addition, all volunteers linked to teams should complete the RFU's Headcase online module.

As volunteer roles often change during the off-season, clubs should ensure any new Rugby Safe Leads are updated on GMS and connected with Devon RFU support. The Rugby Safe Lead remains a mandatory “Golden Role” within every club.

Devon RFU Rugby Safe Lead Chris Ward continues to support clubs across the county and can assist new or existing volunteers with guidance, resources and networking opportunities.

For support or further information, contact:

Chris Ward,
Rugby Safe Lead, Devon RFU,
rugbysafe@devonrfu.com



New RFU Partnership Agreement Focuses on Player Retention and Club Support

Devon RFU will shortly enter into a new four-year Partnership Agreement with the RFU, setting out how Constituent Bodies and the RFU will work together to support and grow community rugby through to 2030/31.

At the heart of the agreement is a shared ambition to increase participation and keep players involved in rugby for longer, with a strong emphasis on player retention, volunteer support and sustainable club development.

The agreement outlines Devon RFU's role across three key areas:

- Run: supporting competitions, participation and playing opportunities

- Retain: Helping clubs keep players engaged in the game
- Regulation: Ensuring strong governance, welfare and safeguarding standards

A key new requirement within the agreement is the completion of an annual Player Retention Plan, which will help Devon RFU identify priorities and support clubs more effectively across the county.

The plan will focus on areas including:

- Creating flexible and enjoyable playing opportunities
- supporting and recognising volunteers
- Providing direct support to clubs

- Understanding local challenges affecting participation and sustainability
- Working closely with clubs, schools, colleges and the wider rugby community

The RFU will continue to provide funding, data insights and regional support to help Constituent Bodies deliver against these objectives.

Further information on Devon RFU's Player Retention priorities and opportunities for club input will be shared ahead of the new season.

Barnstaple Crowned Devon Wooden Spoon Vets League Champions

The second season of the Devon RFU Wooden Spoon Vets League concluded in style on Saturday 16 May, as Barnstaple Vets were crowned champions following a hard-fought 22-15 victory over Teignmouth Vets at Barnstaple RFC.

Played in front of an enthusiastic crowd, the final showcased everything that makes vets rugby such an important part of the game: competitive spirit, camaraderie, commitment and a continued love of rugby. Both sides produced an excellent contest, with the outcome remaining in doubt until the final whistle.

Barnstaple established an early lead through tries from Adam Lloyd and Will Tops before Teignmouth responded impressively, reducing the deficit and remaining firmly in contention throughout. The second half developed into a closely fought battle, with both teams demonstrating tremendous determination and resilience.

A further Barnstaple try from Anthony May, together with the reliable boot of Dave Slee, ultimately proved enough to secure victory, despite a late Teignmouth rally that kept supporters on the edge of their seats.

Congratulations to Barnstaple Vets on becoming this season's champions and to Teignmouth Vets for an outstanding performance in the final.

The Devon RFU Wooden Spoon Vets League continues to go from strength to strength in only its second season, providing an enjoyable and competitive environment for players to continue participating in rugby, reconnect with the game and enjoy the social side of our sport. Devon RFU would like to thank all clubs, players, volunteers, match officials and supporters who have contributed to another successful season.

Thank You and Best Wishes to Sian Brooks!

Devon RFU would like to place on record its sincere thanks to Sian Brooks for her outstanding contribution to the girls' game across the county.

Throughout her time involved with Devon Rugby, Sian has been a passionate advocate for female participation and development, helping to grow opportunities for girls across clubs and schools. Her commitment, energy and encouragement have played a significant role in increasing player numbers and strengthening the pathway for young female players throughout Devon.

Beyond the growth in participation, Sian has also been a fantastic supporter of clubs, volunteers and players alike, always championing the importance of creating welcoming, inclusive and enjoyable rugby environments.

As Sian now moves on to new adventures, everyone at Devon RFU would like to thank her for her dedication and hard work and wish her every success for the future.

Sian leaves behind a lasting positive impact on the girls' game in Devon and will always be warmly welcomed within the Devon rugby community.



Events

- Devon RFU AGM

Date & Time: Wednesday 29th July at 7pm

Location: North Tawton RFC (EX20 2ED)

Details: Following our AGM there will be opportunity for one-to-one or group conversations with Devon RFU Board Members.

Please let Tim know if you will be attending secretary@devonrfu.com

- Wooden Spoon Veterans' League AGM

Date & Time: Tuesday 16th June at 7pm

Location: Topsham RFC

Details: To see how the League has developed and for further information on the rules (that will be amended at the AGM) and past results go to: <https://devonrfu.co.uk/male-game/vets/>

Any potential clubs thinking of joining the league are invited to come along without any obligation.

For Further Information contact Mike Hawkes: devonadmin.vet@btinternet.com