

Mistley RUFC Annual report 2023/4 to Mistley Parish Council

As I write this report our 1st XV has just won promotion as league leaders with two games still in hand. Next season we will move from Eastern Counties Division One South to London & SE Division- Counties 2 Eastern Counties Division. Also, our 2nd XV known as The Marauders have maintained a constant mid table position in Eastern Counties Division 2 South. This has shown the depth of our Players strengths and team spirit within the Club. This has grown over the years and as a proud Village side we have proved that we can compete with the bigger clubs.

Last year our 1st XV was victorious in the Inter County Suffolk RFU Silver Cup against Brightlingsea by 25-18 hosted by Colchester RFU. The Marauders were also in the Bronze Cup Final beaten by Ipswich 3rds. This year we continue our successful cup runs with the 1st XV in the Silver Cup Semi Finals and the Marauders in the Bronze Cup Final.

In addition to our senior teams, we strongly place our emphasis on the Youth teams in our plans for the future growth of the club. Over the last year our Youth section has grown from 90-109 members who train every Sunday morning at Furze Hill and this has been helped by the increase in the number of volunteers. Together with club initiatives we work closely and offer our rugby services to Manningtree High School and East Bergholt High School. We are also looking to re-establish our links with the local primary schools. Our Under 13's have reached the Eastern Counties Plate Competition final with 6 teams from other clubs which we will host on 24th March. We have also provided a qualified referee at U13 level. Sundays are becoming a very vibrant part of a community hub to both playing and non-playing members. We are extremely proud of our success with our youth players.

Being an integral part of the community, we also strive hard to support them where we can and a good example of this was to offer our clubhouse as an additional classroom to Mistley Norman school in their hour of need when the school building was condemned.

In addition to furthering our community involvement we were instrumental with the Parish Council in resurrecting the Pram Race which took place at the end of last May- a splendid and very well attended community event. Just after this event and a week later Mistley RUFC celebrated its 40th anniversary(1983-2023) with a gala dinner held at Colchester Football Club with Andy Goode who played for England between 2005 and 2009 as our guest speaker. The evening was a huge success and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

We also celebrated Remembrance Day at Mistley War memorial as we do every year and entertain the Veterans in the clubhouse afterwards. We also enjoy our annual 20 over cricket match kindly hosted by Mistley Cricket Club.

We continue to upgrade our facilities and we are negotiating to lease the new pitch from the Parish Council behind the clubhouse. Together with adding onto the clubhouse as per our original plans we need to grow our footprint further to bring in more potential players from all ages and to provide sport facilities for all of the community.

All the above cannot happen without the tireless and outstanding work from all our unpaid volunteers in all areas such as coaching, cooking and cleaning -the list is endless- and there are so many names to mention but everyone involved in whatever capacity is fully committed to the club they love. This is very much reflected in the outstanding camaraderie and goodwill from the oldest to the youngest members.

Thank you to everyone' of you.

Finally, we like to welcome you to our annual Presidents Day on the 27th April.

Willy Meston - Past President