



# FOLLOW THE BLUES

August 2008  
Number 42

## News from the Blues Followers

### A New Dawn

**Here we go again!! A new season. New hopes. Some new faces. Some new laws. Those of you who attended the Followers AGM in June will remember the enthusiasm with which Mike Rayer talked about the coming season and his policy of renewing the squad. In particular it looks as though we will have a really exciting back-line and a competitive pack. Mike reflects this enthusiasm and optimism in his prelude to the season.**

Blues fans are renowned for their knowledge of the game and there can hardly be one who cannot quote law and paragraph to any referee who is in doubt! In order to maintain these high standards, the Followers have organised an evening with Ed Morrison. To get you in the mood Robin Dewson outlines the new ELVs that will be used in our league this season. Good luck!!

**Adrian Randall**

#### Mike's Hopes

After a busy summer of recruitment and with plenty of blood and sweat shed on the training paddock, the season grows ever nearer with all the signs so far that we are in for another exciting campaign.

The squad has gelled nicely to date and this was clearly evident recently on our training camp at the Hilltop Outdoor centre in Sheringham, where we managed to combine some rugby training with team and leadership activities. The guys then capped off the weekend with a game against North Walsham which was played in weather more akin to December than August.

Now however we face two tough matches in the shape of Newport

Gwent Dragons and Cambridge. There's no doubt we will get a better idea of how well we have come together after these games. They are sure to test our organisation and conditioning but that's what pre-season games are about.

Whilst we look a squad with great potential the fact remains that when the league season gets underway, results become far more important than performances. We will continue with our philosophy of ball in hand rugby but to grow confidence its essential we get off to a good start. Therefore we have to remain patient, build and adapt our game plan on a weekly basis and establish a level of consistency that's been missing from our performances over the past couple of seasons.

I hope you are looking forward to the season as much as all the squad and management are. Your support as ever will be welcomed by the players up and down the country, but none more so than at Goldington Rd where once again we are looking to upset some of the divisional favourites.

So clear your throats and sharpen your wit.

Let's make sure we keep 'singing the Blues' when Bedford win and .....lose!  
Enjoy

**Mike Rayer**

### Referee Evening

Having been unable to arrange such an evening last season I am delighted to say that Ed Morrison has agreed to come to Goldington Road on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Sept. This event will take place in the Scrum Hall, 7pm for 7.30 start. Nos will be providing a buffet. There will be a charge of £5 to cover costs. It is hoped that Mike together with some of the coaching staff and players will attend.

Ed Morrison is the Head of Elite Referee Development for the RFU, As a successful referee he took charge of 38 internationals between 1991 and 2001, including the 1995 Rugby World Cup Final in South Africa, and was one of the first full

time referees appointed by the RFU. He was a regular at Goldington Road, including that never-to-be-forgotten play off match against Rotherham when we retained our place in the Premiership. Ed has gone on record as saying that it was one of the best games he refereed. Ed has visited us before to talk about refereeing and was our Guest Speaker at the first End of Season Ball. He spent some time in June as TMO at the Churchill Cup.

With the introduction of the Experimental Law Variations (ELVs) Ed will be able to give us chapter and verse on the current situation and we will be able to look at these with the experience of a few matches when they have been applied. I am sure that Ed will welcome questions and discussion on this topic and a range of others regarding the Laws and refereeing in general.

Please make sure that you buy your ticket beforehand to help us with the arrangements. Tickets (£5) will be on sale at the home matches up to and including 13<sup>th</sup> Sept or by contacting Andy or Phil.

**Jackie Markham**

### A new season and new laws.

A great deal has been happening over the last 24 months with greater numbers of matches taking on board and implementing the Experimental Law Variations (ELV's). We will see them globally as of August 1<sup>st</sup> after the last 2 years of trials. So what are the ELV's? There are 13 new laws that you have to take into account when watching your rugby (although just to confuse things, there are additional others being trialled in other countries as well). A great resource can be found here [http://www.irb.com/mm/document/NewsMedia/0/080711IRBELVGuideEN\\_5897.pdf](http://www.irb.com/mm/document/NewsMedia/0/080711IRBELVGuideEN_5897.pdf)

However here are the laws (in italics) with clarification after them

#### Law 6 – Match Officials

*1 Assistant referees are able to assist the referee in any way that the referee requires.* – In my opinion this is no different to what we have, and in fact in my opinion, makes what an assistant referee (no longer

a touch judge) will do, to be just as confusing and inconsistent as before.

#### **Law 17 - Maul**

**2** Remove reference to head and shoulders not being lower than hips.

– Either side can join the maul with their head below their shoulders. This exists so that the next law can be enforced easily.

**3** Players are able to defend a maul by pulling down an opponent in it. – This is the biggest area of potential confusion. With this law, being dragged between his shoulders and hips can only bring down a player. If he is brought down by his legs for example, this is still a penalty (collapsing). The IRB has tried to clarify any confusion. If there was only 1 defending player as part of the maul, and he brings a player down legally and therefore no defending players are now in the maul it is now NOT a maul and referees will encourage scrum halves to “use it” to avoid accidental offsides and ugly examples of a defender coming round to tackle the ball carrier – legally. If defenders voluntarily leave a maul it is still a maul (as last year, so no change in that).

#### **Law 19 - Touch and Lineout**

**4** If a team puts the ball back into its own 22 and the ball is subsequently kicked directly into touch, there is no gain in ground.- If a ball is passed back in to the 22 and providing there has been no further ruck or maul, if it is then kicked in to touch without touching the ground, then the lineout would be in line from where the kick was taken. If there has been a ruck or a maul, or an attacking player has touched the ball, then you can kick straight in to touch

**5** A quick throw in may be thrown in straight or towards the throwing team's own goal line.- This law is the one that I think makes the most sense as there would be no gain in ground if you threw in backwards. Also the ball must still cross the 5-metre line,

**6** There is no restriction on the number of players from either team who can participate in the lineout.- This removes the contentious issue of “numbers in the line”. If you are attacking and you only put 2 in the lineout, the opposition can still put 8 players to defend that if they desire.

**7** The receiver at the lineout must be 2 metres away from the lineout. - Another contentious issue removed concerning the acting scrum half. Several teams would change their scrum half but not inform the referee and therefore gain an advantage.

**8** The player who is in opposition to the player throwing in the ball must stand in the area between the 5-metre line and the touch line but must be 2 metres away from the 5-metre line. – This is giving definite positioning for the defending hooker again stopping the defending hooker attempting to disrupt the attacking lineout with his arm raised.

**9** Lineout players may pre-grip a jumper before the ball is thrown in. – Straight forward

**10** The lifting of lineout players is permitted. - Again, straight forward

#### **Law 20 - Scrum**

**11** Introduction of an offside line 5 metres behind the hindmost feet of the scrum. - Both sides must have all players not participating in the scrum at least 5 metres away from the hind most foot.

**12** Identification of scrum half off-side lines. – The change is to simply incorporate the above law, 20-11 as to where the off side line is if the non-winning scrum half moves away from the scrum. He may remain within a metre of the number 8 on the back foot, but if he does move further away from the scrum, they need to retire to the 5-metre offside line.

Or he can stick with the ball like he always could !!

#### **Law 22 – Corner Posts**

**13** The corner posts are no longer considered to be touch-in-goal except when the ball is grounded against the post. - If a player touches the corner post when scoring a try, the try will stand, but if the ball is grounded as part of a try and it touches the post, then the ball is in touch. Similarly, the ball hitting the corner post is still alive and can be played if it bounces back into the field of play or into in goal.

**Robin Dewson**

### **Ladies Rugby**

Under 18 (as at 1<sup>st</sup> Sept) ladies rugby will be starting, at the Ath on Sunday 7th Sept at 10AM. No experience required. There will be 2 age groups, Under 15 and Under 18 and open to any girl 12-17. We have had over 35 girls come along so far; several have never played the game. So come and join the fun!

### **Social Schedule**

This season sees the start of a slightly new approach to Social Events from the Followers Commit-

tee as we now have two joint Social Secretaries. The load on one person of the Social Secretary position was one of the reasons behind a lower than hoped for number of events last year.

The two joint Social Secretaries are Andy Cobley and Phil Novis. We can be normally found selling jacket tickets under the Lifesure Suites but can also be contacted by E-Mail ([andy.cobley@bt.com](mailto:andy.cobley@bt.com) and [philnovis@aol.com](mailto:philnovis@aol.com)) plus mobile phone (07801-681485 and 07809-206563). Our aim is to manage the social side of the Followers so that at least one event is held every month from September 2008, including after the season has finished. To help us achieve our target, we would like to hear from anyone who has any ideas about what events the Followers should hold. Please think as wide as possible and do not just think of events that have either been held previously or that can be held at Goldington Road. If an event will raise money for the club and / or entertain people, then they are the primary aims. We would also like to provide for the full range of ages and tastes, so please let us know what you would like.

An up-to-date list of social events will be published on the Followers web site but also look out for posters at Goldington Road and listen for announcements on away trips. The first event is Friday Sept 19<sup>th</sup> when Ed Morrison will be coming to Goldington Road.

#### **AWAY TRIP**

**SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> Sept v Rotherham. Adults £17 Juniors £10. Coach departs at 10.00 am.**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> Sept v London Welsh. Adults £14 Juniors £8 Coach departs at 10.00 am. This to be confirmed when kick-off time is advised.**

#### **Next Issue:- Newbury**

Please let me have your views either via the committee or [arandall69@btinternet.com](mailto:arandall69@btinternet.com) by 6<sup>th</sup> September.

The views expressed in this Newsletter are the authors and do not represent the views either of the Followers Association or Bedford Rugby