

2020  
2021



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# RAISING THE GAME



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# THE TEAMS



## COVENTRY RUGBY



## EALING TRAILFINDERS

POSITION  
SPONSOR

### STARTING XV

Louis Brown	15	Luke Daniels
Rob Stevenson	14	Angus Kernohan
Andy Forsyth	13	David Johnston
Will Owen	12	Fraser Strachan
Louis James	11	James Cordy Redden
Tony Fenner	10	Craig Willis
Pete White	9	Craig Hampson
Toby Trinder	1	Kyle Whyte
Nic Dolly	2	Alun Walker
Phil Boulton	3	Johannes Jonker
Nile Dacres	4	Bobby de Wee
Cameron Jordan	5	James Cannon
Sam Lewis	6	Kieran Murphy
Ben Nutley	7	Simon Uzokwe
C Ryan Burrows	8	Rayn Smid C



### REPLACEMENTS

Suva Ma'asi	16	Shaun Malton
Luc Jeannot	17	Will Davis
Alex Gibson	18	Elliot Millar Mills
Adam Peters	19	Fraser Strachan
Senitiki Nayalo	20	Ben West
Joe Snow	21	Jordan Burns
Kieran Wilkinson	22	Steven Shingler
Rob Knox	23	Matt Gordon

### MATCH OFFICIALS

**REFEREE** Alex Thomas  
**ASSISTANT REFEREES** Steve Lee and Simon Park

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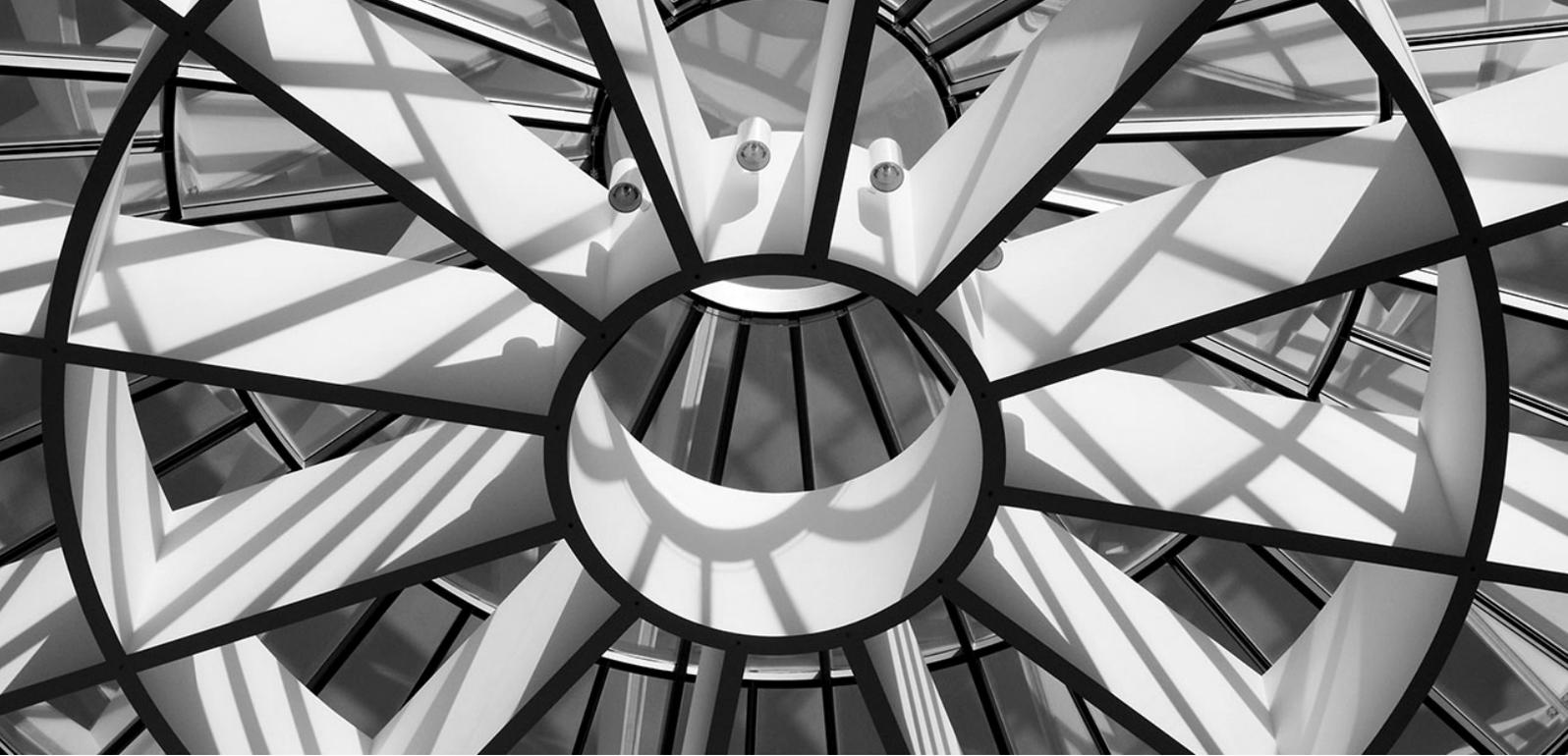


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COVENTRY  
RUGBY  
EST. 1974

HYDRO

# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello everyone. We're now two weeks in and have had two league games of very different standards but similar thrilling finishes with a one-point final margin in each case.

Firstly, what was a dire game here against Bedford with both sides looking ring-rusty ended in a one point win for us with the last kick of the match, shortly after ex-Cov player Will Maisey, who had done it so many times for us here, looked as though he had won it for his new club, but then up stepped Tony Fenner and it was 'job done'.

Then away to Doncaster last week, in an entertaining game showcasing the rich talent and great potential of the young Cov squad, we couldn't quite snatch victory from a seasoned, streetwise Donny team who scraped home after we agonisingly hit the post with an attempt at goal which would have won the match. That's rugby!

Tonight of course we face a very tough proposition in Ealing who have made no secret of their ambition to join the Premiership ranks and who have spent the necessary money on a squad to achieve that, the evidence being in their two pre-season victories over Saracens.

Our boys continue on a learning curve which is designed to set us up for next season; this season there will be no relegation, and its late start and shortened form render finishing positions somewhat irrelevant. Consequently our emphasis is on growing our own talent, supplemented by loan players, some of whom will hopefully make Cov their permanent home, and effectively giving the squad an extended pre-season campaign in advance of season 2021/22. We still don't know what that season will look like, although we are involved in discussions with the RFU and PRL on that topic.

The experimental, centralised Greene King IPA Championship streaming of all games has so far yielded disappointing viewing figures, although its central promotion has been weak and there have been clashes with the Six Nations. We do receive a share of the viewing revenue of all games we play in, so please sign up and support your club, even if shouting at the TV is not quite the same as being there in person (the ref definitely can't hear you).

It is unclear why pubs and other hospitality venues are soon able to open for outside service when we cannot do the same; our 2,800 seater stand could accommodate a sizeable crowd, even socially-distanced, and questions are being asked about that. At least we hope to return to match day crowds at Butts Park Arena in mid-May; the intensity brought to a game by the legendary Cov supporters' roar and the rush it gives the players is sorely missed.

C'mon Cov!



# Good luck

for the 2021 season



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# FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

Today we welcome Ealing to Butts Park, who are the form side in the league and have strengthened over the last 12 months to put themselves in a position to go one step further than being the challengers for promotion.

Ealing have set the tone for the last few years for the league having invested on and off the pitch, they have now started to bridge the gap between the Premiership and the Greene King IPA Championship.

Today will be a tough challenge, but one that we are really relishing. We have taken lots of positives from our last two games, and as a young squad there has been lots of excitement ahead of testing ourselves against Ealing. Despite the one-point loss last week, we felt that it was an all-round better performance than the scrappy and slow game vs Bedford.

In line for his first competitive start today is 18-year-old Louis James, who is a product of our Academy programme, and has really kicked on in the last few months. He is comfortable in a number of positions across the backline, he is quite an accomplished goal kicker and has a great attitude to hard work and learning. I have been really impressed in how he has adapted to all the pressures and processes of professional rugby and taken most things in his stride so far, with such an unassuming nature.

At tighthead James Harper has been recalled by Sale Sharks, so that gives an opportunity for Alex Gibson to come into the squad. Alex has trained well and worked hard, while being patient for a chance, so I am excited to see him get his Cov career up and running today.

At some point in the game, he will replace Phil Boulton who will get his 99th cap for the club. This means it is likely that Boults will get his 100th cap away at Nottingham next week.

I am really pleased for Boults. He has led the club on the pitch through a period where we have rebuilt the rugby programme from a semi-pro set up to a full-time professional team. It has been a brilliant but bumpy journey over the last four years and Boults has played a huge part in the development of the club on and off the pitch, so I hope you can all give him loud cheer (from home) when he reaches that milestone!

It is great to welcome back Adam Peters into the squad this week, who was injured in the first few minutes of the Bedford game two weeks ago. Adam took over the club captaincy from Boults and has had a tough first nine months in his new role, leading and supporting the players off the pitch during a pandemic has called upon all of his creativity and I have already seen him develop which will in turn benefit the club more and more as we move forward.

Enjoy the game and thank you for your support!



# COVENTRY RUGBY

## SENIOR SQUAD



**JOSH BARTON**

05/12/1997



**PHIL BOULTON**

17/01/1986



**LOUIS BROWN**

17/02/1998



**JOE BUCKLE**

13/05/1993



**ANDY BULUMAKAU**

28/08/1992



**RYAN BURROWS**

25/04/1988



**NILE DACRES**

09/10/1991



**NIC DOLLY**

11/06/1999



**TOM EMMERY**

02/07/1998



**TONY FENNER**

12/12/1989



**ANDREW FORSYTH**

28/08/1992



**ALEX GIBSON**



**JAMES HARPER**

16/10/2000



**KAILUS HUTCHINSON**

16/10/1997



**LUC JEANNOT**

16/09/1996



**CAMERON JORDAN**

17/11/1999



**ROB KNOX**

04/02/1992



**DAN LEWIS**

12/12/1989



**SAM LEWIS**

27/03/1998



**KESTON LINES**

08/11/1999



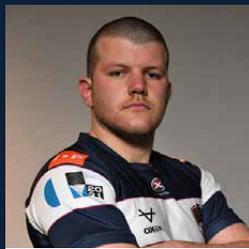


**SUVA MA'ASI**

08/11/1997



**JAMES MARTIN**



**SAM MCNULTY**

17/01/1996



**SENTIKI NAYALO**

12/05/1991



**BEN NUTLEY**

07/04/1992



**WILL OWEN**

06/07/1993



**ADAM PETERS**

17/08/1994



**MARIO PICHARDIE**

31/01/2001



**CALLUM SIRKER**

04/05/1998



**JOE SNOW**

11/12/1998



**ROB STEVENSON**

10/02/1995



**TOBY TRINDER**

05/05/1998



**PETE WHITE**

24/07/1991



**KIERAN WILKINSON**

03/10/1999



**ALEX WOOLFORD**

08/12/1992

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# COVENTRY RUGBY DEVELOPMENT SQUAD



**TOM BALL**

07/02/2002



**LOUIS BEER**

27/11/2000

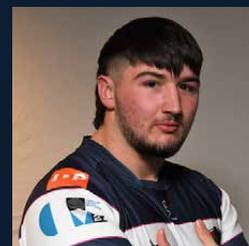


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**JAKE BRIDGES**

29/01/2002



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**LOUIS JAMES**

29/09/2001



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# PLAYER SEASON STATS

PLAYERS	STARTS	AS SUB	TOTAL APPS	TIRES	CONS	PENS	D GOALS	POINTS
PHIL BOULTON	2	2	2					
LOUIS BROWN	2		2					
RYAN BURROWS	2		2					
NILE DACRES	2		2					
NIC DOLLY	2		2	2				10
TONY FENNER	1	1	2		1	1		5
ANDY FORSYTH	2		2					
JAMES HARPER	2		2					
LOUIS JAMES		2	2					
LUC JEANNOT	1	1	2					
CAMERON JORDAN	1	1	2					
ROB KNOX	2		2					
SAM LEWIS	2		2					
SENITIKI NAYALO		1	1					
BEN NUTLEY	2		2	1				
WILL OWEN	2		2					5
ADAM PETERS	1		1					
JOE SNOW	1	1	2					
ROB STEVENSON	2		2	1				5
TOBY TRINDER	1	1	2					
PETE WHITE	1	1	2					
KIERAN WILKINSON	1	1	2		2			4
ALEX WOOLFORD		1	1					



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# FIXTURES LIST



ROUND	DATE	OPPO	VENUE	RESULT / KO
1	06/03/2021	Bedford Blues	Butts Park Arena	10 - 9
2	12/03/2021	Doncaster Knights	Castle Park	20 - 19
3	19/03/2021	Ealing Trailfinders	Butts Park Arena	6.00 PM
4	27/03/2021	Nottingham	Lady Bay	5.30 PM
5	11/04/2021	Amphill	Butts Park Arena	2.30 PM
6	BYE			
7	24/04/2021	Hartpury	Alpas Arena	1.00 PM
8	01/05./2021	Cornish Pirates	Butts Park Arena	3.00 PM
9	15/05/2021	Jersey Reds	Stade Santander	3.00 PM
10	22/05/2021	Saracens	Butts Park Arena	5.00 PM
11	29/05/2021	Richmond	Richmond Athletic Ground	TBC

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# CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE TABLE



POSITION	TEAM	PLAYED	WON	DRAW	LOST	FOR	AGAINST	PTS DIFF	BONUS	POINTS
1	Ealing Trailfinders	2	2	0	0	106	9	97	2	10
2	Cornish Pirates	2	2	0	0	52	24	28	1	9
3	Doncaster	2	2	0	0	39	36	3	0	8
4	Saracens	2	1	0	1	62	38	24	1	5
5	Hartpury RFC	2	1	0	1	63	48	15	1	5
6	Bedford Blues	2	1	0	1	42	35	7	1	5
7	Coventry	2	1	0	1	29	29	0	1	5
8	Amphill	2	0	0	2	23	73	-50	1	1
9	Jersey Reds	1	0	0	1	13	45	-32	0	0
10	Richmond	2	0	0	2	22	65	-43	0	0
11	Nottingham	1	0	0	1	3	52	-49	0	0



# TODAY'S OPPO

## EALING TRAILFINDERS

*By John Butler*



This evening we extend a very warm welcome to Ealing Trailfinders, who arrive with an impressive record behind them.

Pre season, they began a sequence of matches, nine in all, designed to give the squad as good an opportunity as possible to reach this season's Greene King IPA Championship home and away play offs. Of those nine matches, eight were won, including two against Saracens, the only reverse coming away at newly promoted Newcastle Falcons. So much self-belief will surely have been gained as a result.

That impressive form has seen Ealing Trailfinders amass a total of 106 points and 16 tries in their opening two Championship games, while conceding just nine points, three penalty goals.

The opening weekend brought a 52-3 win away at Nottingham, whilst last Saturday on home territory Ampthill were despatched 54-6.

Director of Rugby and former fly half Ben Ward has been able to assemble a very impressive, experienced squad together, backed by a large backroom team in support, together with the Trailfinders travel group as main sponsors.

A large squad at Vallis Way is again captained by South African number 8 Rayn Smid, now in his fourth season at the Club. There is just one Coventry link in the current squad, prop forward James Gibbons. Gibbons, described as being full of intensity, returned to Ealing in the long close season after two years at Cov, but has yet to feature to date.

Of those 16 tries scored in the two wins, several players have notched up a brace. Skipper Smid did so against Ampthill, the others being scrum-half Craig Hampson, wing Angus Kernohan and hooker Alun Walker. Two fly halves, Craig Willis and Steven Shingler, have successfully split the goal kicking.

The Ealing club played their first match on the local common in 1869, two years before the formation of the RFU. In the 64 years or so from 1894 to 1958, the club played at some six different locations, before arriving at the Trailfinders Sports ground in 1999. Major development work has been undertaken in the ensuing years, Ealing now running four senior sides, a thriving Academy, plus a large mini junior section.

The playing contact between Cov and Ealing dates back just 10 years to 2011/12. In addition to the two Championship Cup meetings last season, both won by Ealing, prior to this evening, we have met 10 times at league level.

There was a four-year gap due to differing league status, and currently Ealing lead 7-2, with last season's clash at Vallis Way ending in a thrilling 28 points all draw. The return here at the Butts Park was the last home game before the pandemic, with Ealing edging the honours 8-17. Cov's last win in the fixture came here in season 2014/15, 32 -26, that success coming just before the four-year lull in proceedings.



# PLAYERS TO WATCH



## New face **ANGUS KERNOHAN**

The 22-year-old highly rated winger is a very exciting arrival from Ulster, and has hit the ground running at Ealing Trailfinders with a string of impressive performances.

He scored in both home and away matches against Newcastle in November, and has dotted down in the opening two Championship matches against Nottingham and Ampthill. A memorable solo effort last weekend saw him win the Man of the Match Award in the 54-6 triumph at Trailfinders Sports Club.

He made 21 appearances for Ulster after graduating from their academy, including seven starts in the Pro 14 and two appearances in the Heineken Champions Cup.

Kernohan joined the full-time ranks of the Academy in 2018 and then went on to become an almost constant feature in senior match-day squads, leading to a first team contract. His quality has also been recognised on the international front, and he was a significant part of the Ireland Under 20 Six Nations Grand Slam winning team in 2019.

## Club stalwart **RAYN SMID**

The South African became only the second centurion for the club last weekend as he made his 100th appearance in the win over Ampthill.

He marked the occasion with two tries in a typical captain's performance which showed his importance to the team. This is his third consecutive season as captain, and he continues to lead by example with his tireless displays in the number eight shirt.

Smid moved up the M4 from Bristol in January 2017 after he played for them at Vallis Way in 2015-16. He quickly made his mark and finished the 2016-17 campaign with three tries in 14 matches.

During his time with Bristol the flanker or number 8 played 10 times. Smid joined Bristol in 2015 from Western Province in his native South Africa and he featured for the Cape Town-based team in the Currie Cup and Vodacom Cup.

His performances earned him a place in the Western Stormers 2014 Super Rugby training squad. At the end of that season he then moved to Cavalieri Prato in Italy and played three times for the Tuscan club before he returned to Cape Town.

# TODAY'S OPPO FORM GUIDE



The Trailfinders have been back in action since November, and completed an action-packed pre-season in preparation for the Greene King IPA Championship.

They faced Newcastle Falcons and Bristol 'A' home and away before Christmas, winning three of the four matches as the newly assembled squad began to gel.

They then competed in the Trailfinders Challenge Cup during February and March, and the first placed prize of £20,000 was awarded thanks to the generosity of Mike Gooley and Trailfinders, as captain Rayn Smid lifted the trophy.

With four wins from four after completing a memorable home and away double against Saracens and Doncaster, they lifted the silverware in a socially distanced ceremony after the tournament came to a close.

The Green and Whites had time for one more friendly before the start of the league, and they beat Richmond 33-24 at the Athletic Ground in an action-packed local derby.

The Championship began on March 6th at Lady Bay with a huge 52-3 win at Nottingham, which got the league off to the perfect start.



Ben Ward's men scored eight tries in total in a dominant display to register a bonus point win on the opening day of the campaign. Guy Thompson, Fraser Strachan, Angus Kernohan and Harry Casson all crossed the line whilst Alun Walker and Craig Hampson both scored twice in a memorable victory.

Round Two saw Ampthill visit West London, and the Trailfinders were on form again as they registered a 54-6 win. Shaun Malton, Angus Kernohan, Lewis Thiede, Fraser Strachan, Jordan Burns and Will Davis all crossed the line as well as Captain Rayn Smid who scored a double.

So Ealing come to the West Midlands sitting top of the Greene King IPA Championship table as the only team in the competition with a perfect record of 10 league points from their two games played.



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