

Wirral Under 14's Tour to Edinburgh 14th/15 **and 16th of March 08**

Nineteen Boys and Fourteen Dads enjoyed a thoroughly entertaining action packed weekend staying in the lovely city of Edinburgh. Despite missing several players, we all departed from the Rugby Club just after 3-00pm for the pending 5-hour journey. Stopping in the town of Biggar for a couple of glasses of pop and home cooked pub meal, we arrived at our Hotel at 10-00pm. Following room allocation, we all retired to the bar to try the various cokes and lemonade that were on offer before retiring to bed. Following a Full Scottish breakfast we made the forty-minute journey to Dunfermline Rugby Club. We had an early afternoon kick off, preceding their 1st Team Fixture against Perth; this gave us time for a light meal whilst sitting down to watch the England versus Ireland game.

Although the full compliment of players didn't travel the team spirit and commitment of the boys was clearly apparent for all to see. We agreed with our hosts to play three 20-minute games, thus allowing all the boys to participate. The game was played in a fantastic spirit and I am pleased to say that the boys won a hard fought game 38 – 5. Tries were scored by Ed Forshaw, Mike Vanderzwan, Elliot Speed and Chris Burrows scored two. After some pre match-kicking practice Ed Forshaw also managed 4 conversions. (Not sure who the kicking coach was, but he must have been good!!!!).

Man of the match was Adam Gould, although in truth anyone of 6 or 7 players could have won it.

Following the England game we all then departed to the famous Guilliano's Restaurant for a wonderful meal, and then onto Ten Pin Bowling, where I am pleased to say that the Dads were overwhelmingly the winners!!!! One or two of the dads did sample the lemonade again, but reported that it wasn't quite as good as the hotel. I personally thought the orange squash was very tasty.

Sunday following yet again a Full Scottish breakfast, one or two of the dads reported bad stomachs, which after much deliberation the cause of which was put down to a bad pie or two. We then had some free time for a wander around the city.

We then travelled approximately 15 minutes away to Portobello Rugby Club. After watching the opposition park all their cars up!! And have a pre match shave. Only joking but they were very big lads, we played a very hard fought game but unfortunately the boys lost this encounter 12 – 5.

Jack Woods scoring our only try.

Unfortunately Ed missed the kick from the touchline so the kicking coach got sacked!!

The game was however somewhat marred by an injury to David Byrne who sadly had to go to hospital where it was discovered he had fractured his collarbone.

Fortunately one of the opposition mums was a nurse and she kindly took David on the short journey to the A & E dept at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. My sincere thanks go out to Julie Sutton for all her kind help.

When David returned to the clubhouse he was greeted with a load cheer from both sides.

We rounded off a great weekend and arrived home at the rugby club at around 9-30pm.

Our sincere thanks go out to both our host clubs who looked after us all impeccably, for Burleigh Travel and Dave and Julie Broom for organising the tour and not least the BOYS. They did us and our club proud, and their behaviour was impeccable. They also I believe came of age and played their heart and soul against much bigger opposition.

The Touring Squad was as follows:

**Tom Sweeney
Mike Vanderzwan
Elliot Speed
Ben Cornford
Tom Hutchinson
Ed Forshaw
Charlie Ayre
Ryan Higginson
Adam Gould
Shaun Bromsgrove
Mike Stewart
Alex Keen
James Broom
Chris Burrows
Josh Stead
David Byrne
Tom Charters
Jack Woods
Jake Robinson.**

Finally, my thanks to all my fellow Coaches . Mark Cornford, Paul Gould and Ian Stead.

**Report by: John Ayre
Photos by: Ray Burrows**