

BBRFC Celtic Rugby School Newsletter

20 November 2015

Our Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition this season of our Rugby School Newsletter.



For those of you that are new to the club we produce four newsletters per year, with match reports, photos, news of social events and so forth. All contributions are welcome but we particularly like to receive material from the players; if you have anything you would like to publish then please forward it to Newsletter HQ.

At the time of writing the semi-finals of the Rugby World Cup are approaching, with New Zealand against South Africa and Argentina facing Australia. Despite England's poor performances in their own backyard, the competition has been a huge success with full stadia and a great deal of press interest. There have been some fantastic performances by the lesser-known teams (Japan, incredible!) as well as by the enduring powerhouses, New Zealand and Australia.

Whether it is the positive influence of the World Cup or not, we have noticed a real buzz about our Rugby School with many new and enthusiastic young players signing up. To all newcomers, players and parents, welcome to

BBRFC Celtic. You have made an excellent choice and hope that you enjoy being part of our great club.

Age groups

Just as a reminder, these are the applicable age groups as supplied to us by the Belgian Rugby Federation. Please make sure that you are playing with the correct age group!

DoB	Age Group
1997	U19
1998	U19
1999	U19
2000	U16
2001	U16
2002	U14
2003	U14
2004	U12
2005	U12
2006	U10
2007	U10
2008	U8
2009	U8
2010	U6
2011	U6

Equipment

As many of you are starting to play the game for the first time, the following gear is recommended for all BBRFC Celtic players.

Rugby Boots: Only plastic soles please. We use a high tech artificial surface on our pitch at the VUB. Metal studs are not allowed, as they damage the pitch.

Rugby Jerseys: For matches and tournaments team shirts will be provided on the day. U12s and U14s MUST bring their own jersey to

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matches since it is given to them when they pay their fee. For training you may wear any jersey you like.

Shorts and socks: For matches and tournaments please wear dark blue shorts and red or striped socks. You may buy these from our shop, or from any sports shop.

Gum shield: Gum shields must be worn, both for training and our matches and tournaments. You may buy these from any sports shop. Note that gum shields must be moulded to the shape of the player's mouth (using boiling water), in order to be effective. This is quick and easy to do, so please don't forget. Instructions usually come with every gum shield.

Scrum cap: Scrum caps protect the head against possible hits and collisions. They are totally optional, and some players like them, some do not.

Balls: The school provides all balls for training and matches.

This is also a good place to congratulate our very own James O'Brien on being elected Procurement Manager. As part of his new role James is currently sourcing extra kit including hoodies, beanies and t-shirts; hopefully these will be available soon. James joins Matthijs Roukens, Rugby School Director, on the BBRFC Celtic Management Committee.

U10s at Boitsfort

With the Rugby World Cup in full swing across the Channel, our U10s' first tournament of the new season was at Boitsfort RFC. Paloma Faith wasn't available to do the theme song and there were no £300 corporate tickets, but it

was a great morning's rugby all the same. There was some apprehension before the kick-off: last year's U10s had enjoyed a fantastic season, including a run to the final of the Flemish championships, but several stalwarts of that side had moved up to the U12s or had left Belgium altogether. How would we replicate the muscle and the pace of some of last year's star players?

So the new-look U10s took to the field for their opener against Boitsfort I. It's fair to say that Boitsfort are among the elite clubs in Belgian U10 rugby, so this was like an opening fixture against Toulon, the All Blacks or Scotland. And our lads spent much of the match on the back foot. Great individual tackles from Bob, Nathan, Emile and Marcos and some determined rucking from Max and Emily held Boitsfort at bay for a while, and Matthew was lively at scrum half on the rare occasions we got any possession. But ultimately the lads were overpowered and lost 0-2.



Jorge and team

Our next opponents Gent lined up with eleven players as opposed to the regulation ten. But, even in Podge's absence, Celtics of all clubs weren't going to fall for that one and we kicked off at ten a side. Our lads were in

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control early on, Marcus setting the tone by forcing a turnover with a brave tackle on a much bigger opponent. Matthew then opened the scoring after good work from Ziad. We were controlling the rucks and Alexander twice tidied up loose balls to feed first Bob, and then Matthew for more tries. Gent were never out of things though and the final few minutes saw our lads pinned in our 22. While we were collectively dominant in rucks and mauls, not all of the players are confident enough to make the sort of good individual tackles we'd seen in the Boitsfort game, so Gent were finding space. Gent twice looked like equalising only to become confused by the pitch markings and fail to touch down in time, allowing our lads to hold on for a 3-2 win.

Next up, Dendermonde. Physically, the Dendermonde guys dwarfed our team, with one particularly huge player. So it would be important to make a good start. Marcos caught the Dendermonde kick off and ran through their entire defence to touch down – no problem finding the tryline for Marcos! Dendermonde responded, predictably enough, by throwing the ball to the big lad. At one stage, Neil, Colm and Max combined to force him into touch, although special mention to Nathan who later stopped him single-handedly. With all the Dendermonde muscle sucked into a ruck, Matthew ran in a great solo try to make it 2-0 and from then on our lads were in total control. Bob scored before Matthew got the fourth try (and, I suppose, the bonus point?) in a comfortable 4-0 win.

Finally, Liège RFC. This side showed a commendable disdain for politically correct thinking around childhood obesity by taking to

the field in McDonalds-sponsored kit. Liège played well and dominated possession and territory, with our lads resorting to a defensive kicking game, with rather mixed success. But our lads were growing in confidence in their tackling with Matthew, Emile and Marcus each making try-saving tackles as Liège piled on the pressure. Liège eventually did score but we equalised through Bob, Liège having no answer to Bob's powerful run from halfway. Then it was back to defence, with the entire Celtics pack piling in to drive Liège into touch two metres short in the last action of the match. So the game finished 1-1.

This newsletter has in the past been critical of opposing coaches, so it's only fair to note the sporting behaviour of the Liège coach who asked the ref to allow Celtics to retake a botched restart.

Overall, a really good morning for the U10s. The lads held their own up front against some bigger opponents, and there was plenty of good exciting running from the backs, winning two and drawing one of four matches – enough to qualify from a World Cup group? Especially against Dendermonde, the rugby was as good as anything the U10s had played the previous season and it was gratifying to see the newcomers blending in to the team. So well played Aurelien, Matthieu, Ziad and Marcus made their competitive debuts at this level and immediately slotted in well alongside the grizzled veterans, and to Jorge for overseeing the transition.

Many thanks to our hosts at Boitsfort for an excellently-organised tournament.

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Administration

This is the boring bit...

For all players there are two forms that must be completed...and for those who forget or are not aware that we are in Belgium or are part of the Vlaamse Rugby Bond the answer is no, these forms are not available in English or French!

The first form is the Registration Form and must be completed carefully and signed and dated by your parents if you are 16 or younger. If you do not yet have a Belgian ID then fill in your foreign ID or Passport information where required. Please fill in the club name where required.

The second form is the Medical Form and this is partially filled out by yourself and the bottom left of it is completed by your doctor who must sign and stamp the part he/she completes. The medical examination should cost you less than 30 and take 5-10 minutes maximum!

Once you have completed both the forms then please return the originals to the coach or the rugby school director. We will get you a license. The license entitles you to FBRB insurance AND authorises you to play in all FBRB sanctioned matches. More information and links to the two forms are available on the BBRFC Celtic website.

Last but not least please make sure your fees are up to date!

BBRFC Celtic U12s

The U12s arrived at Boitsfort in good spirits, eager to take part in the first tournament of

the year. Mind games inevitably began as soon as we set foot on the hallowed turf, with the opening gambit from the hosts along the lines of 'Hello, your first game started ten minutes ago.' Refusing to be unsettled by this blatant piece of gamesmanship we stuck to our guns and insisted we'd start at 10am as arranged. Eventually we even had a full team to prove it.

Game 1 was against Boitsfort 2, who probably thought they'd put us to the sword. But we kept our shape, gave them a bit of a physical going-over up front, and were always in control. Debutants from last year's U10s (Izzy and Dominick up front; Lewis and Jake out on the wings) certainly didn't look out of place. 3-0 with tries from Dylan, Izzy and Hugo.

Next up was Liege – a couple of big Walloon guys in amongst them – but ferocious Celtics tackling soon cut them down to size. Emilien on his full debut caught deep in his own half at full-back and ran through a tiring defence to score a fine try. 3-0 again, a good start, and parent banter on the touchline was beginning to find its voice as well.



Well played U12s!

Third game – Liege II. Not our best performance, but another victory. We know we're going to have a really strong pack this year – Tom, Sebby, Jules and Maxim all bring

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size, technique and aggression, and the experience of some tough U12 games last season. Izzy, Dominick and Pierre are excellent additions. We'll compete up front with anyone and everyone – but don't forget: No Hesitation!!

Game four – Gent. Again we controlled the game, helped in particular by some astute kicking from Sam at fly-half. We were bedding in a bit of a new-look backline in this tournament having lost most of last year's team to U14s – we had Dylan sniping at 9; Sam in control at 10; Hugo doing his best Jamie Roberts bulldozer impression at 12; Eowyn and Cameron flying out wide backed up by Jake, Lewis and Emilien; and last but not least Maxence a big threat from full-back. Another fairly comfortable victory (including a first try for Dominick) but again a lot we can work on. Catch and pass, catch and pass, catch and pass...

And so to the 'final' game – Boitsfort 1 on their home pitch with a home ref and even a home parent who took a quick line-out to help them score one of their tries. Banter levels on the touchline went up another notch and the players responded in fine fashion. We lost 4-1 but it was much closer than that. We matched them in almost everything except speed of thought. Plenty of positives and plenty of improvement to come on the training ground. Their coach was very complimentary about our team.

All in all it was a good morning out on a beautiful sunny day, and we left Boitsfort knowing that with a lot of hard work and proper focus we can be one of the best teams in Belgium once again this season. The pick of our tries were those scored by Emilien and

Lewis; probably the best tries scored by Frenchmen under Saint-André...

Meanwhile, back at base, the younger and newer members of the squad continue to train hard and learn more about the game. New coach Ray - poached from Joe Schmidt's Ireland camp - reports good progress. We hope to unleash them on an unsuspecting rugby world at our home tournament in November. Well done U12s – we were all very proud of you!

Kituro Tournament

A number of our new players made their debuts for the U10s in this tournament. Coach Brian had this to say in the run-up to the tournament *"We have welcomed a number of new players at U10 level this season. Some have graduated from U8 last year, and almost all of these players have now progressed to playing in tournaments at the older age group level.*

We also have many new players, almost all of whom are new to rugby. This group has been very focused so far on building the necessary skill level to participate in tournament competition.

To date, we have worked on developing the core fundamentals of the game: ball skills, defence, balanced motion and spatial awareness. The next step will be to begin to understand positional play in rugby and what the various roles are: backs, forwards, specialist positions etc.

The message from the coaching team is very simple. Keep building on the enthusiastic start we have seen so far. The more you practice

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and master the real basics, the better the players you will become!"

We put two U10 squads out at Kituro and both teams played some excellent rugby; most importantly, everyone enjoyed themselves!



Good work from the U10s

Our less experienced players have been performing very well in training which is why the coaching team took a calculated risk in putting out a side consisting mostly of new players for this tournament. Their confidence was proved to be fully justified in terms of performance if not results. We played Kituro 1, 2 and 3 and while we lost each game 0-2, the guys played really well as a team. Rainsey stood out with some strong running (he was quickly identified by the Kituro coaches as a real attacking threat) and Nicolas Padel was outstanding in defence with a series of big hits. Ziad played well having moved up from the U8s and Oliver, Emmerich and Emile were also prominent.

More impressive than the individual performances was the way the team gelled as a unit. The results may not have gone our way this time but surely will in future.

Our second year U10s played three games against BSB, Schilde and a combined Kituro team. We love playing the BSB of course and our battle with them this time was no different. Matthew put in a great performance at scrum-half and scored the first try of the game following a trademark sniping run. It was a tight physical game, several times Celtic marched BSB back with well-executed rolling mauls and there were some fierce tackles. Max, Emily and Alexander did well in the rucks stopping several BSB attacks. Turnover ball set up a great charge from Bob and he powered over to put Celtic 2-1 ahead, a lead we held onto until the final whistle. The match was played in the right spirit, hard but fair throughout.

The Schilde match was a much more open affair, with neither team looking particularly good in defence. Some tackling practice needed Celtics! Sean is exempted from any criticism in this regard; he made a couple of try saving tackles in an all-round effort that probably made him man of the match.



Young prop Alexander leads the team

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Our attacking play was excellent and we demonstrated the virtue of running hard and straight with the ball, TomTom touching down twice and Bob getting a hat-trick. Neil, Mael and Aurelien also caught the eye in a comfortable 5-2 victory.

The final game against Kituro was a much tougher proposition. The guys did their best but the final score, 1-3 to Kituro, was fair enough. One of our new players, Beau, came on as sub and scored a try in his first tournament; well done Beau, keep up the good work.

Many thanks to our friends at Kituro for putting on such an excellent tournament. All our players did well and were a credit to the club. This bodes well for our next tournament which will be at home on 21 November. See you there!

Technical Committee

The Technical Committee meets every month or so and all parents are automatically members. Newcomers to the Club are especially encouraged to come along and make themselves known.

The last Technical Committee meeting was organised by Mr Simon Pascoe and was held at the Oktoberfest in Place Jourdan.

It was a great day out but there were some sore heads the following morning...The next Technical Committee meeting will be held in November, details to follow.

Sadly the only photograph fit for a family publication is the one opposite...



Older but no wiser...

And finally...

As you may have already noticed, the new BBRFC Celtic website is up and running! The goal of Carlos Requena (Communications Manager) was to make it as clean looking and easy to use as possible, so accessing simple information (like fees, forms, training details and fixtures) would be nothing more than a straightforward task.

Nonetheless, there are more things than just text in the website, and we can improve the content and keep it more up to date by uploading all the rugby pictures you have to the BBRFC Celtic Facebook page. They will automatically show on the website.

If are aware of the upcoming events, help maintain the calendars to keep things organised (for example on Teamer or Google Calendar).

If you have any suggestions, comments, encounter any problems or have an awesome (and recent) team picture please send an email to communications@bbrfc-celtic.be