

# BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC



22nd November 2025

Kick off 2pm

Vs  
Penryn



**Garreth Turner**  
150th appearance

**Barnstaple Buccaneers v Ilfracombe | 2pm**

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# WELCOME TO POTTINGTON ROAD

## the heart of Devon



Good afternoon, everyone, and a very warm North Devon welcome to Pottington Road! After a month away, it's fantastic to see Barnstaple Athletic back on home turf for what promises to be a truly captivating Counties 1 Tribute Western West league encounter.

We are delighted to extend a special welcome to our guests today, who have travelled across the border from Cornwall—Penryn RFC! A hearty welcome to their players, dedicated coaching staff, committee members, and all their supporters who have made the journey north. We hope you enjoy your time with us here in Barnstaple and wish you a safe trip home later.

### **The Stage is Set: Barnstaple Athletics' Season So Far**

As mentioned, it's been a month since we last saw the 'Tics here at Pottington, a wait that has felt long following that gut-wrenching defeat to Redruth II. It was a game that slipped away in the cruellest of fashions, with a late, converted try sealing a 28-31 loss in an epic clash.

This season was always expected to be a tougher campaign. With the added demands on the club from the Chiefs' success and with Athletic no longer being the unknown quantity in the

league, the challenge has been significant. So far, it has resulted in just two wins, leaving the team in 8th place. The mission now is clear: to find consistency and start climbing the table.

And encouragingly, that is precisely what we've started to see in their last two outings. First, there was a statement victory in the Devon Intermediate Cup semi-final away at Paignton—a team that had handed Athletic a heavy defeat on the opening day of the season. This time, the 'Tics turned the tables spectacularly, winning 10-40 and scoring 33 unanswered points after the 20th minute. Then, a fortnight ago, they showed immense character to secure a hard-fought draw away at Truro, with a last-minute penalty from the boot of Harvey Rostock bringing home a valuable three points. The signs are there: this team is rediscovering its purpose and fighting spirit.

### **The Opposition: A Mirror Image in Penryn**

Intriguingly, today's opponents, Penryn, have found themselves on a similar path this season. They, too, have registered just two league wins and have struggled to build momentum. However, mirroring Athletic, they arrive at Pottington Road with their own tailwind, having won their last two matches: a 38-0 cup victory over Saltash and a 40-24 league win against Torquay, both on home soil.

The parallels between these two sides are fascinating. They have scored and conceded almost identical points this season, making them incredibly evenly matched on paper. And then there's the history. Who could forget this fixture last



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season? Penryn were the architects of a stunning comeback, overturning a 22-12 half-time deficit to snatch a 29-31 victory, inflicting one of only two home defeats on Athletic all campaign.

So, the challenge for Barnstaple Athletic this afternoon is twofold: first, to continue building this newfound momentum and consistency, feeding off the confidence it brings; and second, to exact a measure of revenge for that painful home record blemish last season.

For Penryn, the task is simple: just do what they did last season. They will be confident, riding their own wave of success and knowing they have the formula to win here.

This confluence of storylines—resurgent teams, statistical twins, and a score to settle—creates the perfect ingredients for a mammoth game of rugby. It's the kind of spectacle we, as supporters, revel in, and it promises to entertain from the first whistle to the last.

Of course, the action doesn't stop here at Pottington Road. It's a huge weekend for the entire club:

The Chiefs face their toughest challenge of the season so far, travelling to face league leaders and title favourites, Camborne. We'll have more on that crucial fixture later in the programme.

The Colts were due to be in action in their rearranged game away at Exeter Athletic, unfortunately this has been called off a second time and the Buccaneers, still searching for that elusive first win, are at home against Ilfracombe.

A quick reminder that there is still time to book your place for a fantastic Christmas roast dinner on the 6th of December! For just £25 plus entry, you can enjoy a gorgeous two-course meal ahead of the Barnstaple Chiefs vs. Lymm match.

Finally, next up in your favourite rugby magazine there is some very special news regarding our Boxing Day plans.

The Chiefs enjoy a weekend off next Saturday, but it's a busy time for the rest of the club. Athletic make the journey to Saltash, while the Buccaneers have a quick bus ride to South Molton.

Our attention at home will be on Pottington Road, where the Colts host Teignmouth Colts. The action gets underway at 2 pm.

Good luck to all our teams playing this weekend and let's get behind the lads here at Pottington Road and make some noise!



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# BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC



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5 TBC  
6 TBC  
7 TBC  
8 TBC

## Bench

16 TBC  
17 TBC  
18 TBC

9 TBC  
10 TBC  
11 TBC  
12 TBC  
13 TBC  
14 TBC  
15 TBC



## Match Officials

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AR 1:

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# Barnstaple RFC

## Charity Match Announcement

Boxing Day rugby has long been a proud tradition for Barnstaple RFC, with our annual fixture against Bideford providing a highlight in the festive calendar. Unfortunately, this year Bideford RFC have, for their own reasons, withdrawn from the scheduled match.

**However, the Boxing Day spirit at Pottington Road is very much alive.**

Barnstaple RFC is delighted to announce that we will instead host a special Charity Rugby Match featuring a North Devon Hospice XV taking on an Everything Ellie XV. Both of these fantastic North Devon charities hold deep and longstanding connections with our club, and we are proud to support the incredible work they do within our community.

Join us for an afternoon of festive rugby entertainment, with bars open, food available, and musical entertainment creating the perfect Boxing Day atmosphere for supporters, families and friends. Further details about the matchday schedule, player involvement, and additional on- and off-pitch activities will be shared soon.

We look forward to welcoming you all to Barnstaple RFC this Boxing Day for a great occasion supporting two brilliant local causes.

# Barnstaple Rugby Club is supporting North Devon Hospice



When someone is diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, life for that person and for those around them is never the same again.

North Devon Hospice provides free care and support to patients and families faced with the impact of a life-limiting illness. We believe in being there for all the family.

The care provided throughout North Devon is because of the amazing generosity of our community. Together, we work towards raising over £4.9 million from scratch each year to provide this essential care to thousands of people. At North Devon Hospice, we are focusing on

developing our services so that patient care and support can be provided closer to home, meaning your support has never been more important.

The hospice is here for you, and because of you. As such we are thrilled to be the chosen charity of Barnstaple RFC for this season. Both Barum and North Devon Hospice are close to the hearts of many in our community, and as such it is very fitting that we are working in partnership.

From all the hospice team - here's to a fantastic season

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# Chiefs Prevail in Heart-Stopping Thriller Against Loughborough



Last Saturday, the green and pleasant lands of Pottington Road played host to a titanic clash that left every supporter breathless. Fresh from a dramatic, last-gasp victory the week before, the Barnstaple faithful might have hoped for a more serene afternoon. It was not to be. The Barnstaple Chiefs, true to their thrilling brand of rugby, delivered another high-octane spectacle that kept everyone on the edge of their seats until the final, decisive whistle.

From the first moments, the Chiefs laid down a formidable marker. Awarded an early penalty, they opted for the set-piece, a statement of intent that paid immediate dividends. The lineout was secured with precision, and the ensuing maul was a thing of pure power, rumbling inexorably towards the line. It was Brandon Moore who applied the finishing touch, showcasing the utter dominance of the Barnstaple pack and drawing first blood.

However, Loughborough University is not a side to be intimidated. They responded in kind just five minutes later, unleashing their talented and well-drilled back line. With sharp handling and searing pace, they sliced through to score a converted try, seizing a narrow 5-7 lead and serving notice that this would be a contest of contrasting styles.



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Thus began a captivating, end-to-end first half. The Chiefs struck next through the powerful Emosi Nadaubale, whose score was born from relentless pressure. The ever-alert Bertie Stretch pounced on a wayward Loughborough lineout, turning defence into attack with a blistering break deep into enemy territory. The ball was recycled swiftly, and Nadaubale, arriving at pace, smashed through two would-be tacklers to crash over the line.

Yet, the students remained unfazed, replying with a try of their own to keep the scoreboard ticking over. The Chiefs, however, were finding their rhythm. Sustained pressure on the Loughborough line culminated in a well-taken score for Jordan Petherbridge, marking a triumphant return to the Chiefs' fold as he dotted down in the corner. The forward dominance was then brutally reaffirmed shortly after, as the Barnstaple eight shoved their opposition backwards in a mighty scrum, allowing Brandon Moore to dot down for his second try of the day. True to the half's pattern, Loughborough had the final word before the break, leaving the Chiefs with a slender and hard-fought 24-19 lead.

Emerging for the second half, the Chiefs seemed to have found the key to victory. In a blistering twenty-minute spell, they scored two unanswered tries, stretching their lead to a seemingly comfortable 36-19. The first came from another textbook maul, with Bertie Stretch the beneficiary. The second was a testament to their forward grit, as Viliame Kotobalavu capped a series of punishing pick-and-go drives by stretching over a desperate tackler. With a 17-point cushion, the game appeared won.

Then, the momentum shifted dramatically. A penalty restart for Loughborough put the Chiefs on the back foot, and their



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composure began to fray. In a disastrous sixty-second period, they were reduced to 14 men, and then 13, with two quick yellow cards. Galvanised, Loughborough seized their opportunity, scoring the first of two converted tries to roar back into contention.

When a third yellow card was shown with just eight minutes remaining—following a period of heroic, scrambling defence from the Chiefs—Loughborough's momentum seemed unstoppable. They clawed another score back, reducing the deficit to a nerve-shredding three points. The final minutes were a cacophony of tension, with every supporter on their feet, holding their breath with each phase. But in a show of immense character, the 14 men of Barnstaple dug deep, their defence holding firm to finally win this titanic battle and secure a precious, all-five-point victory.

This was a classic game, a tale of two strengths. The Chiefs' set-piece supremacy, particularly their destructive maul and scrum, provided the platform for their victory. It was a significant blow when, with about ten minutes remaining, the match went to uncontested scrums, negating a key weapon in the Barnstaple arsenal.

While the power up front was a decisive counter-weight to Loughborough's speedy back line, the Chiefs' discipline nearly proved their undoing. After being largely exemplary for an hour, it completely deserted them in the final quarter. The succession of yellow cards offered Loughborough the daylight they needed to stage a remarkable comeback.

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In the end, it was another fabulous piece of entertainment from the Barnstaple Chiefs—a performance that blended brute force with fraying nerves. The five points were hard-earned, well-deserved, and a testament to a squad that knows how to win, even when staring into the abyss.

## **Daunting Challenge Awaits: Chiefs Face League Leaders Camborne in Cornwall Fortress**

Buoyed by their hard-fought victory, the Barnstaple Chiefs must now regroup and focus on one of the most formidable challenges in National League 2 West: a trip to the home of the league leaders, Camborne. This weekend's fixture is a classic top-of-the-table clash, laden with opportunity and peril in equal measure.

Until last Saturday, Camborne's season had been one of relentless, unblemished success. However, the rugby world was set alight when Taunton Titans delivered a stunning upset, edging the title favourites 30-29 in a heart-stopping finale. The victory was sealed in the most dramatic fashion imaginable, with a missed conversion by Camborne in the dying seconds shattering their perfect record and injecting a fresh dose of unpredictability into the title race.

While that result will have given hope to every chasing team, the task facing the Chiefs remains immense. Camborne's home ground, the Recreation Ground, is a veritable fortress. They are undefeated on their own turf not just for this entire season, but throughout the last campaign as well. This formidable record poses an almighty challenge for any visiting side, and the Chiefs

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will need to produce a performance of immense quality and character to breach its walls.

This encounter marks the first time these two clubs have met in National 2, adding a new chapter to their history. While they have clashed in lower leagues before—the last being a Chiefs victory back in April 2020—both squads have been utterly transformed since then. They are now completely different beasts, operating at a higher level with new players, coaches, and ambitions.

The stakes could not be higher. Camborne's shock defeat has blown the title race wide open, with just five points now separating the top three teams. Luctonians sit sandwiched between Camborne and Barnstaple. Every point from this fixture is therefore precious.

The goal for Barnstaple is clear: to emerge from the cauldron of Camborne with at least a losing bonus point, or perhaps even more. To achieve this, they will need to marshal all the discipline that eluded them in the final quarter against Loughborough and tap into deep reserves of strength. The set-piece dominance that has been their hallmark will be critical, but so will a watertight defence and clinical finishing.

Harking back to that last victory in 2020, a Winston James hat-trick and a superb defensive display laid the platform for a memorable 19-48 win on Camborne's soil. While the faces have changed, the blueprint for success remains similar: stifle the home side's attack, dominate the physical battles, and take every scoring opportunity.

Can history repeat itself? A similarly exceptional performance this weekend could truly upset the applecart and send a shockwave through the league, proving that the Chiefs are genuine contenders. It is a monumental task, but one this resilient Barnstaple side is capable of achieving.

We will keep you updated as best we can throughout what promises to be a fiercely contested and pivotal 80 minutes of rugby.

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# Buccaneers prepare for biggest game of the season



The Barnstaple Buccaneers set their sights on a monumental challenge this Saturday as they welcome the undefeated league leaders, Ilfracombe, to Pottington Road for a 2pm kick-off.

For the young Bucc's, this season has been a story of frustration and growth. As a new and developing squad finding their feet in the competitive Devon Merit Table, that elusive first victory has remained just out of reach. This weekend, however, presents an opportunity to rewrite the narrative in spectacular fashion.

Standing in their way is a formidable Ilfracombe side that has been in devastating form. Sitting proudly at the top of the league, they are yet to taste defeat after six games, amassing a staggering 219 points. Their credentials are proven with hard-fought victories, including a nail-biting 13-15 win away at third-place South Molton and a commanding 44-22 triumph over their nearest rivals, Bideford.

The scale of the challenge is immense, but therein lies the opportunity. For the Bucc's to pull off what would be the upset of the season, they must be impeccably drilled, disciplined for the full eighty minutes,, and, most importantly, believe in their own ability. If they can harness their potential and rise to the occasion, Pottington Road could witness something very special indeed.

# BARNSTAPLE BUCCANEERS



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# BARNSTAPLE RUGBY 2025/26



**NOV 29TH - 2PM**

**DEVON COLTS MERIT TABLE**

**BARNSTAPLE COLTS  
VS TEIGNMOUTH COLTS**

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**DEC 6TH - 2PM**

**NATIONAL 2 WEST**

**BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS  
VS LYMM**

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**DEC 20TH - 2PM**

**NATIONAL 2 WEST**

**BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS  
VS EXETER UNI**

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**JAN 17TH - 2PM**

**NATIONAL 2 WEST**

**BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS  
VS TAUNTON**

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**JAN 24TH - 2PM**

**COUNTIES 1 WESTERN WEST**

**BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC  
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SATURDAY 29TH NOVEMBER | 2PM**