

# BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS



28th February 2026

Kick off 2pm

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## A Tribute to Geoff Watts

It is with profound sadness that all at Barnstaple Rugby Football Club announce the passing of our beloved friend and colleague, Geoff Watts, who passed away peacefully last Tuesday evening at the age of 85.

Geoff's story is woven into the very fabric of Barnstaple RFC. Following proudly in the footsteps of his father before him, Geoff pulled on the famous club jersey as a talented and tenacious player during the 1960s and 70s. Plying his trade in the heart of the pack.



When his final whistle blew on the pitch, Geoff transitioned from player to pillar of the club, serving for many years as a hugely respected and dedicated committee member. His steady hand and sharp mind were perhaps most valued during his tenure as Club Treasurer, a role he carried out with unwavering diligence and integrity. A lifelong and enthusiastic supporter, Geoff was a constant, reassuring presence; a true gentleman who touched everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Geoff will be deeply and sorely missed by all at Barnstaple RFC. Our thoughts, love, and deepest sympathies are with his devoted wife, Julie; his daughters, Lou and Chantal; and all his family and friends at this incredibly sad time.

In honour of Geoff's immense contribution to our club and the sport he loved, we invite all players, members, and supporters to join in a minute of heartfelt applause prior to kick-off to celebrate the life of a true Barum legend.

Rest easy, Geoff. Your legacy lives on in every corner of this club.

# WELCOME TO **POTTINGTON ROAD**

## The Heart of Devon



Good afternoon and a very warm welcome to Pottington Road for what promises to be another thrilling afternoon of rugby here at Barnstaple Rugby Club. We are absolutely delighted to bring you this massive National 2 West League fixture, as the Barnstaple Chiefs prepare to take on Redruth in what is shaping up to be a pivotal clash for both sides.

We extend a warm welcome to thier players, coaching staff, committee members, and all the supporters who have made the journey across the border from Cornwall to join us here in North Devon. We hope you enjoy the fierce competition, the camaraderie, and the warm hospitality that our club is known for, and that you have an enjoyable day at Barnstaple

Today's match is proudly sponsored by one of our most loyal and long-standing partners: Webbers Estate Agents. Your continued support is the bedrock of our club; it enables us to compete at these heights and fosters the incredible community spirit we enjoy today. From everyone at Barnstaple Rugby Club, thank you very much.

### **Action Elsewhere at the Club**

Before we turn our full attention to the main event, there is another crucial fixture taking place just alongside us on the second pitch. Barnstaple Athletic are hosting Truro in another



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crunch Counties 1 Wester West league match hoping to secure their fourth straight win, kick off is 2pm.

## **What's On the Horizon**

Before we dive into today's team sheets and tactics, here are a few important dates and events coming up over the next few months here at Barnstaple RFC:

We are still awaiting a date for Barnstaple Athletics Devon Intermediate cup final against Okehampton. All we do know currently is that it will still be held here at Pottington Road, when we get a date you will be the first to know.

## **Six Nations in the Clubhouse**

We'll be showing every single one of England's matches live in the clubhouse, alongside the best of the remaining Six Nations fixtures on Saturdays. Full details are on the poster below, come down, bring friends, and enjoy the rugby on the big screen, supplied kindly by HBH Woolacotts, visit their new store at Brannams Retail Park, Roundswell for all your entertainment and appliance needs. Visit their website at:-

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## **Ladies' Day – Saturday 21st March**

One of the standout dates in our social calendar returns as the Chiefs take on current league leaders Camborne. Tickets are almost completely sold out, but there are very limited number still available. Tickets are priced at £28. For any enquiries regarding availability, please email Rhiane Easton directly at

[rhiane.easton@gmail.com](mailto:rhiane.easton@gmail.com)

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FEB 21ST

**BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC V ST. IVES (SW) 2PM**

**ENGLAND V IRELAND 2:10PM**

**WALES V SCOTLAND 4:40PM**

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## **End of Season Dinner – Saturday 9th May**

Our popular End of Season Dinner returns, following the same successful format as last year. Further details will be released closer to the time, but for now, simply mark the date in your diaries and keep it free.

## **County Championship – Saturday 23rd May 2026**

We are absolutely delighted to confirm that Barnstaple will host Devon Senior Men as they take on Gloucestershire in the County Championship. Kick-off is at 2:30pm, and Devon will be aiming to make it three consecutive years at Twickenham. Further details to follow, but this is another massive occasion for the club and the county.

## **What a Game We Have in Store!**

Back in November, you'll remember the sheer drama that unfolded at the Recreation Ground. The Chiefs travelled to Redruth and produced one of the most sensational finishes in recent memory.

Trailing 19-12 at the break, a titanic second-half battle ensued. With just fifteen minutes left, Henry Sellick crashed over to bring us within two points. Then, with ten minutes to play, Redruth seemed to have sealed it with a converted try, extending their lead to 26-17. It looked as though the Chiefs' only reward would be a losing bonus point. But this team never knows when it's beaten. In a jaw-dropping finale, first Brendan Darley and then Ryan Lee crossed the whitewash in the final two minutes,



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snatching a dramatic 26-27 victory from the jaws of defeat. It was the kind of game that reminds us why we love this sport.

## **Since That Day: The Fortunes So Far**

Since that epic encounter, both clubs have followed remarkably similar paths. Redruth have claimed three victories, while the Chiefs have edged ahead with four. Both sides suffered the agony of last-minute home defeats to the high-flying Taunton Titans, both were well beaten on the road at Chester, and both secured comfortable home wins against Exeter University. Looking at recent form, there really is very little to choose between these two clubs.

However, that fine margin on the pitch hasn't translated to the league table. The Chiefs are sitting pretty in 5th place, a full nine points clear of a Redruth side currently occupying 10th position. But the table doesn't tell the whole story of the pressure in this game. With the Cornish side sitting just ten points above the bottom three, and smarting from a crucial loss to Taunton last weekend, their position has become increasingly precarious.

This isn't just about avenging November's heartbreak for them; this is a full-blown survival battle. They will view this game as a must-win, and they will arrive at Pottington Road with a fiercely focused mindset.

## **A Clash of Histories and Ambitions**

History heavily favors the visitors; Redruth have won eight of the ten previous encounters between these two storied clubs. But in a relegation battle and a push for the top six, history means nothing—it is the present that counts. For Redruth, the present

is about survival and revenge. For the Chiefs, the objective is clear: to consolidate that 5th-place position and secure a top-six finish. That ambition demands one thing above all else—no more slip-ups on home soil.

To achieve that today, Barnstaple will need to be at their absolute best. They must wipe away the memory of last weekend's challenging trip to Chester and laser-focus on the here and now. The forwards need to dominate the set-piece, the backs need to be clinical, and the entire team needs to match Redruth's desperation with composure and fire.

So, settle in, raise your voices, and prepare for what could be the game of the season so far. Be our sixteenth man, get behind the Chiefs, and let's roar them over that winning line.



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# BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS



## TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT

- 1 GEORGE SNELL**  
*SOLAR PV TECH*
- 2 BERTIE STRETCH**  
*AR COMPLETE SCAFFOLDING*
- 3 CALLUM DAVIES**  
*M & V ESCAPES*
- 4 BEN HILTON**
- 5 BRENDAN DARLEY**  
*WEST DOWN ESTATES*
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3. JESS TOMPSETT
4. LUKE HATTAM
5. ED PASCOE (C)
6. CONNOR TRIGGS
7. SAM STEVENS
8. CHRIS ROVERY

9. ADAM HALL
10. NAT DART
11. NOAH CLIFFORD
12. SAM JAMES
13. JACK SIMMONS
14. LEWIS THOMAS
15. LUKE JONSON

## Replacements

16. TOM COWAN-DICKIE
17. JLUKE BARNES
18. KAIDEN CARNE
19. JOHN STEVENS
20. MATT BONDS



## Match Officials

**REF: Tom Evans-Jones**

**AR 1: Andrew Green**

**AR 2: Mark Summerhayes**

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# Chiefs Suffer Defeat on the Road as they drop to fifth in the league

It was a long and ultimately fruitless journey for Barnstaple Chiefs as they made the 250-mile trip to the North West to face Chester in their latest National 2 West encounter.



Historically, the Chiefs have found life difficult away from the comforts of Pottington Road, and Saturday's fixture did little to change that narrative. Despite a spirited first-half display that hinted at a possible change in fortune, a dominant second-half virtual shutout from the home side left the Chiefs empty-handed, with a late consolation try proving too little, too late.

For the opening 40 minutes, it looked as though the script might finally be rewritten. Chester drew first blood after 15 minutes, but the Chiefs responded in trademark fashion. Following a well-executed five-metre lineout, the formidable Barnstaple maul went to work, rumbling over the try line for Bertie Stretch to crash down and score. Henry Sellick added the extras, nudging the Chiefs into a narrow 7-5 lead.

The remainder of the first half developed into a fierce arm-wrestle, with both sides trading blows. Chester hit back to regain the advantage, but the Chiefs refused to buckle. In the dying moments of the half, the visitors produced a carbon copy of their earlier score—another devastating maul from a lineout saw Stretch emerge from the pile of bodies once again to dot down. With Sellick converting, Barnstaple turned around at the break

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with a slender 10-12 lead and genuine belief that they could finally banish their travel demons.

Unfortunately, the second half failed to follow the same script. Chester seized control of the tightly contested affair, piling on 17 unanswered points to build a commanding 27-12 lead. The Chiefs found themselves pinned back, and their cause was not helped by two yellow cards for technical offences—a clear sign of the mounting pressure they were under. To their credit, Barnstaple never stopped fighting, and in the final minute, they finally breached the Chester line again. Camped on the home side's try line, a series of relentless pick-and-goes saw Sam Vickery burrow through the bodies to score, but it was merely a consolation as the Chiefs returned to Devon without a single point to show for their efforts.

The defeat has seen Barnstaple slip to fifth in the table, following Taunton's dramatic last-gasp victory at Redruth, which allowed them to leapfrog the Chiefs. That result makes today's fixture at home against Redruth absolutely pivotal. With just six games remaining, securing a top-six finish would be a remarkable achievement for the club, and a win against the Reds at Pottington Road is essential to steady the ship.

Looking ahead, next weekend offers a valuable rest week, providing a window to nurse injuries and work towards the dream of a fully fit squad for the final run-in. That campaign resumes on March 14th with yet another mammoth journey—this time a slightly shorter 220-mile trip up the M5 to the Midlands to face Loughborough Students.

Then, on March 21st, the league leaders and title favourites, Camborne, make the long trek to Pottington Road. Having already upset the odds against Luctonians earlier in the season, the Chiefs will be desperate to spoil another promotion party. It's a fixture that promises drama, intensity, and a true test of Barnstaple's character—one that no supporter will want to miss.

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## Deadly Finishing and Tactical Masterclass Secure Dominant Victory for Athletic

Barnstaple Athletic marched onto the main pitch at Pottington Road last Saturday brimming with confidence.



Having rediscovered their winning formula in the previous two fixtures and proving they can sustain a commanding performance for a full eighty minutes, they were in a place they prefer to be. That momentum was not only maintained but spectacularly amplified, as they delivered a demolition job on a St. Ives side desperately searching for their own early-season form.

This time, the spotlight belonged to the wingers, who ran in five of Athletic's eight tries in a breathtaking display of finishing. The scoring was ignited within the first twenty minutes by Joe Hastie, who claimed an impressive opening brace. His first try was a masterpiece of angles, cutting a lovely inside line through the centre of the park after collecting a perfectly timed pass from Kyran McManus, breaking a tackle with purpose to score, with McManus adding the conversion.

Just ten minutes later, Hastie showcased his more traditional winger's instincts. New scrum-half Mitch Selby fired a beautifully flat pass to a sprinting Hastie, who had the momentum to race down the touchline from the 10-metre line, shrugging off a couple of attempted tackles to brilliantly touch down in the corner.

With fifteen minutes gone in the half, the other winger, Jack Barrow, decided it was his turn to join the party. A superb grubber

kick from Kyran McManus sliced open the St. Ives defence, and Barrow's electrifying pace allowed him to outstrip the covering opposition and dot the ball down in the corner. Then, with just three minutes left until the interval, Tom Swales took full advantage of the space created by Athletic's relentless pressure to crash over. He was followed almost immediately by Jack Barrow's second, a moment of individual brilliance where he took the ball on the opposition's 10-metre line, spotted a gap between two defenders in the heart of the pitch, and accelerated through it to score untouched under the posts. Euan Kent, who had taken over the kicking duties, slotted his third conversion of the half, capping a phenomenal first forty minutes where Athletic piled on 33 unanswered points, laying a formidable platform for the second half.

However, St. Ives showed resilience and prevented a complete shutout, scoring their first of two tries just minutes after the restart. But the response from Athletic was immediate. Luke Knight, faced with a prop forward from five metres out, used his quick footwork and experience to glide past his opposite number and ground the ball. After St. Ives managed their second score, Athletic saved the best for last, sealing a fantastic display with two tries in the final five minutes. Ollie James powered over in more traditional Barnstaple fashion, following several phases of relentless pick-and-go drives. Then, to cap a brilliant day for the young winger, Jack Barrow completed his hat-trick, once again unleashing his searing pace down the right flank to score in the corner, rounding out a comprehensive and comfortable 50-12 victory.

This was, without a doubt, the most complete performance I have witnessed from Athletic this season. Right from the opening whistle, with the wind at their backs, Tom Swales and Kyran

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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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McManus exerted complete control. They delivered a masterclass in tactical kicking, pinning St. Ives inside their own twenty-two for the vast majority of the first half and creating endless opportunities to choke the life out of the visitors' defence. The ball retention was excellent, and the distribution was sharp and incisive.

A special mention must go to the new scrum-half, Mitch Sibley. The 18-year-old, who has joined us from Bude, is an absolute firecracker. Full of boundless energy, exceptional skill, and, most importantly, a clear desire for the game, he is an absolute joy to watch. Defensively, the team was again spot on, with St. Ives rarely threatening to enter the Tics' twenty-two. For the supporters who chose to watch this performance rather than endure the national side's debacle, they were treated to a fantastic display of committed, high-quality rugby.

This emphatic victory has propelled Barnstaple Athletic up to third place in the league standings, although both Kingsbridge and today's upcoming opponents, Truro, hold games in hand over the Tics.

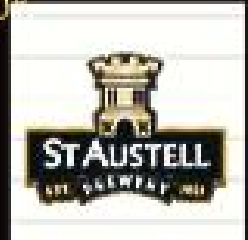
That sets the stage for a fascinating challenge this weekend on the second pitch. Can Athletic maintain their incredible momentum and halt Truro's own ambitions to reclaim that third spot? If they do it will be with 8 senior Colts in the side seven of whom are from Barnstaple, another example of the phenomenal pipeline of talent we have here at Barum. The question is whether they can forge another full eighty minutes of high-intensity rugby. The momentum is undeniably with the Tics; they simply need to continue doing exactly what they are doing now.



To see the full set of photos taken on the day click the link below  
[Barnstaple Athletic v St. Ives \(sw\) photos](#)



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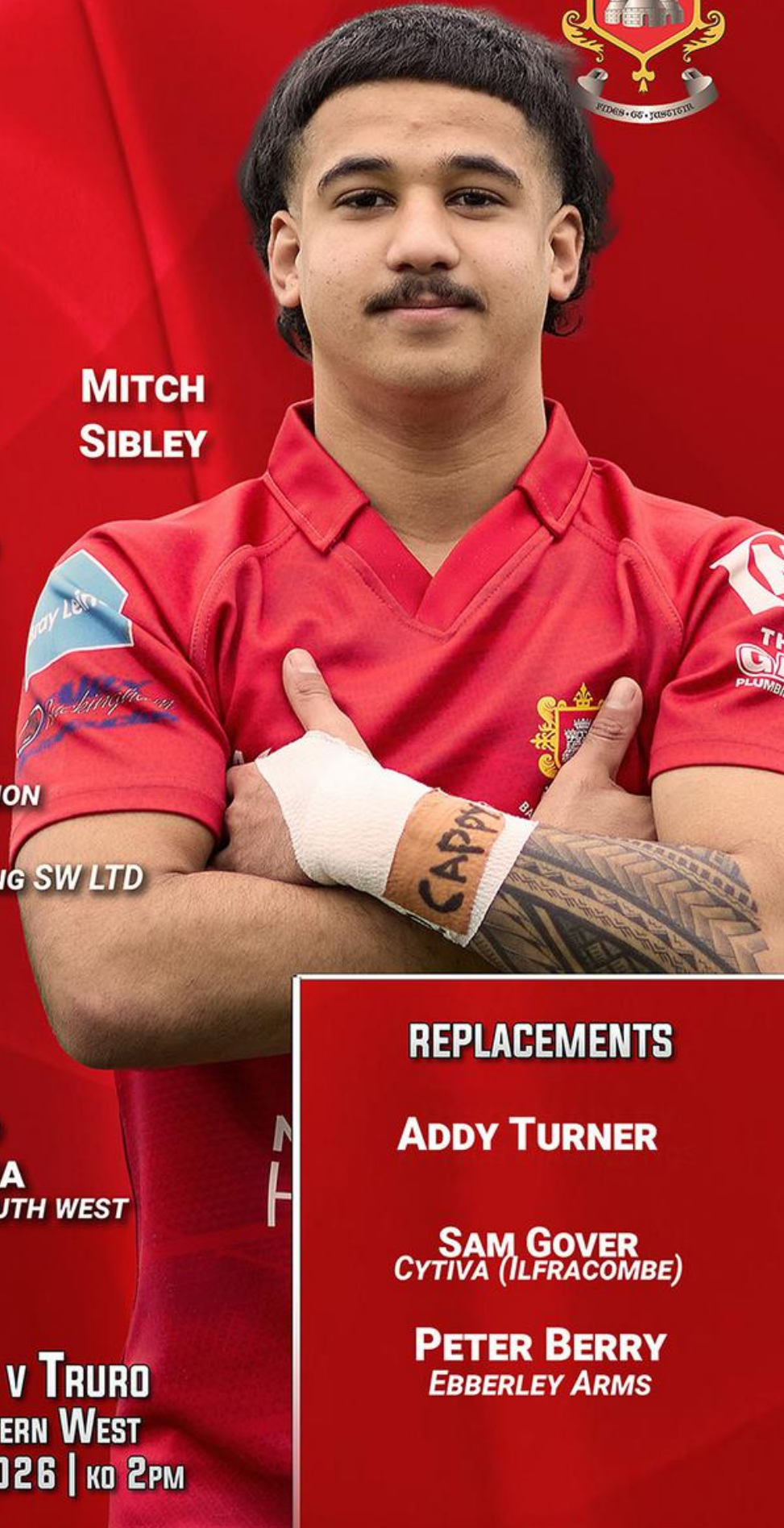
# BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC



## TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT

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*FYREX*
- 2 GARRETH TURNER**  
*PLAN A SCAFFOLDING*
- 3 RHYS HADLEY**  
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*PAIGES LANE BARBERS*
- 9 MITCH SIBLEY**  
*WINSTON JAMES CONSTRUCTION*
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**POTTINGTON ROAD, FEB 28TH 2026 | KO 2PM**

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# **Buccaneers frustrations continue as Colts finally get a game at Ivybridge**



After nearly two months without a game, the Buccaneers hoped to finally get some playing time with a merit table clash at Exmouth, unfortunately a waterlogged pitch denied them, or so they were led to believe.

With no game this weekend the frustrations continue as they do for next weekend when the Bucc's were meant to compete in the Devon Merit table against Brixham, however Brixham apparently didn't want to do the journey and have gifted the Bucc's the five points, that doesn't however compensate for getting some competitive game time.

At the time of writing the Bucc's next game is here at Pottington Road as they welcome Topsham II for a 2pm kickoff on March 14th.

Better news for the Colts who beat Ivybridge in a friendly last weekend 10-24 at Ivybridge. A much needed workout against a quality opponent which will stand them in goodstead as they have a home quaterfinal match in the Devon RFU cup next Saturday against Paignton here at Pottington Road Kick off for that match is 2pm.

With the weather finally getting better lets hope that both these sides seesome competitive action over the coming weeks.



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## **TEAM MANAGERS**

**VERITY WHITE**      **DARREL GILL**      **DEAN DAVIES**  
*LYNTON PACK*      *RGP ARCHITECTS*      *LYNTON PACK*

**JENNY BEER**      **EMMA SMITH**      **JAMES HUDSON**  
*WINDSOR ARMS*      *TARKA CLINIC*

## **PHYSIO / FIRST AIDER**

**RICHARD FLEMMING**      **JESS ROGERS**

**ESME RAISTRICK**      **DONNA KNIGHT**  
*TARKA CLINIC*      *TARKA CLINIC*

---

**BUCC'S**      **CALLUM JOSSELYN**      **TOM CROKER**  
**STAFF**      *OLD VAULT*      *BARBER 32*

**PHYSIO /**      **NICOLA NEWMAN**      **CARRIS GAMMON**  
**FIRST AIDER**      *TARKA CLINIC*      *TARKA CLINIC*

# BARNSTAPLE RUGBY 2025/26



**MARCH 7TH 2PM**  
QUATER-FINAL DEVON RFU CUP  
**BARNSTAPLE COLTS**  
**VS PAIGNTON COLTS**

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**MARCH 14TH - 2PM**  
DEVON RFU MERIT TABLE  
**BARNSTAPLE BUCCANEERS**  
**VS TOPSHAM II**

---

**MAR 21ST - 2PM**  
NATIONAL 2 WEST  
**BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS**  
**VS CAMBORNE**

---

**MAR 28TH 2PM**  
WOODEN SPOON DEVON VETERANS' LEAGUE  
**BARNSTAPLE VETS**  
**VS OKEHAMPTON VETS**

---

**APRIL 11TH - 2.30PM**  
COUNTIES 1 WESTERN WEST  
**BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC**  
**VS KINGSBRIDGE**

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**Pottington Rd, Barnstaple EX31 1JH**  
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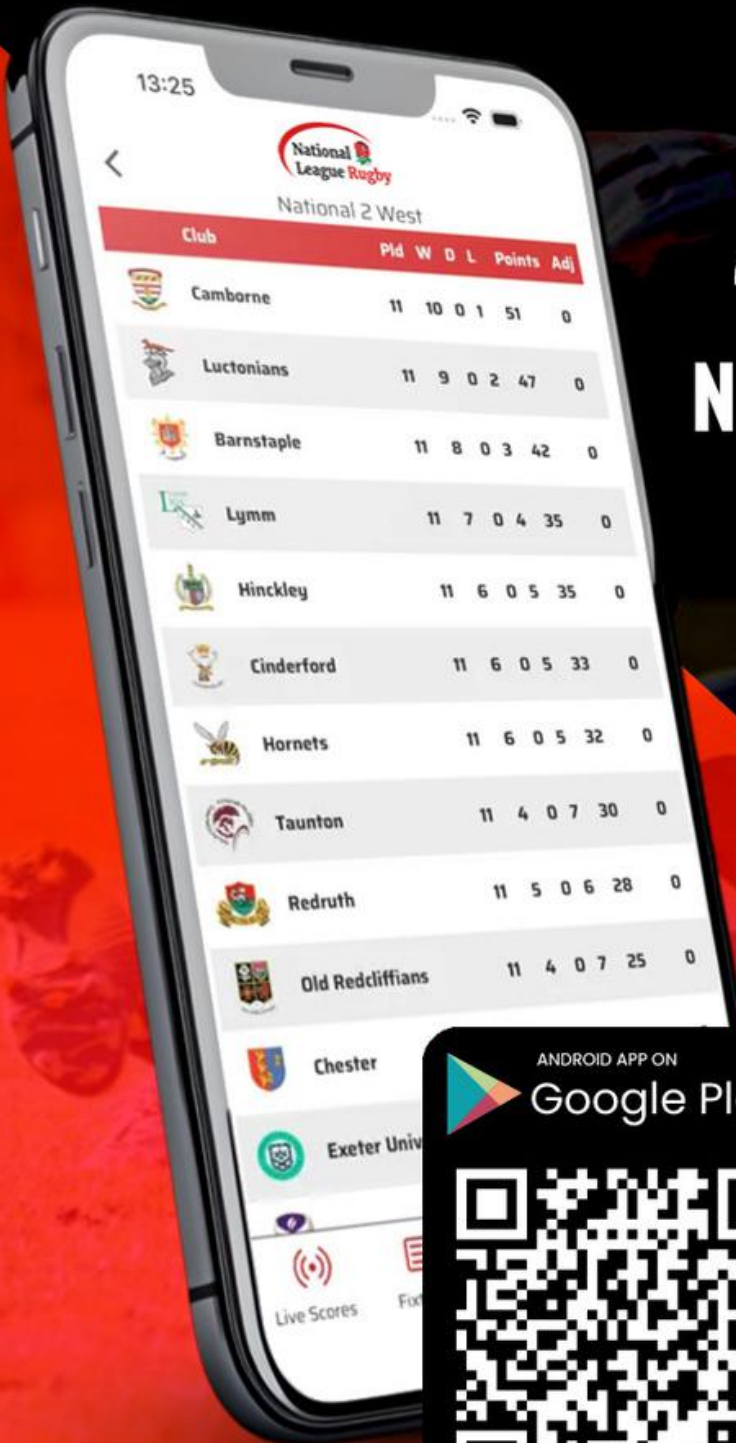
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	Club	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	PD	TBP	LBP	Points	Adj
	Camborne	20	19	0	1	852	453	399	17	1	94	0
	Luctonians	20	16	0	4	618	381	237	15	2	81	0
	Hinckley	19	12	0	7	662	538	124	16	2	66	0
	Taunton	19	10	0	9	607	536	71	13	8	61	0
	Barnstaple	20	11	0	9	547	582	-35	15	1	60	0
	Hornets	20	11	0	9	566	546	20	12	2	58	0
	Cinderford	20	10	0	10	563	537	26	13	5	58	0
	Old Redcliffians	20	9	0	11	537	580	-43	12	4	52	0
	Chester	20	8	1	11	554	684	-130	13	4	51	0
	Redruth	20	8	0	12	531	546	-15	13	6	51	0
	Lymm	20	9	0	11	570	638	-68	11	2	49	0
	Exeter University	20	7	0	13	644	719	-75	12	1	41	0
	Loughborough Students	20	5	1	14	593	756	-163	14	4	40	0
	Syston	20	3	0	17	446	794	-348	9	2	23	0



# **BARNSTAPLE COLTS**



# **PAIGNTON COLTS**

**DEVON RFU COLTS CUP QUATER FINAL**  
**SATURDAY 7TH MARCH 2026 | 2PM**