

BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS



17th January 2026
Kick off 2pm

Vs
Taunton
Titans

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WELCOME TO POTTINGTON ROAD

The Heart of Devon



Good afternoon, everyone, and a very warm welcome to Pottington Road for another thrilling National 2 West fixture!

We are delighted to be sponsored today by our very good friends and long-time supporters of Barnstaple Rugby: Hatchmoor Nursing and Barry Hews Automotive Services Ltd. Your ongoing support and dedication are absolutely vital to our club. It is because of partners like you that Saturdays here at Pottington Road feel so special, so on behalf of everyone at the club—thank you.

We also would like to welcome two further companies who are here to dine with us prior to kick-off, Dryrobe and Toyota. We hope you both leave today having seen a fantastic game of rugby and enjoyed your day with us.

Today, we remember Paul Harris, following the sad news of his passing. Paul played rugby for Crediton throughout the 60s, 70s, and 80s, before dedicating 35 years of service to the Devon RFU. He is fondly remembered by all who knew him.

We will also honour the memory of John Dallyn, who sadly passed away on Sunday, aged 91. John was a prominent player for Barnstaple over many years and remained a steadfast supporter in later life.

Barnstaple Rugby extends its deepest sympathies to the family and friends of both Paul and John, may they rest in peace. There will be a minute's applause before kick-off in their memory.

We have an absolute blinder of a match in store for you today! Your Barnstaple Chiefs are ready to take on this weekend's visitors: Taunton Titans. We'd like to extend a huge Barum welcome to their players, coaching staff, committee members, and every one of their supporters who has made the journey here today. We know this is going to be a fiercely competitive encounter

In addition we also have Barnstaple Athletic on the other pitch who begin a four game sequence of home matches starting today with Torquay Athletic who we also welcome to North Devon and hope you have a great time at our venue, and then culminates with the Devon Intermediate Cup Final against Okehampton on February 7th. Their match today starts at the earlier time of 1.30pm

In between these fixtures are two further Counties 1 Western West vitally important matches that will define how Athletic's season will evolve.

Looking ahead to February the 7th, Pottington Road will host the Devon Intermediate Cup Final. Barnstaple Athletic will face off against Okehampton right here on home soil, with kick-off at 2:00 PM. This is a massive, massive game for the Tic's in their first ever entry into this competition, and we need every voice in the house to be the 16th man for the Athletic. Mark your calendars—you will not want to miss this cup final showdown!



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Before we turn our attention to the action on the pitch, just an update from Boxing Day! Our charity match was a huge, huge success, raising in excess of £8,500 for two incredible causes: North Devon Hospice and Everything Ellie. We were overwhelmed by the support—a massive crowd came through the gates, fantastic fun was had by all, and the feedback from everyone involved has been so wonderfully positive.

A massive well done and thank you to everyone who helped organise and run the day, and to every single one of you supporters who came down and made it such a special and impactful occasion.

But for now, let's turn our full attention to the main event today. Yes... what a game this one promises to be!

The historical ledger between these two clubs leans decisively in Taunton's favour. Across ten meetings, the Titans have claimed eight victories to Barnstaple's two. Those two Chief triumphs, however, are memorable landmarks. The first broke Taunton's dominance during Barnstaple's inaugural season in National 2 at Pottington Road. In a tense, wire-to-wire battle, Barnstaple rallied with 10 unanswered second-half points.

The clinching moment came with just five minutes remaining, as JP slotted a penalty to seal a dramatic 22-19 victory.

The second—and most significant—came this very season in September. The Chiefs journeyed to Taunton and, in a high-octane, big-scoring affair, finally conquered the Titans on their home turf, emerging 34-41 winners. That result was more than a win; it was a statement. Since that landmark day, Barnstaple's campaign has soared from strength to strength. They have amassed 10 wins in total, boasting a perfect 100% home record that has propelled them to 3rd place in the table.

In contrast, Taunton has struggled to find consistent form by their own high standards. With just six wins, they currently occupy 6th place, though recent signs suggest a resurgence. The Titans have won three of their last five, including a stunning 30-29 victory over league favourites Camborne—handing them their only loss of the season.

Barnstaple, however, have hit a bump in the road, losing three of their last five fixtures—all away from home. This contrast sets the stage for an intensely intriguing clash.





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The narrative is rich with motivation: Taunton, seeking revenge and their first away win of the season, while Barnstaple aim to secure a historic first-ever league double over the Titans and fiercely protect their formidable home fortress. It is a thunderous prospect, a pivotal fixture where momentum, pride, and league positioning collide. If ever there was a day for the Chiefs to harness the full, roaring power of their 16th man, today is that day.

To all our wonderful home supporters: thank you for packing the stands and bringing the noise. To our visitors: we hope you enjoy your time here in beautiful North Devon and experience the famous hospitality of our club. May the best team win, but above all, let's all enjoy a fantastic afternoon of rugby!



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5. Tom Bradner
6. Ben Rogers
7. Archie Spokes
8. Ratu Vakalutukali
9. Scott Gibson
10. Tom Putt
11. Jay Toogood
12. Dan Martin
13. Nick Mason
14. Matt Whitlock
15. Reece Malone

Replacements

16. George Gosling
17. Elvis Taione
18. Alex Long
19. Joe Elsworth
20. Ben Heath



Match Officials

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AR 1: Dave Philpot

AR 2: Mark Summerhayes

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Chiefs Show Fortitude in Defeat at Unbeaten Hornets Fortress



Barnstaple began 2026 with one of the season's most formidable challenges: a trip to face the unbeaten-at-home Hornets. The hosts' formidable home record, coupled with the advantage of their synthetic pitch, presented a daunting task. The Chiefs battled valiantly but were ultimately overcome, securing a try-scoring bonus point in a 41-24 defeat.

The start was far from ideal for the visitors, as Hornets capitalised swiftly, crossing for two converted tries within the opening ten minutes to seize early control. To their immense credit, Barnstaple weathered the storm and mounted a superb response. Tries from Bertie Stretch and Brandon Moore—the first of what would become a memorable hat-trick—both converted, saw the Chiefs fight back to parity. The sides went into the break level at 14-14, with Barnstaple rueing two near-misses where the ball was adjudged held up over the line.

The second half, however, saw the home side's pitch familiarity come to the fore. Hornets struck decisively in the third quarter, adding ten points in ten minutes to establish a 24-14 lead.

Demonstrating their resilience, the Chiefs hit back again through a second try from Brandon Moore, narrowing the deficit to 24-19. A crucial converted try from Hornets extended their lead as the game entered the final ten minutes, but Barnstaple refused to

surrender. Moore completed his outstanding hat-trick, closing the gap once more to 31-24 and setting up a grandstand finish with two potential bonus points secured and a draw within reach.

In their pursuit of that final, game-tying score, however, the Chiefs were inevitably stretched. The Hornets exploited the space to add a late penalty and a converted try in the dying minutes, confirming their victory and limiting Barnstaple to a single bonus point.

It was a tough afternoon, yet one filled with character. The Chiefs showed tremendous spirit to recover from a poor start and push an unbeaten home side to the final moments. While the chase for a draw proved a step too far, emerging from such a fortress with a hard-earned point provides a solid platform upon which to build for the remainder of the season.



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The Barnstaple Buccaneers are thrilled to announce a powerful new partnership with two leading local businesses: **M&E Alarms**, your experts in security and peace of mind, and **Jolly Tales Boarding & Daycare**, providing a happy home-away-from-home for your pets.

Thanks to their generous joint sponsorship, every Buccaneer player has been equipped with a state-of-the-art Dryrobe® changing robe. This premium kit is a game-changer for our squad, offering essential warmth, comfort, and quick changes during training sessions and competitions, no matter what the British weather throws our way.

This investment goes beyond just clothing; it's a boost to team morale, professionalism, and performance. We are immensely grateful to M&E Alarms and Jolly Tales for believing in our crew and helping us sail further in style and comfort. On behalf of the entire Buccaneers fleet—thank you!



From Left to Right Bucc's team manager Callum Josselyn. M&E Alarms Tracey and Kayleigh Masters, Players Brad Down and Tom Yeo modeling the new Dryrobes Jolly Tales Sue Dallyn and Bucc's team manager Tom Croker

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A Habit of Narrow Losses: Can Athletic Find Their Killer Instinct?



Barnstaple Athletic entered 2026 acutely aware that the month of January would define their season. The schedule presents a golden opportunity: a single away fixture followed by a crucial trio of home league games against sides in their own competitive orbit. This homestand is the perfect opportunity to build momentum for the season's pinnacle event—a Devon Intermediate Cup Final on February 7th at their Pottington Road fortress against Okehampton. To launch this pivotal phase, a strong start was non-negotiable.

Their campaign resumed with a trip south to face Plymstock Oaks, a side they had dismantled 57-7 at home earlier in the season. Confidence within the Athletic camp would have been high, viewing this as the ideal springboard to set the stage for the four consecutive home games that awaited.

Initially, the script followed form. The first half was a showcase of Athletic's attacking intent. They dominated possession and territory, crossing the try line four times before the break through Tom Swales, Chris Philpot, Joe Hastie, and Max Moore—securing the try bonus point within 40 minutes, although the four missed conversions would come back to haunt them.

That door was blown open in the second half. A revitalized Plymstock seized control, orchestrating a stunning 19-point onslaught to surge into a 29-20 lead as the clock wound down. Athletic, facing a third consecutive loss, found a late spark.

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A 77th-minute try from Harrison Greenslade, converted by Hayden Gosling, set up a grandstand finish at 29-27. But it was too little, too late. Plymstock held firm for their fifth win, condemning Athletic to a third straight defeat—each by a margin of three points or less.

Acute frustration for Athletic as Plymstock' became the third team to snatch a win from what looked a defeated position. Whilst the two bonus points earned is reward for their endeavours, this pattern has become a worrying hallmark; in each of these narrow losses, including a heartbreaker against Wiveliscombe where they conceded the winning try on the game's final play, Athletic have failed to clinically close out matches they largely dominated. The lesson is stark: they must develop a decisive, game-killing edge and deny opponents even a sniff of their line in critical moments.

The question now is whether 2026 will mark the turning point where Athletic learn to finish. They have the perfect laboratory to find out. Three consecutive home league games offer a chance to rebuild confidence and forge a winning mentality before the cup final spotlight arrives. It begins today against Torquay Athletic, a team sitting one place below them in ninth. The visitors arrive with five wins to their name, including a commanding 31-7 victory over Barnstaple in their previous encounter.

Thus, today's match is layered with motivation: league positioning, immediate redemption, and the urgent need to arrest a skid. To get their defining month back on track, Barnstaple Athletic must produce their most complete performance of the season. It's time to stop being the nearly-men and start becoming the closers they need to be.

BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC



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BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC v TORQUAY ATHLETIC
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POTTINGTON ROAD, JAN 17TH 2026 | KO 1.30PM

Buccaneers Aim to Regain Momentum, Rebuild Winning Streak



After a frustrating, month-long hiatus, the Buccaneers are finally poised to return to the pitch. Their momentum came to a jarring halt on December 13th with a narrow 27-24 away defeat to Ilfracombe—an agonizing result that snapped a promising three-game winning streak. Since that day, the squad has been left to stew, their Merit Table campaign suspended and their aspirations paused. The path back to competitive action resumes next weekend, January 24th, but it presents an immediate challenge: two consecutive road trips, first to Exmouth and then to Exeter Saracens. To climb the table and reignite their season, securing victories on the road is essential.

The overarching mission is clear: use Friday's friendly as a springboard, navigate the upcoming away fixtures successfully, and rediscover the winning form that defined their run before the December disappointment.



The background of the image features the crest of Barnstaple RFC. The crest is a shield with a red and white diagonal pattern, topped with a crown and surrounded by ornate scrollwork. A banner at the bottom of the crest contains the text 'ESTD 1880'.

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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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Barnstaple Colts just lose out in non – league clash against Crediton



The Friendly between Crediton and Barnstaple Colts began with Barnstaple, asserting immediate dominance. For the opening 20 minutes, they put Crediton under sustained pressure. Their early efforts were rewarded with two well-taken tries.

The first originated from a period of sharp, multi-phase rugby that meticulously stretched and drew in the Crediton defence, creating a gaping hole in the midfield. Barnstaple's inside centre exploited the space perfectly, slicing through to score untouched. Their second try showcased a more direct approach. Winning a lineout deep in Crediton territory, Barnstaple crashed through the defensive line, to extend their lead.

However, Crediton demonstrated impressive resilience to weather the storm and work their way back into the contest as they began to turn the momentum. Their perseverance paid off with two converted tries, edging them into a narrow 14-12 lead with just five minutes remaining in the half.

Although Barnstaple finished the half strongly, applying significant pressure in Crediton's 22, they could not breach the defence again, and the visitors took their slender two-point advantage into the break.



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Barnstaple emerged from the interval with the same intensity that started the game, immediately putting Crediton on the back foot. Sustained attacking play earned them a couple of kickable penalties, which they turned down in search of a greater reward. The decision was vindicated when, from a cleverly worked short lineout, they secured possession and powered over for a third try. A successful conversion restored their lead at 19-14.

The game settled into a tense, arm-wrestling battle as both defences stood firm. With time becoming a critical factor and just five minutes left on the clock, Crediton produced their moment as they sucked the Barnstaple defence inwards, creating space to sprint clear to score. The subsequent conversion, Crediton's third of the day, was slotted through the posts, putting the visitors back in front, 19-21.

A frantic final few minutes ensued, with Barnstaple throwing everything into one last assault. They came agonisingly close to a winning score, nearly breaking through a desperate Crediton defence, but the final pass did not go to hand. The visitors' relief was palpable as the referee's whistle sounded, confirming Crediton had held on to clinch a hard-fought and thrilling 19-21 victory.

The Colts are on the road this weekend as they travel to Exeter Athletic for a 1pm kick off. Next weekend they will be facing Cullompton in a crucial Merit table match kick off is 2pm.

To see the photos from the game against Crediton click here [Barnstaple Colts v Crediton Colts photos](#)



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TEAM MANAGERS

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LYNTON PACK

DARREL GILL
RGP ARCHITECTS

DEAN DAVIES
LYNTON PACK

JENNY BEER
WINDSOR ARMS

EMMA SMITH
TARKA CLINIC

JAMES HUDSON

PHYSIO / FIRST AIDER

RICHARD FLEMMING

JESS ROGERS

ESME RAISTRICK
TARKA CLINIC

DONNA KNIGHT
TARKA CLINIC

**BUCC'S
STAFF**

CALLUM JOSSELYN
OLD VAULT

TOM CROKER
BARBER 32

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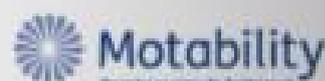
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BARNSTAPLE RUGBY 2025/26



JAN 24TH- 2PM
COUNTIES 1 WESTERN WEST
**BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC
VS NEWTON ABBOT**

JAN 31ST - 2PM
COUNTIES 1 WESTERN WEST
**BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC
VS ST IVES(SW)**

FEB 7TH - 2PM
DEVON ~INTERMEDIATE CUP FINAL
**BARNSTAPLE ATHLETIC
VS OKEHAMPTON**

FEB 14TH - 2PM
NATIONAL 2 WEST
**BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS
VS LUCTONIANS**

FEB 28TH - 2PM
NATIONAL 2 WEST
**BARNSTAPLE CHIEFS
VS REDRUTH**

Pottington Rd, Barnstaple EX31 1JH
email - info.barnstaplerugby@gmail.com
website - www.barnstaplerugby.co.uk



Well that just about wraps up our opening home game of 2026
There are several events on the horizon the first of which is on
January 23rd, please join us for a Quiz Night right here at
Barnstaple Rugby Club, in support of the Veterans' Service. All
the details are on the poster below

Ladies day is on 21st March 2026 when the Chiefs take on
Camborne. From what I know the event itself is sold out but
there is evening entertainment with Barely Legal who as you all
know only too well are an awesome band that will entertain
everyone late into the night

Good luck to all our teams playing today and enjoy your rugby
wherever you are watching it.

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NATIONAL LEAGUE TWO WEST - 2025-26

Club	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	PD	TBP	LBP	Points	Adj
 Camborne	15	14	0	1	612	344	268	12	1	69	0
 Luctonians	15	12	0	3	500	284	216	13	1	62	0
 Barnstaple	15	10	0	5	425	419	6	12	0	52	0
 Hornets	15	9	0	6	447	401	46	9	1	46	0
 Hinckley	14	8	0	6	459	407	52	11	2	45	0
 Cinderford	15	8	0	7	437	438	-1	10	2	44	0
 Lymm	15	8	0	7	475	479	-4	9	2	43	0
 Chester	15	7	1	7	446	499	-53	10	2	42	0
 Taunton	14	6	0	8	460	440	20	11	7	42	0
 Redruth	15	6	0	9	395	438	-43	9	3	36	0
 Old Redcliffians	15	5	0	10	367	412	-45	8	4	32	0
 Exeter University	15	5	0	10	507	557	-50	9	1	30	0
 Loughborough Students	15	3	1	11	418	587	-169	10	2	26	0
 Syston	15	2	0	13	374	617	-243	8	1	17	0