OUARFC

Hilary 2025

24/05/2025

The OUARFC Committee

Dear Navy Blues,

In many ways, Hilary term is the club's busiest time of year, so grab a cuppa and settle in to read our latest updates from on and off the pitch!

Please do continue to spread the word about this email list – we don't want anyone to miss out! If you know anyone who'd be interested in reading these newsletters, feel free to share the registration link here: https://forms.office.com/e/iPZrbMdgiA (please register using your personal email address).

As we expand this newsletter, we're also keen to set up an 'alumni news' section. If you have any updates you'd like to share with the OUARFC community, please send them along to oxfordarfc@gmail.com to be included in next term's edition!

Fitzpatrick Cup

The Fitzpatrick Cup–named after former Carlton (and OUARFC!) player Mike Fitzpatrick–is a competition organised by AFL Europe which has a history of attracting men's and women's teams from across the continent.

National University League (NUL)

We mainly participate in the National University League, which also includes teams from Cambridge, Cardiff, and Birmingham.
In HT2024, we had rounds in Birmingham, Cardiff, and the Grand Final match at home in Oxford.

The term began in January with an unseasonably warm and sunny day out for the Birmingham round of the National University League. The women's team won both matches against the host team and Cardiff, while the men battled to a loss against both (not a great start to the term!).

On Saturday 15 February, we hosted a friendly in University Parks against teams from the Wandsworth Demons. The weather was its UK best: rainy, windy, cold, and very muddy! Wandsworth won both games by a slim margin, but it was great to build relationships with a team we don't usually compete against, fostering the footy community in the UK.

One of the major events of the term was our trip to Cork, Ireland, for the Fitzpatrick Cup on Saturday 22 February. This year, five women's and seven men's teams competed in the tournament. In the group stages, our men were unlucky with the draw and lost to the two teams who ended up in the final. Our women made it to the final, but were ultimately defeated by the Munster Technological University Crows. The trip was enjoyed by all, and we're very proud of both teams!

The last round of the National University League took place in Cambridge on 8 March. Fighting with a reduced bench and several injuries, our women had to concede both matches. In contrast, our men rose to the challenge of Cardiff and Cambridge, winning both games. After a lot of hard work at training, it was exciting to see the team gel.

Two weeks later, we made the trip to Cambridge again, this time for our annual Varsity match on 22 March. Our women's team battled hard to a loss. Following the momentum of their success in the Cambridge round, our men played a very exciting game, defeating the Tabs 56–83. We'd like to say a huge thanks to Cambridge for hosting, and for providing a second bus so we could take approximately fifty additional supporters to cheer us on! Hopefully this extra supporter bus is a tradition that can last for many years.

Most recently, we hosted the NUL 3rd-place and Grand Final matches on a gorgeously sunny afternoon in University Parks. Our men's and women's teams both took part in the Grand Final games: the men had a hard-fought defeat to Cardiff, while the women battled to a resounding victory against Cambridge. As always, we're grateful to everyone who makes this league possible, including our coaches, umpires, supporters, and the teams from Birmingham, Cambridge, and Cardiff.

Apart from this busy match schedule, we hosted two hugely successful taster sessions in February and March, as part of the Oxford University Sport Federation's 'Active at Oxford' programme. It was great to see over thirty new faces come down to try out footy!

Off the pitch, we enjoyed our pre-Varsity and pre-Grand Final potlucks. As well, on International Women's Day–which happened to coincide with the Cambridge NUL round–the men announced a donation of £250 to Refuge, the largest UK domestic abuse organisation for women, made in the name of the women's team.

Games in TT2025:

Summer League Round 1: 26 April, Cardiff

Summer League Round 2: 10 May, Oxford

Summer League Round 3: 31 May, Nottingham

Summer League Round 4: 14 June, Manchester

Summer League Round 5: 28 June, Nottingham

What's next?

In the coming months, we're excited for a trip to Prague, Czech Republic, on 17 May to play men's and women's teams from the Prague Dragons. We're also looking forward to the yearly Old Boys' Game on 24 May in University Parks; and to our Best and Fairest night on 22 May, when we'll celebrate the season.
And then, of course, there's the summer league, where we'll compete against teams from Nottingham, Birmingham, Manchester, and Cardiff. We'll keep our social media updated with specifics of times and locations, so if you're in the UK we hope to see you there!

Yours in Dark Blue,
On behalf of the OUARFC Committee 2024-2025,

Håvard Hem Toftevaag
President 2024–2025

Emma Cameron
Secretary 2024–2025