

12th January 2025



In Touch

Minis and Juniors Special Edition

We've hijacked the start of In Touch this week to give everyone an update on what is happening with our Minis and Juniors. We're delighted that our Minis and Juniors section has grown significantly over the last twelve months, both in regard to the number of young people coming down to the Linney every Sunday morning and weeknight training sessions and in regard to the number of coaches and volunteers who support. We now have over 100 youngsters who regularly attend across all of our age groups and this is around a 42% increase on the number from the previous season!

Matt Wilkes has been helping to lead the creation of Ludlow Rugby Academy which will be launching this Friday at 6:15pm for all of our secondary school-age players. The Academy will be aimed at working with individuals to develop the skills that they need work on with all players undertaking an initial audit to help structure and plan the Academy sessions. Many thanks to the team of eight coaches who will working with Matt to provide this excellent opportunity for our U12s upwards.

It's also been brilliant to have some of our senior players working with our Minis and Juniors in recent weeks – huge thanks to Jon Granger for working with our Under 15s and thanks also to James Yeomans and Kieran Pinches who have been supporting our youngest 'micro' players aged 3-6. It's really beneficial for the youngsters to see and work with our senior players and we would like to encourage more players to work with our age-grade teams.

Our age groups who play in matches would love a few more spectators cheering them on and we welcome everyone to come and support our younger players. Here are a few of our upcoming home matches at the Linney (clubhouse and bar open too) and kick off time is usually 10:30am:

Sunday 2nd February – Ludlow U8, U9, U11 & U12 vs Welshpool
Ludlow U10s vs Clee Hill

Sunday 3rd March – Ludlow U10s & U11s vs Newport
Ludlow U15s vs Eccleshall

Sunday 23rd March – Ludlow U7s, U8s, U10s, U12s & U15s vs Market Drayton

Whilst we have grown generally in numbers, we still need more young recruits to boost our team numbers across each age group so if you know a young person who wants to give rugby a try, please get them to contact us via our contact form on the website: [Mini & Juniors - Ludlow Rugby Club](#) or they can directly email Kelly at secretary@ludlowrfc.co.uk to get booked in for a taster session.

Finally, a huge thank you to the excellent team of volunteers who support Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings and Friday evenings. This includes our 14 regular coaches across the age groups, our team of first aiders and our parents who support too. We're always on the look out for more volunteers to support the Minis and Juniors – particularly as we are introducing a new managers role for each age group and just generally extra pairs of hands to help with all Minis and Juniors sessions. Please contact us as secretary@ludlowrfc.co.uk if you are interested in supporting.

Thanks for all of your support,

The Minis and Juniors Leadership Team – James Bridge, Ben Jackson and Kelly Nicklin

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In Touch update from Andy Wright:

There's only one thing more pleasing than winning a derby game and that's beating them twice in the same season at home and away. The long enforced lay-off, through floods and ice, didn't seem to have dulled the Ludlow attack at all. Will Hodnett (centre) led the charge with a try, three conversions and two penalties while centre Jack Davies and prop Gwyn Pearce added tries of their own for a 0-27 victory.

So we remain fifth in the table but with two games in hand over most of the teams below us. The first of those postponed games, against top of the table Newent will be played at The Linney on Saturday and should be a very good measure of progress for Tom Tench's men. Please get down to support them (2.15 kick off).

Finding fixtures for our second team remains a problem as does finding dry ground on which to train. Both are issues which the committee is actively engaged in trying to solve. However there has been huge progress in the Mini and Junior ranks with the establishment of a rugby academy and a committee of willing volunteers to support the section. The academy will teach rugby skills on a Friday evenings to year 7 up to year 12 pupils. Gareth Nicklin has taken on the dual role of schools liaison and recruitment and coaching development and there will be a coach and manager for each age group. In addition, Kelly Nicklin will take on secretarial duties for the section and Ben Jackson finance while Laurence Tilt is safeguarding officer, Laura Tziros communications and social media, Karen Jones fixtures, and Ben Weller social secretary.

All of the above is brilliant news and should help to ensure that we have a steady stream of keen rugby players to join the senior ranks eventually. A huge tribute is due to James Bridge who has worked tirelessly, often on his own, for several years to get the club to this stage. Less good news is that not everyone who has enjoyed the club's brilliant lunches at home games has actually put their hand in their pocket to pay for it. The result has been that the club has been effectively losing money at these lunches so the committee has resolved that the cost will have to rise to £25 a match and efforts will be made to collect the money in advance of the meal or at least provide a better collection system.

See you soon

Andy Wright

President Ludlow Rugby Club