

Overview of Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club (CURUFC)

CURUFC was founded in the season 1871/2 and was a club for male students. In 2015 the Cambridge University Women's RUFC amalgamated with the men to form a joint club. CURUFC is committed to ensuring that we can provide the best possible rugby environment for our players to maximise their potential both on and off the field. The University of Cambridge epitomises excellence and it is within this context that the club must be understood, as our players combine intense academic commitments with dedication to training and team culture. As a club, our priorities are to provide an enjoyable, inclusive and successful rugby environment, in which the development of our players is well-supported.

CURUFC is based at Grange Road, the ground being owned by the Cambridge University Rugby Union and Association Football Trust Limited which is a company jointly owned by CURUFC and Cambridge University Association Football Club. It has a handsome Club House and Members' Stand and also the Comber Stand which seats 800 and so comes under the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987. There is a playing pitch, a training ground on the site and two weights rooms (the first being the Koster Performance Centre, next to the Comber stand, and the second under the Comber stand). The Club House contains changing rooms for players and referees, a medical treatment room, a board room, offices, a bar, dining room and kitchen. CURUFC is responsible for the upkeep of all aspects of the ground.

CURUFC is the club that represents the University at the annual Varsity Matches against Oxford University. The matches in 2021/22 were played at the end of the Lent term. The Club runs the University selective sides – these are for Men the 1st team, the 2nd team (known as the LX Club), 3rd team in the Lent Term (known as the Centurions) and similarly for the Women there is a 1st team and a 2nd team (known as the Tigers) and a 3rd team in the Lent Term (known as the Jaguars). The Men's 1st team plays midweek under lights against a variety of opposition including professional clubs, universities and the military, whilst the LX club/Centurions play in the BUCS league on Wednesdays with some occasional weekend fixtures. The Women's 1st team plays mostly on Wednesday afternoons in the BUCS league as do the Tigers. All teams have the support of a number of highly experienced coaches. There is also a Head of Performance, who oversees a team of well-qualified physiotherapists, first aiders and Strength and Conditioning coaches. The Men's Captain and Women's Captain, selected by the previous year's teams, serve the year from May to May. Both are instrumental in the continuing tradition of selecting the teams together with the established coaches.

CURUFC is a member of Cambridge University Rugby Football Union (CURFU) which itself is a Constituent Body of the Rugby Football Union (RFU). CURFU oversees the inter-collegiate rugby at the University, as well as working with CURUFC in developing players to represent CURUFC. There is a jointly run Player Development program which involves the Centurions and Jaguars sides. CURFU also develops referees, through its liaison with Cambridge University and District Referees Society (CUDDRS), and runs coaching courses. It has an RFU Grant and it has a College Rugby Manager to oversee and implement the program. There are around 400 men and 100 women who have played rugby within the University.

The teams use the ground intensively throughout September to December, mid-January to mid-March, and sporadically through the summer. At times in the main playing periods, the ground may host up to four matches in a week, with the consequent preparations necessary. On average, the rugby club will host 35 home matches a year and plays 20 away matches. The car park and

other facilities are let throughout the year. Matches are usually played on Wednesdays, either in the afternoon or in the evening, and on Saturdays. A large number of the training sessions take place in the evening using the floodlights. A full infrastructure of Stewards, Safety Officer, Ball Boys, Announcer, Caterer, Bar Staff plus other roles is needed at all home fixtures. Attendance varies but the annual Steele-Bodger match attracts over 3000 people. The Club has different types of membership – Past Player, Supporter and Associate – and there are regular electronic newsletters circulated to the membership. The day to day running of the club is undertaken by the Administrative Manager, the Finance Officer and the Groundsman under the oversight of the Head of Operations. They also support the activities of CURFU.

The Club was incorporated in 2015 and has a Board of Directors which sets the strategic approach and the day-to day work is under the direction of the Executive Committee that meets every month. The running of the club is split into Divisions each with a lead who sits on the Executive Committee along with the senior player officials and some coopted members. . The Divisions are: Playing (Director of Rugby); Administration (Executive Secretary); Finance (Treasurer); Operations including Health and Safety (Head of Operations); Fund Raising (Head of Development); Commercial (Head of Commercial); Communications, Marketing and Events (Head of CME). CURUFC is run independently from the University and is funded by the revenue obtained from the Varsity Match, the Steele Bodger Match, Grange Road activities, various Sponsorships undertaken by the club, regular philanthropic donations and a University Grant towards the running and maintenance for the ground. The club has around 30 volunteers helping on the various committees, some undertaking a substantial amount of work. The annual budget is of the order of £450,000.

The Club aims to provide the best student rugby experience in the world. To support this, it is of paramount importance to provide a suitable annual income stream and secure the long-term financial future of the Club. In addition to the revenues mentioned there is an ongoing appeal to members. To build support for the Club some well-organised and targeted friend and fundraising events occur.