

Rugby U21 National Rugby Festival

The cream of Fram's recent rugby-playing leavers spent much of August Bank Holiday Monday playing in the National Cronk-Cunis U21 Rugby Festival at Richmond RFC.

Nick Whitehead assembled a talented squad, initially numbering over 20, but whittled down by last minute withdrawals to 13. Thanks to smooth East Anglian co-operation with Norwich School, successful combinations were worked out and the team fulfilled its full programme of 4 x 30 minute matches, aiming initially for the main trophy, then tilting for various fall-back trophies – the Plate, the Vase, the Bowl.

We lost heavily in the first round to Monmouth, who subsequently progressed strongly towards the final, made amends with an emphatic victory in a seven-a-side match against local rivals, Norwich, with whom we then combined to lose to Pangbourne in a closely contested match, before finally settling for a semi-final defeat in the bowl against a strong, well-fancied St Benedicts (Ealing) side.

This was Fram's first appearance in this prestigious Festival for a number of years, and well done to all for an all-round performance that embodied both the spirit of rugby and the spirit of Fram. The non-playing, supporting senior element of the SOF was represented by Simon Dougherty (armed with camera and responsible for these pictures, and accompanied by Maggie), together with Norman Porter (Hon Sec). President Richard Sayer was on-call, (ready to leave a birthday lunch!) ready to provide further support had we made it through to a prestigious final. We didn't, so he was advised to enjoy an extended lunch.

It was a hugely enjoyable day, with seven pitches fully utilized and many hundreds of players and supporters kept well fed and watered by the club's various bars and refreshments facilities. The referee of our final match commented that it had been the most enjoyable one he had refereed all day. Hopefully the bandwagon will now roll and we can look forward to the next Festival already scheduled to be held on **August Bank Holiday Monday 2014**. If you will still be under 21 on that date get the Festival into diaries NOW!

2013 Squad: Sam Bigden, Robbie Bridgstock, Andy Hair, Josh Hall, James Hood, Stephen Packer, Charlie Precious, Jacob Rawlinson-Honeyball, Ben Watts, Morgan Whitehead, Nick Whitehead, Carl Witham.

The following are a few of the photos taken by Simon Dougherty.





