

Cork Constitution F.C. Matchzine



Donal Walsh Trophy

Cork Constitution F.C. V U.C.C. R.F.C.

Wednesday 5Rd February 2020 7.30 PM

The next few weeks sees the U20.5 season enter the final rounds of the league stage of the Donal Walsh Trophy. The league final is contested by the two teams that finish first and second, and this season the league has proved to be very competitive with very little between the competing teams. This Wednesday night sees Cork Constitution host league leaders UCC in what should be an exciting affair with both teams having displayed good form in the league to date. UCC are unbeaten so far this season, having won five of their six league games to date, with the first league match against Con ending in a 10-10 draw in The Mardyke back in November. College have displayed consistent form over the season and have a gap at the top of the league table, with the Con 20.5s currently sitting in third place, nine points behind leaders UCC with two games in hand and two points behind Garryowen with a game in hand. Having to play both UCC and Garryowen in the concluding stages of the league, you can see just how tight things are as teams jockey for those top two places !

So Wednesday's game in Temple Hill has real significance, a victory for UCC will see them guaranteed a place in the league final, and keep alive their unbeaten run. A win for Con sees them keep up their momentum in the hunt for a top two spot.

With the game being on mid-week, not clashing with any other club fixtures, injuries aside, both sides should be able to select from a strong panels. This should make for a very competitive and entertaining affair. Both sides look to play an attractive brand of rugby. UCC have of course had a long tradition of playing a fast and adventurous brand of rugby and the last few seasons have seen the Cork Con game plan evolve to merge the traditional power game with a more expansive 'heads up' rugby that has allowed the club to continue to be very successful at senior level.

So, if you are at a loose end on Wednesday evening, you could do a lot worse than come along to Temple Hill at 7.30pm. Evening games are rare enough and the grounds really do look spectacular under full floodlights .

Retired Members & Friends Coffee Morning.

On Thursday 30th January the club hosted a gathering of members who have retired or semi-retired from the 'day job'. Over coffee/tea and biscuits a gathering of 25 former players, coaches and volunteers met for a chat about the current team and teams/players of the past.

The event was a great success and the club plans to host this event on the last Thursday of every month going forward. Frank O'Connell coordinated the occasion, with help from Der O'Riordan and Dermot O'Leary from the Bar Committee, and the President was present to welcome everyone.



Feedback was very positive and all enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with friends and former teammates. Several members who hadn't been in the clubhouse for a few years made an appearance and renewed old friendships.

The next one will be hosted on **Thursday 28th February**, at 11am in the clubhouse. Please pass the word along to members who have retired over recent years and might enjoy the chance to catch-up with former comrades.

Dates for Your Diary

Under 13 Tour Cake Sale

Saturday 8th February in the clubhouse.

Cheltenham Race Day

Friday 13 March 2020 Rochestown Park Hotel.

See feature on page 2

Retired Members & Friends

Coffee Morning.

Thursday 28th February, at 11am in the clubhouse.

Annual Cheltenham Race Day

This event takes place as usual in the splendid Rochestown Park Hotel, and we are happy to remind all of our members and friends who have given such great support to come and share in the fun.

We are staging this year's event on Friday the 13th of March 2019, so please put this date in your diary to ensure you enjoy all the excitement of a day at the races. The day will follow the, by now, well established format of:

12 Noon Gin & Tonic Reception, followed by Our Famous "Beef or Salmon" Lunch and then a Full Race Programme.

In between races we will have all the usual extras with Best Dressed Lady and Gent Presentation and a Raffle for a worthwhile prize.

Please contact one of our Committee shown below to reserve your place. The subscription is at €100.00 per person and €1,000.00 for a table of ten and pro rata for portions of tables.

Congratulations to Constitutions Jack Crowley

Jack was top scorer for the Ireland Under-20s as his 18 point haul (two tries and four conversions) helped the Ireland Under-20s to a 38-26 bonus point win over Scotland last Friday Night in Irish Independent Park.

Jack is pictured below receiving his Man of the Match Trophy from Ger O'Mahoney. PWC)



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CORK CON U-13 CAKE SALE

The U-13 squad are hold a cake sale on Saturday 8th February

We will be set up and ready to go in the clubhouse bar from 09:30 am until 12:30 pm

We need to raise funds for the upcoming U-13 tour to Lisbon. We have 55 excited U-13 Con players travelling to participate in the Portugal Rugby Youth Festival in Lisbon next April. The festival will see thousands of young players from all over Europe compete at ages from U-13 to U19 - there will be 32 teams in Con's age group alone. This is a wonderful opportunity for our young players to participate in an international tournament and it continues a long and successful history of touring U-13 Con teams.

This final fundraising event is a Con tradition and is always well supported by all Con underage groups, parents and members.

We look forward to seeing you there on the morning to help us eat some of the delicious cakes and help to send the boys on their way to Lisbon!

Thank you!
Con Under-13 Coaches

Unpaid Subscriptions



Members are the life blood of our club and our excellent modern facilities are there for our members enjoyment.

It is very important that we continue to collect our subscriptions to assist in the running of the clubs activities.

Therefore I would be much obliged if all members who have not paid their subscription for the 2019/2020 season forward their subscription to the club at their earliest convenience.

As per the rules of the Club a list of members whose subscriptions remain unpaid will shortly be placed on the notice board in the Club House.

Kevin Fielding
President

Dave Cagney
Membership Chairman

SQUAD PROFILE

At the end of last season, a review and restructure of our recruitment processes was undertaken. This resulted in the u20.5 recruitment committee casting the net far and wide as well as working closely with the youths section of the club to ensure that as many players as possible from last year's u18.5 squad (pictured below) would transition from youths rugby and continue their rugby careers into adult rugby in Con.



This recruitment drive has seen our u20.5 squad assembled from right across the county and province. As well as recruiting players from the traditional Cork rugby schools powerhouses of CBC and PBC, we are also delighted this year to have players join us from Bandon, Rockwell, Midleton, Cobh, Tipperary, Glenstall and beyond. We also have seen a large cohort of players come out of the club's own youths section, which is great credit to the fantastic work being done at youths level – long may this continue.

U20.5 PLAYER DEVELOPMENT – A TOTAL CLUB APPROACH

Close collaboration between the Senior Coaching Team and the u20.5 Coaching Team means that we can manage player development very carefully in the club. This gives young players the time and space they need to develop while at the same time exposes them to a high quality of rugby in an elite environment. Both at training sessions and in competition, we gradually introduce our u20.5 players to senior rugby.

Players are individually profiled, and only when they are deemed ready by the coaching staff, and in consultation with the player, are introduced to senior rugby at specifically identified games with experienced players around them. This means that players are challenged to play increasingly higher standards of rugby in a safe and supportive environment.

While we always aim to be competitive and win trophies at u20.5 level, it is an equally important objective for the club these players end their time at 20.5 level better players, ready to continue their adult rugby career and hopefully for some to go to representative rugby or become stars of the future in the Con jersey.

This policy has seen many u20.5 players progress to senior rugby over the years and in this current season 5 players have made their debuts right across senior competitions, right up to and including ALL Div 1.

THE u20.5 COACHING TEAM

The Con u20.5 coach team is headed up by former Cork Con and Munster hooker Denis Fogarty. After finishing his professional playing career in France, Denis spent a couple of seasons heading up a professional u-23 Academy in France.



He returned home in the summer of 2018, so this is his second season as head coach and in the build-up to this season he played a very active role in the recruitment process.

Denis is joined on the coaching ticket by Con stalwart Ken Murphy, forwards coach and team Manager and by Noel Humphreys, who is team Secretary. In addition to these dedicated resources, the squad also has access to a professional Strength & Conditioning coach, a dedicated qualified physio, and specialised sports nutritionist.

The Senior coaches, Brian Hickey, Jonny Holland and Paul MacCarthy also take individual and/or group sessions to work on position-specific skills. A new development this season has been the post-training meals on Thursday nights, which have been welcomed by the players, especially those living away from home. This gives the players a healthy and appropriate meal (i.e. hi-carb, hi-protein, low-fat) ahead of weekend games.

As it is important for young players to be exposed to as many view points as possible to broaden their skill set and knowledge, Denis also brings in guest coaches from time to time. His contacts with former teammates, many of whom are still playing or coaching in the game means there are plenty of opportunities to do this. For example, ex-Munster/Ireland scrum-half, Tomas O'Leary, has been doing some attack drills with the squad over the past few weeks, and John Fogarty, Ireland Scrum coach, recently took a technical scrum session with the forwards.

Asking Denis about his philosophy about coaching and what he hopes to pass on to his young squad he has this to say:

'My job is not just about winning trophies, don't get me wrong, we are all, players and coaches alike, very competitive by nature, and we want to win every time we play, and we instil that desire to win in every player.'

But my job, along with the other coaches that work with me, is to look at the bigger picture and from the individual player perspective. In a broader sense, I want to ensure these lads finish their season or two at 20.5 level better players than when they started, having had an enjoyable and challenging time and that they are still playing rugby at 25,26, 27 and beyond.

Playing well into your 20s and early 30s, as I was lucky to do myself, I can tell you that the lessons you learn about yourself, about life, the friends you make, the opportunities you will get are things that will always stay with you. Be that with Munster or Ireland, the Con Senior XV, or even playing a bit of social rugby, whatever level doesn't matter.

It's a shame if that opportunity is lost, and if my coaching team and I can help young lads develop their game and keep a love of playing the game by the time they pass through u20.5 level, while maybe seeing a few lads progress to play representative or for the Senior XV with Con and so on, then that for us is as important, if not more important than winning the Donal Walsh or All Ireland u20.5 league every year.

The great thing about coaching the Con u20.5s is that this is also the philosophy of the club. They see 20s rugby as an opportunity to help develop a young player to be the best he can be. Players development is not rushed and players are not dropped into situations too early to 'sink or swim'. We as a 20s coaching team work closely with the Senior coaching team to ensure that each developmental step is a challenge without being too big a gap.

That way a player can build on lessons learned, be ready for the next challenge and enjoy himself as part of the journey.'

THE SEASON SO FAR

The season began with a pre-season friendly to Lansdowne RFC. While a very strong Lansdowne outfit put us to the sword on the day, the trip was viewed as a success as it gave the Head Coach Denis Fogarty and his staff a first opportunity to introduce new playing systems and helped bond the squad who have come from a very diverse background. Lansdowne were also pleased with the event and it is hoped to make it an annual pre-season fixture. The excursion to Dublin allowed the squad to start to get to know one another and saw the beginning of the bonds of friendship that are crucial to any squad.

The culture of Cork Constitution as a club, their own identity as a team and the values that the club lives by have been carefully nurtured over the season, and this fantastic group of young

men have formed into a squad with strong sense of identity and a tight bond that will sustain them as the season enters the all important championship rounds.

We kicked off the competitive season of the Donal Walsh Trophy league section with a home match against Young Munster. A typical early season affair, saw lots of handling errors from both sides, but it was the Con XV who found their rhythm better and emerged 39-10 winners. Next up saw Con travel across the city to the Mardyke to take on UCC. This was a very competitive, low-scoring affair, not helped by torrential rain on the night, that eventually ended as a 10-10 draw, with Con scoring the equalizing try near the end to see the match end honours even. A couple of trips to Limerick then saw us well beaten 31-18 by a very strong Garryowen side followed by a comprehensive 0-19 over Shannon.

After the Christmas break, another friendly against Leinster competition saw the visit of Old Wesley in early January. As many players face college exams and the Holiday season, the league goes into hibernation during this period so it is important to keep things ticking over from a match fitness point of view. Coached by former Con player Ronan O'Donovan, the Old Wesley u20.5 team currently compete in Division 1 of the Leinster league, and were seen as a good competitive fixture ahead of the recommencement of our own league. This game proved to be a useful exercise, a tight closely fought game saw Con emerge victorious 19-12.

The league resumed in early January with Con having a 'rest week' so we were able to watch other results unfold. As our first game was to be against Shannon, we paid particular interest to the game between Garryowen and Shannon. A competitive Shannon side ran Garryowen very close in a high scoring affair, Garryowen winning out in the end 33-29.

The 18th of January saw the visit of Shannon to Temple Hill for the resumption of our league campaign. With the league being so competitive and very little between sides, and having already dropped points with our loss to Garryowen, every game is pretty much a must win affair, and this Shannon match was no different. Building on a good preparation over the Christmas period, Con got off to a good start and opened up a decent lead, but, true to form, Shannon's never say die attitude saw them close the gap. To their credit, the Con team responded and eventually ended up with a bonus point win 32-12.

Ken Murphy

U 20.5 Team Manager

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If you are holding a function why not consider using your own Club House, you won't regret it!

Call Terry Ward 021 4291960 or email: info@corkcon.ie to discuss your requirements and arrange to see the facilities.

Cork Constitution Annual Golf Classic 2020

Cork Constitution Football Club are delighted to inform you that the annual fundraising golf outing will be held in Douglas Golf Club on **8th May 2020**. This outing will be one of the first to enjoy the new clubhouse facilities, currently under construction in Douglas.

This outing provides an excellent opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones, to promote your business, and to support Cork Constitution Rugby. The golf course will be in magnificent condition as always in the month of May. Do come along to enjoy the golf and then have a refreshment on the new magnificent clubhouse patio area overlooking Cork city.

We will send out detailed information in the New Year on arrangements for the day. For now, please put the date in your calendar. We look forward to seeing you in May 2020. Please contact Dave Cagney at cagneydave@gmail.com or 087-2364627

Cork Constitution FC Shop

The club shop is full of great gift ideas. There are the new jerseys, the same as the ones the seniors wear when playing in the All-Ireland league.

There are the new pattern half-zips with stock in all sizes and we also have shorts and socks for all ages

Come in and browse every Saturday morning from 9 o'clock to 12 and Amy or Carolyn will be happy to serve you. Credit and Debit cards welcome.

