Rugby at Oakham
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Rugby is firmly established as the main sport for boys at Oakham School during the Winter Term, with the School’s first rugby match on Doncaster Close played against Stamford Town in 1894. The fixture list has arguably strengthened in the modern era, although some of the School’s oldest rivalries remain today with Oundle, Bromsgrove and Trent amongst the earliest opposition. Oakham and Uppingham, although both founded in 1584, did not contest a first XV fixture until 1964.

In recent years Oakham has rightly gained national recognition for the strength and success of its teams, as well as the continued success of individual players who have come through the School and gone on to win professional playing contacts and international and British Lions representative honours. The 1st XV won back-to-back Daily Mail competitions in 2002, 2003 and were finalists in 2011. Latterly the School reached the semi-finals of the NatWest Champions Trophy in 2014 and 2016. For a full history go to https://resources.oakham.rutland.sch.uk/bnstats/Rugby.pdf

Strength & Conditioning
Our Head of Strength & Conditioning, Joel Tratt BSc Msc, works with our rugby players on a daily basis to ensure that they are adequately prepared to train and play. During the season squad S&C sessions take place within the overall training week. Out of season, players can train on a one-to-one, or small group basis. For academy level players, Joel co-ordinates with the players’ respective clubs to ensure that they are fully prepared for both school and academy rugby. Oakham’s Strength & Conditioning programme focuses on players’ long-term athletic development and educates them on the correct nutritional and recovery process to help them develop as top level athletes and rugby players.

Oakham School Rugby XV 1896/97

Brian Smith MBE, who captained undefeated sides in three sports and whose generosity led to the refurbishment of the School Chapel and the BAFS pavilion, was succeeded as captain in 1954 by the most capped Leicester player of all time: David Matthews – 501 appearances.

The School has a proud history of fostering the talents of future Rugby Blues and International players. Two former Oakhamians, Sir Anthony Wharton (1930–35) and C.R Jacobs (1942–45), were Presidents of the RFU with the latter playing in the Grand Slam winning XV of 1957. Twenty years later the School became the first English school to tour Japan.

Oakham’s Director of Coaching and former Leicester captain Ian Smith has coached the Leicester Tigers, England Students and England U19s (in both Six Nations and World Cup competitions), as well as being the former Director of Rugby at Loughborough University.

Oakham School Rugby XV 1896/97

Charlie Walker, Captain 2010, receiving his medal from Lewis Moody, Captain 1995
**Player Pathway – Good to Great**

As a school Oakham has an established reputation for supporting our athletes on their rugby journey but just as importantly we hope boys will continue to play the game at whatever level beyond their time at School. In the first year, new boys are introduced to the game by the Director of Rugby, Andrew Rice. On entry to the Middle School Glenn Gelderbloom, the former Western Province and double European Cup winning Leicester Tigers centre leads the U14 coaching team as well as running the regional DPP centre. The middle school coaching staff comprises a team of experienced, enthusiastic and knowledgeable members of the common room, many with extensive playing and coaching experience.

The School’s relationship with Leicester remains very close in the professional era.

The DPP process starts at the end of the U13 season with the DPP providing a high quality developmental experience for players in Leicestershire, NLD, Norfolk and Staffordshire.

At U15 players selected for the four Player Development Group squads from the nine regional DPPs are invited to the Oakham School festival in February.

Should a pupil be selected for the Academy programme, he will receive ongoing tailored support to manage his academic and sporting ambitions, with the School offering a range of courses, including IB, BTEC, Pre U and A-levels in the Upper School.

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**OO Matt Smith; Leicester Tigers and England Saxons**

**Lewis Moody, MBE (OO) and Tom Croft (OO)** playing for England vs Australia
Recent Representative Honours
(number of appearances)

Lewis Moody: Leicester Tigers 223; Bath; Barbarians; England 71; British Lions 5
Tom Croft: Leicester Tigers 152; England 45; British Lions 5
Alex Goode: Saracens 212; England Saxons; England 21
Hamish Watson: Edinburgh 43; Scotland U20; Scotland 5; Scotland 7’s
Matthew Smith: Leicester Tigers; England Saxons
Charles Walker: Harlequins; England U16; England U18; England U20; England 7’s
Michael Holford: Leicester Tigers; Wasps; Nottingham England U21
Ben Wheeler: Singapore Lions; Cambridge University; Barbarians
Tom Gregory: Oxford University; England U19
Joe Wheeler: Cambridge University; England U18
Charlie Beech: Wasps; Bath; England U18
Matthew Cornwell: Leicester Tigers; Exeter; Northampton; Italian 2nd division side; England U21
Robert Cook: Nuneaton; Cornish Pirates; English Universities; Gloucester
Robert Green: Newbury
Darryl Veenendaal: Northampton Saints Academy; Bedford Blues
De la Rey Veenendaal: Northampton Saints Academy; Cambridge,
Torsten Sherwood: Denmark – Full international
Afandy Van Hein: Indonesia – Full international
Ruairaidh Smith: Northampton Saints Academy; Scotland U17; Scotland U20
Mark Meenan: England 7’s
Harry Betts: England U16

Coaching Staff

Ian Smith
Director of Coaching
331 caps Leicester Tigers

Glenn Gelderbloom
Former Western Province and double European cup winning Leicester Tigers centre.

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