

# COVENTRY



**VS DONCASTER KNIGHTS**  
2021/22 Championship Rugby Round One





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**COVENTRY RUGBY**

# THE TEAMS



**DONCASTER KNIGHTS**

## HOME

## STARTING XV

## AWAY

Tom **Stanton**

**15**

Billy **McBryde**

Tom **Howe**

**14**

Kyle **Evans**

Rob **Knox**

**13**

Fraser **Strachan**

Will **Owen**

**12**

Connor **Edwards**

Sam **Aspland-Robinson**

**11**

Jack **Spittle**

Tony **Fenner**

**10**

Sam **Olver**

Josh **Barton**

**09**

Gus **Warr**

Toby **Trinder**

**01**

Conrad **Cade**

Suva **Ma'Asi**

**02**

Will **Holling**

Phil **Boulton**

**03**

Andy **Foster**

Adam **Peters**

**04**

Danny **Drake**

Nile **Dacres**

**05**

Jack **Davies**

Senitiki **Nayalo**

**06**

Sam **Graham (C)**

Joshua **Bainbridge**

**07**

Sam **Hudson**

Ryan **Burrows (C)**

**08**

John **Kelly**

## REPLACEMENTS

Joe **Richardson**

**16**

George **Roberts**

Dan **Richardson**

**17**

Will **Vaughan**

Joe **Jones**

**18**

Henry **Paul**

Jonathan **K'poku**

**19**

Josh **Peters**

Rhys **Thomas**

**20**

George **Edgson**

Joe **Snow**

**21**

Alex **Dolly**

Tom **Curtis**

**22**

Harry **Davey**

Andy **Forsyth**

**23**

Guido **Volpi**

**MATCH OFFICIALS - Referee** Sarah Cox **ASR1** James Clarke  
**ASR2** Carl Adams **Fourth Official** George Richardson

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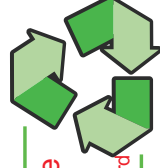
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# THE CHAIRMAN

# JON SHARP

**W**elcome all to Coventry Rugby and the Championship season 2021-22.

It is great to be back playing competitive rugby, an occasion which we never doubted would arrive, although there has been the obvious uncertainty concerning when it would happen, and in what form. We now look forward to a full league programme with all eleven Championship clubs participating in the traditional round of home and away fixtures. Following the completion of the league there will be a cup competition in a format to be announced in the forthcoming weeks.

The close season has been as busy as ever with Rowland focused on developing the playing and coaching squad, whilst Nick and I have been working on a variety of projects, notably the planned site development, which is obviously an extraordinarily complex and lengthy process, but real progress has been made and continues to be made, with the dual long-term objectives of producing new non-rugby income streams and enhanced facilities for spectators and players. I will provide a more detailed briefing as things develop.



Over the last three weekends, our three pre-season friendlies against Nottingham, Wasps and Gloucester produced some really entertaining rugby with a total of 121 points scored by Cov and 112 against. Of particular note was last week's 14 tries, 40 points to 50 thriller against the cherry and reds during which we gave our academy lads a run out during the last quarter of the game. All due credit to them that they were unphased by playing against a seasoned Premiership outfit including some international players. All in all, a great advert for Championship rugby. With a bit of luck and a good optician, we could have won that one.

These fixtures have given everyone some first-class match day experience and have enabled us to try out different combinations, but they do not come without the risk of injury, and we are currently paying a price for that. Speedy recovery to all.

Today we welcome the players, staff and supporters from Doncaster Knights. Donny have made some significant signings this season and will provide a very tough proposition for our lads today. We were disappointed to hit the post to lose a by single point at Castle Park in the only game we played against them last season. A good contest is in prospect.

Let's give the boys a big Cov roar to kick off their season.

C'mon Cov!

**Jon Sharp**  
Executive Chairman



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## In partnership with Coventry Rugby

Working together, we've helped deliver over 100 hours of rugby-based learning to schools in Coventry and the wider West Midlands area.

## Rugby in Schools

Providing fun coaching sessions for 5-16 year olds, led by first team players and coaches.





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## DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

# ROWLAND WINTER

It's great to be able to welcome everyone back to Butts Park to kickstart a league campaign!

Today's visitors, Doncaster Knights, are a well drilled side led by Head Coach Steve Boden, who has invested heavily into his squad over the last 18 months. Last season we pushed them close at Castle Park, and they went on to have an impressive campaign, eventually finishing third and just missing out on the play offs.

It will be a tough challenge today, we know that Doncaster are a physical side who have always been confrontational and we expect a big battle up front this afternoon.

Our last three weeks of preparation have gone well, and although we've unfortunately picked up two injuries to Luc Jeannot & Louis Brown, we have learnt a lot about the new players and I've enjoyed watching the young academy players step up and do well with the opportunities they've all had. The academy and our development pathway will continue to underpin everything we do, and is central to what we are about as a club and our link with the community.

Today we have quite a few players making their league debuts for the club, so I am hoping that you will all give them your loud support and at the same time make sure Doncaster get a true Coventry welcome!

Enjoy the game, it's great to be back!

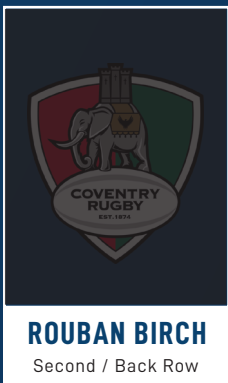
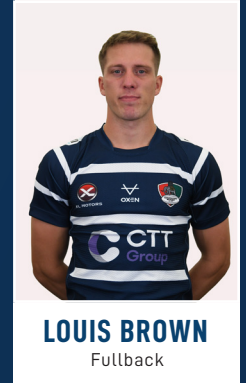
**Rowland**

# COVENTRY RUGBY

## SENIOR SQUAD



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Leicester Tigers



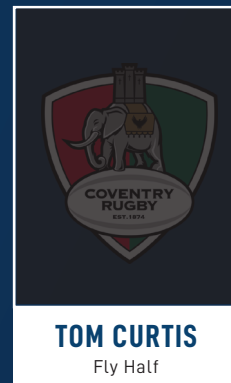
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Sale Sharks



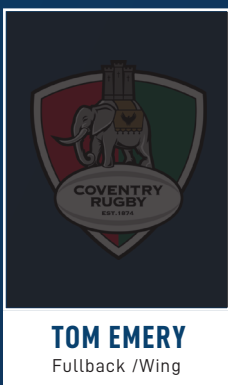
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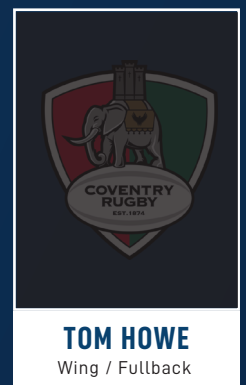
Dual Registered  
Sale Sharks



GB Rugby Sevens



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Rugby



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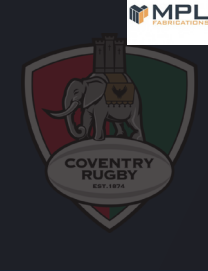
**LUC JEANNOT**  
Prop



**JOE JONES**  
Prop



**ROB KNOX**  
Centre



**JONATHAN K'POKU**  
Second Row



**SUVA MA'ASI**  
Hooker

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**JAMES MARTIN**  
Wing



**SENITIKI NAYALO**  
Back Row



**WILL OWEN**  
Centre




**ADAM PETERS**  
Second / Back Row



**DAN RICHARDSON**  
Prop

Dual Registered  
Leicester Tigers



**JOE RICHARDSON**  
Hooker

Dual Registered  
Worcester Warriors



**JOE SNOW**  
Scrum Half

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**TOM STANTON**  
Centre / Wing / Fullback

Dual Registered  
Gloucester Rugby



**ROB STEVENSON**  
Wing



**TOBY TRINDER**  
Prop

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

**Louis Mann** : E [lmann@coventryrugby.co.uk](mailto:lmann@coventryrugby.co.uk) T 02476 231001

Find more about our players at [www.coventryrugby.co.uk](http://www.coventryrugby.co.uk)

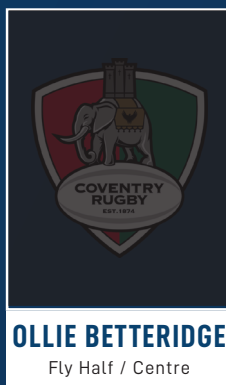
# COVENTRY RUGBY DEVELOPMENT SQUAD



**TOM BALL**  
Back Row



**FRED BETTERIDGE**  
Back Row



**OLLIE BETTERIDGE**  
Fly Half / Centre



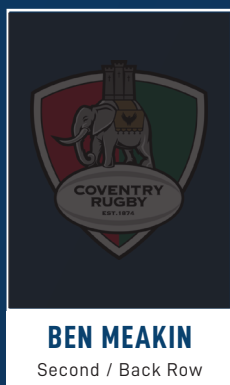
**JAKE BRIDGES**  
Prop



**LOUIS JAMES**  
Centre / Wing



**JOE BROCK**  
Fullback



**BEN MEAKIN**  
Second / Back Row



**EVAN MITCHELL**  
Fly Half



**KIT SMITH**  
Back Row



**RHYS THOMAS**  
Second Row

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KNIGHTS**

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RUGBY**

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**NOTTINGHAM  
RUGBY**

**NOTTINGHAM  
RUGBY**

SAT 6 NOV 3PM

# TODAY'S OPPO

## DONCASTER KNIGHTS

*By John Butler*



**F**inally, the day has arrived! Three home pre season games, but today for all regulars to the Butts Park Arena, for the first time in some 18 months, Championship Rugby returns.

A tough start indeed as well to the 2021/22 season as we welcome Doncaster Knights, considered by many to be one of the likely contenders for honours this season, being one of the fully professional sides in the Division. A warm welcome to their squad, coaches, management & supporters.

Meetings between Cov & the Knights only go back some 16 seasons to 2005/06, meaning that all have either been in League or Championship Cup rugby. To date, with the league meetings all having been in the Championship or National League One, our clubs have met a total of 17 times, Doncaster leading 10-7 in victories.

Last season with COVID 19 curtailing matters, with the second meeting here cancelled, the Knights won a very close encounter 19pts-20 on their Castle Park ground, Cov coming mighty close near the end to pulling off what would have been a notable win.

A season earlier, 2019/20, we gained the league double over the Knights, all of which means our visitors are seeking their first league win here since 2018/19, when they won 17pts -23.

In the Championship Cup, which of course lasted just one season also in 2018/19, both sides won on the opposing ground!

It is also worth remembering that between the seasons 2009/10 – 2018/19, we only met in the one campaign, 2013/14 because of differing league status.

Director of Rugby at Castle Park is Steve Boden, who took on the role ahead of the 2020/21 season from Clive Griffiths, having previously returned as forwards coach. Boden in his playing days had made 188 senior appearances for the Knights. Steve Graham has been named Club Captain, assisted by the co captains Sam Olver & Billy Mc Bryde.

Doncaster have played just the one pre season game, losing closely away by 29pts-33 at Premiership Newcastle Falcons, after coming back strongly in the second half. In common with a majority of Championship clubs, the Knights have overseen a significant number of changes in their playing ranks during the close season. One of their additions to the squad was lock/back row forward George Oram, who moved from Richmond having missed all of last season through injury. George, a very popular figure previously at the BPA, made 56 appearances in a Cov jersey during his three seasons here.

Conversely in the opposite direction, prop forward Joe Jones moved here from Castle Park during the last close season.

Both our sides without any doubt enjoy the fast open style of game whenever possible & today's meeting promises to be a very exciting encounter indeed.



# PLAYERS TO WATCH

By Chris Wearmouth



## SAM OLVER #10 - Fly Half

Sam Olver has become the fulcrum around which the Doncaster Knights game plan depends. Cov supporters will need little reminding of the way the 26-year-old orchestrated his team's first half against the blue and whites at Castle Park last season, creating a couple of tries with deft kicking and neat footwork.

Olver has found his niche in Yorkshire, having found opportunities more limited at both Worcester and Northampton, where he had come through the Academy system as a teenager to win England Under-20 honours and the Premiership Rugby Shield in 2016/17.

Olver comes from a family with plenty of rugby pedigree. His father John represented England and captained Northampton, and Tom and Ben Curry are cousins.



## JOSH PETERS #19 - Second Row

Castle Park has become a home for several ex-Northampton Saints youngsters, such as Sam Olver and new centre Fraser Strachan, who joined from Ealing Trailfinders in the close season.

Josh Peters' signing may have been under the radar, but he has similar pedigree as the backline pair, having come through the Saints Academy from Oundle School. Peters won England Under-18 honours in 2013 and played for both Cambridge and Cov on loan, and then Blackheath between 2018 and 2020.

Peters – who won the most recent of eight international caps for Spain against Romania in March 2021 – then headed to France to play for Stade Dijonnais.

The 25-year-old second row returns to England with plenty to prove, and is still relatively early in his career as a forward to reach his goals.



## In partnership with Coventry Rugby

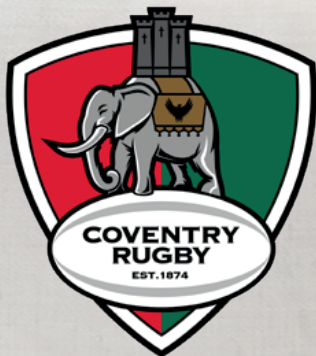
Working together, we've helped deliver over 100 hours of rugby-based learning to schools in Coventry and the wider West Midlands area.

### Rugby & Reading

Inspiring 5-11 year olds to exercise both body and mind, through first team players reading with children in schools for an hour, before enjoying a hands-on game of tag rugby.

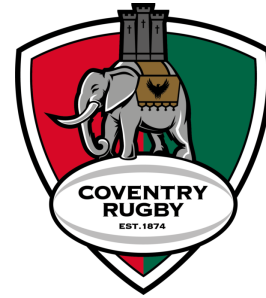
### Rugby in Schools

Providing fun coaching sessions for 5-16 year olds, led by first team players and coaches.



# TOM EMERY

## COV'S GB RUGBY 7



Tom Emery, left joined by fellow Seven Tom Mitchell, Right. (IG: @\_tomemery)

Last week Coventry Rugby's Tom Emery was announced as part of the 13 man squad for the forthcoming 2021 HSBC Canada Sevens in Vancouver (18-19 September) and Edmonton (25-26 September).

The men's Series competition sees the 12 teams divided into three pools of four teams, alike the format used at the Olympic Games. GB Sevens will compete in Pool B and will face Ireland and invitational teams Hong Kong and Jamaica.

Tom Emery always had a penchant for Sevens - his Saints Senior Academy contract was signed at the Bury St Edmunds Sevens in 2016 and he featured in four Premiership Sevens Series while still in his teens - so it was little surprise that when he left Franklin's Gardens in the summer of 2019, he was snapped up by the England Sevens programme. It is in the shortened version of the sport where he has

gone on to shine, playing regularly on the international stage before joining Cov almost a year ago.

"When Tom left Northampton two of three years ago he looked to go down the Sevens route and he's progressed well into that GB group," Coventry's Director of Rugby, Rowland Winter told BBC CWR in a March 2021 interview. "He's still got a bit of work to do and hurdles to jump but Tom's a talented player who can play in a number of positions".

Emery is joined by a talented group of players representing Great Britain. Some familiar faces for Emery, with fellow Welsh squad members Paddy Kelly and Jamie Farndale having been apart of the wider GB Sevens training outfit prior to the Olympics.

Tom Bowen, Alex Davies, Robbie Fergusson, Ross McCann and Max McFarland join the squad on the back of competing for Team GB in the 2021 Tokyo Olympic Games.

French international Calum Randle joins the 13 strong squad alongside, Jamie Barden, who carries previous England Sevens's experience and Freddie Rodderick, who exhibited an impressive performance in this year's domestic Super Sevens Series.

Off-pitch, Emery has been raising awareness for E4Erin, for which he was announced as their first ambassador earlier this month.



Seven year old Erin has had 114 blood transfusions and promotes giving blood on social media. Erin has Heart Disease, Kidney Disease, Liver Disease, Vasculitis, severe

Hypertension and has had Neutropenic Sepsis twice after a large hemorrhage in June 2017. Follow @\_E4Erin\_ on Instagram, give blood and keep your eyes peeled for Tom's E4Erin try celebration.

Best of luck to Tom and the team in Canada!

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# THIS JUST IN!



## NEW RULES IN PLACE FOR 2021/22 PREMIERSHIP CAMPAIGN

Several new laws to have been introduced for the 2021/22 Premiership rugby union. The laws form part of a trial by World Rugby, which aim to make the sport safer before the 2023 Rugby Union World Cup in France.

The laws address a number of concerns which have seen many players retire from the sport due to injury.

Meanwhile, a panel of World Rugby Independent Concussion Consultants (ICC) will be also introduced into the Premiership.

The ICC panel will provide independent expert opinion on whether a player should return to action following a confirmed concussion and the successful completion of the six-stage graduated return to play process for elite competitions.

### What are the new Premiership laws?

- A successful **50:22** kick will give a team put-in to the line-out if they kick into touch indirectly (i.e. on the bounce) when kicking either from their own half into the opposition 22m. The law trial aims to force

players to drop deeper in the defensive line, creating space for attackers.

- In the in-goal area, if; an attacking player is held up, there is an attacking knock-on or an attacking kick is grounded by the defensive side, **play will restart with a goalline drop-out**. This law trial is intended to reduce the number of scrums, reward good defence, encourage counter-attacking and increase the rate of ball in play

- **Pre-bound pods of players:** The practice of pods of three or more players being pre-bound prior to receiving the ball has been outlawed. The sanction will be a penalty kick

- **Sanctioning the lower limb clear-out:** Players who target/drop their weight onto the lower limbs of a jackler will be penalised. The sanction will be a penalty kick

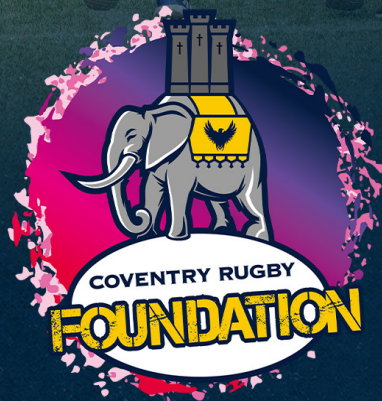
- **Tightening law relating to latching:** A one-player latch will be permitted, but this player has the same responsibilities as a first arriving player (i.e. must stay on feet, enter through gate and not fall to floor). The sanction will be a penalty kick



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# COVENTRY RUGBY

## COMMUNITY | FOUNDATION

The Community Department and Coventry Foundation have had a successful summer in delivering multi sports and rugby camps throughout the surrounding areas to approximately 300 children. Project 500 supported by the Coventry Rugby Foundation was another huge success with 3 camps taking place at the Butts and Morrisons supermarket supporting us with food parcels for all involved.

### UPCOMING RUGBY CAMPS

This October will see the following camps taking place:

- 27TH OCTOBER** - Bedworth RFC
- 28H OCTOBER** - Butts Park – Multi Sport
- 29TH OCTOBER** - Earlsdon RFC

If anybody would like further information on anything above please email [community@coventryrugby.co.uk](mailto:community@coventryrugby.co.uk)



# COVENTRY RUGBY 21/22 FIXTURES

## SEPTEMBER

- H** Nottingham  
18/08/2021 • 15:00
- H** Wasps  
04/09/2021 • 15:00
- H** Gloucester  
11/09/2021 • 15:00
- H** Doncaster  
18/09/2021 • 15:00
- A** Ampthill  
25/09/2021 • 15:00

## OCTOBER

- H** Richmond  
02/10/2021 • 15:00
- A** Hartpury  
08/10/2021 • 19.45
- H** Ealing  
23/10/2021 • 15:00
- A** Cornish Pirates  
30/10/2021 • 14:30

## NOVEMBER

- H** Nottingham  
06/11/2021 • 15:00
- A** London Scottish  
27/11/2021 • 15:00

## DECEMBER

- H** Bedford Blues  
04/12/2021 • 15:00
- A** Jersey Reds  
11/12/2021 • 15:00
- A** Doncaster  
18/12/2021 • 14:30
- H** Ampthill  
26/12/2021 • TBC

## JANUARY

- A** Richmond  
02/01/2022 • 15:00
- H** Hartpury  
15/01/2022 • 15:00
- A** Ealing  
22/01/2022 • 15:00
- H** Cornish Pirates  
29/01/2022 • 15:00

## FEBRUARY

- A** Nottingham  
11/02/2022 • 19.45
- H** London Scottish  
26/02/2022 • 15:00

## MARCH

- H** British Army  
05/03/2022 • 15:00
- A** Bedford Blues  
12/03/2022 • TBC
- H** Jersey Reds  
19/03/2022 • 15:00

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