

DINNINGTON RUFC NEWS

July 2026 Edition



Welcome to our *Promotion Special*

It has been a historic and unforgettable 24 months for Dinnington RUFC. Back-to-back promotions have officially put the club on the map as a rapidly rising force in regional rugby.

Following an incredible run over the last two seasons, we have proven that this club has no ceiling. From our senior squads making history to our youngest players taking their very first steps on the pitch, we end the year on an absolute high with club-wide celebrations.

Inside this edition...

We sit down for an exclusive, in-depth interview with First Team Coach Matt Challinor to reflect on the attitude, sacrifice, and community grit that made this double promotion possible. We also shine a spotlight on the future of our club: the incredible U7s squad!

Club Highlights

May Day Rugby Festival: Check out the highlights from our massive Bank Holiday family event, which drew around 2,000 attendees to South Yorkshire's largest Mini/Junior section.

M&J Spotlight: Celebrating our unstoppable U7s finishing their very first season of tag rugby!



Get your calendars out!
The 2026/27 fixtures are out!



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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW:

“ SWITCHING THE DIAL ”

First Team Coach Matt Challinor reflects on back-to-back promotions and the journey ahead

Q: Two consecutive promotions—this is a historic achievement for Dinnington. Looking back at the last 24 months, what do you think was the turning point or the defining moment where you knew this group was capable of going back-to-back?

A: I think it was early on. If you cast your mind back to the two previous seasons where the guys just avoided relegation, when myself and Johnny knew we were going to take over, we went to those games. Where they were fighting for survival, you could quite easily tell that the team had a lot of growth in them and a lot of good individuals.

What helped us was a bit of a cup run where we went to the Papa Johns Cup final. That was only a couple of weeks after myself and Johnny took over. It was just switching the dial with a bit of belief. The players were always there, but it becomes a bit of a habit where they were just losing by small margins. We reset it by building an expectancy: **"Look, you guys are good enough to win. If you're not, something's going wrong from you guys."** Putting a bit of positive pressure on us was the main switch. The Papa Johns Cup run was definitely the time where we realized, **"We've got something here, we can do something with that."**

Q: Winning is hard, but sustaining it across two different leagues is even harder. What do you see from the players in terms of attitude, sacrifice, and work ethic behind the scenes that made this double promotion possible?

A: Going back to the first question, in terms of ability, the team definitely had it. A bit of cohesion has been the main ingredient for how we've progressed.

The guys do work hard, and training has reflected that. There is an element of fitness—the guys don't particularly like that—but it puts us in good stead. There are a lot of games where the margins are quite small. If we go a score or two scores behind with say 20 minutes to go, I know the guys have got it in them. So, the main ingredients are the work rate and the belief in themselves. The guys are all good players capable of playing a lot higher than they were

Q: Of all the matches, tries, and defensive stands over the past two seasons, is there one specific moment or game that perfectly sums up the spirit of this squad?

A: There are quite a few occasions. There are games where you're not always going to be on the ascendancy, and you're not going to have it all your own way.

The one that sticks out in my mind is last season when we played Ripon away. They are a good side at home; I don't think they lost to anyone except us. Again, things didn't go right for us; we had quite a few injuries, and there was no good reason for us to win that. But the guys dug in with determination. There were times when they were camping out on our line for three or four-minute periods, and we won on the last play of the game. There was no good reason for us to win that other than sheer determination and that kind of attitude.

Q: The connection between the players and the supporters at Lodge Lane has been incredible during this run. How much of a role did this club unity and community backing play in pushing the lads over the finish line?

A: Yeah, it is massively important. As cringey and cliché as it sounds, they are the 16th man. Success breeds success, and we do get a lot of supporters following us through away games. It is like a good pressure, because they understand what the lads' capabilities are. The guys are a tight family, they try and represent everybody in the club, and it's an added pressure but a good one.



ON TO THE NEXT CHALLENGE: REGIONAL 2 NORTH EAST

Q: You've proven we can dominate the previous tiers, but stepping up again changes the landscape. How do you see the tactical and physical demands changing for the first team now that we're in this higher league?

A: In terms of physical demands, I don't think it'll be an issue for us. This league that we're going into—**Regional 2 North East**—is a really competitive league. If you look at some of the teams that are in there—Morley is a traditional big rugby club, and obviously Cleckheaton—a lot of guys at this level will be getting paid.

Our team is relatively young. I know we've got a few stalwarts in there, but there is a lot of growth. I keep talking about how we haven't hit our ceiling, and in the past few seasons, when we do play the better teams—or the perceived better teams—that brings out the best in us. It is a challenge, but the guys are more than capable of taking that step.



BUILDING SQUAD DEPTH IN COUNTIES 4 YORKSHIRE C

Q: To protect what we've built and sustain success at this level, squad depth becomes the ultimate currency. How important is it going to be to build on the current foundation and foster fierce competition for shirts?

A: With the development of the second team going into a structured league—**Counties 4 Yorkshire C**—where instead of having "gimmies" and people not being on the same level, we now know who we're playing in advance with its structure. Again, there are some pretty big teams in there. It'll force the lads into raising their standards as well.

We do rely on the second team quite heavily. It is one club. The previous year we had next to no injuries, but last year, off the top of my head, I believe we used in the region of 36 players. So it's important that they're getting competitive rugby. That way, when they do get called up due to form or injury, they can make a good account of themselves. It's massively important.



Q: With Dinnington officially on the map as a rapidly rising club, what would your message be to the ambitious local players who want to be part of our proven winning environment?

A: Success breeds success. If any potential players are coming into a competitive environment, they should know we pick the team on form. I know in previous years certain players would play week in, week out, but we reward performance. Whether you're an established first-teamer or you've just had a chance, if you perform well, you'll stay in that position in the team.

It's a relatively young team with lots of growth in it, there's a good social side to it, and there is a massive feel-good factor around the club. That goes hand in hand with winning, but we've created that atmosphere. People will be welcomed, they'll be challenged, and if they keep their side of the bargain, they'll play regular rugby at a very good level.

Q: For any players wanting to test themselves and join the pre-season, how do they get in touch? Can they come down to training?

A: There are a few different avenues. You can reach out to me directly, or to Johnny, and even the club website has brought in quite a few players.

We start on the 23rd of June. There will inevitably be a fitness element to it, but we'll try and get the balls out and the skills out as soon as possible. We've given ourselves enough time. It's not regimental and we do have a lot of fun, but it's important that we build a foundation of fitness.

Everybody's welcome, whatever level you are—whether you've played at a good level before, whether you're restarting your rugby career, or are brand new to it. We've got an inclusive club where everybody's welcome. The pinnacle is the adult team, and if you're a serious rugby player or a social player, it's the place to be, and we can tailor that to your needs.

Q: As we look to add quality to the squad for this new chapter, how do we ensure we keep that unique Dinnington identity and grit that got us those two promotions in the first place?

A: Well, if we're being honest, the squad we've got is more than capable to compete, but we're always on the lookout to add new players. A new player coming in would have to impress and be of a certain level. The guys police themselves; there is real good camaraderie between them and a strong social side to it.

We do welcome new players, but if we're able to keep people fit, the nucleus we have will be fine for the standard we're moving into. We're always on the lookout for some gems to add to the first team, but I don't think that will be five or six players. It'll be one or two rough diamonds.

Q: Have you got a message for anyone wanting to come down, whether to play or just to watch?

A: The main takeaway is that people are welcome to come and join the club. We're in new territory going into a league where it'll be really competitive. I think we'll be more than competitive, but it's not going to be a case where we run away with it. We've got to be on our mettle to compete.

WHAT DO NEW PLAYERS GET?

For an annual package of **£350**, new players receive:

- Full stash bundle
- Annual gym membership
- Club membership

Note: Often our lads manage to find a player sponsor, meaning it frequently doesn't cost them a single penny! Even if paid out of pocket, it breaks down to just about £10 a week. Once you take out the value of the custom stash and the gym membership, it works out to pennies.



MINI & JUNIOR SPECIAL: THE UNSTOPPABLE U7s!



Celebrating a Fantastic First Season of Tag Rugby

While our senior teams have been dominating their leagues, the future of Dinnington RUFC has been burning up the turf at Lodge Lane! We want to say a massive congratulations to our incredible **Under 7s squad**, who have just completed their very first official season of tag rugby.

Moving from training games to playing competitive tag rugby is a huge milestone, and these young players have handled it with amazing spirit, teamwork, and a massive amount of fun. Every single week, they have shown incredible determination, learned the core values of rugby, and brought plenty of smiles to the faces of coaches and parents alike.

As the largest Mini & Junior section in South Yorkshire with over 300 active pathway players, seeing our U7s transition into club rugby so successfully proves that the Dinnington spirit is alive and well from the ground up.

A huge thank you to all the dedicated coaches, volunteers, and parents who have supported the team across their debut season. We can't wait to see this group progress next year! **Up the Dinno!**



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Dinnington RUFC

Under U8s!

New Season



As we begin a new rugby season, we're excited to welcome everyone back as our Under 7s step up into Under 8s. It's a great milestone and one that reflects just how far this group has already come.

★ Looking Back on a Fantastic First Season

Last season was all about introducing the game, building confidence, and most importantly, having fun.

We saw incredible development across the whole squad. From those first uncertain sessions to confidently getting stuck into matches, every player made progress in their own unique way—whether that was learning to pass the ball backwards, making their first tag, or simply having the confidence to get involved.

What stood out most was the resilience and commitment shown by the group. Every player faced their own challenges, but they kept turning up, kept trying, and kept improving. That's something they should all be extremely proud of.

● Built on Strong Foundations - The TREDs Values

Last season, the team really began to bring the RFU core values—Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship (TREDs)—to life.

- Teamwork was evident in the way players supported and encouraged each other
- Respect was shown towards teammates, coaches, referees and opposition
- Enjoyment was clear every week, with smiles and energy across the pitch
- Discipline developed as players learned the structure and rules of the game
- Sportsmanship shone through in how the team approached both winning and losing

These values will continue to be at the heart of everything we do as we move into Under 8s.

👏 Thank You

Before we look ahead, it's important to recognise those who made last season possible:

- Our coaches and volunteers – for your time, energy and commitment
- Parents and families – for your unwavering support each week, whatever the weather
- And of course, the players – for their enthusiasm, effort and team spirit

Together, you've built a brilliant foundation for the seasons ahead.

🚀 Looking Ahead to Under 8s

As we move into the Under 8s age group, the focus now shifts towards:

- Continuing to develop core skills
- Building greater understanding of the game
- Growing confidence on and off the pitch
- And most importantly... keeping rugby fun

This is an exciting stage in the players' journey. The friendships they've formed, the habits they've built, and the values they've learned will all continue to grow.

💬 Final Word

We're incredibly proud of what this group achieved last season—and we're even more excited about what's to come.

Let's keep building, keep supporting each other, and keep enjoying every moment.

Here's to a brilliant season ahead for our Under 8s! 🏉👏



Under 8's Profiles

Bert

Scoring tries, running forward so I can pass and we score

James

I enjoy getting the tags and spending time with my team mates and making new friends

Henri

I love scoring tries

Alex J

I like playing games

Henry B

I like scoring tries and having fun with all my friends

Harrison T

I like getting tags and I like handshakes after. It was fun last season

Edie

I like spending time with my daddy (Coach Marshy), playing and spending time with my friends

Ezra

Friends, Tries and Tags!!

Lucas

I like running with ball, passing and scoring tries but most of all seeing my friends.

Louis H

I love being on a team with my friends and getting lots of tags and tries

Ralphie

Seeing my friends and having lots of fun playing rugby

Harrison L

I like it because we do team work and I get to spend time with my friends

Louis B

I like kicking the rugby balls and seeing my friends



FIXTURES

REGIONAL 2 NORTH EAST

2026

Bradford Salem (A) 12th Sept
Wath-Upon-Deerne (H) 19th Sept
Pontefract (A) 26th Sept
Selby (H) 3rd Oct
Wetherby (A) 17th Oct
Malton and Norton (A) 24th Oct
Moortown (H) 31st Oct
Morley (A) 7th Nov
Old Brodleians (H) 21st Nov
Pocklington (A) 28th Nov
Cleckheaton (H) 5th Dec
Wath-Upon-Deerne (A) 12th Dec

2027

Pontefract (H) 9th Jan
Selby (A) 16th Jan
Wetherby (H) 23rd Jan
Malton and Norton (H) 6th Feb
Moortown (A) 13th Feb
Morley (H) 20th Feb
Old Brodleians (A) 6th Mar
Pocklington (H) 13th Mar
Cleckheaton (A) 3rd Apr
Bradford Salem (H) 10th Apr

COUNTIES 4 YORKSHIRE C

2026

Goole 2XV (H) 12th Sept
Sheffield Oaks (A) 19th Sept
Wheatley Hills 2XV (H) 26th Sept
Stockbridge (A) 3rd Oct
Thornensians (H) 17th Oct
Sheffield 3XV (H) 24th Oct
Wortley (A) 31st Oct
Wath-Upon-Deerne 3XV (H) 7th Nov
Barton and District (A) 21st Nov
Hallamshire (H) 28th Nov
Maltby 2XV (A) 5th Dec
Sheffield Oaks (H) 12th Dec

2027

Wheatley Hills 2XV (A) 9th Jan
Stockbridge (H) 16th Jan
Thornensians (A) 23rd Jan
Sheffield 3XV (A) 6th Feb
Wortley (H) 13th Feb
Wath-Upon-Deerne 3XV (A) 20th Feb
Barton and District (H) 6th Mar
Hallamshire (A) 13th Mar
Maltby 2XV (H) 3rd Apr
Goole 2XV (A) 10th Apr



CLUB METRICS & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Our growth on the pitch is backed by a powerhouse community off it:



Active Members:
Over 900

Adult Players:
Over 70 registered

Mini/Junior Pathway:
The largest section in South Yorkshire with 300+ thriving young players

Digital Reach:
Approximately 100,000 Facebook post views per month keeping our community connected

Foot Traffic:
Welcoming roughly 3,500 visitors to Lodge Lane every month.



Follow us on Social Media
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SUPPORT THE CLUB

PARTNERSHIP PACKAGES

By aligning your brand with Dinnington RUFC, you gain direct access to our growing community while driving the development of grassroots sport.

Bronze

Package Includes:

- Social membership for 2 people
- 1 pitch-side advertising board
- Quarter-page programme advert
- Yearly social media spotlight,
- 2 season tickets,
- and 1 player sponsorship.

£1,100 +VAT

Silver

Package Includes:

- Social membership for 4 people
- 2 pitch-side advertising boards,
- Half-page programme advert
- Quarterly social media spotlight
- 4 season tickets
- 2 player sponsorships
- and prime kit branding

£3,000 +VAT

Gold

Package Includes:

- Social membership for 8 people
- 2 pitch-side advertising boards
- Full-page programme advert
- Monthly social spotlight
- 8 season tickets
- 4 player sponsorships
- Driveway entrance signage
- and international ticket draw access

£5,000 +VAT

Want to get involved?

For individual player sponsorship (£350 + VAT), matchday advertising, or bespoke corporate packages, contact **Matt Starr** on **07969 329 396**.

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Club & Senior Teams sponsors



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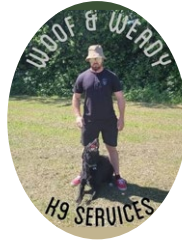
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