£1

BEDFORD BLUES

CAMBRIDGE RUGBY CLUB

BEDFORD BLUES v CAMBRIDGE

Fri 21 Aug 2026 | 7.30pm

BAKER BROTHERS CUP



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HOME FIXTURES 2026/27



BEDFORD BLUES

FRI 21 AUG	7.30PM	CAMBRIDGE
FRI 11 SEP	7:30PM	BATH
SAT 26 SEP	3PM	CHINNOR
SAT 10 OCT	5PM	CORNISH PIRATES
SAT 31 OCT	3PM	HARTPURY
FRI 13 NOV	7:45PM	DONCASTER KNIGHTS
SAT 5 DEC	3PM	COVENTRY
SUN 20 DEC	4PM	CALDY
FRI 1 JAN	3PM	RICHMOND
SAT 30 JAN	3PM	BLACKHEATH
FRI 12 FEB	7:45PM	NOTTINGHAM
SAT 27 FEB	3PM	ROTHERHAM TITANS
FRI 12 MAR	7:45PM	THE BRITISH ARMY
SAT 20 MAR	3PM	AMPTHILL
SAT 3 APR	3PM	EALING TRAILFINDERS
SAT 24 APR	3PM	WORCESTER WARRIORS

FIXTURES SUBJECT TO CHANGE



£4 ONLINE DISCOUNT ON ADULT TICKETS

BEDFORDRUGBY.CO.UK/TICKETS

BEDFORD BLUES

Welcome from the DIRECTOR OF RUGBY TEAM TALK



Good evening everyone and welcome back to Goldington Road as we prepare for our first hit out of the new season as we host the Baker Brothers Cup fixture against our local rivals, Cambridge.

We are very pleased to welcome Craig Newby, his coaching team and playing squad here to Bedford for tonight's clash, which will allow both teams to continue their fine tuning ahead of respective league campaigns.

It's been 83 days since we were last here at Goldington Road and the boys are raring to go for another new season, starting tonight with the opportunity of silverware on the line and an early chance to put a marker down for what we want to achieve in the coming year.

Away from tonight's game, it's been a busy few weeks headlined arguably by the renewal of our Strategic Partnership with Northampton Saints, which heads into a seventh campaign. The relationship continues to grow, and I'm really excited to see how we can work together on and off the field.

We were obviously sad to lose Jim Henry from the coaching group but wish him all the best with his permanent full-time position at Saints. His departure gives Reece Marshall the opportunity to come in and put his own stamp on things defensively, and he's already making great strides.

There was incredible retention over the Summer with 22 players re-signing, added to by the addition of four new faces to the group, all of whom will feature tonight and wear club colours for the first time.

Last season was nothing short of incredible and we will be doing everything we can to ensure more memories are made throughout 2026/27, starting tonight as we look to retain the Baker Brothers Cup and maintain our impressive run under the lights here in recent times.

As ever we can't wait to have you all behind us, this being the first of two home fixtures before the league season begins at Worcester in the middle of September.

We hope to make it another exciting season here at Goldington Road. Be loud and be proud tonight.

Come On You Blues

Mike Rayer

RUGBY STAFF

DIRECTOR OF RUGBY
Mike Rayer
FORWARDS COACH
Cameron Boon
DEFENCE COACH
Reece Marshall
ATTACK/PLAYER COACH
Michael Le Bourgeois
PERFORMANCE ANALYST
Jake McKenzie
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING
Jamie Bain & Bailey Thomas
TEAM MANAGER
Rob Crowle
HEAD PHYSIOTHERAPIST
Mair Seal
SPORTS THERAPIST
Rudi Chaplin
KIT MANAGER
Dave Robinson

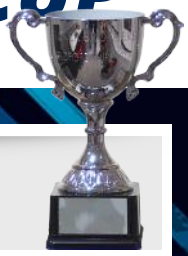






In the Spotlight

BAKER BROTHERS CUP



There's silverware on the line again this evening thanks to the continued support of Bedford based, Baker Brothers, with Blues captain Alex Day looking to lift the trophy for the second time, after its inaugural edition last year.

Blues are going for eight in a row in this fixture from a competitive standpoint, Cambridge hunting a Goldington Road scalp. It's got all the makings of another humdinger, to the victor the spoils.

Baker Brothers: Bringing together the community

Sport has a remarkable ability to bring people together.

For Baker Brothers, supporting that legacy feels both natural and important. Their own business has been shaped by long-standing relationships and a commitment to doing things properly - valuing craftsmanship, attention to detail and trust built over time.

The Baker Brothers Cup

The inaugural Baker Brothers Cup took place last year, with Bedford Blues becoming the first holders after defeating Ampthill 40–24. This year, Cambridge travel to Goldington Road to challenge for the trophy.

The fixture brings together two clubs with their own histories and ambitions, creating a new chapter in what we hope will become an everlasting part of the local sporting calendar.

Rugby's values reflect the approach taken within Baker Brothers: setting high standards, building relationships carefully and understanding that lasting success comes through dedication and consistency.



Remembering Jonno Garland

This year's fixture will also hold a special significance as the teams come together in memory of Jonno Garland, a Bedford Blues Season Ticket holder who sadly passed away during last season's meeting between the sides at Ellgia Fields.

Sport has long provided a place for communities to remember those who have been part of their story. We are honoured that the Baker Brothers Cup will form part of that remembrance this year.

Investing in the future

Baker Brothers' support of Bedford Blues is an investment in a club with a strong heritage and an important future.

We hope the Baker Brothers Cup develops its own history over the years ahead, becoming a fixture that supporters anticipate, players aspire to win and future generations recognise as part of Bedford's sporting heritage.

Tonight attentions turn to the pitch. There will be competition, atmosphere and the excitement that comes with two clubs competing for a trophy. Around the rugby, there will be families in the stands, supporters coming together and young people experiencing a brilliant atmosphere.

Supporting Bedford Blues and the Baker Brothers Cup gives an opportunity to invest in something with genuine local significance and help a valued institution continue to thrive.

Here's to a great evening of entertaining rugby!

BAKER BROTHERS
Est. 1839

BEDFORD BLUES

GILBERT



9 The Gilbert Big Interview ALEX DAY

Let's start by talking about tonight's game, Daisy. What are we looking to gain out of this first pre-season fixture?

It's been a little while since our last game, so this is a great chance to get a hit out. Boys have been working really hard in pre-season and it's nice to be back at Goldington Road.

I think the key thing is putting into practise what we've done throughout pre-season training so far. There hasn't been too much turnover in personnel, a couple of different combinations, so it's a mightily important hit out and being back playing rugby again. It'll be a good marker to see where we're at.

There will be errors but that's absolutely fine because we'll try some things, which will hopefully stand us in good stead for the season.

Incredible continuity again this season with just four new arrivals so far. How do you assess things going into the new campaign?

I think some freshness is needed every year, or you could run the risk of becoming stagnant. But I think when you get into those tough games, and tough runs, continuity will help you out a lot.

Definitely nice to have some new faces who bring a different energy and bring something else to the pitch. Everyone does their analysis these days so it won't take long to work out our biggest threats, and if we can add to that, and add a different dynamic in certain positions on the field then that can only be a good thing.

A great positive to have so many sticking around, but also nice to freshen up a bit and challenge different people.

You've been involved in a number of strong seasons with this club. Where do you think we're at in terms of comparisons to last year's run to the play-off final?

It'll sound cliché but time will tell. Everyone starts from scratch again – we're not going to be able to pick up where we left off last season. We won't be as well-oiled as we were back in May.

Pre-season games are what they are, we can make errors, get back to match fitness. But we'll only really know where we are following the Worcester game and that's all that matters really.

You're an incredibly honest captain. What do you think the targets should be for this group in 2026/27?

It has to be the same as every year which is to make the play-offs. Then if we can do that, then you start trying for the Top Four, then Top Two for a home semi-final.

The league is as strong as it has been in recent years, even the teams coming up are going to be dangerous. Let's aim for the Top Six and then if we can achieve that, we'll figure out the rest of it.



TOP FLIGHT WOMEN'S RUGBY AT GR



LOUGHBOROUGH LIGHTNING v SARACENS WOMEN

FRI 2 OCT

7.30pm KO

GOLDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD

£4 ONLINE DISCOUNT ON ADULT TICKETS

BEDFORDRUGBY.CO.UK/TICKETS

JAECOO PWR NEXT GEN CUP

Today's Opponents CAMBRIDGE

Blues have a proud record to defend this evening as they look to continue their Derby Day bragging rights against near neighbours, Cambridge and retain the Baker Brothers Cup.

Just 30 miles separate the two stadia, but meetings have been few and far between over the years, with only seven previous competitive meetings and a few friendlies interspersed throughout.

Bedford have won all those previous battles, including both Elior Champ Rugby meetings last season – a tense 29-28 victory at Goldington Road then a more convincing 50-21 success at Ellgia Fields.

Elsewhere in the rugby landscape, Blues' connection to Cambridge is more historically associated to the University side as opposed to the Blood & Sand.

Despite the relative lack of past battles between the clubs, there has been a genuine pathway both ways between the two for players. Dan Eckersley and Joe Hill made respective moves either way over the Summer, while figures such as Kayde Sylvester, Ben Adams and Billy Walker are all set to again face their former employers.

A little look further back in the history books see names such as Eddie Rennell, Stefan Liebenberg, Darren Fox, James Shanahan, Handre Schmidt and Pat Tapley among others wearing the colours of both sides.

We extend a warm welcome to Cambridge and their supporters and hope they enjoy everything Goldington Road has to offer this evening as the teams meet for the very first time under lights.







BLUES V CAMBRIDGE

Previous Action





BEDFORD BLUES

BAKER BROTHERS CUP

Fri 21 Aug | KO 7.30pm

CAMBRIDGE RUGBY CLUB

BEDFORD BLUES V CAMBRIDGE

15	Louis James	FULL BACK	Ben Gibson	15
14	Ryan Hutler	RIGHT WING	Joe Hill	14
13	George Worth	OUTSIDE CENTRE	Jacob Cusick	13
12	Lucas Titherington	INSIDE CENTRE	Jasper Sorrell	12
11	Marcus Kershaw	LEFT WING	Ethan Thorne	11
10	Will Maisey (Capt)	FLY HALF	Oscar Lewis	10
9	James Lennon	SCRUM HALF	Ruaridh Dawson	9
1	Joey Conway	LOOSE HEAD PROP	Callum Smyth	1
2	Tommy Herman	HOOKER	Tom Petty	2
3	Will Davies-King	TIGHT HEAD PROP	Billy Walker	3
4	Ilan Evans	SECOND ROW	Charlie Friend	4
5	Rory Ward	SECOND ROW	Nile Dacres	5
6	Kayde Sylvester	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	Ted Warner	6
7	Dan Eckersley	OPENSIDE FLANKER	Chris Mills	7
8	Tui Uru	NO 8	(Capt) Ben Adams	8

REPLACEMENTS

James Fish
Monty Royston
Oisin Heffernan
Alex Woolford
James Bennett
Raff Hewitt
Alex Day
Ben Dufficy
Michael Le Bourgeois
Ollie Broughton

OFFICIALS

R Andy Wigley
AR1 Simon Harding
AR2 James Clarke
5th Ben Minney

All Bedford Blues photography by
Claire Jones - redhatphoto.co.uk
Beth Walliker – BW Sports Photography
Jonathan Paice Photography

REPLACEMENTS

Matt Dawson
Sam Turner
John Petty
Tom Campbell
Jesse Cotterill
Josh Carr
Beni Ritson
Ben Barlow
Jacob Milner
Will Wood
Max Hubbard
Anu Otto

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