



ECCLES RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Founded 1897

2021/2022 AGM COLTS RUGBY REPORT

League Campaign.

At the start of the season we had two colts teams u17s and u18s, who both began their season in the preliminary leagues before joining up to make a combined u18s team in October 2021.

The u17s began their journey in Junior F league which we had requested when going through the application process as we believed that with the size and ability of our squad this would make the most enjoyable experience for our lads. We played four games in this league picking up wins against Clitheroe and Broughton park, where we won 58-55. Losing against Aldwinians and Glossop and Marple combined team. Eccles finished third in their league behind both teams they got beaten by.

Played 4 W2 D0 L2

The u18s were placed in preliminary group D to start their season. They were beaten twice in this campaign by eventual winners Kirby Lonsdale and Southport. They drew away to Altrincham kersal 7-7 and won twice against sale and Rossendale. The latter being the teams most spirited performance of the season after being 9-22 until the 60th minute when Josh Wagstaff took it upon himself to score a hattrick to win the game 26-22 with the final play of the game this game also marked the first that the combined team played together.

Played 5 W2 D1 L2

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The u18s then were selected to stay in league D for the conference leagues where they were joined by the u17s to make a combined team (22x u18s 13x u17s). Although having some very close games and at times playing some good rugby the u18s really struggled in the league losing all eight of their games. This was a combination of lack of players attending both games and training. With lads opting to play rugby league by the end of the season.

Played 8 W0 D0 L8

Cup Campaign.

Eccles had a short lived cup competition this year getting knocked out in the quarter final by Rossendale being their only game in late march. This was mainly down too the lack of players that day as most of our stronger players were playing rugby league by then.

Development.

Although the season overall wasn't a success on the pitch our aim was to provide the lads with a positive experience of what senior rugby is like at Eccles which I hope the lads got through their gradual involvement into the mens setup as well as some coach trips they got this year.

As this was our first season back from COVID lockdown the lads couldn't get involved in senior rugby until the start of 2022. But since then we have had a number of lads training on a Tuesday and Thursday with the men. We also had some open age debuts towards the end of the season, Dylan Perfect made a few second team appearances as did Duncan Coop who also played a first team game. Henry Talbot-Dutton also represented the club at senior level this year getting his first 1XV team start in the plate final win at Wigan.

Centres Josh Wagstaff and Louis Lord were selected to play for Lancashire u18s and both are now part of the England u19s rugby league squad for the European championships in Italy.

Overall the Colts team displayed great character this season even when things were going against them.



Looking to next season it looks like our retention of u17s will be good and the lads are looking forward to combining with the U16s who are stepping up to form a new U18 Senior Colts squad of about 30 players.

Coaches: Finlay Cox, Matthew Hope, Wade Dutton, James Bushby, Jeff Smith, Stephen Brennan. Team Manager: Andrew Connell.