

## Tree Heritage

Pleased to Support Leek Rugby Club

Specialists In Professional Tree Care

- Tree Felling & Pruning to BS 3998
- Tree Surveys & Mortgage Reports

01538 384019 07976 822809  
www.treeheritage.co.uk

FULLY QUALIFIED and INSURED • FREE ESTIMATES

## Creating solutions for you

Lafarge Cement is the UK's largest cement maker and supplies around 50 per cent of the market.

Whether you are a construction professional, self builder or home improver we have Lafarge Cement products and solutions designed for you.

Lafarge Cement UK  
Customer Works  
Walsall Road, F6, Stoke on Trent  
Staffordshire  
ST10 3EG  
Tel: 01538 308 000  
www.lafargecement.co.uk

Be advised: you'll always be sure of getting Independent Financial Advice where you see this sign

Call in now to make an appointment

### BRIAN MELLOR

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Russell House • 20 Stockwell Street • Leek • ST13 6DS Tel: 01538 371288  
www.brianmellorfs.co.uk

Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Services Authority

We're pleased to support Leek RUFC

## UPRIGHTS SOLICITORS LTD

12 Market Street, Leek, Staffordshire  
T 01538 388809 F 01538 388810  
www.uprights-solicitors.co.uk

FOUR GOOD REASONS TO CALL US...

- No win, no fee
- We are paid by other parties insurers and do not take one penny from your damages
- We have a proven track record at getting results and getting them quickly
- Most claims concluded in 5-10 months

CALL US ON 01538 388809 or fill out the form on our website

Pleased to support Leek Rugby Club. Wishing you a successful & accident free season!

## LEEK RUGBY CLUB - FIXTURES 2009-10



### 2009/2010 FIRST XVI

Date	Home	vs	Away	Competition	Kickoff
<b>2009</b>					
16th Aug	Various	vs	Leek	RUFC Trentham X's To	12:00PM
22nd Aug	Buxton 8	vs	11 Leek	RUFC Cup	3:00PM
29th Aug	Leek RUFC	vs	Southwell	Friendly	3:00PM
5th Sep	Wednesbury	vs	Leek	County Cup	3:00PM
12th Sep	Leek	vs	Old Yardleians	League	3:00PM
19th Sep	Leek RUFC	vs	Edwardian	Senior Vase	3:00PM
26th Sep	Tamworth	vs	Leek	League	3:00PM
3rd Oct	Leek	vs	Telford Hornets	League	3:00PM
10th Oct	Veseyans	vs	Leek	League	3:00PM
17th Oct	Leek	vs	Bishops Castle & Onny Valley	League	3:00PM
31st Oct	Bloxwich	vs	Leek	League	3:00PM
7th Nov	Leek	vs	Burntwood	League	2:15PM
14th Nov	Handsworth	vs	Leek	League	2:15PM
28th Nov	Leek	vs	Wednesbury	League	2:15PM
5th Dec	Leek	vs	Moseley Oak	League	2:15PM
12th Dec	Newcastle (Staffs)	vs	Leek	League	2:15PM
19th Dec	Leek	vs	Tamworth	League	2:15PM
26th Dec	Leek	vs	RUFC	RUFC	3:00PM
<b>2010</b>					
2nd Jan	Leek RUFC	vs	Trentham A	Friendly	3:00PM
9th Jan	Telford Hornets	vs	Leek	League	2:15PM
16th Jan	Leek	vs	Veseyans	League	2:15PM
23rd Jan	Bishops Castle & Onny Valley	vs	Leek	League	2:15PM
30th Jan	Leek	vs	Bloxwich	League	2:15PM
13th Feb	Burntwood	vs	Leek	League	2:15PM
20th Feb	Leek	vs	Handsworth	League	2:15PM
27th Feb	Leek RUFC	vs	Congleton	Friendly	3:00PM
6th Mar	Wednesbury	vs	Leek	League	3:00PM
27th Mar	Moseley Oak	vs	Leek	League	3:00PM
10th Apr	Leek	vs	Newcastle (Staffs)	League	3:00PM
17th Apr	Old Yardleians	vs	Leek	League	3:00PM
24th Apr	Leek RUFC	vs	Buxton	Cup	3:00PM
1st May	Linley & Kidsgrove	vs	Leek RUFC	Cup	3:00PM

### 2009/2010 SECOND XVI

Date	Home	vs	Away	Competition	Kickoff
<b>2009</b>					
22nd Aug	Buxton 29	vs	22 Leek	RUFC Friendly	3:00PM
29th Aug	Leek RUFC	vs	Southwell	Friendly	3:00PM
5th Sep	Ashbourne	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	2:15PM
12th Sep	St Leonards	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	3:00PM
19th Sep	Stoke	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	3:00PM
26th Sep	Leek RUFC	vs	Tamworth	Merit	3:00PM
3rd Oct	Telford	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	3:00PM
10th Oct	Leek RUFC	vs	Lichfield	Merit	3:00PM
17th Oct	Stafford	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	3:00PM
24th Oct	Walsall	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	3:00PM
31st Oct	Leek RUFC	vs	Willenhall	Merit	3:00PM
7th Nov	Burntwood	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	2:15PM
14th Nov	Leek RUFC	vs	Wolverhampton	Merit	2:15PM
21st Nov	Leek RUFC	vs	Longton	Merit	2:15PM
28th Nov	Wednesbury	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	2:15PM
5th Dec	Linley & Kidsgrove	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	2:15PM
12th Dec	Leek RUFC	vs	Newcastle	Merit	2:15PM
19th Dec	Tamworth	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	2:15PM
26th Dec	Leek RUFC	vs	Leek RUFC	RUFC	12:00PM
<b>2010</b>					
2nd Jan	Trentham B	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	2:15PM
9th Jan	Leek RUFC	vs	Telford	Friendly	2:15PM
16th Jan	Veseyans	vs	Leek RUFC	Friendly	2:15PM
23rd Jan	Leek RUFC	vs	Walsall	Merit	2:15PM
30th Jan	Longton	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	2:15PM
6th Feb	Leek RUFC	vs	Ashbourne	Friendly	2:15PM
13th Feb	Leek RUFC	vs	Burntwood	Friendly	2:15PM
20th Feb	Wolverhampton	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	2:15PM
27th Feb	Leek RUFC	vs	Stoke	Merit	2:15PM
6th Mar	Leek RUFC	vs	Wednesbury	Friendly	3:00PM
13th Mar	Willenhall	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	3:00PM
20th Mar	Leek RUFC	vs	Lichfield	Merit	3:00PM
27th Mar	Leek RUFC	vs	Stafford	Merit	3:00PM
10th Apr	Newcastle	vs	Leek RUFC	Merit	3:00PM
17th Apr	Leek RUFC	vs	St Leonards 1XV	Friendly	3:00PM
24th Apr	Leek RUFC	vs	Buxton	Friendly	3:00PM
1st May	Leek RUFC	vs	Linley & Kidsgrove	Friendly	3:00PM

A new rugby season starts in September and the RFU, governing the game in England has made some important changes to the structure of the leagues.

The most important is at the top of the game, where the demanded for professional players has meant the introduction of a 2nd professional division below

the Guinness Premiership, which is the flagship of the game in England and probably, the northern hemisphere.

The addition of this division, known as The Championship sees Bristol, relegated from the Premiership last season, contest in a 12 team division including former household names such as Coventry, Moseley and London Welsh.

This addition has caused a concertina effect throughout the lower leagues which eventually affects all clubs, including Leek.

The National leagues now have 16 team divisions and local rivals Macclesfield play in National League 2 North.

Leek will now play in the 12 team league known as Midlands Division 3 West (North), alongside Staffordshire neighbours Newcastle, Tamworth, Wednesbury, Burntwood and promoted Bloxwich.

Longton plays in the newly names National 3 Midlands Division and Stoke, Walsall and Burton will play in Midlands 1 West with Stafford, Lichfield and Willenhall playing in Midlands 2 West.

On the law front, there have been two critical changes that will be felt by all clubs playing rugby this season.

The first is to do with the handling of the ball after a tackle. When a player, standing on his feet is grappling for the ball from a player on the floor who has been tackled, he is now allowed to continue to fight for the ball, even when other players have formed a ruck around him.

Up until this season, the ball would have been deemed "in a ruck" and so should not be played by the hand.

This law change should see the game speed up even more and make players stay on their feet.

We think it will take some time for players at Leek's level to fully appreciate the difference this law change will make, but it will definitely help the fitter sides in the league.

The 2nd major change affects the role of replacements.

There has been much made of the apparent cheating by some clubs when they are losing the scrum to remove a prop and advise the referee that they have no further front row replacement. At this point, the referee has to advise both teams that the scrums will be uncontested. This has caused ill feeling amongst clubs and also has meant some games had to be replayed, if at the time of the incident, the scores were close.

For a number of years in France, the club game has had a rule whereby when all front row replacements have been used, if a team then has a front row player removed, they can replace him with a non specialist front row player, but they must remove another player from the field. In other words, the team will play out the rest of the game with one player fewer than their opposition.

In France, the evidence is that it has stopped a lot of disruption to the game with uncontested scrums, so this law change has been adopted at all levels in England this season.

At Leek's level, the teams are allowed to name 3 replacement players and must name 4 front row specialists before the game. This law change should encourage clubs to improve the recruitment of front row players and hopefully games will not be blighted by uncontested scrums - we shall see.

Leek starts the season having recruited a new Club Coach over the summer. Ian Gittens, an RFU Level 3 coach, has started to impose his brand of rugby on the players and they, in turn, have responded well to his coaching. Leek's more junior players, turning 17 over the summer, have been particularly consistent in training and a number of them have played in the senior friendly matches played already.

Chris Mudd and Graeme Bell both committed to coach at the start of pre season training back in May and both have done a great job getting players fit and introducing some structure into their training sessions.

Neil Edge starts his 2nd year as Director of Rugby, whilst still playing for the 2nd XV and the nomination of captains took an unusual twist this season as 2 players were the subject of a rare vote at the AGM to succeed Simon Beeston as 1st XV captain.

Simon ended a 2 year spell as captain with an injury that could threaten his playing career and the whole club wishes him well in his comeback.

The new captain for 2009/10 is young flanker Adam Nettel. Adam won his county cap last season, having played 5 county championship matches and is improving all the time.

His enthusiasm for the game and the club, having risen through the age groups should rub off on all players and he will lead by example.

His vice captain is Dave Kennaway, who didn't play a lot last season through injury, but is looking sharper with every game.

Dan Needham and Gary McDermott start the season at Leek having come back from Macclesfield towards the end of last season and with James Wilson recovering from a serious injury last season, there is competition in the centre.

Adam Smith has returned to Leek having spent a few years playing in Italy and Tom Laverick, Leek's young quick wing, looks to have recovered his fitness in time for the season.

In the forwards, long term injured Tom Hine may feature this season, but Charlie Fitcher has picked

up a niggling injury that could keep him out for some time.

James Sutton at hooker though is returned from university and looks a fine prospect and with young props Jamie Gordon and Dan Cooper blooded in the 1st team, Jason Milner and Des Birnie will need to be playing well to hold their places.

Veteran Dave Hodgkinson has also returned from a year at Uttoxeter and he will be challenged at lock by young Kieran Flanders, with Andy McFadden a couple of weeks away from returning from an injury.

Howard Render is also looking fitter and with a number of young backrow and 2nd row players impressing in the friendlies against Buxton and Southwell, notably Luke Hardern, George Hunt and Jack Conliffe, there will be good competition for places.

The 2nd team captain this season is scrum half Simon Drew and with Staffordshire reforming the 2nd team leagues, Leek find themselves in the top league having impressed

over a number of years against Staffordshire sides. This season they will have to play Longton, Walsall, Burton, Stoke and Lichfield 2nds and it is going to be a very tough season.

This is exactly what is required for the development of the club in order to produce back up and new players breaking into the first team squad and Simon will find the experience very demanding, but with Neal Edge to help him, there is plenty to look forward too this season.

In the 3rd team, Matt Leather takes over as captain and he is supported by Jo Cooper as vice captain and with plenty of older players still keen to play. The 3rds have a vital role to play in supporting the club in its ambition for promotion at 1st team level.

With Wednesbury relegated into Leek's league, there will be an early taste for the 1st team to size up this opposition this Saturday, as Leek travels to Wednesbury for a quarter final clash in the Staffordshire Intermediate Cup. Traditionally, Wednesbury have a big side and this will test the more lightweight, but quicker Leek team, as it tries to put in a good performance ahead of the first league game on September 12th against Old Yardleians at home.

Last season, Leek slumped to its worst league position since leagues were established in 1987, although it is tempered by the fact that the club has only yo-yoed between 2 divisions in all that time.

This season, there is real optimism for an improved effort and there should not be a lot between 5 or 6 sides in this league. It will be imperative to win all home games and have the discipline and courage to play well and win away.

It is not unreasonable to target promotion this season by finishing in the top 2 places, but it will require a degree of luck with injuries and a consistency that the club found 3 years ago when topping this league with only one defeat.

## Post & Times

If you would like to advertise your sporting event or business in this way

Contact Rob on 01538 399599 for more information

Rob: 07824 350 140 or contact via email on: robert.ryan@thepostandtimes.co.uk

## Wishing LEEK RUGBY CLUB a successful season

### Breeze House

01538 398488  
www.breezhouse.co.uk

## BALL

F. Ball and Co. Ltd.

### Wishing Leek Rugby Club much success in the new season

The U.K.'s leading manufacturer of adhesives and floor preparation products for the installation of decorative floorcoverings

F. Ball and Co. Ltd.  
Churnetside Business Park,  
Station Road, Cheddleton,  
Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7RS.  
www.f-ball.co.uk

## Always on your side

We're here to help you with your mortgage and savings needs.

Call into your local branch for more information.

51 Derby Street Leek ST13 6HU  
Tel 01538 386688

50 St Edward Street Leek ST13 5DL  
Tel 01538 392445

**Leek United BUILDING SOCIETY**  
The friendlier face of finance  
www.leekunited.co.uk

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

YOUR HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON YOUR MORTGAGE.