

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Marie Davies

NIC STRAUSS

Back row. 2004-2008. 109 appearances. 16 tries

Our first introduction to Nic was in August 2004. Our new Director of Rugby was former player Rudi Straeuli and Gareth went to pick him up at Heathrow, after he had been on a visit to South Africa. Rudi brought a surprise package back with him - blindside flanker Nic Strauss, who was to become a Goldington Road favourite, making over a hundred appearances for the Blues. Later that week we held an impromptu party after watching South Africa beat the All Blacks. Gareth and Mike Lilley insisted that the win should be celebrated with a rendition of the South African National Anthem 'Nkosi Sikelel iAfrika' (God Bless Africa) sung by Rudi and Nic. They duly obliged and their performance was certainly enthusiastic and entertaining although perhaps not always melodious!

Nic writes:

'I was born in Fort Beaufort in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. My first introduction to rugby was at school where it was compulsory to play all sports. My school and youth rugby was mostly centered around Glenwood High School and Glenwood Old Boys Team. When asked for early rugby influences I always mention the French hooker Jean-Francois Tordo. In 1993 when I was in my teens he captained the French team on their tour to South Africa. Unfortunately, in the second match v Western Province he was raked in the face by South African prop Garry Pagel, required fifty stitches and took no further part in the tour. (Pagel was banned for nine months, later reduced to six. He joined Northampton Saints for the 1997-98 season and became an influential and formidable member of their front row.

Those of you who remember Jean-Francois will recall how closely Nic's unforgettable head of hair resembled the Frenchman's!

My mother who always encouraged me was also very supportive of my interest in rugby and my

subsequent career. One of my rugby heroes who also attended Glenwood High was Scottish born John Allan. John played for Scotland and when apartheid ended he was given the chance to play for South Africa. He subsequently played in 13 tests between 1993-96 and also played in 12 tour matches. After coaching London Scottish from 1997-98 he moved on to coach the Natal Sharks forwards in 1999. Of course, my next coach was Rudi Straeuli who brought me to England and had a great impact on my rugby career.

When I left Glenwood High I played for Glenwood Old Boys before going to Boroughmuir R.F.C. in Scotland. When I returned to Durban I joined the Natal Sharks where I was mainly playing for the Reserves when the opportunity came in 2004, to join coach Rudi Straeuli at Bedford RUFC. I did not hesitate and spent a memorable four seasons at Goldington Road.



NIC IN ACTION FOR BEDFORD



2005-06. NIC, BACK ROW, 4TH FROM RIGHT.

NIC AND CLAIRE. BEDFORD REUNION



BEDFORD FRIENDS

My outstanding memories of my time at the Blues were the two memorable Twickenham Finals in 2005 and 2006, our trips to Otley where we were served very little food post match, but this was remedied by the local excellent fish and chip shop. The marvellous fans at Goldington Road were a great bonus, not forgetting 'Growler John', Nos's Nosh and the great Golf Days v the Former Players. I made many friends and just to mention a few - Ian Vass, Ben Whetstone, Mark Harris, Alex Page, Soane Tonga'uiaha and Chris Johnson. Then, of course, there were the coaching/management friends I made at Bedford - Geoff Irvine, Mike Rayer and Gareth.

It was great to return for an End of Season Reunion Dinner in the marquee at Goldington Road in 2015, to reunite with old friends and teammates and, of course, introduce Claire to Bedford.

In 2008, I had the opportunity to return to the Natal Sharks where we won the Currie Cup which was a great experience. On returning to the UK I joined

London Welsh for a short time, from January to June 2009.

I finished my rugby career in France, joining RC Narbonne, club Pro D2 for the 2009-10 season and played there until I retired in 2018. I played in the back row and the second row and thoroughly enjoyed the rugby.

It is where I met Claire and where we joined in a civil partnership. We have remained in Narbonne and have two great children - Emma and Noah. After retiring from rugby I became the Owner/operator of 'straussfit.com/physical fitness centre' which is my post rugby career.

Sending best wishes to all at Goldington Road and good luck for the rest of the season. Bedford will always be a special place to me.

NIC PLAYING FOR RC NARBONNE

