

FORMER BLUES PLAYERS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Marie Davies



SEAN McCARTHY

Prop

2017- 2021. 82 appearances. 2019-21 Captain. 2021-2023 Forwards Coach.

SEAN'S RUGBY-PLAYING CAREER

2009-12 Worcester Warriors

2012-14 Jersey Reds

2014-15 Leinster

2015-17 Jersey Reds

2017-21 Bedford Blues

INTERNATIONAL CAREER

Ireland U18 team.

Sean writes:

'I was born in Wordsley, Stourbridge. My first introduction to rugby was at Stratford-upon-Avon Mini and Juniors where I played for the Under 9s and was coached by the influential Jason Leonard. I attended Warwick School where my interest in rugby continued. I progressed to the rugby academy at Worcester Warriors where my coaches were Andrew Stanley and Gary Meechan. I started in the back row and gradually moved forward to prop as I got older and slower! I also enjoyed playing football and cricket.

I signed for Bedford in 2017 while playing for Jersey Reds, who I'd returned to after a season at Leinster. That first season at Bedford was memorable. I made 28 appearances, we finished third in the Championship and reached the semi-final of the British and Irish Cup. (This was the best season in League and Cup since 2012-13). My stand-out game was travelling to Cork in December 2017 and beating Munster in the pool stage of the British and Irish Cup, 14-25. (We had good travelling support in Munster and saw tries from Ed Taylor and Dean Adamson (2) with two conversions and two penalties from Will Hooley).

My first two seasons playing at Bedford 2017-18 and 2018-19 were very successful and we did very well, finishing third in both seasons.

The support at Goldington Road was always fantastic, but many away trips were often memorable too. I particularly enjoyed our visits to Plymouth to play at the Brickfields Stadium.

Many of my teammates while playing and coaching at Bedford have become lifelong friends. I have to mention the 'ever elusive' Mark Flanagan and the members of the ever illustrious 'Mushroom Club' - preparing and eating meals together.

Our team-bonding trips were particularly memorable, especially the visits to Bruges and Ypres in 2017 and Bordeaux in 2018. Team trips always featured 'Bedford's Got Talent' competitions and these two were definitely not to be forgotten. We also had an unforgettable visit to Barcelona which included the 2019 Ice Bucket incident! Return journeys after 'away' wins were always interesting, particularly the long journeys home from Cornish Pirates. On one occasion I recall Martin Hynes and Josh Buggea comparing 'chewed up toffees' on the coach back from Cornish Pirates. Don't ask!



2019-2020.

It was a privilege to be asked to captain the Blues in 2019. Obviously, the pandemic made it a very difficult time. For the final game of the 2020-21 season, we welcomed our supporters back for the first time since Covid took hold in March 2020. It was also my last game for the Blues as I had decided to retire from playing. So on May 29th, I finished my playing career on a 'high' with a Blues 32-28 win against Ampthill.



I had never planned on taking up rugby coaching, but when Mike rang to offer me the opportunity, it was too good to pass up. It was 'eye-opening' to see the club from 'the other side' and a fantastic experience for two years. I think it also gave me a soft exit from rugby after finishing playing. Now when people ask me if I miss playing, I can honestly answer 'Not one bit!'

Now, I occasionally watch a local game or head back to Goldington Road when possible. I live in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire with my wife Holly and baby daughter Tallulah. I work in Property Investment.

My years playing and coaching at Bedford were the highlight of my rugby career. I not only met lifelong friends while playing, but it's also where I met Holly, my wife. I will always consider Bedford Blues to be my 'home club!'

