

FORMER BLUES PLAYERS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Marie Davies



WILL CARRICK SMITH

Second Row

2012-13 - 1 appearance. 2016-21 - 108 appearances.

The 2012-13 appearance came while Will was playing for Exeter Chiefs and was asked to come to Bedford to play in the Mobbs Memorial Match.

Will was born in Wandsworth in Southwest London and his father played for Esher RFC. Will's first introduction to the game was at Sherborne Rugby Club where Simon Mottram was his influential coach. His schools were Perrott Hill and Blundell's School which is well known for its rugby excellence and had, and still has, close ties with Exeter Chiefs and Taunton Titans. The other influential coaches remembered by Will are the Ivybridge College coaches Gary Alridge and Rob Gibson, Rob Baxter at Exeter Chiefs and of course, Mike Rayer and Martin Hynes at Bedford Blues.

In 2010, Will joined Exeter Chiefs and made his debut for the 1st XV in 2012, scoring a try in their 42-15 win v London Welsh. At 6ft 11ins, Will was then, and remains currently, the tallest player to be contracted to an English Premiership side. At the end of the 2012-13 season, he spent the summer playing rugby on loan in the Southern Hemisphere, representing Randwick in Australia and Stoke in New Zealand. He made 17 appearances for Cornish



WILL IN ACTION V CARDIFF BLUES

Pirates while on loan in the 2014-15 season and upon leaving Exeter, he signed for London Scottish ahead of the next season. In 2016, he signed for Bedford where he became a very influential second row player.

After five seasons, Will joined Richmond for the 2021-22 season. He is currently recovering from a knee operation but hasn't dismissed the idea of playing for Richmond again.

Will is our tallest player ever and when he joined Bedford, he was affectionately known as 'Tree' by his teammates. Most of you probably think he took the honour of 'tallest player' from Martin Bayfield, who at 6ft 10ins played 56 games for us from 1985-91. However, contrary to the belief that Welshmen are short, a 6ft 10ins Welsh International called Derwyn Jones made four appearances for us in the 1999-2000 season.



THE CARRICK SMITH FAMILY



LINEOUT TAKE V HARTPURY



2017-18 SQUAD

Will writes:

'In 2016 I was very happy to sign a contract to play for Bedford. I always enjoyed the brand of rugby they played compared to some of the other clubs. Every season there were 'stand-out' games. One of my favourite grounds to visit was the Mennaye Field to play the Cornish Pirates. This was probably because I had played there on loan from Exeter Chiefs and enjoyed it. Despite the long journey to get there we had some cracking games, and the Bedford supporters made a massive effort to be there to cheer us on. Other games that stand out for me are playing Yorkshire Carnegie on March 3rd 2018, after over 150 supporters turned up to clear the snow off the pitch, so that we could play. Bedford won 41-22!



Boxing Day games were great, especially when we played Jersey and won a very close game 39-37 in my first season at Goldington Road. Finally, Munster away at Cork when we won 16-10 was a really memorable victory. At the time Munster were reigning Cup champions and conditions were tough, so it was a great achievement.

Of course, another special game at Goldington Road was when I made my 100th appearance in March 2020, coming off the bench in the game v Doncaster Knights and it was made even more memorable as we gained an emphatic 29-5 victory.

I made many friends at Bedford. My fellow locks Mark Flanagan and Jordan Onojaife... and socially Ed Taylor, Justin Blanchet, Huw Worthington, Alex Penny, Jacob Fields, David Spelman and Dan Temm.

I have many off-field memories. These are a few! Nos' match day Cheese Board as well as his fajitas after training. Scoring 180 in a game of darts against Ed Taylor in an 'away' changing room. 'Bedford's Got Talent', which was always held at the final social of every season.

Then, of course, there were the team bonding tours. We had three great trips during my time at Bedford - to Belgium visiting Dunkirk, Ypres and Bruges; with others to Bordeaux and Barcelona.

I now live in South West London and am married to Sarah. We have a seven month old baby daughter called Hebe. I currently work in Wealth Management in the city for a company called Lathe & Co Wealth Advisers.

I would like to thank Mikey Rayer for selecting me to play for such a great club, who had the strongest group of supporters in the Championship. Congratulations to the people 'behind the scenes' who make the club what it is today.

Good luck for this season!