

FORMER BLUES PLAYERS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Marie Davies



MATT WORLEY

WING / FULL BACK

2018-2025. 116 APPEARANCES, 50 TRIES.

Matt is already one of Hong Kong's most prolific try scorers since making his international debut in 2022, with 17 from 15 games.

Matt played for Bedford Blues for seven seasons. He was a very popular try-scorer, and his speed and skill with the ball in hand earned him the name of 'Magic'. I have to add that the speed with which he answered my questions and followed my guidelines was also 'magical'!

Matt writes:

It isn't that long ago since I was waving goodbye to the fans at Goldington Road at our last home game of the 2024-25 season, against Chinnor, which we won 61-26 to secure a second placed finish in the league. As I write these words, it's the 10th of November, and I feel it is a great privilege to be asked to contribute to the matchday programme and share a little of my background and an update on life now.

I was born in Plymouth and moved to Hong Kong when I was about five years old. I was first introduced to rugby while still in the UK, where my parents would take me to watch either Plymouth Albion or Devonport Services at the weekends. My parents were, and still are, my biggest supporters. They introduced me to rugby and were present at every one of my games when I was growing up.

My rugby journey started to progress when I was a teenager. At 17, I was fortunate enough to be sent on a commercial partnership trip with one of my best friends to Racing 92 in France for three weeks. Both my club and Racing were sponsored by the French bank Natixis. Three weeks turned out to be three years in the French capital, where I gained invaluable



experience playing in the Espoirs League and rubbing shoulders with some of rugby's 'all-time greats' such as Dan Carter, Joe Rokocoko and Ronan O'Gara, to name just a few.

Due to new league eligibility rules, I found myself needing to leave France and a return to Hong Kong beckoned. However, I was picked up by Northampton Saints. Like many young Saints players who have recently worn the Bedford shirt, I was sent on loan during the 2018/19 season. After eight games on loan and experiencing Goldington Road on a match day, I made the permanent move and had some of my most enjoyable rugby-playing years.



2024-25 SQUAD. MATT, FRONT ROW, 6TH FROM LEFT

Bedford became home for my partner, Shayin and myself. I won't lie, we had never heard of Bedford before and wouldn't have imagined us settling down there for over six years. We endured some tough times. For example, when COVID hit, having to transition to landscape gardening during the pandemic and continuing with it afterwards, wasn't in my original plan. Chris Ashworth and his wife Carole were life-savers to me and several other members of the squad. It opened my eyes to what work and life outside rugby can be like. It also meant I had to work with Joey Conway for a few years and listen to him talk about his days at Munster!

I was able to make lifelong friends at the club. I am most grateful to Mike Rayer, the squad and staff for helping me to do so. Being able to see Deano become a father was one of my off-field highlights.

Other notable memories include our Jersey trip team social, every away day bus trip back from Cornish Pirates and when we beat Bristol at home in February 2025.

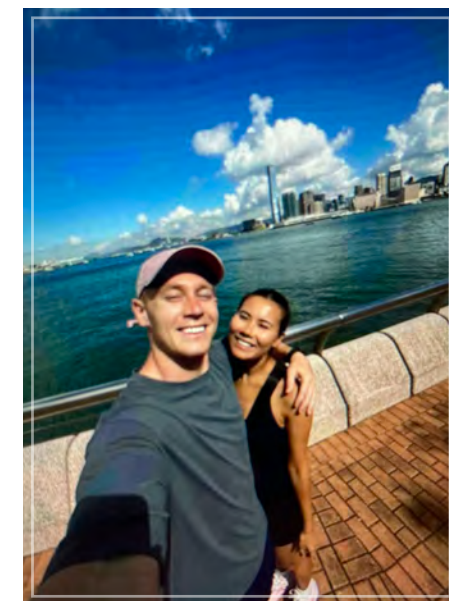
Memorable games for me are Boxing Day v Jersey in 2021, beating Ealing away in 2022 and playing in my 100th Bedford game v Bristol at Ashton Gate.



Shayin and I have settled back nicely in Hong Kong. We are a lot further away from family, so Shayin is my biggest support system. We've rekindled old friendships, met lots of new faces and made new memories together. I am now centrally contracted to the Hong Kong China Rugby Union and back in a full-time environment. At present, we are preparing for the 2027 Rugby World Cup where we have been drawn to face hosts Australia, New Zealand and Chile.

Moving forward, I am hoping to represent Hong Kong in 7s and take part in the Asian Games before focusing on the World Cup in 2027.

Wishing Blues all the best for the rest of the season and I will be keeping a close eye on the results.



MATT AND SHAYIN