

Member Profile;

Club President 1990-92, former 1st XV Scoop Match Reporter & player – Harry Kennedy

EDUCATION;

St. Cuthbert's Grammar School Newcastle, KEVI Morpeth, De La Salle College, Manchester

EMPLOYMENT;

Long since retired.

30 years Teaching prior to retirement, followed by 7 or 8 years running a Teacher Supply Agency and ended working life with a couple of years back in teaching doing "odds and sods of supply" at St Wilfrid's Middle School.

FAVOURITE MUSIC;

It probably says it all when I confess to be a Smooth Radio listener!

BEST MUSICAL EVENT/S ATTENDED;

I haven't been to many. My mother took me to the City Hall to see Frankie Vaughan when I was 7 or 8 (don't know why). My other 2 concerts were Jools Holland and the Lindisfarne Christmas Show.

FAVOURITE FILM/S;

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Pay It Forward, Shawshank Redemption, Schindlers List It's a Wonderful Life and most Westerns.

FAVOURITE POSITION;

No 8.

MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT/S ENCOUNTERED;

Ken Patton. You knew you'd been in a game when Ken was on the field. Playing in the days of 'Friendly' fixtures against Ashington, line outs and scrums meant the odd punch, elbow or more and there was some fairly vigorous "shoeing" of anyone daft enough to lie on the ball, Games were always followed by some very convivial sessions in the bar - Great Days !

BEST MORPETH RUGBY MATCH/MATCHES;

Not a match but a season! Loved every minute with the 3rd Team in 1984/85 season. A mixture of ex 1st Team players and some up and coming youngsters (including a slim young winger called Gary Stephenson) we had a very enjoyable and successful season. Centres Kenny Thompson and Stephen Forster (captain) were quite a double act and my abiding memory is not of a game but of the laughs we had before, during and after the game...

FAVOURITE/BEST MORPETH PLAYER/S IN SAME TEAM AS MYSELF;

Backs - tough call and it's a toss-up between Bill Hewitt and Brian Keenlyside. Bill was a class act with silky smooth skills. Brian was a "tour de force", even in the modern game I have not seen a boot to match his and he was devastating when he hit the line at pace.

Forwards - David Pringle - played with 100% commitment and no little skill. A fierce tackler and superb break down exponent.

Harry's 2 x MORPETH CLUB QUIZ QUESTIONS;

Q. Who won Morpeth RFC Young Player of The Year 1987-1988?

A. Chris Lishman.

Q. Who won The George Brown Cup (for the player/person who contributed most to the game on or off the pitch) in 1995?

A. George Brown.

Club notes for Harry Kennedy & his 1st XV debut season 1970-71 Season;

Harry first played for the club as a schoolboy in the under 18 club side – a side that in 1965 won the Northumberland County under 18 competition. It was a particularly strong side that included future senior County second row players Mike McKenzie and John Hall as well as several others who played for the club over a number of years – Mike Bullen, Jim Dirom, John Leithead, Peter Givens and the speedy winger Bob Towers.

Harry continued to play for the club until the end of the 1980's - it included a Reivers Cup Final against Ashington – and he ended his days with the strong Stags in the 1980's.

Between 1970 and 1978 Harry played 46 games for the club 1st XV - his first game in September 1970 against Glasgow High School Former Pupils – the Morpeth XV that day was; J Wilson, R Thompson, K Lister, D Jeffreys, G Wilkinson, W Hewitt, M Wilson, M Stoney, L Railston, R Young, E Dobson, H Kennedy, T Robertson, J Leithead, I Pringle.

We lost 3-18 but the following week defeated Otley away from home by 5-3 when a young schoolboy David Learmonth played his first game on the wing.

Harry played in a game against Rockcliff in 1977 when the 1st XV won by 92 points to nil scoring 19 tries and Harry caught every one of the kick offs after we scored a try!

The 1970-71 season;

The club became known as Morpeth Rugby Club having previously been called Morpeth Old Edwardians RFC. The Club was run by several committees including an Entertainments and Ladies committee. Ted Laidlaw was both Hon. Sec. and Fixture Sec., while Joe Routledge was Assistant Treasurer and John Robson oversaw the Colts with Cecil Main the groundsman.

Billy Morgan was President and Bill Hewitt captain of the Club – there were no such things as Club coaches and at the end of the season the Club played 4 games in Holland in a tour organised by Prof. Runcorn who played for our 5th team - the Stags. The Annual Club Dinner Dance was held at the Queen's Hotel and the main fundraiser was the Annual Barbecue at Saltwick Farm, Stannington (tickets were 80 pence).

The Stags captained by Isaac Arris won 14 of their 22 games.

The 3rd XV captained by Mike Riley won 12 of their 26 games.

The Second XV captained by Alan Bell won 10 of their 31 games.

The Reivers captained by Harry Little won 18 of their 33 games.

The 1st XV including the tour to Holland played 37 games and won 20 and lost in the County sevens final to Carlisle by 15-16.

John Wilson was top points scorer with 156 (this was when a try was only worth 3 points) and Bobby Thompson top try scorer with 20 in 23 games. Only 40 players played for the 1st XV and 9 played more than 25 games with Les Railston the hooker playing in all the games Les also played for the County Under 21s. David Pringle, Bill Hewitt and Mike McKenzie played for the County with David playing in all the games including the Championship semi-final against Gloucestershire while Ian Blakey joined the club after Christmas.