



UR7s

NATIONAL SEVENS
ACADEMY

2023 - 2024
PROSPECTUS

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PROSPECTUS

“Growing up, I longed for an opportunity like this. A chance to be challenged, to grow and get a taste of what it’s like to be an elite 7s player. A pathway with no limits.”

Amy Wilson Hardy

Rugby 7s Olympian, England 7s, GB 7s & England 15s





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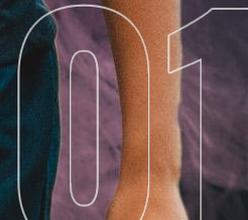
FIRST OF ITS KIND

The National Sevens Academy is the UK's first and most advanced grassroots rugby sevens performance programme, dedicated to developing young, talented rugby players from across the country.

It was launched in 2013 to provide a place for young people to gain a valuable insight and understanding into what it takes to play sevens at the highest level, whilst also developing skills that will benefit them as young people once they have graduated.

The Academy is currently split into two regions - North and South. The season begins with a Summer Programme running in each region and culminates with the Regional Festival. In between, we combine on-field training sessions, dedicated to rugby sevens, with online sessions covering a wide-range of topics from 'Mindset & Performance' to 'Nutrition' and more. During their time with the Academy, players receive a holistic approach to the journey of a young aspiring athlete.

The programme is coached and led by current & former international 7s players, Olympians and high-performance experts on and off the field.





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THE GIRLS PROGRAMME

In August 2021, UR7s welcomed the first cohort of young female rugby players into the Academy.

One of the fundamental philosophies of the Academy is to have role model coaches delivering sessions to the players and providing insight into life as an elite athlete/professional. It was crucial, therefore, that before opening the girls section we could deliver on this philosophy for these young women.

In Amy Wilson Hardy, Meg Jones and Abi Burton we not only have three of the games most talented players but three individuals who represent themselves and their sport in a manner that any young person can, and quite frankly should, aspire to. Passionate, balanced and enthusiastic about their sport, to say the least, together they have given the young players we hope to welcome a great example to learn from.

With the above, and fresh season of rugby to look forward to, we are very much looking forward to welcoming a second cohort of new girls players to the academy programme, starting in August and, with some subtle adaptations, building on the same blueprint that we have developed over the last 8 years.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The UR7s National Sevens Academy provides a holistic approach to developing young, talented people. The academy recognises that learning and development emerges from the interaction between the player(s), the environment that they are in, and the way in which the game is played.

Our purpose is to support the development of players by creating high performance experiences and insight. We strongly believe that young athletes are inspired by not only great coaching but also by working with role models that engage with them on a level they understand, can relate and aspire to.

By combining these experienced role models with the right environment and our expertise on how the game is played, the academy delivers a contextually appropriate learning environment, allowing coaches to design effective and engaging practices.

We believe in learning through play, allowing players to develop their skills in game based scenarios as much as possible, learning from each other as well as through their own successes and failures.

Our aim is to produce the next generation of sevens players, educating them on how sport can be a foundation for success in all aspects of life and equipped with experiences and knowledge that will enhance their ability to perform in life after the Academy.





ENTRY

We run an annual scouting programme where our coaches visit school and club tournaments across the country, including our own UR7s partner tournaments. In addition, the UR7s team run a number of Talent Development Days (TDDs) each year, visiting schools and clubs to run sevens specific sessions with players.

At all of these events, players are scouted based on their potential with our coaches observing key elements such as performance, athletic ability, particular skills and their want to develop in the game of sevens.

Players can also directly apply for a position in the Academy and will be required to send in an athletic CV as well as a recommendation from either a club or school coach.

If a player is offered a place in the Academy they will have the chance to join for the full season, including our summer programme, in-season sessions, virtual sessions and Regional Festival. Alternatively, players can join for the in-season sessions only, which excludes the summer programme element of the season.

The Girl's section of the Academy is entering its third season and we are dedicated to creating equal opportunity for all players in the Academy. It continues to grow and we continue to ensure we have

UR7S ANNUAL TIMELINE

The Academy season is structured to maximise the time we have with players whilst complementing other commitments young athletes will likely have with school, club and other activities. Starting in August, the season opens with the Summer Residential, a unique environment where players will take part in training on and off the pitch over a 3-4 day period. We then follow the summer up with 5 'in-season' sessions in September, October, March and April. All in-season sessions are run on a Sunday afternoon across each region except the final two in April, which are combined and make use of the Easter break, running over a full day in each region. We use this to prepare the players for our Regional Festival, a full tournament run exclusively for all Academy players and the the culmination of the Academy season. We also run a virtual series in February to help the players prepare for the sevens season, which includes topics covering areas from Strength & Conditioning to Nutrition and Mental Preparedness, all delivered by our elite coaches, partners and ambassadors.

01
AUG

SUMMER
RESIDENTIALS &
TOP-UP DAY

03
OCT

IN-SEASON
SESSION TWO

05
DEC

PHASE ONE
RETENTION
OFFERS

07
FEB

RETURN2SEVENS
VIRTUAL SERIES

09
APR

IN-SEASON
SESSION 4 & 5
Phase 2 retention,
regional festival
& tournaments

11
JUL

OFF
SEASON

02
SEPT

IN-SEASON
SESSION ONE

04
NOV

MID-SEASON
MENTOR SESSIONS

06
JAN

WINTER
BREAK

08
MAR

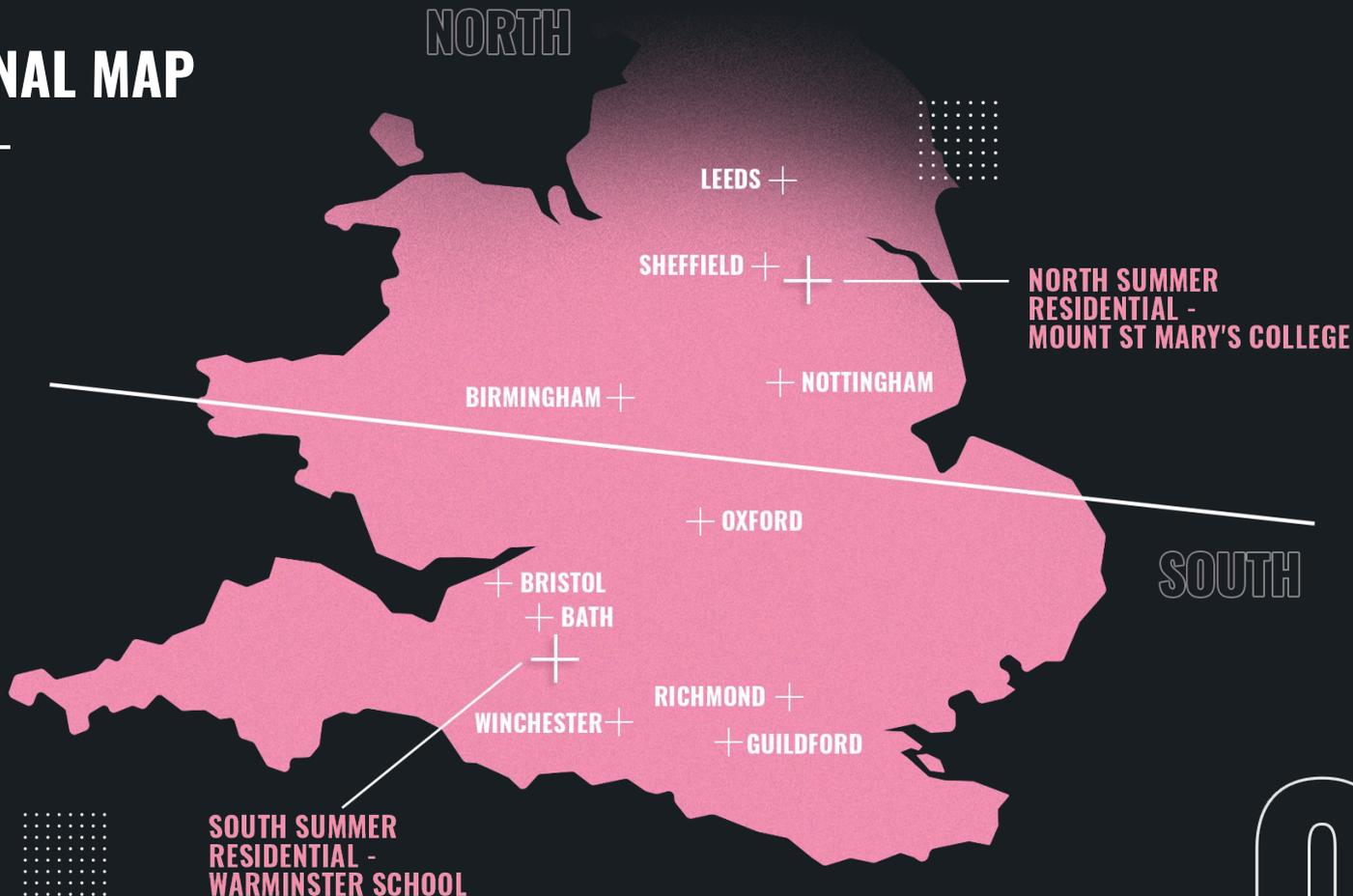
IN-SEASON
SESSION THREE

10
MAY &
JUNE

END OF SEASON MENTOR
SESSIONS, RANGERS TOURS



REGIONAL MAP



RESIDENTIAL & TOP-UP

The season kicks-off with a residential camp in each region. We hold them at some of the top schools in the country to ensure the best possible environment for players.

The residential takes place over 3-4 days, split between the Junior and Senior sections of the Academy in each region, where players are able to work with some of the best players and coaches from the world of rugby sevens.

The experience is unique and affords players the opportunity to develop their skills and ability both on and off the field.

All players are offered the chance to attend the top-up clinic, a session and extra night immediately before the main residential, where players can choose to hone in on specific skills that they would like to work on. Expert coaches in each area will work closely with players on skills such as sprint mechanics, kicking, half-back play, breakdown etc.





IN-SEASON SESSIONS

The in-season sessions take place in September, October, March and April on a Sunday afternoon, except the April session, which makes use of the Easter break and is run over a full day.

The sessions are designed to focus on a particular aspect of the game so that our coaches can help players gain a more detailed insight.

Whilst the objectives we focus on in each session change, the players will be expected to develop these skills in game based scenarios as much as possible.

Our coaching teams are afforded the creativity to design sessions that maximise the opportunity for the players to learn and come from their wealth of experience as current elite players and coaches.

The final in-season session in April is designed to prepare players for tournaments, including our own Regional Festival, which is held later in the Easter break.

THE REGIONAL FESTIVAL

The UR7s Regional Festival is a one-of-a-kind event enjoying its second season. All Academy players are expected to take part and play matches across the day to ultimately crown the winning region. It is the pinnacle of the season and is design for players to showcase everything they have learnt as well as develop their experience playing in a high performance competition.

The format is that of a typical sevens tournament, with each age-group split into teams and playing matches against the other teams in the group over the course of the day. Teams accumulate points individually, for their age-group and then for their region as a whole so that the overall winners of each age-group are identified as well as the winners of The Oscar Montgomery Cup - named in honour of one of our Academy players who sadly passed away in 2020.

A fitting end to the Academy season and an honour to be part of.

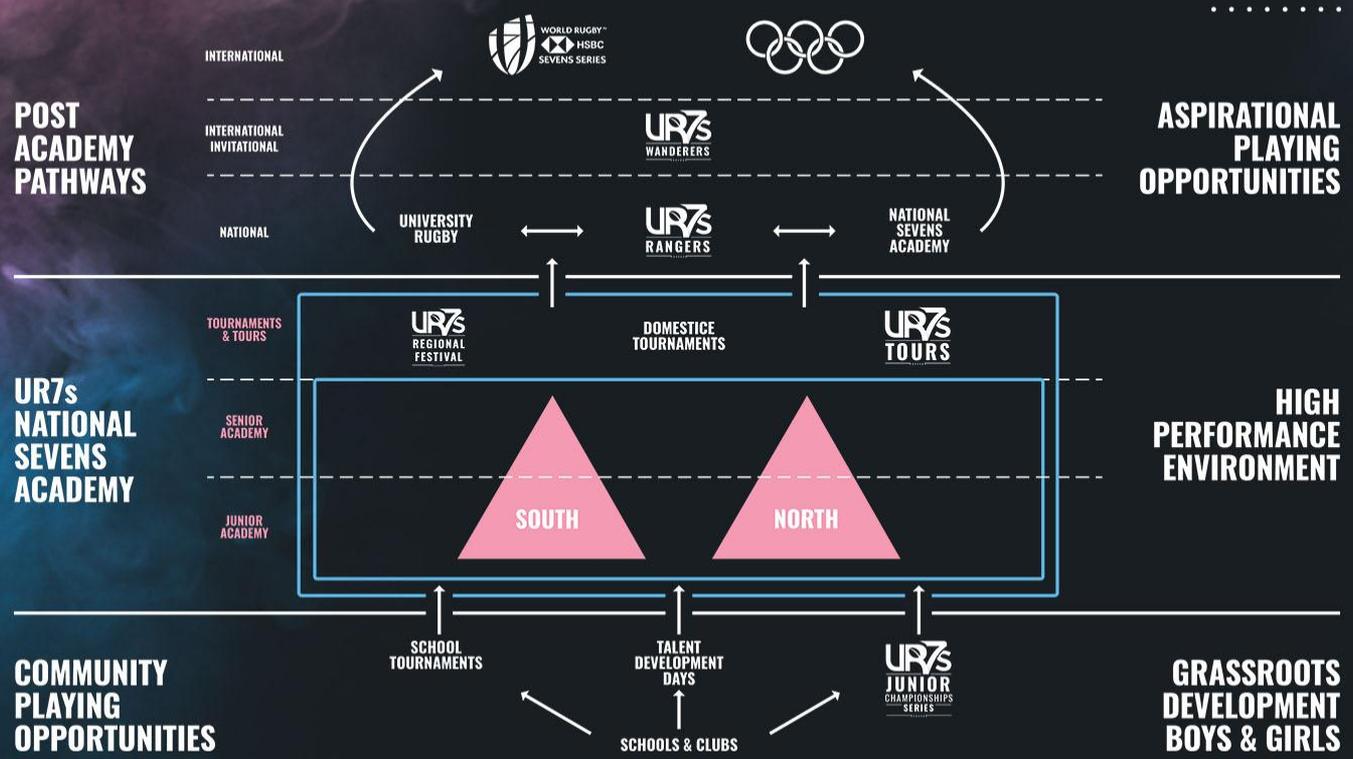
UR7s

REGIONAL FESTIVAL



09

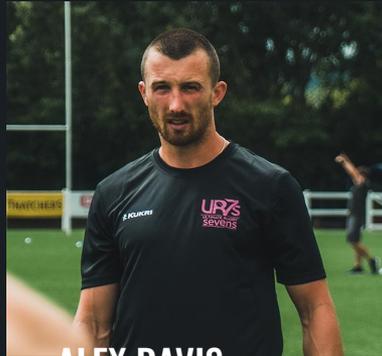
PATHWAY



AMBASSADORS



ABI BURTON
England 7s, GB7s



ALEX DAVIS
England 7s, GB7s



AMY WILSON HARDY
England 7s, GB7s



LUKE TREHARNE
Wales 7s Captain, GB7s



MEG JONES
England 7s, GB7s



TOM MITCHELL
England 7s Captain, GB7s Captain

We are lucky enough to work with some of the best young sevens players in the world and are great ambassadors for Ultimate Rugby Sevens and the game in general. These players input into our curriculum, offer their experiences as professionals, provide off-field education to players and coach the Academy players, when not on international duty.

THE COACHING TEAM



LUKE TREHARNE
Wales 7s Capt.



TOM MITCHELL
England & GB 7s Capt. Oxford Blue



AMY WILSON HARDY
England & GB 7s



CHRIS KNIGHT
Wales 7s



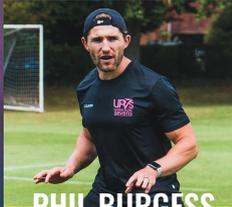
ABI BURTON
England & GB 7s



ALEX DAVIS
England 7s



ETHAN DAVIES
Wales 7s



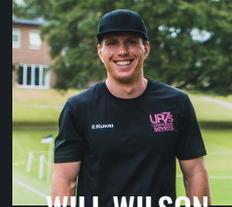
PHIL BURGESS
England & GB 7s



CHARLIE HAYTER
England 7s & England
Women's 7s Head Coach



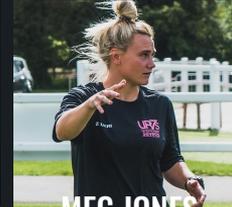
ROSS McCANN
Scotland 7s



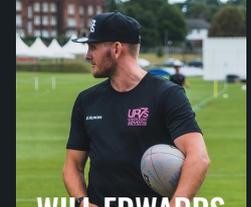
WILL WILSON
England 7s, Oxford Blue &
UR7s Academy Graduate



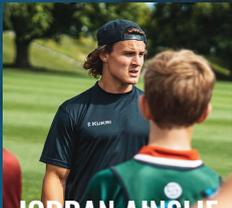
FERGUS GURRY
England 7s & UR7s Academy
Graduate



MEG JONES
England 7s



WILL EDWARDS
England 7s



JORDAN ANSLIE
England 7s



TOM MITCHELL
UR7s Academy Graduate



FIN ROSSITER
London Irish



MATT JACKSON
UR7s Academy Graduate



ADAM MCLEAN
Junior Coach, UR7s
Academy Graduate



CHRIS BALLARD
UR7s Wanderer, UR7s
Academy Graduate

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PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES

Towards the end of each Academy season players get the opportunity to be selected to represent UR7s and play in either Academy development and/or performance teams in tournaments across the country.

Players are selected based on their performance in training across the season, including the summer residential, in-season sessions, mentoring programme and virtual series. Squad members are expected to have a good attendance record and have met any requirements that have been set by the coaches.

The UR7s Rangers was set up to bridge the gap between junior and adult rugby. The squad is selected from members of the Senior Academy section along with academy graduates and some of our core group of coaches. The Rangers tour domestically and give valuable experience to players wanting to take the next step into adult sevens.

The UR7s Wanderers first toured New York in 2008, winning the competition that year. Since then they have toured all over the world, often following the World Series where invitational tournaments are available. The Wandies embrace the spirit of touring and aims to integrate ex-internationals with young up and coming players. Our pink and blue strip is the highest level of accomplishment for any Academy graduate.



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MENTORING & OFF PITCH EDUCATION

Developing high performance is not just about what takes place on the field but also what young players experience off the field. With that in mind, we have developed a series of online sessions that compliment the Academy season and provide players with education on topics including nutrition, strength & conditioning, mindset, mental well-being, managing life as a rugby player and more.

During the summer residential we balance the on field sessions with class-based learning, using the experience within our coaching team as well as bringing in experts from outside the Academy. Topics are tailored to the age-groups to ensure the information is relevant to the players at their stage of development.

Our mentoring programme is designed to give each player the opportunity to reflect on their progress and work with the UR7s team on an individual level. Players are asked to complete a self-assessment to reflect on what they have achieved and what they need to work on. The UR7s team will then work with them to set SMART goals for the season and feedback on performance.

A new feature of the Academy season is a series of online sessions focused on preparing the Academy players for the sevens season. Our elite coaches and ambassadors join to give insight into a variety of topics. We keep the delivery varied across key topics such as physical performance, mental performance, lifestyle and professional rugby insights.

PLAYER WELFARE

Players welfare is clearly a crucial part of any sports programme, and certainly the UR7s National Sevens Academy. We work with a team of top physios, with specific rugby experience, to offer players advice and guidance where needed. If players choose to, we can also connect directly with these physios so that they can provide more dedicated support at a reasonable rate..

In addition, we are taking a lead on player welfare management through our partnership with Return2Play, a leading sports medicine company, which provides world-class injury management solutions. Their particular expertise is the management of concussion in children, where they have a proven record in providing services that achieve optimum outcomes. We believe players of all ages and ability should have access to this type of medical care without delay and at affordable rates.

We're conscious that players will often have school and club physio/medical support so are careful to compliment this and share any notes where required.

We also uphold a clear safeguarding policy, which is promoted across our coaches and supported by the management team.



COACHING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME & WORK EXPERIENCE

Over the years we have used our philosophy of working with role model coaches to design an in-house coaching development programme. Academy graduates are afforded the opportunity to apply to become graduate coaches and start to develop their skills delivering Sevens based coaching sessions, alongside the more senior Academy coaches to begin with.

We have a number of examples of players who have been members of the Academy and become coaches with UR7s, all of whom enjoy the opportunity to develop their skills in leadership, planning, organisation and creativity within the structure offered Tom Mitchell as Head of Performance & Player Experience.

In addition to this, and wherever possible, we develop opportunities for work experience so that our players can develop their skills away from the rugby pitch. Previous opportunities have included working in financial institutions, marketing and PR.

In keeping with the Academy's strategic plan, we believe that rugby 7s can be a vehicle to understand high performance in all walks of life and this element of the programme is therefore something we are passionate about.

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REFERENCES FROM PARENTS

Our son has really enjoyed and benefited from being part of the UR7s Academy. Not only has he had access to professional coaching from players at the top of their game, he has also found the one to one mentor sessions where he gets feedback on how to improve his performance really helpful. The academy really focuses on developing the whole player on and off the pitch, we're impressed he's even learnt to cook through the online cookery sessions.

Dave & Chrissy C. - Parents of North Region Academy Player

Being part of the UR7s Academy has not only given my son massive development opportunities through access to high level coaches, but he has also made strong friendships with other boys he may not otherwise have met, bonding over the love of the game and action packed shared experiences thanks to tournaments and Residential. Over and above the rugby development opportunities, the Coaches are relatable and have great rapport with the boys. They are fantastic role models and mentors, I cannot recommend UR7s enough!

Tandi N. - Parent of South East Region Academy Player

I have been impressed with the professional approach of the UR7s team from the very start. The standard of communication has been nothing short of excellent and I am pleased to say my son's experience on the pitch has been just as good. My son was lucky enough to gain work experience with UR7s sponsors, which he really enjoyed and has helped him form a career path. Despite all the recent challenges from Covid, we continue to recognise the efforts made by UR7s and this has helped my son to develop both as a rugby player and a confident young man

James H. - Parent of North Academy Player

UR7s has been great for my son both on and off the pitch and especially so in helping him overcome his mental health issues and difficulties at school level at the time UR7s first scouted him back in 2017. UR7s was the light in his otherwise dark world and all the coaches and team at UR7s have supported him throughout. Special mention also for your continued support for all the boys during this past, very difficult Covid year.

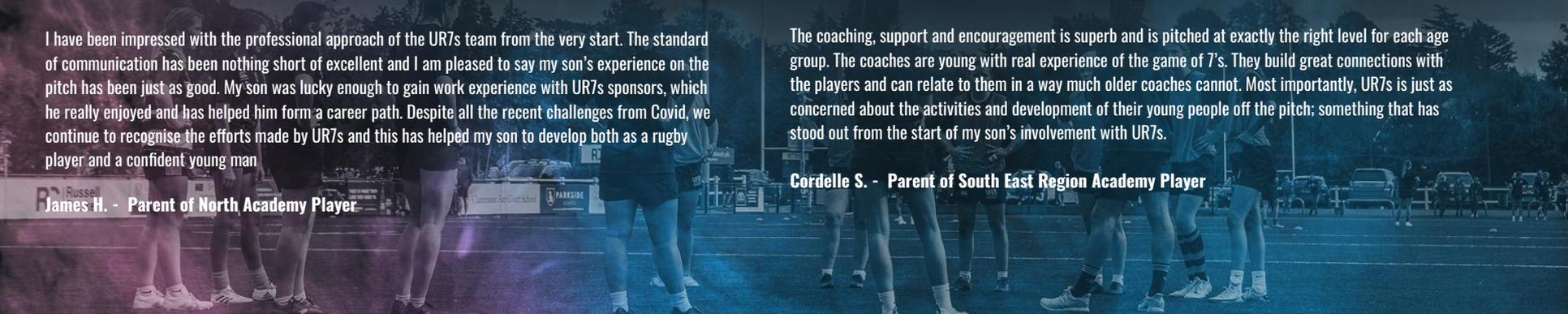
Mark E. - Parent of South West Region Academy Player

My son has enjoyed the structure and content of the sessions and meeting up & playing with 'new' rugby friends throughout the region. The coaching is excellent and he has gained so much more understanding of the 7s game and particularly loves the relaxed manner & banter he has with the coaches. He loves it and his game has developed and improved, not only 7s, but his vision in the 15's game too. He now looks at his health differently, what he eats, his exercise etc. All round it has benefited him and his lifestyle, without actually realising.

Alan J. - Parent of North Academy Player

The coaching, support and encouragement is superb and is pitched at exactly the right level for each age group. The coaches are young with real experience of the game of 7s. They build great connections with the players and can relate to them in a way much older coaches cannot. Most importantly, UR7s is just as concerned about the activities and development of their young people off the pitch; something that has stood out from the start of my son's involvement with UR7s.

Cordelle S. - Parent of South East Region Academy Player



UR7S LEADERSHIP TEAM

TOM MITCHELL

Head of Performance &
Player Experience



EMS ANSTEY

Academy Support Officer



DOM TRIPP

Head of Operations, Tournaments
and Participation



PARTNERS

We work with some great partners and with their help are able to subsidise the cost of the Academy, contribute to our Bursary fund and offer some exclusive discounts to our members. Some of our key partners are shown below. Discount codes can be found on our website.



simply
roasted.



TWICKENHAM



Still made and formulated by Swiss skincare experts, the Ultrasun ethos remains the same today, to find a way to make that crucial choice of protecting against the sun easier for all, no matter the skin type, skin tone, age or lifestyle.

simply roasted is a brand new crisp, that simply takes the best potatoes, slices them thickly, then rest them under a high heat until their roasted to a crunchy brown, ready to be seasoned, bagged and enjoyed. 50% less fat, 25% less salt and under 99 calories per serving

Lexus Twickenham is a well established dealer of quality Approved Lexus cars in London. Whether you have a specific model in mind or you would just like to browse our stock list, Lexus Twickenham has a wide variety of used Lexus from which you can choose. If we do not have a specific model available, we can source the right vehicle for you straight away.

w'air is a versatile, cost-saving device that effortlessly cleans and prolongs the life of all your products. w'air spot cleans, deep cleans or simply refreshes your fabrics using just cold tap water and a little detergent.

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