



ASHTON UNDER LYNE RFC

2025 ROUND UP



1ST XV - COUNTIES 3 ADM LANCs/CHESHIRE

06/09/2025 - Ormskirk (A) L 38-36
13/09/2025 - Fleetwood (H) W 28-27
04/10/2025 - Burnley (A) L 29-0
11/10/2025 - Vagabonds (H) W 44-24
18/10/2025 - Dukinfield (A) L 32-22
08/11/2025 - Congleton (A) W 32-34
22/11/2025 - Orrell (H) W 26-5
29/11/2025 - Hoylake (A) W 7-29
06/12/2025 - Oldham (H) W 20-8
13/12/2025 - Ramsey (A) W 17-26

2ND XV - NOWIRUL WMD DIVISION 4 EAST

06/09/2025 - Knutsford (H) L 14-54
13/09/2025 - Wythenshawe (A) L 41-33
04/10/2025 - Aldwinians 3rd XV (H) W 22-14
18/10/2025 - Manchester 3rd XV (H) W 38-19
08/11/2025 - East Manchester (H) L 24-45
22/11/2025 - Congleton 2nd XV (A) L 21-15
29/11/2025 - Dukinfield 2nd XV (H) L 7-31
13/12/2025 - Old Bedians RFC (H) L AWO



SIBUSISO MPOFU - COACH'S REVIEW

Half way through the season it is apparent the team has taken some steps forward this year.

We started our season away at Ormskirk, in what is usually a challenging fixture. They had soundly beaten us when they eliminated us from the cup at the end of last season. Discipline disrupted our efforts, but we still had an opportunity to win the game through a long range penalty. Sadly it wasn't to be this time.

Fleetwood at home swiftly followed and in another close game, we managed to edge past them by 1 point in what was a very good game of rugby, though both sides were still finding their feet. The rematch will be interesting.

The biggest blot on the season so far has to be Burnley away. The 2 week break did us no favours as far as momentum, and the stormy conditions made it extremely difficult for both teams, but we just couldn't get a foot hold in the game. This is the only game we failed to register a point on the board. Hopefully we learned some lessons in controlling the game in such conditions going forward.

Next up was Vagabonds in another entertaining game at home, where we managed to pick up our fourth bonus point of the campaign. The game was a lot more competitive than the final score suggests, but the lads ability to stay in games shone through and highlighted their improved fitness.

Dukinfield away. Local Derby. Having worked on game plan we felt was good enough to win, it was dissapointing to see it thrown out the window in the opening skirmishes. The feeling was worsened by how well the game plan worked when we finally started applying it, unfortunately we left it too late, then conceded a late try to deny us a bonus point.

Another fortnight with no games lead us to Congleton away. The game was a sluggish affair on a heavy pitch, and we struggled in periods.

Last season we probably end up losing this game, but the lads collected themselves and found a way to get the winning try with no time left in the game.

Only a week off this time before the biggest bloc of games we will have all season, starting with Orrell at home. Something shifted in the lads during that week. There was new level of physicality and urgency, a bit more control and execution when it mattered. Far from the finished product, but for long spells it was what we have been working towards.

We then travelled to Hoylake missing a few regulars, in tough conditions once again. We showed a lot of patience and waited for the opportunities to come to us, and we made sure to capitalise when they did. Yet more defensive strength meant back to back games restricting the opposition to a single score.

The return of the Oldham Derby was much anticipated after over a decade since we last played each other. In what was a hard fought game, we managed to make the most of opportunities created from good set piece work, and backed it up with more good defensive work.

The final fixture before Christmas saw us travel to Ramsey. This could have been a tricky fixture given the wholesale changes in the travelling squad, but the lads came together and were largely in control for most of the game. Despite disciplinary lapses, we managed to secure a winning end to the year before the Christmas break.

We have had some new players come into the fold, and are doing well, especially in the second team. The numbers at training have helped us better prepare both teams, long may it continue. A few players have been asked to switch positions to make us more flexible week to week and have taken on the challenge.

This has allowed us to be competitive in games we would have struggled with in the past, and I would like to thank everyone for the hard work being put into building a solid base for the club.

I hope everyone has a wonderful Christmas and New Year, see you all after the break.

MARK THORLEY - JUNIOR SECTION

The junior section of Ashton Rugby Club is thriving, with numbers continuing to grow across all mini and junior age groups. This steady increase reflects the club's commitment to developing young talent and fostering a welcoming environment for players of all abilities. A particularly encouraging sign for the future is the rise in participation within the Tiny Tacklers program, which provides a strong foundation for upcoming mini age-grade teams and ensures a healthy pipeline of players for years to come. Most importantly, every child takes part across all age grades with a smile on their face, creating a positive and enjoyable atmosphere across the club.

The first half of the season has been a resounding success for all teams, with players showing great progress both on and off the field. From skill development to teamwork and sportsmanship, the juniors have demonstrated the values that make Ashton Rugby Club proud. With growing numbers, smiling faces, and strong performances, the outlook for the remainder of the season and beyond is extremely positive.



JAMES BOWER - SECOND TEAM

At the halfway point of the 2025/26 season, Ashton Under Lyne 2nd XV can reflect on a campaign full of promise and progress. Competing in a tough NOWIRUL Division 4 East, the squad has shown real resilience, highlighted by an excellent derby-day victory and several highly competitive performances against strong opposition.

The team has continued to grow week-by-week, blending experienced players with emerging talent, and has built a solid platform through improved structure, commitment in defence, and strong team spirit. With confidence building, numbers improving, and lessons learned from the first half of the season, the Mashers are well placed to push on, convert close contests into wins, and finish the campaign strongly.

