



## RUGBY

The rugby section was formed in 1923 following negotiations with the Rugby Union when an Old Edwardian XV played its inaugural trial match. The first Annual General Meeting was held on 13 February 1924 and we were invited to enter two teams in the Johannesburg 2nd and 3rd leagues.

There was a nucleus of 54 players making us the largest section in the club at that time. We finished 6th that season, 4th the next and improved to such an extent that in 1926 the Rugby Union requested us to field a xv against a combined 2nd league team as a curtain raiser to an Inter Provincial match at the Wanderers. This was our home ground in those days.

The 1927 Winners Knock out competition, the 1929 and 1930 Winners League Competition were some of the early successes for the club.

These successes were recognized by the TRFU in 1934 when we were promoted from 2nd league to "Transvaal Senior Reserve League." Our first under 19 side was launched three years later and they finished as runners up in their first season.

On 29 April 1939 we had the official opening of our own fields at Houghton with a match against the school. In August of the same year, we toured Messina which marked the end of tours and seasons due to the outbreak of the war.

In 1946, due to the lack of players we decided to amalgamate with Old Johannians Rugby Club and become Old Jeds. One of the first coaches was Gerry Brand who paved the way for our resurgence as a force in Transvaal rugby, and in 1951 we won the Presidents Cup for the first time. We continued to flourish and in 1957 we achieved our ambition of playing in the Pirates Grand Challenge until 1961 when the format changed and we then played in the Lilienveld Trophy competition.

In 1948 a Welshman and a Scot namely, Bryn Davies and Stuart Graham approached us with a "sideline" which had never before been tried in South Africa. The experiment involved a bright, all attacking variation which resulted in the birth of Sevens Rugby.

The Old Jeds Sevens started in 1949 and continued until 1981 as the most enjoyable and popular Sevens event in the country.



*Old Jeds 1<sup>st</sup> XV*

*L-R Back row: D. Gnodde, J. Moore, L. Renwick, G. Jackson, S. Graham, J. Wilson, M. Smythe, D. Lister-James, J. Baxter.*

*Center: L. Jefferies, V. Thorpe, M. Macfarlane, F. Moore (Capt), J. Murphy, J. Murphy, J. Richards, H. Dreyer.*

*Front: W. Hammond, D. Redman, H. Baker.*

*Inserts: P. Cummings, S. Schultz, J. Thompson.*

The years that followed were memorable to all those who came into contact with the club, for the enthusiastic and enjoyable spirit which was engendered by players, spectators and visitors alike which made Houghton home to many.

On 19 May 1978 we returned as a fully fledged section and assumed the name of Old Edwardians Rugby Club again. 1981 was one of our most successful seasons with two teams ending second and two third, in their respective leagues.

We continued to play our rugby in the spirit of William Webb Ellis, who founded the game at Rugby School in 1823, with fine disregard to the rules of Association Football as played in his time, firstly picking up the ball and then running with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the game – the art of running.

We have had many representative honours of which we are justly proud. Just a few of note include Louw and Fraser were the first Old Boys to gain distinction for Transvaal while “Shaap” Forrest was our first Springbok.



*The five Under 20 players who have gained their Transvaal colours.  
Mark Julyan (“A” Center), Peter Blaauw (“B” Lock), Stephen Galley (“A” No.8),  
Adrian De Fay (“A” Reserve Forward), Stephen Birk (“B” Captain and Fullback).*

Since the early days of “Shaap” such illustrious Springbok greats as Sid Nomis, Mike Jennings and Ian Grant have played for us while such names as Tutty Faber, Clive Cooper, “Podge” Collier and Simon Naylor have turned out for the Quaggas.

Those that have gained representative honours and are not mentioned, our apologies for the omission but such has been the chequered, and at times fraught journey of this section, those with the knowledge are sadly, no longer with the club. There have been a few attempts to revive this section over the years but sadly, nothing was sustainable. With the advent of other clubs turning “semi” professional and offering money to players, which was against our ethic, we could no longer continue to survive.