



## PENGUIN INTERNATIONAL RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Rugby Football Union  
Kent County RFU

### Future Hope Support Coaching & Player Development India 31 Oct to 9 Nov 2024

*Report by Sandra Soler-Gomez and Craig Brown*

It was back in 2019 that the Penguins last visited Future Hope in Kolkata and the four assembled coaches were very much looking forward to it. For two of them, it would be their first visit to India.

Penguin Coaches Reece Robinson and Andrew Chambers from New Zealand, Sandra Soler-Gomez from England and Sue Olovsson from Sweden headed to India with a sense of purpose and much excitement.

Our colleagues at Future Hope had lined up a fantastic schedule.



Reece  
Sue Andrew  
Sandra

#### The Week's Schedule

Date	School/Club
Fri 1 Nov	AM - Welcome visit to Future Hope PM - Coaching FH U15s and U18s
Sat 2 Nov	AM – Rugby Academy Support PM – Coaches Training
Sun 3 Nov	AM - Train to Saraswatipur – 7 hour trip PM - Saraswatipur village teams coaching
Mon 4 Nov	Saraswatipur village teams coaching
Tue 5 Nov	Guest coaches at Saraswatipur Tea Resort Tournament
Wed 6 Nov	Head back to Kolkata
Thu 7 Nov	Future Hope student coaching & coach development session
Fri 8 Nov	Local schools coaching and coach development session
Sat 9 Nov	Kolkata schools tournament

#### Sat 2<sup>nd</sup>

Early start to the day kicking off with a 7am session supporting the Rugby Academy. With the children ranging from 6-17 the coaches split into groups supporting the relevant age group skills and games before rotating around to other groups. We were privileged to be joined by a previous Penguins player and all-round legend Waisale Serevi who is currently working for Rugby India. Post session we tried out the local food venues for



breakfast, before heading to the site where Future Hope will be building its new school and homes for the children & staff.



Later that afternoon the group headed back to the field to coach the senior squad. The session comprised of varying games zone and skill zones, developing the core skills of the squad.



The evening finished with Tim taking the Penguin coaches to the Calcutta Cricket and Football Club (CCFC) where they had dinner before retiring for early night (jet lag may have caught up with Sandra who slept through most of the evening).

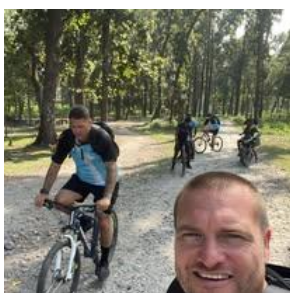
### Sun 3<sup>rd</sup>

Another early start saw the coaches taking a 7hr train journey Saraswatipur. On the team's arrival at the village, they were greeted in a true Indian style all receiving an Indian flower necklace, bindi & sprinkle of rose water. The children from the village showed them around their new school that was only just being built the last time the Penguins visited in 2017 and even sang them a few Indian songs. The Penguin coaches meet with the local coaching team to discuss the pre-school training session that would run the follow morning before heading to the hotel. That evening the team visited one of the local family for Chai tea and like always they were welcomed with open arms.





## Mon 4<sup>th</sup>



A beautiful bike ride took the coaching team to a local village, which is part of the Saraswatipur Tea Resort. 80+ children showed up with smiles on their faces ready for fun.

Once the local goats and cows had been removed from the playing areas the coaches worked on skills and games with the children. Reece supported the older lads, Andrew the older girls, Sue took on the young girls and Sandra worked with a mixed group of the youngest players on the sand banks of the local river where lots of fun for the youngest children.



## Tue 5<sup>th</sup>

Festival day. What an amazing rugby festival Future Hope laid on. About 100 children from 3 villages near the Saraswatipur Tea Resort participated and what a great time was had by all. Some great skills were on show from all the game groups and the matches were played in the true spirit of rugby.



The Penguin coaches also had some rivalry! But at the end of the day the children were the winners.

### Results

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Tiger club coached by Reece
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Kerela coached by Sandra
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Royal Bengal Tigers coached by Sue
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Rajasthan coached by Andrew

Post tournament everyone headed back to school for lunch, which the coaches were only too happy to serve to the children.



## Fri 8<sup>th</sup>

Great fun was had at South City School hosted by new teacher and ex Future Hope pupil Arpan.

Andrew and Sandra supported by coaches Aditya and Prince from Future Hope lead two sessions the 1st 110 children where fun-based rugby games and skills featured.





After a short break the coaches were back with the older children, this time 30 that allowed the coaches to start with a fun game zone followed by ball handling skills zone followed by ball handling then progressed to touch.

The children really developed during the sessions, and many said they would really like to play rugby more now they understood the concept of the game and how much fun it was.

The school Principal gave gifts to the Penguin and Future Hope coaches. The school has the most fabulous asset in their new teacher Arpan who brings with him so much knowledge of rugby but more importantly is showing the children importance of the rugby's core values



## Thank You

The Penguins would like to thank Paul Walsh, Tim and Erica Grandage from Future Hope for hospitality and organisation of the tour.

Finally thank you to the 4 Penguin coaches for taking the time to travel to India – an experience they will not forget!

Also, thanks to Andrew Chambers who provided the Tsunami stash the coaches were wearing.









