



A weekend of rugby, camaraderie, and unforgettable memories!

Ealing Trailfinders U16s embarked on an exhilarating trip to the heartland of European rugby - Toulouse. Despite a few early challenges in finding a local match fixture, the tour turned into a celebration of rugby spirit, teamwork, and fun-filled discovery — exemplifying the essence of touring.

The boys arrived in sunny Toulouse, their excitement palpable as they checked into a city-centre hotel. That evening, the whole group gathered for a Pro D2 clash between Colomiers and Agen, a fiery local derby that showcased French rugby passion at its finest. From the 7,000+ roaring crowd to the physical intensity on the pitch, it was a brilliant atmosphere that left everyone inspired, where the hosts secured a home victory.

Murderball Madness & Space Exploration

Saturday started with one of the most unique experiences of the tour: a Wheelchair Rugby session. Known as “Murderball,” this fast, tactical, and brutally competitive sport proved to be a huge hit. Guided by professional coaches and a two time Paralympian, Matthieu Thiriet, the boys quickly learned that wheelchair rugby is fiercely competitive and intensely physical. Later, some of the squad visited the renowned Cité de l'Espace, while others enjoyed some downtime back in the vibrant city centre — shopping, sightseeing, and relaxing in the cafés that line the historic Place du Capitole.

The evening brought everyone back together for a delightful group dinner at La Brasserie Les Arcades, overlooking the square. Laughter, a 16th Birthday celebration and hearty French food ensured the team spirit shone bright. An evening tour of the Toulousain fountains, with stops at local watering holes, was the highlight of the tour for some, but certainly a perfect end to the day.

Training with the Champions

Sunday's highlight was a training session at Stade Toulousain's Stade Ernest Wallon. Professional coaches provided elite-level training, offering the boys, and our coaches, a glimpse into what it takes to reach the top. After the morning session, there was time for a final group lunch at the quintessentially French Brasserie des Beaux-Arts, before heading to the airport. True to Ealing tradition, seating arrangements were mixed to ensure new friendships flourished.

A Tour to Remember

From wheelchair rugby and professional coaching to French cuisine and sun-soaked adventures, the Ealing Trailfinders U16s Tour to Toulouse was a phenomenal experience, marked by laughter, learning, and lasting memories. The boys excelled in their conduct, inclusiveness, and open-mindedness.

Until the next one — Allez Ealing Trailfinders!