

DEFENDER KICKS OFF SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP ENGLAND 2025 BY CELEBRATING THE FIRST FEMALE PLAYER TO SCORE A TRY



- Defender honours the legacy of Emily Valentine, the first known woman to play rugby, as it kicks-off its support for the forthcoming Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025
- New film captured at Enniskillen RFC, the hometown club of Emily Valentine, celebrates women who embrace the impossible by recreating Emily's try-scoring debut in 1887
- Aspiring professional Amy Nelson (age 12) is the star of the Defender Trailblazers campaign, as she and her teammates commemorate a seminal sporting moment
- Defender is a Principal Partner of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, which kicks off this month (22 August) with England v USA at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland
- To find out more and watch the film, [click here](#)

Gaydon, UK – Friday 8 August 2025: Defender is shining a light on a seminal moment for women's rugby to celebrate its partnership with Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025. Ahead of the tournament kick-off later this month, Defender is reigniting its Defender Trailblazers campaign to tell the story of Emily Valentine, who defied expectations to become the first known female player.

To bring the story of Emily's history-making moment to life and honour her legacy for a new generation, Defender visited her hometown club, Enniskillen RFC, in Northern Ireland. Its inspirational new film recreates the moment Emily became the sport's first documented female rugby player.

Enniskillen RFC is celebrating its centenary this year and Defender will be working with the club throughout Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 to honour its up-and-coming young female talent.

Mark Cameron, Managing Director, Defender, said: *"We have chosen to highlight the story of the first female rugby player to celebrate Defender's partnership with Women's Rugby World Cup 2025. Emily Valentine perfectly encapsulates the spirit of Defender – of embracing the impossible. Her trailblazing performance has inspired this whole festival of women's rugby. It's fitting that her hometown club Enniskillen RFC has a thriving female contingent and Defender will be supporting its young players throughout the tournament."*

The film spearheads the launch of the Defender Trailblazers campaign and will appear across Defender channels, reenacting the moment 10-year-old Emily joined a match from the sidelines in 1887. Emily was watching her brothers play but ended up joining the action when one of the boys was injured.

Discarding her coat and Victorian petticoat, she used her speed to cut through the opposition and score the first ever documented try by a female player. The short film ends with a ball thrown in the Victorian era being caught by Amy Nelson today, surrounded by her Enniskillen teammates.

After showing how Emily's spirit lives on in Enniskillen today, the second stage of the campaign will focus on showcasing the next generation of female rugby players. The final phase of Defender Trailblazers will introduce international stars of today at the same age as Emily when she made her debut, using childhood photos and footage to show how they embraced the impossible to achieve their dreams.

Tommy Dane, President, Enniskillen RFC, said: "Our women's rugby teams are a thriving and important part of the club community, and our youngsters relished the chance to recreate a seminal moment for female players in the game's history. Putting the club in front of a global audience with Defender – a brand which clearly shares and understands the trailblazing spirit showed by the first female try scorer – in celebration of the forthcoming Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 is an honour. To do it in our centenary year makes it even more special."

Defender Trailblazers will take centre stage during the tournament, celebrating the indomitable spirit of women and girls who encapsulate its Embrace the Impossible ethos. This initiative builds on Defender's commitment to rugby and marks the next chapter in the Trailblazers campaign, following its impactful debut during the Rugby World Cup 2023.

The Defender Mascot programme will recruit 64 mascots from several rugby nations including England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France and New Zealand. As with the men's tournament, both boys and girls will be invited to take part.

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Notes to Editors

About Defender

Defender embraces the impossible. Each member of the Defender family is purposefully designed, highly desirable and seriously durable. A modern-day hero that respects the past but at the same time anticipates the future.

Available in 90, 110 and 130 body styles, with up to eight seats, each has a charisma of its own.

As part of our vision of modern luxury by design, Defender 110 is available as an electric hybrid.

Defender Hard Top means business, with 90 and 110 body styles for professional capability.

The tough luxury Defender OCTA is the master of extreme performance – taking performance and capability to another level on and off-road.

A beacon of liberty that can trace its roots back to the first Land Rover in 1948, Defender is a brand that supports humanitarian and conservation work with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Tusk Trust.

The Defender brand is underpinned by Land Rover – a mark of trust built on more than 75 years of expertise in technology and world-leading off-road capability.

Defender is designed and engineered in the UK and sold in 121 countries. It belongs to the JLR house of brands alongside Range Rover, Discovery and Jaguar.

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