4 THE CORNISHMAN THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2018 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2018 THE CORNISHMAN 5

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brilliantly

The Story

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The amount of money that **Cornish Pirates owner Dicky** Evans has ploughed into the club over two decades

Pirates owner wants to cement his legacy with new stadium

Cornish Pirates owner Richard 'Dicky' Evans makes no secret of wanting to turn his beloved club into the next Exeter Chiefs. And he is calling on the patriotic people of Cornwall to support the ambitious vision for the Stadium For Cornwall and what it can bring for future generations. Olivier Vergnault reports

Chiefs both on and off the pitch of that future and will ensure that the made his fortune in the flower grow-

makes no secret of wanting to achieve Premiership greatness too. emulate the success of Exeter The Stadium for Cornwall is part For Dicky, a Penzance boy who Pirates but for Cornwall.

club is promoted to the top tier of ing business in Kenya, Cornwall and English rugby and stays there for the Pirates have been good to him many years to come.

What many people may not know wall on the edge of Truro, along with is that, over the past 20 years or so the proposed new leisure, business, that Dicky has been involved with conferencing and hotel facilities, is the Pirates, he has ploughed some about giving something back. £15 million of his own money into the club and the Stadium for Corn- on for too long. The Stadium for wall project to see it happen. A suc- Cornwall has been more than ten cessful businessman, Dicky contin- years in the making. I had to leave ICHARD "Dicky" Evans and see his beloved Cornish Pirates ues to do so to this day - not because he has to, but because he wants to.

Newmarket

"I think it will become a focal point and will help give young people even greater opportunities so they don't have to leave to make a career," he said. "I want the stadium to be my legacy."

and building the Stadium for Corn-

"I have Parkinson's so I won't live

Cornwall to have a career. The sta-

dium is my vision. Not only for the

Dicky has been a supporter of the Pirates all his life. He played for them when he was young, yet despite moving away to Kenya, his passion for the club and the county of his birth, has never waned.

With investment into players and facilities, the Cornish Pirates under his tenure continually rose up through the rugby divisions to reach the Championship where they have been ever since.

Twice the club was in the play-off final to win promotion to the Premiership through its sporting achievements on the pitch, however, their dreams of playing against the likes of Wasps, Leicester Tigers or Exeter Chiefs would have been dashed anyway because the Mennaye was deemed too small and unfit for the big fixtures by the Rugby Football Union, thus forcing the club to stay down.

For Dicky, the chairman of the Hemingways Holdings, a luxury hotels group which he founded in Kenva, the Stadium for Cornwall is the obvious answer and a move to Truro, albeit controversial for many, is the right thing to do.

within the next three years," he said. help us tap into a much larger mar-"Being in Truro will help us attract ket." new crowds. Penzance is too far for While there are plans at the Stasea and fishermen. Mackerel don't being in talks with the college to

relocate the club's offices. Council seven months ago after the The Government has said it will

but financial difficulties mean that it

>> Cornish Dicky Fyans wants the team Exeter Chiefs

Sports England too. But when the 'i's "I want to emulate what Tony have been dotted and the 't's Rowe has done for the Exeter Chiefs," crossed, work on the stadium should Dicky said. "Look at where they are part of their success. begin in spring next year with a now. They've done brilliantly. We

attract players from the Southern Hemisphere, especially South Africa where I have some good contacts. We still have a partnership with the Wakaito Chiefs in New Zealand. They help us in term of coaching.

"If you build something people will come and that's exactly what will happen with the Stadium for Cornwall. Cornwall is booming right now. We have to get in on it."

The final design work on the stadium, which Dicky hopes will grow in capacity from 10,000 seats to 22,000 over the coming years, is well under way but, in the new year, the next phase of funding will start to make the Pirates' success perennial.

"We're launching a crowdfunding campaign in the new year." Dicky added. "We want to raise £2.5m with £1m going towards buying players and £1.5m going towards the sta-

"That represents a great opportunity for the people of Cornwall to own a piece of the Pirates and be

"It is about seeing the club proscompletion date the following year, need the Pirates to go up to the Pre- per and grow for the future. It's not in time for the new rugby and foot- miership. We will have a core of Cor- just my legacy for the club, it's a legnish players and will also be able to acy for Cornwall."

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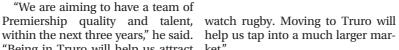
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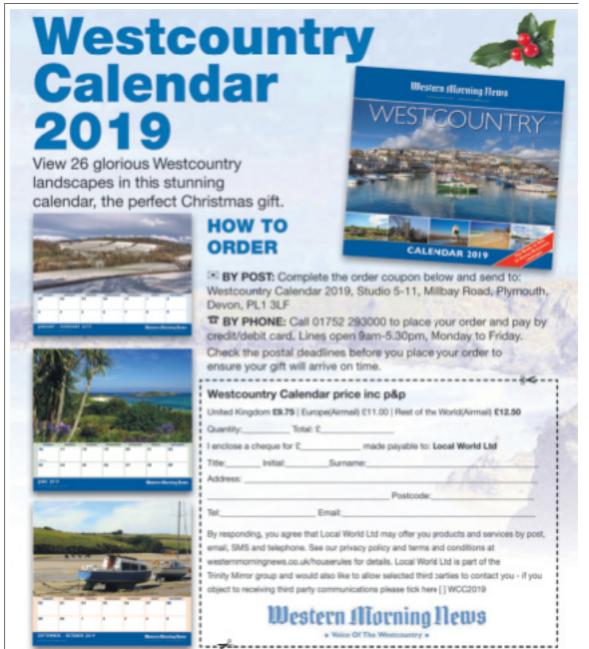
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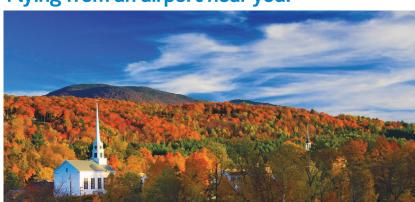
programme

make use of land at Carnon Downs the Pirates are putting, most of it to create a new state-of-the-art being Dicky's own money. Truro training facility for the Pirates and City FC was also due to put in £2m The Stadium for Cornwall project cannot do that and so the other two received vital support from Cornwall are covering its share.

local authority agreed to put £3m match-fund Cornwall Council's towards the £16m cost. The college investment but that decision has is putting in £2m on top of the £5m been delayed and is now involving



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