



ERFSU NEWSLETTER

WIN
RFU cash for
your School!

JANUARY 2009

We are sure you are straight back into it after the break, relishing the chance to burn off the Christmas calories - both the pupils and your own! In this edition we have included articles to guide you through issues that may have arisen during the season such as playing down an age grade, player safety and guidance on setting up a festival or tournament. As always there are a number of informative items including information on HSBC Rugby Festivals, Member School news and a few ideas to improve your School balance sheet!

The Schools Development Team have a stand at the Sports Colleges Conference in Telford on the 11th & 12th February, so pop over to say hello and for a chance to win some goodies. Happy reading and on behalf of the ERFSU and Schools Development Team we wish you all a Happy 2009 on and off the pitch.

TOP AWARD FOR AFFILIATED SCHOOL

Congratulations to North Dorset RFC and the ERFSU affiliated Gillingham School who were awarded prestigious prize at the UK Sport Young People Best Practices Awards.

The Dorset School and Club were named winners of the '**Best Cutting Edge School Club link by a School/Club**' at the School Sport Partnership Conference in Telford on the 15th and 16th October 2008.

North Dorset RFC and Gillingham School have been recognised for their outstanding work, which has included the two parties working closely to raise the standards of refereeing and coaching. North Dorset RFC have also made their facilities available for school matches and rugby festivals, the club also sponsor and donate prizes to the school's sports award evenings and they also promote ambassador school club links and the Step into Sport programmes. An amazing 10% of the school population now regularly play rugby for the club.

The aim of the School Club Links is to create and develop links between schools and community sports clubs, to support an increase in the number of children participating in community sports clubs. Supporting the school, college and university days leg of the "Rugby Journey" underpins the largest catalyst to a lifelong involvement in a safe, healthy and fun game. For more information on how the RFU can assist visit www.rfu.com/schools > Tools & Resources or contact your local Rugby Development Officer.

WIN SOME RFU CASH FOR YOUR SCHOOL WITH THE PRESIDENT'S XV!

This season's President's XV Recognition Awards have been launched by RFU President, Brian Williams. Over £10,000 is on offer to reward excellence and innovation in the grassroots game.



Although the categories refer to 'club' the panel will consider nominations from volunteer teams connected with groups in membership including Schools. Three categories that particularly apply to schools are:

Schools Development

Many children get their first taste of rugby at school. This award will recognise a school whose staff, partners and volunteers work hard to develop and maintain sustainable high quality rugby union opportunities and programmes for boys and girls both inside and beyond the school gates.

Club School Links

Top of the class. We want to recognise a club with an exceptional project that reaches out to local schools, supports teachers, coaches, extra curricular rugby and brings young people into clubs.

Young Volunteers (vRugby)

This award recognises organisations that innovatively encourage 14-25 year-olds to get involved in rugby volunteering. Has your club supported a vRugby team to deliver a project as part of the new national programme?

The 15 winners will pick up £500 each and 30 runners-up will collect £100 each, to invest in the grassroots game. If it is a good grassroots project run by volunteers - please nominate! For more information on the scheme, visit www.rfu.com/presidentsxv, or email Carly Jackson at carlyjackson@rfu.com.



PLAYING DOWN AN AGE GRADE IN SCHOOL MATCHES

Some Case Studies from this Season

Many schools face a dilemma in trying to provide rugby for over age players who not in their normal academic year. This sometimes involves overseas students who drop down a year to enter the English school system or their own pupils who stay down a year if they are struggling academically. ERFSSU is sympathetic towards the needs of these young players and their schools, but must always have regard towards Schools and Youth Regulations which it has helped to draw up. These regulations are based on the principle that school rugby is organised in age grades which coincide with educational academic years. This principle was endorsed by the Court of Appeal in the case of Mountford v Newlands and is enshrined in the RFU's Schools & Youth Regulations as being the most effective way of protecting young players in schools and their teachers.

If schools need advice on the working of the Regulations they can seek it from the RFU Regulations or Schools Development Department at Twickenham who then may refer the matter to the **RFU Schools and Youth Governance Sub-Committee** of which **Tim Stirk** of ERFSSU is the chair. He has given advice on the following cases so far this season:

Case A

Peter, aged 14 on August 30th, was new to his school in September and was placed in Year 9. He is therefore too old for the U14 team and should play with the U15 age group unless, in the professional judgement of his teachers, it is considered to be inappropriate or unsafe for him to play in his own age grade. His teachers must follow the guidelines on playing out of age grade on pp 410-411 of the RFU Handbook including keeping a record of the situation. The school has a duty of care to Peter's opponents to make sure he is not a danger to them and must inform them that he is playing. Obviously he cannot play down in an age grade competition such as the County Schools U14 Cup or next year for the U15 in the Daily Mail competitions.

Case B

Jimmy Chang from Hong Kong is in his last year at school but was 18 last July. He loves playing rugby and his teachers want him to play in the 2nd XV, however most of their opponents include U16 players in their senior teams. By custom and practice senior school matches are classed as U18 matches but the regulations allow U16 boys to play up two age grades to take part in them. Young players like Jimmy, who are in the U19 age grade, have also been allowed to play if the guidelines above are followed - ie he is not a physical danger to his opponents or too good for the level being played. However he cannot play if his opponents include U16 players or if he has reached his 19th birthday. His school thought it was unfair that the presence of U16 players would prevent him from playing, but ERFSSU and Schools & Youth Governance, since it is the normal practice in a majority of schools for U16 players to play in senior teams, did not see the merit in changing the regulations for the sake of the small number of players in the U19 age grade playing in school matches.

DAN HARRISON

The family of Dan Harrison, a young rugby playing prop from Bolton School who sadly lost his life in a car accident last December attended a short and simple ceremony at Twickenham Stadium on August 14, 2008.

Dan's parents, Steve and Amanda and sister Emma met England Team Manager, Martin Johnson CBE and England squad members, Phil Vickery (London Wasps) MBE and Bath Rugby stars Lee Mears and Matt Stevens just prior to a stone being laid in Dan's honor at Twickenham 'Walk of Legends.'

The brief ceremony was also used to acknowledge Dan's own contribution to the Donor Card campaign whereby members can give their organs and skin tissue to help others once they pass away.



Daniels family used the occasion to raise the issue of organ and tissue donation as following an awareness session at school earlier in the year, and a subsequent conversation with his dad, Dan had chosen to add his name to the NHS Organ Donor Register. His family have been told that as a result of this decision as many as 40 people have benefited from his organs and tissue, including for two people the gift of sight in time for Christmas.

Only 25% of the UK population are currently signed up to the register, and yet almost 8000 people are waiting for transplants of one sort or another.

Dan's family hope that the fact that one young man has been able to help so many people, it might encourage others to look beyond the tragedy, and see the positives that can happen. They hope that people who haven't already done so will seriously consider adding their name to the register. As Dan's story shows, it can make a very real difference and change lives.

'RUGBY CORE VALUES'

Much of the behaviour and attitudes that have defined rugby are highly regarded both within and outside the sport. Despite any adverse changes in society, the game's fundamental elements must be retained for the future to aid expansion of the game. The erosion of these values could well undermine the game's attractiveness.

During the last few years a trend has emerged of undesirable behaviour and attitudes amongst many involved at all levels. As more people are encouraged to participate, it is vital that what is and what is not acceptable is clearly defined.



In February 2007 the RFU's Management Board appointed a Task Group to review the game's 'Ethos and Culture'. That Task Group's Phase One Report was approved by the Management Board in July 2008 and a copy of that report can be accessed through a link in the left hand column on the front page of the RFU's Website www.rfu.com

The Task Group, through a series of meetings, interviews, focus groups and online questionnaire, concluded that, in essence, Rugby Union is an inclusive game, for all shapes and sizes, in which teamwork, discipline, respect and sportsmanship provide a healthy, physical sport, which develops life skills and provides fun and enjoyment for all its participants.

The RFU, by the acceptance of the task group's report, has agreed, therefore, that the core values of the game are:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Teamwork | Discipline | Respect | Sportsmanship | Enjoyment |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|

- Without teamwork coupled with discipline and respect there would be no game
- Without discipline and respect, there could be damage and injury to participants and a breakdown in authority
- The game is interdependent and reliant on others of all shapes and sizes
- The game, at all levels, is to be fun, healthy and inclusive for all participants – players, officials, and supporters alike
- Without sportsmanship, honour, fair play and friendships are lost
- The game teaches life skills

Standing against these values are a number of threats, including

- General erosion of respect for authority and each other – this has an adverse influence on the behaviour of participants including ill-informed spectators. The 'win at all costs' attitudes and 'lack of discipline' also undermine relationships.
- The growth of the game and new formats of the game – New participants are not aware of or fully informed about the game's values.
- The Laws of the game not being applied – failure to apply the Laws breaks down respect for those in authority (match officials).

The RFU has agreed that the above core values will be communicated by the RFU to all participants by reminding existing participants and informing new participants. The Task Group is actively discussing the best method(s) of getting the message across. There is no doubt that teachers, coaches and parents will have important roles to play in this process.

In addition, as agreed by the RFU, the Task Group is currently working on a 'headline' standard concise RFU Code of Conduct that restates the key underpinning core values. That code will be published in due course. All other Codes of Conduct will flow from this central code.

The Task Group aims to complete its work by May 2009 and issue its Phase Two (Final) Report then.

In the meantime, since schools have such an important part to play in inculcating and promoting rugby core values, the Task Group invites teachers at ERFU's member schools to read its Phase One Report alongside this article and, as a contribution to the Task Group's work, to submit proposals and comments as to the best ways of getting the message across. These should be sent to Tim Stirk, ERFU representative on the RFU Council and a member of the Task Group at tim.stirk@ukgateway.net or c/o the Schools Development Department at Twickenham. Many thanks for your assistance, **Bob Rogers, Task Group Chairman.**

SCHOOL TICKET APPLICATION FORMS

The schools ticket allocation forms will always be sent out with RFU Touchline and be addressed to the Teacher i/c Rugby, the Headteacher will then receive the payment forms once the allocation is drawn. The next ticket form will be for the Autumn Internationals and will be sent out at the end of May to be returned by the end of June 09, so please look out for it.

FESTIVALS, TOURNAMENTS, LEAGUES, CAMPS



Documenting plans is a daunting task for some event organisers. There is so much to consider. Entertainment or alcohol licences, food hygiene, fire safety, photography policy, vehicle access, welfare, first aid, and even the weather all needing to be transparently risk assessed to reassure and inspire confidence in a well-run enjoyable activity.

We have produced some guidance notes to assist with managing and documenting the process available at www.rfu.com/schools > Governance

It is important that due thought is given to public safety so that the fun and camaraderie of rugby is presented as a safe environment for families. To ensure a degree of consistency, and conformity with game regulations, we are more actively supporting youth rugby events by formalising the permissions necessary to stage a Festival, Tournament, Summer Camp, or League similar with the existing 'permission to tour' process.

Internal activity is a matter for that Club or School. Local events are authorised annually by the CBRDP or CSU. Large scale events and those drawing participants from a wide catchment need annual permission from the RFU Schools & Youth Governance Committee, or the ERFUSU. [CBs need to be cautious of approving commercial activity].

These permission applications allow CBs to control any potential clashing events and manage the youth season. Recently the ERFUSU were happy to authorise a number of events for 2009, including the National Sevens, St. Joseph's Festival, the Independent Barbarian programme, the AASE League and the Gulliver's Super 16

All comply with the youth playing regulations and discipline process. Some CBs have reviewed local events this season, but others will audit for season 09-10. Will you be able to advertise your event as accredited? If not act now, an application form is available at www.rfu.com/schools > Governance

TWICKENHAM WORLD RUGBY MUSEUM



The World Rugby Museum is pleased to unveil a new programme of educational workshops and seminars. The programme has been designed to meet national curriculum objectives from within the context of world rugby and Twickenham Stadium.

Workshops are available for visiting key stage 1, 2 and 3 school groups and seek to engage students in fun learning, not just about the history of rugby, but about the modern day professional requirements of the sport.

Seminars are available to key stage 4 and higher education groups. The talks are delivered by professionals from within the sport and the RFU and cover a variety of topics relevant to the modern running of a national governing sports body and the international sports and events venue that is Twickenham stadium.

Workshops and seminars are intended to supplement our existing Stadium Tours and Museum activities. Further information can be found in the Workshops & Seminars section. If you would like to make a booking enquiry please contact us on 02088928877 or by email at museum@rfu.com

School workshops and seminars are presently available at no additional cost to school groups who intend to, or have already booked Stadium Tours. **All of this runs concurrently with the 2 for 1 offer that the World Rugby Museum is now offering to all ERFUSU affiliated schools!**

YOUTH STRUCTURED SEASON

You will have received your hard copy of the 2009/10 Youth Structured Season in this send out pack. It is also available to download at www.rfu.com/schools Competitions > Youth Structured Season

PLAYER SAFETY

Two cases have recently been brought to our attention which highlights some key issues in player safety.

1. **Supervision** Rugby union is a contact sport and similarly to football, hockey etc..... it can be expected that injuries will occur at some stage. It is therefore essential that coaches and teachers adequately supervise matches and training sessions.

2. **First Aid Provision** Appropriate first aid provision should be available during all physical activities. It is highly recommended that first aid is available at all rugby contact training sessions and matches.

3. **Concussion** Concussion can occur during many school activities from sports to playground activities. It is a relatively common injury which can vary from very minor to very rare but potentially very serious complications. It is therefore essential that those involved in supervising, refereeing and coaching contact sports are aware of concussion; its recognition, and management. A summary is given below but more information is available on the RFU website: www.rfu.com/health



- Concussion is a disturbance in the function of the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head.
- It usually resolves spontaneously but if not managed properly, can result in persistent symptoms which interfere with academic studies and sport, and very rarely more serious complications.
- You don't have to be knocked out to have a concussion.
- Typical symptoms
 - Headache or feeling dazed
 - Balance problems or dizziness
 - Hearing problems or ringing in the ears
 - Vision problems
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Feeling stunned or dazed
 - Confusion
 - Drowsiness loss of memory
- Any school player suspected of sustaining a concussion must be removed from the field of play and not permitted to continue or return to play for a minimum of 3 weeks and until cleared by a medical doctor
- Head injury advice should be given to the player and someone that will be with them over the next 24 hrs.

A Pitch Side Concussion Assistant is available from the RFU by contacting health@rfu.com

HSBC



The HSBC Rugby festivals were launched at Broughton Park Rugby Club on the 8th October with help from British & Irish Lions legend, HSBC Lions ambassador Jason Robinson and the ERFUSU.

The festivals, which are supported by HSBC, the Principal Partner of the British & Irish Lions Tour to South Africa in 2009, will be the first time that a grass roots campaign spans all four home unions, as well as South Africa. The festivals have another important aim of bringing together people from different cultures and countries – something that is at the very heart of HSBC as the world's local bank.

The HSBC Rugby Festivals programme incorporates the RFU's Emerging Schools programme which has grown over the last decade to involve more than 50,000 young people a year. The RFU has run a programme for schools setting out on their Rugby Journey for over 10 years creating opportunities to play at against schools of a similar standard.



HSBC's support now moves us onto the next phase with 6 strands for boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 14, from local right through to national level.

- Year 7 Boys Shield
- Year 7 Girls Shield
- Year 7 Boys Trophy
- Year 8 Boys Shield
- Year 8 Boys Trophy
- Year 9 Boys Shield



The 200-strong RFU Development network lead delivery of the HSBC programme. Vital partners include the County Schools Rugby Unions and Competition Managers. Nationally, the Navy and Army Rugby Unions provide support and resources. And, of course, we acknowledge the teachers themselves who "make it happen" in their own school.

Left to right - Rachel Brown, RFU Rugby Development Officer; Jason Robinson; Harry Benn, Walkden High School; Ken Andrews, President Lancashire County RFU; Tim Stirk RFU Council member and ERFUSU Trustee.



As part of the HSBC Rugby Festivals programme we have joined forces with SOS Kit Aid to bring together schools from the UK & South Africa. SOS Kit Aid is an IRB sanctioned initiative that gives less advantaged children around the world a chance to play and develop rugby through the collection and distribution of unwanted & used kit. Can your school help?

Over the coming months, 16 schools across the country will act as a 'hub' schools for kit collection so local schools, businesses and residents can donate their old rugby kit to the school to be delivered to Port Elizabeth. Would you be willing to become a Hub School? For further information about HSBC's SOS Kit Aid scheme and how you can help please visit www.rfu.com/schools or contact Hayley Mintern hayleymintern@rfu.com

ANTI-DOPING

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has released the **2009 Prohibited List** which outlines the classes of substances and methods that are prohibited in sport, including rugby union. The new List will come into effect on 1 January 2009 and is available together with supporting documents at www.rfu.com/antidoping.

A number of changes have been made to the List for next year so the RFU urges all clubs, teams, players and support personnel to view the List and re-check the status of any medications they may be taking by using the Drug Information Database www.didglobal.com. For further information please contact Gavin Dovey, Anti-Doping Officer, on 020 8831 7441 or gavindovey@rfu.com.

YELLOW CARD FOR FORGETTING!

Remember the regulations require prompt reporting of instances of Sending Off and subsequent sanctions to the CB Schools & Youth Disciplinary Secretary (details are in the S&Y Directory). Failure to do this can result in a sanction for your school.



PGL – WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE RFU

Residential Rugby Weekend Courses



In association with the RFU, PGL is delighted to be able to offer residential Rugby Coaching and Teambuilding weekends for young rugby players in years 7 – 11, with training from RFU recognised trainers, in addition to the established benefits of PGL's excellent outdoor activities such as abseiling and raft building. A residential rugby weekend will enable your young players to mix and train with young people from other schools and clubs under an RFU coach, who will help improve technique, fitness and tactics.

Where and when?

PGL Residential Rugby weekends are available at PGL Boreatton Park in Shropshire, or PGL Caythorpe Court in Lincolnshire. Dates for 2009 are:

- Boreatton Park: **3-5 April, 10-12 April & 17-19 April**
- Caythorpe Court: **3-5 April, 10-12 April & 17-19 April**

For more information visit www.pgl.co.uk/rfu or telephone **0870 143 0143**.



SCHOOLS AND ERFUSU CONTACTS

Rugby Development Officers (RDOs)

They are the first point of contact to support rugby development focusing centrally on Rugby Development and managing the Community Rugby Coaches (CRC) to find your local officer visit www.rfu.com/schools > Contacts

Schools Development Department – schools@therfu.com

Mark Saltmarsh - National Schools Development Manager – Tel: 07740 565061

Elisa Blackborough - Schools Development. Tel: 020 8831 6755 Fax: 020 8831 7442 Email: elisablackborough@rfu.com

Hayley Mintern - Schools Development. Tel: 020 8831 6756 Fax: 020 8831 7442 Email: hayleymintern@rfu.com

Matthew Ferguson – National RFU Tag Rugby Officer – Schools Development – 07872672623 Email: matthewferguson@rfu.com

Daily Mail

Megan Higham - U18 Daily Mail. Tel: 0870 382 1118 Fax: 0870 143 2423 Email: u18dailymail@therfu.com

Sarah Bailey - U15 Daily Mail. Tel: 0870 382 1115 Fax: 0870 143 2423 Email: u15dailymail@therfu.com

Discipline and Welfare

Nigel Orton - RFU Schools & Youth Disciplinary Secretary. Email: ortonnigel@btinternet.com

Tom Sutton – ERFUSU Welfare Manager. Mobile: 07703 439175 Email: tvam02@hotmail.com

S&Y Regulations

Tim Stirk – RFU S&Y Governance Chair - tim.stirk@ukgateway.net

Andrew Rogers – RFU Regulations Manager – andrewrogers@rfu.com

Representative

Penny Craig - U16 Tournaments & Competitions. Tel: 020 8831 6749 Fax: 0870 143 2423 Email: pennycraig@rfu.com

Jo Tyler, U18 Tournaments & Competitions. Tel: 020 8831 7498 Fax: 0870 143 2423 Email: jot Tyler@rfu.com