RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION FOR WOMEN

RFUW

23rd January 2009

Dear CB Chairman

Happy New year to you all !

It was great to meet so many of you at the recent CB leader's conference. I would like to take an opportunity to update you on a number of areas where the RFUW has moved forward significantly in the last year and the role we see we can play in the development of women and girls rugby at CB level.

The growth of women's rugby has been a challenge and with limited resources to bring to the table, the women's game has had to rely heavily on the good will and enthusiasm for rugby for all from those involved in the men's game.

I hope that the advantages of having women playing rugby are becoming easier for you to recognise, the increase in members of your rugby clubs, willing volunteers, potential coaches and administrators, not to mention the significant government funding support being received through CRC posts, facilities funding and whole sport plan funding, none of which would be being made available by government if we were not seen as a sport open to all.

At this point it is important to clarify what the RFUW's role is in this and where we believe we can support the development of the game. With limited staff on the ground it is important for us to support rather then deliver the development opportunities and ensure that women's rugby is being delivered through the structures already in place at the RFU.

We recently made some changes to our development team; David Rose joined us in September 2008 as Head of Development. David's role is primarily to mange the development team which consists of five WRDM's (Women's Regional Development Managers) and the overall development of women and girls rugby, working strategically with the RFU senior management team, to ensure the delivery of the women and girls section of the whole sport plan though the system that is in place.

We plan through a variety of mechanisms to communicate with you all directly about matters relating to women and girls rugby, significantly funding is an issue for us and we realise that in many CB's those funds are limited. Working with the RDO's and RDM's through the Regional Development teams and partnerships we are highlighting funding streams to assist the development of the game including women and girls rugby. I was pleased at the conference when Nick Eastwood acknowledged that one area of funding that needed to be addressed was that to CBs for the delivery of women's and girls rugby. I am sure we will all be following him up on that !!

A point of criticism that is often levelled at the RFUW is the fact that we are Elite focused. In the past this has been the case but now the staff numbers that are working on the development of players, clubs, coaches and support services number

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18 and we are investing in the grassroots at every chance we can. We will also be working hard to help you and our clubs to access funding and assistance from outside agencies.

Your regional manager is your first point of contact for matters concerning women and girls and in addition we now have ten Club and Coach Officers (CCO's) based regionally to support coach development and education in clubs and schools. This is a great step forward and allows us for the first time to promote the development of the women's game into specific key areas.

I am sure you have seen our success on the field and we are now leading into the Women's Rugby World Cup 2010 that we have won the right to host. I hope that you see all the work you do on the ground as a very important part of maintaining our success and hopefully leading to us becoming world champions not only once but for years to come.

If you have any questions relating to women and girls rugby, please contact your local WRDM, (listed below), or David Rose. Our intention is that over time we will have the opportunity to meet and discuss any issues locally with you in your CB and together produce action plans that allow the game to grow and increase further participation for women and girls in rugby.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

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Managing Director

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