



A very warm welcome to the new rugby season and another edition of Schools Rugby, the termly ERFSU supplement within Touchline. This will be an exciting term, with the Rugby World Cup in New Zealand igniting new passions for our sport.

Please do send us any stories and pictures reflecting the best of schools rugby. Just email [schools@therfu.com](mailto:schools@therfu.com) marking your contribution Schools Rugby Newsletter.  
Mark Saltmarsh, National Schools Development Manager.

## Perfect Time to Choose Rugby!

The world's third biggest sporting event is underway with the Rugby World Cup 2011 putting rugby union in the spotlight, especially in rugby-playing schools.

This issue of Schools Rugby arrives with the World Cup well underway in New Zealand. We will all be following England's progress. Even school coaches wearing other nations' colours will want England to make it out of Pool B into the latter stages because the success of the England team is a huge part of promoting rugby union in English schools.

This World Cup and new school year sees the launch of the Choose Rugby schools offer. Every head teacher has received a copy of the Supporting Whole School Improvement brochure, outlining what rugby union can do to support schools in raising standards.

We believe all schools should Choose Rugby now. With World Cup fever at its height, there's no better time for school management teams, teachers and other staff to use

rugby's many benefits that extend well beyond the pitch.

Rugby union is a driver for positive change, providing a unique variety of development opportunities for teachers and young people. The sport does provide fitness and enjoyment but can also help to improve attendance, achievement levels and behaviour in schools. Rugby's core values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship instil positive qualities in young people that will endure beyond their school days.

The RFU has worked closely with teachers and key partners in education and rugby to develop FREE online tools and resources that enhance both the sport and academic programme for schools. To see

what's on offer visit [rfu.com/schools](http://rfu.com/schools).

Says Mark Saltmarsh, National Schools Development Manager, "We are confident that the spectacle of the Rugby World Cup and the resources we have created to support whole school improvement will help our school colleagues and their students. This is a perfect time to Choose Rugby."



## UK School Games and an eye to Olympics



At the start of this month (September) girls from the four England Divisions and two Wales Dragons squads battled for gold in the inaugural rugby sevens tournament as part of the Sainsbury's UK School Games at Sheffield RFC.

Rugby's appearance in the Games in Sheffield brings the sport much closer to the action as the current format leads on to the launch of the new School Games which co-incides with London 2012. Says Mark Saltmarsh, National Schools Development Manager, "Being involved in this high profile event was a great boost for rugby union."

"The centrepiece of the coalition government's strategy for school sport, the School Games will include a new national event in 2012. It could well be that the 12 sports involved in Sheffield will be invited to take part. So being involved in a partnership of high profile Olympic sports is a huge plus before London 2012. This is vital to our strategy to bring the game to more young people and new audiences between now and Rugby World Cup 2015."

At the Sainsbury's UK School Games Wales Dragons A won gold, with silver and bronze going to England South West and England Midlands respectively, with the bowl won by England North. The Games reflected the best of women's U18 rugby over the two days of competition.

Said Andy Paton, RFUW Player Development Manager, "It was great for all the players, coaches and team managers to be involved in the big major games experience and among 1600 high performance athletes living in the athletes' village. From the opening to the closing ceremony, the Games provided a first class athlete education programme with quality competition venues across the city."

"For those young people across the 12 sports that will undoubtedly make it to major championships and world events in the future it will have been an invaluable grounding in what it means to perform on such a stage."

Watch out for more news about rugby union and the new School Games in 2012 in Schools Rugby and on [rfu.com](http://rfu.com). For more on the Sainsbury's UK School Games visit [www.ukschoolgames.com](http://www.ukschoolgames.com).

## Choose Rugby Choose O2 Touch



With the Rugby World Cup kicking off, O2 Touch arrived in a number of schools across England, with free kit, fun and improved fitness.

O2 Touch is part of the RFU's Choose Rugby campaign and brings the benefits and values of rugby union without being a contact sport. It is great for beginners or experienced players who want to have fun.

A fast moving and energetic game, touch rugby can help to improve students' fitness, agility, spatial awareness, support play and handling skills. O2 Touch is



also an excellent way to give students leadership skills as it relies on two nominated students to lead the programme within the school. It can also contribute to their volunteering hours in a Duke of Edinburgh or Sports Leaders award and give them the chance to plan a sporting event. A section of the [rfu.com](http://rfu.com) website is packed with information to help your young leaders to introduce and develop O2 Touch, so why not visit: [rfu.com/O2Touch](http://rfu.com/O2Touch) now?

Touch rugby's informal flexible format means that schools and student leaders can decide how to run it. Some 100 schools are currently taking part, with a target of 200 more next term. To join the O2 Touch revolution just email [schools@therfu.com](mailto:schools@therfu.com). O2 Touch is running throughout the season and you can become one of the groundbreaking 300 at any time. Whether you have a season full of fixtures or a weekly slot to fill, try O2 Touch!

Sign up to O2 Touch and your school will receive a free kit bag of O2 Touch equipment, including balls, bibs and cones.

## RFU Grand Draw Easy Money for Schools

In the past two seasons over 130 Schools have helped to fund tours, bought new kit and improved sports facilities thanks to money raised through the annual RFU Grand Draw.

More than £140,000 has been raised with no risk and no cost to the schools taking part. And with funding constraints this is a perfect time to make money the easy way through the Draw. It's so simple – the RFU Draw Society sources all the prizes and provides all Draw material free of charge. Those taking

part keep 90% of the proceeds as a tax free donation. The Society takes only 10% to cover operating costs.

While schools have already raised thousands many have yet to join the scheme. If your school is one of them and you would like more information, simply contact [grand.draw@therfu.com](mailto:grand.draw@therfu.com) and the organisers will be happy to help you. Or you can complete a Grand Draw entry form found on [rfu.com](http://rfu.com).

## Rugby World Cup in your classroom!

There's a whole host of downloadable goodies available to bring the Rugby World Cup to life in the classroom and improve results right across the curriculum. Turn to Page 3 to get the England squad on side!

THIS IS  
RUGBY.

Teamwork Respect Enjoyment Discipline Sportsmanship

# Importance of sport to country's morale

Peter Johnson ERFSU President

There has been a lot of understandable anxiety about the problems in our society in the wake of the recent riots. Inevitably, the behaviour of many young people has come under scrutiny and it has been rather depressing to experience the constant gloom depicted in the media.

At times like this, sport has the ability to raise the spirits so thank goodness for England's amazing cricket success in the India Test series. It has been a timely reminder of the importance of sport to the morale of individuals and the country as a whole.

Sport also has its part to play in the development of young people. For so many, involvement in sport and the communities which emanate from it has proved to be a life-enhancing experience. With the best cricket team in the world, the Rugby World Cup happening, the next one in England in 2015 and the London Olympics almost upon us, it is the perfect time to promote the benefits of sport. As the new rugby season unfolds we must not miss this excellent opportunity.



Peter Johnson

## Daily Mail RBS Schools Competition – All to Play For

After last year's schools day at Twickenham Stadium, which saw the largest finals crowd to date at approximately 14,000, the Daily Mail RBS Schools competition is approaching its 23rd year as England's leading schools cup competition.

Founded in 1988, the competition has contributed to the development of England stars like Mike Tindall, Danny Care and James Haskell as well as England U20 centre Elliot Daly, who was part of the U18 Cup-winning Whitgift School team last season.

The 2010-11 season saw the introduction of a new and innovative U15 Vase structure, which comprised 64 pools of four, with winners progressing through to the knockout stages of the competition. The new structure continues this season, providing schools that lose in Round 1 with another three fixtures and a second chance to run out at Twickenham on Finals Day. Lessons were learned last season and as an added incentive, both the winner and runner up of each pool will now go through to the knockout stages.

"The Vase pools provide additional structured games – a mini fixture list – for the first round losers, many of them schools in their early years of playing the game" says Mark Saltmarsh, National Schools Development Manager. "Playing against local schools of a similar standard in meaningful matches acts as an encouragement which a straight knock-out competition can't provide. Many schools that have graduated from the developing and emerging schools programmes now have a playing opportunity in schools rugby's major national competition. This shows that the Daily Mail RBS competition is not only finding our champion schools but also nurturing the grassroots of the game and keeping young players of all standards involved."

Almost 90 schools that were not involved last year have entered this season's Under 15 Cup, a number either making their very first appearance or returning after many years' absence. There are a total of 564 teams in the draw.

The local Rugby Development teams are vital to the success of the new format. They have put in place a coordinator for each Under 15 Vase Pool and will work closely with the County Schools Union and the schools involved.

Joining the Under 18 competition are a further seven schools this year, with the total number now at 464. As RFU President Willie Wildash says, "The Daily Mail RBS Schools Competition plays a pivotal role in schools rugby and the standard carries on rising year on year. I would like to wish all schools entering the competition the best of luck and I look forward to welcoming the finalists to Twickenham on Wednesday April 4th."

The U15 competition begins on Wednesday 14th September, followed a fortnight later by the U18s competition on Wednesday 28th. More information at [www.rfu.com/dailymailrbs](http://www.rfu.com/dailymailrbs)



Victorious Whitgift

## Hothfield Haka Tony Simpson

Hothfield Primary School in Silsden, West Yorkshire has embraced the Rugby World Cup as a part of the curriculum thanks to a friendship between staff member Beckie Carter and Philippa Norton, who works for the British High Commission in Wellington. Now twinned with Mornington School in Dunedin, where England were launching their Rugby World Cup campaign against Argentina on September 10, the school is abuzz with all things rugby.

Kiwi officials were keen to use their country's hosting of the World Cup as an educational tool and schools in cities welcoming the competitors were encouraged to set up exchange links with schools in countries visiting them.

"Philippa suggested that we might be suitable partners for the project," says Beckie. "The children from Dunedin sent us cardboard cut-outs of caricature rugby players which they coloured in to represent the New Zealand All Blacks and letters telling us about Dunedin and New Zealand. We coloured the reverse side with an England strip, although given that we play in white we've made one or two minor additions to add some colour!"

"We've also sent pictures and letters back about Silsden, Yorkshire and England and what life is like over here.

Having had our children walking on the Three Peaks and being on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales, we've featured that fairly strongly."

Having New Zealand in general and Dunedin in particular as a theme and the rugby union World Cup as the background to their new topic the 75 youngsters involved have also found an expert on the subject in RFU Development Officer for West Yorkshire, Hamish Pratt, who was born and bred in Dunedin and even has an auntie who once taught at Mornington School.

"I knew that Hamish was a Kiwi," said RFU Press Officer Tony Simpson. "Then I discovered that he is from Dunedin and the fact that he knew the school and had someone in the family who had worked there was amazing. The children might even give him a Hothfield version of the haka, especially as England were wearing their new all black change strip in Dunedin because of the colour clash with Argentina's pale blue and white jersey."

As the youngsters from Hothfield can now tell you, the name Dunedin stems from Dùn Èideann, the Scottish Gaelic name for Edinburgh, on which the design of the city was based. Until 1900 it was the biggest city in New Zealand.



## Who is your Daily Mail RBS Real Rugby Hero?

Entries are now open for the 2011 Daily Mail RBS Real Rugby Heroes programme, which recognises and rewards people making invaluable contributions to rugby, from coaching the beginners to providing warm drinks on winter afternoons.

Volunteers play a vital role in schools rugby and previous winners have included parents, teachers, a student, club coaching co-coordinator, school nurse, school sports administrator and a grounds man. All had helped to implement or develop rugby related programmes in their schools.

Across the country there are many more rugby heroes worthy of recognition. If you know someone who has made a difference at your school, fill in the form at [www.rfu.com/realrugbyheroes](http://www.rfu.com/realrugbyheroes) and tell us why you believe they deserve to become a Daily Mail RBS Real Rugby Hero.

Up to ten winners will receive a pair of tickets to a 2012 RBS 6 Nations game at Twickenham, plus a VIP trip to Twickenham's Daily Mail RBS Schools Final, where they will be presented with their certificate. Entries close on December 31st, with winners announced in the January edition of Schools Rugby.



## YAZOO! All New Key Stage 2 Resource

A brand new Rugby Curriculum Resource for Primary Schools has been launched by YAZOO and the RFU, complementing the hugely successful Yazoo Tag 2 Twickenham competition.

Game centred and skill based, the resource helps children to develop their understanding of tag rugby via innovative, progressive and enjoyable lesson plans, which can be tailored for any playing level.

With a whole-part-whole coaching style, sessions can be adapted based on teachers' observations. The teacher simply watches play, stops it, selects the appropriate activity to develop the children's skills and then resumes the game. This allows a specific skill to be improved as children transfer skills learned into a game situation.

Developed with the help of teachers' feedback, the resource includes the National Curriculum Objectives for PE, matching them with the aims and objectives in the tag rugby programme. The new resource will help to raise pupils' fitness and skills levels, improve their understanding of the importance of good health, increase participation and competitive sport within the school; in line with government recommendations and the new School Games.

This free YAZOO RFU resource and the Tag 2 Twickenham programme offer many of the benefits of rugby union. Pupils will discover rugby's Core Values of teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline and sportsmanship, helping them in their sporting and school lives.

For more information and to access the resource visit [rfu.com/schools](http://rfu.com/schools), or contact [schools@therfu.com](mailto:schools@therfu.com).



## Great Value Varsity Match Offer!

The Nomura Varsity Match Thursday December 8th, kick off 2pm, U21s 11:30.

Played since 1872, one of rugby's historic fixtures and a pivotal part of the Twickenham match programme returns on Thursday December 8th and there's a great ticket offer for schools.

When Oxford take on Cambridge in their annual battle it's against a backdrop of 129 games played with this year's clash promising an exciting, closely fought encounter. Your school could be there taking advantage of a great schools' offer, with tickets only £5 per pupil and a free adult seat with every ten ordered! So don't miss out on the battle of the Blues at our special schools-saver prices.

To buy tickets go to [rfu.com/tickets](http://rfu.com/tickets) and for further information email [tickets@rfu.com](mailto:tickets@rfu.com).

# RWC Role Models & Teaching Resources

You could enlist the likes of Chris Ashton, Jonny Wilkinson or any of England's World Cup heroes to inspire your students.

Recent research conducted around role models revealed that after family members the most likely person to influence young people is a sports person. With this in mind the RFU has developed a series of readymade downloadable teaching resources that harness the inspiration and excitement of the Rugby World Cup to help you deliver engaging lessons.

There is one reading toolkit and three interactive resources with lesson plans, whiteboard activities, teacher notes, student worksheets and interactive games. All use exclusive rugby footage and photos and

are based on the National Curriculum key concepts and outcomes:

Primary cross curricular; Primary Project – Become a Rugby World Cup Winner! In this resource the children will cover Key Stage 2 Maths, English, Science, Geography and Citizenship in accruing the necessary skills to become a World Cup winner.

Secondary literacy; Literacy led cross-curricular project entitled Bidding to Host the Rugby World Cup. In this resource students work in groups each representing a bidding nation, at the end of the project they vote to decide where the next World Cup will be held!

Secondary numeracy; KS3 Maths/Geometry and Measures/Angles. In this resource

students will learn about angles through a series of interactive activities linked to rugby.

Transitional KS2/3 literacy toolkit for teachers; packed with literacy games, ideas and activities for practitioners to use up to and throughout the Rugby World Cup to improve students' literacy skills. Love Rugby: Love Reading has been written by top children's author Tom Palmer, and produced by the National Literacy Trust in partnership with the RFU.

All resources, as well as PE lesson plans, are available to download free of charge at [rfu.com/schools](http://rfu.com/schools). Watch out for resource updates throughout the season.



## Reading and rugby a winning partnership

The RFU and the National Literacy Trust have formed an exciting partnership, which means that as well as the Love Rugby: Love Reading toolkit we can look forward to more quality education resources in the future.

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity that aims to transform lives through literacy – directly supporting those who struggle with literacy and the people who work with them. One person in six in the UK struggles to read and write. Schools can access lots of resources, including sport-themed resources such as the Rugby World Cup toolkit and a Premier League Reading Stars project, as well as join professional networks on the charity's website, [www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk). You can also join the National Literacy Trust's Schools' Network and receive support and ideas to raise literacy standards at your school. [www.literacytrust.org.uk/schools\\_network](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/schools_network).



## Yazoo Tag 2 Twickenham

Tag 2 Twickenham has been a resounding success. It is run by the RFU and YAZOO, together with the scheme founders, the Child Victims of Crime police charity, which funds the training of more than 600 police staff each year to coach YAZOO tag rugby in primary schools.

The programme has taken tag rugby to nearly two million children in the last six years. And distributed tag equipment to thousands of schools. This year Teddington School, Stanley Primary, were back at Twickenham for the second year in succession after a last-minute win over north London rivals, West Leigh Junior School, in the RFU YAZOO Tag 2 Twickenham national finals at Rugby School. Retaining the title in the biggest primary school programme of its kind in England was no mean achievement and playing before England's Investec International against Wales was their reward.

But fun was had by thousands and one player, Dan Hand from Fellside School in Whickham, Newcastle, wrote an excellent account of their campaign before interviewing England wing Mark Cueto.

He wrote:  
I can't believe how far we've come in 12 months, many of us, including me, didn't have a clue how to play tag rugby and now we're playing at the birthplace of rugby union, Rugby School in Warwickshire.  
Monday 11th May:  
Can't believe we leave tomorrow, I am so excited! I have all my clothes packed and everything out for tomorrow. I'll have an early night tonight, but I'm sure I won't sleep, anyway better go and check my kit one last time before I go to bed!

Tuesday 12th May:  
12:30pm – Thinking of questions I can ask when I interview Mark Cueto tomorrow, I'll be very nervous!  
3:15pm – The school day has finished and enjoying a snack before we get the bus, everyone cannot wait until we leave!  
4:00pm – We've said our goodbyes to our parents and on the bus now, it'll be a long four hours, that's for sure!  
6:30pm – Stopped at Woodall service station to have our tea, I had chicken nuggets and chips at the KFC; they were delicious!  
9:00pm – Arrived at Premier Inn and I'm pleased



to know that my room-mate is my best friend! It will be an early night for us as we want to get as much sleep as possible before the big day! Wednesday 13th May:

7:30am – Woke up bright and early and went downstairs to get some breakfast. I had two croissants, bacon and beans. They were absolutely gorgeous!!  
8:30am – Just got given our rugby kits and I'm number 8. Furthermore, they are ours to keep forever!  
9:30am – On bus en route to Rugby School. Butterflies are fluttering in my stomach!  
12:00pm – We have just finished our qualifying group, we are a little disappointed with our performance we won one game out of five but everyone gave their best and the standard is very high. We do have the chance to redeem ourselves in the afternoon  
12:15pm – Just came back from interviewing Mark Cueto, I was very nervous but managed to conquer my fears! He is very interesting!! It's amazing to think that he's a full England international.  
3:30pm – In the afternoon, we managed to win three out of five games and certainly didn't disgrace ourselves. We finished 3rd but only missed 1st by 3 points! Our final finishing position was 17th.  
4:00pm – Watched the final to decide the National Champions. Congratulations to the winners, Stanley, the first team to retain the championship. I wish them the best of times at Twickenham. I'm really proud of my team for getting so far in the tournament, it was a great experience and something I won't forget in a hurry.

For more information and access to the resources please go to [rfu.com/schools](http://rfu.com/schools), or alternatively please contact [schools@therfu.com](mailto:schools@therfu.com).

## Ten out of Ten for SOS Kit Aid



SOS Kit Aid is currently celebrating a decade of success during which 90,000 youngsters in 22 emerging nations across the world have received recycled kit. Not only have all these young people enjoyed the benefits of SOS Kit Aid's efforts but 90,000kg of badly needed rugby kit has been diverted from environmentally damaging UK landfill sites.

With new LV= sponsorship and a joint initiative with the Lord's Taverners, SOS Kit Aid will complete 47 big kit deliveries to some 22 emerging nations and for the first time in the UK during 2011, a 44% increase on 2010.

Bolton School enjoy being involved with the SOS Kit aid projects. Says Paul Fernside, Head of Games, "It is so simple for us to do. We collect pupils unwanted sports kit (not just rugby) place it in a wheelie bin, when the bin is full, we ring Andy Thompson from SOS who comes to collect it. We try to tie this in with asking our lost property system for any unclaimed items of sports clothing

(and we have lots!). Any unwanted team kits are also passed on to SOS at the end of the season. The thought that some young people somewhere in the world will be using the kit makes it very satisfying.

"We have also worked with the local club Bolton RUFC, to see if they have any unwanted kit – that way Andy can collect from the same area. Our players at Bolton School are very fortunate and tend to have most things, their kit having a second life elsewhere, instead of being thrown in the bin is a fantastic reason to be involved with SOS."

To discover more visit [www.lvsoskitaid.com](http://www.lvsoskitaid.com)



## King's Kick Off Season in Style

King's School in Macclesfield started their rugby season with a training camp up near the Pyrenees, followed by hosting their 22nd 1st XV Festival. Rugby playing schools from across the country brought squads to compete in an environment that allows coaches to experiment, with no scores kept or recorded. Schools like Sedbergh, Oakham, Old Swinford Hospital and Bryanston made their annual trip to Cheshire to prepare for the season.

The following day, King's hosted their inaugural Old Boys Sevens Festival, with past players returning and rekindling old friendships. It was a chance to build links with former pupils and the standard of rugby was very high.

Guy Mason, King's Head of Rugby, says, "The whole weekend celebrated the past, present and future of King's

rugby. The 1st XV Festival has always worked well and we also wanted to build on the RFU initiative of keeping people playing after they leave school through our Sevens Festival spanning 20 years of King's rugby players."

Pupils and staff were busy over the summer months too. Pupils helped the RFU by refereeing and coaching at the Macclesfield and District Primary Schools Tag Festival; while most of the 1st XV were in the gym using the new state of the art weight training facility. The teaching staff entered two mixed teams into a school touch rugby league and enjoyed it so much that they put a team into the Didsbury Summer Touch Rugby league as well. King's Old Boys also won the schools summer touch rugby competition organised by the RFU, hosted at both Macclesfield and Wilmslow RUFC.



# Tour a True Education for Skinners Boys



It is often said that benefits of young players going on tour stretch beyond the pitch and beyond rugby. This was certainly true for Tunbridge Wells Skinners School's U14s in the summer.

A great deal of preparation and fundraising, by parents and the 25 boys involved, preceded their two week tour to South Africa. It certainly paid off when the squad gained not just a clean sweep of four resounding wins against hosting teams but also a real understanding of life in the country and the townships.

The boys took out five huge kit bags of equipment collected over six months and a visit to a township school soon revealed just how much it was needed. Skinners pupils were welcomed into lessons and got involved in some rugby at break time.

Said scrum half/full back Will Billing, "The children at Thornhill Primary School played rugby in bare feet and we were very glad to be able to provide kit, trainers and rugby boots. We now all realise how much we have compared to them, having seen homes made from wooden crates and canvas.

"This season we become U15s and I think we have changed. We've only been beaten once in our time together and we won all our matches in South Africa but we realised that although winning is great it isn't the most important thing. Apart from meeting new people and seeing how others live, we saw our teachers differently and got much closer as a team."

Matches were played against Woodridge College, Oudstorn High School, Kasselsvlei High School where Skinners were tested most before winning 31-17 and Hamilton Sea Point. The boys, led by their coach Tim Watts, also took an hour and a half training session at Woodridge College which included all the skills and drills learned during their time at Skinners.



## ERFSU

### Schools Rugby

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## Bring the Team to Heroes Rugby at Twickenham

Saturday 3rd December 2011  
kick off 4:30pm

H 4 H Northern Hemisphere XV managed by Lawrence Dallaglio, Jason Leonard and Ieuan Evans

Southern Hemisphere XV, managed by Michael Lynagh and Sean Fitzpatrick

School party tickets are £10 each, with 1 adult at £10 for every 10 junior tickets purchased. Coach passes are £25 each if 75% of the party are juniors.

Let's pack out Twickenham for this Heroes Rugby Challenge, supported by J P Morgan, in aid of Help for Heroes. To buy tickets go to [rfu.com/tickets](http://rfu.com/tickets) and for further information email [tickets@rfu.com](mailto:tickets@rfu.com).



## Internship at the RFU

Robert Gilroy

For two weeks in the summer I was lucky to have an internship at the RFU gained through my school, Millfield. Based at Twickenham Stadium, I also had the opportunity to meet some of my heroes and to experience how the sport is run.

I worked within the Schools Development Department, very appropriate for a 17-year-old A level student. I began by becoming a fully qualified touch judge before helping out in the office. Contributing to decisions that would affect me and my friends at school was a good feeling. I also worked in both the World Rugby Museum and the Rugby Store which gave me an understanding of the work of the RFU and also a chance to see the much discussed black England change kit before everyone else!

After helping to pack the ball boy kit for the England v Wales Investec International, I was escorted onto the pitch by Keith Kent, Twickenham's Head Groundsman, who explained how it was looked after in the run-up to a game. Jonny Wilkinson was about 30 metres away, practising his kicking at the time! When the team ran out to start their warm-up, I was seated in the sin bin and was one of the few people watching.

I then helped with the England open training session at Twickenham Stadium, manning the inflatables, playing touch rugby and drinking YAZOO. Then I watched England train in front of a 3000 strong crowd of fans who then collected autographs.

More office work brought me down to earth, before I helped some of the RFU coaches teaching teenagers how to coach rugby. This taught me a lot about how to handle different situations and to coach, something I am very much looking forward to doing again soon. I thoroughly enjoyed my time working at the RFU and huge thanks go to everyone there for the experience.

Elisa Blackborough, Education Administration Manager said, "It has been fantastic to have Rob join us this summer, going forward we would like to open up this RFU placement opportunity to other member schools."



## Grow Your Own Referees!



Three years ago Hereford Blue Coats School hosted an Entry Level Referees Award for students so that they could officiate school matches on Saturdays and at Luctonians, their local club, on Sunday mornings. Since then more than 60 young people have qualified as referees and officiate all over the country thanks to support from their club referee co-ordinator Hugh Black and PE teacher Mike Stubbs.

When Gloucester Rugby needed referees to assist with their annual schools tournaments, they trained 12 young volunteers at Kingsholm to officiate that same week in the Gloucester Schools Festival. At the event the young referees were supported by local development squad officials who gave feedback and helped with any problems.

Bradford Grammar this year offered pupils the opportunity to complete the RFU's Young Officials Award as part of their Sixth Form General Studies programme. Under the guidance of Will Halford, Referee Development Manager for the North East and Yorkshire, Neil Spence, Community Rugby Coach for West Yorkshire and members of Bradford Grammar School's PE & Games department seven pupils completed theory sessions and developed their practical skills over four tournaments hosted by the school.

The RFU's Young Official Development Officer, Adam White, said, "Schemes like this are fantastic, not only for us referees, but for the game as a whole. It takes a lot for a young person to be in charge of 30 players, especially with all the parents and coaches on the touchline but they have really stepped up to the mark and do a superb job."

If your school or college would like to run a course for your students please contact Adam White – [AdamWhite@rfu.com](mailto:AdamWhite@rfu.com) – or phone 07576 180813.

## Rossllyn Park HSBC National Schools Sevens

The National Schools Sevens in association with Rossllyn Park FC and run in partnership with ERFSU is the world's largest rugby tournament with some 7,000 boys and girls aged 13-19 competing each year. The next tournament on the week commencing 26th March is now taking entries.

Call Dom Shabbo 020 8876 6044 or visit [www.rpns7.co.uk](http://www.rpns7.co.uk)

## New Home for Crusaders' Protectors

Tony Simpson

Branksome Science College in Darlington were the delighted recipients of the post protectors used at Twickenham Stadium when The Crusaders tackled The Sharks in their one off Super 15 game on English turf after the New Zealanders lost their ground to the Christchurch earthquake.

The protectors were shipped in from New Zealand and the cost of sending them back was more than a new set so they ended up in County Durham gracing Branksome's rugby posts. Said Brendan Fitzmaurice, "We are very grateful for this gift, which means we won't have to borrow post protectors again now we have such high-class equipment."

