SCHOOLS RUGBY

January 2014

RUGBY WORLD CUP TO INVOLVE SCHOOLS





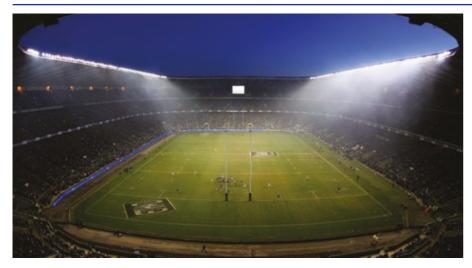
School children across the country will be part of the excitement of Rugby World Cup 2015 (RWC 2015) with the formation of a new youth partnership. The Rugby Football Union, England 2015 and Youth Sport Trust are developing a programme targeting secondary school children with a range of activities during the build-up, including welcoming people to the tournament.

This programme will include:

- School Rugby Ambassadors young people across the country will be selected to become School Rugby
 Ambassadors and will take a leading role in promoting rugby and RWC 2015 with their peers in school by
 organising events to mark the important tournament milestones. These events will be an opportunity for
 young people to develop their own leadership skills and represent their school as ambassadors of Rugby
 World Cup 2015. This programme will be formally launched in February 2014.
- School Resource Pack a group of teachers drawn from across the country are to develop a teaching
 resource pack that will be available from summer 2014. The new resources will help teachers and students
 use rugby union as a tool right across school and celebrate the sport in the run up to and during RWC
 2015. The resource pack is being designed for teachers of all subjects. It will provide ideas and support for
 bringing rugby to life across the curriculum and the school.

TM © Rugby World Cup Limited 2008 – 2014. All rights reserved.





BUCS RUGBY FINALS – FRIDAY UNDER FLOODLIGHTS

University rugby involves huge numbers of players of all levels and to see the very best why not take in the British Universities & Colleges Sport Rugby Union Championship finals held for the first time under the Twickenham floodlights.

England's victorious 2003 Rugby World Cup squad members, Richard Hill (Brunel University West London), Martin Corry (Northumbria University), Kyran Bracken (University of Bristol) and Will Greenwood (University of Durham), all took part in this fixture before going on to achieve international success

The men's and women's finals always bring fabulous fan engagement and fantastic levels of skill and drama to the Home of England Rugby and, with the evening kick offs in 2014, more rugby fans will be able to enjoy the spectacle than ever before.

So save the date – Friday 28th March 2014 – **tickets@rfu.com**









CALL FOR HELP IN IMPORTANT RESEARCH STEPHEN WATKINS

The RFU wants to develop and enhance their young player education programmes with your help. Your school or college is invited to take part in an RFU funded research project about performance enhancement & supplementation in rugby union run by Leeds Metropolitan University. The study involves interviews with both 16-18 year old male adolescents who are part of a school sports team and teachers responsible for the school or college rugby teams. Interviews will explore perceptions around how adolescent males try to improve their sporting performance and image. This will include providing a background about their sporting experience, identifying the attributes that they think are necessary to be good at their sport, talking about dietary habits and giving their opinion on the use of nutritional supplements and banned substances.

Once the project is complete, findings will be reported to the academic community and wider game. Leeds Metropolitan University can also send your school or college a summary of the findings as they may inform your player development programmes. The results will remain anonymous throughout and at no point will the identity of the school or college or any individual be revealed in any publication.

Please to contact Dr. Lisa Whitaker to discuss taking part. Tel: 0113 8128651; E-mail: L.A.Whitaker@leedsmet.ac.uk



If you have tickets to the RBS 6 Nations England v Ireland match please join us in the West Fan Village for refreshments and a get together by booking at **schools@therfu.com**



Tim Stirk ERFSU PRESIDENT

When I was first involved with school rugby in my county, the rivalry and antagonism between clubs and schools was evident. It became an ambition to encourage these two vital components in the development of young players to work together and to ensure that the contribution of both was appropriately acknowledged. The development of partnerships and links between schools and other institutions in rugby remains a central theme of my work in ERFSU and the RFU.

Rugby World Cup 2015 and its potential legacy provide the stimulus to foster partnerships at local and national level, between schools and their local clubs and between County Schools Unions (CSU) and their Constituent Bodies (CBs) to further the growth of our game. ERFSU works closely with colleges and universities to promote rugby union in the education sector and vital partnerships have been forged with the RFU and its various departments. At this half-way point of the season I wish to thank all at Twickenham and in the RFU's work force in the field with whom we work for schools rugby, especially our partners in Education Development and Rugby Events and Competitions. We also have a new partnership with the Professional Rugby Department to help run the England 16 Group and I hope that the RWC 2015 Unity Project may provide us with the opportunity to establish partnerships with developing countries in Europe.

In this first term of the academic year I have watched a variety of rugby at different levels – school, junior representative, club and international. Again I have been struck by the high standards achieved and been proud of the contribution made by schools rugby. The North and Midlands Academies U15 Festival

showcased some of the talent which will feature in the 16 Group programme. I was then delighted to represent ERFSU at the opening of a new pitch at Sexey's School, Bruton, where rugby has enjoyed impressive development over the last 20 years.

The QBE Internationals saw many former schools players representing England and gave Schools Development and ERFSU the opportunity to entertain teachers at the Party in the West Fan Village at the Australia match. The following day I attended the 'Veterrimi IV' Festival at Sherborne School where four of the oldest rugby playing schools - Sherborne, Durham Cheltenham and St Paul's - compete for the A J Dingle Cup (A J Dingle was an old boy of Durham who played for England in 1913/14 and was killed at Gallipoli in 1916). Despite some inclement weather the standard of rugby was excellent and Durham were worthy winners. Watching two senior women's internationals (both won impressively by England) reminded me that we must do more to encourage girls rugby in our schools. I have also watched matches in the NatWest Cups which make me look forward eagerly to the next rounds including the Semi-Finals and Finals

Finally, may I thank all of you who make schools rugby the undoubted success that it is: teachers, players and parents in schools, clubs that reach out into their school communities, the RFU staff in Schools Development and around the country (especially those delivering the All Schools Programme), the volunteers running our CSUs and those who man the committees of ERFSU so effectively. I wish everyone a very happy New Year and continued success and enjoyment.

DON'T FALL FOUL OF THE AGE GRADE REGULATIONS DAVID TURNER

Regulation 15 can be a bit daunting and a mistake could result in a breach of regulations and mean a lot of time spent sorting it out. Please familiarise yourself with Regulation 15 and the associated Age Grade Guidance available at www.rfu.com/thegame/regulations.

To make things as clear as possible ERFSU has produced guidance and a form to ensure compliance in each of two important areas:

· Playing up or down an age grade

This guidance is of little use if you don't know whether a player is in Year 9 but over age. Coaches must therefore routinely check all players' dates of birth, not just those in teams but also when they start at the school, also taking into account for any pupils repeating a year and those who join the school mid-term.

You'll find the guidance and a best practice consent form at

www.rfu.com/thegame/regulations - Playing an U15 player against one or

more U17s

The situation is more complicated when U16 teams can contain U15s, and those U16 teams

play outside England against an U16 team that may contain players who are classified as U17s under RFU Regulations (but due to differences in age banding, are classified as U16s in the foreign jurisdiction). In this situation special consideration is required and approval should only be requested after VERY careful consideration.

Don't wait until you are on tour. Apply for any permissions needed months in advance, when planning. And remember to check with the opposition if the need does exist.

If an overseas U16 team plays you in England remember to check if they have any players who, under RFU designation, are U17: If they do you must either say they can't play them or you must not play your U15s. For matches in England, now approval can be given for U15s to play against U17s.

You'll find the guidance and a consent form for U15s playing against U17s outside of England at www.rfu.com/thegame/ regulations



MELISSA PLATT

Reaching Round 5 of the U15 NatWest Schools Cup alerted the South East London Colfe's School squad to what they can achieve if they stick together. It has inspired them to develop their skills so they can match the best in the competition.

Colfe's knocked out Kingsdale (50-7), Beths Grammar (24-10), Langley Park (26-29) and Eltham College (27-27) on their way to the fifth round, a significant achievement for a team which didn't win a game last season.

Andrew Foster, Colfe's U15 rugby coach, said: "Our boys took away some terrific memories. You don't need to reach Twickenham for it to be a worthwhile journey."

Colfe's campaign ended in defeat against defending champions Dulwich College, but said Foster: "The boys showed spirit and resilience against a school which has won the Cup two years running. We are not yet at the same level. As a co-ed school we have some 60 boys in a year rather than 180. However it's very encouraging to see two-thirds of the boys in the year volunteering to play rugby.

"The NatWest Schools Cup has given them a tremendous amount of confidence. A Cup competition inspires something special in the build-up to a game and the sense of achievement and enjoyment felt by our players at progressing to each round has made them even more determined to succeed.

"It was exciting for the team to play Beckenham and Blackheath under floodlights in front of hundreds. Many spoke of the amazing sensation when they were applauded off the pitch. It was the first time they had been able to clap the crowd as they had seen their England heroes thank supporters after internationals."

Rugby's core values are also having an impact on school life according to the U15 rugby coach who is Head of GCSE performance: "You can see the boys taking what they have learnt on the rugby field into the classroom; qualities like teamwork, respect and positivity. They have also benefited from the school's introduction of a psychology programme called Tougher Minds run by Jon Finn and Professor Jim McKenna. Leadership and decision-making skills develop on the rugby pitch and aid pupils' academic work.

"Before each game the boys write down key match targets and then reflect on what they have achieved," says Foster. "Even at 14 they have a tremendous grasp of psychology and the positive effects a team can achieve through praise and focus."

Foster believes the ultimate goal of reaching the U18 NatWest Cup Final in three years' time is achievable: "We had many players making significant contributions in the U15s NatWest Schools Cup this season, so it will be exciting to see how they develop. They are determined to improve individually and advance as a group."

The Natwest Schools Finals are at Twickenham on Saturday 29th March. For more information, go to

www.rfu.com/natwestschoolscup twitter @schoolscup

ST MARK'S AT HOME AT AVONMOUTH

St Mark's School, Bath, hosts community-based sports clubs at their all-weather, floodlit pitches. However, the school doesn't have suitable playing facilities for rugby so a new partnership with Avon Rugby Club has made a real difference. The RFU has also funded new kits for the lower and upper school A teams as well as coaching for the girls' squad.

Said Rugby Development Officer, Julie Swann: "The school wasn't playing a lot of rugby and a local rugby club wanted to recruit a new age group. Building a relationship between school and club has improved the boys' and girls' playing experience. Working alongside St Mark's Head of PE, Steve Leonard, Avon's Matt Sutherland and Ian Smith from RFU, we established local needs and brought all key stakeholders together."

Steve Leonard added: "Our facilities are not, unfortunately, suitable for rugby fixtures and this has been disappointing for our teams. Being based on a hill makes for great physical training but means that until now our fixtures have all had to be away. We are really pleased that this is no longer an issue for our sportsmen and women and everyone is really excited to have our own 'home' facility. We are incredibly grateful to both the RFU and Avon Rugby Club for their support and look forward to the partnership developing even further in the coming years."

The teams have already seen success with more players of all levels playing, a string of close-fought victories over local schools as well as collaborative projects with local primary schools to share the benefits of this development and new community partnership.



RUGBY UNION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS COURSE

Teachers or coaches working with 11 to 18-year-old pupils and wanting to deliver safe and effective rugby union within and outside the curriculum are offered a new seven-hour course involving practical and classroom based activity.

Rugby develops young people's personal and social abilities alongside their sporting

skills and the Rugby Union in Secondary Schools course covers many valuable aspects, is supported by a teachers' resource pack and, on completion, brings an RFU teacher's licence and

access to the RFU online coaching academy.

Please contact your local RFU Rugby

Development Officer for details of courses in your area.

SAINSBURY'S SCHOOL GAMES UK-WIDE

The Sainsbury's School Games 2013 had a full UK complement at the U18 Girls 7s competition for the first time, with teams from England's four Divisions, two from Wales and teams representing Scotland and the Irish Provinces.

The School Games 7s is now an integral element to the development of Under 18 Girls at international level across the Home Nations. A full UK sevens seems certain to continue in 2014 School Games, which The Youth Sport Trust have announced will take place on 4th –7th September in Manchester.

John Steele, Chief Executive of the Youth Sport Trust, said: "With top quality venues and a city with a vast experience of hosting major sporting events I am thrilled that the Sainsbury's 2014 School Games is heading to Manchester. I am sure it will be a spectacular occasion and we look forward to a warm welcome."

In September 2013 Wales Dragons A collected the trophy for the second time in three years – their first win in 2011 was also in Sheffield – when they defeated the South West 10-0 in a closely fought final. England London & South East came third and England Midlands won the bowl competition.

The Sainsbury's School Games also provided a superb opportunity for five Young Whistlers from the Warwickshire Society of Referees. Aged 15 – 17, they took responsibility for organising themselves to referee, organise pre-match essentials and then to work as a team on the field.

Former England Women's captain and RFU University Rugby Development Officer, Sarah Hunter said, "Refereeing elite athletes from different countries in front of big crowds, they also had the pressure of keeping on schedule and meeting expectations of experienced and demanding coaches. One even took part in an interview with England's Amy Turner which was broadcast to the whole crowd."

Peter Tolan, chairman of the WSOR Young Whistlers who, with Ian Roberts, acted as referee manager said, "Our young officials' standards throughout the weekend, both on and off the pitch, were impeccable. They learned an enormous amount and developed both in their personal and refereeing lives."

Said Young Whistler Kyran Flynn, from Alcester, "To referee such a high standard of 7s rugby was a great experience for me and all the other referees involved. It has helped me improve my refereeing and I made many friends along the way."

STEPHANIE GILES



JOINED UP THINKING

Tor RFC near to Glastonbury are recruiting young players from St Dunstan's and Crispin schools. Fixtures between them have been hosted under floodlights and the club has been working with Community Rugby Coach Chris Hurd who has been running skills sessions in school and after school for Years 8 and 9. They are aiming to add a junior team for their 40 U6-U10s to move on to and have juniors coming through to play colts and senior rugby.

The club had four U13/U14 players turning up for skills sessions at the start of the season. Now 65 players who took part in matches at the club, refereed by Somerset Rugby Development Officer, Julie Swann, have been welcomed. Seven new players have already turned up for training at Tor RFC and were part of a 10s team playing a training game with Cheddar RFC, scoring two tries with some great offloading.

The schools were given kit packages as well

as the chance to attend RFU accredited courses for the teachers and team coach. Crispin School teacher Roger Petch said: "All of my players really enjoyed themselves at Tor and I think a lot of them are seriously considering attending training there. The ones that have already started going are always talking about it to the rest of their friends."

Castle Cary RFC also hosted a three-way fixture between local secondary schools Ansford Academy, Sexey's School and King Arthurs, having already run a Year 7 carousel of coaching and competition at the club. They will also be hosting local and regional Tag to Twickenham events. An impressive 40 players turned up for the December fixture which saw three Barbarian style teams refereed by Chris Hurd, whose after school support resulted in four players joining the club, with no doubt many more to follow.

THE MINI & YOUTH RUGBY BLUEPRINT

DAVID FRASER



The Mini & Youth Rugby Blueprint Roadshow visited 27 venues countrywide between October and December with more than 500 people able to share their views on the shaping of the mini, junior and youth game in the lead up to Rugby World Cup 2015.

The roadshows shared recent evidence from players highlighting why they play or have stopped playing and collected stakeholders' views on the most appropriate game format, playing opportunities and support based on young people's needs and wants.

The aim is to ensure that more young people start, remain in and choose a lifelong friendship with rugby union, strengthening our clubs and growing the game in the communities around them. Feedback from the workshops will help shape the competition and playing framework for 7 – 18 year olds. The Age Grade Competition Review group will now work on producing a framework across clubs, schools and colleges based on the roadshows' outcomes.

Progress on this review and a more detailed report is at www.rfu.com/myrugbyblueprint

NATWEST WANTS YOUR HEROES

MEGAN THOMAS

NatWest, in partnership with the ERFSU, are searching for volunteers for this year's Real Rugby Heroes Award. If you know someone who has played a crucial role in helping to deliver rugby nominate your hero now at www.rfu.com/realrugbyheroes

From establishing girls' rugby clubs, washing muddy kit and driving minivans the length and breadth of the country, to giving up spare time to coach, each of the Real Rugby Heroes nominated over the past four years have sacrificed their time to support the benefits of taking part in rugby union.

The 2013-14 Heroes will each receive two match tickets to England v Barbarians, as well as VIP invitations to the NatWest Schools Cup Finals Day on Saturday 28 March at Twickenham Stadium. Last year's winners included:

Head of PE Richard Byrom, who has played a central role in developing rugby teams at Dukeries Academy increasing the profile of rugby within the college and the community to such an extent that the rugby players have a status around the college and rugby training is the place to be seen."

Rory Snowball, prevented from playing rugby due to injury, took up video analysis for various age groups in St George's College, Weybridge, focusing on all aspects of the 1st XV's game, allowing players to fully review their performances.

Tony Henderson, who has coached both after school and at weekends, volunteering with his sons' school's rugby programme for seven years.



NEWCASTLE SCHOOL FOR BOYS DO JONNY PROUD

A team of young rugby players gained national honours recently when the 1st XV from Newcastle School for Boys (NSB) headed to Rendcomb College, Cirencester, to take on school teams from across England and Wales and win the inaugural Society of Heads Jonny Wilkinson Cup without conceding a single try.

The two-day contest saw NSB playing Sibford School, Oswestry School and Ewell Castle from Surrey, before the boys once again met Oswestry in the final and lifted the trophy to take back to the city where Jonny Wilkinson spent much of his rugby career as a Falcons player.

The school's director of sport, Lee Hogarth, said: "I am immensely proud of the boys – not just for their skill on the pitch but for their sportsmanship and their spirit. They played with great temperament and were commended by everyone for their graciousness throughout."



KIDS FIRST RUGBY

DAVID FRASER

Kids First Rugby, a new approach to the way the game is delivered for children in England, puts the child at the centre and moves on at their pace and development, enabling more children to experience success.

Developing children as confident, capable young people first is at the core of the RFU's offer to schools. Using rugby to develop young people's personal and social, movement and rugby skills can have a dramatic impact on all aspects of their lives and on pupils' progress.

Kids First aims to develop a grounding in rugby's core values. Children's rugby ambassador Ruckley helps children to understand that rugby is about fun, improving, exciting action and working as a team.



The RFU has developed an engaging new Kids First Rugby training course for primary school teachers. With great new resources for staff and pupils that work across both school and club, it supports teachers in delivering the Kids First programme aims, while also helping them to achieve the outcomes of the new national curriculum for primary school PE.

Check it out **www.rfu.com/schools** or contact your local RFU rugby development officer.



COLLEGES RUGBY



Martin Tucker ECRFU CHAIRMAN

A very busy term for everyone involved in the sector and for all involved with ECRFU. At a recent board meeting Hamish Morton (Colleges Development Manager) reported a very positive picture of developmental work currently happening in the colleges, including: 64 Colleges signed up to O2 Touch so far; 147 Colleges engaged in targeted work with their RDO and local club and College Rugby Activators being trialled in three colleges.

The competitive programme across England has seen a rise in the number of teams playing regularly in the leagues organised by British Colleges Sport, with 125 teams this year compared with 105 last year. The increase is thanks in part to a developing structure which pitches teams against the same level of opposition and seeks to avoid mismatches – all part of the drive to make youth competition more relevant to our players.

ECRFU is very grateful to those who have volunteered to become regional coordinators and represent the views and thoughts of member colleges in their regions. The coordinators will be promoting the game in conjunction with the RFU staff on the ground and encouraging new participants into both competitive and non-competitive forms of rugby as well as supporting existing college rugby programmes. The volunteers recently gathered at Twickenham for an orientation day that included an insight into the mechanics of CB networks, the strategic aims of ECRFU and its organisational structure.

As part of its four year strategic plan, ECRFU has set some challenging in year targets including developing work experience in rugby within 25 colleges, O2 Touch being played in 80 colleges, effective links being in place between 100 colleges and clubs and satellite rugby clubs being introduced in 25 non-playing colleges.

This season started very brightly and we must now build on these foundations as we continue to promote the game both in colleges and the wider rugby community.

Wishing everyone a very happy and productive 2014 and remember to keep in touch via **colleges@rfu.com**

January 2014

COLLEGE'S FIRST EVER 15-A-SIDE MATCH

Central College Nottingham is reaping the benefits of RFU targeted delivery in education, having fielded their first 15-a-side team in a competitive match.

Calvin Beech, RFU Community Rugby Coach, has worked closely with the college since the start of the season to provide high quality coaching, culminating in the first ever fixture when they met Moulton College from Northampton in the British Colleges Sport national cup.

"Central College Nottingham has been supported this year by the RFU's commitment to grow the number of participants from 16 to 24 years of age and a focus on broadening our work in colleges," said Andrew Highton, the RFU Rugby Development Officer for Nottinghamshire.

"Calvin has supported college staff and developed social and competitive ways of engaging new participants. To ensure rugby becomes sustainable, we are offering students the opportunity to attend foundation courses and use these new skills in the community.



"John Widdowson, the college's Sport Academy Manager, has set up opportunities to play and volunteer at local clubs on Sunday mornings, providing practical work experience for students, raising the college's profile within the community and helping retain players in the game."

COULSDON COLLEGE MAKE CONTACT

Coulsdon College recently enjoyed their first ever full contact fixture against a local sixth form team from Darrick Wood School. At the start of the academic year the aim was



to introduce rugby union into the college, starting with an open day and taster session run at their fresher's fayre which kick started weekly training sessions run by Community Rugby Coach, Chris Spedding. Adam Martin, a teacher at the college, helped coach sessions and has now taken on the role of Lead Coach.

The college was encouraged take part in the Surrey Grand Prix 7s Series and, after performing well, interest in rugby has been building and numbers have steadily increased at training sessions.

The College Sport Maker, Ben Chambers, has been instrumental in introducing rugby and set out to link the college with local rugby clubs Old Mid-Whitgiftians RFC who were looking for players and with Purley John Fisher RFC.

Old Mids jumped at the opportunity to host the inaugural match under floodlights, and deployed one of their Under 16 players working towards his ELRA level 2 to referee. The teams played an exciting game, with Coulsdon scoring four fine tries in defeat.

COLLEGE AND CLUBS UNITE

At the start of last year Ashton Sixth Form College struggled for players and had to combine with another local college to field a team. Over the summer, the college was identified to receive targeted delivery from the RFU to develop rugby in order to retain more players in the game during the school to college transition.



With support from two local rugby

clubs, Aldwinians RFC and Ashton under Lyne RFC, local Community Rugby Coach, Steph Veal, helped organise a summer trial for new students to build interest. This was a huge success with 22 new students attending and club coaches helping out on the day and establishing solid club links.

In September, the college entered the local Greater Manchester League and the NatWest Cup and have fulfilled their fixtures in both competitions, with a squad of 20 players who train and play regularly.

In addition, 15 players from Ashton Sixth Form College are now playing club rugby, two of them back with their old clubs after dropping out. They also have five players new to the sport, one having gone on to play 1st XV rugby for his club side.

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD & PLAY

Easton & Otley College near Norwich have employed a part-time College Rugby Activator as part of an RFU organised pilot scheme to expand their rugby provision. Providing rugby for everyone is the main aim, including O2 Touch, a new contact rugby club for students not involved in the Rugby Academy and leadership opportunities.

Over 40 students have completed the Level 1 Rugby Leaders award and are involved with projects in the college and local community. Students provide four local high schools with quality coaching to help increase participation. John King, Director of Sport at one of them, Cliff School, said, "Easton and Otley College students provide additional coaching tailored to ability, with sessions well organised and delivered."

The student leaders also plan, organise and deliver college O2 Touch sessions. Over 130 students have tried O2 Touch since September, including girls and boys of varied experience. One of the student leaders, Stephanie Leekes, said "It's great to learn a new sport and be able to teach rugby to other students. This will be great to add to my CV and to further my knowledge and career in sport as I want to become

a sports teacher."

Jonny O'Brien, the College Rugby Activator, said "O2
Touch gives all of our students the chance to play without
the physical side of the game. This is a great leadership
opportunity for students to gain a recognised award and
additional coaching experience."











