

Staffordshire Rugby Union

Mini and Youth Committee Meeting

Held at Willenhall Rugby Club on 6 November 2017 at 7:30 PM

Those Present

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Michelle Banks	Willenhall	07432 028356	juniorchair@willenhall.gmail.com
Mike Yorke	Stoke on Trent		mikejaneyorke@hotmail.com

Apologies: None

Distribution: Those present and those below

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Principal Points Arising

ITEM	NOTE	ACTION
Minutes of Previous Meeting	All agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 September at Newcastle Rugby Club were a true record.	
Chairman's Report	<p>Robin Websdale (RW) reported as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>RW had attended an RFU meeting at which Mark Saltmarsh (RFU National Schools Development Manager) was present. MS had advised that the Competition Calendar for season 2018/19 is due to be published in the first two weeks in November. On receipt, RW/Mike Bezus (MB) will add Academy dates and complete for Staffs and send to the RFU for 'sign-off'.</p> <p>In response to a request from various fixture secretaries, it was agreed that RW/MB will circulate the Competition Calendar prior to RFU 'sign-off' so that fixture secretaries can plan around it</p> <p><i>[Note that the Competition Calendar does not prescribe specific dates but only 'windows' or blocks of weekends when competitions may be held. RW will in due course need to pick specific Sundays within the 'windows' for CB Competitions]</i></p> <p>RW noted that a currently P&C Commission Report is recommending the introduction of two important measures for Age Grade Rugby; namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of the 'half game' rule where all players are to play at least half the game. Whilst it is recognised that this may be difficult to manage for large squads (and to enforce), it should be the approach adopted in any event to ensure equitable opportunity, to maximise player development across squads, and to address over/under-playing issues. The possible introduction from Season 2019/20 of a requirement that players be over 18 to play adult rugby. 	
Recording of Fixtures and Results in GMS	<p>The item was introduced by Simon Hincks and followed on from the discussion at the September Meeting which was recorded in the minutes as follows.</p> <p><i>"SH advised that the RFU (and SRU) were going live on 5 Sept with a new system of recording results on the Game Management System (GMS).</i></p> <p><i>SH advised there is a need from now on to record on GMS the results of fixtures played in Boys U14s, U15s, U16s and Colts Age Grades, and Girls U15s and U18s.</i></p> <p><i>SH introduced this on the basis that the RFU is monitoring the number of games actually played (not just arranged) as one of the criteria that it applies to determining International ticket allocations.</i></p>	



	<p><i>Some present suggested it may also be a means of checking games played against Reg 15.14. SH advised not, on the basis that any results added to GMS once an Age Group has recorded 16 results do not count further towards international ticket allocations.</i></p> <p><i>Some practical points for Clubs:-</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. First, Clubs are to start adding results this season. <u>Results recorded this season will have an effect on international ticket allocations next season (2018/19).</u></i> <i>2. Second, Clubs will need to gear up to this, either by all Age Groups reporting their results into a Club Official who will upload them to GMS each week for all Age Groups; or by each Age Group administrator being given access to the 'fixtures' area of GMS so they can do it themselves".</i> <p>Some of those present pointed out various difficulties with using GMS in the way expected by the RFU. These included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the lack of any 'Junior Fixture Secretary' role on GMS • the need to rely on other Fixture Secretaries to accept games added • that GMS will not allow fixtures to be edited once added, even if void • uncertainty over who can/should add/accept/record County fixtures • that many clubs still work on Pitchero • that the invitation generated once a fixture is added may not go to Fixture Secretaries • that the system only works if all those involved buy into it, and that includes Clubs outside Staffs, as well as those within. <p>As a consequence of these issues and others discussed at the meeting, there is a need to correct the reference in the September Minutes that is underlined and in bold above. It was confirmed during the 6 November meeting that the recording of fixtures and results on GMS this season (2017/18) will <u>not</u> affect International ticket allocations.</p> <p>It was also agreed that using GMS in the way described could not 'go live' (or certainly could not be enforced as a key measure for confirming International Ticket Allocations) until the issues identified have been addressed and the system becomes 'fit for purpose'.</p> <p>In the meantime, SH gave a demonstration of how to add a fixture ('Team Management' tile, then 'Fixtures/Add Fixture/Select Team/Add Match').</p> <p>Once 'live', Clubs will need to decide who is to add results (whether Fixture Secretaries or others).</p>	
<p>Playing Out of Age Grade</p>	<p>RW/SH took those present through a single page Summary Sheet prepared to aid the interpretation of the relevant parts of Reg 15. The intention is to have this signed off by Mark Saltmarsh.</p> <p>Some general points/questions arising were:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mini/Midi age grades may play/train as mixed age grades with Constituent Body sign-off (i.e. there is no need for individual playing up/down approvals in those age grades). 2. This is subject to various provisos in Reg 15.3.4 including that no more than half the players on the pitch at any time can be from the older age grade, and that the team plays to the rules of the younger age grade. 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Once into Junior Age Grades, approvals from the CB must be individual to each player. 4. If a Club played, for example, a mixed U14/U15 squad, the Club would have to undertake player assessments for all of the younger players in the mixed squad to check they are suited to playing as a mixed squad, and then seek CB approval for each player. 5. In the event that a Fixture Secretary is asked to confirm a fixture with a mixed squad from another club containing perhaps 1 or 2 players playing down, the rule of thumb would be to ask that Club to confirm that it has either individual CB approval for each player, or a CB approval that allows that squad to play as a mixed age grade squad. 6. The onus is on the Club playing up/down to advise the other club that it is doing so and to demonstrate CB authorisation. 7. For U9-U19 a player may be permitted to play down for up to one season only. The player must remain in the lower age grade for the whole season and, if the player does move back up into the higher age grade, that player cannot play down again during the same season (15.4.2). 8. SRU was asked to clarify the situation with girls. RW/SH will add to the summary sheet. <p>Clubs should refer to the Summary Sheet in the first instance, and/or Reg 15 and the Code of Practice. If unclear either about the content of the Summary Sheet, Reg 15 of Code of Practice, or about the process for then seeking any necessary CB approvals, all should make contact with Mike Bezus in the first instance.</p> <p>Similarly, if any Club is seeking approval from the CB, that should be sent to MB.</p> <p>[Note: RW has since issued by email on 07/11/17 the Summary Sheet and various forms required when seeking CB approval. The Summary Sheet will be re-issued once information relating to Girls rugby has been added].</p>	
<p>Colts Transition League Season 18/19</p>	<p>The SRU will issue an invitation to all Clubs to attend a meeting at Cannock RFC on Monday 4 December at 7:30 pm to discuss the Colts Transition League for 2018/19. This will review the operation of the League this season and will seek views on those Clubs likely to be interested in competing in the League.</p> <p>Note: invitations since issued.</p>	
<p>Date of Next Meeting</p>	<p>8 January 2018 at Burton RFC</p>	