



I Newsletter | Sep 2020 |

A bi-monthly update published by the Yorkshire RFU



Welcome from Dawn Rathmell - President of the Yorkshire Rugby Football Union

Welcome to the September 2020 Edition of the Newsletter. I hope you are all managing to stay well as we try to navigate our way through these ever-changing times.

Those of our professional staff that have unfortunately been issued redundancy notices have now left us and we wish them all the very best for their futures – they have all done a fantastic job within the County and will be missed.

The new staff and structure will hopefully be in place sooner rather than later. We are also in a position to announce that the Yorkshire Academy will rise like a phoenix from the ashes, staff have been identified and the official announcement will be made soon, and personnel named. Things are starting to look up at last.

We were lucky to have an informal visit by RFU President Jeff Blackett who came to Ripon to watch a training session. (The photo shows me presenting Jeff with some Yorkshire 150 wine and a glass to drink it with). Unfortunately, numbers had to be strictly limited due to COVID restrictions, but we had a very pleasant evening and Jeff kindly answered questions of those who were lucky enough to be there. My thanks to Ripon for their hospitality and the COVID compliant buffet – cracking catering and hospitality as usual from this club.

I wish you all the best and hope to see some of you when rugby returns, and we are able to continue our delayed 150 Anniversary celebrations.

Keep well - keep safe

This newsletter includes:-

Return to Rugby Roadmap | England Rugby Announcement
Eddie Jones celebrating region's young players | Fundraising in the region
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Rugby Force and Pitch In | Immediate Support Fund
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Return to Rugby Roadmap: Community Game

Progress continues to be made in returning to playing rugby. Despite rising case numbers and an increase in some restrictions, the Government did not place any further limitations on sports played outdoors in its 21 September announcement. England Rugby had applied to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport for permission to fully return to play. Unfortunately, this was not successful, and England Rugby has now announced that the earliest date for a return to competitive play is January 2021. You can read the full statement [here](#).

Read England Rugby's statement [here](#)

Yorkshire RFU will be discussing what this means for clubs in our County over the coming days with a view to bringing forward support for the most affected clubs.

[Link](#) to our Return to Rugby Information Hub

The Community Game therefore remains at Stage D on the Return to Rugby Roadmap. Details of what this means can be found on our website at our Return to Rugby information hub. You can access it [here](#).



**England
Rugby**

England Rugby Financial Announcement

On 21 September, Bill Sweeney responded to the Government's announcement that plans to allow spectators into sporting events in the autumn would be paused. He said, "No crowds at Twickenham for the Autumn Quilter Internationals, the Premiership in October or the Championship and community game will have severe consequences for the sport in England across all levels.

He continued, "Championship Clubs will face significant financial hardship. Our community rugby clubs, many of which run grounds that are at the heart of communities are under threat." You can read his full statement [here](#).

Read Bill Sweeney's statement [here](#).

England Rugby has already made around 140 people redundant and, as a result, this has changed the way the community game will be supported in Yorkshire. The detail of these changes is being finalised and you can read the detail [here](#).

Read about structure changes [here](#)

As our President has said we're like to thank every member of the England Rugby team that has supported our region in recent years. We're grateful for everything you've given our clubs, our communities, our players, our coaches and our match officials and we wish you well for the future.



Eddie Jones congratulating some of our region's young players

It was really pleasing to see Eddie Jones taking the time to recognise the incredible contribution made by two junior players from Yorkshire. Eddie said that Fin Garner at Wheatley Hills has 'All the attributes of being a good coach. He noted that 'One of the most important things about rugby is the selfless work' in response to Fin's contribution both on and off the field and off. You can watch Eddie's video [here](#).

Watch Eddie Jones' video [here](#).

He also lauded the fundraising work of Alfie Potter and brother Will from Skipton Under 11s. They raised money for their friend, Luke Mortimer who survived meningococcal meningitis after losing both hands and legs last December. The fundraising effort has raised over £125.

Fundraising targets smashed by Yorkshire Girls' Centre of Excellence and the Bumbles

We've had two great fundraising initiatives in August and September. On Yorkshire Day (1 August) the Yorkshire Girls' Centre of Excellence set out to raise awareness and funds for the rugby charity State of Mind and to raise some money for the Centre of Excellence.

They ran and cycled to all of the clubs that are represented at the Centre in next season's squad. The U18 pathway girls ran one mile every hour for 8 hours to reach a grand total of 168 miles. The coaches, with support from some players and some friends cycled to all 8 clubs. From Old Crossleyans RUFC to Hull Ionians RUFC, it was over 100 miles in one day.

On 11 September, a team, including our President Dawn Rathmell, took part in a Three Peaks Challenge to raise money for Bumbles rugby. Bumbles rugby promotes community participation in healthy recreation by the provision of facilities for the playing of rugby and bringing disabled people into contact with the sport.

They are raising money to take part in the International Mixed Ability Sport (IMAS) Rugby World Cup. Some of you will remember that the first ever IMAS World Cup took place at Baildon RUFC in 2015.

Both groups smashed their fundraising targets and we couldn't be prouder of every single one of you! We'd like to add our thanks to everyone who supported them. Well done everyone on a massive effort!



Annual General Meeting update

The Annual General meeting for the County takes place on 28 September. In response to the current challenging circumstances, the Committee has taken the decision to hold the meeting online rather than requiring delegates to attend in person.

Key agenda items at the meeting include the appointment of officials, the Treasurer's interim report and President's report. In the President's report Dawn Rathmell reflected on Yorkshire 150 celebrations and how saddened we all are by the impact of Covid-19 on our game. Tony McNally is nominated to be our new County President at the AGM. You can read all of the AGM papers on our [website](#).



Read AGM papers [here](#)



**England
Rugby**

Click [here](#) to read the plan.

Click [here](#) to take the survey

Adult Male Future competition structure

The Future Competitions Structure Group (FCS) has released a Recommendation Paper on the adult male competitions structure (English Club Championship Level 3 and below), for implementation in the 2021/22 season. This follows frequent engagement with the game over the last nine months and evidence collection.

The proposals include: reducing league sizes in a number of instances; introducing league break weekends, and organising leagues which minimise travel, all essential to meet the game's needs. Player feedback has highlighted the importance of knockout rugby; therefore, it is proposed that we invigorate cup/knock-out rugby. Click [here](#) to read the plan.

Your feedback is welcomed ahead of any RFU Council decision on 2 October 2020. Please click [here](#) to give your views. Please also share with your members so that they can have their say too.



NatWest Rugby Force weekend and Pitch-In for Rugby

There were two national celebration and volunteering events in September; the well-established NatWest Rugby Force Week and the new "Pitch in for Rugby" Weekend.

It was great to see clubs from our region get involved in both events. At Baildon, they tidied up the grounds, painted the posts and finished the renovations to the changing rooms and clubhouse; West Leeds got the paint brushes out and it looks like BP RUFC demolished a whole building before enjoying a socially distanced pint (or two)! All as part of the Nat West Rugby Force weekend.

It was great to see so many Yorkshire clubs share photos, memories and stories as part of the Pitch Up for Rugby weekend. Halifax Ladies, Keighley, Selby and Roundhegians are just some of our clubs who got involved.



Reminder about the Immediate Support Fund

Acklam RUFC and Hull RUFC are the latest clubs to benefit from grants awarded from our Immediate Support Fund.

The Immediate Support Fund has been created by the RFU and the Yorkshire RFU to provide rugby unions clubs in Yorkshire with financial support to deal with current, short-term cashflow issues. The aim of the fund is to support the most vulnerable clubs in the region.

Information about making a request from Fund can be found [here](#)

Initial applications should relate to one in-month cashflow issue. Further applications can be made to the fund should support still be required in subsequent months.

We're trying to help as many clubs as possible through this process and you can find out more information about the Fund and how to apply [here](#)



2020/21 Age Grade Season

Welcome back everyone for the 2020/21 Age Grade Season. It is not a season as we normally find but to avoid doubt it has officially started, so in season activities are permitted. Just as a reminder all our activities are governed by Regulation 15 of the RFU laws - [you can read them here](#)

You should also be aware that the season has been extended to Monday 31st May 2021, which should allow us a little more time to play, this has NOT been updated in Regulation 11 at present.

With the impact of Covid-19 on our sport we have addition regulations to consider. The RFU have produced guidance on this and this is set out in the Return to Rugby Community Game. You can read the guidance [here](#).

Age grade rugby complies with regulation 15 of the RFU laws - **you can read them here**

We need to take these into account along with any local authority regulations, combine them with Regulation 15 and work to the lowest set of conditions. If in doubt defer to a lowest level and ask.

We all look forward to a season where we can further develop our sport and use it as a platform for our young players to develop.



Yorkshire Academy Update

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) and Yorkshire RFU have been working to secure the pathway in Yorkshire since Yorkshire Carnegie announced it was no longer able to fund an academy programme. In the short term, the RFU and Yorkshire RFU are working to put in place a solution for the development of high potential young players when rugby is able to restart.

At the start of September, interviews were held by England Rugby for the posts of Head of the Yorkshire Academy and Head of the England Rugby Development Player Pathway for Yorkshire. Once these posts are confirmed, the appointees will move quickly to set out their plans for this season.



RFU Council – Yorkshire representatives report

Yorkshire RFU has two representatives, Ted Atkinson and Jim Chapman, on the RFU council. They are elected by our clubs to represent our views.

Ted and Jim also both sit on sub-committees which report to the RFU's Community Game Board; Ted is on the Nominations, Age Grade and Education and Player Development Sub-Committees and Jim is Chair of the Competitions Development Sub-Committee. Jim also represents the RFU on the Board of the England Colleges RFU.

You can read their update report [here](#).

Ted and Jim regularly publish a comprehensive update of their work. Both have focussed on the financial impact of the virus and on creating appropriate and timely advice to support the Return to Rugby Roadmap. You can read their update report [here](#).



Staying RugbySafe – Use It, Sanitise It, Keep Safe

As we all know now, this pesky COVID-19 isn't showing any signs of going. To ensure all our players stay safe, and we don't spread COVID around our clubs, here's just a few key pointers

- **Training Equipment** – Sanitise all equipment before training, after its been used by EACH person and at the end of the session – that includes balls, which should be cleaned every 15 minutes during passing and line out practice
- **Gym equipment** – The equipment must be fully wiped down with Antibacterial Wipes before and after use by each individual – keep wipes by each piece of gym kit, and the weights, with signage to remind players to clean it. Each piece of equipment should be spaced out so there is a minimum of 1m between each piece of equipment, or where this isn't possible, every other piece should be taken out of use. Equipment should not be opposite each other so users are face to face. Further information can be found [here](#).
- **Gyms** - Based on the Government guidelines issued on the 22nd September 2020, from it is now a requirement that anybody using an indoor gym or weights area must wear a face covering at all time. In indoor activities, such as use of gym or weight rooms, groups must be in their bubbles of a maximum of 6 people (unless more than one from same household), still observing social distancing guidelines and spaces between equipment and weights benches
- **Showers** – if they have not been used for some time, BEFORE showers can be reopened for use, they must be run through with very hot water to ensure no risk of legionella use them. Further information can be found here: [RFU Changing Room Checklist & Legionella](#)
- **Test & Trace** – Remember for each training session and Ready4Rugby event you should be recording details of those involved, including the coaching staff, first aid/physio and any other attendees or observers (eg parents if it is for Age Grade). This information should be kept for 21 days, in case the NHS Test & Trace needs it. After 21 days, the information should be destroyed or deleted. , you should be recording:
 - o Date of training/Ready4Rugby game
 - o Name of person
 - o Contact number
 - o Which 'bubble' of 6 they are training in (this should be the same group each session)

Read the RFU Coronavirus Guidance [here](#)

Remember, we are here to help. Further information is available on the England Rugby website, via this link - [RFU Coronavirus Guidance](#) Alternatively please contact me either through the YRFU office, or by emailing: rugbysafe@yorkshirerfu.co.uk



**England
Rugby**

England Rugby training and development webinars

Over the past few months, England Rugby has created several exceptional training and development webinars covering club, referee, and coach development.

All these webinars are available on demand from the England Rugby website and you can access them using the following links: -

[Club webinars](#)

[Referee webinars](#)

[Coach webinars](#)

This newsletter is published every two months by the Yorkshire RFU. The next edition will be November 2020.

If there's anything you would like to share with the Yorkshire rugby community through this update, please email yorkshirerfumarketing@gmail.com by 1 November 2020.

Our values

Teamwork | Respect | Enjoyment | Discipline | Sportsmanship