



Notebook



EASTERN COUNTIES REPRESENTATIVE ON RFU COUNCIL AND HON SECRETARY POSITION

Following the close of nominations Roger Pierson is the only candidate nominated for the role of RFU Council representative for Eastern Counties. Roger is therefore elected to fill that position for the next three years (until July 2021). Congratulations to him on his election.

As you will all know, Roger has been carrying the role of Hon Secretary while we seek a replacement and he has now indicated that he wishes to relinquish that role with immediate effect.

I am delighted therefore to announce that Robert Temple has agreed to take on the role of Hon Secretary at least until the AGM. We have no Committee meeting until April, so I have made the appointment on an emergency basis having consulted the key officers of the CB in order to ensure continuity in our work. Thank you to Robert for agreeing to step in this way. Roger will I am sure be able to provide advice and support having been the holder of the position since 2005



Robert Temple
ECRU Honorary Secretary

Alasdair Bovaird
Chair – Eastern Counties Rugby Union

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EASTERN COUNTIES U13 FESTIVALS A HUGE SUCCESS

Eastern Counties have developed an innovative formula at Under 13s, as a “replacement” for the former county cup program.

Each county (Cambs, Norfolk & Suffolk) held 2 earlier festivals, involving all U13 teams within their county; the first was semi-seeded with all teams playing 4 x 15-minute one-way matches, the second was seeded so that teams played opposition of a similar standard (but with no overall winners). All teams were then nominated to one of 5 finals, tiered all county festivals held across Eastern Counties last Sunday, providing playing opportunities for all U13 players in the CB to develop their skills at an appropriate level, and against teams from the other counties.



Glorious sunshine, accompanied by a cold wind greeted no less than 32 teams from 25 different clubs – around 600 boys – with 6 or 7 teams at each of 5 venues.

B teams were allowed to enter; 2 clubs combined forces; a couple of clubs were short, and others willingly lent players, and 4 of the 10 referees were teenagers.

These are not “win win” festivals – there were no cups to play for; each team played 4 others, again in 15-minute one way matches against similar standard opponents.

Eastern Counties has worked with the RFU in piloting a half game for all at U13s this season, and referees were instructed to stop games half way through, on order to allow coaches to make replacements.

This formula also gave some of our smaller clubs, Thurston, Mistley & Newmarket the opportunity of hosting a county event for the first time.

Tier 1 – at Thurston – Bury, Ipswich, Southwold, Shelford, Cambridge, Norwich, Wymondham

Tier 2 – at Stowmarket – Stowmarket, Sudbury, Colchester, Holt, Beccles, Saffron Walden

Tier 3 – at Diss – Hadleigh, Ipswich B, Diss, N Walsham, Ely, Wisbech

Tier 4 – at Mistley – Woodbridge, Mistley, Swaffham, Wymondham B, Shelford B, Cambridge B

Tier 5 – at Newmarket – Bury B, Mersea Island, StowCol B, Crusaders, Norwich B, West Norfolk, Newmarket

Jamie Warner of Stowmarket commented *“Some cracking rugby played in the best spirit; a fantastic festival this has been, a great one to develop the exciting youth rugby we have”*.

David Regester, Director of Youth Rugby at Norwich *“what a great afternoon of rugby Norwich U13’s had today. Good to see so many playing the game across the area”*.

Graham Smith from Swaffham *“playing against so many different sides was a great experience and not having a ‘winner’ helps encourage coaches to play all of their squad throughout”*.

Paul Brindley from Bury *“Bury had 38 boys playing at 2 venues at the appropriate level of completion, and all of the Bury boys had a great experience/development opportunity”*.

Mark Campbell of Shelford *“a great day yesterday and it would appear that both our sides were in tiers where they had competitive games which is superb”*.

Ross Cowie, Chairman of Eastern Counties Club & Player Development added *“The program has taken much organisation, but it is a joy to see so many boys playing in the right environment. This was the second year that we have run this program, and it is clear that it is a winning formula. Our aim was to provide rugby for all U13s playing club rugby in the CB, and for them to enjoy rugby at their own level, and to contribute to their development. Coaches are now buying into player development rather than winning at all costs, and with around 600 12 & 13-year olds playing, this must provide a great platform for youth rugby in the CB, and for the onward individual development of these youngsters. A huge thanks to all those who have helped make festivals such a success”*.

IMPROVING THE CLUBHOUSE EXPERIENCE IPSWICH RFC

The ECRU Funding and Facilities Group has been taking steps to encourage Clubs to consider improving the clubhouse experience for all visitors. The Ipswich Club has taken advantage of this initiative and been supported by ECRU. The Club was proposing to rewire the audio system to current standards, to replace all of their speakers, add a fourth screen and to purchase a wireless microphone. The expected benefits were expected to result in an enhanced experience for members, a more attractive proposition for hirers of the clubhouse and better management of outdoor activities. A fundraising exercise had been undertaken and some equipment was donated by sponsors. ECRU were able to top up the amount required allowing the project to be completed just before the start of the Six Nations Tournament. The result was an improved experience for members and a healthy take over the bar!



GOOD IDEAS



Hadleigh RFC recognises that 2018 may prove to be a massive year for many players and members whether looking at Higher Education, a change of career direction or perhaps even a new start after a few years away from the job market. As part of the Club's on-going commitment to members a one-off CV WORKSHOP has been delivered to support any member taking the next step on the career or education trail.

Mick Collins the Clubs Fixtures Secretary, who has 20 years of International Recruitment and Talent Acquisition experience, has shared his knowledge of what hiring managers, educators and recruiters want to see on a CV and how it may be improved to give the best chance possible.

Starting with basics such as formatting and design the Workshop provided valuable insights into how badly written CVs are viewed, ignored or forgotten and how a good CV will get the applicant ahead of the pack. The Workshop also provided guidance on adapting a CV to specific opportunities and "How to ACE an interview".

PITCH MAINTENANCE ADVISER



We welcome Andy Spetch on board as a Volunteer Pitch Adviser.

He will generally be focusing on Suffolk Clubs where with his wealth of knowledge on the subject of ground maintenance he will no doubt make a significant contribution to the improvement of rugby pitches in the area. Any Clubs requiring advice should contact initially groundsmenconnected@rfu.com to arrange a Club visit. Following this visit Andy will compile a formal report setting out recommendations for Clubs to consider.



<http://www.groundsmanship.co.uk/rugby-union/rugby-groundsmen-connected>



Risk Review

Veritas Risk Management – Club Health and Safety

Veritas Risk Management – Club Health and Safety

At Veritas Risk Management we already provide a variety of specialist services specifically tailored towards the successful and safe management of a Modern Rugby Club and Leisure facility.

Our Award Winning staff can undertake a Club Risk Review and produce an analysis covering the entire club house, car park and touchline environments – this is a service that is specifically designed to work alongside the RFU Risk Assessment Online Tool which ultimately aims to improve the club's safety record, facilities and reduce costs. The review will allow the club to update the online tool and set priority actions and our staff will support you through the process.

Veritas Risk Management offer an innovative and flexible approach to Risk Management tailored to the individual needs of the club, recognising its unique environment and work with staff to empower and create ownership.

Our aim is to minimise disruption to your operations by where ever possible working around your existing systems. We know our Risk Management Services work because we deliver recommendations that your staff can use in a real working environment.

PRICING

Normally Veritas Risk Management would offer this service at a rate of £350 but we have agreed a central deal with RFU that means you and 4 other clubs in your area can work with us for free.

Veritas Risk Management will work with your representative in compiling the risk analysis, all the while providing advice and guidance on Health and Safety. Visits last for approximately 2 hours and are followed up by a detailed analysis, specific to the issues identified during the visit – actions can then be agreed by the club and uploaded onto the RFU Online Risk Assessment Tool for easy management and action tracking. We will also contact you in the following weeks to ensure that you and the club have all the support it needs. The visits will be coordinated on a regional basis (ideally we are looking for number of clubs to work with over a two day period and can run a Health and Safety workshop in the evening for other clubs who may want to understand what we can do.) and are completely free of charge to clubs.

For more information, please contact John Winders Chair EC Club Development e: john.winders@btinternet.com

MY JOURNEY TO BECOMING A REFEREE

I count myself incredibly lucky to have been involved with rugby for nearly 20 years and to have been part of the growth of the women's game.

This 'blog' is not about my playing days, but that is where my road to refereeing started so it is important to me. If you asked me 5 years ago if I would referee I would have said No. I've never cared for being in a position of 'authority' I have simply loved the game since I started to play. I don't follow a team, other than my Home club. I only truly like to watch live sport.

Over the years I have experienced those referees who don't really want to be refereeing 'women's' rugby, those who shouldn't even be refereeing in due to such poor decisions made, causing a disruptive game. Even though that is rare now, as the quality of women's Rugby has grown so much I hit a 'tipping point' a couple of seasons ago. You see I believe in change. In improvement. In being the best you can. Just some of the things that rugby has brought to my life. I met Godfrey from the Norfolk referees' society who is an inspiration. I thought that's what you can do to a game!

I said at the start I am lucky. Partly because I have been able to be part of this sport for so long, as I've seen so many lost to injury. Yes, I've had my fair few, but perhaps in the future it will be to my detriment that I'm from the age of 'if you can strap it up you can play on'.

I don't want to be forced out of the sport and left with no other avenue through injury. However, much it breaks my heart, has brought me to tears, the mere thought of retiring from playing. the thought of not being physically active to the best of my ability is far worse. You see, Rugby has taught me that even a Ballet dancer (15 years & my dream, but not talented enough, too tall & heavy) am 'average child', can be a strong, fierce runner, someone for 80 minutes has the confidence to take on the world. All the personal achievements, the friendships, the rivalry, is something that has enabled me to be the strong woman that I am throughout my life, to be the best I can. Every time I have trained or played, I take immense joy in seeing the women around me, take on the world around them.

So the reason I want to referee is not only a selfish one, so that I don't fall by the wayside, but so I can continue to give back to the sport that has given me so much, has helped shape the player I am

One of my first coaches Dave Trubee was a referee. He was an inspiration to me and put me on the path to where I am nearly 20 years ago. He taught me then about modesty, how to support all those around you, the importance of grass roots and made me realise what a rugby family is. Since then I've been lucky to have extended my rugby family across the country.

One hot under the collar night I responded to a call for referring, cursing that everything falls on a Sunday when women's teams play. Colin Edmond at Suffolk RFU took me under his wing and offered to mentor me. Absolutely incredible, pitch side discussions analysing the referee and welcoming me into Suffolk & North Essex Society. I'll never forget walking into a room of referees & realising so many of them knew my Players face. I was also hit by the modesty of all those referees who love referring the women's game. Colin also offered to throw me onto a pitch and see how I got on. That was inspiration enough to get my qualifications achieved.

I signed up to Day 1 – with intention to complete Day 2 next season due to lack of sessions, but fortunately for me, our opposition pulled out so day Two was completed. I've never been impressed by the RFU, the only Sunday referring courses may have resulted in an e-mail or two...but their level of gender Equality through referring I have been raving about ever since to anyone who will listen.

The course itself was well delivered. I am a terrible student as I want the 'job done' but I had so much fun learning and being 'naughty players' with my cohort. It was inspirational to see ages 16 – 60 years of age wanting to further develop refereeing and themselves. Plus a fellow female, only 16, but who too had come to the course due to experiencing poor refereeing. which although saddened me for someone in the modern age of women's rugby, made me stronger to pursue my path.



Colin Edmunds & Suffolk & North Essex Referee Society meetings were a massive support to further preparing me to referee my first fixture. As was seeing two of youngest female referees refereeing three junior Girls age group games at Woodbridge Rugby Club.

My first fixture was a senior league men's game & although nervous, I was very excited to take my first steps to knowing if it was for me. I didn't want to be a referee a player was 'disappointed' in and personally if I hated it, where would that leave me with this sport?

The welcome I had from the home side was heart-warming. The attitude of both teams was an excellent representation of the Spirit of the game & enabled me to focus on the delivery of the RFU Core Values. I understood how difficult referring was, how hard it was to see 'everything' and thankful I could keep up!

At the end of the game, one of the coach's shook my hand and said "you did a great job" I don't care if he was lying! As that day, I walked away from the club feeling more excited than I ever thought I would, as I absolutely loved my referring debut. I good see the development needed, the positives to take forward. And most importantly I felt again the empowerment that rugby gives you, I feel I still have a future with this sport and an ever-growing love and respect for it.

SITUATIONS VACANT

SWAFFHAM RUFC SEEKING

A HEAD COACH

Swaffham RUFC is seeking a Head coach for their senior side in the 2018-2019 season when the 1st XV will be playing in Eastern Counties Div. 2 North.

Candidates should preferably have a current RFU coaching qualification (though not essential) but would be expected to achieve at least Level 2, and complete CPD courses, in order to maintain this qualification during their time in post. All courses will be funded by the club and are seen as essential for the candidate's development. Candidates should also possess a passion for developing people and players.

There will be no direct financial payments for their services but the Club will endeavour to cover any reasonable costs incurred, and provide necessary kit to perform the role. Details of this arrangement will be confirmed at interview.

The successful applicant will be asked to assist the current Coach ideally for the last month of 2017/18 season to allow them to familiarise themselves with the playing level, Club operation, and also to develop plans for the following season.

Applicants should send their application and CV to :-

The Secretary, Jim Crouchman at

JamesCrouchman@oxbury.co.uk

or

alisoncrouchman@btinternet.com

GREENE KING IPA INTERNATIONAL RUGBY SEVENS CELEBRATES ITS 10TH YEAR

One of the UK's top rugby sevens tournaments, the Greene King IPA 7s is celebrating its tenth year this May.

The tournament which is held at Bury St Edmunds Rugby Club, takes place on Sunday 6 May 2018 this year. Attracting elite teams from across the world, it is being seen as a practice tournament for many top players ahead of the World Cup in San Francisco later this summer.

The event will once again be part of the Super Sevens Series Tournaments, four national tournaments which run throughout the summer in the UK. There are twelve teams committed to the series with a further four invitational sides.

Last year the event attracted national squads from England, Ireland and Jamaica, whilst premiership clubs Northampton Saints and Worcester Warriors also competed.

In addition to the elite tournament an open tournament run concurrently for developmental and local teams.

For the latest information on this event visit www.bserufc.co.uk or follow the Greene King IPA 7s Facebook page or twitter account @GKIPA7s, #GKIPA7s.

WHEREABOUTS MARCH

- 3 - Holt RFC (Postponed)
- 3/4 – CB Conference
- 6 – Player Retention Group
- 8 – Mistley RFC RFC
- 12 – Suffolk RFU Committee
- 14 – Norfolk v Cambridgeshire
- 15 Partnership Meeting with RDOs
- 23/24 EC Retreat
- 26 Cambridgeshire RFU Committee
- 27 Womens & Girls meeting – Stowmarket RFC Committee
- 28 Norfolk RFU



Roger Pierson
RFU Council Member
ECRU Secretary

- 10 - Diss RFC
- 10 – Twickenham
- 23/24 – EC Retreat



John Winders
Chair Club Development

JUNE 2018						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

The **Eastern Counties Annual Awards dinner** has been confirmed as taking place on: - **Saturday 16th June 2018** and will be held at Thurston RFC

Guest speaker Peter Wheeler

See poster on page 10 for more info....



Ian Forton - ECRU President

- 3 – Hadleigh RFC (Postponed)
- 7 – EC Competitions Committee
- 10 – Sudbury RFC
- 14 – Schools day Twickenham
- 17 – London cup finals
- 18 – U20 Hertford RFC
- 23/24 - EC Retreat
- 28 - EC Finance Committee



Alasdair Bovaird - ECRU Chair

- 4 – CB Conference
- 7 – U17s v Cams, Norfolk, Suffolk
- 14 - Norfolk v Cambridgeshire
- 18 – Herts U20s v EC U20s at Hertford
- 19 – Cams Youth Chairs
- 21 – Competitions Committee
- 23/24 – EC Retreat
- 26 – Cambridgeshire RFC Committee
- 27 – Cambridgeshire v Norfolk at Ely RFC



Pamela Clarke - ECRU Treasurer

- 4 – RFU CB Conference
- 5 – Leadership Academy Risk Assessment
- 6 – Player Retention Meeting
- 14 – Leadership Academy Mentor Group
- 18 – Leadership Training Day
- 19 – Leadership Academy
- 23/24 – EC Retreat



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If you would like your club article to appear in this Newsletter, then please send it (preferably with a related photo/image) to: -

Notebook@ecrugby.com




by the third Friday in the month.

Russ Clarke

ECRU – Chair Marketing and Communications

Eastern Counties Rugby Union

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EC REPRESENTATIVE TEAMS' – RESULTS/FIXTURES

EC U18's (Girls) and U15's (Girls)

29th October

Middlesex 17-30 EC U15s 

Middlesex 57-23 EC U18s 

19th November


EC 10-12 Essex U15s 

EC 24-59 Essex U18s 

3rd December

EC v Bucks H Stowmarket

EC U17's (Boys)

18th Feb (Sun) Herts 24-24 EC (away) 

25th February EC 24-24 Essex at Thetford

Match Postponed – Frozen pitch

7th March EC v Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire Baa-Baas

Match Postponed

18th March Kent v EC (away)

EC Women (Gill Burns County Champ.)

29th April EC vs Oxfordshire


6th May EC vs BYE


13th May Buckinghamshire vs EC

20th May – Semi Final

27th May - Final


EC U16's (Boys)


21st January EC 31-12 Leicestershire 

4th February EC 12-0 Notts Lincs & Derby at Holt RFC KO 2pm 

18th February EC East Midlands at The Leys School KO 2pm

EC U20s (Men)

Sunday 11th February EC 15-24 Surrey at Shelford RFC 2pm 

Sunday 25th February EC 21-21 Kent at Shelford RFC 2pm 

Sunday 18th March v Hertfordshire (away)

EC Men (Bill Beaumont County Champ.)

5th May East Midlands vs EC

12th May Lancashire vs EC

19th May EC vs Yorkshire

27th May - Final



EC U20s and Colchester's Sam Easton powers his way past Surrey U20s defenders

Course	DateStart	Additional Date Info	URL
CPD Coaching Continuity West Norfolk RFC 5 March 2018	05/03/2018	5 Mar 2018 6.30pm - 9.30pm	http://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/#/search?id=&c=&eventid=226337941
CPD Scrum Factory Colchester RFC 5 Mar 2018	05/03/2018	5 Mar 2018 7pm - 10pm	http://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/#/search?id=&c=&eventid=226338007
CPD Coaching Mual & Ruck Wymondham RFC 7 March 2018	07/03/2018	7 March 2018 6.30pm - 9.30pm	http://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/#/search?id=&c=&eventid=226337942
EFARU West Norfolk RFC 28 April 2018	28/04/2018	28 April 2018 9am - 5pm	http://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/#/search?id=&c=&eventid=226338179
ERCA Easton & Otley College 13, 27 May, 10 June 2018	13/05/2018	13, 27 May, 10 June 2018 9am - 5pm	http://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/#/search?id=&c=&eventid=226337284
ERCA Ipswich School 20 May, 10, 24 June 2018	20/05/2018	20 May, 10, 24 June 2018 9am - 5pm	http://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/#/search?id=&c=&eventid=226337320

For More Information Contact: -

Norfolk - Sam Carpenter - samuelcarpenter@rfu.com / 07872 827151

Suffolk & Cambridgeshire - Chloe McMorran - chloemcmorran@rfu.com / 07715 856728



**EASTERN COUNTIES RUGBY UNION
AWARDS DINNER
SATURDAY 16TH JUNE 2018
7PM - 11.30PM**



**GUEST SPEAKER
PETER WHEELER
ENGLAND & LIONS LEGEND**

**THURSTON RFC
ROBINSON FIELD, IXWORTH RD,
THURSTON, BURY SAINT EDMUNDS
IP31 3QE**

£40 PER PERSON

**WELCOME DRINKS AND SAUSAGES
COURTESY OF OUR SPONSORS
GREENE KING & MUSK'S SAUSAGES**

Email dinner@ecrugby.com for tickets



Greene King IPA – Proud Sponsors of Eastern Counties Rugby Union

