

Notebook



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Premier travel



We are delighted to announce that Premier Travel have agreed a two-year deal to become sponsor of the Eastern Counties Wanderers team.

The recently reformed Wanderers who were proud to pull their Premier Travel branded shirts when they played in a series of games that mirrored the Eastern Counties men's XV fixtures in the Bill Beaumont County Championship, winning two of their three games against: -

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GAME GROWTH

Growing the game starts at grass roots and youth and junior rugby. Without a solid foundation how can we hope to sustain numbers in our colts and senior sections. There has, without a doubt been a drop in numbers as players reach the golden years of U17/Colts rugby and we need to try and understand what is turning our future players away from the game because without them the senior game will continue to struggle.

With the advent of Age Grade Rugby, we have seen a more player centred approach which can only benefit the young Girl or Boy as they progress through the age groups and develop their game but is their development more a luck of the draw depending on which coach they have and how committed that coach is to actually developing all the players in their charge. What even is development? Is it starting and ending a season with the same number of players? All of whom have enjoyed their season playing with their friends no matter what the results or is it concentrating on a select number of players to try and win everything and ignoring the needs of the players, who in their eyes aren't good enough. Learning focused coach versus result focused coach or put another way long term versus short term. The coach concentrating on long term development and continuous learning is more likely to give players a variety of valuable experiences which will hopefully keep them coming back for more, even if some of these come at the expense of a win.



For the last two seasons Eastern Counties has been piloting the half game rule which sees all available youth and junior, Girl and Boy players playing at least half a game. From the 2019-20 season this becomes mandatory. There is of course the safety aspect to take into account when it comes to contact but in general if your daughter or son has made themselves available to play, then they should be playing a minimum of half a game. This must have sent shock waves to those particular coaches who are result focused and who continue to pick their strongest players and leave others at home. Yes! it still happens. So, what happens now with the mandatory half game rule? Is it as simple as the guidelines would suggest?

It is very important that there is good communication between clubs in advance of fixtures in order to ensure appropriate playing experience for ALL players. A certain amount of flexibility is needed to help all players get game time and there are no hard-fast rules when it comes to how you do it but whatever type of coach you are, please don't leave anyone behind. We hear so often how rugby is a late development sport so how can those coaches who shoehorn young players in to A and B teams possibly know what the future holds for any player or what effect it has on a young player by doing so. All player inclusion will surely develop all players.

The reality is, to have any hope of retaining players, we need every young player playing regularly and enjoying the game so please don't leave any player who wishes to play behind as you may find that eventually they will find other things to do and we will lose them from the game and let's face it there are so many more options out there now you couldn't really blame them could you.

As always if anyone has anything they would like us to look at, or any good or bad experiences they have had or are having with growing the game, player retention or indeed the half game rule, then please contact us at gamegrowth@ecrugby.com and please follow us on Twitter @ECRUGameGrowth. Only with your help can we grow the game.

Darren Wright – Chair ECRU Game Growth Committee



TRAVEL FUNDING FOR TEAMS LEVEL 3 AND BELOW

As clubs will know, the RFU cut the travel funding available to clubs last season. Recognising that this was done in a fairly crude way, and that the impact on some clubs was much greater than others, they have now set up a working group to look at the whole issue of funding travel. I have been asked to join that group and we had our first meeting in early July. The intention is to make recommendations for the Community Game Board and the RFU Council to agree in time to implement for the 2020-21 season.



The first meeting focussed on trying to establish some principles to work from, and we agreed that:

- The RFU should continue to support clubs financially if their league commitments result in excessive journey distances; but
- That a certain amount of travel is inevitable, and clubs must expect to self-support as well – the RFU support is a contribution and is not expected to cover the whole cost of travel; and
- That this issue is intimately tied up with competition structure and cannot be treated entirely on its own.

We also discussed the issue of support for travel by and to ‘offshore’ clubs – from the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Isle of Wight – which are in a somewhat different category in that they require boat and/or plane travel. There is currently a moratorium on any new offshore clubs being allowed to enter the RFU competitions.

We have all been asked to take soundings from our clubs on their views on this issue, so – accepting that we’d all like more money, but that the RFU is not likely to increase the overall pot and that the devil will be in the detail of any changes – could I ask you all to let me know what you think about the following questions – and to email your thoughts to me at chair@ecrurugby.com

- Is it right that the RFU travel funding should be for ‘extraordinary’ journeys (e.g. over 150 miles round trip as it is now) rather than for example, total miles travelled across a season?
- Should clubs have to demonstrate that they have spent the money received on travel costs?
- Might it be better to base funding on travel time rather than mileage?
- Should funding be available for all teams in the RFU leagues (i.e. from Eastern Counties 1 upwards) or should it be for first XVs only?
- Should funding be devolved to CBs to distribute rather than the RFU doing it nationally?

And if you have any other thoughts on this, then please also send them to me at the above address – I can’t promise that the group will make everybody happy (it’s more likely we’ll make everybody unhappy!) but I do need to know what clubs think.

Alasdair Bovaird, Chair, Eastern Counties Rugby Union



CB SAFEGUARDING MANAGER & RUGBYSAFE MANAGER WE WELCOME MALCOM AND STEPHEN TO THE ECRU TEAM

We are delighted to announce that Malcom Bell and Stephen Case-Upton have joined Eastern Counties RU in the roles of Safeguarding and RugbySafe Managers respectively.

SAFEGUARDING

Malcolm Bell – EC Safeguarding Manager

Malcolm joins the team as Safeguarding Officer, taking over from James Pepper. Malcolm continues in his role of County Safeguarding Officer for Suffolk and will continue to work closely with fellow County Safeguarding Officers Sally Lloyd (Norfolk) and Clairice Pepper (Cambs).

You can get hold of him by email at Safeguarding@ecrugby.com

Malcolm's appointment is timely, especially given the new age grade regulations, which are explained on the next page, but please feel free to contact him should your club Safeguarding Officer have any questions.

RUGBYSAFE

Stephen Case-Upton – EC RugbySafe Manager

Stephen joins EC taking on a new RugbySafe Officer role, Stephen is a practicing GP in Ely and is the Ely Tigers club doctor, as well as Bedford Blues matchday doctor, he's also Cambs RFU Chief Medical Officer.

Stephen is passionate about player welfare and safety in community Rugby and as you can see brings a wealth of experience to the role as well as the qualifications holding an MSc in Sports and Exercise Medicine.

You can get hold of him by email at rugbysafe@ecrugby.com he will be posting information on RugbySafe on Facebook at [ECRugbySafe](https://www.facebook.com/ECRugbySafe) and Twitter at [@ECRugbySafe](https://twitter.com/ECRugbySafe)



For more information on how to make your club Rugbysafe, please see:-

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NEW REGULATIONS YOUTH PLAYERS IN ADULT RUGBY AND OTHER AGE GRADE CHANGES



Area	What has been updated?	Why has it changed?
Age Grade Season	The 2019-20 season will be Saturday 7 September to Sunday 10 May.	Due to the change of the 2020 May Bank holiday, we have extended the season to the Sunday 10 May to support the traditional tours/activities on the long weekend.
Age Grade Player Registration	Players in the U7, U8, U16, U17 and U18 age groups in club are required to register via parents on GMS. Players who are new to the game and who registered online last year also need to re-register using this process.	This gives players and parents more control of their own personal data and is GDPR compliant. This process reduces admin burden on volunteer registrars and will provide players and clubs with more accurate data.
17 Year Olds Playing Adult Rugby	A two-step process will be introduced for 17 year old players (male and female) to play adult rugby. This process ensures that clubs have a Safeguarding Officer and approval from the CB to play up 17 year olds and then that each individual player has also been assessed by the club and approved by the CB.	There have been significant updates by the DBS to the rules on safeguarding children playing in adult sport. We want to safeguard our young players and our adult clubs/people in line with the level of the revised DBS requirements. This includes having a more robust assessment and neutral approval of the individual player. Full guidance and support is being developed for players, coaches, clubs and CBs.
Combining U17 and U18 Age Grades	U17 and U18 may play as a combined age group without needing permission.	This brings regulation in line with common practice in the club/school/college game. This also reduces the administrative burden on volunteers who previously needed to follow a permission process for an U17 to play with U18s.

These are generally self-explanatory, but please note: -

17 Year Olds Playing Adult Rugby – please be aware that there is a change in process and this **now requires CB Permission** – I will be working with Malcolm-Bell, Eastern Counties' Safeguarding Manager to prepare a procedure, but in the meantime, all clubs should note that they will not be able to play 17 year olds in their adult teams unless they have a Club Safeguarding Officer in post. If you have any queries on this, please contact Malcolm at Safeguarding@ecrugby.com We are advised that the RFU will be developing guidance – so please wait for us to finalise the process.

Age Grade Season – we have already prepared our Playing Calendar to finish on 3rd May, however the age grade season finishes on 10th May 2020. As a result, the season is now scheduled to start on Saturday September 7 – we suspect that many clubs will have scheduled and advertised Registration Sunday on September 1, as per our issued and agreed playing calendar – if so, there is no need to change this plan, but clubs are reminded that while U13-18 sides are permitted contact training in the 2 weeks prior to the season, there is no such permission for U7s to U12s. Clubs should ensure that any activity planned for the younger age groups on Sunday September 1 recognises this.

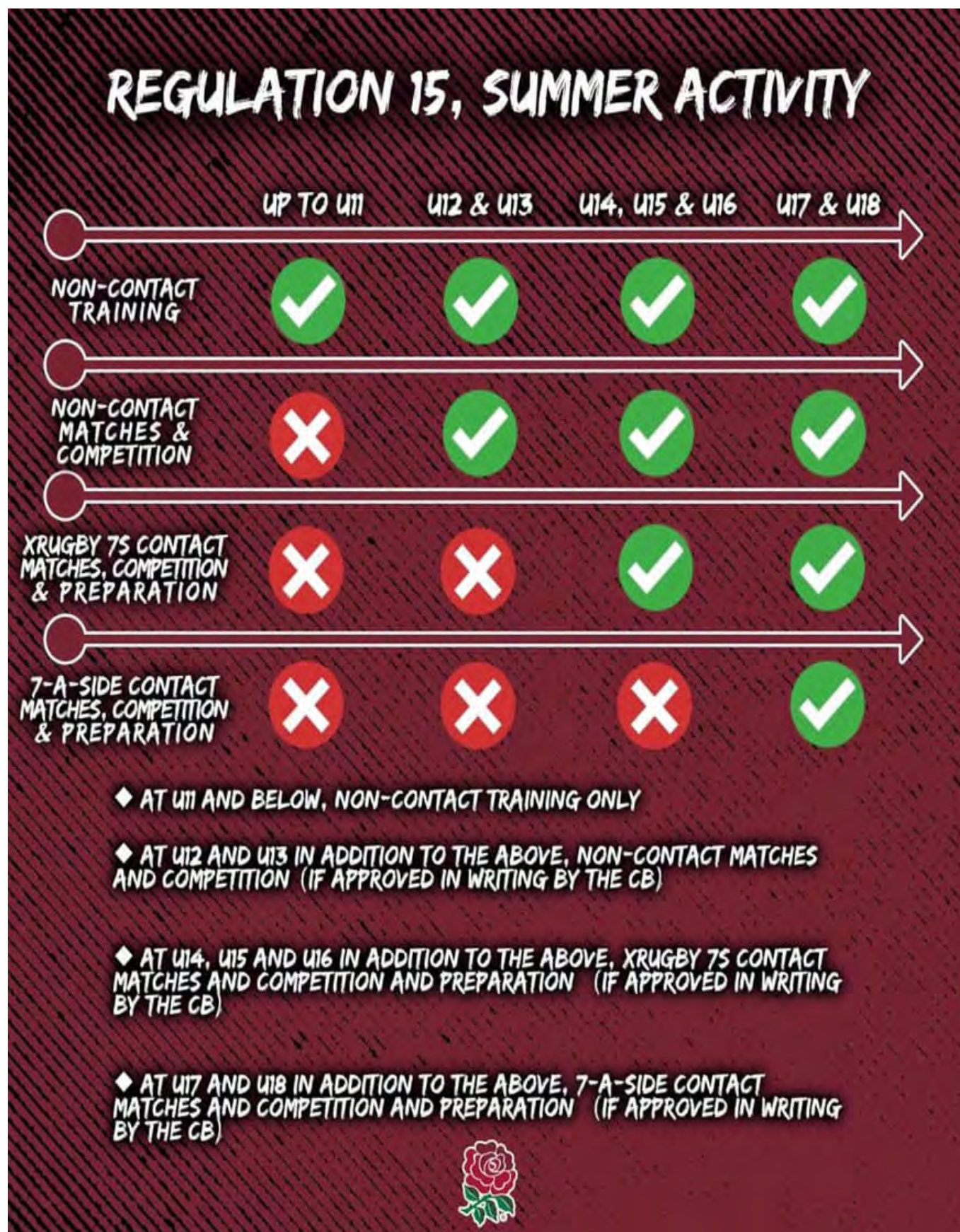
Age Grade Registration – please ensure that your Player Registration Officer, and U7, U8, U16 & U18 Managers are aware of the updated **annual registration process**

Combining U17 & U18 Age Grades – this codifies current practice – no action needed

Ross Cowie – Chairman – Age Grade & Youth Rugby



SIMPLE EXPLANATION TO ASSIST YOU IN PLANNING YOUR OUT OF SEASON ACTIVITY...



GRAHAM HILTON - LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Graham began his rugby life at the Norwich Club in 1966 where he subsequently played at all levels from 1st to 4th XV's and Vets until 1983 when a back injury curtailed his career on the field. His most notable contribution to his Club since that time has been as the Clubs groundsman. He has been associated with the Norwich pitches since 1971 and for the last 18 years has operated as the sole volunteer groundsman undertaking all of the work involved himself which he still does today in his mid-70's. He has also served Norfolk RU with a 15-year spell as the County Colts Secretary from the early 1980's and as the Norfolk President during the 2007/08 season.

Members of the Norwich Club were delighted last season when he agreed to become its President in recognition of the value of his immense contribution to the game.

ECRU honoured Graham with its Lifetime Achievement Award last year and it was following on from this accolade that Graham was further recognised with the RFU President's Value the Volunteer Outstanding Contribution Award. This is the major honour of the RFU Volunteer Recognition and Reward Programme.

To celebrate Graham was invited to the England v Italy game at Twickenham where he received an exclusive pre-match behind the scenes tour given by Steve Grainger, the RFU's Rugby Development Director, which included the changing rooms, medical room and television studio. This was followed by Keith Kent explaining the structure of the Twickenham pitch. Graham was impressed that Keith remembered a trip to Norwich's Beeston Hyrne ground when he recalled problems caused by shallow cables.



The day continued with lunch in the Spirit of Rugby, West Stand with the RFU's President, seats to watch the game and dinner for the post-match function. It was at this stage that Graham was presented with his award by Edie Jones.

Graham extends his thanks to Roger Pierson, our Council Member at the RFU for "ably looking after him" during this very special day.



EC YOUNG AMBASSADOR HARRY ROWLAND SHORTLISTED FOR REFEREEING AWARD



Harry receiving his Young Ambassador Award from EC President John Winders at this year's Annual Dinner

Harry Rowland, who is the Eastern Counties Young Ambassador for 2019/20 has been nominated for a prestigious National Rugby award.

Harry received confirmation of his formal invitation to attend the Rose Room at Twickenham on the evening of Thursday 29th August for the Guinness National Rugby Awards as one of six shortlisted finalists for the senior award of "Referee of the Year". He is a dual capped Danish international in both the U18s XV and U19s 7s team and is busy this summer in the build up to and preparation for tournaments in Poland and Dubai has

We wish Harry the best of luck and will be keeping an eye out for news from HQ on the 29th August.



Harry in action for the Danish U18s XV



Harry in shown here refereeing at Roslyn Park 7's



EASTERN COUNTIES YOUTH FINALS OF FINALS

Eastern Counties hosted their “Finals of Finals” on Sunday 28th April, with 12 different events across the CB, with many clubs playing each other for the first time, and some very close & competitive games, a fitting end to the 15-a-side club season in the CB. Results: -

At Under 14 level, Southwold Rugby Club hosted Cup Winners Final between Southwold, Norwich, and Huntingdon.

The first game saw Southwold beat Norwich 19-6. Norwich then played Huntingdon which saw Huntingdon win 25-7 setting up a final game between Southwold and Huntingdon, a hard fought game in which Southwold took an early lead but Huntingdon came back in the second half to bring it back to 12-12, another well worked try by Southwold brought the score to 17-12 and the Southwold defence held out. All three teams entertained the crowd with some fantastic rugby.

Under 14s – in Suffolk

Cup Winners – at Southwold

Southwold 19 - Norwich 6

Huntingdon W Norwich L

Southwold 17 - Huntingdon 12

Runners Up – at Bury

Bury 5 - Cambridge 0

Bury 24 - Wymondham 19

Cambridge 47- Wymondham 0

Plate Winners - at Stowmarket

Stow 0 - **Shelford** 28

Holt 0 – **Shelford** 33

Stow 5 – Holt 17

Plate Runners Up - at Colchester

Colchester 33 – Saffron Walden 25



U14s Cup Winners - Southwold

Under 15s – in Norfolk

Cup Winners - at N Walsham

N Walsham L - **Bury** W

Bury W - Saffron Walden L

N Walsham W – S Walden L

Runners Up – at Braintree

Braintree 17 – **Shelford** 21

Plate Winners - at Diss

Diss 24 - Ipswich 17

Plate Runners-Up - at West Norfolk

West Norfolk 7 - 24 **Newmarket**

Newmarket 20 - 12 Colchester B

West Norfolk 31 - 5 Colchester B



U16s Runners up Cup winners – North Walsham

U16s in Cambridgeshire

Cup Winners – at Saffron Walden

S Walden 5 – Sudbury 7

Sudbury 5 – **Wymondham** 17

S Walden 0 - **Wymondham** 7

Runners Up - at Huntingdon

Huntingdon 19 - Colchester 14

Colchester 5 v **N Walsham** 12

Huntingdon 10 – **N Walsham** 17

Plate Winners - at Cambridge

Cambridge 12 - **Bury** 12

Holt 7 - **Bury** 48

Cambridge 26 - Holt 6

Plate Runners Up - at Ely

Ely W – Diss L

Woodbridge W – Diss L

Woodbridge 19 -14



U16s Cup Winners – Wymondham

PREPARING FOR SEASON 2019/20



The Thurston Club is getting up to speed with their thoughts firmly on next season after the erection of new goalposts, which were funded in part via the Rugby Football Foundation v. This investment has been supported both by ECRU Club Development as well as the Rugby Football Foundation Groundmatch Grant scheme. This project has been masterminded at the Club by Bob Mountford



Here are some photos of the replacement of the posts: -



OPPORTUNITIES AT EASTERN COUNTIES

If you are enjoying being involved in rugby and want to get more involved, or if you know of somebody who does, then we hope that you will think about getting involved at a county or Eastern Counties level.

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers – so even if none of the specific roles advertised below appeals – why not send us a note letting us know a bit about what you'd like to do and some sense of what your background is – don't need a full CV, but a sense of what you would be bringing to the table would be fantastic. Send it to loverugby@ecrugby.com – and we will take it from there.

Chairs, Managers, Volunteers

This year we have some specific roles we are looking to fill – some for our AGM on 1 June, some for next season, but no need to wait if you are interested in letting us know. There are also roles available at the three county unions and those are listed below as well. As above, send expressions of interest to loverugby@ecrugby.com and we'll be in touch!

Role	What do they do?
Chair of Club Development	With current Chair, John Winders having been confirmed in the role of President of Eastern Counties at the recent AGM, we need to identify someone to take over this crucial role – which involves close liaison with the three counties and with the RFU team to support clubs in developing their organisation and facilities. A full handover will be provided, and the new chair will benefit from John's considerable expertise in the role.
Assistant Treasurer	To support the Hon. Treasurer, the Finance Committee and the Management Committee – particularly in the process of monitoring financial performance and the delivery of our action plan.
Chair of Coaching Committee	this post is currently occupied by Chris Capps-Jenner our Director of Representative Rugby and he is looking to step down to focus on the larger role. Working with the County Coaching Co-ordinators and the RFU professional team, the Coaching Committee's role is to promote coach development across Eastern Counties – and to organise the highly successful annual coaching conference each summer.
Press & Digital Communications Officer	To support the Chair of Marketing and Comms, duties will include maintaining the ECRU Website and Social Media Feeds, posting news articles to these channels, co-ordinating the EC Notebook as well as collating match reports from the representative teams and sending these to the press

OPPORTUNITIES AT IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE, NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

Role	Where?	What do they do?
Sponsorship Co-ordinators	Cambridgeshire Suffolk	Work with our Eastern Counties Sponsorship Co-ordinator, Davide Taylor – identifying opportunities in those areas to get sponsors on board.
Volunteer Co-ordinators	Cambridgeshire Norfolk Suffolk	All three counties are looking for someone to take the lead in this area: supporting clubs to support and recruit volunteers and working with the Chair of Volunteering at Eastern Counties to ensure that no stone is left unturned to ensure that this vital resource is recognised and developed.

Coaches

The process for coaches is slightly different – please send information about your coaching background to our Director of Representative Rugby, Chris Capps-Jenner at chrisccappsjenner@sas-es.com Eastern Counties and the three counties run representative programmes at adult and age grade levels for both male and female players.

All of these programmes require coaching teams which are put together by our Director of Representative Rugby.

If you are coaching at a club or have experience of coaching in any environment – and would be interested in joining one of our teams then please let Chris know at the email above.

At Eastern Counties, we aim to improve the rugby experience for all involved in the game in our three counties – and to do that we have a continuous need to bring a wider range of people into our work – if you want to contribute then please put yourself forward. If you are not sure if any of the above are exact fits for what you want or are able to do – then let us know what you can do, and we'll take a look at where you might fit in.



COACHES/MANAGERS WANTED

Ipswich RFC are looking for talented self-motivated coaches/managers to help drive our club forward.

SPECIFICALLY

LADIES COACH - PLAYER COACH or COACH MANAGER

We need to push on with transforming our small squad into a competitive women's team for Ipswich and surrounding area. The women we have just need some bods to help improve training and to become a magnet for new players. Touch rugby sessions already in progress.

GIRLS COACHES - u13, u15 & u18

Due to current coaches retiring we need fresh coaching and management talent to continue the great work done over the last few years in conjunction with our friends at Woodbridge RFC. East Suffolk Lynx is our combined team for each age group.

SENIOR MENS 2ND XV COACH

A strengthening squad who need more coaching help on a weekly basis - can you help?

SENIOR MENS 3RD TEAM MANAGER

A busy and sociable outfit that needs match day help and a few hours commitment during the week.

For all roles - Ideally you will be coaching savvy (but we can help with courses if you are a little unsure), a wizzo communicating with players, parents and supporters, organised, have a GSOH and don't take yourselves too seriously.

All roles up for discussion with our main man for playing matters Henry Gaskin before the end of June

henry.irfc@gmail.com

Most roles are non-remunerated with the possible exception of Ladies & Senior Men's Coaching roles.

However, Ipswich RFC may pay appropriate travel expenses, provide some stash and sponsor club membership for the right people subject to abiding by all RFU guidelines. Other roles to suit other skill sets may also be available - please get in touch!

www.ipswichrugby.com



ENGLAND AND SAINT'S CAPTAIN ATTENDS MAKEOVER WEEKEND AT NORTH WALSHAM RFC



North Walsham Vikings had a special guest on Sunday 23 June, when England and Northampton Saints captain Dylan Hartley called in during the Club's "Makeover Weekend". On both the Saturday and Sunday working parties of volunteers were at the Club's Scottow Park ground continuing the ongoing work to improve facilities and get everything ready for the new season in September. Hartley's visit was national recognition for the improvements the Club are making, and he brought with him a £3,000 grant from the NatWest Rugby Force programme, one of just six available nationwide. He spent around five hours at the Club, and as well as lending a hand with the painting he ran a training session with the Youth & Minis (pictured), chatted with Members and held a question and answer session.



There is quite a transformation going on at Scottow Park. Not only has a lot of effort gone into improving the playing surfaces but there have been enhancements too to the woodlands, walking and jogging tracks and playground. The viewing facilities for the disabled, known as "the veranda", are also being upgraded with a new roof and decking.

Meanwhile work has begun to install a lift in the Clubhouse so enabling everyone to use the first-floor social facilities. This £61,000 project, which includes a meeting room, will complete an upgrade to the upstairs, an improved kitchen and extended bar having been operational since 2016. Funding comes from three sources: a Rugby Football Union interest free loan, £10,000 from North Norfolk District Council's Big Society Fund and a £31,000 grant by the European Union's Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Already well used by Scottow Parish Council and Schools, the Club hopes these improved facilities will also lead to its increased use as a venue for community organisations, businesses and private events.

"It's all very exciting and Dylan's visit was very worthwhile, he showed a lot of interest in what we are doing and Members young and old enjoyed meeting him," said Chair Keith Jarvis, adding "I cannot thank our volunteers enough, without them none of these improvements would be happening."



RUGBY FOOTBALL FOUNDATION NEWS

More progress has been made in the Eastern Counties from this funding source with awards being confirmed for the North Walsham and Mistley Clubs.



The North Walsham award is one of £5,000 which will be used to help purchase a tractor.



Mistley have secured £10,000 as a contribution towards the fitting out of their new clubhouse. These are exciting times for this North Essex Club.

YOUNG RUGBY AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR – 2018/19

At the end of last season Jamie Hooker, then a 16 year from the North Walsham Club, was recognised as joint ECRU Rugby Ambassador of the Year. Subsequently the ECRU Coaching Group has encouraged Jamie to develop his career in rugby by sponsoring him to obtain the Level 2 England Rugby Coaching Award. ECRU has now been advised by David Horne, the Clubs President, that Jamie has again this season been outstanding in his commitment to his Club, continuing to assist with coaching the juniors and also supporting the 1st XV by running the touch both at home and away fixtures. As a result of his efforts he has been awarded his Clubs trophy for Outstanding Youth Commitment. Dave says North Walsham are "very proud of Jamie and his achievement and also thank ECRU for their continuing support in his rugby career."





Eastern Counties Award Course Calendar 2018/19

England Rugby Training Course Descriptors [Click Here](#)

Online Course Booking Guide - [Click Here](#)

England Rugby Coaching Award – [Click Here](#)

A live calendar of CPD and Award courses, can be found clicking on this link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1F9I3TQwMCriNQyMvA3wCiEnKfGBOdpnGnndHt1ffPa0/edit?usp=sharing>



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@ecrurugby.com




by the 25th of the month.

Russ Clarke

ECRU – Chair Marketing and Communications

Eastern Counties Rugby Union

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JOIN US FOR DRINKS AND NIBBLES IN THE CAR PARK AT TWICKENHAM

With the much anticipated RWC in Japan happening during the usual Autumn International window there will be no EC presence at Twickenham this autumn.

However, the popular “drinks in the car park” will be back for the 2020 Six Nations, specifically the England vs Wales game on the 7th March.


So, if you’re lucky enough to secure a ticket, then pop along and see us in the Cardinal Vaughan Car Park for pre-match drinks. As it’s 4.45pm KO we will be setup from 2pm, last orders will be at 4pm!




EASTERN COUNTIES RUGBY UNION


Join us for Drinks and nibbles!


Sat 7th March from 2pm



ENGLAND


**KO
16:45
GMT**


WALES

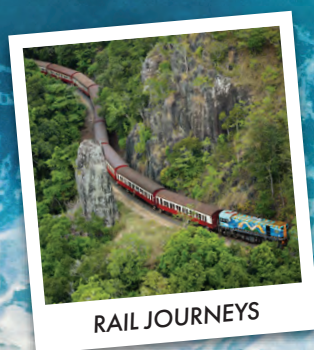








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