



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
COMMUNITY RUGBY & OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT



Sussex Women and Girls Rugby Meeting

Wednesday 12th August 2009
At Ardingly College
(County Player Development Camp)

Meeting Notes

Present:

Roger Edmondson	CB President	Mal Chumbley	RFU RDO
James Fisher	RFUW Regional Manager	Simon Burgess	RFUW Coaching Officer
Jeannette Hastings	H3 Asst Coach	Wendy Harwood	H3 Manager
Andy Baurer	H3 U18 Coach	Glenn Warren	Worthing Chairman
Mike Fisher	Pulborough Jnr Chair	Liz James	Hove Coach
Helen Coyte	University of Chichester	Sid Fletcher	University of Chichester
Mark Bonar	Chichester College	Robin Gayle	H3 Coach

Item 1

The Meeting commenced with an outline from the RDO on the purpose of the meeting and the W & G Management committee. Last year a meeting had been held at Hove RFC, with a similar aim; to move the game in Sussex for Women and Girls forward.

It was stressed that to achieve sustainable growth in the County all involved needed to adopt a more strategic approach, the Professional staff from both RFU and RFUW were in place to support all the volunteers in this role as well as guidance using best practice from across the game.

Item 2

Those present gave a synopsis of their area or club with playing numbers and coaching strengths. The summary was playing numbers were fluctuating, especially as some had experienced a large number of players moving up to the higher age band for the coming season and therefore recruitment remained a priority. Coaching was a similar position across all Clusters and Clubs with sufficient numbers, especially Worthing who boasted 9 coaches operating across U12, 15, 18 and senior teams. The issue was one of seniority in coaching and support to develop. The vast majority of coaches involved in Girls Coaching across the County were of Level 1 standard, and therefore by definition were only able to operate as Assistant Coaches, delivering part of a session or a session under supervision. The picture at Women's level was similar, although coaches involved tended to be of a more experienced level.

The efforts and commitment of all involved in the coaching process is to be applauded and all require regular support and development to support the growth of the W&G Game





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The perceived disruption at club level caused by the RFUW Regional programme was a great source of frustration amongst Clubs and Clusters. Players and Coaches being away with the Regional Programmes causing insufficient numbers remaining to have any meaningful club or cluster activity. The RDO suggested that a post Christmas programme of Skill Development, utilising additional coaches may be an option to promote player and coach development within the Girls game. The sessions being arranged at a central County venue and held on Regional programme dates

Item 3

There followed a lengthy discussion on the need for a clear direction and development structure for the Women and Girls game in the County. The considerable efforts of all involved over the past few years had led to successes in some areas but there was a clear need for a more sustainable programme and improved links with all involved. The Professional staff would be instrumental in the production of this Development Plan and would be a key resources to enable its objectives to be met. The key areas for inclusion in the Development plan would be

- Improved and formalising Club links with Education sector – Schools, Colleges and Universities are participating in a wide range of competitions and festivals but the take up for continued playing at Clubs is comparatively low.
- Whole Club Development – Part of the RFU Strategic Plan is for clubs to adopt whole club development plans, incorporating all elements of the club. This is well underway in Sussex and the focus for the work, led by the RDO, would be to look at the exit route for young girls from the Min/Midi programme to Under 12's at clubs.
- Raise Coaching Standards – The range of Level 1 coaches operating in the Girls game in Sussex needs supporting and development towards Level 2 and beyond. Existing Level 2 coaches need mentoring to ensure consistent high standards of coaching is delivered and those demonstrating the appropriate skills and attributes supported on to Level 3.
- Link between Under 18 and Women's Game at Club, Cluster and County level – Including the Link to Universities and Colleges this is an area of potential huge loss of players and greater links are required to minimise this.
- W&G Management Group – A management structure led by Chairpersons of Women and Girls formed with a clear reporting process to County Executive Committee, to manage the delivery of the Actions on the agreed Development Plan.

It was proposed that before the next meeting a small group, supported by the RDO and RFUW regional Manager produce a Draft of the Development plan for discussion.

Item 4

The appointment of a chair for the Girls Group remained a priority, Robin Gayle expressed an interest in discussing this position and the RDO and Regional Manager agreed to meet with him to clarify the role, the level of commitment required and to demonstrate the support available.





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A.O.B

Mark Bonar (Chichester College) identified the need for coach education courses (Level 1) in the Education Sector, the College and the University of Chichester offered a potential large coaching workforce with PE Teachers Students and similar, undergoing courses. Previously the issue had been raised with Coaching Department and the RDO agreed to raise this again.

Glen Warren (Worthing RFC) expressed concern over the demise of playing numbers at clubs and questioned the role and future of the Clusters arrangements. Whilst many present had views of the future of the Cluster programme the RDO proposed that this be something to be included in the Development Plan and in doing so would establish a clear pathway for cluster and club development.

James Fisher (RFUW RM) announced the Regional Programme was now recruiting coaches and managers and the process was advertised on the RFUW website. The programme had changed from previous years and there would now be a programme of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for head coaches.

Festival Programme – London Ladies and Essex dates was announced and confirmation of Sussex participation was sought.

The Rugby World Cup, hosted in England next year presents a huge opportunity for the game as a whole and although venue details were still be finalised it was anticipated that these would be local enough to Sussex to enable close links and activities.

There were volunteer opportunities available for those wishing to be directly involved with the RWC and details were on the Website (to be placed on Sussex website)

To improve links Simon Burgess (RFUW Coaching Officer) would now sit on the County Coaching and Playing Committee, alongside Jon Bates (RFU Coach Development Officer)

A Coach Development event delivered by Simon Burgess would be held in Sussex on 30th November – venue details to follow

Sid Fletcher (University of Chichester) Announced the HE Development Camp Programme that had been circulated (to be placed on Sussex website)

Roger Edmondson (County President) re-stated the County policy of a ‘One Club’ approach to everything we do and their support for the Women and Girls Game throughout the County and thanked those present for their efforts and commitment.

DONM 28th September 2009 at 7.30pm at Worthing RFC

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