

Sussex R.F.U. Youth Management Group

West Sussex Clubs' Forum

MINUTES of the Meeting held on 6th January 2011.

PRESENT: Adam Tunesi (Hove); Chris Jones (Crawley); Mike Travis (Haywards Heath); Duncan Bennett (Chichester); Dominic Lee (Pulborough); Jeff Ashman (Horsham); Dai Price (Horsham); John Clery (Horsham); Craig Boswell (Horsham); Ian Thurloway (Crawley); Nick Cook (Worthing); Steve Briscoe (Under 15/16 League Organiser); David Beglan (Chairman). The Chairman welcomed those present and expressed his delight at the good attendance.

1). APOLOGIES had been received from Steve Searle (Under 13/14 League Organiser); Gary Ansell (Shoreham); Mike Richardson (Colts' League Organiser); Mike Fisher (Pulborough); Kevin Blakiston (Minis' Organiser); David Hooker (YMG Chairman); Martin Cleary (Haywards Heath); Mark Jenkins (Haywards Heath). No communication had been received from the Representatives of Bognor or Midhurst.

2). The Minutes of the Meeting of 16th September 2010 had been circulated and were agreed as correct.

3). Matters arising. There were no matters arising.

4). Matters referred from the Youth Management Group and the CBRDP. At meetings of the YMG and CBRDP, reference had been made to the shortage of Referees and it was regretted that it was rarely possible for Sussex Society to appoint a Referee for matches below Under 16 age group. Despite the Community Referee initiative, pioneered by Peter Atthis, which suggested that there were fair numbers of Community Referees (see County Handbook), it appeared that many of these were inactive. The Chairman suggested that, ideally, where a Club fielded, for example, four senior teams each Saturday, that Club should provide four Referees from its numbers. If this were the case, the problem of shortages would go a long way towards resolution. Ian Thurloway said that there seemed to be a shortage of ELRA (Entry Level Referee Award) Courses available and Steve Briscoe pointed out that planned ELRA Courses in both East and West of the County had been cancelled because of lack of support. Ian suggested that the Partnerships could arrange ELRA Courses. Adam Tunesi said that the problem might be resolved by the SSRFUR proposing a Course, to be held at a specific Club and asking for numbers of candidates from Clubs in that area.

5). Correspondence. There was no other correspondence.

6). Mini matters. In his email of apology for absence, Kevin Blakiston had requested that the Meeting be reminded about the Minis and Juniors Fixture Forum to be held at Haywards Heath RFC on Monday 17th January. The East and West Festival draws would be made at that Meeting. Duncan Bennett produced a leaflet regarding reporting of injuries at the West Festival (to be held at Chichester) and requested that any points raised with regard to this should be raised with Chichester RFC.

7). Youth Leagues.

a). Steve reported that the unusually savage December weather had caused problems for the Youth Leagues but it was hoped that our area would be more fortunate in the New Year. The rating of players on match cards had been a successful innovation and the County Coaches had welcomed the assistance provided. This scheme has helped to bring players, who were not on the County "radar", to the attention of the Coaches. Dai Price and Jeff Ashman pointed out that it would be helpful for Club Managers/Coaches to know when a County Coach/Manager would be coming to watch such a player, so that it could be ensured that said player was in the team and in his right position in the match in question.

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7). Youth Leagues (continued).

b). Steve had sent a survey to all the Clubs to find feedback on how the Leagues are working and had received 27 replies so far. It seemed that most people were happy with the status quo but there had been a suggestion that the Under 13 League should be regional rather than merit based. Some Under 15/16 squads would prefer to play matches Home and Away, if the Structured Season allowed room for this. Steve will collate all the replies and make recommendations to the Youth AGM in May.

8). Colts' League. In his email of apology for absence, Mike Richardson thanked all the Clubs for their excellent communication and support during the trying weather. He would appreciate feedback from the Clubs regarding the Structure for next Season. Mike Travis expressed his thanks (echoed by the Meeting) to Mike Richardson for his sterling work in organising the Colts competitions and drew the Meeting's attention to the Twickenham Meeting for Youth and Colts' Fixtures on 28th January at 5-30 p.m. The Structured Season details for next Season had arrived good and early this Season and there would be spaces for Clubs to arrange friendly matches against Clubs from out of County. Mike said that such matches are of value in providing experience and development for players. Mike agreed with Chris Jones that the Colts Cup tended to "overload" the Season and should be reviewed. In referring to the Structured Season, Steve said that the "blue" dates are the only dates where the County is permitted to arrange Matches/Training/Events.

9). Other business.

a). Jeff Ashman asked if it would be possible to move the first League match for Under 16s to mid October, to allow coaches further time with work on the change in the lineout at that age group. Steve pointed out that the Structured Season made this difficult.

b). Chris Jones suggested that January be avoided for Under 16 matches, as changes in the school exam system meant that GCSEs occurred at that time. Steve said that, again, this would cause problems with the Structured Season.

c). Jeff Ashman suggested that Leagues could finish the Season with semi finals and not just finals. Steve said he would consider this possibility.

d). Steve reported that the RFU had introduced the need for Constituent Bodies to approve all Youth Festivals, because of previous problems with lack of First Aid cover. Internal Festivals (including just Sussex Clubs) would be given approval without problem. Where a Festival (meaning the involvement of three Clubs or more) included teams visiting from outside Sussex, approval would have to be sought from the CB. This Season's Festivals had been approved and Steve will issue a template for next Season during the summer.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9-15 p.m. with thanks to Horsham for their hospitality.

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