



Kent County Rugby Football Union Limited

Report of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting held at Old Colfeians RFC
on 27th June 2018

The President, Colin Blackham, took the chair, with 32 members present including County Officers, Past Presidents, Vice Presidents, Members of the Committee, Representatives of Clubs and Associates of the County. The following Clubs were represented at the Meeting:-

Askeans	Charlton Park	Old Colfeians	Penguin International	Sheppey
Aylesford Bulls	Folkestone	Old Dunstonians	Pups	Tunbridge Wells
Beckenham	Gillingham Anchorians	Old Elthamians	Royal Bank of Scotland	Vigo
Blackheath	K S R F U R	Old Gravesendians	Sevenoaks	Westcombe Park
Canterbury	New Ash Green			

In advance of the meeting, those present stood in silence in memory of any persons associated with Kent County RFU and its Clubs who had who had passed away during the past year. Mention was made of County Vice President John Cormack, Past President of the Referees' Society, Cliff Booth and Peter Batty-Smith of Dover RFC.

Apologies for absence were received from two Clubs, three members of the Executive Committee, two Past Presidents, eight Vice Presidents and three Associates.

Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the last AGM, held on 28th June 2017 at Ashford RFC having been circulated to all Clubs and Associates were taken as read. With one minor correction, these were approved and were signed by the President as being a true record of that meeting, on the proposal of Robin Taylor (Westcombe Park) and Tony Power (Royal Bank of Scotland). There were no matters arising.

Minutes of the last Annual Financial General Meeting

The Minutes of the AFGM, held on 17th December 2017 at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Wrotham and the Accounts for the year ended 30th June 2017, had been circulated to all Clubs and Associates. The Minutes were approved and signed by the President as being a true record of that meeting, proposed by Roger Clarke (Tunbridge Wells), seconded by Tony Power (Royal Bank of Scotland).

Address of the President

"As I come to the end of my tenure as the 30th President of this Union, I look back and think how lucky I am to have been allowed to have held this position. I have enjoyed most of what I have been involved with but with some sorrow during this period I have attended on behalf of the Kent Rugby Community a number of funerals and memorial services of some great people. I say this because I want people to realise that when you take on such a role there are downsides as well as the lunches, dinners and games you attend. During this time have travelled all round the County attending games at all different levels. At the beginning of the season I actually attended the inaugural game of a brand new club, Swanley Rugby Club. I wish to thank all clubs that I have visited for the hospitality and friendship shown to me, which has been humbling at times.

This year has been a mixed bag for Kent Rugby as you will have seen from the report. Once again the County sides have had a good season, and at this point I must thank Cranbrook RFC, Westcombe Park RFC and Aylesford Bulls RFC for allowing us to use their grounds for County games. The Kent Cup Finals day went off very well and my thanks also go to Footscray RUFC for all the effort that was put in by the club making it a very successful day. The only downside was the very cold weather, but even this did not hamper the attendance figures!

We held two very successful Awards Functions. Breaking new ground, the Local Leagues Awards were at the Ashford International Hotel with a new format. The County Volunteers Awards Dinner was again held at the Shepherd Neame, Faversham Brewery. Both were very well attended and the feedback I got was that both events were enjoyed by those present.

It has been disappointing that a number of games were cancelled in the Shepherd Neame Merit tables mainly due to lack of players. This is a problem affecting the whole of English Rugby not just Kent.

With my other hat on I must mention the disappointing number of Red Cards this season. This is more than previous years and is somewhat worrying especially taking into account the number of games cancelled.

Overall I would suggest that Kent Rugby is in reasonable health and the County Committee, all volunteers, are doing their level best to keep improving things. I am pleased to propose adoption of the report". This was seconded by Tony Southgate (Sheppey) and agreed by those present.

The President then took the opportunity to present his personal award – to Dr Alan Thompson of Blackheath FC, the County's Senior Medical Officer, who also received a blazer badge in recognition of his many years' service to Kent Rugby.

Election of Officers and Vice Presidents for Season 2018-2019

Colin Blackham continued "There are times in one's life especially as a volunteer that you are required to do something that makes you pleased to be involved. This evening I am really pleased to propose as my successor, John Nunn a distinguished servant of our host Club this evening. He is a rugby man through and through and if cut in half like a piece of Blackpool rock it would probably say Rugby, Rugby, and Rugby.

He started playing rugby when at Colfe's Grammar School. He played for Ministry of Defence and the Civil Service and continued physically playing regularly until he was 50. But then he didn't stop, having his last game in Zimbabwe at age 60. He was a founder member of Combined London Old Boy's taking on the roles of Treasurer and Kit Manager. He was a steward at Twickenham from the late 1980's for about 20 years. He has been part of the County set up for many years, involved in the Playing Committee, Selection Committee Serving as Team Secretary. In 2015 he was at Twickenham to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award. So I cannot think of more appropriate person to be President of Kent County RFU". The meeting approved the appointment with warm applause.

The new President replied "Thank you all for electing me as your President - an honour that I hadn't imagined would come my way. When Mike Cordell asked me how I would feel about becoming President, I said I would seriously think about it and let him know. Although being asked not to tell anyone, I broke the silence to ask the advice of my sons and asked them 'why me'? They replied, why not you! So here I am and I shall do my best to attain the high standards set by previous Presidents. I hope to get around to as many clubs as possible – rugby is a way of life and the more you put in, the more you get out. I will promote rugby in Kent and hope that when in turn I hand over, more senior rugby will be being played. There should be more give and take between clubs – winning is a bonus but not the most important element. The transition from Youth Rugby should be handled better and players not lured to other clubs, where they do not always fare as well, and there is then reticence to return to their previous club. The game is all about camaraderie". He presented his predecessor with a blazer badge, noting his Presidential years, a County plaque, and a flowers for his wife to thank her for her support of Kent Rugby.

John Nunn's first official duty was to proposed en-bloc the other Officers: Honorary Secretary, Sylvia Taylor; Honorary Treasurer, Peter Dessent; Immediate Past President, Colin Blackham. All three appointments were agreed by the meeting.

All existing Vice Presidents were nominated for annual re-election, proposed by Mike Newsom (Blackheath), seconded by Dennis Attwood (Charlton Park).

Roger Clarke, the Chairman of the Kent RFU Executive Committee then addressed the meeting: "This evening, we wish to acknowledge two members of Kent County RFU who are stepping down after many years service:

Robert Horner's contribution to rugby is vast! He joined the County as the Referees' Rep in the 1970's – was Hon Secretary in our Centenary Year, as well as County President 1988-91, he went on to represent Kent on the RFU Committee/Council and was President in 2003/04, a very auspicious year. However his interest in and support of the County has been constant throughout the years – most recently providing invaluable advice in respect of GDPR, and in support of seriously injured players.

Also stepping down following a move abroad is Mike Cordell, who has completed 18 years as Hon. Secretary, of which 14 years was combined with RFU Council Representative. The Executive Committee proposes that Mike be appointed a Life Vice President of Kent County RFU". This was approved by the meeting, which acknowledged both parties.

Election of Committee for Season 2018-2019

Mike Cordell drew the meeting's attention to the list on the reverse of the report, who had been nominated. There being no alternative nominations, the election was carried. He also reminded those present that following the election earlier in the year, Roger Clarke will be RFU Council Rep for a fixed term of three years.

Appointment of Auditors

The current Auditors, Crane and Partners had confirmed their willingness to continue as Auditors. Nigel Fray (Gillingham Anchorians) proposed their appointment, seconded by Tony Power (Royal Bank of Scotland).

Any other business

The Wilf Hawkins Shield awarded to the club who recruits the most new Associate members, was retained by Canterbury RFC.

Robert Horner introduced a presentation by Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby, who have had their funding withdrawn by Sport England and who are fund-raising to try and ensure that the sport continues to thrive. Kent County RFU are encouraging clubs to hold fund-raising events, and Sevenoaks RFC who have previously held and event offered support and guidance.

The President thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.55 pm, with a vote of thanks to hosts, Old Colfeians RFC

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