



Kent County Rugby Football Union Limited

www.kent-rugby.org

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Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting will be held at **Sheppey RFC**, Lower Road, Minster-on-Sea, Sheerness, ME12 3ST on **Wednesday 26th June 2019, at 7.30 pm**. The members of the County Committee hope that you will be able to attend.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the last AGM, held on 27th June 2018.
3. Address of the President, who will propose adoption of the Report.
4. Minutes of the AFGM of 11th December 2018.
5. Proposed Rule Amendments – Appendix 1
6. Election of Officers & Vice Presidents for 2019/20.
7. Election of Committee for season 2019/20.
8. Appointment of Auditors.
9. Any other business.

Report

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is the principal decision-making body of the Kent County RFU overseeing all that is 'Rugby in Kent'. Committees and sub-committees take on the administration of all aspects of the work required and report back to the Executive Committee for ratification. This season, the Executive Committee - Chaired by Roger Clarke and comprising of John Nunn, Sylvia Taylor, Peter Dessent, David Clent, Kevin Cope, Nigel Fray, Jo Martin (RFU) and Tracy Pettingale as Secretary and Administrator of the Committee - has engaged with its member clubs in a way not seen before. It held a club consultation evening at the Shepherd Neame Brewery in September 2018, followed by three Insight evenings held at clubs across the county during February, March and April 2019, where a range of club personnel were invited to attend and give their views on how best the county could support them. 43 of our member clubs were represented at these events. Retention and recruitment of players was the number one concern for clubs and Competition structure was a clear leader in where clubs wanted to see a review which would help them achieve this aim. The results of this extensive consultation will be used to help shape the way we allocate our budget for the forthcoming season as the County looks to complete a Local Funding assessment for both RFU and County funds administered by its various Committees and Sub Committees. As a final task the Executive is carefully assessing the range of volunteer positions required for the County to carry out its work and Nigel Fray was co-opted to the Executive for a period of 2 years to complete the drafting of job descriptions, advertising of positions and planning for succession across all positions.

County XV

This season has seen the Senior side continue to grow and flourish at the top level of County Rugby. Tom Stradwick of Blackheath FC led the coaching team for the first time supported by Taff Gwilliam and John Gallagher who was in his final year as a Kent coach.

Drawn to play against Cornwall, Gloucestershire and newly promoted Hampshire the squad was made up of players from 10 different Kent clubs with the bulk of these coming from Blackheath, Old Elthamians and Canterbury.

The opening game against Cornwall coincided with Canterbury club promotion play off so no Canterbury players were considered for selection. In a hard-fought match at Medway RFC, Kent went down very narrowly to the eventual County Champions Cornwall by 25-21.

Despite this set back and now able to select from a full-strength squad Kent travelled to Bristol to take on group favourites Gloucestershire, a side Kent had never beaten at this level. Kent produced a top-class performance to secure a bonus point victory by 42-33. That victory was backed up the following week with another bonus point win away against Hampshire by 35-26 at Havant RFC.

With the England Counties squad to tour Georgia selected after the County Championship Kent were delighted to discover that no less than 7 Kent players were invited to tour. Tom Williams, Danny Herriott, Jack Daly and Steve Leonard of Blackheath FC, Nathan Morris and Keiran Moffatt of Old Elthamians RFC and Dan Sharp of Canterbury RFC. Our congratulations go to all these players and to everyone else involved in ensuring that Kent rugby continues to grow and go from strength to strength.

Under 20 XV

The 2018/2019 season saw the County Under 20s squad once again qualify for the National Quarter Finals of the Jason Leonard Cup. Pool victories over Eastern Counties at Tunbridge Wells RFC by 76-7 and Sussex at Cranbrook RFC 40-33 saw Kent travel to unbeaten Hertfordshire to decide home advantage in the National quarter finals. A pulsating game of rugby saw Kent cruelly lose out 31-29 to the last kick of the game.

Kent were then drawn to travel and play Gloucestershire at Bristol in that quarter-final tie and the very young squad shorn of a number of players through injury nevertheless acquitted themselves very well in a 32-21 defeat.

A number of players went forward to the London & South East trials with Bobby Bratton (Old Elthamians RFC), Charlie Knight (Thanet Wanderers RFC) and Matas Jurevicious (Tonbridge Juddians RFC) being successful. The Divisional programme then saw Matas Jurevicious gain England Counties Under 20 selection.

Encouraging for Kent moving forward is that a large number of this season's squad remain available for next season and together with some talented Under 18s coming through augers well for next season. Our thanks go to all those involved in supporting the Under 20 programme.

Under 18's

The Kent U18's 2018/19 season commenced with assessment of over 100 boys. A final squad of 27 was selected for the forthcoming campaign. Their first match was against Surrey, played at Warlingham RFC, the final score being 38-0 to Kent. For their second game, Kent U18's faced Sussex at Charlton Park, the final score ended with Kent winning 29 -17. For their third Fixture the boys then travelled to Harlow RFC to play Eastern Counties, running out eventual winners 31-0. For their fourth and final fixture of the season Kent travelled to Horsham RFC to face Essex, finishing the game 52-0 winners. The Kent U18's squad ended the season unbeaten with 3 clean sheets from their four games.

From the squad of 27 boys; 13 players have been invited to trial for London & South East U18's County Divisional team at the end of January; Cody Barber (Leigh Academy, Dartfordians RFC), Max Bullock (Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, Medway RFC), Joel Chance (Hayes Secondary School, Bromley RFC), Zachary Corrigan (Hayes Secondary School, Old Colfeians RFC), Cullen Daly (Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, Medway RFC), Beau Farrance (Hayes Secondary School, Old Elthamians RFC), Ben Fryatt (Dartford GS, Westcombe Park RFC), Oliver Green (Tonbridge School, Sevenoaks RFC), Joshua Ondoma (Dartford GS), Kai Pearce-Paul (Ravenswood School, Old Elthamians RFC), Thabiso Sithole (St. Lawrence College), Jack Smith (Hayes Secondary School, Old Elthamians RFC), Matthew Smith (Hayes Secondary School, Westcombe Park RFC),

Following on from their impressive season, 7 Kent U18's County players featured in the final squad of 23 for the London & South East Divisional Team, Max Bullock, Joel Chance, Joshua Ondoma, Jack Smith, Cullen Daly, Beau Farrance & Kai Pearce Paul, with a further 3 selected as non-travelling reserves, Zac Corrigan, Ben Fryatt & Matthew Smith. London & South East beat the North Division 26-9 and the Midlands 29-12. Leading on from this 3 of the Kent players were selected for the England Counties U18's squad to play Ireland U18's Clubs, Joel Chance, Max Bullock & Beau Farrance and Cullen Daly was named as a non-travelling reserve. The series against Ireland was tied with a win apiece.

Under 17's

The Kent U17's 2018/19 season commenced with over 70 boys invited to training. Match day squads were selected from all who trained and all players who attended training represented the County at least once. Four fixtures were arranged, with the County squad winning 3 of the 4. Kent beat Surrey 57 – 15, Essex 10 – 0, Sussex 20 – 10 and lost to Herts 25 - 12.

Game Development Committee

This committee is responsible for all 'on the pitch' elements of Kent rugby:

Coach and Referee Development

The coach and referee development committee have successfully delivered on a number of events and projects over the 18/19 season. Starting with refereeing, we have delivered 2 Continuous Match Official Development courses with nearly 50 people attending. 10 Young match officials completed their England Rugby Referee Award course and were praised by our Match Official Development Officer Andrew Small of the RFU about their attitude and commitment to the course. Onto coaching, we have funded 2 new female coaches through the England Rugby Coaching Award, over 20 students & teachers through the Rugby Ready course and had Stuart Armstrong come into Kent to deliver an excellent masterclass. 25 young people aged between 14-18 have completed the new and bespoke Kent Rugby Young Coaches Certificate. It has been well received throughout the county and also by the RFU and RFU council. 150 people have booked onto the upcoming masterclass with Saracens and England scrum half Richards Wigglesworth and the annual Coach Development Conference is open and looks to be a superb event as always. This season we will also be fully funding a Kids First CPD day, a one-day event where people can come and take part in a number of official CPD events across the day. We are excited as we pan into next season and continue some great work around the county.

Youth Committee

Season 18/19 has been an excellent year for Kent Youth Rugby with record numbers of participants in our county competitions.

One of the main highlights has been the establishment of a revised competition calendar for the U17 / U18 age grades. These groups now have a range of competitions, including 10 and 12-a-side formats, designed to engage all players and

maintain their engagement throughout the playing season. The finale for this group saw 23 Colts teams (over 500 U17/18 years olds) competing in the finals of the inaugural Colts Trophy Competition. This was extremely well supported by Kent Referees Society with 3-men teams on all matches and resulted in a superb display of young talent. Feedback from clubs and players has been very positive citing improved engagement of players and a keenness to retain U18s in the youth game. It is our intention to retain the new structure for over 17s. The Cup finalists in the Colts Trophy competition were:

CUP FINAL	Old Elthamians	36	Bromley	12
CUP 3 rd / 4th	Sevenoaks	12	Tonbridge Js	31

Note should be made of CB member clubs' success in the National U18 Cup. In the semi-finals we saw Bromley tied with Old Elthamians, the latter making their way to the Cup Final where they came a close second to Wharfedale RFC.

At U14 to U16 we continued the popular season-long format of competitions. This year we had 81 teams represented across the age grades engaging over 2000 players. The intention for the forthcoming season is to tweak the format so that all teams are engaged to the end of the season in a waterfall format rather than an elimination phase.

U14 Cup Final	Sevenoaks	19	Aylesford	7
U15 Cup Final	Canterbury	20	Blackheath	23
U16 Cup Final	Canterbury	0	Aylesford Bulls	17

U12s and U13s engaged in their waterfalls. This season 66 teams were involved (over 1,300 players). We do not produce results for these young player competitions as participation and development are the core objectives.

Additionally, the Under 13 to U18 groups enjoyed Sevens Rugby competitions with 96 teams engaged. This number was slightly down from last year due largely to the limitations of the structured season and Easter holidays. Events were well managed by host clubs.

The youth committee have attracted further volunteers and, as chair, I would like to applaud and thank the team for their dedication to managing their age grade competitions. They are a true asset to Kent CB. We have also worked hard to collaborate with our colleagues in Club Kent and DPP programmes to ensure our activities dovetail.

Of particular note, the new mini chair, Dawn Waters, has been a great success. All five age grade competitions (U7 - U11) proceeded without a hitch and were well supported by the community. In all 282 teams participated, being some 3,200 players.

Note must be made of the success of our Young Match Officials programme which is starting to produce some fine young referees. We are working closely with the group and have successfully used the group in all major youth competitions. Of particular note is Ben Wood, a member of the Kent Referees Society Junior Development Squad, who at age 19 has achieved Level 5 referee. He "commutes" from Bristol University to referee in Kent. He headed off to the Dubai 7's 2018 tournament to help further develop his refereeing where he was awarded 'Best Development Referee of the Tournament!' by the officials of Dubai 7's. We hope to encourage clubs to promote the development of young referees in parallel to those playing the youth game.

Youth rugby is entirely self-funding. This season we have made a small overall profit which we hope to put aside for use next season in support of our core objectives.

Generally, our competition managers have been well supported by the community although we continue to experience aggressive coaches where winning appears to be the only objective. This negative attitude has been matched around the playing area with an increase in the number of "5.12" discipline infringements including incidents of referee abuse by spectators and player abuse by spectators.

Accordingly, in 2019-20 the core objective of the Youth Committee will be to roll out an education campaign that all member clubs with youth sections will be expected to support and this will be matched with a zero-tolerance approach on abuse of all kinds.

Women & Girls

Due to work commitments Marc Smith unfortunately had to step down from his role as Women & Girls' (W&G) Chair at the start of the season. His previous work had set a strong foundation for the W&G game to develop and flourish.

The County Girls' trials saw 160 girls attend with the standard far higher than the previous year. The format for fixtures was changed with 3 formats of the game embraced, 15 a side, 7 a side and X7s with the Half Game rule also being applied. Overall a successful year the U15s being consistent throughout across all formats with good results with all players developing throughout the programme. The U18s are encouraged by improved results on last season and all their games were extremely close. The girls' county programme is allowing players to really develop. Nicole Wythe, 16 years old was selected to play for England U18s against an emerging Wales side at the Principality Stadium. There are 18 girls that are attending Centre of Excellence trials in July we wish them well.

Kent Women had a very positive start beating both Surrey & East Midlands to set up a winner takes all final pool game away at Sussex. Unfortunately, they just missed out losing 20-10 to a Sussex side that progressed through the competition to the final. There is now an abundance of talent within the County with a Development squad now also in place things bode well for future years.

The programme of events supported by the County allows more women and girls to enjoy the sport. Newly formatted pitch up and play events for girls have allowed players to try the game, develop their skills with like ability players and helped to improve retention. There have been multiple tournaments for all girls age groups across several formats with 30 teams attending the County 7s finals at Tunbridge Wells at the end of April. The girls U18 league was a great success and feedback and player desire has allowed us to plan for an U15 Girls league in the 2019/20 season.

U18 League Winners	Tunbridge Wells	Runners Up	Aylesford Bulls
U18 Kent Cup Winners	Tunbridge Wells	Runners Up	Dartfordians
U15 National Cup Area 3 Winners	Aylesford Bulls		

Events for women were targeted at those new to the game, allowing them to explore the contact elements, play at a level they were comfortable with and helping them work together to grow the game. This has helped support the growth of the Women's game with new teams on the horizon.

Plans for 2019/20

Girls' league at U15 & U18; Coach Development to support player development; Player Masterclasses in key positions to improve skills and ability; Playing opportunities for developing players; Festivals for 7s & X7s.

Competitions

RFU Clubs Championship

National 1: Both Blackheath and Old Elthamians were very much in the mix going into the last quarter of the campaign, along with Ampthill, Rosslyn Park and Rotherham. In the end it became a battle between Elthamians and Ampthill and the early March clash between the two is probably what decided the issue with the Hertfordshire club taking the points and going on to clinch the title leaving the SE London club to think what might have been. Blackheath's challenge also fell away in the second half of the campaign where losses to the eventual winners, plus Rosslyn Park who finished third, and a couple of mid-table sides saw them drift off the pace to eventually finish fourth.

National 2 (South): Both Canterbury and Tonbridge Juddians were in the chasing group, with Canterbury very much leading the chase from the mid-season point, whilst TJ's were largely at the tail end of the group at the halfway stage. Both clubs kept their form as first Taunton and then Henley stuttered with TJs very much coming up on the rails and in the end finished third. Canterbury, having taken the playoff place, went on to meet National 2 N club Chester who had finished behind Hull Ionians, with Canterbury taking the tie 19-10 to join Blackheath and Elthamians in National 1 next season.

London & SE Premier:

For the county's clubs, promising starts somewhat faded and both clubs ended in mid-table, with Sidcup 8th as they did last season, slipping down the table and flirting with the relegation battle. After a promising first season in the division last year, Tunbridge Wells 7th might have expected a better campaign this time around but it was their propensity to lose to sides below them and beat sides above them that saw them hovering on the edge of the danger zone for a large part of the season.

London 1 (South): What a nail-biter this division was, with just a single point separating four clubs going into the last month of the campaign; and the promotion battle literally going down to the wire with both Medway and Sevenoaks involved. The final day saw Sevenoaks take the title, but it was a gritty comeback on the last weekend by Brighton at fellow challengers Camberley, that saw them snatch the runners up spot and the promotion playoff place against Colchester. Of the county's other representatives; Dartfordians enjoyed a solid first half to the campaign before flirting with the drop zone in the third quarter of the season, eventually finishing eleventh, whilst Westcombe Park, who might have been expected to challenge for promotion were never quite on the pace as they finished in mid-table.

London 2 (South East): In a division dominated by Kent clubs, it was Beckenham that took the title at the end of March, last season they were in the running but showed greater consistency this time round to finish clear of Horsham in the playoff spot. At the bottom end of the table both of the relegation places were finalised on the same weekend with Aylesford dropping straight back down to London 3 along with bottom club Heathfield & Waldron. For the rest of the county's clubs it was mid-table mediocrity with Gravesend in the top half of the table whilst Maidstone, Dover, D&B and Thanet all struggled at some point through the campaign.

London 3 (South East): It was Kent clubs that provided the competition with Beccehamians and Vigo always in the hunt with Folkestone recovering from a very poor start to the campaign to be in with an outside chance in the closing stages of the season. In the end it was Beccehamians that secured the promotion spot on the last day of the campaign, from Folkestone who will no doubt look back at their awful start to the season, and Vigo who finished fourth.

Shepherd Neame Kent 1: Ashford took the league title at something of a canter, strengthened by returning players they proved to have too much firepower for the competition. Anchorians put in a good season to take the playoff spot against Crawley, which they subsequently won. Old Gravesendians for long periods looked like potential challengers but fell away in the second half of the season and finished in fifth place. At the bottom, the withdrawal of RBS meant just the one relegation place and in many ways it was a formality as Sheppey suffered a horrendous season to finish well adrift at the bottom and drop to Kent 1. There was very much a top and bottom section to this division with Foots Cray, Whitstable and New Ash Green very much the bottom half of the table with an 18-point separation between them and the top section occupied by the promotion chasers and mid-table, Kings College Hosp and HSBC.

Shepherd Neame Kent 2: It was newcomers Cliffe Crusaders that were the pace setters, taking top spot early in the campaign and going on to take the title in their debut season in the leagues. The battle for the other promotion place was really between three clubs with Sittingbourne falling away leaving Faversham and Lordswood to battle it out in a contest that went to the final two weekends of the campaign as the top three clubs were pitted against each other, with Faversham eventually taking the promotion place. At the bottom of the table Askean anchored the table from Greenwich, with Dartford Valley the other club in what was a clearly delineated bottom three in the table.

RFU Cups

Intermediate Cup

Early exits for Dover, Maidstone, Beckenham, and Aylesford Bulls, with three clubs - Charlton Park, Gravesend and Old Colfeians making it through to the divisional semi-finals. Charlton Park lost narrowly 20 – 21 to Letchworth with the all Kent other semi-final seeing Old Colfeians win 61 – 15 against Gravesend. Old Colfeians then had an excellent 34 – 21

win against Letchworth in the Divisional final before suffering an agonising 18 – 19 loss to Matson of Gloucestershire in the Southern Semi Final and just missing out on a Twickenham Final.

Senior Vase

Despite a good pedigree, Bromley had an early exit along with Old Dunstonians and Folkestone. Three Kent clubs did well in the Junior Vase with Sittingbourne losing to Hitchin in Round 4, 0 – 22. Ashford also made it to Round 4 before losing to Reeds /Weybridge 20 – 53. Gillingham Anchorians went as far as the divisional semi-final before losing 0 - 65 to Hitchin.

Junior Vase

In what is the largest of the RFU Cup competitions, this season saw just six Kent clubs enter a tournament that suffered badly with walkovers in the opening rounds. Bexley exited in the first round with Greenwich and Sittingbourne progressing, although Sittingbourne with some good fortune despite losing their fixture against London Media. In a second round racked with walkovers that saw only five of the sixteen scheduled matches take place, Greenwich exited leaving Anchorians, Ashford, New Ash Green and Sittingbourne to progress. New Ash Green departed in the third round with Sittingbourne going out in the quarter-finals along with a much-fancied Ashford side who lost out to Reeds Weybridge. Anchorians made the regional semi-finals, but suffered a heavy 68-0 defeat at Hitchin.

Invicta League

The league is the highest level of playing for 2nd teams in the County, so as usual a good standard of rugby is played. Sevenoaks were the winners with Canterbury runners-up with regular rugby played by all clubs. Bonus points for being close losers in games played with only one club failing to accumulate any bonus points, was an indication of the competitive nature of the league with 30 bonus points being earned during the season. At the bottom of the table we had Beckenham on 28 points, they however should be commended for getting a team out to fulfil all fixtures despite someone heavy defeats.

Metropolitan Leagues

In Premier West, Old Dunstonians 2nds came out on top with Old Elthamians 3rds finishing as runners-up with Old Alleynians 3rds, Sidcup 3rds and Southwark Lancers 2nds all in a tight finish right up to the end of April.

The Spitfire League was comfortably won by Blackheath Bandits with Beccehamian 2nds just edging out Beckenham 4ths as runners-up. Likewise, the Bishops Finger League was dominated by Old Alleynians Development team with Swanley 1st just holding off Shooters Hill 1st for second position. The Master Brew League went to the wire with Southwark Lancers 3rds just holding off Gravesend 5ths.

Rural Leagues

The season started with a healthy 45 clubs into the usual 4 divisions, plus a mild winter that assured an above number of games played. In the top league of Premier 2 East it had more than any previous season of re-arranged and forfeited games, with two sides withdrawing - East Peckham and Maidstone 2nds due to serious slumps in player base. Otherwise a good competition with Sevenoaks 3rds as winners followed by Gravesend 2nds and Deal & Betteshanger 2nds.

Late Red League was competitive with the top four teams fighting it out all season with Ashford 2nds winning followed closely by Sevenoaks 4ths and Cranbrook 2nds. Five Grain 4 East had one team withdraw as Hastings & Bexhill 3rds ran out of players so liquidated their status. Ashford 3rds won well, followed by Ashford Barbarians and Thanet Wanderers 3rds. Five Grain 4 West had runaway winners in Tonbridge Juddians 3rds followed by Canterbury 4ths and Gillingham Anchorians 2nds with 20% of matches close and the forfeit rate higher on 24%.

Thanks are due to all members of the Adult Competitions Sub-Committee along with the volunteers who work hard throughout the season on the individual leagues to provide our clubs with a competition structure.

Shepherd Neame Kent Cup, Shield, Plate, Salver & Vase

In fine weather on Sunday 28th April the Shepherd Neame Kent Finals Day was held at Charlton Park RFC who were excellent hosts. Giles Hilton, one of our wonderful sponsors Shepherd Neame, was in attendance for the presentations.

The Kent Cup was a repeat of the previous season where Old Elthamians and Sidcup produced a highly skilled game for the large crowd to witness. Old Elthamians took revenge by 55 – 29 pulling away in the final quarter to claim the Cup to the joy of their supporters.

In the Shield final, Gravesend upset the form book by edging out the host club Charlton Park 26 – 23 in a close encounter that went down to the wire. The Plate Final produced a close and entertaining game between the 2nd teams of Canterbury and Westcombe Park with the lead changing several times before Canterbury pulled clear to take the final score to 39 – 31.

Ashford secured the Vase 18 – 3 against a spirited Kings College Hospital side to complete a Cup and League double with their League win in Kent 1. In the Salver, Faversham won against higher League Southwark Lancers 17 – 15 to go with their League promotion to Kent 1, so due congratulations to them and their delighted travelling support.

Club Kent

Saracens Kent DPP (Developing Player Programme) & PDG (Player Development Group) have had a very successful 2018/19 season, with the County of Kent once again proving it has many players with the ability to progress in the sport of rugby. The DPP Management Team in the County are constantly looking to improve the programme and provide the best experience possible for all players. Unfortunately, it won't be without disappointment and tears along the way, as the programme is not suited to all players. We do see some struggle and rather than lose them from the sport completely we look to release them to club and/or school rugby with development points to work on, with a view to them being suitable candidates for the programme at a later point in their development.

The DPP has always sought to develop and nurture rugby players who have ability and talent, but require a higher and more focused level of coaching than they might receive at school and/or club rugby. In the 2018/19 season we have achieved:

- 3 Kent based U18s being offered a Saracens Senior Academy contract, with 2 of these players playing in the England U18s squad;
- 21 Kent based players being taken into the Saracens U17s/U18s for 2019/20 season;
- 10 Kent based U16s players attending Wellington in April 2019 and playing against Leicester, Harlequins and London Irish;
- 21 Kent based players involved with the Saracens U15s squad during the 2018/19 season and receiving coaching from Saracens coaches

At U13's we currently have 310 registered players, with approximately 260 to 280 of those turning up regularly for the training sessions provided by the DPP. For the 2019/20 season we are looking to take approximately 280 to 300 players into the U14's DPP. Our aim for the future of the programme in Kent is not to limit the numbers from an early age, but to keep the base as broad as possible with a view to taking players who exhibit the right attitudes, aptitude and skill set through to the Player Development Group (PDG), to develop and hone those skills further.

We now have 2 PDG centres in Kent, one based at K-Sports in Aylesford and the other at Ravenswood School, Bromley. With these two facilities comes the opportunity to double the numbers at PDG level and again keep that base as broad as possible for as long as possible. We will always look to move players into the PDG who show the ability and aptitude for this and move those who find this group too challenging back to DPP to allow them to develop further and at their own pace. The same is true at DPP. We are conscious that whilst many players want to be part of this programme, it is not appropriate for some, and they are better served at club and school rugby developing their ability at that level and re-entering the DPP at a later age. We want to retain players in this sport and not push them to a point where we risk turning them away from the game completely.

The Saracens DPP also has a vision to develop coaches as well as players. To this end we are already inviting current Kent Club Coaches from U13s age grades to coach at DPP sessions, alongside our more "seasoned" coaches. We hope that by providing this insight into the DPP to these coaches the outcomes will be:

- Coaches gain knowledge which they can take back to their clubs and share amongst their colleagues and players;
- Coaches have a better understanding of the DPP, how it works and what its aims are, which they can then share with their clubs, players and parents;
- Coaches are encouraged and empowered to continue coaching at club level in to the future and beyond the period which they might otherwise have done.

We have an amazing volunteer workforce, who have enabled these boys and the programme as a whole to progress. We would also like to extend our thanks to Kent Rugby for their help and support, with special thanks to Tracy Pettingale for the work she does particularly at the nomination stage.

Kent Referees' Society

In operational terms this has again been a very successful season for the Society. Recruitment has gone well and we have appointed 91 referees, which is on par with last season's number of 92. Our core number of referees (covering 15 or more games) has risen from 37 to 39.

In terms of individual appearances Alan Whittingham was our most appointed referee (55 games) with Kevin Willis (47 appearances) and Tom Read (44) next.

After some years as Appointments Officer, David Clent stood down early season. The Society and the game in general should congratulate and thank David for his service in this role.

The number of Appointments effectively remained static at 1373 (1366 last season). The major concern here was the number and impact of late cancellations of games with referees already appointed. This was most common across the Invicta League, Merit games and the Kent Cup. We were not informed generally of cancellations until from Tuesday to late Friday of games scheduled for Saturday.

For the second season running the Young Match Officials Group within the Society proved an outstanding success. The group now numbers 22 officials who have been appointed to a wide range of games within schools, clubs, County fixtures and tournaments. Their numbers are critical to the Society both today and in the future. This season's Youth Finals days were excellently run by Debby Park and her team and it was pleasing to see the YMO's play a key part in acting as teams of 3 for both days. Chris Smith and Clive Evans have again played a key role in managing the Group with interest from various departments within the RFU.

The Development of the YMO's and the wider referee group has been greatly helped by the Coaching and Match Observer team. This team, superbly led by Alan Crane, has adapted well to the new RFU led Performance Review process and has watched over 25% of our appointments (370 games).

Of most concern to the society has been the level of Official abuse received by individual referees. We have experienced incidents of serious levels of abuse at School, Youth and Adult games. We have seen abuse reports involving our YMO's.

Low levels of abuse continue to increase – these involve players and coaches questioning decisions and constant appealing. Coaches and spectators do not feel the need to meet the requirement to stay off the playing area. We have 2 referees who have retired from the game as referees due to this behaviour and the issue has been raised by others. We expect this to impact on our ability to meet next season’s fixtures and are currently investigating how best to allocate our resources and which games we cannot allocate referees to.

In terms of individual achievement for referees who started their refereeing with Kent, Matt Carley was appointed as referee for the 6 Nations and has been selected to go to the World Cup in Japan.

Laura Pettingale was referee for the Italy v Ireland Women’s 6 Nations, attended the World Rugby Academy in South Africa and received her RFU Blazer after officiating at the England v Barbarians Women’s game in June.

Steven Randall and Ben Wood have both been confirmed as Group referees with South East and South West Groups respectively.

Our Training Programme this season has continued to build on last year’s success. We started with pre-season fitness and fitness tests and a pre-season Conference where Andrew Small started his successful relationship with the Society and the YMO Group began to develop as a team. Training meetings throughout the season have been the best attended ever and thanks go to Nick Wickham, Steve Matthews and Tracy Pettingale for providing high quality material and presentations.

Season Awards

Cliff Booth Award for Best Newcomer – Grant Scandling

Most Improved – Tom Cox and Ollie Smith (joint winners)

This award is now to be named after John Carley for his immense contribution to the Society.

President’s Award – Chris Smith

Long Service Awards – Bill Hobba and Graeme Charters

Life Vice President – Laura Pettingale

The Whistler Trophy for the most hospitable club in Kent, as judged by referees, was awarded to Maidstone RFC at the County Dinner.

Club Development Committee

This has been a particularly challenging year for the Club Development Committee (CDC), with a new Chairman Kevin Cope taking the lead just after Christmas. We have also had to recruit a new Leadership Academy lead, Andy Dawling a new Volunteer lead, Tom Wood and more recently a new Rugby Safe lead, Trevor Hopper. The committee continues to be responsible for developing, coordinating and supporting the work that assists clubs across the county to operate in the most effective, safe and successful way. There is however becoming a greater challenge for us all, with clubs struggling to recruit and retain senior male players, leading to an increasing number of clubs failing to fulfil match commitments. Club Development has been at the centre of an extensive consultation with clubs and players throughout the season which concluded with three ‘Insight Evenings’ held in East, Mid and Metropolitan Kent. We face reduced funding support from the RFU during the 2019 / 2020 season, yet you have given us a clear indication on what areas you want county support to focus upon; (88% of clubs see Player Recruitment & Retention as their highest priority, with Volunteer Recruitment, Facilities, Coach & Referee Development and the review of Competitions also considered important areas that needed attention) We will need to establish new strategies to promote and encourage rugby to prosper within our communities. Therefore, we will aim to be more visible, integrative and communicative with our clubs, ensuring those priorities identified by you form the core of our objectives going forward. Our intention is to establish regular ‘Grassroot Rugby Forums’ in five areas across the County, the first in North West Kent was established during the latter part of the season and includes eight local struggling clubs. These eight clubs; Askeans, Bexley, Erith, Footscray, Greenwich, Orpington, Shooters Hill and Swanley are exploring opportunities to support each other to strengthen their clubs. This is the initial approach we will apply elsewhere during 2019 / 2020.

Leadership Academy

Sponsored by the RFU the year has been a great success with 23 candidates successfully graduating from the course, having attended a number of set learning days and numerous mentoring sessions. We owe particular thanks to the mentors who have supported the candidates throughout the year, and look forward to seeing those who have completed the course, go on to strengthen their clubs and perhaps take on roles within the county in future.

Facilities

Once again, this year, the County was able to commit all of its allocated £25,000 budget to clubs that successfully applied for grants under the Small Grants Programme. The County received applications from 10 clubs, totalling £35,966, of which seven clubs were awarded grants (see details below).

Applicant Club	Amount applied for	Award	Project
Beckenham	£5,000	£5,000	Clubhouse extension
Medway	£3,531	£3,500	Clubhouse extension
Whitstable	£4,000	£4,000	Refurbishment of toilet / shower facilities
Gravesend	£5,000		H&S requirements, i.e. inclusion of a new extractor to reduce smell and extract any carbon monoxide.

New Ash Green	£1,000	£1,000	New flood lights for the club's training area.
Old Colfeians	£4,000		Refurbish the female and male toilets.
Thanet Wanderers	£3,000	£3,000	To contribute towards two major projects within our club's development programme: 1) 'floodlights' for a much needed second training area; and 2) 'pitch barrier'

The quality of applications was variable, despite clubs being well-informed of the criteria that had to be met to stand any chance of making a successful application. This meant that some projects that might have had merit were not considered at all, while even some of those that did meet the application criteria, and were credible, had to be considered against others of equal or better merit, due to the grant 'pot' being limited. This was the case in point when the CDC considered the Phase 1 of this season's grant applications, given the disparity between available funds and the amount that was bid for. As such, the assessment of clubs' applications was rigorous, where three options were put forward by the CDC for the Executive Committee's consideration: A. as many applicant clubs as possible receive at least something; B. a mid-range; and C. a tough outcome, where only clubs presenting applications for priority projects, e.g. urgent maintenance / health & safety, disabled access, or improvement of facilities to accommodate women & girls rugby. The Executive Committee agreed with the CDC's recommendation to adopt a tough approach; the proposed three awards (to Beckenham, Medway and Whitstable) looked to secure the greatest long-term gains for the clubs concerned. And while the other two applications (Old Alleynians and Thanet Wanderers) had merit, they did not quite stack up against the other three. Phase 2 of this year's Programme Phase, elicited fewer applications that, together, broadly matched the available budget, making the process to assess applications (while maintaining assessment rigour) and apportion funds simpler.

Rugby Safe; this addition to the work of the CDC focuses on an overarching player safety and wellbeing programme to support clubs, schools, colleges, universities and participants at all levels of the game. It has five different strands all of which contribute and provide input to how the game should be played and managed to ensure that rugby is as safe as possible; Values & Culture, Playing Environment, Education & Development, The Game and Research. To understand how clubs are managing 'Rugby Safe' a questionnaire was circulated to clubs during May 2019, the outcomes from this survey will focus our efforts during the next season.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Audits were sent out to all clubs and we aim to visit 5% of clubs each season. We have coordinated a number of Play it Safe and In Touch courses across the County. There have once again been a few on pitch behaviour issues, these have been passed to the Kent RFU Youth Discipline Officer to address. Sadly, there has also been a rise in spectator abuse of match officials, this has led directly to the loss of three volunteer referees (impacting potentially 70+ future matches). We will be looking very closely at these type of issues in the future, with a view to consider the whether 'club' sanctions might prove to be an effective deterrent against future incidents. We must tackle this kind of behaviour together; it is everyone's responsibility to challenge and stop these unwelcome incidents. Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline & Sportsmanship.

Volunteering

Without the support and hard work of Club and County Volunteers our game could not be enjoyed and simply wouldn't grow or prosper. It has been a great pleasure to be able to facilitate opportunities to both celebrate and reward some of the amazing achievements by those remarkable people who support our game. I can report that following our call for nominations for the Kent RFU Volunteer Awards, we shortlisted finalists in nine categories, all have been invited to the Awards evening at the Shepherd Neame Brewery on 6th June 2019. These awards will be presented by Jeff Probyn, the England and Lions prop forward. In addition to this we had some excellent nominations for this year's Mitsubishi Motor Awards from across the County and celebrated with a reception for all the finalists at the Mitsubishi dealership in West Malling, with two of our finalists shortlisted for the overall national award. Surprisingly, some clubs did not take advantage of either opportunity to celebrate their volunteers, please remember we welcome nominations from all clubs, large and small. During the second half of the season I have supported the 'Grassroots Forum' work of the Club Development Committee, getting to understand the challenges some clubs face in recruiting suitable volunteers. Going forward, we hope to reach out to more U14 -U25 year olds at clubs, to hear how they might shape the game in Kent. With this in mind we aim to run a Young Rugby Ambassadors conference and explore opportunities, prior to the start of the 2019/2020 season.

Associate Secretary Report

Final Associate Members for the current season:

Total current Members 692 Deceased/Resigned 8/1 New Members 2018/19 24

Tunbridge Wells providing the greatest number of new members with 4, thereby winning the Wilf Hawkins Shield.

We have 240 members for which we either do not have an e-mail address or that held is not current which means we will not be communicating with nearly 35% of our members (eg AGM Notification). Since the announcement of the County going paperless, notification has been posted to those without email addresses and an article included in In Touch. Neither has proved particularly fruitful as I have only received 5 email addresses from members not previously held. This is a serious concern as we need to engage with our Membership to prove the worth of the subscription paid as well as our duty to inform them of events such as the AGM.

Concluding; The **Club Development Committee** further supports the work of the County Executive team through managing and supporting our Communications, Marketing and Media activities. In this respect three revised roles have been created in these areas and recruitment to these roles will begin in earnest during the early part of the 2019 /2020 season. Finally, we would like to remind clubs that where we provide opportunities to either celebrate the success of their volunteers or bid for small facility funding, we supply clear details of what is required by nominators and applicants. Supplying the required information in the correct format ensures that all submissions are considered in a fair and comparable manner, improving the chance of success. Please follow instructions carefully.

RFU Delivery Team – Kent

It has been another successful year across the county, with the key focus from the RFU staff being upon sustainability and 'helping Clubs to help themselves', as well as continuing to model best practice, we have seen a positive impact where Clubs have worked closely together themselves to share successes and discuss recent challenges faced. High on the priority list during 2018/19 has been working to ensure that the quality of experience for Senior Adult Male Players remains high, and the Rugby offer continues to keep them playing at their local Rugby Club – to enhance the Kent RFU competitions, and from player feedback, a number of Friday Night Lights events have been run throughout the County. These were held at Sidcup & Canterbury at Christmas for returning students whilst raising money for the 'For Jimmy Charity'. These were attended by over 100 players and 8 clubs. The other two took a Women's focus at Gillingham Anchorians, and another was hosted by Aylesford Bulls to give a social Rugby playing offer that proves to be popular. Due to the success of Women's recruitment last season across Kent Clubs and the increase in Clubs running their own bespoke recruitment campaigns, there have been less Inner Warrior Camps run this season compared with in 2017/18, however this has not seen a decline in Women's Rugby, quite the opposite in fact, with 13 Senior Women's XV's having entered League Rugby for 2019/20. There has also been the growth of a Women's XV at Dartford Valley RFC, along with a resurgence in numbers at Brockleians RFC. Along with continued whole Club development from a Rugby Development Officer perspective, there has been an emphasis on the Community Rugby Coaches involving themselves with key individuals from a coach development and mentoring perspective, resulting in them all taking on a number of mentees throughout the season from across Targeted Clubs such as Beccehamian RFC, Sittingbourne RUFC, Old Colfeians RFC, Dartfordians RFC, Thanet Wanderers RUFC, Folkestone RFC, Dover RFC, and Sevenoaks RFC. As a countywide team, we have focused on 24 clubs throughout 2018/19, supporting them across Club infrastructure, player recruitment, developing their engagement with the local community as well as coach, referee and volunteer development. Clubs have continued to engage with Accreditation process, using their action plans to good effect within their own environment, something we have utilised as team to work towards sustainable and achievable outcomes – it should be noted that Swanley RFC have become Accredited for the first time. We have continued to work closely with Kent RFU to ensure a collaborative approach, which we believe will be strengthened in 2019/20 with the advent of Local Rugby Planning – examples from this season, have been the working relationship between the Match Official Development Manager and the Kent Referee Society, the enhanced communication between the Competitions Team at Twickenham and the Game Development Committee, along with the co-delivery of the Kent RFU Insight Evenings from the Rugby Development Officers, Community Rugby Coaches and the Kent RFU Committees. NatWest Rugbyforce has once again been promoted across all Clubs, with the specific weekend due to take place on June 22nd and 23rd – the focus being upon helping rugby clubs attract new members and become more sustainable for the future. This season, 20 Clubs within Kent applied to be part of NatWest Rugbyforce, receiving additional funds from Twickenham to support their plan for the weekend. Canterbury RFC were also selected as the national 'Club For All' winner, resulting in the Club receiving a further grant along with additional benefits to enhance their specific project. In addition to NatWest Rugbyforce, there has been additional support provided to Clubs and Schools, specific to facility development – such as the financial and staff support that Park House RFC received at the beginning of the season due to circumstances beyond their control, as well as Bullers Wood School, linked with Beckenham RFC, having received support to purchase Rugby posts so they can have a pitch on their school site, ensuring the sustainability of Rugby within the school. Coach & Referee development has seen good success across Kent in 2018/19, with 65 courses being delivered to over 1,000 individuals across both the Club and School environment. Some of these courses have been funded with support from Kent RFU, notably Teacher/Student courses at Langley Park & St. Dunstan's. Within the CBRE All Schools program there have also been a number of courses attended by Teachers and Students, specifically at Orchards Academy, linked to Swanley RFC and at Kemnal Technology College, linked to Sidcup RFC. Others include, Royal Harbour Academy linked with Thanet Wanderers, Mascalls Academy, Marsh Academy linked to Folkestone RFC, St. Edmunds and Astor College linked to Dover RFC. On the volunteer front, the Rugby Development Officers have worked closely with Kent RFU's Volunteer Coordinator, helping deliver the Leadership Academy launch, and being involved in the selecting of nominees for the Kent RFU Volunteer Awards. They also delivered the Mitsubishi Motors Awards Volunteer Evening, supported by key Kent RFU individuals. On the Young Volunteer front, we have worked to engage those Young Rugby Ambassadors across Kent, and will continue to do so in support of potential new initiatives devised in the Local Rugby Plan for 2019/20. Lastly we would like to thank all of the volunteers across Kent, for all of the time and effort they continue to commit to growing the game of Rugby, both on and off the field; their work is truly appreciated and is a key factor in the growth of Rugby throughout the county.

Notices

Subscriptions

These are due on 31st October 2019:

Member Clubs £50 Individual Associates £10 Corporate Associates £250 Associated Clubs £20

Please ensure that your club's standing order is for the correct amount as some have not amended it to reflect the current subscription rate.

International Tickets 2019/20

All fully paid up Associates of the County may apply for tickets to England's matches at Twickenham, however such tickets are provided on the condition that they are for the sole use of Associates and their guests. Recipients will be asked to acknowledge their acceptance of the RFU's terms and conditions for the sale of tickets, and any transgression will be the subject of disciplinary action by the County.

All those who have previously applied for tickets will be contacted. Any other members who wish to be added should contact Tony Power direct by email: athpower@btinternet.com or by post: 7 Foxgrove Avenue, Beckenham, BR3 5BA

Minutes of the Annual Financial General Meeting held at the Holiday Inn, Wrotham Heath on 12th December 2017 at 7.00pm

The Meeting was chaired by Roger Clarke

Clubs represented: Brockleians, Askeans, Old Colfeians, Old Elthamians,
Gillingham Anchorians, Tunbridge Wells, Aylesford

Apologies: David Metcalf (Individual Member), Graham Smith (Askeans),
Simon Doherty (RBS), Margaret Kukoyi (Vice President),
Steve Homewood (Askeans/Old Shootershillians),
Vincent Bramhall (Penguins), Jarrod Lawrence (Dartfordians),
Giles Hilton (Canterbury), Andy Stanley (Askeans/Blackheath)

1. To receive the Company's Financial Statement for the year ended on 30th June 2018 and the Auditors' report thereon and to make any suitable order in respect thereof.

Kent RFU's financial statement had been published on the Kent RFU website and circulated via email to all clubs and those Individual Members with a registered email address.

The Treasurer commented that although we had planned for a budgeted £15,000 - £20,000 loss for the financial year, the financial markets performed such that some of our investments turned a profit and with this and prudent financial management KCRFU had broken even for the year. This despite our spending significantly increasing on the Small Grant Facility funding element.

The Treasurer reported that 2 questions had been received prior to the meeting:

1a) It appeared that despite the County charging clubs to attend the Annual Awards Dinner, the costs had increased from previous years. The Treasurer explained that the balance over the net dinner cost of £3,403 was the expenditure on all KCRFU Awards plus the purchase of a new stock of ties at £1,150, an occurrence that seems to be required every 4 years.

1b) The expenditure on Governance and Compliance of £1180 in excess of the previous year was due to the fact that figures had been added from the Game and Club Development Committees, travel and hire of facilities: ie this was now an over-arching heading.

There being no further questions arising the adoption of the accounts was proposed by Roger Clarke (Tunbridge Wells RFC) and seconded by David Clent (Old Elthamians RFC). Copies of these were then signed by the Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

2. To hear any other relevant financial matter for the consideration of the County Committee during the ensuing year, but on which no voting shall be allowed.

Roger Clarke explained that an email had been received prior to the meeting from Andy Stanley, following the decision by the county to bring all committee's bank accounts under the umbrella of the main Kent County RFU account. This reflected the RFU's wish that CB's follow enhanced standards of governance from a financial standards and management point of view. Roger Clarke explained that he had attended the recent Competition Committee meeting with the Chairman of the Game Development Committee. At this meeting this subject had been discussed in detail and full explanations

given as to the rationale behind this. It had also been emphasised that the specific Leagues would continue to nominate how the monies would be spent. Duplication of funding would be avoided; a transparent audit trail would be in place and therefore financial protection given to all involved. Andy Stanley had not attended this meeting and Roger Clarke would reply to his email with this information.

There being no further relevant financial matters the meeting ended at 7.15 pm.

Election of Officers & Committee for Season 2019/20

Officers

President	J E C Nunn
Hon. Secretary	S C Taylor
Hon. Treasurer	P J Dessent
Immediate Past President	C R Blackham

Committee

Office held in 2018/2019

N T Armstrong	Rural Clubs Representative
D Attwood	London & SE Competitions Sub-Committee Representative
G Bunnage	Metropolitan Clubs Representative
R J H Clarke	Chair, Executive Committee & RFU Representative
D A Clent	Chair, Game Development Committee
S Corcoran	Metropolitan Clubs Representative
K Cope	Chair, Club Development Committee
A Dawling	Chair, Leadership Academy
J Day	Chair, Adult Competitions Sub-Committee
N Fray	CB Facilities Co-Ordinator & Succession Planning Manager
A J Gwilliam	CB Director of Rugby
D V Haigh	Rural Clubs Representative
S K Homewood	Hon. Associates Secretary
S D Neaves	Rural Clubs Representative
O Smith	Safeguarding Officer
D Park	Chair, Youth Rugby
D Phimister	Chair, Coaching & Refereeing
A T H Power	Hon Assistant Treasurer & International Ticket Secretary
T Read	CB Volunteer Co-Ordinator
N Wiltshire	Chair, Club Kent
Vacant	Chair, Women and Girls

Kent Rugby is grateful for the support received from



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APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED RULE AMENDMENTS TO BE PUT FORWARD AT THE KENT RFU AGM 2019

The Rules of the KCRFU have not been reviewed since they were last published in 2000. The Executive Committee proposes to make a number of amendments to the Rules, subject to members' approval at the AGM, that are designed to:

- Reflect the repeal of the Industrial & Provident Societies Act 1965, under which the KCRFU was registered, and which has been replaced by the Cooperative & Community Benefits Act 2014 [there is no need for the KCRFU to re-register under the 2014 legislation.];
- Amend the process by which AGMs will, in future, be notified to the membership (section 7.2);
- State explicitly the principle of 'one member, one vote' as AGMs (section 7.5)
- Create a new section (8) relating to the Election of Officers;
- Require the Executive and all other committees of the KCRFU to comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and to have controls and risk management procedures in place (section 11.4);
- Require all individuals appointed to any role within the KCRFU to act with honesty, probity and in the best interests of it (sections 12.5 & 12.6);
- Require the KCRFU explicitly to undertake responsible and prudent financial planning and control (section 15.1);
- State that the opportunity for members to apply for international match tickets is conditional upon the payment in full of an annual subscription, at the prevailing rate (section 16.3)
- Amend the Registered Address of the KCRFU (section 19.1);
- Require that the CB adheres to personal data protection legislation (section 22.1)
- Require that the KCRFU's accounts are published on its website (section 25);
- Require the CB, in the event of either a solvent or insolvent wind down, to comply with all relevant legislation (section 27); and
- Set out transparently the Executive and various Sub-Committees' Terms of Reference (annex).