

KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT APRIL 2023



1. TACKLE HEIGHT UPDATE

Clubs should have received today details on the decision taken by the RFU Council following the consultation exercise conducted with the game - you will find the release **here** on our website. This statement includes a summary of the data compiled by You Gov as a result of the consultation and shared with you earlier in 2023.

I understand that there will still be some misgivings in relation to the law variations on the tackle height but I insisted prior to the vote at Council that we had undertakings on an empathetic rather than rigid approach to officiating the new law variation by officials for a period after introduction to ensure players and officials work together to make this variation work.

The RFU will also ensure that the effects on the game and the incidence of accelerated head injury are closely monitored during season 23-24.

In the meantime we will work at KCRFU to distribute the guidance and information materials to all of our clubs in order for the changes to be implemented by coaches and players in the time available between now and the commencement of the season. We will also work with the Kent Referees Society to ensure that any club who wants to run a training session with a Society Referee may be able to do so to work on tackle height variations and any other aspect of the laws which you would like to build in.

We will also advocate any pre-season games being used to further player and coach understanding of how our Referees and others will interpret these changes.

There will be a range of RFU sessions run at Kent clubs and these will be published as soon as the final list has been approved.

Thank you to all those who have been involved in getting to this point and please continue to ask questions make points for further consideration on how we handle this and get involved in the monitoring if you are not currently part of the Community Rugby Injury Prevention Survey (CRISP). More information will follow on this.



Finally there are many positives to this years participation levels with Kent Rural Merit Tables for instance achieving an 81% game completion rate and with a number of clubs threatened with closure being moved out of this category. In addition the work carried out by Kevin Cope Chair of the Club Development Committee and Mark Finnis our RfU Club Developer have proved successful in helping a number of clubs who have experienced problems with player numbers but there is still much to do and our Executive want to ensure that the implementation of these tackle height changes are delivered in a manner which minimises losses of players to the Adult Male game.

Elsewhere Age Grade numbers have stood up well at our 43 clubs with Age Grade sections, Womens Rugby looks set in Kent to set a record for League entries in season 23-24 and Girls Rugby is holding its own regarding playing numbers. This does not, however, down-play the continued work we must put into Schools liaison, Migration of players from Age Grade to Senior Rugby, building up the Metropolitan Merit Table completion rate and the build back we must continue to work on in the Adult Male game in general.

Look forward to seeing some of you at the County Championship games or at the County Awards Dinner.

Roger Clarke
Chairman of Kent County RFU and RFU Councillor

2. KENT COUNTY RFU PUBLISHES DISCIPLINARY PANEL JUDGEMENTS

The KCRFU announced in its January 2023 Information Sendout that it will publish the outcomes of both adult and Age Grade Disciplinary Panel hearings. The list of cases is now available on the KCRFU's website. The published information broadly adheres to that which is published by the RFU.

Naming adult players found guilty of an offence

As part of this process, we also said that we will publish the names of all adults found guilty of the offence(s) alleged against them. After further discussion we decided for the time being not to publish the names of individuals found guilty of offences. However, we should not wish to lose the option of introducing it as a general deterrent at some stage, should it be required and we are aware that the RFU is considering requiring CBs from next season to publish the names of individuals (at all levels of the game) who are found guilty of Match Official Abuse.

If you would like to read more information on this, please read the full notice on our website. [HERE](#)

3. INVITATIONS TO KCRFU ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Our annual awards dinner this year will be held on Thursday 25th May once again at the Ashford International Hotel. The deadline for confirmation of places is 5th May.



As per usual 2 attendees for league winners and runners up will attend for free. It will be great if our rugby community can come together for this evening and celebrate the achievements of our teams in Kent. Please respond to the invitations that have been sent out asap to assist with planning the event.

Please note that last year, some clubs accepted the free invitations and failed to turn up. This is very costly to Kent County RFU so please ensure your nominated attendees are informed.

4. ARE YOU AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF KENT COUNTY RFU?

If you are, you are in with a chance to win 1 of 5 free tickets to the Annual Awards Dinner. The prize will include a ticket for you and a guest to attend the County Dinner on Thursday 25th May 2023 at the Ashford International Hotel.

If you are not a Member, it is not too late to be entered into the draw. Simply sign up now by clicking on the link below. By becoming a Member, as well as being entered into the free draw, you will be entitled to:

Apply for tickets to England Home matches

Have your voice heard by attending and vote at all AGMs, EGMs and Financial AGMs

Receive regular updates about Kent County Rugby and the game.

Ability to access the Annual Awards Dinner

Have that warm, self-satisfying feeling that you are helping to get our great game spread across the County amongst all age levels and abilities.

ALL THIS FOR JUST £20 PER YEAR, 1st September to 31st August

If you were previously registered as a Member but only paying £10, send an email to Steve Homewood at membership@kent-rugby.org to get your unique link.

5. SOUTH EAST REPRESENTATION PLAY AT TWICKENHAM

Two Kent teams have been invited to represent London and the South East in a tournament at the national stadium, Twickenham on Bank Holiday Monday, 1 May.

Congratulations to East Peckham & Paddock Wood 1st Team and Dartfordians Ladies, who will be running out on the hallowed turf, to play against clubs from three other regions.



WE'RE OFF TO
TWICKENHAM
COME AND SUPPORT US

EAST PECKHAM & PADDOCK WOOD RFC
are playing at Twickenham on 1st May Bank Holiday

- Free Entry for all supporters
- Free Parking by the North Stand
- Food and Drink concessions available
- First Game 10:45 KO
- contact eppwrfc@gmail.com for more info

The clubs' respective officials will also be given special access to the RFU members' room, and free entry (and free parking by the North Stand) to the stadium for some 100 spectators and supporters.

Match Schedule can be viewed [HERE!](#)

6. VOLUNTEER AWARDS 2022-2023



Thank you to everyone who nominated volunteers in the 2022-23 Honda and Kent Volunteer Awards.

The reviews are currently taking place and, when complete, emails will be going out to individuals to invite them to the awards evenings. Similar to last year, there will be two evenings held to celebrate our volunteers - more details to follow.

Pamela Kilmister
Volunteer Officer

7. KENT COUNTY WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP BEGINS

The Kent County Women's Squad has begun training for this season's campaign, led by Peter McAllister and Andy Miller. The squad is comprised of 30 women from across the county, drawn from a variety of clubs and levels. Training has been positive, and the squad is looking ahead to the three fixtures in May.



It would be wonderful to have as many supporters as possible along to the games, to cheer the team on and really utilise the home advantage for the two home fixtures.

Sunday 7th May - Sussex v Kent at Brighton RFC @12pm

Sunday 14th May – Kent v Essex at Aylesford Bulls RFC @3pm

Sunday 21st May – Kent v Hampshire at Medway RFC @3pm

Come along to cheer the team on and celebrate the growth of the women's game in the county. We look forward to seeing you there!

8. KENT COUNTY MEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP BEGINS

The men also start their campaign with Tom Stradwick lead coach and new coach David Marshall who is a welcome addition to the County set up.



6th May – Kent v Hampshire at Medway RFC at 3pm

13th May- Kent v Somerset at Medway RFC at 2pm

20th May – Cornwall v Kent at Camborne RFC at 3pm TBC

9. KCRFU APPROACH TO ASSESS FESTIVAL, TOUR AND CAMP APPLICATIONS IN LIGHT OF PROVEN BREACHES OF RFU REGULATIONS 15 AND 21

The CB strives always to ensure that as many players as possible have the opportunity to play rugby as safely as possible, including to experience that through tours, training & development camps and festivals. Our objective is always to facilitate and increase participation in and enjoyment of our game in all of its forms. However, to ensure that this can happen, both the CB and clubs must, together, adhere to the Regulations that underpin our game, such that player (especially, young player) welfare and safety remain paramount.

Regrettably, there have been recent incidences of clubs that are either under investigation for alleged breaches or have been disciplined for actual breaches of RFU Regulation 15 and 21. These clubs have also applied to host or have been invited by the KCRFU to host its Age Grade festivals.

Such an approach could be seen as rewarding poor behaviour by clubs and is incompatible with the aims of Age Grade player safety.

To ensure better awareness and compliance with both Regulations, the KCRFU intends, with immediate effect, to make compliance a whole club issue, whereby, proven failings by a club, whether they stem from junior and minis sections or the senior sections, impact the whole club.

Underpinning this objective is the principle that it is the whole club which is responsible for the safety and welfare of its younger players. As such, the senior section of the club bears as much responsibility as its junior and minis sections in ensuring compliance with all RFU Regulations. It follows, therefore, that although disciplinary sanctions

may fall on culpable individuals and the club as an entity, the consequences of a lack of compliance should fall on the whole club, too.

See Kent County policy for approval of events **HERE** on our news page on our website.

The policy, we believe, provides a proportionate and reasonable approach to mitigate further the CB's concerns surrounding non-compliance with Regulations 15 and 21, setting minimum 'barriers' to approval for certain activities which are distinct and separate from the disciplinary process.

These proposals and their effectiveness will be kept under regular and frequent review.

Nigel Fray
Hon. Secretary & Director of Governance

10. WOODEN SPOON FEMALE VETS TEAM SELECTION
Recruitment for the 2023 Kent Vets ladies' team for Vets Fest on 30th September at Moseley RFC.

For any further information, please contact Sandra 07768 182434

SAVE THE DATE RUGBY VETS JOIN OUR TEAM

KENT NEEDS YOU! Women's Squad



30th Sep @ Moseley RFC
Over 35 (or thereabouts)



Register your interest @

[https://woodenspoon.org.uk/wooden-spoon-vets-fest-](https://woodenspoon.org.uk/wooden-spoon-vets-fest-2023/)

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