

# KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT JUNE 2023



## 1. KENT COUNTY AGE GRADE END OF SEASON UPDATE

The Kent competition was generally successful, and some tweaks to improve it will be implemented next season. Thanks for all your feedback.

The sevens competition was well attended, and all age groups seemed to enjoy the day. Congratulations to all trophy winners and group winners in both competitions.

I have enjoyed watching a number of well fought games this season, and I look forward to seeing a few more in 23/24.

Turning to next season, links to the entry forms for all age groups are now live on the Kent website. **{HERE}**.

Following a successful trial of the electronic match card system on GMS, all age groups will be using this system next season.

Some things to be aware of:-

1. Team names entered into the application form need to be available on GMS for your team. Speak to your GM S officer at your club to ensure this is in place before the start of the next season. Help is available via the GMS hub online.
2. Team officials will need access to the competition modular GMS (granted by your club's GMS officer) and access rights to add scores. This can be done now.
3. All players will need to be registered on GMS by their parents (or the club in extremis) before they can be picked for any team using the electronic match card. This is a requirement of regulation 15 in any event and should be done every season. Unregistered players will not be allowed to play.

The competition rules have been amended for next season and can be found **{HERE}**



But before we get to next season's competition, we have summer activities to enjoy. The RFU have published the summer activity framework, which should be followed if any summer rugby is planned. The framework can be found **{HERE}**

With the new tackle laws coming into play next season, the summer framework provides guidance on how this can be trained and coached so we are all in a good space at the beginning of next season. There is also a tackle height resource pack which can be found **{HERE}**

The RFU has also published next seasons amendments to regulation 15. We have clarified the understanding of some of the regulatory challenges we've had in the past season. The amendments can be found **{HERE}**

### **Playing out of age grade and playing adult rugby**

Both of the above require constituent body approval, which is managed online via forms on the Kent RFU website. this is not to be confused with the RFU online forms, which came into being after the Kent online process was in place. there is detailed guidance via pop up information boxes and links to other documents to assist in completion. please provide as much information as possible to enable the approval team to make an early assessment.

Once approval is granted, you will receive a notice of approval sent to the original applicant, without which players should not play out of their age grade.

Clubs wishing 17 year olds to play at our rugby should seek club approval via the online forms prior to applying for player approval. The approval process for next season will open on 1st July 2023. applications made prior to this date will be deleted.

I wish all of you a restful summer and I look forward to another successful rugby season in Kent starting in the autumn.

**Alan Erskine**  
**Youth Chair KCRFU**

## 2. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN WELL BEING PROJECT

With four clubs now on-boarded with the mental wellbeing pilot across Kent, we are looking to recruit potentially another 3-4 clubs this coming season.

The pilot scheme has 3 steps, and clubs can be flexible in their approach depending on the size of the club and demographics. Part 1 of the model we look to implement is access to Free Mental Health First Aid training (funded by Kent), so you have MHFA who are then accessible across your club, part 2 is access to mental health charities and partner organisations that we already have established working partnerships with, and they, in turn, offer additional support to your players and volunteering membership.

Kent also then offers mentorship to get you started with the pilot from our wellbeing lead Ali Boyd. Over the next 3-4 months, we will also be in receipt of Kent County plaques endorsing those clubs that have joined up as "Mental Health Friendly Clubs." If you'd like to learn more, then please get in touch with Ali via [well-being@kent-rugby.org](mailto:well-being@kent-rugby.org)

"We are delighted with the motivation and dedication, clubs and volunteers have shown to be part of this initiative, and we want to thank them for wanting to offer holistic support to their players and volunteers off the pitch, as much as on it –Ali Boyd "

**Ali Boyd**  
**Well Being - Kent Rugby**

## 3. GAME ON FOR MERIT TABLES

In January 2023, we announced that the Kent County RFU (KCRFU), in partnership with Shepherd Neame and the RFU, was introducing a trial incentivisation package to encourage 'grassroots' rugby in the county. The package, which is player-centric, we hoped would support clubs in playing matches, building team spirit, maintaining player morale, and retaining players.

The scheme we hoped would encourage teams playing in Kent Merit tables to complete matches at the first time of



asking during the second half of the 2023-23 season and ensure as many players as possible were participating in games.

The most important aspect was to play rugby, irrespective of results and positions in leagues, a return to a more Corinthian approach to our game. The 'incentivisation rewards' offered were decided on the completion rates of matches, with walkovers and postponed matches having a negative effect on weighting.



Where teams found themselves short of players, the 'Game On' variations were encouraged and available to provide an enjoyable, rewarding, yet still competitive rugby match. Those clubs adopting 'Game On' to play receive additional rewards.

With our Rural and Metropolitan merit table matches now complete, we are pleased to announce the outcome of our scheme;

Winners of Brewery Tours (20 players) are Sheppey 2nd XV and Thanet Wanderers 2nd XV.



Winners of Team meals (20 players) are Sittingbourne 2nd XV, Deal & Bettshanger 2nd XV, and Maidstone 2nd XV.

18 Rural teams will also receive two crates of ale, together with 5 Metropolitan teams.

‘Game On’ rewards of two restaurant vouchers for an individual player (selected by their team) and their partner will be received by; 8 Rural and 10 Metropolitan sides.

We have begun contacting successful clubs and working with Shepherd Neame over the next few weeks to ensure the recipients get these rewards and are exploring the possibility of providing a similar scheme during the 2023/2024 season.

**Kevin Cope**  
**Club Development Chair- Kent Rugby**

#### 4. KENT COUNTY AGM

Notice is hereby given that KCRFU Annual General Meeting will be held at Gillingham Anchorians RFC, Darland Avenue, Gillingham, ME7 3AN on Wednesday 19th July 2023, 7:00 pm registration for a 7:30 pm start. The members of the County Executive Committee hope that you will be able to attend. There will be a light buffet provided..

Anybody wishing to attend, RSVP to [office@kent-rugby.org](mailto:office@kent-rugby.org)

The annual report and agenda will be circulated at the beginning of July to all Club Honsecs and individual members.

**Nigel Fray**  
**Kent County RFU Honsec**

#### 5. RUGBY SAFE UPDATE

The Rugby Safe Manager at each club is a golden role, GMS contact details are still not up to date for many clubs. This was raised by numerous CBs at the National Rugby Safe Conference. It is a requirement under regulations that clubs keep these details up to date.

The London Heart Bursary scheme for AED'S will continue

for the next season (23/24). Any clubs wishing to purchase an AED can contact me - Kent County RFU Rugby Safe Manager Peter Thompson, for further details.

[rugbysafe@kent-rugby.org](mailto:rugbysafe@kent-rugby.org)



The Howdens Risk Assessment has just been released for season 23/24. The link for this is below

<https://howdenriskassessment.co.uk/rugby/lookup-club>



All clubs need to complete this risk assessment, which should be completed prior to the start of training for the 23/24 season. Once completed, please can a copy be forwarded to the Rugby Safe email ([rugbysafe@kent-rugby.org](mailto:rugbysafe@kent-rugby.org)). This will enable me to monitor who has completed before the RFU, inform me, and offer support to any clubs that need it. Failure to complete the risk assessment could ultimately affect a club's insurance.

A large amount of work has been carried out in relation to the lowering of tackle height and concussion management. Each club is being encouraged to appoint a ‘tackle champion’ in relation to this change.

Many clubs still appear to not be sure about the GRTP process, which is due to change at the beginning of season 23/24 to come into line with recent government guidance on the management of head injuries within sport (GRAS).



The ProActive app (developed in conjunction with the RFU) now has additional functions that allow Reportable incidents to be reported immediately within the app. There is also an additional section been added for the management of concussion. The link below will take you to a demo site so that you are able to see the functionality of this great app.

<https://demo.proactivereporting.com/>

First Aid training is still an issue within the CB, and therefore, a funding stream is being made available for next season so that each club may apply for a £55 voucher towards the cost of the course for their club.

Finally, England RFU has been working closely with the charity LooseHeadz with regard to mental health and wellbeing within Rugby. More information is to follow regarding avenues of help and support being made available to our community, and additional resources are being added to the rugby safe pages on the RFU website.

**Peter Thompson**  
**Rugby Safe, Kent Rugby**

## 6. VOLUNTEER AWARDS 2022-2023

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



The two awards evenings held at Blackheath RFC on Wednesday, 28th June, and Sheppey RFC on Thursday 29th June were great evenings where we saw lots of valued volunteers receive recognition for their selfless contributions to their clubs and the game of rugby.

This couldn't happen if it wasn't for those that nominated the volunteers throughout the county - photos of the evenings and details of the award recipients will be posted on our website soon.

**Pamela Kilmister**  
**Volunteer Recognition, Kent Rugby**

## 7. CRISP - INJURY SURVEILLANCE

The Community Rugby Injury Surveillance and Prevention (CRISP) Project team is currently inviting men's (levels 3-9) and women's club 1st teams (levels 2-6) to register to take part in season 2023-24.

The project is managed by a team at the University of Bath and is funded by the RFU as part of RugbySafe research. More information is available at:

<https://keepyourbootson.co.uk/rugbysafe-toolkit/research/>

The CRISP project is the tool by which any potential changes in injury patterns in the community game will be monitored following the lowered tackle height for 2023-24. A large sample of injury data is crucial in allowing us to understand any changes in injury patterns, and therefore this is the opportunity for clubs to provide the data needed

to feedback this information to the rugby community. Participating teams are asked to record the following:

### Pre- and early-season:

- Brief details on age, weight, and height for 1st team squad players and individual consent from each player (consent signed via an online link by players).

### During the season:

- Brief details for every 1st team match (score, weather, opponents, pitch surface), whether or not any injuries were sustained.
- Details on any 1st team match injuries causing the player to miss one match or more (8 days or greater time-loss).

Data is recorded via the CRISP online data entry system or through a newly developed CRISP reporting module which will be available within the Proactive reporting system (if your club uses this).

Participating teams will receive a report of their team's match injuries compared with the averages for teams of a similar playing level.

### How to register your club

To nominate your team(s) or for any further information, please go to:

[https://bathreg.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/crisp\\_2023-24\\_registration](https://bathreg.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/crisp_2023-24_registration)

**INJURY DATA WANTED!**  
**COMMUNITY RUGBY INJURY SURVEILLANCE AND PREVENTION PROJECT (CRISP): 2023-2024**

The CRISP Project team is hungry for injury data to help us develop our understanding of injuries across all levels of the English community game.

We seek data from the following teams:

- > Men's Community - National, Regional & Counties Levels
- > Women's Community - Championship & National Challenge Levels
- > DPP & Club Age Grade Girls
- > Club Age Grade Boys
- > Schoolboy

Submitting your injury data helps us to improve player safety.

It allows us to understand the:

- ✓ Impact of the lowered tackle height for 2023/24 on injuries
- ✓ Differences in injuries across age groups
- ✓ Differences between the men and the women's game

**LEARN MORE. REGISTER YOUR TEAM. SUBMIT YOUR DATA.**