

IV. Correspondence

Halton Farnworth are to host the Student Challenge Games on Sunday Feb 8th and as all players are requested to assist on the day requested a free weekend for their teams at all age groups. This request was approved.

Wigan St Patricks' requested permission from the League for their U15's team to tour Spain between 22nd - 30th May 2009 playing two games against SM Pia in the South of France whilst they are there. This request was approved.

The League had received notification that all our teams, bar two, were now insured via the BARLA insurance policy. The two Clubs concerned were notified and subsequently liaised with BARLA and made the necessary arrangements meaning that all our Clubs are now insured.

V. Referee Appointments Coordinator's Report

David again was forced to reiterate that Club's MUST ensure that Match Official's are contacted as early as possible and NOT to leave contact to the last minute. If Referees aren't contacted they will almost definitely make alternative arrangements and be unavailable to officiate.

VI. U13's Fixture Secretary's Report/Registration Issues

The 2nd Round of the NW Counties Cup draw was made on the big screen and resulted in the following ties to be played on the 18th Jan 2009:

Widnes St Maries v Chorley Panthers
Langworthy Reds v West Bank Bears
Leigh East v Golborne Parkside
Leigh Miners v Burtonwood
Clockface v Wigan St Patricks
Folly Lane v Haydock Warriors
Blackbrook v Saddleworth or Oldham St Annes
Portico Vine or Leyland Warriors v Thatto Heath Crusaders

II. U14's Fixture Secretary's Report/Registration Issues

Paul explained that it had been quite quiet due to the recent bad weather, however, the National Cup is being played on the 18th Jan with the draw already being posted on the website. The following ties & byes affecting our region's teams:

Dewsbury Moor v **Thatto Heath Crusaders**
Wigan St Judes v Kells
Chorley Panthers v **Bold Miners**
Smawthorne Panthers v **Latchford Albion Unicorns**
Ince Rose Bridge v Hunslet Parkside
Blackbrook v **Eccles & Salford**
Halton Farnworth Hornets v **Orrell St James**
Leigh East v **West Bank Bears**
Pilkingtons Recs v West Hull
Rylands Sharks v Castleford Panthers

Byes

Crosfield Cobras
Leigh Miners
Oldham St Annes
Saddleworth Rangers

VIII. U15's Fixture Secretary's Report/Registration Issues

Not a lot to report due to the lack of games but the Cup Draw for the NW Counties Cup Preliminary & 1st Round was made on the big screen which resulted in the following ties to be played on the 18th January and 1st February 2009:

Preliminary Round (18th Jan)
Rochdale Mayfield v Shaw Rhinos
Cadishead Rhinos v Saddleworth Rangers

Round 1 (1st February)
Cadishead Rhinos or Saddleworth Rangers v Hindley
Chorley Panthers v Langworthy Reds
Culcheth Eagles v Burtonwood Bulldogs
Folly Lane v Rochdale Mayfield or Shaw Rhinos
Leyland Warriors v Crosfield Cobras
Moss Bank Bulldogs v Fitton Hill & Hathershaw Bulldogs
Shevington Sharks v West Bank Bears
Widnes St Maries v Latchford Albion Unicorns

IX. Transfer Committee's Report

Paul Mitchell explained that due to the break there were some outstanding transfers in the system which he was going to chase this week to get the players playing a.s.a.p.

Margaret Byrne explained the procedure regarding appeals to BARLA and that cheques for £40 were to come to this League and we will then forward payment with all the relevant paperwork to the independent appeals panel.

X. BARLA Representative's Report

Sam Armstrong explained that the subject of which direction the League takes regarding membership of BARLA is to be discussed and an SGM with vote will take place. Representatives at the meeting were asked to return to their clubs, discuss the issue and vote at next months meeting. It is hoped that whichever way the vote goes a clear Mandate to the League's Management Committee will be given to implement whatever action is required.

There will be 4 options:

1. Re-apply for Full membership of BARLA and have voting rights via them.
2. Remain as Associate Members of BARLA with no voting rights via them
3. Remain as Associate Members of BARLA but register our votes via the RFL's Community Boards' "Other Leagues"
4. Leave BARLA completely and seek representation and voting rights solely via the RFL's Community Boards' "Other Leagues".

A full discussion will take place prior to the vote so that everyone fully understands the implications of each alternative.

The Youth & Junior Congress, facilitated by the RFL and attended by almost all of the UK Youth & Junior leagues, is to meet on Tuesday 27th January at Bradford Bulls' Coral Stand and Sam, Jackie and Margaret will be attending. We have raised Summer/Winter Rugby as an agenda item

and look forward to the views of other Leagues' representatives. Some Leagues already play Summer rugby, predominantly the "Development" areas of Wales, Scotland, The Midlands, The North East and London/The South whilst in other, more established areas like Humberside, they seemingly have successfully trialled younger age-groups already and their experience will be invaluable.

XI. Disciplinary Chairman's Report

Hearing Notifications were issued to several clubs for cases which were to be heard on Thursday 22nd January at Golborne Parkside Sports & Community Club.

Verdict Notifications were issued to several clubs for cases which were heard on Thursday 17th December at Golborne Parkside Sports & Community Club.

XII. Any Other Business

The Treasurers' Report showed that the League had a balance of £11984 at the time of the meeting.

Jackie paid back outstanding monies to those who had previously paid their National Cup entries to the League as these were now being collected via the District Leagues.

Clubs were asked by Jackie and Jayne Bissett to go back and check that the details on the website are still correct and that the named person is still the person who correspondence is to be sent to as claims and complaints had been received that the correct personnel at the club's were not always being made aware of issues/fines etc. The League use the contact details issued to us and recorded on the website so if you do not inform us of change it is inevitable that the wrong person is contacted. This will not be accepted for non-payment of fines ... if it's wrong let us know a.s.a.p.!!

The League welcomed Peter Brooke, the RFL's North West Match Officials Development Officer based at Warrington Collegiate who spoke to the meeting about his role and his desire to see a closer working relationship between Clubs & Match Officials. He proposed that this could be helped by:

- Offering clubs a free training session for anything from 30 minutes to an hour session, where he and members of the local Referees Society will come down to the club and run a training session.
- Looking at various different examples of game play on DVD and practical examples from the referees.
- Arranging mixed workgroups which will be good for team building whilst learning more about the sport and understanding the role of the Match Official.
- Club members being able to meet Match Officials first hand in a relaxed environment and also being able to get to hear their views on various points of play.
- Sessions which can be run at any club who would like to assist in the venture (timing wise any time between 7pm and 9pm)

- Doing all of the above at no cost to the Clubs.

Who Can Attend?

Peter explained that the sessions will be open to anyone from the Club be it players, coaches, staff or parents.

Outcomes and Opportunities

- Peter would look to get both the National and Local Media involved as this will show an extra element to how Clubs and Match Officials are working together to improve the overall standard of the game.
- From a club point of view, Coaches, players and parents will hopefully be able to better understand the laws of the game and the role of the Match Official.
- From a Match Officials' perspective it will, in turn, give them a much greater understanding as to why players do certain things & possibly how they should view situations differently.
- Peter is very keen to have Match Officials meet the players and learn more about the players thoughts on the field.
- Anybody attending will, if they desire, also have the opportunity to attend the Foundation Match Officials Course.

How Do We Arrange A Session?

Clubs simply need to contact Peter by e-mail at peter.brooke@rfl.uk.com or by phone on 07738 131790 and he will make the necessary arrangements.

Peter, like David Lowe, raised his concern that Match Officials were, on some occasions, not being contacted until the Saturday night before a game ... this is far too late and is likely to lead to the Official not being available for your game. He too asked that Clubs please contact them as early as possible.

Referees were being kept up to date regarding kit checks especially in light of the blades issue ... please check your studs regularly and replace damaged ones to prevent injuries.

Finally, Peter highlighted that practical and constructive feedback about referees is very useful and is used as a learning tool by the various Societies' Development Officers so please feel free to pass any such information on to him.

John Wroe of Breakaway Tours gave a presentation about the extremely successful Scarborough Festival and other initiatives & offers related to the Challenge Cup Final weekend which his company can offer Clubs and individuals. Brochures and DVD's were handed out and anyone who wishes to receive further details can either visit Breakaway Tours website at www.breakawaytours.co.uk, contact them on Tel 01706 715 808, Fax 01706 715 984 or, alternatively, by e-mail at: info@breakawaytours.co.uk

The date of the next meeting at Golborne Parkside will be the 4th February 2009 commencing at 8.30pm.