



North West Counties 13 – 15 Junior Amateur Rugby
Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting 6th May 2009
Committee Members: Margaret Byrne (Chair)
 Sam Armstrong (League Sec. /Discipline Chair)
 Jayne Bissett (Treasurer)
 Lindsay Bissett (U13's Fixtures)
 Paul Edwards (U14's Fixtures & Reg Sec.)
 Brian Edwards (Reg Sec.)
 Jackie Clowes (U15's Fixtures Sec.)
 Paul Mitchell (Transfers Chair)
 David Lowe (Vice Chair/Ref. Appointments)

Apologies:

Next Meeting: Wed 3rd June 2009 at 8.30pm, Golborne Parkside ARLFC

I. Attendance

Ashton Bears	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blackbrook Royals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Blackpool Scorpions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Blackpool Stanley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bold Miners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Burtonwood Bulldogs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cadishead Rhinos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chorley Panthers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Clockface	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Crosfields	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Culcheth Eagles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eccles & Salford Juniors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fitton Hill	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Folly Lane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Halton Farnworth Hornets	<input type="checkbox"/>	Haydock	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Higginshaw	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hindley	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ince Rose Bridge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Langworthy Reds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Latchford Albion Unicorns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Leigh East	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leigh Miners Rangers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leyland Warriors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Liverpool Lions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moss Bank Bulldogs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Oldham St Anne's	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Orrell St James	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Golborne Parkside	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pilkington Recs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Portico Juniors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rochdale Mayfield	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rylands Sharks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Saddleworth Rangers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shaw Rhinos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shevington Sharks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thatto Heath Crusaders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Waterhead	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
West Bank Bears	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Westhoughton Lions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Widnes Moorfield	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Widnes St Maries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wigan St Cuthbert's	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wigan St Jude's	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wigan St Patrick's	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Woolston Rovers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Clubs not present at the meeting have been fined £30 as outlined and minuted at the May 2008 meeting.

(Cheques to be made payable to NW Counties 13-15 ARL)

II. Minutes & Updates from the Last Meeting

The minutes of the April 2009 meeting which were posted on the NWC 13 – 15's website were proposed by Wigan St Patricks and seconded by Folly Lane.

III. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

IV. Correspondence Friendlies/Festivals/Tournaments

The League had received three requests for authorisations for friendlies/festivals, namely:

Chorley Panthers U15s, who have requested permission to host and play Northampton Knights U15s on Saturday 23rd May, looking towards a 2pm kick off.

Crosfields ARLFC who are hoping to host a festival on Sunday 5th July 2009, for the 12, 13, 14 and 15 age groups. They are hoping to invite 4 or 5 other teams at each age group to take part. All players will receive a medal for taking part. Each Crosfields' Coach will be organising which teams they would like to invite.

Wigan St Judes U15's who have requested permission to play Kells U15's in a friendly on Wed 27th May 2009.

All of the above events have been approved by the League.

Request For Old Kits

The League have been contacted by Carlisle Tigers ARLFC from Scotland who, having formed their open-age section, and after a very successful first season in Scotland (where they have converted many former rugby union players), have now starting up U17 and U15 sides, with a good number of young lads keen to take up Rugby League.

They currently have a problem, as they have no kit for them to play in, and cant afford to buy two brand new sets. They have been invited to a few tournaments happening soon and would if possible like a kit to wear.

They are asking if there are any clubs, who may have recently purchased kits for these age groups, who would possibly be willing to donate their old kit for these young teams? They are more than happy to cover the cost of any postage up to Scotland and just need jerseys, not socks or shorts, for the lads to play in.

Help For Heroes

Steve Phillips, Youth & Junior Secretary of Latchford Albion Unicorns has come out of running retirement to help raise funds for two charities which are connected to areas he has been very closely involved with during his working and social life namely HM Forces and Rugby League. He's collectively called these fund raising events 'Running for Heroes'; Steve completed the first half marathon in Jan '09 for 'Help for Heroes' (HM Forces charity) and raised over £550 thanks to your kind donations and now its part II.

XIII Heroes is a supporter led voluntary charity whose stated objective is 'to provide financial assistance to persons who are or were connected to rugby league football and who require support whether by means of disability, physical or mental infirmity, poverty or age with the direct object of improving their conditions of life.'

It has helped two ex-Warrington Wolves players in recent years - Ian Knott and the late and much missed Mike Gregory which is how Steve became aware of their work, along with other young amateur/professional players (<http://www.13heroes.org/motivation/index.php>).

Their website is at <http://www.13heroes.org/home/index.php>.

Steve will be running in the Chester Half Marathon on the 17th May '09 and is hoping to raise at least £500 towards this charity. You can make donations directly via their website at (<http://www.13heroes.org/donations/index.php>);

He's waiting for some sponsorship forms to be sent through, but in this modern age hopefully most people can donate on-line? As the donations all go into a central fund he would be grateful if you could leave a comment that this is a donation for 'Steve - Running for Heroes' so he can provide feedback to everyone regarding how much was raised?

He thanks everyone in anticipation of their help and hopes he can beat the 2 hour mark this time around as he finished the last race in 2 hours and 53 seconds!

New Contact Details

Following the resignation of their former Widnes Moorfield Junior Secretary, Peter Fraser, Dave Smith has agreed to take on this role until further notice.

His contact details are:

Dave Smith
Secretary
Widnes Moorfield ARLFC
22 Snowberry Close
Widnes
Cheshire WA8 3XZ

Tel: 0151 424 8773

E-mail: daveandhelen1@sky.com

Similarly, following the resignation of Russ Malley, Kate Hall has been appointed as the new Club secretary for the Junior section at Crosfields ARLFC. Her contact details are:

Kate Hall
Mob: 07793 198260
Home: 01925 729533

V. Referee Appointments Coordinator's Report

Nothing to report

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

Nothing to report

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

On behalf of the League, Paul Edwards congratulated Rylands Sharks on winning the National Cup following a superb performance at the Willows on Bank Holiday Monday, May 4th.

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

Nothing to report

IX. Transfer Committee's Report

Paul Mitchell confirmed to the room that the Transfer Window opens again on the 1st June.

Mike Carney of Wigan St Patricks was given the floor to express their concerns with the League's current Transfer System.

Mike stated that "In 14.09 of the Constitution it states that *"Additional player transfers may be sanctioned providing mutual agreement between the clubs is confirmed in writing to the League Transfer Committee"*.

They contested that "as a club, St Pats have always attempted to keep players playing rugby even if it has meant them transferring to another team. i.e. they have allowed more than one player to transfer to another club in the same season - without objection.

Rule 14.09 states that additional players can be transferred as long as both teams agree to it and it seems a very fair rule". Their contention was that the felt the Transfer Committee appeared to have a different understanding of the rule and this needed clarifying to the League's Members.

They wished for all Members to vote on the rule and agree what, the majority of Members interpret, is the true definition of the ruling to prevent mis-interpretations from all parties.

Sam Armstrong highlighted that the crucial word in "mutually agreed" transfers was "may" and that this had been put in as, in the past some clubs had gained players via the mutually agreed route by gaining signatures from those members of the club who were not necessarily involved in the day to day running of that team and therefore not best positioned to authorise transfers without consultation with Coaching staff. He continued that "each case is unique and the factors surrounding them are not always straightforward which is why they tend to go to appeal.

Margaret Byrne further clarified the issue by stating that "standard" transfers i.e. within a club's entitlement of 3, and the first from any other club are processed almost immediately and it is only those transfers where the rules are being asked to be, for want of a better description, broken, that are delayed.

St Pat's also felt, that as a result of the lack of an agreed definition of this, that they have not been treated fairly and clarification on this rule would help alleviate their concerns.

They gave an example in the way that the transfer of a particular was handled. Both teams, St, Judes and St. Pats, were in agreement with the transfer, and yet, it had to go to an appeal and then was still stopped. The result, they felt, was that a young lad ended up not playing rugby for the majority of the season just finished. They also believed that if he had "de-registered" he could have been playing now.

Margaret responded by reminding clubs, again, that if they are aware that they have already had their entitlement for the season then they should, in the first instance, be telling players wishing to join them that fact and warn them that there is a possibility the transfer may not be agreed. Most importantly inform the player that they should remain playing and training

with their current club or seek a club that has not had their entitlement. There is no reason whatsoever that a player should not be playing and it is felt that, sometimes, players being given false hope regarding transfers that leads to players missing game time as the League do not physically stop them continuing whilst any transfer request is being processed..

Mike continued "The player concerned has now been advised that he can transfer to St Pat's "next season" but the Club want this to go through as a transfer for "this season" and again feel they have been unfairly treated".

Their understanding was that we should all be striving to encourage youngsters to play Rugby League, whereas, this decision had, they felt, had the opposite effect.

They further contested that "If this had been football the lad would have been playing for his new club within a week". They believed that they had encouraged the system to work that quick when players had left St. Pats, naming one instance where a player was playing for his new team within 2 weeks.

It was commented that they actually felt that every transfer that involves a player coming "to" St. Pats has to go to an appeal and yet anyone "who leaves" was passed automatically by the Transfer Committee. Sam responded that EVERY team in the League, irrespective of size or history, are treated equally and that no club is treated better or worse than any other.

Another issue raised concerned three players from Blackpool who had joined St Pats from Rugby Union this year and this too had gone to appeal.

The constitution states under transfers -

14.05 - Youth/Junior players, once registered with a club, may only transfer to a club in their domiciled area after it has been established that the player does not owe any money or equipment to the club they wish to leave.

They believed that there was nothing stipulated under registration rules that players have to "register" within the domiciled area. This again, they felt, was a different interpretation of the rules. These were, he believed, three players new to the game.

Sam highlighted that this was, in fact, incorrect and that all 3 players had actually been Lancashire Service Area players last Summer and that, at least one, had previously played for one of the Blackpool clubs. Mike was unaware of this and accepted the information.

It was also highlighted that the reason these had in fact gone to appeal was following concerns expressed by the Lancashire SA & several clubs regarding these players to all intents and purposes bypassing several more local clubs en-route to St Pats.

St Pats believe that they had to ask if this "is this one rule for some and different rules for others" and they merely wished to place on record their request that "the same rule be applied to all and that the "rule" is a common sense rule that keeps players playing rugby".

They understood the rationale behind the rules but felt that they were not being evenly or consistently applied as did the Representative from Eccles & Salford who highlighted a previous case. Paul Mitchell, took umbrage at these statements and stated that he felt it was because he HAD been consistent and applied the rules that some clubs were now raising issues.

The representative from Oldham St Annes asked whether, to avoid any further doubt, the mutually agreed aspect should be deleted altogether?

As no decision could be made on the night it was agreed that the deadline for submission of amendments to the rules/constitution would be extended to Sunday May 10th in case anyone wished to formally request any changes and Margaret Byrne acknowledged that the League, in turn, would review the wording to try to remove any ambiguity.

X. BARLA Representative's Report

Sam informed the floor that we had expressed our disappointment in BARLA via the BARLA Forum and the Press following their latest "BARLA Press Release" This stated that "At the BARLA Board of Management Meeting held at West Yorkshire House, Huddersfield it was discussed and agreed that next season BARLA **would** run an Under 16's BARLA National Youth League.

This issue was never previously discussed at any of the Youth & Junior Councils and seems, in our opinion, to be both rushed and ill-considered as it was felt that the current Board were not sufficiently able to run a competition of this magnitude.

BARLA Youth & Junior Rep, Ken Tinsdale, has now backtracked and is now reported in the press as implying that their own BARLA press release was incorrect and that "... the Board of Management **has merely decided to put forward the notion** of a National Under 16's League to see what the response was from Clubs and Leagues.

The question was asked "When, with merely 16 weeks to the start of next year's season and most clubs now temporarily disbanded for Summer, were the Association going to get round to asking these questions and having the courtesy of informing the Leagues who's teams would undoubtedly be forming this new competition.

It was felt that, had any individual from a team approached another team's players to encourage them to move in the same manner that BARLA is now seeking to approach League's clubs then Disciplinary action for "poaching" would inevitably be asked for.

It was asked, "What message are the Board sending out by this action when they of all should be setting an example? If we, as a League, approached other Regional Playing Leagues and asked their teams to leave their existing competitions and join our own the same Board would without doubt drag us "over the coals" and yet it appears okay for them to act in this way?

It is a great concern that it appears that a lot of the goodwill recently restored, after hard work by the BARLA Chair, is seemingly now being again eroded if this is the way the Association wishes to conduct it's business.

Dissatisfaction with the lack of promotion of the BARLA/Northern Rail National Youth Cup Finals which did not warrant a mention on the BARLA Website before the event was also mentioned. Our League's team, Rylands Sharks, and all others who had participated in this, allegedly, flagship competition have had the day considerably de-valued by the apparent apathy shown towards it since the day the draw took place at our Monthly Meeting..

XI. Disciplinary Chairman's Report

Hearing Notifications were to issued to several clubs for cases which were, due to the forthcoming Bank Holiday, to be heard on Monday 1st June at Golborne Parkside Sports & Community Club.

Verdict Notifications were issued to several clubs for cases which were heard on Monday 20th April at Golborne Parkside Sports & Community Club.

XII. Any Other Business

The Treasurers' Report showed that the League had a balance of £11945 at the time of the meeting.

Presentation Nights

Confirmation of details of this Season's Presentation Nights were again read out.

The 3 nights booked at Hindley are as follows:

9th May U13's Presentations

16th May U15's Presentations

30th May U14's Presentations

League Voting Procedures

Halton Farnworth Hornets suggested ways in which they consider that the current procedure for voting at meetings can be improved upon.

This was as follows:

1- Subjects that require a decision upon should be forwarded to each Club Secretary.

2- The Club Secretary would then discuss with their own Committee the issue raised and decide what their clubs decision will be.

3- The Club Secretary would then pass that decision back to the relevant League Secretary.

4- All the decisions made by individual clubs would then be added up.

5- Whatever the result of those decisions. either for or against a topic raised, would be announced at the following monthly League Meeting.

We have already contacted a number of accredited clubs and they are all in favour of our ideas.

They are asking the League for their views on the proposal before taking any further action eg proposal at the Leagues AGM as they value the opinions of those who would be involved in introducing the new system

Although relevantly simple to introduce they realise that the process required may involve extra work for the Leagues which is NOT the intention.

Sam Armstrong explained that the Monthly Meetings were intended to be attended by those with the authority and mandate of their clubs to make any necessary decisions and that, more often than not, notification is given of, usually, a month where a vote is required so that Clubs CAN discuss the matters beforehand. If Clubs actually attended the Meetings and fed back the information or even read the Minutes then, he felt, the Secretaries may be better informed

He believed that some of the potential pitfalls of contacting each Club Secretary individually were:

- a) they change roles with alarming regularity
- b) contact change details are not always notified to the League,
- c) the number of claims of non-receipt of e-mails could mean that some clubs do not discuss the issues
- d) who would decide deadlines for receipt of votes?
- e) who would chase each Secretary of our current 46 clubs if their vote wasn't received?
- f) the proposed system would lose the currently achieved transparency where the votes are collected and can be checked by any member of the floor.

Sadly, there was again no-one present from Halton Farnworth Hornets to discuss the matter further.

NW Counties Cup Finals "Man Of The Match" Awards

The NW Counties Cup Finals "Man of the Match" awards were presented, in front of an appreciative audience, to the deserving winning players by Mr Steve Jones of KT8 Photography who had kindly sponsored them (www.kt8photography.co.uk).

Receiving the award of a series of a superb framed image were ..
Gavin Rodden (Ince Rose Bridge U13's)
Lewis Charnock (Rylands Sharks U14's)
Tom Gilmore (Halton Farnworth Hornets U15's)

Unfortunately, Lewis & Tom could not attend and will, instead, receive their awards at the respective Presentation Evenings.

Cautionary Feedback from Recent Tours To France

The League has received two very concerning letters following recent tours to France which we have been asked to bring to the attention of our Members.

West Bank Bears U14's

"The tour of France was a great success, everyone involved enjoyed it, players, coaches and family alike. All in all a superb time was had by all, well worth 18 months of fundraising!

We shared the same resort as Saddleworth Under 15s and all the lads got on really well.

We played the best French side at our age, although 3 or 4 of them looked at least 16 !!! 25 minutes each way and edged it 28-26, however, they didn't like to be beat and tried to intimidate us by spitting, punching, grabbing genitalia etc.

Our lads discipline was superb and we walked away from the abuse with heads held high".

Saddleworth Rangers U15's

You have no doubt already heard about the disgraceful behaviour by certain French teams on both Saddleworth Rangers and West Banks recent tours of the area.

Dealing with ours alone. I can only liken the attack by the opposition players on the Rangers lads as being set upon by a pack of wild animals. Throughout the game they were trying to draw our boys into a fight (blatant punching in the tackle) also at one point when one of our lads wouldn't retaliate for an over zealous tackle by the French he was chased down and kicked from behind (seen by the French ref -only penalty given - no direct punishment of the player). The main incident itself came about in my opinion as a pre-planned assault on our boys.

With only 2 minutes left on the clock the French were ahead by nearly 50 points, the boys said (relayed to us after the game) that the French seemed to be gathering in the centre of the field and all the subs seemed to be readying themselves for something.

Then in a flash we had lads strewn all over the field (I was dealing with one of our injured players on the sideline at the time), but people have told me that one of the French boys ran up to our biggest lads from behind and floored him with one punch resulting in a very serious eye wound then fled the scene. The player had to have a total of 12 stitches in the 3 wounds around his eye (and was very lucky to have not permanently damaged his right eye).

One of our other players went to see if his team mate was ok, and another French player ran in from the side and launched himself off the ground (not in sight of our player) and swing a punch into the Rangers players mouth, again this has resulted in the most serious of our injuries. This player had to have 2 of his bottom teeth reset by an Orthodontic specialist in France -a metal plate and wires fitted to his bottom set of teeth and 6 stitches in his bottom lip (inside and out) -where his teeth had come through. He will be visiting an Orthodontic trauma specialist this week to see if they can save his teeth (at 15 years of age!!!!). This, all without considering the mental shock he has had to suffer and the days feeding himself through a straw.

We also had another player hospitalised due to an earlier incident in the game were 3 players tackled him and one blatantly kicked him in the head. He was scanned for a possible brain-bleed as he partially lost sight in one eye. He recovered at the hospital and is thankfully now ok.

The French club (as a club) has shown little concern only asking about their welfare after being prompted by ourselves (when we requested the Referees report and any video evidence - still waiting!!).

I must make it clear this was not a fight or brawl, our lads were attacked with such ferocity they did not have a chance to defend themselves. When we pulled our guys off the pitch we literally had all our players affected (either physically -bruises ,cuts and cauliflower ears) or mentally (majority were in tears at the extent of the injuries to their team mates).

I have been involved in rugby for many years both with the juniors and spectating at senior games and I have never seen such a disgraceful act in my life.

With hindsight we should have involved the Police, but we just wanted to get the boys to hospital, fixed and back to Britain.

The only way we can prevent this happening again (believe me I am certain it will) is to prevent any British teams visiting this club (or any others who commit such acts) ever again. Before the game we were told that these clubs "crave British opposition" and by starving them of this is the only way to punish them.

Can I possibly request that all the NW Counties clubs are informed of this incident and that they are discouraged in playing this team. Also if the info could be passed onto other league governing bodies around the country to warn any future touring teams.

We have informed the RFL and they have asked us to gather all the info we can (statements).

Anyone requiring further information please e-mail
neil.wilcock@openreach.co.uk

4 Nations Group Offers

The meeting welcomed Steve Gafney of the RFL (and former Chair of Castleford Lock Lane) who presented an initiative for amateur Clubs to attend the 4 Nations games by gathering a party of 50 people to watch two games in the series. In return those signing up for the £100/Adult & £85/Concession will get:

- A £20 ticket for any of England's three group matches
- A Four Nations Cup Final match ticket
- A new Puma England shirt valued at £50 delivered before the games
- Return travel from your Club to both games
- £1,000 cheque for your Club funds after the Final

The RFL believe that Group bookings will be limited and demand high so Clubs were asked to ensure that they book early for this offer.

Ideally Clubs were asked to support the England v Australia game at the JJB Stadium, Wigan on the w/e of 31/10/09

Other games in the Series include:

England v France, The Keepmoat Stadium, Doncaster, w/e of 24/10/09
England v New Zealand, Galpharm Stadium, Huddersfield, w/e of 7/11/09
and for clubs based in the South, Australia v New Zealand, Twickenham Stoop, London, w/e of 24/10/09

For more information please contact a member of the RFL Business Development Team as follows:

Steve Gafney - 07595 520 578 or steve.gafney@rfl.uk.com
Ray Tennant - 07595 520 338 ray.tennant@rfl.uk.com

The forms are available via the Stationery page on the NW Counties 13-15's website. Please return your completed forms to Ray or Steve at the following address: RFL, Red Hall, Red Hall Lane, Leeds, LS17 8NB

The RFL Require a statement of interest and a deposit of £20/person by the end of June. Full payment will be required by Sept 1st.

Steve also highlighted that tickets for the SL Grand Final are a minimum of £21 but if a club gets a party of more than 10 then they can be had as a special offer of just £10.50!!

Enterprise Training - Finding Funding/Charity Health Check

Mark Johnson of Enterprise Training spoke to the floor about his organisation's Finding Funding/Charity Health Check course.

This enriching course, arranged after discussions with BARLA, provides strategies and practical solutions to maximise the potential for success in securing funding for Clubs.

The course includes:

- Workshops on how to write an effective presentation
- Finding potential sources of funding
- How to build lasting relationships with funders
- Identifying the requirements of individual clubs
- Identifying what can and cannot be claimed

A local venue is planned to enable club members easy access.

Contact details for Mark Johnson, Course Director, are as follows.

Enterprise Training,
Newton Road
Tibshelf
Derbyshire
DE55 5PH
Tel: 01773 590088/Mobile: 07817 995252
E-mail: sales@enterprisehousebc.co.uk

Sam highlighted the recent successes that Wigan St Judes had had in applying for funding for various aspects of their clubs expenditure which had even included their travel costs. He recommended that each Club should grasp the opportunity and ensure that they have a delegate to attend.

There is a surprising amount of funding out there for projects beneficial to youngsters and the community as a whole and this is an ideal chance to grasp the opportunity for assistance and guidance as to what is available and how to go about gaining it.

Currently Enterprise Training are looking to fund the course with a suitable grants and will be releasing details shortly. We will post details once received of the exact course locations & dates

The Utmost Affinity Group

The League welcomed back Mr Eric Czerwionka, MD of the UTMOST Affinity Group. UTMOST is an "Insurance introducer", which has links to most of the major insurance providers in the UK and has been set up to work alongside both BARLA and the clubs within BARLA.

Eric explained "Everyone recognises that insurance costs are a burden to all Clubs, so UTMOST and BARLA came up with a scheme which not only provides insurance but also generates income streams for the Clubs.

Essentially, UTMOST allow you to offer very reasonably priced policies (often with a "price match" guarantee) to everyone involved with your Club. There is no cost to the Club for this and all clerical work is done for you and, in return, a commission goes straight back into the Clubs funds.

Additional insurance products can be made available to your Club's members via your own Club website merely by incorporating an Utmost link. This link will then take you directly to your own Utmost Affinity website page, where your members will have access to the whole range of insurance services provided by our Brokers and allows your Members to take advantage of these services. Any policies started in this way, will result in a "finders fee" being paid directly back to your Club and will again help towards financial stability. This is a win/win scenario especially if the policies offered cost no more than your Members are already paying and benefits their Club too!

The website will provide details of the contact phone numbers and, very soon, will provide access to an online quotation facility which will fully automate the service, using a unique keycode, so that the commissions go straight back into the club they love.

It isn't just the large Insurance companies and Law firms that can help Clubs either! The unique way that the Affinity group has been set up, allows small businesses to join the scheme, and to generate more work for themselves through their association with other Affinity partners. This strategy allows partnerships between small companies and the Clubs in their area to grow. Utmost attach a small fee to any contract generated by the Affinity group, which again is paid to the back to the Club.

On top of this you will get access to the many great services offered by the ever growing list of Affinity partners, and UTMOST will assist in finding sponsorships and fundraising ideas for the Clubs wherever they can. They have already helped out other Clubs in our region this way and more will follow shortly including a tie-in with the League's new exhibition trailer.

Of course, Player Injury Insurance is one of the talking points at the moment, and UTMOST have managed to put together some great Club and League policies in this field.

Each package they put together with their FSA regulated broker partners is specifically tailored to your Club/Members' individual requirements and can include cover for everything from Building Insurance on Clubhouses, to player injuries, to travel insurance on your away games and tours. The extensive contents insurance policies will also protect your valuable sporting equipment.

Stadium/ground and Property Insurances are also areas where they are striving to drive the price down for all".

Eric further explained that "..this has all been put into place for your Clubs to benefit, so please don't be shy in coming forward and is all part of your League & BARLA's intention to make itself and all member Clubs, more financially independent".

Eric continued "It is very simple to get these things up and running at your club, and UTMOST are always happy to have a friendly chat to see how they can help in any way.

Utmost recognise & appreciate that no two clients are alike, and make sure you get the right cover you need, and that you do not pay for cover you don't need".

To see for yourself how this could help your Club please take a few moments to look at the Affinity group website (www.utmostaffinitygroup.co.uk) and their Sports Insurance site (www.utmost-sportsinsurance.co.uk)

Annual General Meeting

All clubs are reminded that the next meeting is the AGM which will take place on Wednesday 3rd June 2009.

The following have put their names forward for nomination for the roles listed below next season:-

Margaret Byrne (Chair)
Sam Armstrong (League Secretary/Discipline Chair/BARLA Rep.)
Jayne Bissett (Treasurer)
Paul Edwards (U13's Fixtures Secretary)
Lindsay Bissett (U14's Fixtures Secretary)
Jackie Clowes (U15's Fixtures Secretary)
David Lowe (Registrations Secretary)
Jeff Schofield (Referee Appointments Officer)
Brian Edwards (Child Protection & Welfare Officer)
Paul Mitchell (Transfer Secretary)

Any Management Committee position can be contested by anyone prepared to volunteer their services. Anyone wishing to do so should forward their details to the League Secretary at the earliest opportunity. Anyone wishing to raise a matter at the AGM are reminded of section 4.06 of the Constitution which states "*Amendments or additions to the rules must be given in writing, be proposed and seconded by clubs who have been League members for at least one season and be received by the League Secretary on or before 1st May each year. The Management Committee may also place proposals before the Annual General Meeting. A two thirds majority of the clubs present and holding voting rights is required to carry proposals and/or amendments to the Constitution*".

It was agreed that this date will be extended until 10th May. At the time of the meeting the League had received no formal external correspondence from any teams, clubs or individuals for the AGM.

The date of the next meeting at Golborne Parkside, which will be the AGM, will be the 3rd June 2009 commencing at 8.30pm.