



THE CLUBHOUSE

MAY 2015

WRU NEWSLETTER

LEAGUE REVIEW

The review of the WRU SSE SWALEC National League structure has delivered its verdict on the new format which was adopted for this season.

An open debate with clubs through the WRU National League Working Party has concluded that the new league system is working in its current form.

Some specific issues were raised and

addressed within the wide ranging monitoring and review process which has taken place under the chairmanship of WRU Director Anthony Buchanan.

Going forward promotion and relegation will be automatic and the usual format will be based on a two up and two down policy.

There are some inevitable exceptions with perhaps the most profound being

the four up and four down system which works between the four feeder leagues and the Championship. Another fundamental rubber stamped by the working party and then the WRU Board is that there will not be any play-offs. The working party itself included representation from each district and its deliberations were progressed on evidence gathered through a questionnaire sent to clubs.

UNREGISTERED PLAYER ISSUE

The WRU is anxious that clubs realise the importance of registering all players and keeping records right up to date.

It's an issue which has been discussed by the WRU Board and the message is that registration is vital and a priority.

Board members recognised that formal sanctions are taken against any cases of unregistered players taking the field.

But the spectre of insurance issues complicating the matter further in cases of injury were also raised by directors.

The view is that the clubs must protect themselves so a reminder of the constant need for vigilance is front of mind for all districts.

FACELIFT FOR CLUBS

The NatWest RugbyForce weekend is getting closer and thirty clubs have been selected for the grants of £500 each to help complete their planned projects.

It takes place across the weekend of August 15/16 when volunteers will turn up at each venue to help spruce up their clubs.

There were 77 applicants this year and five of the projects – Canton, Whitehead, Maesteg, Bala and Nantgaredig have been nominated as regional finalists to the Win a Pitch Makeover competition selected by a public vote which all clubs will be given details of.

The winning clubs are: Canton, Cardiff Quins, Old Penarthians, Rhiwbina, Treherbert, Caerleon, St Julians HSOB, Whitehead, Alltwen, Banwen, Bryncethin, Crynant, Cwmavon, Glynneath, Kenfig Hill, Maesteg, Seven Sisters, Skewen, Tondu, Tonna, Bala, Cobra, Llanidloes, Shotton Steel, Ammanford, Carmarthen Quins, Haverfordwest, Nantgaredig, Penybanc and Penygroes.



CONFERENCE

The WRU is organising a national coaching and refereeing conference to be held at the National Centre of Excellence at the Vale Resort, on Saturday 27 June.

Community coaches and match officials from all clubs are invited to take part, where Rob Howley will be a keynote speaker.

Clubs are being asked to nominate a pathway coach and referee to attend the conference and confirm attendance via <https://wrucrc2015.eventbrite.co.uk>

FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback or ideas for Clubhouse content you can contact the WRU Head of Communications, John Williams, directly, via: jwilliams@wru.co.uk

NEWCASTLE EMLYN WATERBOYS

The SSE SWALEC Finals day at the Millennium Stadium featured an intriguing link between the elite and grassroots games.

Anyone who saw the Newcastle Emlyn waterboys take the pitch in the Plate final against Ystrad Rhondda would have realised they were looking at some familiar faces.

Scarlets duo Gareth Davies (pictured above, 2nd from left) and Scott Williams (3rd from left) along with Cardiff Blues' Josh Turnbull (far right) were part of the backroom staff of the club of their origin.

Unfortunately despite offering plenty of guidance during the match, the Welsh trio saw their side lose the keenly contested final.

For the fans though, there were plenty of opportunities post match to get autographs from their heroes.



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CLUB CONTACTS

Many of you will have noted that the WRU website information on club contacts has changed.

The previous list of named individuals representing clubs has been removed because of issues related to the kind of data we are allowed to publish.

All clubs are now listed by address, phone number and website address.

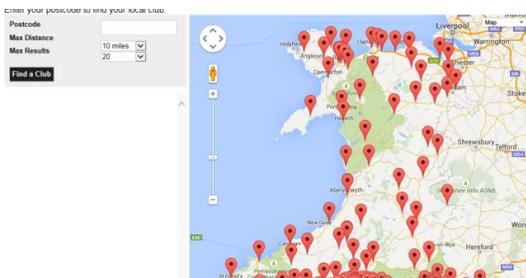
To get that information from the WRU website you enter the *Rugby Development* section and go to *Club Operations* and then on to *Club Contacts*. A click from there you can type in the postcode or name of the club you want to contact.

The list of contacts is linked to an online map which shows the location of every WRU member club.

You can take a look at the relevant page by going to the online address below:

http://www.wru.co.uk/jointhebeat/rugby_clubs.php

This is a work in progress with more detail to be added as we gather more data on each club to make getting in touch even easier.



CLUBHOUSE IN WELSH

A Welsh language version of this issue of the Clubhouse newsletter is being made available and distributed to all clubs. All future editions of Clubhouse will also be available in both English and Welsh.

The move has been approved by the Board following feedback from around the districts.

It complies with the WRU's Welsh Language Policy which declares the Union's intention to promote bi-lingual action wherever possible.

There are practical and financial issues related to this but the Clubhouse is one example where the WRU is keen to reach both English and Welsh speakers.

BOARD MEMBER HONOURED

Proud Welshman Anthony Buchanan (pictured, right) brings decades of rugby experience to the board table in his new role as a director of the Welsh Rugby Union.

And as he settles into the boardroom environment he has been honoured for the hard graft he has put in at the coalface of the game down the years.

He was honoured by Llanelli Rugby Club at Parc y Scarlets and presented with a plaque by the Scarlets Chairman Nigel Short and Head of Recruitment, Gareth Jenkins, as a gesture of gratitude for his involvement over the past 30 years.



YOUTH TEAM GOVERNANCE

Moves are being considered to create clearer governance pathways through youth and second team rugby to help the future sustainability of player numbers.

It's an issue which is under review through the WRU's Rugby Committee and the full Board has also debated the issue at length.

The WRU's Rugby Department is now studying the issue and a number of recommendations will be presented soon.

The focus of debate has been the core governance structure and a view is emerging that this needs to be aligned through the nine WRU senior districts.

There are currently some cases where youth teams are governed through different districts other than their club's senior teams.

Consideration is being given to how WRU staff are allocated to the district bodies and the season and competition structures for youth and second fifteen rugby are also under discussion.

There are currently 163 youth teams under WRU governance and the aim is

to ensure they are operating within the Union's strategy to engage youngsters in the game, ensure they are transferred into the clubs and then to retain them as adult participants.

This is clearly going to be a talking point at districts and the message is that this debate is current and active within Welsh rugby circles.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Welsh Rugby Union is earlier this year because of the Rugby World Cup and will take place at the Vale Resort hotel near Cardiff on October 4, 2015.

You will be receiving notice in the usual way from the WRU, but at this stage you may well have an opinion on how the day is organised.

We cannot promise that any and all ideas will be adopted but the WRU is anxious to make the AGM as useful and user friendly as possible for all the clubs in attendance. So let us know if you have any thoughts.