



**ANNUAL GENERAL**  
**MEETING**

**Belgrave Rugby Football Club  
Thurcaston Road,  
Leicester**

**President:**

**Brian Hesford**

**Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

**7.00 p.m.**



## Annual Report: Season 2016 - 2017

This report reviews the activities of Leicestershire Rugby Union Ltd. for the season 2016 - 2017.

### Administration and Governance

The Management Committee remained as elected during the year.

During the season, the Management Committee met six times and there were two Special General Meetings and one club meeting. Attendance at the latter meetings was varied and reasonable. However, some clubs were again still not represented at any General Meetings and it is hoped that these clubs will replace their current LRU Representatives with persons who are more readily available and absorbed in County matters.

Attendance at the six Management Committee meetings has been:

B. Hesford	5	P. Harding	4	R. Green	5	R. Hickson	4	P. Howard	6
M. Powell	4	S. Rice	6	D. Toon	4	K. Swift	2	B. Welford	1
P. Green	4	K. Whitcombe	6						

During the season, a continuous review has been undertaken of the committee structures within the union, its constitution, and its processes. Development plans for the season 2017 – 2018 will be discussed at the end of the AGM.

The number of RFU Non-Voting Member clubs currently stands at 6 (including the University Clubs) with 28 RFU Voting Member clubs. There are now 24 clubs in Leicestershire that have become incorporated to give them some form of limited liability. It is hoped that those six eligible clubs not currently incorporated will consider incorporating during the next twelve months in order to give their officers and members some protection against any legal action for negligence that may be taken against their clubs.

As part of the RWC 2015 Legacy and continuing programme Leicestershire are partnered with Warwickshire and *Hrvatski ragbijaški savez* the Croatian Rugby Union in the World Rugby Unity Project. This project has been developed to provide assistance to European countries and to grow the game in their countries using the expertise of the RFU Constituent Bodies. Outgoing and Incoming Scoping Visits were undertaken during the world cup year and a project plan continues to be developed albeit somewhat slower than the CB partnership envisaged. A Coaching and Volunteering Conference is planned for later in the 2017 – 2018 Season and it is hoped that Leicestershire clubs will take the opportunity to engage with this project, particularly if club tours could be arranged to Croatia.

### Age Grade Rugby – Dean Toon

The AGR team have been visible at clubs over the season and we have endeavoured to be transparent, flexible and supportive to clubs working with them to solve on going challenges, around age grade, safeguarding and discipline. We have been proactive in assisting fledging AGR sections and worked closely with our partners, principally the RFU. We have this year bolstered our Safeguarding team with Mike Flatt and aim to further strengthen this section in 2017/18.

The AGR held New Festival formats for ages U7-13 based on the 5 core values of Rugby. This was the first time for this format and we will continue to run county festivals refining the process. Over 1300 young people received participation medals.

The LRU AGR Cup competitions were all keenly contested and the spirit of Rugby was prevalent throughout. All junior age groups up to Under 16 competed in a Cup Bowl and Plate format whilst the Colts competed in a straight knockout competition. Congratulations go to all teams taking part producing the following Roll of Honour –

### Cup Winners:

Under 14's	Hinckley RFC
Under 15's	Market Harborough RUFC
Under 16's	Market Harborough RUFC
Under 17's	Leicester Forest RFC
Under 18 Colts	Lutterworth RFC

This was the first year of the new Age Grade Rugby Formats and Playing Calendar. The design of ensuring schools', clubs and representative fixtures do not clash has worked and will lead to the CB working ever closer with schools and other parties for the best interest of the young person.

We continue to work on our medium term aims of

- Working closely with key stakeholders
- Being transparent
- Helping clubs establish core values

I would like to place on record my thanks to all involved in the LRU AGR Committee along with the Age Grade Club Representatives for their commitment and work during the season.

### **Under 17's and 18's – Marc Birr**

The season for the Under 17s & 18s has been a reasonable successful one. With both squads going unbeaten throughout the season. It started with the Under 18s winning their warm up game against Warwickshire followed by the 3 Championship games against East Midlands, NLD and meeting Warwickshire in the final. Winning the final 17-7 and Scoring 148 points and conceding 48 points in the 4 games this season. The Midlands squad was chosen from the three games of which Leicestershire had 15 players through to the trial weekend. After that weekend 8 Leicestershire players were selected in the Midlands squad to play the North at Dudley in February (Oli Bee, Dominic Groom, Tommy Lee Smith, Will Hurd, Will Roberts, Sam Reed, John Kenward and Jacob Tivey). Four of these players then selected for England Counties. Oli Bee, Dominic Groom, John Kenward, Will Roberts in Ireland. Leicestershire was the largest representative CB across all four regions and on in to the England Squad.

After Christmas, the under 17s started with a different selection system, the coaching team selected player to attend training instead of running trials. This was done by visiting all the clubs and schools at least twice watching the players in a match situation. We this has been well received by the clubs and schools. Once into the under 17s squad selection games, our first game against East Midlands was cancelled due weather conditions. The following 3 games produced some outstanding flowing rugby. Winning all three games scoring 101 points and conceding 32 points. We go into next season in good shape but aware there is still work to be done which starts at Bradgate Park on the 1<sup>st</sup> July.

### **Leicestershire Schools Rugby Football Union- Brian Welford**

This past year has witnessed the continuing roll out of the age grade programme and we look forward to the next stage. Our Chairman, Jason Button, has been active not only at his own school but also at the DPP and building links within the schools across the county. His work was recognised by the ERFUSU and he became one of the recipients of a Real Rugby Hero award. This was presented to him on Schools Day at Twickenham in March. This was a proud day for Jason but also for Leicestershire Schools.

Our major work revolves around liaising with schools to ensure that they are kept up to date with the various initiatives coming down from Twickenham. The reorganisation of the NatWest Schools competition witnessed the introduction of tiers at both Under18 and Under15 levels. Teams were placed in a tier appropriate to their playing levels thus giving greater opportunities for smaller and developing schools to reach finals. In the Champions Trophy, the highest level, Oakham School reached the semi-final before losing by one score to the eventual winners. In the U15 section, Welland Park had a great run again to the semi-final and a one score defeat.

On the domestic front, as usual, much important developmental work is led by Jenna Bonser and her team. The All Schools programme, girl's small sided competitions, inner city competitions are all a vital part of the work. We are lucky to have Jenna taking the major role in this important development work. The school's competitions have, in the early stages, been part of the Team Leicestershire structure. At the knockout stage Dave Doig joined our committee and brought the competitions to their conclusion with finals at Leicester Grammar School. (Results attached). A few problems arose around the playing dates and next season Dave will take over running the competitions from the start.

The CSU are extremely grateful for the support from the LRU and this in turn means that Leicestershire maintain a good profile in the ERFUSU.

### **Development Committee – Vacancy**

The overall strategic objective of the CB Development Committee for the season 2016 - 2017 has been to develop, manage and deliver an annual coaching, club referee and player development plan that not only increases the number

of active coaches and referees within the LRU, but assists with the retention of players of all ages within the game of Rugby.

During the season 2016 - 2017 we have continued to deliver coaching programmes as outlined in the PFR. Furthermore, all of our coaching and CPD courses including for the first time the level 1 coaching children course have been free to Leicestershire coaches. Regrettably, it is said that all good things must come to an end and the CB fully funded courses strategy that has been in place for just over four seasons is under review. It is expected that clubs will have to fund their own courses from the start of the 2017 – 2018 season

Thanks go to all of the Development Sub-Committee members for their efforts during the season, and in particular the substantial efforts of the Rugby Development Staff who have delivered the variety of training throughout the LRU are very much appreciated.

## **Director of Rugby – Mark Powell**

### **U16's**

With the introduction of a trial system and the appointment of a manager to work alongside Troy, we have had a great season with 19 players selected for the DPP academy Program of which, 16 played at the Wellington Tournament. The current state of play with the DPP is up in the air re-funding from the CB's. This being supporting the Tigers programme, due to the RFU edit on funding and the contribution paid to the Premiership sides for Community Rugby, the current funds are being questioned and the management of this is under review. Once I have an update, I will advise the Management committee to pass this onto the clubs.

Next season, the same options and trial and we hope again to find players that have yet to be discovered and get selected (3 this season).

### **U17's-18s**

We are very proud of the four young men who were able to get through the rigors of selection and represent the English Counties U18's in Ireland. These players came from Leicester Forest and Lutterworth who have been honoured for their achievements at the end of season presentation evening; Oli Bee, Will Roberts, Dominic Groom, and John Kenward.

The U17's programme has proved that no two sides are the same with a preponderance of backs this season whereas the side for the U18's campaign was forward dominated, they took on all comers and beat them all. Training for next season is booked. The summer sessions will be again a good way of keeping the players on the straight and narrow and fitness focused for the next U18 season.

I would like too also thank the 'Berryworld' sponsor for the contribution made. This helped in no small way to pay for shirts and aid a better deal for the players to afford stash and look a proper county side.

### **U20's**

This season we had a trial game against East Mids in preparation for the next season where we will be running a team in the Midlands championship. This has a come about due to the players and senior clubs and universities buying in to the county representative schedule and opportunities.

The objective for the team, managed by Simon Chaperon and head coach Mick Holford, will be to gain a few scalps and even if the luck is on our side getting to 'Twickers'. No pressure but I am confident in 2 years we should be able to achieve that goal.

### **Men's Senior**

As a last swansong for the old coaching team lead by Paul Walsh, and ably assisted by 'Dosser' Smith, we again achieved massively and won the County Championship Division 2, beating Hampshire very comfortably. Albeit a little tight in the first half, but flood gates in the second.

I wish to thank Lutterworth and Oakham RFC for allowing us to use their facilities for the two home games v's Staffordshire and Durham, and Leicester Forest for the use of their site for training.

We had a total of 42 players in contention with 12 new players receiving ties and 6 caps presented at Twickenham. Next season will be a challenge as some of the older stalwarts will be standing down and we will have a new Head coach, but am optimistic that the assistants will remain in situ to continue the continuity and the strategy of developing coaches internally for head coach positions in the future.

Next season we will also have 2-barbarian games, 1 against Leicester Thursday and 1 against Staffs in March/April. The home game x1 for the senior county will be open to any club that wishes to host. I will be putting a shortlist together and asking those clubs to tender for that honour.

I also would like to mention and great achievement for 2 players this season with Chris McFedries being the only player to have represented the county at all of the 5 games played at Twickenham and Tom Wheatcroft being selected for the England counties tour of Spain.

### **Womens and Girls**

It is with great sadness that two ladies who have been very active in this section of the CB decided this season to stand down as Secretary and Chairperson. But it would be very remiss of me not to thank them both for the sterling work that they have done over the years and hope to recognize their contribution in the future with a small token of our gratitude for the volunteering; Del Townsend and Paula Brotherhood.

This section is on a journey and I think without the support of the senior county management team this success and ongoing strategic development would not be possible.

Tim Howard stepping in as Ladies Manager also helped massively and hope he will continue in post over a longer period and that we will have a new Chairperson in situ shortly.

One date for the dairies is an INNER Warrior event on 10 September being hosted by the RFU and LRU at Leicester grammar school. This should coincide with the Women's World cup profile and details will be circulated shortly.

### **Women and Girl's – Tom Kilburn\***

We ran a program of 8 sessions over the period of 12 weeks at Syston RFC. This season saw the removal of the Midlands festival and an extra triangular fixture added.

### **Leicestershire Under 18's Squad**

We ran a squad of 34, which will change next season when we will see an influx of players creating competition for places at this age group. The group has a very strong starting line-up but the rest of the squad have some work to do with their core skills. Many of the players are getting very little match opportunity at club level, which does not help them, and at CB training, we have really had to go back to basics. Off the back of the programme, 15 players were given the opportunity to attend the Midlands trials. Of the 15, 10 were selected into the squad. Congratulations go to Hollie Bawden, Ellen Ramsbottom, Abi Gordon and Amy Relf, (all Loughborough College), Georgia Watson, Tabitha Copston and Olivia Perrin (all Market Harborough), Phoebe Andrews & Isabella Cranwell (both Oakham), and Solitaire Moonen-Leadeatt (Leicester Forest).

Three of these girls Olivia, Phoebe and Solitaire have all been selected with a further two years to play in this age group. Hollie Bawden, Ellen Ramsbottom, were both selected for the Midlands 7's squad.

In August Tabitha and Leah Bartlett both represented England Talent Development Group twice against Canada. Amy Relf was also in the U18 European 7's Championships in France.

### **Leicestershire Under 15's Squad**

In previous year the programme has been very inclusive due to the lack of playing numbers. This season saw a change as we were able to select a squad at under 15s and some players returned to club rugby with some feedback and work on's. 15 players were given the opportunity to attend the Midlands trials. Of the 15 that attended 5 were selected into the Midlands squad. Congratulations go to Chelsea Page and Olivia Chantrey (both Leicester Forest), Mathilda Renault, Ella Woodward (both Lutterworth), Lauren Rollason (Market Harborough), We have Olivia Chantrey involved in the Midlands 7's squad.

### **The under 13's**

No activity in this area

We ran a couple of successful girls pitch up and play for clubs. Over 100 girls attended the event in October at Loughborough. By working with the players from an earlier age, identifying talent and development needs we hope to raise the standard dramatically

Age Group	School Year	Numbers this season	Squad size 2016-17	Numbers next season	Squad size to select from 2017-18
Under 18	Year 13	5	34	16	47
	Year 12	16		13	
	Year 11	13		18	
Under 15	Year 10	18	29	9	30
	Year 9	11		21	

## **Senior Side**

The Women's game saw a major change last season with the creation of a New Women's County Championship Cup and Plate competition (named after Gill Burns, stalwart of W&G Rugby of which Leicestershire ladies won). Leicestershire, we struggled for numbers last season but this year we have taken the feedback on board and had a very competitive squad of 33 players training regularly.

I have watched a number of club and university matches in preparation which helped pull a very strong side together. It was during these matches I spoke to George Richardson of Leicester University, Stephen Duffus, Trevor Goddard and Rohan West of Loughborough, David Young of Coalville and Adam Lawrence of Lutterworth. They were all given the opportunity to assist and a few of them have been utilised as development coaches. Marc Birr of the under 18s (Boys) has had some time on his hands and been fully involved and assisting. This coaching team has bridged the gap between clubs and county which has been a massive help to get the players to buy in.

## **Long term development**

It is also part of the plan to include the under 18 players that have come of age in the senior training squad, 4 of them have been very key members of the squad all being selected in the last few matches when available as have 2 from the past year. Leah Bartlett graduated and was chosen in the England Under 20's squad to take on Canada and featured in the England under 20's team in the six nations.

## **Girls**

Loughborough (including Market Harborough & Oakham) under 18s qualified for the national final and unfortunately missed out and finished runners up. Coalville / Forest Vixens numbers are continuing to grow and go from strength to strength at all ages. Lutterworth and Market Harborough have good numbers at under 13s & 15s. Ashby have growing numbers and currently playing most games alongside Melbourne. Leicester Lions started a brand-new team and are quickly gaining numbers.

## **Women**

This season has seen a lot of success locally on the pitch for local clubs. Coalville in their first season back in the leagues finished runners up in Women's NC Midlands 2 North. Lutterworth finished runners up in Women's NC Midlands 1 and reach the quarter finals in the National Junior Plate. Loughborough finished fifth after a rocky start in Women's Championship North 1 (tier 2) and won the National Intermediate Plate. Unfortunately, Old Newtonians were unable to fulfil their league fixtures and dropped out of the leagues but on the flipside, we have seen a new team in Sileby women grow their numbers play a handful of friendly fixtures. Local player Nicola Crick of Lutterworth had an event held in her honour as she been playing for 20 years, Rochelle 'Rocky' Clarke England's most capped player attended the event. Amy Whittaker has been selected to represent England at the World deaf sevens in Sydney next year.

\*A full report on the Woman and Girls 2016 – 2017 season is available on request

## **Safeguarding – Helen Wrighten**

Following the resignation of the Safeguarding Manager at the beginning of the year Mike Flatt and I split the Clubs between the two of us. We were their first port of call for any issues which we either dealt with in house or passed to the RFU. We attended as many games as possible and supported the Club Safeguarding Officers where needed. We had presence at the Festivals and the Colts County Cup Final.

I attended the Rugby Safe Conference in May and Mike and I are attending the Safeguarding Conference in June and are developing a Safeguarding strategy and team for the new season.

Our thanks go to Helen and Mike for their work this season.

## **Welfare – Helen Wrighten**

A small number of incidents have been reported during the 2016 – 2017 season. From a welfare perspective we are hoping that this is a good sign and not one that clubs are failing to report overnight stays to the CB.

## **Leicester Tigers F C**

Congratulations again go to those members of the Leicester Tigers club who have represented their countries this season. We wish them and the club success in the future.

Thanks also go to Leicester Tigers for their use of the Welford Road ground for the Senior County Cup and the Laurence Fenton Colts Under 18 County Cup Finals.

### Competitions Report – Kevin Hick

Congratulations go to all the competition winners and a massive thank you goes to those people who helped make the Competitions happen.

The LRU Awards Presentation Evening held again at Cosby Golf Club was a success thanks to the organisational capabilities of Ken Palfreyman, Richard Green and Pauline Harding.

**The competitions summary for Season 2016/17 is as follows:**

#### Cup Competitions:

Senior County Cup Winners	<b>Melton Mowbray RFC</b>
Senior County Cup Runners Up	<b>Syston RFC</b>
Senior County Bowl Winners	<b>Not Contested</b>
Senior County Bowl Runners Up	<b>Not Contested</b>
Senior Presidents Cup Winners	<b>Aylestone Athletic RFC</b>
Senior Presidents Cup Runners Up	<b>Stoneygate RFC</b>
David Brookhouse 2 <sup>nd</sup> XV Cup Winners	<b>Hinckley RFC</b>
David Brookhouse 2 <sup>nd</sup> XV Cup Runners Up	<b>South Leicester RFC</b>
Veterans Cup Winners	<b>Loughborough RFC</b>
Veterans Cup Runners Up	<b>Melton Mowbray RFC</b>

Thanks go to the host clubs for their support.

Thanks also go to the Club Fixture Secretaries for getting the Cups completed, and Simon Chaperon who successfully organised proceedings on the night of the County Cup final at Welford Road this season.

#### Leicestershire Merit Tables

Merit A Winners	<b>Syston RFC 3rds</b>
Merit B Winners	<b>Coalville RFC 2nds</b>
Merit C Winners	<b>Aylestone Athletic RFC</b>

Senior Colts Winners	<b>Lutterworth RFC Colts</b>
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In preparation of the Preparation for 17/18 season there was a successful competitions review meeting held with 21 Clubs Represented. There are six possible additional teams for the 17/18 season in the merit leagues which would give 30 teams competing. A Major area of concern was the number of forfeited games almost 1 in 7 of the merit table games were conceded and almost 1 in 4 of the county cup games. There will be some minor modifications to competition rules and points system to attempt to improve this and the County Cup will revert to a two-tier competition with the main county cup for Midlands 1 and 2 level clubs and a second competition open to all other county clubs. The Presidents cup, second team cup and veterans cup will remain unchanged. The finalised Merit League structure and rule modifications are due to be issued to all clubs by the end of May.

#### RFU National and Midlands Leagues

Leicestershire Level 4 Champions Cup	<b>Leicester Lions RFC</b>
National Ladies Intermediate Plate	<b>Loughborough RFC Ladies</b>
Midlands 5 West (South) Winners	<b>Burbage RFC</b>
Midlands 4 East (South) Winners	<b>Sileby Town RFC</b>

#### Midlands Leagues – Steve Mounfield

Much in the same vein as last year there have been mixed fortunes for Leicestershire Clubs in 2016-17.

Old Newts decided very early in the piece that the difficulty over players availability to travel the distances involved in their League would make their stay impossible and made the move to Leicestershire Merit Tables. Just as early, Burbage took the opportunity to fill a space in Midlands 5 West (S) and were promoted only having lost one game. The other Leicestershire club to win their League were Sileby who will now meet some old and new faces in M3E(N). Congratulations go to them. Unlucky not to be promoted were Coalville who, having come second in M2E(N) lost to Oundle in the playoff for the third promotion spot.

Other clubs to do well in their Leagues were Lutterworth 4<sup>th</sup>, Wyggs 4<sup>th</sup>, Melton 6<sup>th</sup>, Oakham 6<sup>th</sup> and Ashby 6<sup>th</sup>. Sadly, there were two clubs who struggled throughout the season and as a result both Vipers and Jimmies have been relegated for 2017-18.

For next season, there will be a few changes. Triggered initially by the demise of London Welsh, and not helped by clubs moving to Midlands from South and South West, there has been an element of restructuring of the Leagues. This has meant that a few clubs must move areas, Sileby for instance are to move from South to North and others from East to West. Such moves are inevitable from time to time and the choice of which clubs being moved is determined, via RFU Regulations, from the distances that would have to be travelled to away fixtures. One or two have benefitted from this rule. Burbage who are technically an East club, would have had a 50% increase in their mileage figures had they moved to M4E(S) so they have remained in West for the time being.

Administratively 2016-17 was a quiet season with very few fines and no points deductions for any Leicestershire clubs. One change for next year will be a (compulsory) trial at the higher level of a new electronic "card" for notifying match results. This was trialled in a few areas last year and appears to have been very successful. It is expected that, should there be no major problems, this will be rolled out to all levels from 2018-19.

### **Leicester Society of Rugby Referee's – Mark Elliott**

The Society currently has 75 active referees and 27 other members, 8 of which are active Referee Assessors/Match Observers.

The Society Members meet on the last Monday of each month, 19:30 Hrs at Vipers RFC (Sept – Dec) and Belgrave RFC (Jan – April). The Committee meet every month, two weeks prior to the Members meeting.

This season we have supplied Match Officials to over 800 Saturday games, 350 Sunday games and close to 300 mid-week games, with 98% of games notified to us being covered.

There is a growing movement towards more Sunday games and less Saturday games. This is due to the increase in Junior rugby at most clubs and, unfortunately, a decrease in the number of clubs putting 3 and 4 teams out each Saturday.

We have a coaching/mentoring strategy within the Society, where the more experienced referees are paired with less experienced colleagues, to help them develop into the refereeing role and fulfil their potential, whatever that may be. LSRUR is joined in a Federation with the Notts, Linc's & Derby Society. It is through this Federation that referees who show the potential to move up to Midlands Group and beyond to the National Panel, are identified and put forward for consideration. Our Federation representatives meet with those from NLD on a regular basis.

We have the emerging issue of an increasing number of younger referees taking up the whistle. This brings its own challenges with it, most notably from a safeguarding point of view. The Committee are aware of this and we are formulating strategies to accommodate the young persons. The LRU safeguarding office attended our last members meeting. If this route keeps young persons involved in the game of rugby, that is to be celebrated and we will do all we can to encourage them.

Overall, the Society is in very good health and we are already looking forward to the challenges of next season.

Our thanks go to the LSRUR for all their hard work this season

### **Rugby Development Officer's Report – Jenna Bonser**

During the off season last year, we ran a successful u20s festival at Melton RFC which was to encourage lapsed players and lads who had come back from university for the summer to join their clubs again for some social rugby. We aimed to run something similar at Christmas which unfortunately didn't go ahead however we did host another one at Easter at Vipers RFC. We also supported growing touch activity throughout the County by offering financial incentives to host social touch events during the off season which helps with recruitment and also brings in some revenue to clubs during this period, this is continuing into this summer too and has widened to include some NLD touch teams too. We have also run 2 touch referee courses this year which were well attended.

In August, we launched our first 'Return to Rugby' programme with Ashby RFC which proved to be a great success and brought back 27 players to the club who have since played some development fixtures and have remained at the club. We are looking to roll this out to other targeted clubs in August/September 2017.

We started the delivery of CPD last July offering all the new age grade courses u7-u13s which although initially were poorly attended in July, in August numbers picked up and we received excellent feedback from the coaches attending. Once again, this year large numbers of coaches and referees have attended the courses and with the financial support of the CB we have been able to offer a large choice for all levels and abilities. The 17/18 course calendar is currently being planned and should be available to clubs by the end of June 2017.

The RFU club accreditation scheme has changed since Jan 2017 so a number of clubs are working towards achieving the new award at the moment, currently 22 clubs are accredited and all of these have to undertake an annual health check followed by reaccreditation every 2 years. Work is ongoing to encourage those clubs who are not accredited to start to work towards achieving this, it is now relevant for ANY club not just those with mini & junior sections. Thanks to LRU President Brian Hesford for carrying out several presentations of the award throughout the season.

We have had mixed success with our schools and colleges programmes this year – the city schools programme continues to grow steadily with large numbers of kids participating in after school sessions followed by festivals held at Belgrave RFC. The challenge continues to be the transition of these players from school to club however we are continually trying to encourage and support this process. We have once again ran our monthly girl's festivals held at clubs with current girl's sections inviting local schools at u13/15 & 18 to play each other and try and support transition from school to club. There are around 20 schools playing some form of girl's rugby now which is positive. We have also continued with our monthly colleges festivals but this is a challenging area and numbers of teams have been quite poor due to staff and curriculum pressures but we keep trying!

We have continued to offer our support to the 3 Universities and rugby is in a strong position with additional student teams being put out at both Leicester and DMU Universities, our work with Loughborough university has been focussed around the Spirit of Rugby programme and trying to offer opportunities for qualified coaches and referees in the community, work is ongoing in this area.

Several meetings have been held with the British Asian Rugby Association and Leicester Tigers so we can work together to try and grow rugby participation in the Asian community – this is slow progress but with the recent appointment of a full time Tigers coach to look specifically at this area I am confident we will see some impact in 17/18.

We are currently delivering our annual tag programme for children with moderate learning difficulties culminating in a festival in June.

The effective use of the GMS system by clubs remains a challenge and the offer of training is available for any individual and/or club by RFU GMS trainers, it is important to keep encouraging people to try and use it and it can be an effective management tool for clubs when used to its full potential whilst also appreciating some of the feedback about its glitches!

I have continued to be involved in the various sub committees hopefully supporting the CB in trying to develop rugby at all levels in the County – in particular a lot of work has been done with the facility group and the proposed AGP which should be a great asset for the County going forward. I helped the CB identify candidates for the Leadership Academy and presented to this group about the rugby landscape in December. I wish this group well in the future and hope to see them get involved with some of the CB committees in the coming months/years. I have also worked closely with the CB volunteer coordinator on reward and recognition to ensure those key volunteers at clubs are deservedly recognised for all the work they do.

This season we have seen 1 new men's team, 1 new women's team, 2 new junior teams, 3 new u17 teams and 4 teams who were deemed 'at risk' at the end of last season have all been retained. Work is currently going on looking at potential growth and sustain clubs for 17/18 whilst appreciating the fluctuating nature of player commitment and other challenges that we see in the modern game.

Finally, long serving Community Rugby Coach Luke Green has recently been appointed as the Rugby Development Officer for North Warwickshire and I would like to thank him for his work as a CRC in Leicestershire for the last 10+ years. Tim Westwood has been appointed as his replacement and I am sure he will continue the good work for the County.

The CB endorses the thanks and work of Luke Green his enthusiasm for the game and coaching will be missed

## **Volunteer Coordinator's Report – Helen Wrighten**

The season started with the hopes of holding a Volunteer Recognition Evening but with only 7 out of 30+ clubs putting 2 volunteers forward for recognition two dates were cancelled. We eventually decided to hold the event alongside the County Cup Finals at Welford Road on May 9<sup>th</sup> where the 14 Volunteers and their guest had a hot buffet, presentation of an engraved hip flask (men) or engraved glass (ladies) followed by an excellent game of rugby. The evening was a success and the comments from those that attended was complimentary.

I was invited and attended Lutterworth's Thank You Evening which was very well supported by the Club volunteers and their Young Ambassadors.

A number of Volunteers were put forward to the RFU for various recognition awards which saw Henri Ginvert receiving the RFU President's Value the Volunteer Award.

With the launch of the Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer Recognition Awards a number of Volunteers from around the County were nominated and will attend an evening at Hinckley to say thank you and one of the Volunteers has been put forward for the Volunteer of the Year.

Our thanks go to Helen for her work this season.

## **Facilities and Funding Coordinator – Richard Hickson**

The facilities group met on four occasions during the year to progress the wishes and aspirations of the counties clubs and to progress the initiatives outlined in the PFR and through the NatWest Challenge. The group continued the audit of clubs needs throughout the county through the club insight programme and clubs have been approached where help was deemed to be possible and effective.

This year the largest RFU contribution to county club's development is the proposed all weather pitch at Leicester Forest.

Other projects undertaken this term include a grant towards floodlighting at Ashby, pitch drainage at Coalville and help with floodlighting at South Leicester.

As part of the terms of the PFR facilities have coordinated two successful conferences, an energy saving evening at Leicester Forest and a ground keeping event at Vipers, both well received by clubs, sixteen clubs were represented at the energy saving evening and there were twenty-four attendees to the grounds keeping event.

We awarded grants of signage to promote clubs to the wider population to five clubs. Three clubs have been awarded £1000.00 grants towards pitch maintenance projects. As part of the ongoing LRU project, three sets of goalposts have gone to county clubs, old newts, Coalville and Birstall. Seven sets of post protectors have been distributed to clubs on a first come first served basis. Two clubs have been granted RFF grants and two been given loans. Two clubs have applications pending to RFF, one to Sport England Small Grants Scheme. Two clubs have benefited from visits and advice from Keith Kent, Twickenhams groundsman and three more have received advice about ground keeping from John Upton our newly appointed volunteer pitch adviser.

Five clubs were invited to the Nat West challenge evening in February and received £500, project winners will be decided independently by Nat West programme.

The group have submitted draft proposals for projects to be included in next year's PFR.

Altogether sixteen clubs have benefited this year from one or more LRU/RFU initiatives.

Sadly, this will be my (I think) fifteenth and last facilities report to the clubs, it's time for a new perspective and personally I need to spend more time with my grandchildren and the management of my own rugby club is becoming more demanding. I believe the county has traveled a long way since my appointment in 2002, but there is so much more to be done, and I hope my successor will carry the programme forward. I'm not entirely abandoning the county, if there is any advice I can give on a purely personal basis, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thanks go to Richard Hickson and his team for the work that they have put in on behalf of the CB and the Leicestershire Rugby Union Clubs.

## Discipline – Richard Green

The Discipline Panel has met ten times this season which is less than the eighteen times last season. The total cases heard was 69, an increase from last season's 43.

Outline details are:

7 not proven  
4 heard by the RFU as National League clubs  
21 juniors, 18 clubs, 2 schools, 1 college (Brooksby)  
4 Students - 2 male, 2 female

By offence - Seniors:

10(4)(A) punch – 10  
10(4)(A) Striking with elbow - 1  
10(4)(A) head butt - 1  
10 (4)(B) stamp- 1  
10(4)(M) 2 yellows in 1 match - 13  
10(4)(M) verbal abuse - 9  
10(4)(S) dissent - 1  
10(4)(C) kick - 1  
10(4)(E) dangerous tackle - 1  
5.12 non-player abuse of match official - 1

By offence - Juniors:

10(4)(E) dangerous tackle - 1  
10(4)(M) abuse - 4  
10(4)(A) punch - 6  
10(4)(A) head butt - 1  
10(4)(M) 2 yellow cards in 1 match - 4  
10(4)(M) unsporting behaviour - 1  
10 (4)(C) kick - 1  
5.12 replacements entering field of play and joining fight - 2

By club:	Seniors	Juniors
Market Harborough	5	-
System	2	2
Hinckley	5	1
Market Bosworth	2	-
Coalville	2	1
Ashby	2	-
Leicester Lions	1	-
Aylestone Athletic	2	-
Leicester Forest	1	2
Belgrave	1	-
Loughborough University	3	-
Oakham	1	1
Vipers	2	3
Aylestonians	1	-
Melton Mowbray	1	1
South Leicester	1	-
Oadby Wyggestonians	1	2
Lutterworth	1	1
De Montfort University	1	-
Loughborough	-	1
Loughborough Grammar School		1
Uppingham School		1
Brooksby College		1

Two clubs were brought before the Panel at the end of April for totalling up five proven cases (5.12 charges of bringing the game into disrepute) during the season.

Hinckley RFC had already a suspended fine from the previous season for the same offence, mainly in respect of their junior members, and part of this fine was imposed whilst the rest was suspended for a further season. This action took into account the fact that the cases for the current season were down, mainly, to the actions of their senior members and not their junior members where their record had improved dramatically.

Market Harborough RUFC were fined for the same offence and the fine was suspended for one season. Both clubs were advised to improve their senior member's disciplinary records for the next season or the suspended fines would be imposed.

Clubs should note that Discipline Panels are becoming concerned about the level of abuse against official's cases and will take serious action against those found guilty of such offences.

My thanks go to Brian Hesford for all his hard work and his patience with the difficult interface with our clubs and to all members of the panels who have given of their time and expertise willingly again this year. Particular thanks go to those members who have taken on the challenge of stepping up to become panel chairmen, a role that can be quite demanding at times. Temporarily filling the shoes of our previous Chairman, Peter Howard, has not been easy but I am sure that the new Sub-Committee Chairman and panel chairmen will eventually become as expert and understanding as Peter was during his reign.

### **Youth Discipline – Les Vernon**

In total, there are 22 red cards all admitted and dealt with by the clubs. This is a substantial increase on the previous season. What has not been included in this return are the actions by clubs in disciplinary matters outside of Red Cards but included in the referee's report, these being a parent banned from attending 4 games. Also, a team that would not own up to events in a game so the club suspended the team for 1 game. School players sent off, there were only 3 reported. These were from games refereed by society referees. It is felt that in games that are refereed by teachers, if a player is sent off then this is not being reported or the players are being replaced meaning that any sanction is avoided although this is not proven and is very difficult to do so. This practice also appears to be happening in other CBs. Also, some clubs are failing to report players being sent off, and have refused to cooperate in investigations regarding acts of foul play. These matters have been resolved but clubs need to realise that, if it continues to be a trend then there are actions that can be and will be taken.



Details of the Youth cases which came to the attention of the Discipline Panel:

	TOTAL SCHOOL & YOUTH CASES SUBMITTED	S&Y CASES DISMISSED	SCHOOL CASES	S&Y ADMITTED	S&Y NOT ADMITTED	10.4(a) STRIKE	10.4(a) HEAD	10.4(a) OTHER	10.4(b)	10.4(c)	10.4(d)	10.4(e)	10.4(f)	10.4(g)	10.4(h)	10.4(i)	10.4(j)	10.4(k)	10.4(L)	10.4(m)	10.4(n)	10.4(o)	10.4(s)	5.12
LEICS	22	0	3	22	0	7	1	1	2	2		1								6				2

ONGOING	S&Y CASES ADDED UP	
0	22	Leicestershire

10.4.M Breakdown	PHYSICAL M.O. ABUSE	VERBAL M.O. ABUSE	THREATENING WORDS OR ACTIONS AT MATCH OFFICIAL	2 YELLOWS	EYE AREA	HAIR PULL	BITING	VERBAL ABUSE OF PLAYERS	SPITTING	RACIAL ABUSE	ANY OTHER 10.4(m) ACTS	TOTAL
LEICS	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	6

**YOUTH 5.12**

**Reason for 5.12**

**Sanction/outcome**

**M.O. ABUSE**

U15 RAN ONTO PITCH AND HIT OPPONENT 3 TIMES CLUB BAN 6 GAMES

NO

U15 RAN ON TO PITCH AND HIT OPPONENT ONCE CLUB BAN 4 GAMES

NO

**OTHER OFFENCES**

**CLUB SANCTION**

U14 10.4 (B) STAMP TO BODY CLUB BAN 1 GAME

U14 10.4 (B) STAMP TO BODY CLUB BAN 1 GAME

U15		10.4 (A) PUNCH		CLUB BAN 2 GAMES
U15		10.4 (E) DANGEROUS TACKEL		CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U15		10.4 (B) STAMP TO BODY		CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U15		10.4 (M) 2 YELLOWS FOUL PLAY		CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U16		10.4 (A) PUNCH		CLUB BAN 2 GAMES
U16		10.4 (A) PUNCH		CLUB BAN 2 GAMES
U16		10.4 (M) PLAYER ABUSE		CLUB BAN 2 GAMES
U17		10.4 (A) PUNCH		CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U17	10.4 (A)	ELBOW TO HEAD	10.4 (A) ELBOW TO HEAD	CLUB BAN 3 GAMES
U17	10.4 (A)	PUNCH		CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U17	10.4(A)		HEAD STRIKE	CLUB BAN 4 GAMES +NON-RUGBY SANCTION
U18	10.4(C)		KICK	CLUB BAN 4 GAMES
U18	10.4 (A)		PUNCH	SCHOOL BAN 2 GAMES
U18	10.4 (A)		PUNCH	SCHOOL BAN 1 GAME
U18	10.4 (A)		PUNCH	CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U18	10.4 (M)		2 YELLOWS	CLUB BAN SOS
U18	10.4 (M)		UN SPORTING ACT	CLUB BAN 1 GAME
U18	10.4 (M)		2 YELLOWS	SCHOOL BAN 1 GAME

The thanks of the Management Committee go to Richard, his team of willing panel members and to his discipline secretary for all their hard work throughout the season



## **Concluding Remarks**

Congratulations go to all players that have represented Leicestershire at all levels so admirably over the last season.

The Management Committee, Sub Committee Chairmen and Team Managers would like to thank all those member clubs who have supported and assisted the Union during the season both in supplying players for our teams and for the use of their facilities. In particular I would like to thank those clubs who have hosted County finals matches and congratulate them on their hospitality.

Lastly a vote of thanks goes to our outgoing President, Brian Hesford, who during his year of office visited almost every County club and supported our County matches at many venues. Brian has been yet another very good ambassador for the Union at those functions to which he has been invited. Brian's support at County events and matches has been welcomed by all the hard-working Team Managers and Committee Members. Brian's work will continue in the 2017 – 2018 season as he still retains the role of Discipline Secretary

Kevin Whitcombe  
Honorary Secretary  
Leicestershire Rugby Union Ltd

25<sup>th</sup> June 2017