



**LEICESTERSHIRE  
RUGBY UNION**

**ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING**

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

**President:**

**Steve Rice**

**Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**7.00 p.m.**



## Annual Report: Season 2018 - 2019

This report reviews the activities of Leicestershire Rugby Union Ltd. for the season 2018 - 2019.

### Administration and Governance

During the season, the Executive Committee met four times, there were three Operating Committee meetings, two Special General Meetings and one Clubs 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 four Executive Committee meetings has been:

P Green	4	K Whitcombe	4	D Toon	3	S Rice	4	P Howard	3
B Crellin	3	G Bates	4	H Wrighten	3	M Birr	4	M Powell	1

During the season, we have continued to review the committee structures within the union, its constitution, and its processes. We have unfortunately been without a Hon Treasurer for the season as Kim Swift has stepped down. The vacancy in the treasurer role has proved to be challenging with the role currently being managed by the CB Chair and several committee members. Additionally, Dean Toon has stood down as chair of the AGR committee and this is reported on in the AGR entry. Mark Powell also stood down at the end of the season from his role as an Executive Committee Member as did Simon Chaperone from his role as Senior Men's Manager. In relation to the latter Leon Brown of Lutterworth RFC has stepped into Simons shoes and we welcome him to the CB and wish him all the best for the future.

The CB thank Kim, Dean, Mark and Simon for their service to the CB and its Clubs. Nonetheless, it is hoped that our member clubs will assist in the search for replacements for both Kim and Mark.

In late 2018 the CB was informed that there would be a new process introduced in relation to the way we are to be funded, the Planning Funding and Reporting process is to be replaced with a Local Rugby Plan [LRP] which will move the CB, its member clubs and the RFU locally to adopt a more pragmatic approach to rugby delivery at its grassroots. As part of that process the Leicestershire Rugby Union attended a Strategy and Funding Consultation Meeting attended by area 4 CB members and as a result of this and club consultation has now submitted Leicestershire's LRP to the RFU for approval. It is hoped to present elements of this plan at the AGM. The Leicestershire Rugby Union will continue with its' Development and Fiscal Plans during the season 2019 – 2020.

The season saw the Leicestershire Rugby Union enhance its use of its now head office at 47 Highmeres Road, Thurmaston, Leicester, LE4 9LZ. The move to the permanent site is necessary for the Constituent Body to become more effective and professional in its administration of the business of delivering grassroots rugby across all levels and gender.

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 to give their officers and members some protection against any legal action for negligence that may be taken against their clubs.

Leicestershire in partnership with Warwickshire continue to maintain dialogue with **Hrvatski ragbijaški savez** the Croatian Rugby Union in the World Rugby Unity Project. This project was developed to aid European Countries to grow rugby in their countries. The project proved to be problematic, however there have been several governmental and Croatian Rugby management changes that led to a delegation visiting the CB in early February 2019. The visit has revitalised momentum in the key objective of growing the game and its infrastructure at AGR Level. It is anticipated that as a result of this improved position that we will in the future be able to support an AGR team to tour in Croatia.

I extend my appreciation to all those volunteers serving on CB committees, at times it is not easy, nevertheless we continue to manage and administer the business that is the Leicestershire Rugby Union.

## Age Grade Rugby – Dean Toon

The season saw the guidelines from the RFU being adjusted, notably around playing down which has been mainly adhered too. Season 2019/20 sees the introduction of the Half Game Rule which has been widely publicised and some clubs in the county have adopted this into the season.

The tag festival saw almost 900 children taking part at U7 &U8 levels.

The County ran its first waterfall tournament at U12/U13 level which proved successful and the standard of rugby was excellent in both age grades. It was noted by numerous onlookers about the skill levels displayed at these age grades, with ball through the hands and use of space being at a high level. Again in the ethos of AGR all participants enjoyed equal playing time and medals were awarded to all.

The Junior and Colts Competitions were again keenly contested and congratulations go to all that participated in delivering some great Rugby for all to enjoy.

We would like to thank all the hosting clubs for assisting the CB with the staging of events, Melton, Syston, Market Bosworth, Ashby and South Leicester. I would like to place on record my thanks to the AGR team in facilitating the festivals, comps

The AGR section has once again demonstrated improvements in the core values this season and this is down to great work by the army of volunteers at the clubs. I would like to place on record my thanks to the wider LRU AGR personnel in Competitions, Festivals, Safeguarding and Discipline. This year I am also delighted to announce a successor to my role, Liz Causon who I have no doubt will thrive in her new post commencing in the 19/20 season.

### Roll of Honour: –

Colts League - Syston
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County Cup
Under 14 – Market Harborough
Under 15 - Oakham
Under 16 – Market Harborough
Under 17 – Market Harborough
Colts Cup - Syston

County Plate
Under 14 – Hinckley
Under 15 – Leicester Forest
Under 16 – South Leicester

### Leicestershire Schools Rugby Football Union- Jason Button

To Be Confirmed

### Director of Rugby – Marc Birr

### Leicestershire Men.

After a difficult lead up to the men's campaign, with an unfortunate and regrettable situation between the union, the head coach and the Manager, which resulted in the resignation of both Geraint Davis (Head Coach) and Simon Chaperon (Team Manager) just before training started. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Geraint and Simon for their hard work and wish them all the best in the future.

A new coaching team was put in temporary control of this seasons campaign. Lead by Chris Campbell as Head Coach from Nottingham Trent University, Leon Brown of Lutterworth RFC as Manager. Supported by Ben Avent, Joe Glover and Tom Wheatcroft all from Hinckley RFC also Keith Burnett (Sports Therapist). I would like to thank them for all their hard work over this successful campaign.



After an HWO over Staffordshire, a big win at Nuneaton RFC over Warwickshire. Followed by a narrow win against East Midlands at Vipers RFC the men set up the trip to HQ for the final. And at that final Leicestershire Men won the Bill Beaumont Division Two title with a comprehensive 38-18 win over Surrey at Twickenham.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the three sponsors involved in the campaign. Redshift Associates, Idyllic Bespoke Joinery Ltd, and Ideal Building Services.

Played 4 won 4 points for 145 points against 35

### **Leicestershire Ladies**

The ladies also had a successful campaign with a trip to Twickenham, but the result was disappointing with the ladies falling short, after a spirited 21-36 performance against Buckinghamshire. The result aside this was a fantastic achievement and experience for all involved in this year's Gill Burns Division 2 Championship, as the final was played at Twickenham for the first time.

The ladies won all three league games against Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire. Which set up a home semi-final against Hertfordshire. This game showed just how much the ladies' game has developed over a short time, with Leicestershire scoring in the last play of the game to set up a Twickenham Final winning 24-22.

I would like to thank Steve Duffus (Head Coach), Trevor Goddard (Manager), Lewis Glover, Lewis Jones, Jenny Renton and Ben Lowe (sports therapist) for all they hard work.

Finally, a big thank you to the sponsors of the Leicestershire Ladies, Principle Financial Services and Cathy Stephens Jewellery.

Played 5 won 4 lost 1 points for 152 points against 75.

### **Leicestershire U20s**

Leicestershire U20s made it to the Jason Leonard Division Two Semi-final against Berkshire. Unfortunately, the U20 lost the game 39-10.

Leicestershire won all three league games against Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire setting up a home quarterfinal against Northumberland at Syston RFC, which the U20s won 20-13.

The U20s had 12 players go forward to the Midlands U20s trails. Which lead to 3 players being selected for this year's Midlands U20s squad to play in the regional development weekend at Derby RFC. One Leicestershire player Will Roberts of Leicester Lions RFC was put on the standby list for the England Counties U20 tour to Romania

I would like to thank Joe Allen (Head Coach), Simon Chaperon (Manager), Alex White and Steve Barker for all their hard work over the Leicestershire U20s campaign and get the U20 up and running after a break for 4 years.

Played 5 Won 4 lost 1 points for 150 points against 117

### **Leicestershire U18s Boys**

Leicestershire U18s had another successful campaign with 14 players going forward to the Midlands U18s development training sessions. The biggest of any other CB for the Third year running in the Midlands. In this season super Sunday fixtures saw the U18 suffer they first defeat in the 3 seasons against East Midlands but had two convincing wins over Warwickshire and Staffordshire.

4 players made it to the Midlands squad for the regional development weekend. With Josh Brown from Syston RFC Being Selected for this year's England Counties U18s tour to Ireland (which was a draw 1-1) one other player was put on the standby list.

I would like to thank Graham Dawe and Jaime Monteiro (Managers), Steg Williams, Aaron Pike, Lewis Glover for all their hard work.

Special thanks to Mick Corley who had stood down to take on Oadby Wiggs Colts as Head Coach, thank you for all your hard work over the past three years. The coaching team has been retained for the next three seasons. The teams record is as follows:



Played 9 won 7 drew 1 lost 1, 42 players to Midlands trials, 18 Midlands Squad players and 7 England Counties players over the three seasons.

I would like to thank this year's sponsors of the Under 18s GDFE Services and Wells Macfarlane.

### **Leicestershire U18s Girls**

The girls' county programme started on Sunday 27th January with over 40 U18s girls at Birstall RFC. On Sunday 17th February was the final development training day where the coaches picked their final squads for the programme. The U18s selected 35 players into the playing squads.

Leicestershire held a Festival all day on Sunday 24th Feb at Syston RFC welcoming 3 other CB's (Warks, North Mids & Staffs) to play 3 formats of rugby (15 a side, 7's & X7's). The U18s only lost two games throughout the campaign over the 4 festivals. This was reflected in the nomination for the centre of excellence. Leicestershire had 14 nominations go forward to Loughborough Lightning RFC.

I would like to thank David Challenger (Head Coach) Jon Foster (Manager) David Young and Development coach David Kennedy for all the hard work throughout the season.

### **Leicestershire U17s Boys**

This is a development squad for next season U18s Boys. There was a development day up at Ratcliffe College 6 training session and 4 games. The U17s won 3 games this season against East Midlands, Notts Lincs & Derby, Staffordshire. Their only defeat was against Lancashire U17s at Sale RFC which was a big set up for Leicestershire U17s. Who put in a fantastic performance and the results could have easily gone the other way?

Next season's U18s squad has been selected with a wide number of clubs, schools and colleges involved.

I would like to thank Jamie Ray who has joined the U17s and U18s Coaching team as a Development coach.

### **Leicestershire 16s Boys**

The U16s had a successful set of results this season. Beating NLD on Super Sunday before going on to further wins against Warwickshire (home) and Staffordshire A and B (away). Their last game was a full home fixture against NLD which ended in a hard-fought draw.

19 players from the squad have been selected for the next stage with Tigers; one of those from outside the Tigers PDG. Five other players have so far been invited to join the U17s training squad.

90 players attended the trials in November from clubs all around the CB.

I would like to thank Troy Thacker (Head Coach) Stuart Davis (Manager) & Paul Callard for all their hard work this season.

Special Thanks to Stuart Davis the U16s Manager who has stood down as Manager this season after 3 years in the job.

### **Leicestershire U15s Girls**

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February saw over 40 U15s girls attend the trial at Birstall RFC, I hope you agree that this was a very good start to the programme.

On Sunday 17th February the selected girls were asked back for development training. The U15s selected 30 players for the playing squads.

Leicestershire held a Festival all day on Sunday 24th February at Syston RFC welcoming 3 other CB's (Warks, North Mids & Staffs) to play 3 formats of rugby (15 a side, 7's & X7's). After a foggy start it all kicked off with girls' rugby playing on 4 pitches all at the same time. Feedback from the players and parents from all CB's was very positive.

Leicestershire U15s Girls had mixed results winning and losing in some close games throughout the 4 festival between Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire and North Midlands.

Leicestershire U15s Girls have had 6 Nominated players for the centre of excellence at Loughborough Lightning.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ofure Ugiagbe (Fuzz, Head Coach) Jon Foster (Manager), Jenny Renton and Development coach Eleanor Wilkinson for their hard work over the season. A thank you must go Syston RFC for their excellence in hosting the Girls Festival for the CB.

### **Conclusion**

We have been very successful at representative level within Leicestershire this season in all areas of the game. Something the CB and the clubs should be very proud of. There has been a tremendous amount of hard work and passion been put in by everyone involved in representative game from the players, coaches, managers, all the clubs which have hosted games for the CB and not forgetting all the parents. It's has been a pleasure to assist, coach with you and support every one of you. There are some challenges ahead of us to continue with the success we have got use to over the past few seasons. I intend to capitalise on this success to provide all the squads with what they require to continue with this passion for representative rugby within Leicestershire.

### **Womens and Girls**

The Women's and Girl's forum is growing and we now have a regular attendance from 8 clubs that have girls sections. The forum is starting to gain momentum in terms of building teams across the clubs involved and a working together ethos is starting to emerge for the benefit of all clubs. Tam Bream has stood again for a further year as Chairman and following several years of continued support Yvonne Copson has stood down and been replaced by Eleanor Wilkinson as Secretary. Thanks must go to Yvonne for her valued and active support over the last three years. Various joint activities are planned across next season to try to build the teams with less numbers across the age groups whilst giving play time to all participants.

### **Girls – Jon Foster (Manager)**

Girls county programme started on Sunday 27th January with trials with over 40 girls at u18' followed the next week with over 40 u15's, a very good start to the programme.

On Sunday 17th February 70 girls were invited back for a development training day where the coaches picked there finish squads for the programme.

The u15's picked 30 players and the u18's picked 35 players as their final training / playing squads.

Leicestershire held an all day Festival on Sunday 24th February at Syston RFC welcoming 3 other CB's (Warks, North Mids & Staffs) to play 3 formats of rugby (15 a side, 7's & X7's). After a foggy start it all kicked off with girl's rugby playing on 4 pitches all at the same time. Feedback from the players and parents from all CB's was very positive.

Leicestershire girls had mixed results with both ages winning and losing in some close fought games.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Syston RFC for their excellence hosting and for all LRU committee who helped on the day. THANK YOU.

On Sunday 10th March after some quick changes to our venue due to weather conditions, Leicestershire 15's & 18's went to Rugby Lions ground to play Warks for an afternoon of 3 format rugby with mixed results. The only downside to the day was having one player from each age having to visit the local hospital with what turned out to be broken ankles. The coaches and management wish the girls a speedy recovery.

On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March the u15's went to Rugby Lions to play Staffs in a 15 a side game. Leicestershire where a very strong team and scored very quickly to take a commanding lead by half time, unfortunately a Staffs player had an injury just before half time and the game was halted whilst waiting for an ambulance. The girls then had to wait 40mins until the other game on the other pitch had finished so they could finish the game. They played the second half and won the game.

Also on the day the u18's travelled to Walsall RFC to play Staffs, which was a very close game with Leicestershire coming away with a win.

14 players have been nominated for the COE programme. They will know sometime in July if they are successful.

My opinion of the programme is that we have a good coaching base and the players are enjoying playing rugby.

## **Womens**

There was no falling down at the final hurdle for Leicestershire's women this year.

Wins over Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire saw us top our pool for the third season running and set up a home semi-final against Hertfordshire. Despite having to come from behind all game Leicestershire never gave up and scored in the last play of the game in a superbly contested and physical encounter, there was going to be no repeat of the Semi Final disappointment last year.

The icing on the cake this year is that the Final is at Twickenham and will be a day to remember for all concerned.

The coaching staff of Stephen Duffus, Lewis Glover, Lewis Jones, Jenny Renton, and Team Manager Trevor Goddard along with the representative group of players are to be congratulated for this achievement and we await the outcome of another proud moment for Leicestershire's women's Rugby.

Our thanks also go out to our Sponsor Principle Financial Services for their continued support and to Birstall RFC, which has been the women's home ground for the past two seasons and all their support for allowing the use of their facilities, hosting home games pre and post-match food and ensuring pitches are marked and set up for us to play on.

We also look forward to those girls transitioning from the U18s, recent success from that age group would be Grace Stanbridge who has played in two of the pool games and Issy Drexler a cup winner first time round and this year saw her invited to the Scotland Futures program and training with the U20s.

### **Safeguarding – Helen Wrighten**

The County Safeguarding Conference was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019. 15 Safeguarding Officers attended from 12 Clubs. There was a good mix of long standing and new Safeguarding Officers in attendance. The format sitting round tables seemed to work as the Clubs were able to share experiences and some good discussion took place.

Any reports that were referred to the RFU were passed back to the County to deal with. Most were education and clash of personalities. At the time of writing this report there is nothing outstanding.

We have purchased five conduct boards to display at festivals and junior competitions.

We have attended several games and cup finals including the Colts Cup Final at Welford Road on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.

We have had in a Club Audits from the following Clubs this season thank you:-

Syston, South Leicester, Shepshed, Sileby, Oadby Wyggestonians, Melton Mowbray, Loughborough, Leicester Lions, Oakham and Coalville.

Several In Touch and Playing it Safe Courses have been held over the County and were well attended.

We attended the RFU Safeguarding Conference on the 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Rugby Safe (Welfare) – Helen Wrighten**

We attended an Area 4 Rugby Safe meeting 13<sup>th</sup> February which highlighted the need for Rugby Safe Officers in every Club which will be high on the agenda for next season. All teams need to have a first aider with a minimum of emergency first aid Course this will also be in the forefront over the coming seasons.

Mike Flatt will be the Rugby Safe Manager for the County next season.

A number of incidents have been reported over the season but only one that required an overnight stay.

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

Every year we are asked to nominate someone for the RFU Presidents Volunteer of the year; this year our nomination was Andy Beevers from Oadby Wyggestonians. Andy had a day of hospitality watching a Quilter International Game.

The Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer of the year awards evening this year was held for the first time alongside our Volunteer Recognition evening at the County Cup finals at Welford Road on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May.



There were 24 nominations from 10 Clubs, County and Referees Society. This year's County Volunteer of the Year chosen by Mitsubishi Motors was Lloyd Hankins from Ashby RFC. Lloyd will attend the Black-Tie Dinner at Twickenham in September.

Mutual Wealth international tickets were awarded to Paul Collier, Ashby and Simon Phelps, Coalville.

Lutterworth once again held a Volunteer Recognition evening which I was unfortunately unable to attend but thank you for the invite.

100 Quilter Final tickets were offered to our Clubs for Players aged 18 – 24 who had transitioned into senior rugby or returned to the game. A number of Clubs took up the offer and visited Twickenham on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June to watch the Barbarian Games.

Thank you to all volunteers in the County, you make rugby in Leicestershire the great sport it is today.

### **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**

#### **Merit Tables**

The merit tables this season featured 30 clubs, after South Leicester 2nds withdrew early on struggling to fulfil fixtures, an increase of 1 from the previous season consequently more fixtures were played this year with 233 games played with 45 conceded (16%) this compares with at this stage last year 192 played and 56 conceded (22.5%). This shows a positive improvement as more games were played and the proportion of forfeited games dropped by a third. This I believe, although have no hard evidence to back it up, is a result of tweaks to the competition rules which have encouraged sides to loan players to ensure games are played and clubs co-operating to "share" players when they have no game themselves. Some of the increase in games has probably been at the expense of friendlies as more clubs enter the merit leagues to provide fixtures with the friendly fixtures being so much more difficult to find via the fixture pools.

Merit A has been won by Syston 3rds for a third year running with Lutterworth 2nds narrowly beating new participants Kettering 2nds for 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

Merit B Winners were Stoneygate who were pushed to the end by runners up Aylestone Athletic.

Merit C is the closest competition with three teams finishing equal on 91 points with Shepshed being victorious on points scored with Leicester Forest 2nds runners up and an unlucky Vipers 3rds finishing in 3rd.

More teams are seeking to enter the merit leagues for next season, Sutton Bonnington and Oundle 2nds have applied to join Merit A and Oadby Wyggs 3rds, Market Harborough 3rds and Market Bosworth 3rds are looking to enter Merit C with Anstey also considering re-joining next season. That would give a league of 10 and two of 13 with 36 teams competing.

#### **County Cup Competitions**

The County Cups produced some very competitive finals over the three finals events with much reduced numbers of games conceded throughout the competition with the exception of the Vets Cup where of the twelve scheduled games; including the final only five were actually played. Despite that the final saw Hinckley narrowly defeat Melton in an excellent contest.

Other Winners were

County Cup - Syston,  
County Bowl - Leicester Forest  
2<sup>nd</sup> Team Cup - Lutterworth

Runners Up - Oadby Wyggs  
Runners Up - Birstall  
Runners Up - Oadby Wyggs



2<sup>nd</sup> Team Bowl - Burbage  
Presidents Cup - Stoneygate

Runners Up - Ashby  
Runners Up - Aylestone Athletic

## **RFU National and Midlands Leagues**

### **Midlands Leagues – Steve Mounfield**

The 2018/19 season was a difficult one for Leicestershire clubs in the Midlands Leagues. Having been promoted last year, Syston have fallen back again to Midlands 1East, their place in Midlands Premier being taken by South Leicester who have also been relegated, this time from National 2.

In M1E, Syston replace Melton who move down to M2ES after a particularly tough season and they replace Oakham who are relegated from there to M3ES. They themselves replace Birstall who drop down to M4ES.

In the North of the County, Ashby are relegated from M2EN to M3EN where they are joined by Sileby, one of the few to buck the trend and be promoted, reversing last year's relegation to M4ES. The change from South to North will bring them into contact with some new faces.

The other promotes are Leicester Forest to M2ES, Market Harborough to M1E and Burbage, our only club in the West, who move from M4WS to M3WS.

We thus have four promotions and six relegations with the remainder being non-movers in terms of levels, though one or two clubs, like Sileby, have been asked to move from South to North and vice-versa. Congratulations and commiserations to all.

In addition to their promotion, further congratulations are due to Burbage and Forest who were champions of their Leagues and for whom I have their plaques if they will contact me.

It seems to have been Forest's year as they did well in the Cup, winning the Midlands Division Senior Vase before coming up against a strong Northallerton side in the RFU Semi Final, thus being denied their day at Twickenham.

The only significant change for 2019/20 will be that Electronic Match Cards will be used for all League matches at all levels. Training dates are being arranged for those clubs not currently using them. This system, whilst imposing strict time constraints in reporting results, has significantly improved the reporting of players and results thus reducing clubs' administrative burden resulting in fewer fines.

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

#### **Current Officers of the Society**

President	Kerrel Wills
Chairman	Mark Elliott
Secretary	John Hill
Treasurer	Nick Lacey

#### **Committee Members**

Appointments Secretary	Mark Elliott
Re-Appointments Secretary	Kerrel Wills
Mid-Week Appt. Secretary	Louis Massarella
Sunday Appt. Secretary	Duncan Chandler
Exchange Secretary	Rob Knapp
Training Secretary	Tom Brucciani
Recruitment Secretary	Noel Manchester
Society Advisor Development Sec	Geoff Blackburn
Grading Secretary	Peter Bower
Promotions Secretary	Josh Burgess

The Society currently has 80 active referees and 26 other members, 10 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 been notified of 1920 games for us to appoint Match Officials to. The breakdown of matches is as follows:-

Summary	Games	Clubs	Schools/University	Cancelled
<b>1st Team</b>	468	311	94	63
<b>2nd Teams</b>	418	235	77	106
<b>3rd Teams</b>	125	69	28	28
<b>Others</b>	84	32	11	41
<b>Ladies</b>	111	64	24	23
<b>Colts-U18</b>	198	105	33	60
<b>Juniors</b>	516	315	97	104
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>1131</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>425</b>
Games %		75.65	24.35	

There is still 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. There are a handful of local clubs who are struggling to put a single side out!

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.

Any referee who has the potential to improve their grade becomes part of this Development Squad.

LSRUR is joined in a Federation with the Notts, Lincs & 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.

Over the course of this season we, as a Society, have become full voting members of the RFU and now have the Rugby Football Refereeing Union as our Constituent body. This brings with it the necessity to use the RFU match official appointing tool, called Who's The Ref. This is an 'off the shelf' package that the RFU have purchased and is not as good as our own appointments system that we are fortunate to have within LSRUR. The Committee are working hard to ensure that the two systems can be integrated, so that the local clubs and referees retain the ease of use and functionality of our own system, going forward.

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. 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.

The Society Annual dinner, held at Leicester Tigers on the 12<sup>th</sup> April, was another success. We had Maggie Alfonsi as our keynote speaker who was very well received.

The Committee were very disappointed that the LRU refused to fund the LRU discipline committee table at the dinner; so much so that we funded the table ourselves. This group of people work hard week in, week out and are fundamental to local community rugby and maintaining the discipline required. It is incredibly disappointing that the LRU fail to recognise and reward this work.

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

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

In the period just before I went off on maternity leave (/July/Aug/Sept 2018) the RFU was going through a staffing restructure that effected the local RFU delivery team therefore I am only able to report from quarter 2 onwards (from October 2018)

October – December 2018:

A new RFU all schools programme was launched working with Leicester Forest RFC and city schools working with both boys and girls u12-u15s.

A ladies Inner Warrior campaign was launched and delivered and a female only masterclass was held with @ 30 attendees.

Monthly social touch sessions were held on the AGP with @ 20 regular attendees

A total of 638 people attended various CPD and coaching courses throughout quarter 1 & 2.

January – March 2019:

Started planning for 19/20 season and offered GMS drop in sessions - these were well received with 9 clubs, CB personnel and the referee society all going along.

Another Inner Warrior campaign was launched to recruit adult females to the game

Reviewed the colts league and made some minor adjustments for the 19/20 season

Rugby Football Foundation green deal loan awarded to Vipers RFC for LED internal lighting conversion, RFF grant for Lutterworth to replace goalposts and pitch advisors visited Leicester Lions, Birstall, Stoneygate and Oakham RFC.

12 clubs submitted NatWest Rugby Force applications

April – June 2019:

Started to work with a lot of clubs on their RFU accreditation health checks and reaccreditations

CRCs supported the inner warrior sessions

Assisted with the identification of volunteers for the Mitsubishi volunteers event at Leicester Tigers in May

Age grade courses promoted and delivered

Promotion of NatWest rugby force weekend (22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> June)

Planning for 19/20 – working with CB on new Local Rugby Partnership Plan and working with CRCs on focus club support.

Having returned from maternity leave I am currently trying to meet with as many clubs as possible and ensure all plans are in place for the coming season in terms of RFU support both on and off the field.

I would like to thank Anna Macdonnell for covering the RDO role for most of this last season and wish her well on her return to CRC in Warwickshire – and many thanks to our CRCs Tim and Phil for all of their hard work.

### **Facilities and Funding Coordinator – Vacant**

The group continues to possess a mixed membership consisting of volunteers and RFU staff overseeing the annual action plan and club facility developments in the Leicestershire and Rutland area. The group has also recruited a further member, John Upton, who currently serves the Leicestershire area as a Volunteer Pitch Advisor to rugby clubs. A chair for the group remains a priority going forward.

The group has administrated a budget sum of £6,500 from the Leicestershire RU PFR Plan with particular support towards Goalpost Replacement, Pitch Maintenance and Boot scrapers. All clubs have been offered access to these schemes with a response to the opportunity from 12 clubs (*Anstey, Burbage, Coalville, Leicester Forest, Leicester Lions, Hinckley, Lutterworth, Market Harborough, Old Newtonians, Oakham, Shepshed, Stoneygate*). All clubs have been offered financial support in some form, but disappointingly not all clubs have completed their projects or responded to the offer made. However, in reply the group has been able to support those responding clubs to a greater extent.

Both *Lutterworth and Burbage* have been supported with RFF grants towards goalposts and mobile floodlights respectively, with a further grant application received by Loughborough at the time of this report. RFF Interest Free Loan awards have been issued to Aylestone St. James for a roof replacement project and Vipers have been supported via the Green Deal Loan scheme to install a scheme of internal replacement LED lights.

The following clubs have received pitch reviews and reports from either Keith Kent or John Upton as the Leicestershire Pitch Advisor as part of the RFU's Rugby Groundsmen Connected programme; *Oakham, Shepshed, Burbage, Leicester Lions, Stoneygate, Birstall*.

### **Marketing and Media – Gail Bates**

The 2018/19 season has yet again been a busy one for marketing, media and county events.

We have continued to see the Leicestershire Rugby Union brand grow in strength. Our Facebook page likes have now exceeded the 2k target for this season and is now at 2049, Twitter followers 3431 and Instagram at 166. Instagram is still new to us, but will make this account more of a priority for 2019/20.

The website remains static with traffic with average visits per day at 310. The website has been live for 3 years now, and members are now using the site as a first point of reference. We plan to assess and re-structure the site over the summer if necessary. Some pages can be difficult to find, although we did add in a search function to allow users to quickly find the pages they were after. Senior competitions pages have proved problematic with difficulties around

updating league results. This will be discussed with the developers and it may be that we do not continue with that feature and simply link to the RFU site.

We have been increasing visibility on our YouTube channel with the Live Streaming of county games. We are gradually seeing a steady increase in subscribers to the channel. The channel has been live for 18 months or so now and a number of the videos are getting good views. We also streamed the County Cup finals from Welford Road and considering that service was not advertised in advance, we were having people tune in from all over the world to watch. Total views for the colts game have now exceeded 1k with the senior match a breathe away on 928. Being able to provide stats like this will increase our sponsorship opportunities.

The media and publicity team has been complimented with the having Caroline Miller on board. Caroline is a long serving volunteer with Market Harborough RUFC and a mentor with the Leadership Academy. Whilst joining the team towards the end of the season, Caroline has assisted with social media and we will be working together a lot more into next season to share the workload and continue to grow the publicity that is now moving swiftly in an upwards direction.

Events attended and organised this season have been: 100 year memorial match, numerous county matches through all ages and genders, AGR festivals and competitions and County Cup Finals at Welford Rd. The 100 year memorial match was covered locally with an interview on Radio Leicester and pre and post event articles in the Leicester Mercury. Both local media outlets have been supportive of local rugby throughout the season. I would like to utilise them more, and with additional support, this should be more achievable. Clubs are encouraged to tap into this too.

The focus for next season needs to be on sponsorship. We now have a fantastic sponsorship video and brochure detailing sponsorship options. We have been working hard on the brand for the last 2-3 seasons which will increase our chances of gaining sponsorship. Working with Marc Birr, I remain confident we will be successful with this for 2019/20.

#### County Cup Finals – report

Once again we were able to host our colts and senior men's finals at Welford Road on May 7<sup>th</sup> and were able to combine the event with the Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer Recognition awards with special guest Jonny May making the presentations.

This year, the decision was made to hire the stadium as a whole and we then we took receipt of the gate money. In previous years, gentlemen's agreements had been made regarding finances, however the last 2 years were not the case with both Leicester Tigers and LRU wishing to make contractual agreements for financial transparency. In addition to a revised pricing structure and strong advertising, we were able to sell 1400 tickets which covered the cost of the stadium hire. After this, we only had catering costs, leaving us with a much reduced bill to previous years and saving approx. £3k on budget (final figures tbc). If we can gain sponsorship for the event in 2020, we will be nearer to cost neutral, which is the goal.

Both matches were live streamed and the footage can be viewed on our YouTube page.

In response to members feedback from 2018, along with the Tigers, we decided to utilise the Crumbie Terrace for spectators as the atmosphere is better. Players food was served from the Crumbie Lounge allowing them to mix with family and supporters post-match.

#### Discipline – Chris Hayward

CB Discipline Stats Adult 2018-2019	
9.12 Contact with Eye	1
9.12 Strike Punch	8
9.12 Strike with Arm	2



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STRONG HERITAGE - STRONG FUTURE

9.12 Strike with Elbow	1
9.12 Strike with Head	2
9.12 Strike with Knee	2
9.12 Strike with Shoulder	2
9.12 Kick	1
9.12 Stamp	1
9.12 Match Official Abuse Verbal	5
9.13 Dangerous Tackle	1
9.13 Tackling Early Late or Dangerously	1
9.17 Tackling the player in the air	1
9.18 Tip Tackle - lift and/or drop/drive opponent	1
9.27 ACTGS Two Yellows	4
9.28 Misconduct Failure to respect referee	1
5.12 Match Official Abuse - Physical	
5.12 Match Official Abuse - Verbal	7
5.12 (Offence as charged)	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Dismissed</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CB Discipline Stats – Per Club 2018-2019</b>	
<b>Seniors</b>	
Market Harborough	2
Syston	1
Vipers	5
Birstall	2
Coalville	1
Leicester Forest	3
Belgrave	4
Hinckley	5
DMU	2
Market Bosworth	5
Aylestone St James	3
Loughborough Uni	1
Ashby	5
Sileby	2
Oakham	3
Old Newts	1
Melton Mowbray	1
Burbage	1
<b>Juniors</b>	

Market Harborough	2
Syston	2
Ashby	1
Oakham School	2
Melton Mowbray	1
<b>Clubs Advised and Warned</b>	
South Leicester	
Ashby	
Aylestone Athletic	

Thanks go to both Chris Hayward and Brian Hesford for all their hard work and to all members of the panels who have given their time and expertise willingly again this season.

### **Leadership Academy – Steve Rice**

This season was a very satisfying time as we made significant changes to the methods of mentoring and developing some very talented people. The RFU also enhanced the course content although it is regrettable that the funding for this area has been frozen. This season saw a larger team of mentors involved allowing more quality time to be spent with the candidates.

My thanks go to Jason Kennedy, Caroline Miller, Peter Howard, Barbara Crellin who gave valuable time coupled with myself to mentoring.

The academy had eight quality candidates with several younger candidates displaying great character and dedication over the season. Our candidates for the season were as follows

Liz Caulson - Hinckley RFC  
 Kevin Howley - Market Harborough RFC  
 Nicola Crowe - Leicester Forest RFC  
 David Kennedy - Leicester Forest RFC  
 Kudzai Katzande - Aylestone St James RFC  
 Ruth Hunt - Ashby RFC  
 Stephen Hunt - Ashby RFC  
 Ben Mitchell - Ashby RFC

As a result of attending the leadership course both Ashby RFC and Market Harborough RFC have decided to set up a young leader's development scheme. Market Harborough aspire to do this on a bigger scale similar in style to the scheme Shane Fox introduced at Coalville.

Jason Kennedy has been appointed Leicestershire's lead mentor to drive the Academy in the absence of RFU backing. Leicestershire RFU have given a small budget to this area in the LRP so we can continue and maintain the search for future leaders of clubs and CB.

Liz Caulson has been appointed AGR Chair for the LRU for the season 2019/20

Caroline Miller is now assisting Gail Bates with the website and other duties within the LRU operating committee. She has also been appointed Hon Secretary of Market Harborough.

My congratulations go to all three and it shows we are finding the right people to develop the administration and function of Rugby in Leicestershire.

My thanks go to all mentioned for dedicating their time and making it a valuable and worthwhile experience.

### **Concluding Remarks**

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

We especially congratulate the Leicestershire Rugby Senior Womens team for a successful representative campaign, leading to their second appearance in the Gill Burns Cup Final. This year's lady's final was the first ever played at



Twickenham although regrettably they were unable to mark this historic occasion with a victory. Congratulations go to the subsequent winners Buckinghamshire.

Congratulations also go to the Leicestershire Rugby Union Senior Men who reached the final of the Bill Beaumont Cup and secured victory at their Twickenham appearance against Surrey.

The Executive Committee, Sub Committee Chairs 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. 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, Steve Rice, who during his year of office visited almost every county club and supported our county matches at many venues. Steve throughout his presidency continued in his work within the Leadership Academy, which he promotes at every opportunity. In Steve's words this is the platform where we will grow our future club and CB leaders and we need to support this strategy at every opportunity. Steve has been a very good ambassador for the union at those functions to which he has been invited. Steve's support at county events and matches has been welcomed by all the hard-working Team Managers, Committee Members, Players and Volunteers alike.

Kevin Whitcombe  
Honorary Secretary  
Leicestershire Rugby Union Ltd  
26<sup>th</sup> June 2019

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