

Payment of Players update

We would like to remind clubs that Payment of Player declarations are due to be submitted between 1 March and 30 June 2019. The declarations will include any Gross Payments of Material Benefits paid or payable, between 1 June 2018 and 31 May 2019. The declarations are mandatory for clubs who wish to be eligible for RFU benefits, and clubs that do not complete a declaration within the designated window will lose access to these benefits for the 2019/20 season.

Regulations pertaining to payment of players were introduced on 1 August 2018 as part of Regulation 7 – Players, Approaches, Contracts, Payments and Player Movement. The regulation can be found in full [here](#), and a list of FAQs that we have produced can be found [here](#). A guide on how to submit the declaration can also be downloaded [here](#). For any further enquiries, please contact paymentofplayers@rfu.com

How NatWest RugbyForce has helped Alton RFC

NatWest RugbyForce is back for 2019 and clubs are invited to [register online](#). The programme offers a unique and carefully crafted programme for grassroots clubs across the country, including a wealth of advice and support, to ensure that clubs can thrive as strong and sustainable businesses away from the on-pitch action.

One club who benefited from NatWest RugbyForce, was Alton RFC in Hampshire. We have produced a short case study, where Tom Gaynor, Chairman of Alton RFC, talks about how NatWest RugbyForce helped them as a community rugby club. They embarked on a project to improve the quality of pitches at the club. As a result, the club have not missed a training session and played all of their home matches on their own ground. Tom attributes this to NatWest RugbyForce, and the support the initiative offers. To watch the interview with Tom, please [click here](#).

Register your club for NatWest RugbyForce 2019, by [clicking here](#).

Clarification on Age Grade Law variations and Rules of Play

Please remember that all Age Grade matches must take place using the Rules of Play for that given Age Grade. The only Laws Variations permitted for Age Grade rugby are those already included in the [Age Grade Rules of Play \(Appendices 1 to 11 of RFU Regulation 15\)](#). No other variations to the Laws can be applied without the prior approval of the RFU.

The Rules of Play have been developed with player welfare in mind and to provide a progressive and staged development of the Laws which encourages the appropriate development of young players. All clubs, coaches and referees for Age Grade rugby should make themselves familiar with the applicable Rules of Play for their specific Age Grade and competition.

County Championship fixtures announced

The 2019 County Championship Finals will be taking place at Twickenham on the following dates:

Sunday 2 June:

Gill Burns Division 1 Final (10.00am)

Bill Beaumont Division 1 Final (5.30pm)

To purchase tickets, please [click here](#).

Saturday 8 June:

Bill Beaumont Division 3 Final (11.00am)

Gill Burns Division 2 Final (1.00pm)

Bill Beaumont Division 2 Final (3.00pm)

Update on CB Age Grade player pathway consultation

Following speculation around a proposed removal of CB Age Grade rugby, David Ewing (Chair of the RFU's Player Development Sub-Committee) has written to CBs and Clubs to provide an update on current positioning and an upcoming consultation process.

The delivery of Age Grade rugby alongside CB pathway activity is a complex process. The impact of participating in simultaneous programmes on player welfare, player retention and Age Grade rugby at clubs can be significant, including:

- overplaying / over-training
- prioritising club / school / academy / CB activity
- programmes operating outside the agreed structures as stipulated in the Age Grade calendar
- loss of understanding from stakeholders as to the purpose of the CB pathway

To view this communication, please [click here](#).

Inner Warrior campaign returns

Clubs around the country will be welcoming new women this January with the next wave of the Inner Warrior campaign taking place from 12-27 January. We'd like to encourage all clubs that are hosting camps, to spread the word amongst their male and female members – do they know a woman who hasn't yet had the chance to play rugby that would be up for a new challenge for the new year? Women can sign up to attend their local camp at www.englandrugby.com/innerwarrior. For any clubs looking for advice on how to maximise the impact of their camp, please see [this video](#) from Alban Barnes at Fullarians.

Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer of the Year Awards – nominations open

Nominations for the Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer of the Year Awards will open on 8 January – please [click here](#) to nominate a deserving volunteer. Volunteers are key to our game and now in its third year, the Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer of the Year Awards recognise and celebrate the vital role that is played by our volunteers all over the country. The Volunteer of the Year Awards are aimed at recognising those who have impacted their communities in the last 12 months specifically. Nominations are open until 24 February and shortlisted nominees will be announced in March. For more information, please [click here](#).

Secure Trading Sevens Series 2019

Calling all sevens teams - the Secure Trading Sevens Series is back for 2019 and teams can register in local qualifiers now. The format for this year has been streamlined – with the best men's and women's teams from across the local qualifiers progressing directly to the National Finals. The National Finals will then see the winning men's and women's sevens team crowned champions of England. For more information and to enter your team, [click here](#).

Mitsubishi Motors volunteer hospitality – Guinness Six Nations fixtures

As part of the Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer Recognition Programme, club volunteers who already have match tickets for the Guinness Six Nations fixtures at Twickenham, are able to register up to four tickets for pre-match hospitality in the British Airways Fan Village.

The aim of this recognition incentive is to identify and thank grassroots volunteers for their valued contributions to the game. We will be serving hot food and a variety of beverages, opening two hours before each match and closing just before kick-off.

Registration is open for one game only, and to volunteers who did not attend hospitality at one of the Quilter Internationals in November 2018. To register for tickets, please click on one of the links below:

Sunday 10 February – England v France (3.00pm kick off)

Saturday 9 March – England v Italy (4.45pm kick off)

Saturday 16 March – England v Scotland (5.00pm kick off)

The next Community Game Update will be released on
Friday 8 February.