Wiltshire Youth Forum Minutes

Location – Melksham RFC

September 2018

Present

Julian Phelps Chair Forum – Melksham RFC

Justin Cliff Secretary Forum – Royal Wootton Bassett RFC

Matthew Glover – Melksham RFC

Kevin Thornton – Chippenham RFC

Richard Bourne – Salisbury RFC/ D&W U16

John Flynn – RPPG Chair

Alan Low – Royal Wootton Bassett RFC

Steve Barber – RFU

Ken Williams – Warminster RFC

James Cook – Trowbridge RFC

Ali Lund – D&W CSU & DWRFU U20

Derek Turner – Trowbridge

James Glossop – Bradford on Avon

Dave Wookey – DWRFU

Nick Elbourne – DWRFU

Ron Whitham – Dorset Youth Forum DWRFU

Dee Walters – Supermarine

Steve Allen – Salisbury RFC

Competitions

Nick Elbourne provided an overview of D&W Youth competitions which focused on player recruitment and retention

More flexible guidelines have been introduced in terms of games played (games may be played before the date stated with competition organiser approval)

Pleased with feedback with few incidents reported – Nick now has help with all age grades and the Half Game rule is applied as a guideline currently

Schools are also using Half Game Rule as well

Take up of club competitions was generally same number wise as in previous years

Club Recruitment & Retention

It was widely recognised that there are now many clubs who are unable to raise sides from U6 through to Colts.

Some mergers had been successful with teams such as Warminster/Melksham/Corsham merging at U14 – some mergers had however been short lived with players then drifting out of the game or moving to clubs with larger numbers in particular age groups.

The competition from other sports was highlighted as a factor (eg football)

Whilst Friday night games had been trialled - often because of irregularity these had mixed results in terms of success

The need to ensure GMS was up together was again highlighted with their being a potential for players numbers throughout the county being over emphasised – in addition with many club sides reliant at Junior/Colts with players still playing schools rugby – GMS was highlighted as not being a reflection of the number of regular community club sides numbers (Supermarine now keep a weekly register of players who attend)

The state of Colts Rugby in the county was again highlighted as a concern with only Bassett, Trowbridge, Melksham though to have a regular Colts side – some players are then guided to play adult rugby ahead of when is most suitable given ability/physicality

Suggestions to retain players was to ensure Team Managers are fixed at Colts level as many coaches step aside at the end of Junior levels – ideas such as food with U16, Seniors – the mixing of coaches between Seniors/Colts and U16 was also seen as good practice

Some clubs such as Trowbridge/Bassett had chosen not to play in competitions as a result of speaking with players who just wanted regular social rugby

Schools

Ali Lund provided a good update on schools rugby and highlighted particular appetite and growth in girls rugby and has suggested possibility of an event at Dauntseys in March for Year 7 girls

Alan Low highlighted the need for further schools support in the Swindon & Surrounding Area now that RFU All Schools campaign had ended and wondered if Schools Forum could fill the void

RFU

Steve Barber reinforced the need for Clubs/Schools to manage the behaviour of those on touchlines

He also suggested the idea of roping off pitches was considered

Steve also floated an idea that he has introduced for club coaches to get together to discuss updates / fun games and specified games around the 'breakdown area' – he will send details to clubs when available.

RFU Safeguarding Audits

Dave Wookey advised that Royal Wootton Bassett, Supermarine & Bradford on Avon were the next clubs to be audited - responses are awaited from these clubs

DPP /County

Richard Bourne provided an overview of DPP County Programme stating it was club aligned

U16 event to be held at Dauntsey on 4th November with a similar event for U18's to be held the Sunday after the Forum meeting

The transition to U20's was highlighted as being of great importance and clubs had been asked to submitting nominations from U19/20 age groups – Alan Low indicated that consideration should be given to dates of training sessions as these often clashed with Senior Rugby matches

All DPP communication is sent to relevant GMS contacts

AOB

It was agreed that there would be a joint forum meeting at the end of the season

Dave Wookey stressed that any clubs holding festivals were asked to send their request through to him 3 months beforehand . He also advised that permissions for overseas tours and hosting overseas sides (inc WRU / SRFU and IRFU) needed to be obtained from DWRFU and RFU (Information is on the DWRFU website)

Dave also reiterated that U6's cannot play in matches with U7's

Meeting Closed

Date of next meeting Monday 28th t January @Melksham RFC

Update Mini Age Groups Regulation 15.5

Since the forum meeting I have received an email from Dave Wookey

Could I call upon your good offices to get a message out to clubs regarding playing out of age grade. I have had 3 instances this season of finding out after the fact that clubs have been playing mini age grades up (forbidden) Playing Mini players down without approval or joining age grades without approval.

The new table in Reg 15.5 is now very clear but on challenging some clubs have not even read the regulations this season. I know I mentioned it at Wiltshire Forum, but definitely need emphasising before someone outside of CB sees something and we end up on a RFU disciplinary

Many thanks

Dave