

Sussex RFU Youth AGM 2011 Youth Chairman's Report

Introduction

I have prepared my report for issue before the Youth AGM so that clubs have notice of any issues I may raise which they wish to discuss at the AGM. I will leave detail reports on leagues, forums and minis to their respective league organisers and Chairmen who will report after me at the AGM.

Leagues

Despite what is becoming the norm of problems of weather disruption, this year with snow before Christmas, I must congratulate the League organisers and all the clubs on completing their Programmes to schedule. Mike Richardson also had to cope with a major re-organisation of his leagues, when clubs were unable to field B sides as they had planned, which he dealt with in his inimitable style.

I was able to attend all the finals which were all competitive games and a credit to the clubs involved. Unfortunately the under 13 final was not played as Brighton withdrew and the competitions committee had no alternative but to not allow the Brighton A team to play in the under 14 competition next season.

We must thank the County President Peter Bailey and Past President Roger Edmondson for presenting the trophies.

Review of League Structure

The major exercise we carried out was the three year review of the league structure. We decided to carry out a full consultation programme and we must thank Steve Briscoe for all the work he did in preparation of the questionnaires and collation of results. We also had a programme of review at forum and our competition meetings. Generally up to under 16 the current structure was approved. The major area of discussion was on the under 17s where there was significant support for a league format and we eventually ended with a tie between preferences for a cup or league. We will therefore have league pools to select the four teams who will go forward to the National competition with a cup format to decide their places. It has been suggested that we run plate competitions for the other teams which I hope we may be able to arrange. It was agreed that the colts East West format we were forced to use this season was not ideal and it is planned to have a merit Colts league. Due to the problems experienced this season the league organisation will only be finalised at the start of the season when teams competing are confirmed.

League Regulations

As planned the agreed set of regulations were published in the County Handbook, County website and issued by the League organisers. A guidance document was prepared and issued by Steve Briscoe to assist new club team managers

We have carried out an ongoing review and mainly arising from RFU regulation changes have made some minor changes for approval at the AGM. The consultation exercise also led to a change allowing more flexibility in kick off times for under 16 games.

Referees

There has been discussion on availability of referees. We normally only expect referees to be appointed for under 16 and colts games and even this has become difficult. The County President has started an initiative to increase the number of referees. Our regulations then leave the responsibility with clubs to appoint a qualified referee ideally not from that age group. We will see significant changes with the new referee appointments system which we will monitor. I cannot leave this topic without expressing thanks to David Maconachie for all his hard work in running the appointments system over the past few years.

Forums

We must thank David Beglan and Ian Newman for chairing the two Forums which were especially useful in our consultation exercise.

Minis

The Mini Festivals programme has again been completed successfully. We must thank Kevin Blakiston the Chairman and the clubs who hosted the three festivals which were all organised to an exceptional standard..

The requirements of the under 13 leagues had raised some issues about seeding through the Forums and this was successfully introduced.

Registration

Eddy Sears has advised me that the season started with a considerable number of changes in Club Registrars. However they all seemed to get up to speed very quickly especially as they had to cope with the re-registration process at short notice.

The biggest problem seems to be CRB's expiring and RFU IT rescinding their access so clubs need to ensure their registrars renew their CRBs in good time.

A summary of the number of registrations at each club will be issued with the papers of this meeting. There are 157 girls and 5612 boys registered with Sussex clubs which is a fall/rise of probably due to the re-registration process which will have removed significant inactive players. .

Clubs have reported 79 transfers during the season. 65 took place in 2010.

Eddy is not looking for any changes to the current process.

County CBRDP Committee

I continue to work with County through the CBRDP committee and we have been able to obtain actions on concerns raised by the forums or AGM.

The CBRDP is raising a tour guideline document and in the short term expensive county tours are not currently being actioned.

Concerns about county teams have been addressed by 2 Club Coach Co-ordinators being elected to the Coaching and Playing Committee and the introduction of the match sheet player rating whose results are then fed back to the county managers. I would urge club team managers to ensure this is carried out. It is planned to issue a guide to finding all the county information which is currently on the county website.

The vagaries of the structured season can cause date clashes between club and county dates and we are aiming to ensure county managers are aware of our allocation of dates for leagues etc.

David Hooker

Sussex Youth Chairman