



DEVON RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION MINI & JUNIOR COMMITTEE

Chair :	Rob PALMER	07855 400539
Vice Chair:	Paul SETTER	07810 005834
Secretary:	Denise HODGE	07835 647281
Treasurer:	Ken JEFFERY	(01803) 605975

Minutes for the meeting held at Exeter Saracens on the 5th October 2009 Meeting commenced at 1900hrs – 23 in attendance.

1. Apologies

Rob Curtis, Roger Marshall, Lucy Sambell, Dickie Darch, Ken Jeffery, Dean Davies, Dave Hodgetts

2. Approval of Minutes

Carried unanimously

3. Matters Arising

Rob Palmer confirmed that letter had been sent to Paul Comer.

No other matters to discuss

4. Chairman's Report

Rob Palmer explained that due to difficult circumstances over the summer and the postponement of the September meeting that he had been unable to make a written report.

- a. Youth Structures Season – It is intended that the under 13's, 14's and 15's season will be structured for the 10/11 season ready to fall in line with the Fixtures Meeting to be held in January 2010.
- b. DRFU Development Plan – copies were attached to the agenda and the general feeling of all present was that it had the right balance of objectives. This Development Plan could be used by all clubs to draw information for their own individual club plans. The DRFU and RDO roles are to help/assist clubs with this process should they wish.

- c. Exeter Athletic – Rob Palmer explained that some comments made during the EGM at Ashburton regarding Exeter Athletic are unfounded. He clarified that Exeter Athletic have applied to set up an adult team and there were no implications currently for the mini and youth sections within clubs in Devon.
- d. Player Registration & Transfer Policy – Rob reinforced that this policy was in place and should be complied with.
- e. Age Grade Issues – **The RFU can and will impose sanctions on players playing out of age group, which will involve the suspension of coaches. Any allegations made will be fully investigated and dealt with under the RFU guidelines.**

If players are found to be playing at the incorrect level, ie, 16's playing at adult level, the coach can be suspended for a period of time, the 1st XV can be given a point deduction and the club can be suspended from the RFU.

Schools have their own union and work to slightly different guidelines and it was discussed that they have to be responsible for any infringements. It was also pointed out that schools are not covered on the continuum nor have any structured season.

ACTION: Rob Palmer to contact DRFSU President Geoff Hughes to discuss how schools can be brought more into line with the DRFU.

Clubs were asked to make sure that the players registration/id cards are carried by the coaches for each fixture. Youth Players can play up one age grade, with written parental consent. For Continuum teams, dispensations will be considered on their merit.

There is no dispensation for the girls as their age groups are different – u15s you must be 12 years old as of the 1st September and u18s must be 15 as of 1st September.

Rob Palmer mentioned that in the August edition of 'Touchline' that there were continuum amendments for the u6's.

5. Secretaries Report

Continuum Forms: - Cullompton, Chiefs, Saracens, Honiton, Kingsbridge, Paignton, Salcombe, Tavistock, Tiverton & Topsham only ones received.
Fixtures: - This is not the job of the Devon Sec to send out requests for fixtures – all clubs have a fixture secretary and it is their responsibility to

liaise with other clubs when matches are cancelled and alternatives required. Below is a website to promote the use of the fixtures forum that Phil Friend set up to help Devon Junior/Mini/Girls teams find new fixtures at short notice. If everyone in Devon can develop the forum habit it would save you a little bit of work, cut down the mail in my inbox and probably provide a really good service. At the moment about eight clubs are signed up but it is not really being used as it hasn't yet reached critical mass status. Once it does - it'll be the place to be!

The forum is at:

http://www.youforum.co.uk/devon_youth_rugby/index.php

and is very straight forward to use.

6. Treasurers Report

Rob Palmer relayed from Ken Jeffery that the DRFU Junior section was a well run and managed section and that there were no problems financially. AFFILIATION FEES these were due on 1st October and some are still outstanding it was decided that clubs that have not paid have until the 19th October to do so and if they remain outstanding at that point then competitions will be reassessed.

7. Competitions Report

Clubs are still sending their match report forms in with blank spaces, i.e. date of birth and there are still outstanding registrations.

The u13s final will be at Plymouth Albion on April 11th 2010

The u14s final will be at Barnstaple on April 18th 2010

The u15s final will be at Ivybridge on April 25th 2010

The u16s final will be at Exeter Chiefs on May 2nd 2010

Please do not arrange club tours to coincide with these dates.

The u15s Plate final (from last season) – Paignton v Sidmouth has finally been played with Paignton winning and it was commented by Rob Palmer and Terry Friend that the match was technically brilliant by both sides for a match played so early in the season. The only downside to this was verbal abuse from a parent which was stupid and unnecessary.

ACTION: All clubs to make parents aware of the Parental Code of Conduct.

ACTION: Paignton RFC to provide the Chairman with an update on the outcome of the incident at the Under 15's Plate Final.

Fisherman's Cup – Andy Foster stated that all was well with this and that the 50 point ruling would stand as agreed at the last AGM.

Landscape League – it seems that some clubs are unaware of the fixture dates set out for the Landscape matches to be played, these dates have been set out in the structured season which was attached to the minutes from the AGM.

Terry Friend will publish a league table each month which will be forwarded to Richard Stegall to be put onto the new DRFU website.

The Devon Shield has new sponsors and these finals are usually played on rotation north and south of the county. It was proposed that the final will be hosted alternatively by Exeter Chiefs and Plymouth Albion. This was passed unanimously. Plymouth Albion will host the 09/10 Devon Shield Final, with the proposed date of Thursday 29th April 2010.

Festival forms have been sent out by Terry Friend and need returning asap with payment and hosting clubs (who must hold seal of approval) will be decided at the December meeting. The agreed format for the festivals is 24 participating clubs who will then play in 8 pools of 3 (2 games) 1 x quarter final, 1 x semi final and the final giving a total of 5 games to be played which falls within the continuum guidelines.

8. Child Welfare Matters

No report from Nigel Larcombe-Williams

9. Rugby Development/School of Rugby/RFU Issues

Please see attachment.

10. School Matters/County Squads

The main issue for discussion was overplaying of players. It came to light that players are playing at school level (poss 2 matches per week including Saturdays) and then playing at club level on a Sunday. The overuse of players at school with some playing in different age bands was having an effect on them playing at club level and it was felt necessary that a letter from parents should be given to allow their son to play out of age group at school level.

11. Women's and Girls

All clubs that have u15 and u18s are playing in a 15 club structured season covering Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset – a 6 club 1 county increase on last season. Exmouth have formed their u15 and u18 girl's squads and are affiliated to the RFUW and will be added into fixtures.

Thanks to Rob Palmer and Rob Masters for their support at the Devon County Trials day – the squads have been selected for Senior Ladies (22 attending) u18s – squad of 30 (46 attending) u15s – squad of 26 (42 attending).

With reports sent back from other counties in the region Devon had the strongest contingent trialling on the day. Girls selected from Albion, Tavistock, Kingsbridge, Barnstaple, Saracens, Exmouth and Cullompton.

12. Registration Officer Report

Nothing to report.

13. Referees and Discipline Issues

Referee abuse there seems to be no decline in this offence and has already resulted in on referee deciding not to continue. Terry Friend sent out the discipline sheets to all and already there is a marked increase in offences compared to last season. There have been 19 in the first month of the season against 53 for the whole of 2008/09 season. It is the responsibility of all clubs to reiterate the player/parent code of conduct.

14. Any Other Business

Rob Palmer stated that he intends to retire as Chair of this committee as he has been Chair for the past 5 years. If anyone would like to volunteer for this post then they should contact Rob directly so that they can shadow him over the next 6 months.

15. Date of Next Meeting

7th December 2009, 7pm at Exeter Saracens.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

D. HODGE

Honorary Secretary, Devon RFU Mini and Junior Sub-Committee.