

NORTH WEST COUNTIES JUNIORS

Minutes of the AGM held 3rd December 2013 at Leigh Miners

Roll call:

Absent: Atherton, Blackbrook, Chorley, Culcheth, Fitton Hill, Halton Farnworth Hornets, Haydock, Higginshaw, Rochdale Cobras, St Maries Vikings

All will be fined £30 for non-attendance of the AGM as per association rules.

Chairman's Report

This is the second summer season and we have made steady progress. Most teams are abiding by the Respect Campaign. We have just under 4000 children playing rugby league in the North West. This is down to you so please keep up the good work. We need to keep kids playing the game and to do that you need to embrace the league ethos of 'Sunday is Fun day' – coach to develop, don't coach to win.

We are facing a lot of challenges from outside sources at the moment. Keep to the ethos of the league and buy into the Respect Campaign to stop outside interference. You are all good people, working hard and doing good work and need to continue to build on what we have.

We develop young children through to U12s which is highlighted by two cup competitions. Once again, we applaud Blackbrook on winning the Lancashire Cup in what was a fantastic display at Widnes. Our own finals day was held for the first time at Preston Grasshoppers. Despite a power cut, everyone just got on with the job in task (in the dark!) to produce a memorable day. Congratulations to all the teams involved, we hope that you have some great memories. For all of our U12s, we hope that you continue to progress as you move to 13s-15s and we wish you all of the best for the future.

The league is only as good as the people involved and we are lucky to have a good team.

The registrations secretaries do their job for next to nothing. If you think about the difficulties you have in registering one team/ one club – they are dealing with 30! Thank you to Ann, Eileen, Brian and Tommy for their contribution over the season. Thank you to Karen, our Discipline Chair, who is hard but fair. We get great reviews from the RFL Safeguarding team for the way that we conduct our disciplinaries and are have been held up as a model for others. If you don't want to face Karen and her team (John, Eileen, Jeff, Ronnie) then don't bend the rules and embrace the Respect Campaign.

Thanks also go to Graham. We have been doing this together for nearly 20 years. Graham does a lot of work behind the scenes. He attends meetings all over the country; never with his own agenda, always with our clubs' best interests in mind. His is a key role; he is our voice.

Thanks also to all of the coaches and other volunteers at the clubs. Without your efforts we wouldn't have a game. Keep up the good work, and keep your focus on development. Thank you all for your hard work which is not only appreciated by us but also by the kids and their parents.

Graham interjected to thank Mick. He is a chair who always fights your corner – literally! Sometimes he needs kicking under the table to be warned to cool down! We hope that you appreciate what he does – even if you occasionally lock horns with him!

Accounts:

We still have £620 in fines outstanding. Every club that owes fines will be contacted and their teams will not be entered into the fixtures if they aren't paid by the January meeting. This will now show in next year's accounts.

We are still showing a surplus so the league fees will remain unchanged. We don't need to increase them – you keep us going in fines!

The balance is £4270.83

Election of Officers

The committee have all agreed to stand for re-election en bloc. This was up held.

We are working on updating the Constitution. We will be keeping it in plain English and not following others in making it too wordy! It just needs to be altered slightly as many of our rules came from BARLA and don't fit with the changes that have been made over the years.

Regular Meeting

Transfers

Transfers are not being conducted properly and we will be keeping a close eye on them next season.

A player has to approach the new club and obtain a transfer form. If you don't ask if they have played before you won't know where they are transferring from. If they are out of district/ a second or third transfer from a local club they cannot transfer. Don't mess around making promises that you can't keep. They can't transfer so refuse it there and then.

RULE: Each age group can have three transfers per season – each must be from a different club.

Be honest and fair and tell parents the rule upfront. Mess around with the transfer system next season and we will bring you to disciplinary.

It is up to the clubs to sort out the paperwork and send it – not parents. We do not deal with parents. All communication should come through the clubs. **Clubs CANNOT refuse to sign a transfer form.** If you are presented with a form and you disagree with it (second transfer/ funds owed) sign it but write your concern on the form.

Can we remind you, a player **CANNOT** train with you until his transfer is complete. If you indicate that he has been training (or the parent says something) you will be explaining yourself at disciplinary.

Player Loan Trial

If your U10s are short on players due to illness or a school event and the U9s have lots you can 'loan' players on a temporary, short-term basis. Email Mick, Graham or Eileen naming the players that you wish to loan and we will give written permission. On match day, you will show the permission and their existing card. Players can only play for teams that they are eligible for, so someone playing up at U9s cannot be loaned.

The loan has to be agreed at club level (and by parents) and permission given by the league; the card must still be shown.

It worked on a few occasions last season, mainly because it wasn't abused. Use it for the purpose intended and it is useful; abuse it and it will be removed.

Fixtures

We can't do anything until the applications are in and we know what teams are entering. Please complete the application and email it to either Mick or Eileen. Fees must be paid by January meeting.

Wrexham Raiders have requested to join. They will come to the January meeting to talk about their application and at the moment are looking at entering at U12s and U10s (we think).

You will only have to travel there once; they are willing to do it every other week. Teams have to honour their away fixtures. Teams like Saddleworth and Oldham manage to travel yet some teams always seem to have no team, coaches working shifts every time they have to travel there (and only when they have to travel there). We know which teams are doing it and we will be monitoring it. If you are not willing to fulfil your away fixtures don't enter – you can't pick and chose; it's not fair.

We will be running from the 1st week in March to the end of November. The summer break will remain the same (August). It was pointed out that clubs trying to arrange festivals found it hard in such a short time frame. Mick said that as long as notice was given (6 weeks minimum) festivals could be held at anytime and fixtures for non-participating teams can be re-arranged. The easiest thing would be to invite pairs of teams (based on fixtures) to your festival of course! Festivals will not be allowed if sufficient notice has not been given.

This is the third summer season of a proposed three year trial. At the end we would like to know what you think. Has it worked for you? Over in Hull they are looking at teams from U12s going back to the traditional season. We will go with whatever works for the majority in our area.

Primary Rules

There is a meeting tomorrow to discuss Primary Rules. The RFL are trying to say that the minimum qualification for a head coach should be L2. We have always been under the impression that at our age groups L1 was sufficient. We are the entry level, teaching the kids the basics in small sided games. They don't need coaches trained for 13-a-side. It also means that all our coaches would have to be retrained (at considerable expense). We have objected and have support from other areas (Yorkshire, the South). We are going to fight our corner.

We need to be pro-active. Get your people on the courses. Teams will not be entered into fixtures if they don't have a qualified coach or a coach who has booked on the course. We will be checking. Coaches will not be allowed to state that they are pending – on the application form state which course they are booked on. We have been warning you about this for months!

Pilot Scheme

Martyn Rothwell wants to see the implementation of the new format. He wants us to replace what we do with the small-sided games format which he states have been successful. We had five teams enter and only two finish which suggests otherwise. There are merits for Newbies – we could see us using it for them next year. All this talk about the minimum qualifications for coaches, yet these games are run by unqualified Games Coaches and we need to find more volunteers to make it work?

AOB

The outstanding raffle prizes were given out.

Raging Bull are again offering a free kit to the December winner. The kit will be to the club's design and will be ready for the season.

Winner - 17 Haresfinch (again!)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

**Next meeting: Tuesday 7th January 2014 at 8.30
£10 fine for non-attendance**

