

Rugby Development Committee (RDC) Report to the General Meeting 21.03.18

The Rugby Development Committee has responsibility for all aspects of the development and delivery of rugby in the CB. There are five RDC sub-committees: Team Lancashire (Representative Rugby all age groups male and female); Player Development; Coaching & Refereeing; Competition; and Medical Steering Group. The Chairmen of the RDC and each of the five Sub-committees are appointed by the CB Management Board.

Each of the constituent parts of the RDC have representatives present at this meeting to detail their own developments so far this season: Senior Rugby; The Royals; U20s; U17-18; 7-16, Women & Girls etc. There are however, one or two major developments put in place through the RDC that merit mention as part of this report:

Coach Development:

The Lancashire Rugby Development Centre Project aimed at developing coaches in open age grade rugby is acknowledged as being the leader in the field. A number of well attended workshops have been delivered. There will be an Annual coaching conference held in August with nationally recognised personalities delivering a programme alongside well known Lancashire coaches. Latest project by the Development Centre is to form an association for 1st team coaches in the adult game with the intention of providing a platform for the exchange of ideas, coaching information and best practice.

Links have been opened between the Lancashire Rugby Development Centre and local universities. Player and coach development programmes for students have started and 10s and 7s competitions have been sponsored by the Development Centre; the aim of these programmes is to introduce clubs to university players and coaches and develop the pool of talented coaches and players available to Lancashire rugby – clubs where events have been held have reported them to have been a success

The Club Coach mentor scheme, which delivers up to ten hours of free coach and player development to local clubs continues to be popular in the down season but, take up during the season has been limited. More club coach mentors are being recruited and trained, growth of the programme will continue at the best possible pace. Club coaches participating in the scheme tend to remain in contact with their appointed mentors for many seasons after the initial introduction

Player Development:

Now in the second season, the Royals are a team for players from National North (Level 5) and below. The aim is to present as many players as possible with the opportunity to represent their County at open age level. Competition for places has been strong and interest from clubs and players is very high. We have a wealth of talent in Lancashire who deserve an opportunity to play representative Rugby. The Royals will continue to provide for this large block of aspirational players who play at clubs operating at Level 5 and below.

Lancashire RFU Academy was launched last season. The Academy provides young and talented players, who are not part of the RFU/Sale Academy, with a mentor to advise the player from the

player's entry into the academy onwards to the highest achievable levels of open age rugby. The Academy is not a team or a pathway to a team, but is an initiative to develop individual skills. Very positive reports continue to be received from players and parents. Mentoring is on a one to one basis with the player. Mentors open communication pathways with the player's club coaches and age grade representative coaches. All Academy players have a personal fitness and skill development programme in place which has been created by academy professionals.

We are trying to engage with players in the 19 – 23 age group to identify specific development needs , the aim is to make a significant contribution the performance of key players in the County at club level. This is especially important for all young players as they progress into the adult club game; the development Centre contacts with student rugby will be a useful tool in this task

Medical development:

The Medical Steering Group is in the process of formation. The recently appointed County Hon. Medical Advisor is pulling together a team to advise the CB on medical cover for representative squads, Tournaments and festivals. The group will also be able to advise the CB and clubs on RFU policy and best practice on medical matters and player safety and related issues

Referee Development:

The CB continues to work with the Joint referees Group comprising the Federation, local societies, RFU professional staff and Lancashire & Cheshire CBs. Referee recruitment, training and development is top priority. Lancashire has made funding and resources available throughout the season. Development Centre contacts with student rugby have opened up new contacts with, and opportunities for, students interested in refereeing – both the 10s and 7s festivals are student refereed events

Scholarship Funding:

Lancashire has funded coaches and medical support volunteers to obtain certification, re-certification and higher qualifications. Funds have been made available to both County and club personnel. Additional funds are available for the remainder of this season and for future seasons

Medical:

The Medical Steering Group is in the process of formation. The recently appointed County Hon. Medical Advisor is pulling together a team to advise the CB on medical cover for representative squads, Tournaments and festivals. The group will also be able to advise the CB and clubs on RFU policy and best practice on medical matters and player safety and related issues

Future Plans:

The Rugby Development Committee, the Player Development Committee, the Coaching, Committee, Team Lancashire and the Medical Steering Group will:

- Review the terms of reference and Standard operating procedures for each of the committees
- Review progress towards achieving objectives
- Set priorities and identify new objectives
- Make preparations to implement Annual & Strategic planning