



## COMMUNITY GAME UPDATE

Please find the June 2019 edition of the Community Game Update. We hope you find the update useful, and if you have any feedback, queries or content that you would like to feature, please email Vee Montebello, RFU Senior Communications Manager ([veemontebello@rfu.com](mailto:veemontebello@rfu.com)).



### Communicating with the RFU

We wanted to update you on some recent changes that we've made within our communications team.

Having joined the RFU in 2014, **Gareth Mills** is Head of Communications and is tasked with delivering an effective multi-channel communications programme. **Vee Montebello** joined the team in May to support the Community Game communications programme.

The communications team is keen to hear from you about activities taking place in your area and can advise or help in generating media coverage or coverage on England Rugby's digital channels, where possible. This might be an up and coming festival, a successful charity event or someone in your community game who has done something that you want to highlight.

Vee is your first point of contact for such activities at [veemontebello@rfu.com](mailto:veemontebello@rfu.com). In addition, Joe Ogden promotes the community

game through England Rugby's website and social media channels through written and video content. He is always on the lookout for stories in the game from inspiring players, coaches, volunteers and teams that display rugby's core values. Contact Joe at [joeogden@rfu.com](mailto:joeogden@rfu.com).

You can also send suggestions for the monthly digital Touchline, which has more than 50,000 subscribers, to [patriciamowbray@rfu.com](mailto:patriciamowbray@rfu.com). Touchline usually goes out in the second week of every month.

Our aim is to work with you to grow and promote the community game.



## Deadline for Declaring Player Payments – Sunday 30 June

With less than a month to go until the deadline for submission of Payment of Player declarations, mandatory under **RFU Regulation 7**, please note that Sunday 30 June is the final deadline for submissions.

The requirement came in to force on Wednesday 1 August 2018 for the 2018-19 season for all clubs (Level 3 and below) wishing to be eligible for RFU benefits. The declaration covers the period of Friday 1 June 2018 – Friday 31 May 2019.

A list of FAQs can be found [here](#) and a guide on how to submit your declaration can be downloaded from [here](#), including how to check that you have completed your submission.

For any queries around Payment of Players, please contact [paymentofplayers@rfu.com](mailto:paymentofplayers@rfu.com).



## The RFU launches its Transgender Policy

The RFU issued its **Transgender Policy** in May. With core values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship at the heart of what we do and how we play rugby, the RFU aims to promote equal opportunities so that anyone wanting to play the game can do so without encountering prejudice.

As the national governing body for rugby union in England, the RFU is responsible for regulating training and playing to promote the safety and equitable treatment of everyone taking part.

The new Transgender Policy provides a clear framework to enable transgender and non-binary gender players to participate in rugby and the eligibility requirements mirror those of the World Rugby and International Olympic Committee policies.

Rugby is a sport for all and any harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with RFU Regulations.

# GAME ON!

## Game On regulations start next season

As communicated in the May edition of Community Game Update, in order to provide clubs with more flexibility and options to play more matches, 'Game On' regulations will be introduced in the 2019-20 season and included in RFU Adult Playing Regulations for all friendly matches and competitions outside the men's and women's RFU English Club Championships.

In brief, a club has a number of options available for each match from 'Game On' regulations, i.e. the size of a team, length of a match, use of rolling subs and the style of line-outs and scrums. 'Half Game' regulations can also be utilised.

Watch out for more detailed information, which will be issued shortly, on [englandrugby.com/GameOn](http://englandrugby.com/GameOn) and England Rugby social channels.



Injury surveillance in youth and men's  
community game

As part of RugbySafe, ongoing research into the number and types of injuries sustained across school rugby and the men's community game is being independently conducted by a team at the University of Bath.

The Youth Rugby Injury Surveillance Project (YRISP) has been running since 2013, while the men's community rugby injury surveillance and prevention (CRISP) project has been running every season since 2009. The primary aim of both projects is to monitor the rates and types of injury at these levels of the game, while asking additional questions about causes of injury and what measures can be put in place to reduce the risk.

Work from the projects showed that specific warm-up programmes could help to reduce concussion and lower limb injuries. This has resulted in the Activate programme which is now freely available for anyone to access via the **Activate** webpage and use with their team.

The team are currently working on exciting new projects, using match video analysis to understand more about how match events differ between playing levels and which type of tackle characteristics are more likely to lead to injuries. There will also be a focus on how teams are using the Activate programme so that future guidelines and resources can be optimised. In the men's community game, there will be a continued emphasis on understanding more about injuries sustained on Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) and natural grass surfaces.

Looking forward to season 2019-20, the YRISP and CRISP projects will continue to monitor the injury risk at different levels of the game from Schools U12 through to U18 age groups in both 15 and 7-a-side rugby and across all levels of the men's community game. There are opportunities for teams at these levels to get involved in these research projects. By taking part, each team will be better able to track and understand their injury profile compared with the national average for teams at the same age or playing level and will receive a "supporting the RFU to put player welfare at the heart of the game" logo to display on the school/club website.

If you are interested in these projects and would like your team to take part, the research team would be happy to explain more.

Results and resources related to the projects, including 2017-18 season reports are available on the **RugbySafe** webpage.

For further information, please contact Matt Hancock and Craig Barden: [rfu-youth@bath.ac.uk](mailto:rfu-youth@bath.ac.uk) regarding youths and Simon Roberts: [rfu-crisp@bath.ac.uk](mailto:rfu-crisp@bath.ac.uk) for men's community.

As part of the RugbySafe campaign, the RFU has worked with leading mental health charity Mind to provide generic information and guidance on mental health which will be available from July onwards and can be accessed from the **RugbySafe homepage**.



## Introducing the new Stats Centre

The Electronic Match Card (EMC) captures accurate information such as results, team line ups, try scorers, disciplinary information, etc. from matches at various levels of the men's and women's RFU English Club Championships. Following feedback from players and clubs, we have developed a tool called stats centre which can be used to generate interesting and engaging statistics for individual players, clubs/teams and leagues to compare, much like Strava does for cycling. This information is pulled from EMC.

Several pieces of research also told us that clubs and players enjoy seeing this kind of information, and we hope that surfacing this in an engaging way, including with comparison to professional players, will allow greater engagement with clubs and the game in general. In time, we will also explore great rugby stories and incentives and rewards that we may be able to offer for individual, team and club performances. You can see the stats centre

[here](#).

At present, for certain levels of the game, completion of some of the areas of EMC, which generates the data displayed in the stats centre, is not compulsory. However, we would encourage all players, team managers, club officials, Matchcard admins to explore the stats centre and give us feedback.

If this is seen as valuable for players, teams and clubs, then we would encourage completion of non-mandatory information in EMC to ensure we can enhance the stats centre for next season.



## Changes to Facility Grants

Following the recent Business Planning Communication outlining the reductions in investment next season, the Helping Hand and Groundmatch grant schemes will not be distributed by the Rugby Football Foundation in 2019/20. Limited funds will still be available and clubs wishing to discuss their facility needs can contact either their RDO or Area Facilities Manager.



## Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC)

The RFU can provide a referral to an expert for advice on CASCs – information on how your club can save money can be found [here](#). If your club is looking for help and advice on CASCs, whether you are considering registering or looking to make better use of available tax advantages like gift aid, please contact Dave Stubley - Club Management and Volunteer Manager for a telephone referral [davestubley@rfu.com](mailto:davestubley@rfu.com) or phone **07736722387**.



## NatWest Rugby Force weekend 22nd – 23rd June

594 rugby clubs across England have registered for NatWest RugbyForce 2019 weekend, which takes place on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd June. It promises to be another great event bringing the rugby family and local communities together.

This is a nationwide programme that helps grassroots rugby clubs up and down the country attract new members and become stronger and more sustainable for the future.

The clubs who won grants of £3,000, plus a host of other benefits and rewards, are:

- Bishop Auckland RUFC, County Durham
- Canterbury, Kent

- Combe Down RUFC, Bath
- Hackney RFC, East London
- North Walsham RFC, Norwich
- St Leonards RFC, Stafford

Legends from the game, including Maggie Alphonsi, Dylan Hartley, Jonathan Joseph and Phil Vickery, will be at one of the winning clubs over the course of the NatWest RugbyForce weekend.

Please help support your club by popping in to provide much needed hands-on support and help the clubs get ready for the start of the next season.

Please also send in your stories or photos to [natwestrugbyforce@rfu.com](mailto:natwestrugbyforce@rfu.com). Discover more about NatWest Rugby Force [here](#).



## O2 Touch & Secure Trading Sevens Series Finals – 29th-30th June 2019

As part of the O2 Touch programme, a selection of lucky volunteers who help to run the programme across England were invited to the annual Twickenham Takeover. They enjoyed a fun-packed day which included O2 Touch sessions, training with former England player Ugo Monye and fitness influencer Tom Bliss, a behind the scenes tour of the changing rooms and a BBQ to make the most of the sunshine.

The next O2 Touch event takes place at The Bay, Nottingham on Sunday 30th June. The O2 Touch national tournament will round off a weekend of rugby festivities in Nottingham following the Secure Trading Sevens Series

final on Saturday 29th June.

There's still time for teams to sign up to the regional group stages of the Secure Trading Sevens Series to be in with a chance to be crowned National Champion and win HSBC Sevens hospitality tickets – discover more [here](#).

You can also enter your O2 Touch teams [here](#) using the code **O2 Touch**.

**Teamwork   Respect   Enjoyment   Discipline   Sportsmanship**

