

SEC'S REPORT

Firstly thank Martin Cooke for standing in for me at the beginning of the year. Both our circumstances were such that it made sense for me to revert back to Sec. when I did but thanks for helping out.

RFU

Eccles were represented at RFU AGM by proxy vote where in line with Lancs we supported the Cliff Brittle camp.

Chairman, Sec, Captain and coach Derek Pearson attended RFU roadshow at Huddersfield where we learnt valuable information particularly re. the Lottery.

Further to the receipt of " Rugby Restructure 2000 " - Mr. Brittles view of the way forward and our return of a fairly detailed questionnaire the Chairman and Sec. attended A nationwide consultation meeting at Orrell where the Chairman was complimented by Mr Brittle on his ability to get to the nub of a problem straight away.

Recently as you will have seen Mr Brittles position has been weakened resulting in the resignation of his right hand man Fran Cotton.

My personal view is that they have been right to take the tough stance with the senior Clubs - as the paucity of the England squad now in Australia shows where the senior Clubs priorities lie.

We have now received notice of this years RFU AGM in July and judging by some of the proposals coming from the non senior Clubs it could prove to be a significant meeting in terms of the future structure of the RFU. We are hoping to actually attend this meeting.

LANCS

Thanks to Dr John Noone's attendance we were founder members of the Lancashire Medical Association and have attended a number of meetings where talks have been given by various Medical experts, we are fortunate to have Johns services most Saturdays and Dr John Percer's on a Sunday with the Juniors.

We are looking to broaden the level of 1st aid cover available at matches and in AOB I will be advising of our intention to run some courses for those interested.

Weve attended the Lancs Disciplinary meetings more than we would have liked to - thats partly because were doing things by the book and others aren't.(Weve written to Lancs. on the matter.) However 6 sent off in a season, although 1 was deemed as having no case to answer, so call it 5 is not a record to be proud of .

Otherwise Lancashire have been as informative and helpful as ever. I do however wonder of their present position re. Brittle and Cotton at the moment. Previously they have been keen to advise of their view and offer opinions and guidance, just lately they have gone quiet and I wonder just what their position is and intend to enquire.

At Eccles as Harry mentioned the season started off with the sad loss of Ron Jones, who incidentally told me a few days before he died that his few days on tour in Ireland had been the happiest 3 days of his life.

The Centenary year of 1997 was seen out with Neils and Billys successful New Years Eve Disco and 1998 started with the final planing permission being granted for the car park behind the posts and the Clubhouse extension, the permission for the changing room and gymn extension having been granted earlier.

1998 has seen some important developements at the Club, firstly the Lottery has been submitted which depending on the outcome could range from a complete rejection, and even then we will be in a position to spend some money where needed , to a major developement in terms of our facilities. For those of you who don't know the lottery consists of :-

The second significant developement has been the formation of a Ladies team who entertained a Widness ladies team at Eccles for their inaugural match and then entered a 10 a side tournament at Vale of Lune reaching the semi finals of the plate.

Thanks to everyone who helped but particularly George Glover for coaching and Claire for her organising.

Anyone who knows anyone who might be interested see Claire or the Ladies notice board. Current ages range from about 20 to 40 and all are welcome but were particularly looking for some young fast backs 17+.

The third significant developement and probably the biggest one in terms of playing developement is that of the formation of a Colts side.

Credit goes to John Murphy, Gary Lynch, Trev Howarth and Kevin plus their other helpers for forming the Salford Mustangs last year from Eccles under 16 and De La Salle under 16s to enable both under strength squads to play.

Fortunately for Eccles, and I Like to think this is in some part due to our friendly yet reasonably efficient set up, the lads have decided to play at Eccles next year under I believe the name of Eccles mustangs.

I'd like to thank Neil and Billy for taking over as promoters of the annual draw and for their joint rolls as Social secretary, can Radar sell tickets?

On that note the season concluded with the marquee weekend and as any of you that attended will testify all the events were a huge success. Particular thanks go to John Whiteside and Colin Whitehead for organising the Annual Dinner and Dinner Dance respectively.

Other thanks are due to Paul Flemming for the sterling job hes done throughout the season, Alan Chettoe who yearly, quietly gets on with the difficult job of Fixture Sec. Ted who never stops and is always here in his role as Chairman of Ground and Pavillion ably assisted by our resident Clerk of Works Harry, who jointly form the backbone of the Thursday morning workparties for our retired or otherwise available members - thanks to them.

Since the death of Phil Platt all grass cutting strimming etc is done by volunteers and Alan the groundsman,

Our pitches are fast becoming second to none thanks to Ted ably advised by the other Harry the expert.

Other thanks go to our loyal staff Alan, Alex and Claire.

I'd also like to thank Vic for his help as assistant secretary which he does in addition to Membership and Ticket Sec.

Lastly on behalf of everyone I'd like to thank Harry who is standing down as President in his 50th year at the Club for his two year Centinial stint and for the burgers and beer tonight.

CHAIRMANS COMMENTS IN HIS ABSENCE

Due to a failed satalite link I haven't actually received Marks comments but putting aside the usual bits about commeraderie I know the gist of what he would like to say.

Negatives.(first)

No fifth team again and on the odd occasion no fourth team .

Lack of people standing for election (some missing positions particularly 4th team capt and vice)- no vote - does this reflect a lack of commitment ?

No tour

No of late cry offs and not notifying non availability properly - only way is on list.

Poor attendance training.

1st team results since the Oldham game.

No good listing them all - need to reflect on them and think could I have done anything to help the situation , can I do anything to help next year

Positives.

Continued success and growth of Junior Section

Formation of Colts team - major event.

Formation of Ladies section

Lottery Submission

Another succesful marquee weekend

Another succesful Junior Tour

First team results up to Oldham game

Offer of a coach for next year subject to commitment levels - initially attracted by facilities and organisation

- therefore overall previous strategy of improving facilities and structure to encourage groth of juniors and attract new blood is paying off

Again did I help with any of these? can I next year

Also literally 10's of other jobs that are done,

ordering food
collecting match subs
washing kit
organising handbooks
ditto match programmes
colecting glasses when busy
buying ref a pint
running the line
bringing pads and touch flags in
etc etc

New ways to help
Sponsor for all team kits
Adverts in handbook £50 a page
Ground advertising
Match sponsors
See Bill Lowe re last 2, Mark for kit, me or Vic re Advert

Lastly a reminder, we can only provide the framework, its the actions of each and every member that makes the Club what it is. This meeting authorises the committee to change the rules of the Club to enable the Club to become a Friendly and provident Society whilst endeavouring to maitain as much of the principles of the old rules as is reasonably possi