

## MIDDLESEX NOTES ON THE RFU COUNCIL MEETING

### Held at Twickenham Stadium - 7<sup>th</sup> April 2017

The meeting was chaired by the President, Peter Baines.

#### 1. Nominations Report

(Simon Collyer-Bristow - Chairman of the Nominations Committee)

- 1.1. Following recommendations from the Nomination Committee, Council elected:
  - a. **Chris Cuthbertson** as Chairman of the Governance Committee with immediate effect until the end of the 2019/20 season.
  - b. **Peter Baines** as Immediate Past President for the 2017/18 season.
  - c. **Maggie Alphonsi** as National Member for the 2017/18 season.
  - d. **Martin Corry** as National Member for the 2017/18 season.
  - e. **Deborah Griffin** as Women's & Girls Representative on the RFU Council for the 2017/18 season.
- 1.2 Selection is underway for the appointment of three Directors without Portfolio. 11 applications were received from Council members, of whom seven have been selected for interview. Nominations will recommend three candidates to the June 2017 Council meeting for approval.
- 1.3 The nomination process for the two RFU representatives to Rugby Europe will commence shortly. The present representatives are **Rob Udwin** and **Ben Calveley** (RFU Head of Corporate Affairs).
- 1.4 Recommendations for membership of the Committees and Sub Committees will be made to the June 2017 Council meeting.
- 1.5 In addition Council approved the implementation of a factual Recording & Reporting system on Council Members to their Constituent Bodies and Representative Bodies.
- 1.6 Council was reminded that nominations for Privilege Membership of the RFU should be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
- 1.7 It was also confirmed that Nominations are continuing to work on guidelines for the granting of Privilege Membership.

#### 2. Payment of Players Implementation

(Malcolm Wharton - Chairman of the Community Game Board)

Council **APPROVED** several resolutions (see Appendix 1) in respect of the implementation of the Payment of Players recommendations, which had been approved in principle at the February 2017 Council meeting.

#### 3. Professional Game Development

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Professional Game Board)

- 3.1 Council **APPROVED** a number of principles relating to:
  - a. The movement of England Academy Players between Premiership, Championship and National 1 & National 2 Clubs.
  - b. The removal of the limit on the number of times a Loan Player may be registered ahead of the Transfer Deadline.
- 3.2 Council **APPROVED** the delegation to the Governance Committee of the amendment of the Regulations necessary to adopt the principles in 3.1 above.

#### 4. HM Sport Governance Code

(Peter Baines - President)

- 4.1 Peter Baines summarised the discussion at the informal meeting of Council held the previous evening to discuss the proposals in the HM Sport Governance Code Working Group's interim report.

- 4.2 Council **AGREED IN PRINCIPLE** the following recommendations from the Working Group:
    - a. Changes to the responsibilities of the Members, Board & Council as set out in the Rules.
    - b. The introduction of term limits for Council Members.
    - c. The commitment to females making up at least 30% of the Board of Directors.
    - d. The preparation of a Diversity & Inclusion strategy for the whole game.
    - e. Changes to the nominations process for both Council and Board appointments.
  - 4.3 Council **APPROVED** the timetable proposed by the Working Group for the consideration of and implementation of necessary changes (see Appendix 2).
  - 4.4 Council **NOTED** that dialogue with HMG and Sport England will continue, with involvement of the Working Group, and that the Working Group will provide feedback on this dialogue to Council at the earliest opportunity.
  - 4.5 Jason Leonard, Chairman of the Working Group, emphasised that, in accordance with the timetable, this was the start of the consultation process. Council was asked to consider the proposals and consult with stakeholders and provide feedback to the Working Group by **12<sup>th</sup> May 2017**. This will allow the Working Group time to consider the feedback and prepare its final recommendations that will be put to Council for formal approval at the Council meeting on **2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017**.
5. **Transfer of Wasps from Middlesex to Warwickshire**  
(Angus Bujalski - RFU Legal & Governance Director)
    - 5.1 Following Wasps relocation from London to Coventry, Council **APPROVED** the change of Constituent Body from Middlesex to Warwickshire.
    - 5.2 This change was supported by Wasps, Middlesex & Warwickshire.
  6. **Annual General Meeting Calling Notice**  
(Angus Bujalski - Legal & Governance Director)
    - 6.1 Council **APPROVED** the Calling Notice for the AGM.
    - 6.2 At the AGM the game will be asked to approve a number of minor changes to the RFU Rules.
    - 6.3 The AGM will be held at The Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington, London on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 at 5.00pm.
  7. **British & Irish Lions**  
(John Spencer - Manager of the British & Irish Lions)

John Spencer gave a presentation to Council on the upcoming tour to New Zealand by the British & Irish Lions.
  8. **Chairman's Update**  
(Andy Cosslett - Chairman of the Board)
    - 8.1 As recommended by the recent RFU Board Effectiveness Review, the Chairman of the Board will submit a written report to each Council meeting. The first report was circulated with the papers for this Council meeting.
    - 8.2 The report highlighted:
      - a. **Board Effectiveness Review**  
Work continues to implement all of the recommendations of the report.
      - b. **Senior Independent Non-Executive Director**  
Dominic Proctor has been appointed as the Senior Independent Non-Executive Director. In this role he will be responsible for carrying out the Chairman's annual appraisal.
      - c. **Independent Non-Executive Director Recruitment**  
The recruitment process has started to fill the Independent Non-Executive Director position.
      - d. **September 2017 Board Meeting**  
The September 2017 Board meeting will be held at Preston Grasshoppers RFC.
  9. **Chief Executive's Report**  
(Ian Ritchie - Chief Executive Officer)
    - 9.1 **International Representative Teams**
      - a. **England**
        - i. England failed to win the Grand Slam, but did win the Six Nations.
        - ii. England has two games against Argentina in Argentina this summer.

- b. **Under 20s**  
The Under 20s won the Six Nations Grand Slam.
  - c. **England Women**  
England Women won the Six Nations Grand Slam.
- 9.2 **Women's Super League**  
10 teams have been selected to play in the inaugural Women's Super League. Thurrock RFC and Lichfield RFC were unsuccessful in their application to join and have filed appeals, which are now being processed.
- 9.3 **Global Calendar**  
The key principles have been agreed, but further work needs to be done on the possible reduction of the Six Nations from seven to six weeks.
- 9.4 **Rugby Development**
- a. **Playing Data**  
The National Rugby Survey data continues to be analysed. This analysis is supporting the business planning process for 2017/18 and the development of the strategic plan.
  - b. **Sport England 2017/21 Funding Submission**  
A total of £12.3m has been secured from Sport England for the next four-year cycle (£10.0m for participation and £2.6m for the development of women's talent). Payment is dependent on Sport England agreeing the RFU's governance action plan.
  - c. **Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) Strategy**  
The first three pitches are now fully operational with usage building at all of them. Work has recently commenced on two more and it is hoped that 15 more will commence over the summer. The first offer has been made on a Rugby Share site at Hull University and four more are well advanced.
  - d. **World Rugby/Tier One Community Sevens Project**  
The RFU continues to be heavily involved in this World Rugby project. Trials are currently taking place.
  - e. **Club Development**
    - i. Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer Recognition programme has been well received. Over 1600 volunteers have been nominated through the CB based volunteer recognition awards.
    - ii. Young Rugby Ambassador numbers now stand at 1,249 of which 467 are actively logging volunteer hours.
    - iii. 52 of the 56 2015/16 facility projects have now been completed. 22 projects are now in development from the 2016/17 programme.
  - f. **Game Development**
    - i. Course attendance for the first half of the season stands at 18,009.
    - ii. 12,411 have completed the online Headcase training since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016.
    - iii. 17 coaches have been offered places on the RFU Level 4 professional coaching programme. A Level 4 course for those not operating in a professional environment will be piloted in 2017/18.
  - g. **Education Development**
    - i. 614 Clubs and Schools have now signed the Old Mutual Wealth Kids First pledge.
    - ii. 87 phase 5 CBRE All Schools attended the Shirt Unveil at the England v Italy game.
  - h. **Rugby Growth/Player Development**
    - i. There are 19,800 players registered at 345 O<sub>2</sub> Touch Centres. The male/female split is 78%/22%.
    - ii. League registered female players now stand at 27k.
    - iii. 100 clubs are engaged in Return to Rugby. 2,146 players have registered and 846 have played at least one game.
    - iv. England Counties have beaten Scottish Clubs and Ireland Clubs this season.

**9.5 Commercial Update****a. Merchandising**

- i. Licencing & retail sales are 13% over budget.
- ii. Progress is being made on the plans to relocate the Rugby Museum.

**b. Partnership/Business Development**

- i. Renewal negotiations are underway with several existing partners.
- ii. New business outreach to 300+ brands has commenced.

**c. Debentures**

The East Stand Debenture migration process has started and has, overall, been very positive.

**d. England Rugby Hospitality**

- i. Timelines and budget are on track for the East Stand Development, but a more accurate final spend will not be available until two major procurement packages have been agreed.
- ii. Basic terms have been agreed with a hospitality company to sell hospitality packages in the new East Stand facility.
- iii. The plans for the new East Stand facility have now been communicated to all the Official Licenced Operators. Work is being undertaken to ensure a smooth termination of the current contracts and to monitor for any signs of a growth in unofficial hospitality.

**e. Ticketing**

- i. The home Six Nations games were sold out without going on general sale.
- ii. Ticketing is now focussed on the OMW England v Barbarians game. This will be a non-cap game and the prices reflect this.
- iii. Discussions are underway to change the current paper based Club ticket ordering system to an online system. Consultation will take place shortly with Clubs and CBs.
- iv. Work is underway to deliver an official online ticket resale service to all RFU ticket holders.
- v. Discussions have commenced with concert promoters re potential concerts in the 2018 & 2019 summer seasons.
- vi. There is a growing issue of abuse of ticket conditions. The intention is to act firmly on those identified as breaching ticket conditions with a view to deterring others.

**9.6 Digital, Marketing & Communication**

- a. The new England Rugby Club continues to perform well. The free Social membership continues to be promoted to enhance the database for commercial opportunities including tickets for non-capacity games.
- b. A new web strategy is being developed to improve functionality and navigation.
- c. The Inner Warrior Campaign continues to drive participation in grassroots women's rugby.
- d. The 2017 London Sevens campaign has been launched.
- e. An integrated marketing and communications campaign is in development for the Green King IPA Championship.
- f. A new logo and brand identity is being developed for the new Women's Super League.

**9.7 Strategy & Corporate Affairs****a. Local Community Relations**

- i. A Community Liaison Officer has been appointed for the East Stand Development.
- ii. £50k of local sponsorship projects have been agreed.
- iii. Complaints following the Six Nations games have been minimal with very few instances of anti-social behaviour.

**b. Public Affairs**

Secondary ticketing continues to be a concern. The RFU and other major sports have been working closely with Parliament to try to satisfactorily resolve the issue.

## 9.8 Stadium

### a. 2017 Six Nations

- i. There were a minimal number of customer complaints during the Six Nations, but one recurring complaint is the movement of spectators in and out of the seating areas during the game. It is now a priority for the executive team to see how this can be minimised.
- ii. The pitch is holding up well with minimal signs of wear.
- iii. Additional stewarding, traffic management and enhanced security demands are having a direct impact on budgets.

### b. East Stand Development (ESD)

- i. A significant amount of work has been carried out by the ESD Professional Consultants Team to ensure that construction work started on time.
- ii. Despite a couple of early setbacks, the East Stand Development is still expected to be completed in time for the 2018 Autumn internationals.

## 9.9 Legal & Governance

### a. Safeguarding

- i. The Union has received numerous queries from the media and Government Departments concerning whether the RFU has had a similar number of historic complaints to the Football Association, which it has not.
- ii. There has been a significant increase in the number of DBS applications from Clubs. None of these has identified any confirmed disclosures of historic abuse that have been related to an individual's involvement in rugby.
- iii. Work has started on re-drafting the RFU Safeguarding policy to include the most up to date reference to statutory guidelines.

## 9.10 Discipline

Recruitment is underway for the RFU's Independent Head of Rugby Judiciary. Sir James Dingemans is standing down at the end of the season after four years' service.

## 9.11 Information Technology

- a. The Game Management System (GMS) Steering Committee has been refreshed and held its first meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017.
- b. Information Security continues to be a priority. An organisation-wide review is being planned.

## 10. International Report

(Ian Ritchie - Chief Executive Officer)

### 10.1 Introduction

Since the last Council meeting there have been World Rugby Regulations, Rugby and Women's Advisory Committee meetings. A Rugby Europe Board meeting has also taken place.

### 10.2 World Rugby - Regulations Committee

- a. The Regulations and Rugby Committees have unanimously agreed to the World Rugby Council that the residency requirement be extended from three to five years. This will be considered at the World Rugby Council meeting in May 2017.
- b. Minor changes are also being proposed to Regulation 8 concerning Olympic eligibility.
- c. The Regulations Committee is also recommending that players must be released after Club fixtures on the previous Saturday, if selected for a Friday evening international.
- d. There is ongoing dialogue between World Rugby and the FFR on the need for and use of their Extension Committee. World Rugby and FFR agree that having such a body is a legal requirement in France even though it runs contrary to World Rugby's universality principle.
- e. The new specifications for player monitoring devices have been adopted; EXCO and Council will now consider the issue. It has also been agreed that a trial of a new type of shoulder pad that can measure the forces players are subjected to would be approved.
- f. Guidance will be given to Unions to help them make decisions on whether to host neutral matches.
- g. Changes to World Rugby Regulations to bring anti-doping practices into line with the WADA code were approved.

- h. Changes to Regulation 21 to make artificial run-off areas more cost effective were passed.
- i. The World Rugby Judicial Panel appointments were also approved.

#### 10.3 World Rugby - Rugby Committee

- a. Negotiations on the global season are now nearing completion and the general principles were agreed by the Committee.
- b. It was agreed that, as a temporary measure, players would be allowed to wear leggings and long sleeves in Vancouver as the artificial pitch is of the same type that caused problems in San Francisco.
- c. The Committee received an update on the impact of the tackle height intervention. It is too early to say if the intervention has been a success and reduced concussion.
- d. An application to trial a new type of head gear that claimed to reduce concussion was, following expert advice, not approved.
- e. The delivery of the Women's Rugby World Cup in Ireland is on track. Ticket sales for the pool matches are going well.
- f. World Rugby also continues to discuss the community sevens concept, which is aimed at the 18-35 age group; getting people new to rugby playing contact and helping lapsed players return to the game.

#### 10.4 World Rugby - Women's Advisory Committee

A draft Women's Plan has been prepared and approved by the Rugby Committee. There will now be a wide consultation with a view to having a final draft ready for approval by September 2017.

#### 10.5 Rugby Europe - Board Meeting

- a. The Chairs and Members of the Committee have been elected (with the exception of the Anti-Doping Committee as it has been agreed that no more than 50% should be made up of one nationality). This is the culmination of a formal nominations process including the newly formed Nominations Committee that was put in place by the governance review.
- b. **Rob Udwin** was re-elected as Chair of the Age-Grade, Development and Competitions Committee.
- c. Rugby Europe's Strategic Plan is still being developed. The aim is to approve the final version at Rugby Europe's June Council meeting. The business plan that will underpin the strategic headings is under development.
- d. Rugby Europe has written to the Six Nations requesting the opening of a dialogue on providing meaningful playing opportunities to the Tier Two European Unions.
- e. Talks are continuing with EPCR on the qualifying competition for the Challenge Cup and whether franchises from Romania, Russia, Spain and Italy will be invited to participate.
- f. FFR presented their bid for the 2023 Rugby World Cup to the Board. The IRFU will have an opportunity to present to the June Rugby Europe Board meeting.

#### 10.6 Six Nations

- a. There have been no meetings of the Six Nations Council since the last Council meeting.
- b. The 2018 & 2019 fixtures have still to be agreed, but it is hoped that they will be before Easter.

#### 10.7 European Professional Cup Rugby (EPCR)

The main issue on EPCR's agenda continues to be the potential acquisition of a significant interest in Gloucester by the owner of Montpellier, Mohamed Altrad. Discussions are continuing.

#### 10.8 British & Irish Lions

The British & Irish Lions have launched a grassroots programme called Learning with the Lions, which has three strands:

- a. Pick of the Pride Ambassadors Programme: One young ambassador from each of the home Nations will travel to New Zealand and learn about the global challenges facing rugby.
- b. Local Club Activation within the Home Unions: 480 branded packs will be sent to local rugby clubs, which will include giveaways and information on hosting Lions themed events. The aim is for youth teams to host events and attract a younger audience to watch the games.
- c. Engagement Events: These will be events hosted at New Zealand rugby Clubs for travelling fans and locals.

**11. Strategic Plan Update**

(Stephen Brown - Chief Officer of Business Operations)

- 11.1 Stephen Brown gave a verbal update to the meeting.
- 11.2 The first draft of the strategic plan has been circulated. Council was asked to provide feedback by 21<sup>st</sup> April 2017.
- 11.3 The Council Strategic Plan Review Group continues to meet to assist with the refinement of the plan.
- 11.4 The financial information in the plan and the KPIs are still being refined. Undoubtedly, over the next four years, the Union will not see the same level of revenue growth that it experienced in the last four years and the plan needs to reflect this.
- 11.5 A second draft will be presented to the Board for approval at the May 2017 Board meeting.
- 11.6 Council will be asked to approve the plan at the June 2017 Council meeting.

**12. Financial Report**

(Stephen Brown - Chief Officer of Business Operations)

- 12.1 Stephen Brown presented the February 2017 flash financial report.
- 12.2 The year to date retained profit is £2.6m adverse to budget. This is due to £1.8m relating to the new player payment agreement and increased match related costs.
- 12.3 Overhead costs are £0.3m adverse to budget with restructuring costs only being partially offset by a lower depreciation figure (due mainly to AGP investments not commencing as soon as anticipated).
- 12.4 A full year forecast shows that a retained loss of £10.7m, which is £2.7m adverse to budget. This is entirely due to the new player payment agreement not being fully budgeted for.

**13. Professional Game Board**

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Professional Game Board)

- 13.1 Jeff Blackett gave a verbal update to Council.
- 13.2 The Professional Game Board is carrying out a post Six Nations review. This is a routine review following any tournament or series.
- 13.3 A full written report will be presented to the June 2017 Council meeting.

**14. Community Game Board**

(Malcolm Wharton - Chairman of the Community Game Board)

- 14.1 The main aspects of the work of the Development Department are covered in the CEO's report.
- 14.2 The Community Game Board met the day before Council and received updates on the following:
  - a. Women & girls strategy.
  - b. Player tracking..
  - c. Age grade - Sharing of good practice.
  - d. Coaching strategy.
  - e. Payment of players.
- 14.3 In future, Community Game Board meetings will be held a sufficient time before Council meetings to allow a written report to be circulated with the Council papers.
- 14.4 Malcolm Wharton & Steve Grainger (Rugby Development Director) will be meeting with seven Constituent Bodies between April 2017 and June 2017.

**15. Governance Committee**

(Angus Bujalski - Legal & Governance Director)

**15.1 Insolvency Regulations**

- a. Governance continues to discuss the regulations that apply to Clubs that go into insolvency.
- b. The discussions centre around whether the current regulation provide sufficient rugby deterrent to financial mismanagement.
- c. Governance has yet to reach a consensus and it is proposed that a paper will be presented to the June 2017 Council meeting setting out the options being discussed and asking for Council's assistance in determining the way forward.
- d. There is no urgency as workable regulations are already in place.



**15.2 Compensation Advisory Panel (CAP)**

- a. Just prior to its abolition CAP proposed that a group should be set up to consider whether the service fee paid to all Council members on the Board of Directors should be extended to any other positions held by Council members. This work has been taken on by the Governance Committee, who set up a small working group to consider the matter. This group will report to Governance in May 2017 and recommendations put to Council in June 2017.
- b. CAP also suggested that Council entitlements should be reviewed. Governance believes that this work should be undertaken by a group that reports directly to Council.

**15.3 National CB Working Group**

Work has begun on the criteria to become a National Geographic Constituent Body. A paper will be presented to the May 2017 Governance meeting and brought to Council in due course.

**15.4 Global Law Trials**

- a. At its November 2016 meeting, the World Rugby Council approved five Global Law Trials (see Appendix 3).
- b. These were adopted in all rugby played in the Southern Hemisphere with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.
- c. The Global Law Trials come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 for all games in the Northern Hemisphere.
- d. All games on the British & Irish Lions tour to New Zealand will include the Global Law Trials.

**16. Any Other Business**

Council was advised of the events that have been planned to support the Try for Change Fund. Try for Change is an England Rugby programme in partnership with Sport Relief, which uses the power of rugby as a force for good to improve the lives of disadvantaged people.

(see <http://www.englandrugby.com/about-the-rfu/rfu-charities/try-for-change> for further details).

**The next Council meeting is on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington.**

**Chris Cuthbertson & Rob Udwin**

10<sup>th</sup> April 2017

***These notes are our personal recollections of the meeting and include those matters which we believe will be of interest to Middlesex Clubs. No attempt has been made to convey all the opinions expressed during the debates.***



## APPENDIX 1

**PAYMENT OF PLAYERS**

Implementation Resolutions Approved by Council

**1. Introduction of Thresholds**

The introduction of financial thresholds for the men's game for gross payments to players playing in the RFU Leagues at Level 3 and below and that any club who pays above these thresholds will lose access to certain RFU funding support.

**2. The Thresholds**

The thresholds as set out below:

- a. Men's Level 3 - £275,000 to include the payment of player coaches save that only £12,500 of the costs of each of the first and second player coaches will be excluded in calculating whether or not the threshold has been exceeded.
- b. Men's Level 4 - £157,500 to include the payment of player coaches save that only £10,000 of the costs of each of the first and second player coaches will be excluded in calculating whether or not the threshold has been exceeded.
- c. Men's Level 5 - £65,000 to include the payment of player coaches save that only £7,500 of the costs of each of the first and second player coaches will be excluded in calculating whether or not the threshold has been exceeded.
- d. In respect of Men's Level 6 and below:
  - i. Any club who pays any player any material benefit (whether contracted or not contracted) in return for playing rugby in the RFU Leagues at Level 6 and below, will lose access to certain RFU funding support; and
  - ii. Clubs at these levels will be permitted to engage one paid player coach only up to a maximum of £10,000 and no more than 50% of which shall be in respect of his/her playing duties.

**3. The Declaration**

- a. The introduction of a declaration for all clubs with a men's team playing in the RFU Leagues at Level 3 and below to complete and submit on a mandatory basis in the 2018-19 season.
- b. The introduction of a declaration for all clubs with a men's team playing in the RFU Leagues at Level 3 and below to complete and submit on a voluntary basis in the 2017-18 season.
- c. The principles in the draft declaration. A final version of the declaration will be presented to Council for approval in the 2017-18 season.

**4. Regulations**

The principle of the regulation changes.

A final version of the regulations to implement the agreed principles will be presented to Council for approval in the 2017/18 season.

**5. Loss of RFU Funding**

The loss of RFU funding support should a club pay above the permitted thresholds at Level 3 to 5, pay players at Level 6 and below, fail to submit a declaration or otherwise not comply with the regulations.

**6. Implementation of a Review Group**

The establishing of a working group, reporting to CGB, to oversee and review the implementation of the project.

## APPENDIX 2

**HM SPORT GOVERNANCE CODE**

Timetable Approved by Council

<b>Date</b>	<b>Actions</b>
27 April 2017	Working Group reviews feedback from Council and Sport England
3 May 2017	Governance hold initial discussion on structure of changes to the Rules
12 May 2017	Deadline for responses from the Game
16 May 2017	Working Group reviews feedback from Council and/or other stakeholders and prepare detailed proposals
17 May 2017	Board reviews progress
2 June 2017	Council considers detailed proposals
2 June 2017	Annual General Meeting
14 June 2017	Governance considers detailed changes to the Rules
19 July 2017	Board considers detailed changes to the Rules
[TBC] Sept 2017	Governance considers Rule changes and calling notice
20 Sept 2017	Board considers Rule changes and calling notice
[TBC] Oct 2017	Governance reviews progress
[TBC] Oct 2017	Council considers Rule changes and approves calling notice for the Special General Meeting
1 Nov 2017	Board reviews progress
[TBC] Nov 2017	Council reviews progress
[TBC] Nov 2017	Members consider Rule changes at Special General Meeting

## APPENDIX 3

**GLOBAL LAW TRIALS**

The World Rugby Council has agreed that the following Global Law Trials will apply to all games played in the Northern Hemisphere from 1st July 2017 (The GLTs have been applied in the Southern Hemisphere since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017).

The changes will apply in all of the summer tests in the Southern Hemisphere including the Lions tour.

**1. LAW 3 NUMBER OF PLAYERS – THE TEAM****3.6 (Uncontested Scrums)**

Add (h) Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with eight players per side.

**Reasoning:** To discourage teams from going to uncontested scrums.

**2. LAW 5 TIME**

Add to 5.7(e) If a penalty is kicked into touch after time has elapsed without touching another player, the referee allows the throw-in to be taken and play continues until the next time the ball becomes dead.

**Reasoning:** To discourage teams from infringing in the dying moments of the game.

**3. LAW 8 ADVANTAGE**

Add to 8.1(a) When there are multiple penalty infringements by the same team, the referee may allow the captain of the non-offending team to choose the most advantageous of the penalty marks.

**Reasoning:** To discourage repeat offending when advantage is already being played and to reward teams against whom repeat offending has taken place.

**4. LAW 9 METHOD OF SCORING****9.A.1 (points values)**

Penalty Try. If a player would probably have scored a try but for foul play by an opponent, a penalty try is awarded. No conversion is attempted.

Value: 7 points

**Reasoning:** To discourage teams from illegally preventing a probable try from being scored while also saving time on the clock by negating the need for a conversion.

**5. LAW 19 TOUCH AND LINEOUT (Put forward by the RFU)****Add to definitions on page 117:**

- A player who is attempting to bring the ball under control is deemed to be in possession of the ball.

**Reasoning:** This brings into law something that is already applied in practice. It means that a player "juggling" the ball does not have to be in contact with it at the exact moment of touching the touchline or the ground beyond it for the ball to be deemed to be in touch. This makes it easier for the match officials to adjudicate.

**Amend eighth definition on page 117:**

- If a player jumps and knocks the ball back into the playing area (or if that player catches the ball and throws it back into the playing area) before landing in touch or touch-in goal, play continues regardless of whether the ball reaches the plane of touch.

**Reasoning:** To simplify law and to increase ball-in-play time.

**Add to definitions on page 117:**

- If the ball-carrier reaches the plane of touch but returns the ball to the playing area without first landing in touch, play continues.

**Reasoning:** To simplify law and to increase ball-in-play time.

**Add to sixth definition on page 117:**

- In this case, if the ball has passed the plane of touch when it is caught, then the catcher is not deemed to have taken the ball into touch. If the ball has not passed the plane of touch when it is caught or picked up, then the catcher is deemed to have taken the ball into touch, regardless of whether the ball was in motion or stationary. (This has now been extended to the Dead Ball line and the Goal Line as a result of a Law Clarification submitted by the RFU)

**Reasoning:** To simplify law and to increase ball-in-play time.

With the exception of the change to Law 3, which is only for 15s, all of the above trials apply equally to 15s and rugby sevens.