



Club Rugby Council meeting (2009/2)

Date: *Tuesday, 24 March 2009*
Location: *MRU Referees' Room, FMG Stadium*
Time: *7pm*

Minutes

1. Welcome

Attendance: Kevin Tod (CRC chair); Dave Faulkner (CRC deputy); John Knowles (MRU CEO); Chris Ricketts (MRU community rugby manager); Martin Brady (MRU club liaison officer); Barry Mitchell (Dannevirke Sports); Roger Heatley (Ashhurst Pohangina); Peter Hogan (Manawatu Rugby Referees' Association); Gary Nesdale (Feilding Old Boys Oroua); Peter Carswell (Feilding); Troy Homes (Linton Army); Neil Aitcheson (Freyberg); Peter Clark (Marist); Lyn Bevan (Bunnythorpe); Graeme Bull (Manawatu Rugby Referees' Association); Kim Durham (College Old Boys); Barrie Angland (Manawatu Rugby Supporters' Club); Colin Parker (Freyberg); Mike Dravitski (Te Kawau).

Apologies: Tony Murphy (MRU board chair); Steve Morris (MRU president); Hugh Blair (MRU board member); Peter Askey (MRU board member); Farah Palmer (WAG); Neil Kitchen (Feilding); Nick Reid (Secondary Schools); Terry Cooney (Halcombe); Chrissie Hughes (Halcombe); Sam Strahan (FOB Oroua). Confirmed by Peter Carswell / Lyn Bevan.

2. Confirmation of minutes from 26 January 2009

Confirmed by Roger Heatley / Barry Mitchell.

3. Matters arising

No matters arising.

4. MRU CEO Update – John Knowles

Mr Knowles said that the MRU's finances were 'strand' at present and cash flow was always tight at this time of the year and the MRU had reduced \$500,000 from its budget. He also talked about the loss of staff due to the restructure that the Union was currently undertaking. Mr Knowles mentioned the Highlanders game which the MRU was hosting and looking ahead to the Turbos season.

5. 2010 Senior I Competition format

David Faulkner from Massey University began the discussion by reiterating Varsity's stance that they believed a 10 team Senior I competition mirrored with Senior II was in the best interest of increasing the standard of the Senior I competition.

Kevin Tod suggested that the Senior II competition was not a reserve grade and although a mirrored competition was desirable, it may not always be possible, depending on the number of teams entered in respective grades. Also, that a reserve grade does not allow for Clubs such as Bulls, to progress to Senior 1, - there would be no opportunity of aspiring to higher level.

Lyn Bevan (Bunnythorpe) believed that having a 10 team competition which was mirrored was unfair as it locked teams into those grades and meant clubs like Bunnythorpe would never have a chance of making Senior II because it didn't have a Senior I side.

Gary Nesdale (FOB Oroua) agreed with Bunnythorpe's view and said it would be unfair on Bulls who were already a Senior II side as they would be demoted to Senior Reserve. He also said that if clubs were in favour of change that FOB Oroua was not in favour of promotion/relegation but would live with it.

Kim Durham (COB) said his club was in favour of a 10 team competition but believed having a mirrored competition would not work.

Peter Carswell (Feilding) said Feilding was happy with the 11 team competition, particularly as it was mirrored.

Neil Aitcheson (Freyberg) said he thought the 10 team competition idea had been well marketed over the last two years and he warned clubs to think carefully before voting on reducing the number of teams.

Barry Mitchell (Dannevirke Sports) was concerned about having a 10 team competition and was in favour of the current format, 11 teams with 12 teams in Senior II.

Mike Dravitski (Te Kawau) said they were in favour of 11 teams and wondered if it was reduced to 10 teams whether there would also be a reduction in players numbers overall.

A poll was taken as to whether the 2010 Senior I competition should consist of 10 teams: In favour: College Old Boys (2), Old Boys Marist (2), Massey University

(2). Against: Ashhurst Pohangina (1), Bunnythorpe (1), Dannevirke Sports (2), Feilding Old Boys Oroua (2), Feilding (2), Freyberg (2), Linton Army (2), Te Kawau (2).

Those clubs in favour of a 10 team Senior I competition in 2010 were defeated 14 to 6 and as a result the 2010 Senior I competition would remain at 11 teams. Kevin Tod told the meeting that the result of the poll would be reported to the Board, to assist their decision in forming the 2010 Club Competition Format.

6. General Business

- MRU community rugby manager Chris Ricketts talked about the 2009 club competition and said that clubs should receive a full first round draw for lower grades next week. He also answered the following queries:
 - o Ground sizes at Bill Brown Park and Colquhoun Park – Mr Ricketts said he had measured BBP and said it was short by 70cm and so the goal posts had been moved; the issue with Colquhoun Park was safety and the pitch had been moved away from the soccer field.
 - o Concerns around traveling all the way down to play Wairapa Bush clubs. Mr Ricketts said only one club had expressed a reluctant to travel but if other clubs had concerns he would revisit it.
- Doug Brew (FOB Oroua) told the meeting that the merged had struggled to obtain sufficient numbers to field an age group team and they had requested of the MRU that they be granted dispensation. MRU CEO John Knowles confirmed to the meeting that the MRU Board had given the club dispensation for one year. Mr Brew said his concern now was the players they had would be lost to the game and asked clubs to contact him if they could assist in placing the players into teams.
- Martin Brady mentioned that clubs had been issued with the 2009 Club Handbooks and scorecards with more handbooks would to be distributed. He also mentioned that the referees were looking to have a greater presence in community rugby and, in particular, in the various clubrooms around the province. He believed it was a great opportunity for clubs to welcome the referees into their clubrooms and extent the invitation to the referees to speak during the club's after match speeches.
- John Knowles pointed out to clubs that in view of New Zealand hosting the 2011 RWC there was a possibility that there would be some crossover between club rugby and the Air New Zealand Cup.
- Barrie Angland made the following points on behalf of the Manawatu Rugby Supporters' Club:
 - o He was looking to continue to support club rugby through his radio show "Footy at Five"
 - o If clubs want assistance in promoting worthy club supporters then contact Barrie and they can work together on recognising volunteers
 - o A reminder to clubs that the Supporters' Club was still looking for club rugby jerseys to put up in their clubrooms.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.