



Club Rugby Council meeting (2007/2)

Date: *Wednesday, 14 March 2007*
Location: *MRU Referees' Room, FMG Stadium*
Time: *7pm*

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies:

Chairman John Anderson welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were received from Farah Palmer (Women's Advisory Group); Murray Edgecombe (HSOB); Jim Lyons (HSOB); Kevin Jones (COB); Hadyn Smith (MRU CEO); Tony Murphy (MRU board chairman); Malcolm Burr (Marist); Gary Nesdale (Oroua). Moved by Roger Heatley, seconded by Samantha Moke.

Attendance: John Anderson (Freyberg, CRC Chairman); Troy Homes (Linton Army); Paul Harris (Te Kawau); Kim Durham (COB, Manawatu Rugby Referees' Association); Samantha Moke (Bulls); Craig Lindsay (Bunnythorpe); Vicki Spicer (Bush); Dave Wolland (Bush, CRC Deputy Chairman); Donald Jones (Linton Army); Dave Parata (Kia Toa); Kevin Tod (HSOB); John Whitehead (Varsity); Neil Aitcheson (Freyberg); Stephen Scott (Feilding); Barrie Angland (Manawatu Rugby Supporters' Club); Kevin Shing (FOB); Mike Dravitski (Te Kawau); Murray Mitchell (Te Kawau); Trent Te Koro (Kia Toa); Bill Donovan (Te Kawau); Del Bettridge (Bulls); Roger Heatley (Ashhurst); Peter Clark (Marist); Kenny Johnson (Kia Toa); Colin Parker (Freyberg); Martin Chesterfield (COB); Colin Gates (Te Kawau); Chris Ricketts (MRU community rugby manager); Martin Brady (MRU club liaison officer).

2. Confirmation of minutes from 29 January 2007

Minutes were confirmed by Mike Dravitski / Dave Parata.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of Operations Support Committee

The MRU had received three nominations prior to the meeting and were from Kevin Jones (COB); Murray Mitchell (Te Kawau) and Dan Lewis (Oroua). John Anderson said that up to six club representatives could be elected on to the committee and he would accept nominations from the floor.

Dave Parata nominated Trent Te Kooro on behalf of the Kia Toa RFC, while Kevin Tod nominated John Anderson, seconded by Dave Wolland, to the committee.

The CRC Chairman announced after there was no other nominations that the above people were duly elected onto the Operations Support Committee and that from discussion from the floor of meeting that the remaining vacant positions maybe filled at a future meeting of the CRC.

The full OSC is: Chris Ricketts (Chairman); Kevin Jones; Murray Mitchell, Dan Lewis, Trent Te Kooro and John Anderson.

5. 2008 Club Competition Format

MRU community rugby manager Chris Ricketts outlined the consultation process which had been undertaken and focused on the role of the MRU Board. The MRU staff's recommendation and any outcome from the CRC meeting would be forwarded to the Board for consideration and it was the Board which had the final decision.

He then went onto explain the reasoning behind the Union's recommendation which would see a 10-team competition for 2008.

The CRC chairman then sought members' opinions on the proposed recommendation and the following is what members had to say:

| Name | Comments |
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| Dave Parata (Kia Toa) | Sought clarification that any recommendation from the CRC would go to the MRU Board. John Anderson confirmed this was the case. |
| Colin Gates (Te Kawau) | How long has the proposed format been set for? Chris Ricketts responded by saying the MRU had no timeline on it. However, believed that it was practical to have the new format in place for at least two years. |
| Donald Jones (Linton Army) | Congratulated the MRU on the thorough and professional process but said it was essentially Hobson's Choice – commenting on a recommendation that differed from Linton's proposal. |
| John Anderson (CRC Chairman) | Tonight was an opportunity for those clubs or people who |

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| | hadn't read the summary of what each club has proposed for the 2008 competition. |
| Dave Parata (Kia Toa) | Sought to clarify Kia Toa's report. The club stated there should be a minimum of 10 teams but it was their preference to grow the game and to widen the boundaries. The key point was to build the local team (Turbos) from our region. An interesting point was that the likes of Auckland and Canterbury still sourced players from elsewhere. Believed the CRC should voiced its opinion on this issue in the media. |
| Neil Aitcheson (Freyberg) | Raised concerns over the manner of how the recommendation report was written and could not see how the recommendation would foster the game. He believed a phrase: "A reduction in the number of teams to 10 will produce a higher standard of Senior I competition" could be seen as fact when a word like 'will' is included. He also believed statements like "Clubs must also have an age grade side (Under19 or U21)" were too restrictive when the word "must" is used. |
| Stephen Scott (Feilding) | Agreed with Mr Aitcheson regarding Senior I Status being dependent on having a colts or under 19 team. Mr Scott also raised concerns about how this would be policed. He wonders whether there would be an increase in the competition if the size of the competition was reduced. Mr Scott also spoke on behalf of Gary Nesdale (Oroua) – Mr Nesdale said he could not understand that if expanding the Air New Zealand Cup was a good thing then why would it be a good thing to decrease the number of teams in the Manawatu Senior Competition. |
| Samantha Moke (Bulls) | Commented on the Senior I Status criteria and said Bulls were prepared to look at the bigger and while they were a small community were looking at getting an age group team together. |
| Dave Wolland (Bush) | Believed clubs should have a colts team as they were the future of the club. He highlighted the establishment of an academy at the Bush RFC as his club's commitment to the age group level. |
| Colin Gates (Te Kawau) | Said Te Kawau had not changed its view on the format. Queried Chris Ricketts as to why the summary report did not come out on 2 March as per the consultation process timeline. Mr Ricketts said that when the timeline was put in place the MRU did not know it would host the Hurricanes' match on 3 |

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| | March and was subsequently preoccupied with that. The report was released on 5 March. |
| Paul Harris (Te Kawau) | With regards to the teams going down, has there been any thought given as to how they will get back up? |
| Stephen Scott (Feilding) | Believed it would be difficult for any team that was relegated to regain Senior I status. Another consideration was that the sponsorship dollar would be hard to find if your club was only playing at the Senior II level. |
| Neil Aitcheson (Freyberg) | Mr Aitcheson said that if clubs go down then it would be the death of the club. He also said that "we were about growing the game." |
| Dave Parata (Kia Toa) | Believed there was a social responsibility aspect to this whole discussion. |
| Kenny Johnson (Kia Toa) | Highlighted the example of Bush RFC being given a chance by being granted Senior I status a few years ago and their club has grown. |
| Dave Wolland (Bush) | Sought to clarify Bush's position as stated in the summary report. He said that if there had to be a reduction then a drop to 10 would be preferable. Mr Ricketts responded by saying the MRU did not go out trying to impress upon clubs that there should be an 8, 10 or 12 team competition and the meeting agreed that that was the case. |
| Kenny Johnson (Kia Toa) | Queried Mr Ricketts as to how much influence did the final tally of clubs supporting a reduction of teams have on the recommendation. Mr Ricketts responded by saying had little influence, but should there be not a single club support a 10 team competition then it would not have been recommended. |
| Kevin Tod (HSOB) | Speaking onto behalf of HSOB. He said the club believed that clubs should have a Senior II or Senior Reserve plus an age group team. |
| Peter Clark (Marist) | Stated that Marist was in favour of an eight competition but that was a 16 team two-tier competition, like the Wellington competition (something that wasn't clear in the report). |
| Murray Mitchell (Te Kawau) | Said it was good to see two board members speaking on behalf of clubs. |
| Martin | Said COB went for a 10 team competition and that a club |

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| Chesterfield (COB) | should have a Senior I, II and colts team. |
| Bill Donovan (Te Kawau) | <p>Asked whether if that situation occurred then when a team from a Wanganui Senior I club played in the MRU competition, where would they fit in?</p> <p>Mr Ricketts said that under the current bylaws they would start in the Senior Reserve grade.</p> |
| John Whitehead (Massey) | <p>Said that Massey had not changed its opinion of a 10 team competition and supported the notion of clubs having a Senior II and colts.</p> <p>Mr Whitehead also said that the NZRU was looking at encouraging smaller Heartland unions to merge so that they could be administered by larger Premier unions, like Manawatu. If that happens then teams from other unions could join the Manawatu competitions.</p> |
| Samantha Moke (Bulls) | Spoke on behalf of Bulls which was still a member of the Rangitikei sub union, said clubs in the sub union weren't happy about how things were going in Wanganui and they may look to move in the future. |
| Stephen Scott (Feilding) | Wondered whether we were 'jumping the gun' in reducing the number of teams if in the future the boundaries would change and teams from other regions would come in. |
| Dave Wolland (Bush) | Said that downsizing or clubs struggling is occurring in Wairapa Bush with Eketahuna looking unlikely to field a colts team this year. |
| Kent Te Koro (Kia Toa) | Believed this year's competition would be good. |
| John Whitehead (Massey) | <p>Mr Whitehead said while Mr Rennie's comments were solely based in his requirements from a Turbos perspective, the clubs' views were solely based on the clubs' perspective.</p> <p>He also said that Rennie's view was nothing new and that a number of Manawatu NPC coaches over the years have said there were too many teams in the Senior I competition.</p> |
| Kenny Johnson (Kia Toa) | <p>Mr Johnson responded to Mr Whitehead – saying that if Manawatu had that attitude then it would stop trying.</p> <p>He concluded by saying that “you want your club to survive.”</p> |

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| Kevin Tod (HSOB) | Wondered if the competition was to stay the same but a criteria put in place what would happen within the clubs. |
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The CRC chairman then ask clubs to vote as to whether they agreed with the current recommendation to go before the board on 19 March. The number in brackets denotes each club's preference for the number of teams in 2008.

| In Favour | Vote | Against | Vote |
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| Ashhurst Pohangina | 1 | FOB (12) | 2 |
| Bulls (10) | 1 | Freyberg (12) | 2 |
| Bunnythorpe (10) | 1 | Feilding (12) | 2 |
| Bush (10) | 2 | Kia Toa (12+) | 2 |
| COB (10) | 2 | Linton Army (12) | 2 |
| Marist (8) | 2 | Oroua (12) | 2 |
| Massey (10) | 2 | HSOB (12) | 2 |
| | | Te Kawau (12) | 2 |
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The result from the vote and the CRC minutes will be forwarded to the MRU Board for its discussion.

6. General business:

a. Manawatu Rugby Supporters' Club

MRSC president Barrie Angland said it was a sad day for the club as Bryan (Barry) Snellgrove was buried today.

Mr Angland asked the community rugby manager about keeping a scoreboard operating on the number one ground at Arena. Mr Ricketts said that it was too costly to run the main electronic scoreboard. The MRU would move a scoreboard from the back grounds to have a score up at the number one ground.

He also urged clubs to let him know if they have anything special coming so he can promote it on his radio show. Mr Angland also asked clubs to assist the supporters' club in driving membership. MRSC membership was now open at \$10.00 for the season.

Barrie Angland can be contacted on 356 8448 (hm) or Ab.angland@inspire.net.nz

b. Operational Matters

Mr Ricketts said he had been experiencing difficulties in dealing with Arena Manawatu over the availabilities of fields for the club rugby season. Mr Ricketts has been told by Arena Manawatu that fields two and three will be out of action for some months from the beginning of the season.

Samantha Moke (Bulls) said the club was hosting the women's 10s tournament this Saturday and invited members to attend.

Dave Wolland (Bush) said was hosting the Force Back competition and invited clubs to get involved.

7. Next meeting

CRC chairman John Anderson said the next meeting of the CRC would be confirmed at a later date.

Meeting concluded at 8.44pm.