



## Club Rugby Council meeting (2006/3)

**Date:** *Tuesday 20 June 2006*  
**Location:** *MRU Referees' room, FMG Stadium*  
**Time:** *7pm*

### MINUTES

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies:

Chairman John Anderson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from: Mike Dravitski (Te Kawau); Barry Mitchell (Dannevirke Sports); Steven Kinane (Bunnythorpe); Dave Parata (Kia Toa).

#### 2. Role call of delegates:

Sam Strahan (Union President & Oroua); Tony Murphy (Board Chairman); Hadyn Smith (Union CEO); Chris Ricketts (Union community rugby manager); Paul Martin (Union academy manager); Martin Brady (Union club liaison officer); John Anderson (CRC chairman & Freyberg); Tania Wilson (FOB); Henry Brighthouse (Dannevirke Sports); Malcolm Burr (Marist); Kevin Jones (COB); Roger Heatley (Ashhurst Pohangina); Tyrone Barker (Bulls), Jim Lyons (HSOB); John Nairne (COB); Craig Lindsay (Bunnythorpe); Barrie Angland (Manawatu Rugby Supporters' Club); Kevin Tod (HSOB); Peter Clark (Marist); Colin Parker (Freyberg); Murray Mitchell (Te Kawau); Bill Donovan (Te Kawau); Kelvin Tantrum (Feilding); Gary Nesdale (Oroua); Troy Homes (Linton); Peter Marshall (HSOB).

#### 3. Minutes from previous meeting – 27 March 2006:

Two alterations to the previous minutes, it should have read:

- John Anderson was nominated by Kevin Tod for the CRC chairman's role.
- Dave Wolland was nominated by Peter Clark for the CRC deputy chairman's role.

#### 4. Matters Arising:

No matters arising.

## **5. Board Report:**

Chairman Tony Murphy said it had been a difficult period for the Union but was pleased to announce the appointments of Dave Rennie as the new Air New Zealand Cup head coach and John Knowles as the new Air New Zealand Cup manager.

Peter Thorburn had resigned from the Union Board following the IRB approaching him to assist with coaching USA in the lead up to the 2007 World Cup. Thorburn's departure has created a vacancy on the Board and Mr Murphy said there were two options available to fill the position. The Board could re-advertise the position or co-opt someone onto the board with the preferable option being the latter.

Other points raised by Mr Murphy:

- Mr Murphy said he would like to publicly acknowledge that the Hurricanes franchise had been "outstanding in support" of the Manawatu Rugby Union in the past few weeks.
- Manawatu's Ian McAffer was recently reappointed as director to the Hurricanes board.
- NZRU – Mr Murphy said the recently released funding review indicated there was becoming more of a focus on targeted funding. Provincial Unions would receive the following funding per registered player for the different age groups: 13 to 19, year olds \$60 per registered player and \$45 per registered player outside of this bracket. This recognises the focus on the 13 to 19 year old group.
- Boundaries – The NZRU review also indicated a keenness to see Unions look at their boundaries in the pursuit of efficient and effective running of the game.

## **6 Union Financial Report:**

Union CEO Hadyn Smith said that it was likely that the Union would finish the financial year 'in the black' but not at the level it would have hoped for. Mr Smith stated that Manawatu was ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of the Air New Zealand Cup Unions which has made securing sponsorship more difficult.

Mr Smith emphasised that NZRU and Hurricanes payments back to the Manawatu Rugby Union were based on player registrations. Clubs need to be aware of this as ultimately it would have an impact on them.

Mr Smith that Union community rugby manager Chris Ricketts would now by taking a more prominent role at the CRC meetings with Mr Smith pulling back on his role. The reason for this is that Mr Ricketts deals with all Union operational matters.

## **7. Air New Zealand Cup Team Report:**

The following points were made by Union CEO Hadyn Smith:

- Team Name - The Manawatu team will be known as the "Turbos" with the reasoning being it connects the team with the turbines on the hills in Manawatu and links the name with the youth market.

- Merchandise - ISC (International Sporting Company) will be issuing a full range of merchandise for supporters to buy in the future.
- Tickets – We require TicketDirect to have a stronger presence in the city and are currently looking to have more outlets. Pre-sales are a must.
- Team Liaison & Ball Boys – The Union has advertised for these positions to be filled for all home games. If you know of someone who would like to fill these positions or you would like to be involved contact Chris Ricketts at the Union office.

## **8. Club Rugby Report:**

Below is Union community rugby manager Chris Ricketts' report presented at the meeting:

### *Grading Round*

- Senior 1, Senior 2 and Colts Premier participated in a 5-game grading round from to create a top-6 / bottom 6 format.
- All other grades with the exception of Women's and Presidents also participated in a 5-game grading round starting a week later.
- This grading round proved valuable for 2 reasons:
  - It allowed for both late withdrawals and late entries into various grades without having an impact on the championship round.
  - By commencing the championship round for all grades on the same weekend, this allowed for adjustment of teams between grades
- From the pre-season entries, 10 teams withdrew and 2 teams entered during the grading round.
- Senior Reserve grades were rolled into 2 for the championship round.
- Colts A and Under 19 grades combined for the championship round.
- 3 teams were promoted and 2 relegated.

### *Cross-Pool Matches*

- On 13<sup>th</sup> May Senior 1, Senior 2 and Colts Premier participated in cross-pool matches, including a cup final for the top two teams, whilst all other grades completed their grading round.
- There was a fair amount of feedback regarding the validity of both the cross-pool games and the pre-season games (April 1<sup>st</sup>), which will be addressed in the review of the competition at the end of the season.

### *Championship Round*

- We are now in week 6 of the championship round, which for the Senior 1, Senior 2 and Colts Premier grades is the start of the second phase of the double-round robin.
- The Rain affected weekend last week has had an impact on all grades with the exception of Senior 1, and the MRU is currently making amendments to the format to account for this wherever possible. Changes will be issued to clubs this week when they are finalised.

### *Looking Forward*

- Play-offs occur for all grades, with Finals for the Senior 1, Senior 2 and Colts Premier Grades on 12/8
- Due to the Air New Zealand Cup match v Auckland on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July, we would like to play club rugby on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> to enable everyone to attend the match. There is the provision to play a limited number of games early on the Saturday should there be any clubs that can't play on Sunday afternoon.
- A comprehensive review of this season's competition format will be made in consultation with all participating club administrators and coaches at the conclusion of the season, with a view to establishing the best possible format for 2007 and beyond.

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Questions arose from Mr Ricketts' report, included:

- What will happen to games cancelled due to the rain at the weekend – Mr Ricketts said the easiest way for the games to be accounted for was to scrap the entire round.
- Peter Clark (Marist) questioned whether the round scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> July would have the designated day as the Sunday (30<sup>th</sup> July) meaning teams which could not play Sunday would have to default. Mr Ricketts confirmed this.
- Gary Nesdale commented that the fields at Kimbolton were in good condition and were 'always open'.

### **Club Rugby Report Continues:**

#### *Formats – Relegation:*

Te Kawau had submitted the following for discussion at the meeting: "Automatic Demotion, why should the last placed team in any grade, and in particular senior 1, face automatic demotion at the end of the 2006 or any other season."

Murray Mitchell (Te Kawau) spoke to the matter by saying when was the decision made to have automatic relegation.

Mr Smith responded by saying that the Union staff are there to do what clubs want. He said it was discussed and ratified by the clubs.

Mr Nesdale asked whether it was possible that changes could be made at the start of the 2007 season and Mr Ricketts said it was possible.

Mr Strahan said that promotion/relegation was divisive and why not consider a competition where there were 13+ teams in the top grade.

The meeting gave an indication to have a comprehensive review at the end of this season which would include discussion around promotion/relegation.

*Formats – Invited Teams:*

Te Kawau had submitted the following for discussion at the meeting: “Invited Teams, should teams invited to play in MRU competition, be allowed to be promoted up in the grades (subject to meeting the approved criteria) and displace Manawatu affiliated and based teams.”

Mr Smith said the Union would act in the best interest of the Union and any invited team would have to meet the current criteria. For instance, if Dannevirke Sports wins the Senior II top six competition then they are eligible to go up a grade but the criteria would be looked.

*Home and Away Fixtures:*

Mr Smith said that if anyone had a an issue with draws & fixtures then the correct procedure is to contact Chris Ricketts & Mark Dinsdale at the Union then if it needs to go further it would be addressed by the CEO and then the Board if need be but it was not a matter for this meeting.

**9. Club Liaison Officer’s Report:**

Mr Brady said he had contacted all clubs but was yet to meet with three clubs (Feilding Old Boys, Bunnythorpe and Halcombe).

Mr Brady also raised the following two points:

- Tickets - the Manawatu Rugby Union was offering both senior and junior clubs. A limited number of ‘Gold’ seats and General Admission seats have been discounted to clubs. A club may pass on the saving to their members or use the scheme as part of their club’s fundraising. Seats will be allocated on a first in first served basis. Club secretaries and/or Club Administrators have been emailed with information regarding the scheme. Clubs only have until mid July to get their orders back to the Union. The value of the tickets are: Gold (\$50 adult; \$15 child) & General Admission (\$35 adult; \$12 child). Prices below are what the Union will charge charges:

<b>Ticket</b>	<b>Price per adult</b>	<b>Price per child</b>
‘Gold’ Seats	\$35	\$12
General Admission (includes family zone)	\$30	\$10

- NZRU Manuals – The national body has just released its “Club Best Practice Manual. The manual was a one-stop reference guide for the clubs, and would also assist the recently appointed club liaison officers in their work with the clubs. The manual also contains useful information on roles and responsibilities, ideas on how to retain players, player recruitment

initiatives and templates which clubs can use. All but one club has received their manual. Halcombe is the only club yet to receive their copy.

**10. Academy Report:**

Academy manager Paul Martin explained the purpose of the academy was to have players being able to play Air New Zealand Cup rugby three years after leaving school.

At this stage Mr Martin said a selection panel had been established to select future academy players – the current panel consists of the Manawatu Union rugby development manager, the Union under 16 and under 18 coaches plus the academy manager. In addition Mr Martin was looking at establishing a pre-academy system which would encompass players under 13 and up.

The players in the academy at present were all 'going well'. He urged clubs to be involved in the academy system by contacting him about any player which they feel have potential.

**11. General Business:**

- Murray Mitchell (Te Kawau) enquired about how secondary schools rugby was going. Mr Ricketts replied by saying both girls and boys numbers were up on last year and that the secondary schools' board was working effectively with Union board member Graeme Frazer chairing the meetings.
- Kevin Tod (HSOB) requested from other clubs that if they do default then as a matter of courtesy contact the other club involved.
- 6pm is an agreeable time for future CRC meetings.

Meeting closed at 8.47pm.

Next meeting will be confirmed in due course but would be in approximately two months.

Chairman: .....

Date: .....