

# NOW I RUL(E) TIMES ISSUE NO. 10

**Editor :- Tony Ayin**

**Ass. Ed. :- Fred Swarbrick**

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**Issue No. 10 under our new Editor Tony Ayin !!!**

## Editorial:

Welcome to the Issue 10 in which you will see is a little different to previous editions. Whilst the season has been affected by these snow spells in November and December we are at the final stages of what has proved to be a tough year.

Talking of finals you will see photos and a breakdown of the **Raging Bull Finals as written by Mike Atkinson**, between last year's winners, Macclesfield 2s, and their opponents, Birkenhead Park 2s. This was held at Stockport Rugby Club on Saturday 7th May with Macclesfield 2s maintaining their winning form to take away the spoils.

This issue is packed with winners. You will get an insight into Stockport's coaches- Tim Burgon and Anton Hanson - as well as genuine stalwarts of the game in Dr John Lansbury, former Sale, North and Barbarian plus Colin Durkin, President of the Manchester & District Referees Society. Please do not adjust your viewing as some photos are in black and white!!

However we go in search of a newly formed Club, Formby Vikings to give you an inside view of the trials and tribulations of setting up in 2007. Some laughter is provided for your entertainment from guest writers, Fred and Neil.

Whilst each year we witness great achievements in our sport it is always with sadness that we have to say our goodbyes to family and friends. Our sympathies go to the family of Jim Steele ( Hawcoat Park) who passed away following a match at Tarleton Rugby Club in February 2011. Jim was a club legend with more than 850 1st XV appearances spread over 40 years and his loss will be a felt by the wider rugby community.

Finally we end with a rant from the bunker and some trivia which has been spiced up with contributions from a former Club Chairman and the usual droll sound bites from our indomitable, Fred Swarbrick, Chairman of the North West Intermediate Leagues.

I welcome your views and comments and what you would like in the next issues to include a section on what interests you.

So if you have some news, story, or would or would like to see something then let me know via [ayintony@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ayintony@hotmail.co.uk).

Thanks to our Sponsors who are represented with their Logos below for their continuing support !!



# Club of The Month:- Formby Vikings



## History

- \* **Founded in 2007 with mini-rugby**
- \* **Jason Keating, Director of Rugby & Sport**
- \* **Played at Duke Street Park**
- \* **Established by volunteers including Wayne Laing, Tim Palmer, Paul McCann + Allen Wood**
- \* **Moved to Formby Football Club in 2009**
- \* **Formby Vikings Seniors set up in 2008**

## The Beginnings

Key volunteers in the community came forward including Wayne Laing, a local PE teacher, Tim Palmer & Paul McCann, St Mary's Old Boys Players and a local parent and now ex-footballer, Allen Wood.

The club began training at Duke St park and over the first few months more and more children and young people turned up for rugby training. The majority were complete novices and the new volunteers, who were often parents of the children, although keen, had no rugby and, in many cases, no sport club experience.

### Alexandria enjoys a social evening !!

Formby Cricket club then offered an opportunity to train and play mini rugby at their ground which they shared with the local Hockey club. The then President, Tim, and his wife Mandy, must be thanked for their assistance and support. Formby being an ex Viking settlement, sealed the new clubs name and the two logos were organised by Wayne Laing and family friend, Duncan Curry.



During the summer holidays in 2007, it was decided to offer free rugby coaching to all local children in an effort to build the club's strength. We had lots of children now playing, and guided by the RDO, Martin, we quickly identified we had to formally register the club and ensure we had the correct structure in place. This is when the lack of rugby volunteers and knowledge hit home and Jason had promised his wife, Alexandria, that setting up a club would not impact on his time greatly as they now had two boys and a baby girl.

That first season (2007/8), Vikings had 23 U17s turn up for training and the colts team was born. U7, U8 + U9's teams evolved and a mix of players in every other age group up to U14s.

## Club of The Month: Formby Vikings

We continued in this vein for another season and recognition must go to Waterloo for the season 2008/9. They fully supported their senior colts to join forces with the Vikings to ensure between the clubs we had an avenue for this age groups' rugby, as neither club could sustain a side. This was the early cluster agreement between the Vikings, Waterloo and then Southport RUFC to ensure we gave every opportunity to those wanting to play rugby.

More and more adults were getting involved and Formby Vikings Seniors was born. They played a few friendly games against St Mary's Old Boys (were they ever friendly?) and welcomed some key new arrivals including **Brian Henry**, 50-year old hooker and black belt Karate Kid, **Phil Murray** our ball room dancing second row, **Alex Leonard** our very own 'run forest' and community coach, **Dave Helmsley**, the bay-watch physics teacher and vice captain **Dave Morton**, all the gear but no idea, good egg and duped team manager.

The Colts who had played now also took up the reins in senior rugby. These included utility forward Mick, the trio of Bell brothers, and other characters a club needs including **Chunder Pete**, **Angryboy Randal**, pretty boys **Rich and John**, mummies little soldier **big Dan**, **glasshouse Criag**, **Pablo**, **Tony** and many more bringing the squad size to 42 players. The first two seasons has seen the Vikings prop up the bottom of the league, but beat both the promotion teams. We hope to be pushing for a top table place next season!!!



The Formby Vikings 1sr XV  
Jason Keating 3rd Left Back Row



The future is in good hands !!

**Jason Keating added.. "during my playing career and setting up the Formby Vikings I acknowledged grass-root volunteers from other local clubs including Waterloo, Southport and St Mary's Old Boys. Their support and guidance has been greatly appreciated, however it does frustrate me when I see local children travelling from Formby to these clubs, only to sit on the bench or play infrequently due to large squads when they could represent their own home town and bolster the small teams which we have..."**

## Club of The Month: Formby Vikings

In 2009 the Vikings moved to Formby Football club when the new owner Dave Webster took over. This was a 15 acre site, however a land deal was completed as a joint venture, and the whole site is now 45 acres. The rugby section has 12 acres and funding and planning has now been secured to build a small rugby clubhouse with 3 fully drained floodlit pitches.

There are talks to bring on board the local netball and basketball teams and offer the BMX/Skateboard following in Formby a park to utilise. The club also hopes with the football club to make the site multi sports, offering the community a centre of excellence.

Plans are set to have the rugby club up and running for the 2012 season, and expand the age group opportunities.

**A.T.L.A.S** is an affiliated club to the rugby section promoting sustainability with new indoor facilities in the heart of Formby offering Boxing, Karate, Judo, Taekwondo, Circuit training, Caveman, Dance (Traditional & Street) Yoga Pilates and many more as well as community rooms for activities such as card making, bridge and cake making.

Jason Keating, Director of Rugby & Sport, has been a key figure in getting Formby Vikings off the ground from the outset, and has tremendous support from his family especially his wife, Alexandria, Secretary, and his father-in-law and Chairman, Brian Hazard and club officers such as Janet Mullen, Allen Wood, Ian Walker, Martin Syme, Ellis Hall-Lyons, Clare Lambert, Dave Morton, Tim Bell, Rich Bell, Lisa Phillipson and Dave Lanagan.

**If you are sitting at home thinking I could set up a rugby club have you thought of the following list of job roles:**

- President
- Chairman
- Director of Rugby
- Team Coaches
- Team Managers
- Club Captain
- Club Secretary
- Club Shop
- Fixtures secretary
- Membership Secretary
- Treasurer
- Website design
- Catering staff
- Sponsorship & Fundraising coordinators
- International Ticket coordinator
- Child Protection officer,
- First aid Officer
- Publicity / Press officer
- Referee contact
- Player recruitment
- Volunteer coordinator.



**Christmas at the Vikings**



**Alexandria Keating checks after match arrangements.**

## THE RAGING BULL CUP FINAL : –

**SATURDAY 7 MAY 2011 AT STOCKPORT RUGBY CLUB, HEADLANDS ROAD STOCKPORT.**

**Macclesfield 2nd XV 31 points v 18 points Birkenhead Park 2nd XV**

**Report by Mike Atkinson.**

**Pictures by Allison Ayin.**



**The jubilant Macclesfield celebrate their 3rd victory in the Raging Bull Cup**

Macclesfield ran out convincing 31-18 winners in an exciting final, sponsored by sportswear supplier **Raging Bull**. The match was played in dry but windy conditions at Headlands Road. Macclesfield dominated possession and territory for most of the game but Birkenhead Park had some exciting moments, scoring two good tries and demonstrated some determined defence during long periods of pressure by Macclesfield.

Despite not getting into the Macc. half for the first 10 minutes a good run by **Dave Hall**, the Park fly half took play into Macclesfield territory and a penalty chance was converted by him from 40 metres. A good kick ahead by the excellent Macclesfield full back, George Dury was not dealt with well by Park and their fullback's clearance was charged down by Macc. flanker, **Philip Laing** and he got the touch-down to make it 5-3 as there was no conversion.

On 23 minutes Park went ahead again with another **Hall** penalty. Park defended well, twice turning over Macc possession as they were close to scoring, on 32 minutes Macclesfield opted for a scrum after a penalty was awarded and good driving play and recycling created a chance to move the ball wide to the left and winger **Peter Harwick** ran in wide out and got the try close to the posts, which was converted by **Ian Roberts** to give Macc. a lead they never conceded. Park did well at the kick off with their flanker making the catch but a penalty was awarded in their favour it was reversed for retaliation. The half ended with a good break and run by Park but the wing just had a foot in touch as it looked like he would run clear.

After some more good running by Park, a penalty provided a lineout opportunity for Macc. in the Park 22 and the forwards controlled well to drive over the line and there was a try for No. 8 **Jack Scott-Sugden**, **Robert's** conversion bounced back off the posts. (17-6 on 46 minutes). Park again had a chance when good driving allowed No 9 **Will Walton** to break blind and it looked as if his speed had got him clear but again there was a foot in touch.



**Raging Bull Director Carl Richards presents Cup to Richard Jones (capt) Macclesfield 2nd XV**

## Finals Day (continued)

With a series of scrums near the Park line it was inevitable that the Macc. pressure would tell and **Scott Sugden** was again the scorer as he took an inside pass from the speedy **Drury**, who had come in on the right. **Roberts** added the two points. (24-6 on 58 minutes). Macclesfield looked to have scored again but they were called back to half way for a knock on before a quick penalty was taken by Park and an extra ten added as Macc. had not retreated and second row, **Ryan Stead** forced his way over the line, **Hall** added the conversion to give Park some hope at 13-24.



**Carl Richards and Shelley Owens (Raging Bull) present, shirts, tankards and ties to our 4 Officials. Chris Bennet, David Crooks, Steve Bennet and Roger Bowden. 4th Official**



**Shelley Owens presents the fine Birkenhead Park XV with their Plaque and sports shirts**

On 68 minutes, despite an apparent knock on at half way the ball was moved left by Macc. and **Drury** again showed his pace, coming into the line to carve through the Park defence and score under the posts, **Roberts** converted and the lead was 31-13. It was Park who had the last word as **Stead** made an impressive 40 metre run deep into the Macc. 22 and although his pass did not go to hand Park were awarded a penalty and a good forward drive from the lineout resulted in an unconverted try for prop **Sean Fisher** on 80 minutes for the final score of 31-18.



**Our Ball boys display their shirts kindly donated by Raging Bull**



**Team Manager Chris Hehir proudly displays the Cup**

**Shelley Owens and Carl Richards present the “Man of the Match” Brian Leigh Memorial Trophy to Macclesfield No. 8**

**Jack Stott-Sugden**



## Coaches of the Month: May 2011—Stockport RUFC



It's no coincidence that Stockport Rugby Club is doing well in National League 3 North having just missed out last year they have secured promotion this time around. Tim Burgeon, Head Coach (on the right) and Anton Hanson (Backs Coach) have tasted success in their playing days with local rivals, Manchester, in the 90s and have brought that winning streak with them.

Arguably two of the nicest people that you will ever meet they attribute the success to a good base of local talent that rises through the ranks at the Club, player retention, competition for places and a strong forward base. So what is the story behind the fire-fighter and school teacher !!

*Tim's best memory as a player was winning the Lancashire Cup vs Fylde. As a coach, it was winning at "Twickers" in the Intermediate Cup Final in 2006 was up there!*

### Tim's Bio

- Flanker or No.8
- Mosley Hall G.S.
- Alsager College
- British Universities
- Stockport RUFC
- Manchester RFC (vice cap)



**Tim believes France will win RWC 2011 as the only team capable of beating the All Blacks on their day.**

Tim took over from Dave Parker over 6 years ago and in 2005-2006 season was the winning coach as Stockport beat Morley 11-6 with a try by Dan Eccles and 2 penalties from Ben Chadwick in the Intermediate Cup at Twickenham. Anton joined 3 years ago after a short spell coaching at Wilmslow Rugby Club following Simon Baker's relocation to Portsmouth.

Both agree that their approach is guided from hands-on experience whilst at Manchester alongside the enigmatic New Zealand-born captain and coach, **Denis Kelly**, who left an indelible mark. "He was 20 years ahead of his time..." added Anton with regards to his preparation and fitness levels. Five consecutive seasons of promotion were testament to this. Players such as Jimmy Wilde, Matt Hoskins, Rod Ellis, Neil Sykes, Greg Birch, Neil Hitchen, Andrew Bridgman, Andy Murison and Steve Swindells were beneficiaries of this unique coaching philosophy.

Anton also has time for Brian Noble who has tasted success with the other code with Bradford, Wigan and Great Britain. Tim remembers Phil O'Brien from his youth as he also had a good word to say in your ear and was really knowledgeable about tactics.

## Coaches of the Month: May 2011—Stockport RUFC



**New Zealand to win RWC 2011 as home soil gives them 10-15 points advantage.**

Tim talks positively about the mini and junior sections and the work of the coaches and parents in making it such a success. Additionally he gives credit to **Kay Weeks** for her unstinting work in setting up coaching for children's disability rugby for Medium Learning Difficulty/Specific Learning Difficulty at the Club which has gained national recognition from the RFU as Children's Coach of the Year in 2010. This story deserves an article of its own, so watch this space!

He acknowledges the strength in depth at the Club with the 2nd XV (BMW Bateman Premier) with the 3rds, 4th and 5th XV teams playing in the University of Salford leagues in Division 1,3 and 5 East respectively. "We are community oriented and whilst I have a goal for the 1st XV to maintain a position into the National Leagues the success of the whole Club is equally as important the Club is well supported and run...

" When pressed on which person was inspirational Tim and Anton had no hesitation in nominating **Colin Nevitt**. He is a stalwart, comfortable playing any position in the forwards to assist whichever team needs his skills playing prop, second row and prop as he nears the twilight of his playing career plus he likes the odd pint or two...

Anton enjoys coaching rugby at all levels and when he is not with one of Stockport Grammar's school teams he loves nothing more than being with twenty-odd U8s at Stockport on a Sunday morning including his son, Dominic. He gets as much pleasure with the team as he did in his playing days. Over 200 youngsters attend a thriving minis and junior section each week.

Anton also feels that the attitude of younger players,, especially those that have gone via the Academy route, may be detrimental to club rugby going forward. Being superbly fit and having been coached to county standard does not mean that you are a superstar at 17 or 18. Team working and understanding where you fit into the squad are just as important traits to develop

*If Anton could change one aspect of modern rugby it would be controversially to allow the tackled player at the ruck to hold onto the ball . As defensive sides are committing only 1 or 2 players to the breakdown thus making it an uneven contest .....*



**France to win RWC 2011 as the only team capable of beating the All Blacks on their day.**

## Character of the Month: Dr. John Lansbury (In conversation with Fred Swarbrick)

On taking over as editor of NOW I RUL (E) TIMES, Tony suggested non-other than Dr. John Lansbury, England Reserve, Barbarian, England Trialist, North of England, North West Counties, Sale and Heaton Moor. I had no hesitation in saying "Yes". Playing in the shadow of John as we progressed through our respective Rugby careers I knew immediately "Lans", as he generally is known, would be interesting news. Pictured here with two of his grand-children.

### John Lansbury !!!!

Played against the All Blacks and with Eric Evans, and survivor of 2 coach crashes (was that you, Fred!!) John has a remarkable career for such a gentleman.



**John the proud grandfather. The elder one plays lacrosse and the younger one, rugby. He has another grandson who is a national karate champion aged 11.**

Really John hasn't changed much, but what I will always remember is his infectious laugh, more a chuckle I suppose. A truly confident man.

In normal circumstances Hookers will always leave the park having beaten their opposite number whatever the circumstances even though they might have received a real "trousering". He was an excellent Hooker and was always a difficult opponent to play against. I must say I came off second best on a number of occasions, note not every time.

Lans was also a smashing "fella" off the field, and I can't argue against his selections ahead of me when battling for the same position in a number of representative games. If only replacements could have played at that time.

John Lansbury had a terrific playing career, starting at Sale FC at the age of 15 in their junior sides. At 17 he took his place in the Sale 1st XV against Halifax at Ovenden Park,



**John Lansbury pictured with Fran Cotton for NW Counties v All Blacks: Workington 1972**

covering for none other than the legendary, **Eric Evans**.

He then plied his trade in the Sale 2nd XV for some 5 seasons. During that time he completed his studies at Liverpool University and qualified in medicine. His chance came, and in explaining this to me, I felt that John was extremely disappointed by the reaction from the great man. Eric never forgave "Lans" for taking his place in the Sale XV, in what was now a permanent selection.

At the time of his playing days the Sale side was filled with personalities such as Fran Cotton, Dick Trickey, Steve Smith and Peter Stagg to name but a few. In fact Lans took over as skipper in the 1975 season.



**A ball handling Hooker !!!**

He progressed to the **Cheshire XV** and gained 60 caps, it was at this time whilst playing for Cumbria that I came across "Lans".

His prowess was being recognised and, in 1966, he was selected for the NW Counties against **Australia** at White City, Manchester.

In 1967 he took his place again in the NW Counties side to play the All Blacks again in Manchester's White City Stadium.



A couple of years later he was selected for the North of England v Australia, the game played at Northumberland's famous Greyhound Stadium. A claustrophobic ground, but always I thought, gave an advantage to the home side.

Lans during this time was representing the North in the England Trial system that existed. Then came 1972!

The **ALL BLACKS** against NW Counties the game to be played at Workington. It was Cumberland and Westmorelands home patch. Venues selected in rotation.

All the players as mentioned above plus other great names at that time were pulled together under the charge of **John Burgess**, the arch motivator. It was felt the Counties had a great chance to beat the Blacks on the remote NW coast of England. Training sessions were held Sunday mornings spread through the County.

A warm up game was arranged against East Midlands at Leicester. **Peter Wheeler** would be hooking for them, Lans and I would have a half each. It was on this trip that his experience in medicine came to the fore. After experiencing the hospitality of the Leicester Club on what was an evening game we set off on the return journey for the late trip home.

Our coach (not Burge) was involved in a head-on collision with a car being driven apparently on the wrong side of the road. Lans and Dr. Barry O' Driscoll were called on and administered treatment immediately to the injured, mainly in the car. Only 2 people survived from the passengers in the car. A truly tragic occurrence. The team fortunately did not suffer any serious injuries.

The other crash involved the Sale team and the coach actually flipped over leaving the lads upside down. They were on their way to a fixture with Coventry. A remarkable point he made was that Dick Trickey had a number of coins in his pocket and during the "skid" they were squared off in contact with his femur.

Duly selections were made for the Tour Match and "Lans" took his place in the side. Everyone knows the outcome of the game.

remember the last time he bumped into the All Blacks.

Five years ago a somewhat unsuspecting Lansbury was pitched in against the marauding All Blacks when they played the North of England. It was an experience he is never likely to forget as the tourists gave them a good hiding.

Next week he plays against them again. He will be hooking for North West Counties at Workington and told me: "I know what to expect this time."

Asked about his previous meeting with the tourists he said: "The last time English rugby was quite unprepared for the physical and technical assault they gave us. Since then the whole of British rugby has learned a great deal from the All Blacks and this showed in the way the Lions beat them last year."

Lansbury, a local doctor, said: "Everyone knows that they are a physically aggressive side and unless you go on to the field with the same outlook they will dominate you."

**TALENTED**

I asked if the aggressive aspect of the present tour concerned him.

"A lot of people are saying that the game is degenerating into a brawl and I think that to a degree it is. And that's a pity," he replied. "I think it is unfortunate because the All Blacks are a talented side."

He is not a player to shirk the hard physical side of the game, but feels there must be limits.

"I don't think this over physical aspect does the game any good. I don't mind robust play, but vicious off-the-ball thuggery is bad for the game. It becomes more of a battle than a match."

"The All Blacks have always been aggressive players, always determined and using

**Sale are ready for the All Blacks**

physical and mental intimidation."

Looking forward to next Wednesday, he said: "Rucking will be our main problem. The All Blacks are fast around the field and get into these rucks early. We have to match them."

Lansbury was delighted with his selection, especially as it looked at one stage as though Fred Swarbrick, from Cumberland, might land the hooking job.

**ABSENCE**

"Before our warm-up game against East Midlands I thought I might not get in because Fred is a good hooker. But I played in the second half and thought I had a good game."

This season he was back in the Cheshire side after a three-year absence and of his call to play against the All Blacks, said: "Many people would give their right arm to play against them. And here am I playing against them twice."

## Character of the Month: Dr. John Lansbury

Following the success and having received at least 3 non-travelling reserve cards for England, Lans received a coveted invitation to join the **Barbarians** on what was, at that time, a traditional tour of South Wales. Lans played in two of the games alongside the greats such as Pierre Villepreux (France) Gordon Brown (Scotland) and Mike Burton (England).

For an hour and a half, Lans and Fred exchanged rugby stories at John's home in Cheshire. Fred's quote:.. " It was just fantastic to meet up again with a chap I always considered a great hooker but also a character in the game..."

*Spot a few former stars of the 70s below at a match held at Broughton Park!!*

| NORTH  |   | SOUTH-WEST & SOUTH              |   |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|
| (Colours: White shirts)  |   | (Colours: Blue shirts)          |   |
| 15   | <b>B. PATRICK</b> (Gosforth and Northumberland)                         | 15                              | <b>P. E. BUTLER</b> (Gloucester and Gloucestershire)                    |
| 14   | <b>D. W. CARR</b> (Gosforth and Northumberland)                         | 14                              | <b>A. MORLEY</b> (Bristol, Gloucestershire and England)                 |
| 13   | <b>D. ROUGHLEY</b> (Liverpool and Lancashire)                           | 13                              | <b>M. C. BEESE</b> (Liverpool, Somerset and England)                    |
| 12   | <b>P. S. WARFIELD</b> (Durham University and Durham)                    | 12                              | <b>J. BAYLISS</b> (Gloucester and Gloucestershire)                      |
| 11   | <b>P. J. SQUIRES</b> (Harrogate and Yorkshire)                          | 11                              | <b>P. M. KNIGHT</b> (Bristol, Gloucestershire and England)              |
| 10   | <b>A. G. B. OLD</b> (Leicester, Yorkshire and England)                  | 10                              | <b>T. PALMER</b> (Gloucester and Cornwall)                              |
| 9  | <b>S. SMITH</b> (Sale and Cheshire)                                     | 9                               | <b>A. PEARN</b> (Bristol and Devon)                                     |
| 1  | <b>W. F. ANDERSON</b> (Orrell and Lancashire)                           | 1                               | <b>C. B. STEVENS</b> (Penzance & Newlyn, Cornwall and England)          |
| 2  | <b>J. LANSBURY</b> (Sale and Cheshire)                                  | 2                               | <b>J. V. PULLIN</b> (Bristol, Gloucestershire and England)<br>(Captain) |
| 3  | <b>F. E. COTTON</b> (Loughboro' Colls., Lancs. & England)<br>(Captain)  | 3                               | <b>M. A. BURTON</b> (Gloucester, Gloucestershire & England)             |
| 4  | <b>M. LEADBETTER</b> (Broughton Pk., Lancashire & England)              | 4                               | <b>A. BRINN</b> (Gloucester, Gloucestershire and England)               |
| 5  | <b>A. R. TRICKEY</b> (Sale and Lancashire)                              | 5                               | <b>J. R. SCOTT</b> (Exeter and Devon)                                   |
| 6  | <b>P. J. DIXON</b> (Gosforth, Cumberland & Westmorland,<br>and England) | 6                               | <b>J. A. WATKINS</b> (Gloucester, Gloucestershire & England)            |
| 7  | <b>A. NEARY</b> (Broughton Park, Lancashire and England)                | 7                               | <b>R. SMITH</b> (Gloucester and Gloucestershire)                        |
| 8  | <b>R. M. UTTLEY</b> (Gosforth and Northumberland)                       | 8                               | <b>D. M. ROLLITT</b> (Bristol, Gloucestershire and England)             |
| Referee: CAPTAIN P. L. LILLINGTON (Army and London Referees' Society)      |   |                                 |   |
| Touch judges: MR. F. J. PARKER (Manchester and District Referees' Society) |   |                                 |   |
| MR. A. WELSBY (Manchester and District Referees' Society)                  |   |                                 |   |
| Reserves in attendance:  |   | Reserves in attendance:         |   |
| S. MAXWELL (Richmond)  |   | R. C. STADDEN (Exeter)          |   |
| A. R. COWMAN (Coventry)  |   | K. C. PLUMMER (Bristol)         |   |
| M. YOUNG (Gosforth)  |   | N. BENNETT (St. Luke's College) |   |
| C. WHITE (Northern)  |   | N. VOSPER (Plymouth Albion)     |   |
| F. SWARBRICK (Vale of Lune)  |   | J. WHITE (Bristol)              |   |
| J. HALL (Cheltenham)   |   | R. SPEED (Bristol)              |   |
| F. BAYMAN (Orrell)   |   | R. ORLEDGE (Bristol)            |   |

A Mormon was seated next to an Irishman on a flight from London.

After the plane was airborne, drink orders were take. The Irishman asked for a whiskey, which was promptly brought and placed in front of him.

The flight attendant then asked the Mormon if he would like a drink. He replied in disgust, "I'd rather be savagely raped by a dozen whores than let liquor touch my lips.

The Irishman handed his drink back to the attendant and said " Me too, I didn't know we had a choice."

## Profile of the Month: Colin Durkin



**Colin Durkin at Macclesfield Rugby Union Football Club**

Referees advised by Colin on their way up the ranks include:

- ◆ David Leslie ( Scotland),
- ◆ Peter Hughes (England)
- ◆ Colin High (England)
- ◆ Andy Taylorson (Panel)
- ◆ Trevor Fisher (Panel)
- ◆ Rob Sheard (Panel)
- ◆ Fred Howard,
- ◆ Nigel Yates (Panel)
- ◆ Mike Hamlin,
- ◆ Geoff Gregson (Panel)
- ◆ Wayne Barnes (England) whilst at Salford University.

Fred Swarbrick met recently with Colin at the Referees Annual Dinner in March 2011. He quotes: “ Colin is one of the great characters in our game, a stalwart and a most respected member of the Manchester & District Referees Society...”

If anyone deserved the Honour of Presidency Colin does after advising Referees at all levels for some 38 years, including our Exchange Referees, regularly attending 50-60 games a season. What makes a President?

Colin started with the Society in 1973 as an adviser. He was actually a Football Referee before turning to Rugby Union touch judging at his first Club, Wigan R.U.F.C.

In 1975 he left the Wigan Club to join Aspull. After a number of years there he left to return to Wigan, and after experiencing touch judging he took up advising in 1975, which he continues to do to the present day.

He highlights a long list of notable Referees who have come under the umbrella of his presence. Maybe they owe a small part of their success to young Colin Durkin.

A remarkable fact is that Colin does not drive. Travelling to games by train, bus and whatever mode of transport might be available he would get there. I'm sure even by horseback if he found he had to. I remember the first time I met him on taking over Referees Contact at Vale. Colin would be arriving by train.

“ I'll meet you at the station, and we'll go to the Vale” No way I'll walk get a bag of fish and chips on the way and take my time getting there. Things have changed now...

Colin has a driver, Trevor, and he'll always be welcome to the pre-match meal at the Vale.

After 5 years he took a position on the Grading Committee and continued for 33 years. In fact he hasn't missed a regular Society Meeting for some 38 years. What a record and commitment!

He spent the two years of his vice Presidency under the President David Leslie. How would he follow David, a proud Scotsman? Colin a humble, in many ways, shy Lancastrian following another workaholic - notice, I say workaholic - in our game.

Colin has done so as he approaches the closing weeks of his Presidency by setting targets, one of which was to visit each and everyone of our Clubs under the auspices of the Society. At the time of our Meet he had 5 to go !!!!!

Asked who his favourite Clubs might be he suggested inevitably Wigan, but Warrington and Vale of Lune were equally top of his list. Surely not Vale because I was with him. No definitely not he said, you're always sure of a great welcome at Vale.

He doesn't forget the help the late Brian Leigh gave him in his early days he'll always be grateful. In recent years he received the accolade of volunteer of the year presented by Lancashire to only one person a season by Lancashire County. He wears his "honours" tie proudly.

After being involved in mid-week re-appointments for 20 years and Sunday appointments for 7 years, he now plans to work, on the completion of his term of President, with Clive Ennis, in the task of assessing and developing young up and coming Referees. I'm sure he'll find a few lads to turn into future International Refs.

Our senior Referees will be able to relax. No longer will they have to feel the "lash" of Colin's tongue after a game. At that point Nigel Fallon entered our conversation and immediately—proffered—

**“ Colin is a legend in the game”**

I agree it was inspirational for me to be in the company of a genuine worker for the game and a true legend as Nigel rightly said.

#### **Three Nuns at a Football Match**

**Three men were sitting directly behind them. Because their habits were partially blocking their view, the men decided to badger the nuns hoping they'd get annoyed and move to another area .....**

**In a very loud voice, the first guy said, “ I think I'm going to move to Yorkshire. There are only 100 nuns living there.”**

**The second guy came in “ I want to go to Cumbria, there are only 50 nuns living there”**

**3rd Guy says in an even louder voice.” I want to go to Lancashire there are only 25 nuns living there.”**

**The MOTHER SUPERIOR turned round, looked at the three men and in a very soft , calm voice said, “WHY DON'T YOU GO TO HELL.....? THERE AREN'T ANY NUNS THERE !!!!!”**

## **A RANT FROM THE BUNKER: AN EX-CHAIRMAN**

150 years ago, an unknown English schoolboy dropped on a football, picked it up and ran down the pitch to effectively invent the game of Rugby. The selfish little B\*\*\*\*\*d must be the most cursed at sporting historic figure in every rugby playing household on a Sunday morning as players across the world try to put a foot into a pair of Y-fronts/knickers without falling over.

Of course, at 7pm the previous Saturday evening (after the compulsory 7 pints) he is the greatest ever Englishman.

The **Webb Ellis Trophy** is up for grabs this year down in New Zealand where, as usual, the home side are favourites to lift the trophy. I think the All Blacks are justifiably the bookies favourites and anybody who watches both the Super and Tri-Nations series will witness some magnificent running off-loading rugby.

There is, however, one thing missing from both these series: you see very few 'fat lads'. Yes, there are some cubic 19 stone behemoths in the front row and some 6 foot seven monsters in the second and back row but they have a defined body shape. This is not just at high level, it is prevalent throughout the whole of modern rugby. I am in no way shape or form criticising this progress but you don't see a single beer belly or man boob till way past level 6 of the leagues or in veterans rugby. My old school coach used to select his whole team based on what he called 'The Pencil Test' which was as follows:

- Level 1: can write with pencil. A back ( position to be defined based on pace)
- Level 2: could potentially kill somebody with pencil. Back row forward.
- Level 3: can hold pencil under man boob. Second row forward.
- Level 4: can hide whole pencil under man boob. Front row forward.
- Level 5: can wave pencil officiously in people's faces. Referee.
- Level 6: can convince everybody that pencil is a silk purse. Coach.

I remember vividly seeing household name international players giving it their best shot with an enormous belly and boobs! I have been on the RFU Nutrition website and it is, frankly, quite frightening with an absolute earth of lard based products on the recommended intake list.

### **What is a mung bean?**

They also have a height to weight ratio chart and it has told me one thing: I am just not tall enough. The game is for all shapes and sizes and long may that continue. Many years ago, I had the privilege of playing against the quite fearsome Broughton Park side of the 1980's. I was playing for a team from over t'Pennines but had studied at Manchester University and was looking forward to meeting a couple of mates who had signed for Park. One of them, Chris Morgan was a remarkably fast and tough centre but he was only five feet eight inches and weighed about eleven stone. Chris's centre partner was the 'gravitationally challenged' class act that was Graham Higginbottom who came in at circa seventeen stone. Now logic would dictate that Graham would smash the ball up at inside centre and the likes of Rimmer, Morgan and O'Brien would do the rest. Not a bit of it.

## A RANT FROM THE BUNKER: AN EX-CHAIRMAN

Chris was the crash ball centre and Graham the fleet footed ethereal outside centre! You could guarantee that Chris would be in MRI casualty every Saturday evening suffering from concussion. On his first 1<sup>st</sup> XV away debut, Park played Gloucester and Chris was given the honour of leading the team out. As he trotted out onto the revered Kingsholm turf, the Tannoy announcer said ‘ And here we have Broughton Park being led out by their mascot.....’Poor lad.

It was in this game (unfortunately) that I first came across Jimmy Wilde. A maul had formed close to the touchline and I fancied a dart down the blind side. Off I went only to be hit very hard by Mr Wilde. When I came to, I had no idea where I and who I was then suddenly, I recognised a face in the crowd: sadly it was mine.

For what its worth, I fancy Western Samoa to cause some damage at the world cup and if they play as the sum of their parts they may well be a semi-final side. I have trouble Mr. Paddy Power with £10 of your English sterling for them to reach the semis. I think England has a strong squad but will flatter to deceive as they don’t have enough powerful personalities in key positions. Knocked out in quarter finals would be my bet.

It is good to see the RFU putting their money where there mouth is and, despite a reduced operating profit, still funding the grassroots of the game. You only have to look at some of the club facilities around the North West to see how much work has been done on both the fund raising and physical graft side. It is sad to say, but it makes a bit of a mockery of the ‘Big Society’ notion as pushed by our great leaders. I think it is a marvellous idea: just not their idea!

Rugby clubs have operated the Big Society mentality for many years with the vast majority of clubs being run buy a collective of highly motivated, enthusiastic, uncomplaining (!) and unpaid volunteers from executive committee down to water bottle filler. Incidentally, I have just bought the Big Society Cutback Cluedo game, but its not as much fun as the library has been shut down.

I have been very impressed when visiting various clubs to see the RFU raffle tickets doing so well with some fantastic prizes and the income weighted heavily towards the participating clubs. The first prize in the Welsh RFU draw is a sophisticated weekend date with Andy Powell to include:

- ⇒ Watch Andy play (12 minutes)
- ⇒ 24 hour drinking session
- ⇒ A massive pub brawl in the bar of your choosing
- ⇒ A trip to casualty
- ⇒ Lift home in a golf buggy

I’m certainly tempted.

## *A Page of Trivia 1.*

Things you already knew, but forgot because of your age.  
Isn't that a kick in the brain-box.

If you are right handed, you will tend to chew your food on the right side of your mouth. If you are left handed, you will tend to chew your food on the left side of your mouth.

To make half a kilo of honey, bees must collect nectar from over 2 million individual flowers

Heroin is the brand name of morphine once marketed by 'Bayer'.

Communications giant Nokia was founded in 1865 as a wood-pulp mill by Fredrik Idestam.

Tourists visiting Iceland should know that tipping at a restaurant is considered an insult!

People in nudist colonies play volleyball more than any other sport.

Albert Einstein was offered the presidency of Israel in 1952, but he declined.

Astronauts can't belch - there is no gravity to separate liquid from gas in their stomachs.

Ancient Roman, Chinese and German societies often used urine as mouthwash.

The average person who stops smoking requires one hour less sleep a night.

The Mona Lisa has no eyebrows. In the Renaissance era, it was fashion to shave them off!

Because of the speed at which Earth moves around the Sun, it is impossible for a solar eclipse to last more than 7 minutes and 58 seconds.

The night of January 20 is "Saint Agnes's Eve", which is regarded as a time when a young woman dreams of her future husband.

There are over 25 million bubbles waiting to burst out of each bottle of Champagne

Google is actually the common name for a number with a million zeros

It takes glass one million years to decompose, which means it never wears out and can be recycled an infinite amount of times!

The heat of peppers is rated on the Scoville scale

# A PAGE OF TRIVIA 2

## The World's Largest Helicopter



Preparing for Flight



In the Hangar

The Helicopter is modelled on the Soviet made Mil V-12, of which there were only two prototypes ever made. The Helicopter

Company purchased one of these prototypes from the Mikhail Leontyevich Mil helicopter plant in Panki-Tomilino, Russia in

2004 and have been engineering the world's first flying hotel ever since.

"The Helicopter features 18 luxuriously-appointed

rooms for adrenaline junkies seeking a truly unique and memorable travel experience. Each soundproofed room is equipped

with a queen-sized bed, fine linens, a mini-bar, coffee machine, wireless

Internet access, and all the luxurious appointments you'd expect from a fly-

ing five star hotel. Room service is available one hour after lift off and prior

to landing." The Helicopter is due to fly maiden journey this summer (June



26th) with

an undis-



closed price.



In Flight

To Fill a Corner :-



I prefer Rugby to soccer. I enjoy the violence in Rugby, except when they start biting each other's ears off.

Elizabeth Taylor.

Commentator ; The Frenchman took a bit of a shoeing there didn't he Brian ?

Brian Moore : I don't care, he's a Frenchman!!

## A Page of Rag Mag Humour

### The Defence Attorney.

A defence attorney was cross-examining a police officer during a felony trial— as below :-

Barrister : Officer did you see my client fleeing the scene?

**Officer : No sir but I subsequently observed a person matching the description of the offender running several streets away.**

Barrister : Officer, who provided the description?

**Officer : The officer who responded to the scene.**

Barrister : A fellow officer provided the description of this so-called offender. Do you trust your fellow officers ?

**Officer : Yes sir, with my life !**

Barrister : With your life? Let me ask you this then officer. Do you have a locker room in the police station—a room where you change your clothes in preparation for your daily patrols.?

**Officer : Yes sir, We do.!**

Barrister : And do you have locks on the lockers in that room ?

**Officer : Yes sir, We do. !**

Barrister : And do you have a lock on your personal locker ?

**Officer : Yes Sir !**

Barrister : Now why is it, officer, if you trust your fellow officers with your life, that you find it necessary to lock your locker in a room you share with those same officers ?

**Officer : You see Sir, we share the building with the court complex, and sometimes lawyers have been known to pass through that room.**

**( The courtroom erupted with laughter. Can only be a great comeback !!)**

### A Young Boy

A young boy and his grandfather are raking leaves in the garden. The young boy finds an earthworm trying to get back into it's hole.

He says, " Granddad, I bet I can put that worm back in the hole."

Granddad replies, " I'll bet you five pounds you can't., it's too wiggly and limp to put it back in that little hole"

The young lad runs into the house and comes back with a can of hairspray.

He sprays the worm until it is straight and as stiff as a board. Then he puts it back in the hole.

The Granddad then hands the boy five pounds and takes the hairspray back into the house.

Thirty minutes later he returns and hands the boy another five pounds.

The lad says, " But Granddad you have already given me five pounds"

I know he replies, " That's from your Grandma."

### Hear Ye, Hear Ye.

**The words of the great intellectual Cicero.**

**Don't be what you isn't**

**Just be what you is,**

**Cause when you is what you isn't**

**You isn't what you is !!!!!**