

# TOUCHLINE

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## JONES THANKS FANS AS ENGLAND CELEBRATE GRAND SLAM

As England celebrated the 21-31 victory in the RBS 6 Nations Grand Slam clincher in Paris, Head Coach Eddie Jones praised the fans for their support throughout the tournament.

From the 15,000 who were at Twickenham's open training session in January to the more than 20,000 who travelled to France for the finale and the thousands watching on TV, Jones said: "I've just got to thank the fans. They have been absolutely fantastic. The warmth of support for the team is just outstanding and has been instrumental to our success."

England's 13th Grand Slam, the first since 2003, was accompanied by full-voiced support.

"It was fantastic," said Jones. "You could hear it at various times during the game, the support of the English. It was like that in Rome. In the three away games the English support was absolutely fantastic. The French were really up for it and to have that support in the French back yard was very, very valuable so we're so thankful to the fans."

The England Head Coach also predicted more success to come. "The great thing is that the best is still ahead of us," said Jones. "We have still got a long way to go. The exciting thing for us is that the average age of this side is only 24. The winning-trophy age in Test rugby is about 28. So we're three or four years away from peaking."

"Everyone is ecstatic to be the most dominant team in Europe. It is a nice first step for us but it is only a small step because we have much larger steps to go, starting with the Australia tour this summer."



## URBAN FOOD FEST FOR TWICKENHAM

CHARLOTTE HARWOOD

This year's HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series finale at Twickenham is partnering with Urban Food Fest for a Feast of Rugby.

Urban Food Fest is famous for its street food and night markets in Shoreditch, London and Manchester where street food trucks and stalls serve exquisite global dishes, offering treats from France to Fiji. Slow roasted and smoked pulled pork burgers, sweet and savoury crepes and Venezuelan maize arepas are just some of the delicacies that will be on offer over the HSBC London Sevens weekend.

The HSBC London Sevens market will take over Twickenham on the 21st and 22nd May 2016 at the new-look event, with over 20 international street food trucks, stalls and bars, transforming the stadium into the ultimate day out for die-hard rugby fans, food lovers and for friends and families alike.

Nic Fletcher, Head of Marketing, England Rugby, said: "We want to offer something different for the tournament and, working with Urban Food Fest, we will reach a new audience of adventurers and

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## TWICKENHAM LEADING CONNECTED REVOLUTION

Twickenham Stadium is at the forefront in providing a truly connected experience for sports and leisure fans and the Home of England Rugby recently welcomed representatives from sports stadiums from Inter Milan to Croke Park and Wimbledon to Manchester United, as well as those from racecourses and arts centres, to demonstrate how Twickenham took the lead.

RFU Chief Executive Ian Ritchie welcomed the guests and said that modern day sports fans live in a connected world, mobiles, tablets, contactless payments dictating where and how they spend their money.

"Our fans expect the same level of modern technology that they enjoy in their every-day lives and here at Twickenham I am delighted to say that we have been pioneers in making the stadium one of the leading venues for connected and integrated systems," he explained.

The stadium's innovative approach has won awards, but more importantly won customer satisfaction, improved profitability and a better quality fan experience. Contactless and mobile payments have been introduced across all visitor touch points and a till on an armband smart-phone means even roving beer sellers no longer have to take cash and their sales can be recorded in real time. Match programme booth card payments have also been introduced.

Analytics now happen not beyond but throughout a major match day and stock to cash variances have dropped to below 1%. At one international match, bar takings of around a million pounds only recorded a variance of around £30. Point of Sale has become dynamic, reacting to fans' movement and demand around

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## URBAN FOOD FEST FOR TWICKENHAM

food-lovers, while adding an extra dimension to the day for our loyal rugby fans.”

Jessica Tucker, Founder of Urban Food Fest, said: “It’s a perfect combination partnering world class rugby with mouth-watering premium street food dishes. We look forward to all the visitors enjoying our unique culinary treats and having an all-round fun day out.”

The London round of the 2016 tournament will once again be the final event of the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series. The 2015/16 season sees five new destinations added to the Series in Cape Town, Sydney, Vancouver, Singapore and Paris and this season’s tournament carries added significance with many of the teams competing having qualified for sevens’ debut at the Olympic Games in Rio in 2016, with London the last time they compete before Brazil.

To enjoy a feast of rugby at the HSBC London Sevens, secure one of 35,000 exclusive tickets by booking today. [Click here](#) for more information and to book tickets.

## TWICKENHAM NEEDING CONNECTED REVOLUTION

the ground and a card transaction is completed in around five seconds, which reduces queues and keeps fans happy.

Connected IPTV means all screens throughout the venue now connect to Point of Sale, making them reactive to sales and customer movement, so that if there’s a lengthy queue on Level 1, fans can be directed to a quieter sales point. People arriving in corporate hospitality boxes now share this physical experience, catalogues becoming a thing of the past, with orders placed and fulfilled via tablets – bringing a 45% sales increase.

PCI (Payment Card Industry) compliance – a requirement of all card issuers – keeps fans’ personal information entirely secure in Twickenham Stadium’s technology revolution.

Said George Vaughan the RFU’s senior project manager: “Twickenham’s success demonstrates our excellent working relationships with technology partners who have contributed to our vision of revolutionising this sector, both for the game, which sees all the RFU’s income reinvested in rugby, and fans who come to enjoy matches at the stadium.”



## ENGLAND SAXONS TO PLAY SOUTH AFRICA A

### GARETH MILLS

England Saxons will play South Africa A in Bloemfontein on Friday, 10 June, and Outeniqua Park in George on Friday, 17 June, having last played in 2015 when they beat the Irish Wolfhounds 18-9 in Cork. That side featured Maro Itoje (Saracens), Luke Cowan Dickie (Exeter), Elliot Daly (Wasps) who all went on to feature in Eddie Jones’ Grand Slam winning England team. It will be the first time since 2003 that the South Africa A team will be in action in South Africa. On that occasion they drew 30-30 against Argentina in Wellington.

“We would like to thank SA Rugby for inviting the Saxons to tour South Africa this June,” said RFU Chief Executive Ian Ritchie. “The two-match series will provide a fantastic experience for the squad to play against very strong opposition who will be extremely well prepared, having worked alongside the SA senior side ahead of the matches.”

SA Rugby CEO Jurie Roux said the Saxons playing South Africa would provide the opportunity for a larger group of players than normal to line up against elite international opposition. “The Saxons’ tour will coincide with Ireland’s three Test series against the Springboks and all players not involved with the Boks will get the opportunity to take on top-ranked opposition during the same time, thereby exposing even more of our top players to international rugby,” he said.

“Providing international opposition for a bigger group of our players is important as we aim to improve the experience and depth of our player base. The Saxons’ tour will do just that. Looking at their results in recent years, it’s clear the two matches against the Saxons will be very tough for the SA ‘A’ team. Many of the current crop of England players, who dominated the RBS 6 Nations, came through the Saxons, so we can expect to face their next generation of Test stars.”

## RFU PLEDGES #IWILL SUPPORT GAME’S FUTURE LEADERS

### GEMMA COBB

The RFU is focusing on the legacy of Rugby World Cup 2015 both on and off the pitch. To support and develop young volunteers to become future influencers and leaders, the Union has re-launched the Young Rugby Ambassador (YRA) programme.

A partnership established with vInspired, a leading youth social action charity, means that volunteers aged between 14 and 25 can now log their hours online and receive incentives and rewards for the time they have invested in developing rugby in their local community.

YRAs can get involved in a range of activities, including event management, fundraising, refereeing, coaching and become leaders in their school or college. The new YRA programme is open to all young people involved in rugby whether in school, college, university or part of a community rugby club.

The RFU is making a pledge to the #iwill campaign to support future leaders by maximising opportunities to promote the game through to Rugby World Cup 2019. Through the #iwill campaign, led by the charity Step Up to Serve, the RFU pledges to:

- Give young people a voice in rugby through the Young Rugby Ambassador, National Youth Council and Spirit of Rugby programmes
- Celebrate young people who are taking a lead in developing youth social action via the RFU Volunteering Recognition and Reward programme and further opportunities. We will

also support young people to have a voice in decision making across the game.

- Act as an ambassador for the #iwill campaign across projects and events to raise the profile of our pledge.

England Sevens player Rachael Burford made a pledge to grow the game. She said: “I pledge to create a female rugby academy to help strengthen the growth of the women’s and girls’ game. I started rugby aged six, thanks to my local rugby club where I had lots of playing and training opportunities. The Young Rugby Ambassadors have the ability to inspire change in their own community. Young people’s involvement in the decision-making process around the shaping of the game is important to ensure our sport is truly accessible for all.”

[Click here](#) to listen to a video message from Rachael.

All at the YRA Leadership Conference this month (April) are being encouraged to make their personal pledge and share what they will aspire to achieve to have an impact in their local community.

For more information on the YRA programme, or for case studies on current Young Rugby Ambassadors, please visit: [www.englandrugby.com/YRA](http://www.englandrugby.com/YRA) or keep up to date with their activity on Twitter and Instagram via [@RFUYouth](https://twitter.com/RFUYouth).







## O2 TOUCH REWARDS STUDENTS AT TWICKENHAM

**SUZI MURRAY**

Six university students from Oxford, Exeter and Birmingham were rewarded with the opportunity of a lifetime when they became part of the guard of honour pitch side at Twickenham Stadium at the RBS 6 Nations England v Wales match.

The students were selected through O2 Touch's reward and recognition scheme which acknowledges the important work of the programme's volunteers. Through the volunteer O2 Touch Operator and Ambassador network, the O2 Touch programme operates both a pitch up and play facility aimed at individuals new to rugby or who can't commit on a weekly basis, and O2 Touch leagues, for those who want to play in a more structured and competitive environment.

Sam Miller, of Exeter University, said: "The whole experience was fantastic and something we will never get an opportunity to do again. We would like to thank everyone at O2 Touch for making this happen, it is something none of us will ever forget!"

Miles Partridge, Oxford University, added: "I will never forget my first time at Twickenham, walking into the stadium to the roar of the crowd... the atmosphere as God Save the Queen raised the roof from every side was unbelievable."

## SEVENS TRIO TRY THEIR HAND AT STREET FOOD

England Sevens players Dan Bibby, Ethan Waddleton and Sam Egerton swapped kit for aprons this month (April) as the HSBC London Sevens took over Urban Food Fest in Shoreditch ahead of the main event in May.

The players teamed up with talented street food vendors and

were taught how to make some of the delicious dishes that will be served up by Urban Food Fest at the HSBC London Sevens on the 21st and 22nd May, which will transform Twickenham into a festival of rugby and food.

If you haven't got your ticket yet, [click here](#).



## ARGENTINA TO TAKE ON THE WALLABIES AT TWICKENHAM

**VERITY WILLIAMS**

SANZAAR and Unión Argentina de Rugby have confirmed that The Rugby Championship match between Argentina and Australia will be played at Twickenham Stadium on 8 October 2016. The match will be the first in the history of The Rugby Championship played outside of the four core territories and is an opportunity for the southern hemisphere to return to London a year after filling the top four places at the Rugby World Cup.

Ian Ritchie RFU CEO, said: "We're delighted to have The Rugby Championship coming to Twickenham. After welcoming so many teams and fans here during the Rugby World Cup, it's fantastic to be able to open our doors again. We were treated to a great match between these two teams in the Rugby World Cup and I'm sure that it's set to be another high octane encounter in the autumn."

Tickets are available via [www.Ticketmaster.co.uk](http://www.Ticketmaster.co.uk). Ticket prices: £85/ £65/ £45. The junior rate of £25 is available at every price category.



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR 400 AT BMW WELLINGTON U16 FESTIVAL

This year's BMW Wellington U16 Festival saw each of the 14 RFU licensed regional academies and 400 of the country's leading U16s take part in matches following a six-day residential camp. Training sessions and competitive opportunities and a programme of off-field sessions were on offer as well as training development for over 100 coaches, match officials, medics and administrators.

"The strategic review into the U16s programme last year highlighted the need to engage increased numbers at this stage of the pathway," said RFU head of regional academies Alun Powell. "Talent identification is not an exact science so we need as many players as possible to benefit from learning opportunities available at the Wellington Festival."

RFU National Development Academy Manager John Fletcher said: "Competition is vital in supporting the development of coaches, players and referees and I was really impressed with what I saw from all of the teams. The skill level of the players improves year on year and I'm excited by the players coming through. Helping develop these players off the pitch is equally important which is why the education programme was a key part of the week."



As well as workshops in nutrition and sports psychology, Rugby World Cup winner Richard Hill spoke to each of the teams about pressures off the pitch and what it takes to become a professional player.

"Key to a player's development at this age is understanding the pressures off the pitch," said Hill, who is involved in developing England's Age Grade players. "This is an important age for these players, they've got exams coming up which they have to balance with their rugby and we want to help them achieve that balance."

Following the Festival, a squad was being selected to face Wales on Sunday, 10 April.





# NEWARK & SOUTHWELL AT TWICKENHAM

Nottinghamshire rivals Newark and Southwell combined to send a team of ‘Golden Oldies’ for a special match at Twickenham.

Led by ex-Barbarian player Richard Byrom, the coach of Newark, a combined team took on the Parliamentarians in a charity match to raise funds for the Rugby Football Union’s Injured Players Foundation.

The Commons & Lords won 34-32 but not before Byrom, 54, the former Nottingham full back, had scored twice to celebrate his first appearance at Twickenham in a long career.

Byrom’s only other appearance at Twickenham as a player had been a short-lived affair. He was once part of a Nottingham squad at the Middlesex Sevens. “But we lost in the first round and I never got a chance to play,” he said.

The Newark contingent were bolstered by the presence of Victoria Lyon, a keen member of the club’s under-15s girls team, who sustained brain injuries in a road accident last autumn when her family was returning from having watched the club’s first team play at Pavors near Nottingham.

Victoria is presently undergoing rehabilitation at Tadworth Court Centre in Surrey but was still able to make the journey to Twickenham.

Club president Alan Swain said: “It was a special moment and,



in many ways, it made the day when we saw that Victoria had been able to travel to Twickenham. She was among the first to have her photograph taken alongside the Six Nations Trophy.

“We knew it was going to be a good day, but overall it exceeded our expectations. We all feel lucky to have been part of it.”

The opportunity for the two clubs to join forces was paved by Newark MP Robert Jenrick who was among the Parliamentarian XV

alongside another Nottinghamshire MP in Sherwood’s Mark Spencer.

Both clubs presented the Injured Players Foundation with a cheque for £6,000 each and Southwell president Charlie Anstey said: “I have been to Twickenham a number of times but I have not had a day like this.”

The two teams changed in the main changing rooms and were treated to an after-match buffet in the Presidential suite.

## RFU CONTINUES WORLD CUP LEGACY WITH GILBERT BALLS

GEMMA COBB

Continuing the legacy of Rugby World Cup 2015, and in recognition of the work of grassroots rugby clubs, the RFU has given 20,015 Gilbert Rugby World Cup replica and competing nation balls to RFU member clubs.

Steve Grainger, RFU Rugby Development Director, said: “The country is still buzzing with rugby fever following Rugby World Cup 2015, with more and more people taking up and returning to the game. We are committed to continuing the tournament’s legacy and ensuring the appetite for rugby continues to grow.

“This is one way of rewarding our clubs and players at the heart of rugby, giving back to those championing the sport and opening up opportunities to get more people playing. With the World Rugby Under 20 Championships in Manchester this coming June, the first time on home soil, there are many ways for people to be a part of the action, whether through volunteering, playing, coaching or spectating. We hope these replica balls will inspire players and clubs to continue their great work.”

Richard Gray, Sales and Marketing Director of Gilbert, said “As the Official Ball of the Rugby World Cup 2015, the World Rugby U20 Championship and of England Rugby, Gilbert are delighted to work with the RFU in supporting this exciting legacy initiative. Never before have so many balls been distributed in such a comprehensive way across the entire country.”



## HULL SPORTING HERO HONoured

Andrew Taylor, a long serving volunteer from Hull, was recognised for his outstanding contribution to rugby union in the local community at the Torch Trophy Trust Awards ceremony at the Royal Army and Navy Club in London. Presented with his award by HRH the Prince of Kent, he was among 20 volunteers honoured for their dedication to sport.

Sir Bobby Charlton, Chairman of the Torch Trophy Trust said: “It is hugely important to honour the incredible volunteers that make sport happen in our nation. Without their passion and generosity, we would see participation numbers fall.”



## LEGENDS REVEALED BY SAMSUNG

SUZI MURRAY

England Rugby legends Martin Johnson and Lawrence Dallaglio surprised fans at the Samsung Gear VR Experience in the West Fan Village at Twickenham during the RBS 6 Nations.

Fans were given the chance to try out Samsung’s latest technology – the recently unveiled Samsung Galaxy S7 and Galaxy S7 edge, as well as the Samsung Gear VR headset – in an experience designed to test their rugby skills through the Samsung School of Rugby game.

The virtual experience then became reality as unwitting participants were given a big pre-match surprise – being greeted by the two towering rugby legends as they removed their headsets.

[Click here to watch](#)



## MAXWELL KEYS IN WORLD RUGBY U20 OFFICIALS LINEUP

NICOL McCLELLAND

England’s Craig Maxwell Keys is one of nine match officials who will take charge of the World Rugby U20 Championship in Manchester.

Keys joins officials from Argentina, Australia, France, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Wales and South Africa for the tournament, which has so far produced more than 400 graduates to the Test arena.

The U20 Championship is also a crucial development tournament for the world’s best emerging match officials, with many of the current top international referees having previously appeared at this tournament.

With New Zealand looking to retain the trophy won last year in Italy and England, last year’s beaten finalists, looking to impress on home soil, the stage is set for one of the most competitive U20 Championships, giving officials high-intensity, high-stakes conditions to deal with.

World Rugby High Performance Match Officials Manager Joël Jutge said: “The U20 Championship is a crucial platform for referees to take the next step up. With the level of competition increasing year on year, the tournament is an important part of our process to develop referees, who are aided by referee selectors and coaches, and receive feedback which will benefit them for years to come.”

**See the Future Stars of Rugby at the World Rugby U20 Championship in Manchester this June. For more information, including how to buy tickets, [#FutureStarsofRugby](http://www.englandrugby.com/u20championship)**





# ENGLAND RUGBY BECOMES TITLE PARTNER OF THE RPA PLAYERS' AWARDS

VERITY WILLIAMS

England Rugby will become the Title Partner of the RPA Players' Awards, which will take place on Wednesday 11th May at Battersea Evolution, London.

The three-year agreement will see the event become known as the RPA Players' Awards, in association with England Rugby.

As part of the new partnership England Rugby will sponsor the evening's most prestigious prize, the RPA Players' Player of the Year Award, which is currently held by Bath and England's star centre Jonathan Joseph, and the Championship Player of the Year Award.

RFU Chief Executive, Ian Ritchie said: "We're delighted to be partnering with the RPA on what is a great annual event. The RPA is an important stakeholder in the game and we're pleased to support their work with over 1,000 current and former members. We have such a wealth of talent in the English game and it's great to be able to recognise and celebrate that."

Damian Hopley, RPA Group CEO, said: "The RPA Players' Awards recognises the outstanding performers of the club and international game, so it is fantastic to have the additional support of England Rugby in acknowledging our players and their achievements."



# VIKING BOOTY

On an international match day Twickenham Stadium is full of people who love rugby, many having lost the active connection they had through playing the game. The trip to the Home of England Rugby is often their only real chance to feel part of the sport.

That's why the Keep Your Boots On campaigners rocked up to the West Fan Village and set about persuading this experienced rugby group – men and women – to lace up their boots again and train as coaches or referees.

A keen audience at the RBS 6 Nations heard how coaching and refereeing offers more ways to enjoy the game, brings a chance to reignite friendships in their old clubs and to make new friends, keeps them active and means they can give something important back to the game they love.

Three World Cup winners: Neil Back, Will Greenwood and Phil Vickery, lent their support and posed for pictures wearing their KYBO hats. And a veritable horde of Vikings, led by Cumbria RDO Liam Nicholls, enjoyed Norsing around.

The route back into the game was explained, and many eagerly signed up to hear more about what they could do. From there they will receive email details about how to get involved and how to sign up for a course.

Anyone interested in coaching or refereeing can simply go to [www.KeepYourBootsOn.com](http://www.KeepYourBootsOn.com) and find out for themselves the rewards of getting involved.

# TWICKENHAM WINS WORLD FIRST

Twickenham Stadium, the Home of England Rugby recently became the only stadium in the world to win the International Safety Award with merit for protecting its staff and guests from the risk of injury and ill health.

The award was given in recognition of the RFU's commitment to keeping staff and guests safe and minimising the risk of injury at work. Twickenham was recognised by the British Safety Council (who organise the International Awards) after satisfying an independent judging panel that the organisation held exceptional health and safety standards.

Twickenham Stadium has reduced accidents by 14.5 per cent year-on-year since 2012, making particular strides towards reducing injuries caused by slips, trips and falls on match days by repainting all of its steps with anti-slip paint and providing

spillage kits on all levels of the 82,000-seat venue. The Stadium also has one first aider for every eight staff on non-event days and over 100 doctors, paramedics and first aiders on match days.

Richard Knight, Twickenham Stadium Director, said: "To be the only stadium given the International Safety Award confirms and recognises our commitment to keeping everyone safe. We won't be resting on our laurels though as we want to make even more progress in improving safety at Twickenham Stadium over the coming years."

Mike Robinson, Chief Executive of the British Safety Council said: "The British Safety Council commends Twickenham Stadium on their achievement. The award is in recognition of their commitment and effort to keep their employees and workplaces free of injury and ill health."



# GRAND SLAM BABY

Twickenham Stadium's Rugby Store held a meet the trophies event for fans to have their photo taken with the RBS 6 Nations and Triple Crown trophies. First in the queue was baby Callum who, at just three days old, with his big sister and brother watched England win the Grand Slam.

# LATEST PROFESSIONAL RUGBY INJURY SURVEILLANCE PROJECT RESULTS

GARETH MILLS

The latest 2014-15 Professional Rugby Injury Surveillance Project (PRISP) shows the overall likelihood of a player sustaining a match or training injury remained stable last season and within the expected range of variation seen since the project began in 2002.

The time taken to return to play was the highest reported. Although the average severity of 29 and 28 days respectively still falls within the expected range, there appears to be a trend for an increasing severity of injuries.

Precise reasons are unclear, but last season saw a small increase in relatively uncommon injuries that have a disproportionate effect on results, specifically Anterior Cruciate Ligament and Medial Collateral Ligament knee injuries was double 2013-14.

The overall risk of training injuries was lower than in the previous two seasons.

Concussion was the most commonly reported match injury for the fourth consecutive season, at approximately 17% of all match injuries; with 110 reported cases from 70 Premiership Rugby, 23 European Competition and 17 National Cup matches played.

It is likely that the continued focus on improving concussion awareness and the on-going development of the Head Injury Assessment (HIA) process, contributed to the rise in reported cases. The average time that a player remained away from rugby was 12 days, stable with previous seasons.

Premiership Rugby, the RFU and the RPA, have improved concussion awareness among players, coaches, referees and medical teams, with concussion management a major focus, and this season more than 1,600 completing a world-leading mandatory concussion education programme, which is likely to have contributed to the number of concussions reported.

Changes to the nature of the professional game (i.e. more powerful players and/or an increasing frequency of contact events) have been suggested as factors underpinning the increase in concussions. However, notably the risk of all other (non-concussion) match contact injuries has remained stable.

A combination of coaching, law-making and refereeing initiatives are likely to be needed for effective concussion prevention. The current World Rugby video analysis study will provide insights, with the PRISP study part of this.

Detailed analysis of the return to play pathway after match concussion is the largest such study in professional rugby and will help to inform the development of the protocol, with the aim of reducing the risk of all injury following return from concussion.

The study reported 11 players retired as a result of injury and one as a result of illness last season. In comparison, 23 players retired as a result of injury and two players retired through illness in 2013-14.

There was a reduction of recurrent match injuries, continuing the trend seen since 2007-08, the result of the continued delivery of effective injury rehabilitation by club medical and conditioning teams.

The incidence of non-time loss and time-loss injury in matches played on artificial turf (Allianz Park and Kingston Park) was again compared with those played on natural turf, with no clear differences.

The relationship between training load and subsequent injury risk was investigated for the first time at four clubs, with players at an increased injury risk if they had high one-week cumulative loads or large week-to-week changes in load. This has been expanded for the 2015-16 season, with data collected at all 12 clubs.

Simon Kemp, RFU Chief Medical Officer said: "This study provides objective evidence to help us understand the effects playing the professional game has on players' health and to develop approaches to improve player welfare.

"We are continuing to work hard on concussion education, game day management and return to play based on the best medical and scientific evidence available. Our awareness programme has very significantly changed players', coaches' and referees' understanding and the principles of recognise and remove, recover and return are consistently delivered. Research findings will inform the 2016 Berlin Consensus Conference that will review worldwide research prior to any revisions. A key objective has to be to try to reduce concussions, while preserving the essential characteristics of the game, and we are hopeful that this study will help inform the analysis led by World Rugby."

Corin Palmer, Head of Rugby Operations at Premiership Rugby, said: "Player welfare is Premiership Rugby's No.1 priority and, alongside our 12 clubs, we have established world-class standards when it comes to treating any injured player. Cultural change amongst everyone involved in rugby union at every level is the key to the treatment of concussion. The Concussion Education programme is changing the way we all see concussion and reinforcing the key principles of Recognise and Remove. The Premiership Rugby clubs have made huge strides on the understanding and treatment of concussion."

Richard Bryan, the Rugby Director for the Rugby Players' Association, said: "The injury audit continues to be an essential piece of work and reference point for the professional game. With the increased number of reported concussions and concussion remaining the most common match injury, education and raising awareness are clearly having an effect. Nevertheless, the game needs to continue its work of exploring all avenues for concussion prevention measures and we are pleased that the report expressly references this."





# FIRST CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR DEAF RUGBY

After three years work, an idea became reality when a Deaf Awareness Rugby day was held in CREDITON, Devon. This was the first of its kind in the country, and the result of collaboration between Exeter Deaf Academy, England Deaf Rugby and RFU Community Rugby Coach Wayne Reed.

The day saw a deaf awareness session run at Queen Elizabeth's School with interpreters sharing information with players, parents and coaches about sign language and deaf awareness when coaching rugby. An open coaching session was then run by Wayne and the England Deaf coaches with more than 30 boys, girls, men and women joining in.

England Deaf head coach Shaun Fletcher said, "To see kids and adults of all ages interacting and simply playing rugby is unbelievable. Not only is this a huge step in identifying potential England Deaf players for the future but it is a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness of deaf rugby in the South West. This whole process has been unbelievably successful and it is a pleasure to be working alongside Exeter Deaf Academy and Wayne Reed."

Nichola Birch from the Exeter Deaf Academy said, "We're proud to be part of the first Centre of Excellence for Deaf Rugby. Deaf people can often find it difficult to take part in sport activities and can miss out on all the health benefits that come with it. Working with England Deaf Rugby and Wayne Reed, we hope to help change this by making rugby more accessible. Through events like these we also hope to increase deaf awareness with local coaches so deaf players can be supported at their own clubs."

As a finale, the England Deaf rugby team played an Ide Barbarians team at Crediton RFC, with three hearing-impaired players representing Ide and being invited to attend future England Deaf training sessions. England Deaf ran out winners by 12-5. Devon RFU's support and vision in ensuring that inclusive rugby is part of its strategy won much praise as did Crediton RFC for hosting and helping make the day a success. No entry fee was charged but a bucket collection raised £350 for the Deaf Rugby charity.

Wayne Reed will continue working with the Exeter Deaf Academy helping to promote regular training sessions and events in Devon, hoping that this model can be shared nationally. He said, "It was a fantastic day which exceeded all expectations, with players travelling from as far away as Cornwall and Oxfordshire. My aim now is to support individuals by linking them to clubs and helping with their transition into playing for mainstream teams."



# HAMPSHIRE GIRLS HAPPY PLAYING COLLEGE RUGBY

Last month (March) brought the first ever girls' rugby fixture between Alton College and The 6th Form College Farnborough. In September 2015 coaches from the girls section of Basingstoke RFC, supported by Kieran Spencer, Hampshire RDO, attended freshers' days at the colleges with a display stand encouraging girls to play rugby. With help from some very keen PE teachers, regular lunchtime coaching sessions followed, with Kieran securing kit and equipment from the RFU.

Both teams took part in a Central Venue League event in December, which gave them a taste of things to come. As match day approached there was a great deal of excitement in both camps. On a chilly day in Alton the first ever girls' rugby sides from the colleges took to the field.

It was an absolute try fest, with The 6th Form College

Farnborough eventual winners by 65 - 55. However it wasn't all about the scoreline - Annie McMullan, captain and driving force behind the Alton side, said "We're all so happy and I think lots of the girls have found their sport! It was great to play the Farnborough girls, we really enjoyed it."

Annabel Rice, captain and rugby sport activator for Farnborough, said "Thanks to everyone helping to make this happen, it was tremendous fun."

The 6th Form College Farnborough (in blue) and Alton College hope this is the first of many matches and said Russell Amos, Head Coach Basingstoke RFC Girls, and Girls Rugby Champion, "I have to say that it has been a huge privilege to have been part of this journey and I am looking forward to even more girls' college rugby next season."

# GREAT DEAL!

EnglandRugbyDeals has been visiting clubs, offering expertise in reducing overheads. They want to visit and help more clubs, so please get in touch if your club would like a visit. You could benefit by cutting your costs and gaining money to spend elsewhere. It's a win win situation!

After a visit by EnglandRugbyDeals, Fylde Rugby Club decided to use the Fixed Lined Telecoms Deal and changed their supplier. This has seen them saving a fantastic £819 a year, which is 40% of their annual bill. Fylde have also had a call performance management tool on their lines to help make further savings.

One area of spend highlighted to EnglandRugbyDeals is washroom services. The good news is that savings of between

30% - 50% have been identified if clubs use a market-leading deal available to EnglandRugbyDeals members.

Make sure your club signs up for the Booker 2% Rebate Scheme. Sign up now to be entitled to a retrospective rebate from September 2015 which for all participants will be paid out mid-April. If you need to request a form please email [support@englandrugbydeals.com](mailto:support@englandrugbydeals.com)

**GET IN TOUCH...Members of EnglandRugbyDeals wanting more details on deals or a club visit please email [support@englandrugbydeals.com](mailto:support@englandrugbydeals.com) or ring 01283 711551.**

**If you are not a member and would like details please visit [www.englandrugbydeals.com](http://www.englandrugbydeals.com).**



While at the RBS 6 Nations England v Wales match, Prince Harry took the opportunity to meet CBRE All Schools pupils playing in the curtain raiser and RFU Injured Players volunteer fundraisers and client and Wheelchair Rugby Paralympian Andy Barrow.





# GREENWOOD JOINS BARBARIANS FOR WEMBLEY DATE WITH SOUTH AFRICA

World Cup winner Will Greenwood is joining the Barbarians coaching staff for this year's showpiece game against South Africa, teaming up with former Australia Head Coach Robbie Deans to prepare the team to take on the Springboks at Wembley Stadium connected by EE on November 5. The famous invitation club – in their 125th season – are aiming for a third successive victory in the series after beating South Africa 26-20 in 2010 and 22-5 in 2007.

Greenwood represented the Barbarians twice as a player – against Ireland in 1996 before he was capped by England and against Scotland 10 years later. His father Dick played for the club in the 1960s.

"I grew up watching the Barbarians," said Greenwood. "It was an honour to play for them and it is a privilege to be involved in coaching the team against South Africa this year. Bringing people together from different countries to play for each other and for the traditions the Barbarians represent is a great challenge and one I'm looking forward to."

Tickets to the Barbarians v South Africa are available from [Ticketmaster.co.uk](http://Ticketmaster.co.uk)



# GET FIT WITH O2 TOUCH

SUZI MURRAY

O2 Touch is one of the RFU's fastest growing participation programmes with over 13,500 registered players playing regularly in 300 centres nationwide. A mixed format of rugby and one of the first team sports to combine music and fitness, O2 Touch is social fitness at its best.

This spring, O2 Touch is taking fitness to new levels with renowned professional personal trainer Richard Tidmarsh [@richTidmarsh] and London fitness bloggers Twice the Health [@twicethehealth] as they introduce new and dynamic workouts, designed specifically for O2 Touch sessions. New exercises will be released weekly via O2 Touch social channels and will form a part of O2 Touch nationwide.

Each centre is also equipped with an O2 Touch sound system and bespoke music mixes, created specifically by up-and-coming DJs to ensure participants get the most out of their workout. On average participants can burn up to 775 calories per O2 Touch session.

O2 Touch is a unique offering that gives participants a great playing experience and workout, regardless of ability. The programme is coordinated by the RFU in partnership with O2. Through a dedicated network of close to 1,000 O2 Touch Operator and Ambassadors, the O2 Touch programme operates both a pitch up and play facility, aimed at individuals who are new to rugby or who can't commit on a weekly basis, and O2 Touch leagues, for those who want to play in a more structured and competitive environment.

Get involved visit [www.o2touch.co.uk](http://www.o2touch.co.uk) to find your nearest session or follow @O2Touch to get the latest workouts.

# IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH RUGBY

Try for Change, the RFU's flagship social responsibility programme that promotes, supports and grows the power of rugby for social good has among its charitable partners: the Injured Players Foundation, RPA Restart, Wooden Spoon, School of Hard Knocks and the Dallaglio Foundation. For more information, or to share programmes, contact Tim Wainwright, RFU Social Responsibility Manager, [timwainwright@rfu.com](mailto:timwainwright@rfu.com)

**The Dallaglio Foundation** nurtures and develops the essential skills of disadvantaged young people by working in Pupil Referral Units with those at increased risk of long-term unemployment, exclusion, criminality and imprisonment. By increasing their sense of worth, self-confidence and self-esteem, they work to empower them to make better life choices. Dallaglio Foundation RugbyWorks aims to leave young people more employable, socially responsible and making positive life decisions.

This June, former England and Lions legends Lawrence Dallaglio and Austin Healey will go head to head cycling through Spain, France and the Balearic Islands raising money for the Dallaglio Foundation and its RugbyWorks programme.

In the 4th Dallaglio Cycle Slam, the pair will lead 250 riders just under 2,000km and 32,000m of climbing from San Sebastian, through the Pyrenees, to Andorra, Barcelona, Majorca, ending in Ibiza.

The charity's RugbyWorks programme will benefit from the Dallaglio Cycle Slam. The programme is delivered in London, Newcastle, Bristol and South Wales to teenagers aged 14-17 who have been excluded from mainstream education.



Dallaglio, who founded the charity in 2009, hopes that his fellow riders will join him in raising £1 million for the charity. "It's a tough target and we need all the help we can get," says Dallaglio. "Healey is already off to a good start and I'm determined to show him how charity fundraising is done!"

Austin Healey, taking part in his second Dallaglio Cycle Slam, says: "We all know who will be King of the Mountains, the real race will be in the fundraising!"

So, who will you back – Dallaglio or Healey? Sponsor Lawrence Dallaglio and Austin Healey and quote 'Head to Head' in your fundraising message to be entered into a prize draw and win a signed shirt by the Lions legends.

[Click here to sponsor Austin Healey](#)  
[Click here to sponsor Lawrence Dallaglio](#)

For further information on the Dallaglio Foundation and RugbyWorks please visit [www.dallagliofoundation.com](http://www.dallagliofoundation.com)



# GREAT SCHOOLS ACTION AT NATIONAL 7S

The HSBC Rosslyn Park National School 7s last month (March) had a record 751 teams competing across eight events over a week.

The flagship U18 Cup saw Cranleigh beat Harrow in the final 27-19, in a first final for both at Rosslyn Park. Cranleigh were in a quarter final group that included 2015 champions Wellington College and then faced 2014 champions Millfield in the semi final. Harrow beat Millfield, and Hartpury College, in their quarter final group before beating Kirkham Grammar School in the semis.

The Plate was won by Stowe, who beat Barnard Castle 24-12 to make it back to back silverware at the National Schools 7s. In the Vase, Tonbridge beat a rampant Bedford side in the final, having lost to Felsted but going through on points difference. Bedford were looking formidable, but Tonbridge were on a roll by the final, winning 26-10. The Bowl saw King's Macclesfield defeat St Paul's 14-12 in a thrilling final, where a late try sealed it.

In the Colts competition 160 teams fought it out over a thrilling two days which saw Brighton College become the champions by 20-19, after a tough game against New Hall School in the final.

A new U14 competition saw Ivybridge Community College beat Warwick, who went through from the group stages as one of the best runners up. Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni picked up the

U14 Plate, beating City of London Freeman's 26-14.

The Girls AASE tournament was again won by Hartpury College, who beat Bishop Burton College 28-0, and the Open Girls tournament was won by Ysgol Dyffryn Amman, who beat Christ's Hospital 29-7. St John's, Leatherhead won the ERFUSU Spirit of Rugby Award.

For the second year running, Caldicott won the Preparatory Schools tournament, beating Bromsgrove 12-5 in the final. That final also produced one of the great scenes of the tournament, with Bromsgrove supported by their U18 1st XV, who went on to become National fifteen-a-side champions the following day.

The Junior Schools tournament saw the two finalists, Wimbledon College and Ysgol Gyfun Glantaf, play some superb rugby throughout. Wimbledon College beating their Welsh counterparts 15-7.

The action on the main pitch was live streamed and proved highly popular, particularly with the likes of Jason Robinson, Tom Mitchell, Mike Friday, and referee J.P. Doyle among some of those on commentary duty.

**The dates for next year are Monday 20th March to Friday 24th March, 2017.**



# PLAYERS WEAR POPPY FOR PARIS MATCH

As part of RFU's Great War Commemorations, the England team and England Women wore the poppy for the France v England RBS 6 Nations matches.

The French Rugby Federation agreed with the French Mission for the Centenary to wear the French equivalent, the bleu et, throughout the 2016 Six Nations and, following a request from the French Government, England wore the British Legion poppy to commemorate 100 years since one of the biggest battles of the Great War, the Battle of the Somme, where English and French soldiers and those from allied nations fought and died side by side.

On the Thursday before, a Flame Ceremony took place at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Paris, the British Ambassador to France, Sir Julian King, then hosting a Somme 100 France-England Rugby International Commemoration Reception at the British Ambassador's Residence.

Attending were the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Sport, Tourism and Heritage, the Rt Hon David Evennett MP; French Secretary of State for Veterans, Jean-Marc Todeschini; RFU Chairman Bill Beaumont and the Chairman of the French Rugby Federation Pierre Camou. The RFU delegation included descendants and representatives of WWI fallen England internationals Rupert Inglis, Alfred Maynard and Ronnie Poulton Palmer.



# BEGINNERS GET STUCK IN AT FAVERSHAM

Last month (March) Faversham Rugby club hosted its first women's rugby tournament, with teams from Ashford, Faversham and Maidstone competing at the beginners event. A great group of spectators watched the first game between Faversham and Maidstone and, with nearly half the players enjoying their first start on the pitch, both teams fought amicably for the 30 minute game, Maidstone stealing the win. The tournament's second phase proved more difficult, with the Ashford women's team showing what it takes to be in a league, dominating the scrums and breakdowns to win the event.

The beginners nature of the event provided a fantastic opportunity for players to experience rugby, with an RFU Women's Rugby Officer helping to educate and lead the teams a pitch up and play event. Faversham women's rugby are looking forward to hosting more games to promote local teams and welcome new players of all abilities to their Tuesday training sessions, 7.30 pm at the Abbey School.

Canterbury Christ Church University Rugby Activator Claire Boucher organised the event, with support from her university, Kent CB and England Rugby development staff.

# SAM SETS THE PACE FOR YRAS

GEMMA COBB

Sam O'Neil, a 19-year-old Young Rugby Ambassador from Newcastle, has clocked up 100 hours of volunteering, the first to reach this milestone since the re-launch of the programme earlier this year, when a partnership with vInspired was created.

vInspired's involvement enables 14 to 25 year olds to log hours invested in developing rugby in their local community and be rewarded. Sam was awarded a rugby ball signed by the England team, together with YRA kit and a certificate, at the Newcastle Falcons v Wasps match on Easter Sunday.

He said: "It's great to be recognised for volunteering as it's something I really enjoy doing. I would recommend anyone with an interest in rugby, sport or volunteering to become a Young Rugby Ambassador as it's a great chance to build up a range of skills and experience... and you will have fun doing it!"

After Sam's local rugby team folded when he was 15 years old he decided to look for other ways to get involved in the game and soon discovered volunteering.

"My dad was a coach and suggested I try volunteering as a referee at a nearby club. I started off volunteering as a referee for Juniors and then Colts, before being selected to referee at senior games when I turned 18."

This year, Sam has helped community rugby coaches with an All Schools Festival for girls, run and taught a Level 1 refereeing course and mentored new referees at February's Land Rover Premiership Rugby Cup.

"Volunteering has greatly improved my confidence in communication as well as my leadership skills," he said. "The experience I have acquired through refereeing has also had an impact outside rugby. I'm currently in the Army Reserves and going through the application process for the RAF and so my leadership experience has put me in a great position. Since I turned 18 I've also had the chance to travel to new clubs outside Newcastle, giving me a great mix of experience."

The RFU is encouraging YRAs to get involved in a range of volunteer opportunities, both on and off the pitch including event management, fundraising, refereeing, coaching and as leaders in their school, college, university or rugby club.

For more information on the YRA programme visit [www.englandrugby.com/YRA](http://www.englandrugby.com/YRA) or keep up to date with their activity on Twitter and Instagram via [@RFUYouth](https://twitter.com/RFUYouth).

# TWICKENHAM TO UNVEIL MEMORIAL GATES

As part of the RFU Great War Commemorations, the RFU commissioned the Rose and Poppy Gates, to be located under the gold lion in front of the Spirit of Rugby, and act as a national and local memorial. The gates, created by artist Harry Gray, will serve as a lasting reminder of those from the rugby family who made the ultimate sacrifice. Integrating both the 1914 England Rose and the Poppies of Flanders, the gates are being cast from bronze, some of the poppies formed from the brass of WWI shells from the battlefields.

The RFU are undertaking a number of commemoration activities between 2014 and 2018, of which the launch of the Rose and Poppy Gates forms a central part. On the 29 April students of the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, will play at a short service for members of the rugby family, descendants of those who died, local dignitaries, military representatives and the RAF, Navy and Army Rugby Unions, including the Army and Navy teams playing the next day at Twickenham.

Those with an interest are welcome to attend at 3pm by applying to [publicaffairs@rfu.com](mailto:publicaffairs@rfu.com)



# HARRY'S A TEAM PLAYER

Harry Langley was seriously injured a year ago playing hooker for the University of Sussex when he took a tap and go penalty and ran into somebody head on before a ruck formed over him.

A year on and Harry, having moved from Brighton Hospital to St Georges for surgery and then to rehab at Stanmore for several months, is playing wheelchair rugby, which he says has "made a massive difference."

"I went to my first training session at Stanmore and now play for Canterbury Hell Fire in Kent," says 20-year-old Harry, who was with his younger brother Jack, a flanker for his school, in the Injured Players Foundation hospitality box at Twickenham. They were enjoying watching England get another win secured en route to a Grand Slam.

"I love wheelchair rugby, being able to play sport, being

competitive. I like being part of a rugby team, getting lots of advice, lots of banter."

There are targets to aim for too, who knows maybe one day Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby, but in the meantime Harry loves training and playing with his Canterbury squad. "I get such a lot from it," he says.

Support is on hand from the IPF, and from his old university team mates (above right), who ran the Brighton Half Marathon and raised £4,343.50 for the IPF to continue supporting Harry and all those seriously injured playing or training in England.

Why not visit Harry's blog at [www.haztobe.com](http://www.haztobe.com)  
To discover more about fundraising or the work of the IPF visit [www.RFUIPF.org.uk](http://www.RFUIPF.org.uk)





# MEET THE GROUNDSMAN

Twickenham Stadium’s groundsman extraordinaire, Keith Kent, kept youngsters entertained in the Easter holidays and may well have inspired the next generation of turf-masters.

Keith used to cut his mum and dad’s lawn when he was a sports loving lad, with his firm favourite Leicester City Football Club. When he was a teenager, his mum saw an advert in the Leicester Mercury for a trainee groundsman at the club and Keith applied. He says he thinks he got the job because of his enthusiasm, he clearly wanted it so much.

Keith told the youngsters at Twickenham’s Meet the Groundsman event that, although not everyone who loves sport can be a player, there are many roles available which keep you close to the sport you love.

Having trained at Leicester, he applied to become Head Groundsman for Manchester United and was there during a very successful 15 years, when they won many trophies, including the 1999 unique treble of the European Cup, the League and the FA Cup. He got to know many famous footballers and renowned coach Sir Alex Ferguson. Keith arrived at the RFU in 2002 and has overseen a complete replacement of the Twickenham turf.

There are three groundsmen at Twickenham and Keith also oversees and helps the groundsman at the Pennyhill Park team base, where they have a state of the art pitch. Keith says the RFU may one day take on a trainee groundsman and, who knows, the children visiting to hear his story might one day apply.

**Little known fact – on Rugby World Cup final day Keith cut the pitch four times, recording 18 miles on his pedometer.**



# SEDBERGH CAPTAIN’S TWICKENHAM EXPERIENCE

When tight-head prop Ben Patchett, led the Sedbergh U15s out of the tunnel at Twickenham Stadium for their 24-17 victory over Wellington College in the NatWest U15 Schools Cup final, he was following in the stud marks of his grandfather, Roger Hosen. Hosen was an exceptional full back/wing who played for England in the sixties. In one full season for England, he established a record of 46 points from five games.

He did manage, however, to escape injury at Twickenham, while the unfortunate Ben only made it to 27 minutes of his final before being stretched off to receive hospital treatment for a dislocated and fractured ankle.

Said Ben’s mum Kate, “The team won and that was absolutely fantastic but unfortunately the day ended badly for Ben and it was such a shame that he didn’t get to hold the Cup. The Twickenham medics did a great job in putting Ben’s ankle back in place though, so much so he didn’t need surgery and escaped much of the pain.”

And to ease his discomfort and disappointment, Sedbergh Head Coach, Chris Swainson, turned up at the hospital with the trophy.

Having first played rugby for Penryn while still at Falmouth Grammar School, Roger Hosen played 54 matches for Cornwall and won ten England caps, scoring in all but one. He also played twice for the Barbarians.

Teaching at Northampton’s Grammar School, he was recruited by Northampton Rugby, playing 250 games for them and scoring 1,463 points. He also taught games at Warwick School before becoming Master in Charge of Rugby at Cheltenham College and

moving to Bristol Rugby. In the 1980s he retired from teaching, became landlord of the Seven Stars pub in Stithians, turning out well into his fifties for the local rugby club. He died in Truro in 2005, aged 71.

Said his daughter Kate, “Dad was a very modest chap and although he held various rugby records he seldom spoke about it. Ben is aware of his grandfather’s playing history, all dad’s England shirts and swopped shirts are framed at my mother’s home in Falmouth and occasionally he has been mentioned on television when records have been broken.

“Dad would be immensely proud of Ben. He had three daughters and, although his England playing days were before we were born, I remember how we would sit in the Twickenham Stadium car park listening to the international match on the radio and cheering England tries, while dad was inside watching the game!

“Ben’s the family’s only rugby player now and his grandmother, Margaret, is a big supporter. I must admit I have been welling up thinking about Ben playing at Twickenham where dad played. It’s been quite emotional for the family.”

Before kick-off, Mrs Hosen and her three daughters were welcomed to the World Rugby Museum at Twickenham to see memorabilia of Roger Hosen’s playing days.

On a pre-match visit with Sedbergh Ben, who began playing with both Sedbergh and Wharfedale rugby club aged 10, said: “I have always known my grandad played for England and I am definitely proud that it is part of the family history and to have my

# NOVOS CLEAN UP ALL ROUND

Many of the Novocastrians 1st XV joined fellow members of the Benton-based club to pick litter in the local Paddy Freemans Park and Waggon Way walk the day before playing in the Northumberland Senior Plate Final and lifting the silverware.

Some 70 club members spent the afternoon of Easter Friday collecting litter throughout the Park and public footpath in Benton and Heaton, after a request for help from Newcastle City Council’s Paul McKinnell, Communities Facilitator at the Council’s Cooperative Communities Service.

Novos RFC Director, John Dias, explained, “Novos is a community rugby club with the majority of members and parents of our ever-growing youth section living nearby, so we feel very much part of the community and like to look after the local environment and neighbourhood. We received a lot of really positive feedback from everyone we met and hopefully, there might be less litter in the future.

“In addition to the younger members and many of their parents, the volunteers included most of the 1st XV who had every reason to stay at home relaxing prior to their Cup Final, which they went on to win the next day, beating Ponteland 41-3 in the Northumberland Senior Plate Final, so maybe it was a good way to prepare!”

Paul McKinnell added, “Not only did the club collect some 60 sacks of discarded litter but they were also seen by other members of the public, which sends a strong message out that it’s everyone’s responsibility to clean up after themselves. It was a great success all round!”

Based at Sutherland Park near Four Lane ends, Novocastrians RFC is one of the region’s oldest rugby clubs, with four senior men’s teams, two women’s teams and a thriving youth section. Further details of the club can be found at [www.novos.co.uk](http://www.novos.co.uk)

grandmother coming to watch me play. Playing at Twickenham will be incredible.”

Roger Hosen would, no doubt, have been proud of Ben captaining Sedbergh to NatWest U15 Cup victory and, once that ankle is mended, Ben will be able to look at the NatWest Cup and reflect on a rather too eventful day.







## GOING UPSTAIRS TO GRAHAM

As England were racking up wins for a 13th Grand Slam, RFU Television Match Official Graham Hughes was covering five RBS 6 Nations matches bent over monitors in an outside broadcast van.

Graham, having been a respected senior referee, became a TMO in 2005 and, with 11 seasons under his belt, had covered 327 games before the Six Nations drew to a close.

“When I first started it was very much “Try, yes or no?” Now it’s any reason not to give a try and takes in foul play and has certainly extended far more,” says Graham, who says as the seconds tick by waiting for his call he is only aware of “doing the job, getting it right.”

Spare a thought for the isolation of the TMO. “We are the ones walking from the stadium to an outside broadcast van in some car park just before kick off and walking back in at the end,” says Graham.

“I love staying involved. I wouldn’t be refereeing now but it’s still very much a support role for the officials on the field. When I began refereeing we didn’t even have touch judges, or Assistant Referees, as they are now. The game is more difficult to referee nowadays, more intense, there’s a lot more going on and things happen faster. There’s more at stake as well.

“I haven’t had any abuse as a TMO but I enjoy the banter. I got a couple of texts from Scottish friends at the Wales v Scotland match and laughed when my son texted ‘Boo!’ at Sale v Gloucester because I didn’t allow a try!

“While the crowd is waiting, I’m completely unaware of how long I’m taking, until watching the highlights. I’m just going through it, considering all the angles, doing the job, getting the right outcome.”

Graham is one of the RFU’s ten TMOs and one of the most long-serving, with two Rugby World Cups and, as Touchline went to press, his 150th Premiership match as he covered Bath v Saracens.

“We meet as a group several times a year,” he says, “and as a World Rugby group at least once a year. Of course, we were together for eight weeks during the Rugby World Cup. We email and speak to each other and it’s always good to talk to the others, ask questions, like how did that look, it’s part of the evaluation process.”

So maybe they are not so isolated after all as they are sitting over those monitors in their various stadium car parks.



## ST AUSTELL ANGELS

**PAULA ROWE**

Some 14 months ago St Austell RFC had no women’s or girls’ section, or a girls’ section and there was only one senior women’s team in Cornwall, at Penryn. Having supported work in local schools to attract under 18s to play rugby the club had some mums asking to play.

Ann and Andy Demaine and Paul Woodhead, involved in the girls’ game in Cornwall for a decade or more, helped set up St Austell Angels.

The sun shone on the first match when they fielded 11 Angels, two bibbed up and still playing tag; now these same novices play regular full-contact matches every week or two. Jasmine, a 22 year old hairdresser, now wants to become a Young Rugby Ambassador to recruiting more players of her age. “It’s about the huge rugby family you get, from all ages and fitness levels. I was so nervous about starting, I didn’t want to be laughed at, I’ve been so welcomed and my fitness has improved so much.”

There are now 30 registered Angels, aged between 18 and 55, most never having played before and says Carly, who had played at university, “This is a place where anyone can play and you feel instantly accepted as part of the rugby family. We stick together as part of team and support each on and off the field. It encourages self-esteem and confidence in women.”



## ENGLAND WORLD CUP WINNERS IN LEGENDS’ LAIR FOR NATWEST RUGBYFORCE

**CHARLOTTE HARWOOD**

England legends Will Greenwood and Lewis Moody have joined Wales’ Tom Shanklin and Scotland’s Alastair Kellock in offering grassroots clubs across Britain genuine support and advice as they become honorary board members through the NatWest RugbyForce initiative.

Now in its fourth year, the grassroots partnership between NatWest and the RFU aims to help clubs attract new members and become more sustainable. New for 2016, clubs across England, Wales and Scotland will have the chance to see Greenwood, Moody, Shanklin or Kellock join their club as an advisor for a year.

This commitment from the England rugby icons will go beyond the usual level of involvement in the grassroots game and will see Greenwood and Moody become ingrained in the chosen clubs. From offering advice both on and off the pitch, to attending AGMs, club events including NatWest RugbyForce Weekend on 25th and 26th June and advising on how to maximise their facilities, the honorary board members will immerse themselves in their new clubs.

To launch the new incentive each legend has taken his seat in the ‘Legends’ Lair’ to reveal what they are looking for in a club

and how they intend to use their playing and business experience to add their support, with legendary referee Nigel Owens also making a cameo appearance.

Greenwood said of his new role, “To succeed in rugby you need to identify the best opportunities and take your chances. I know there’s a club out there that can take off, if only they’re given the opportunity – and I want to help them make that happen.”

Lewis Moody said, “Rugby inspired me as a child, and continues to do so. World Cup winners or weekend warriors, we’re all in this together. That’s why I’m involved in RugbyForce and why I urge every club across the country to get involved.”

Earlier this season clubs that registered for NatWest RugbyForce had the opportunity to receive financial support, take part in workshops and receive additional support such as pitch maintenance guidance from Twickenham Head Groundsman, Keith Kent. While clubs that have already registered will automatically have the opportunity to have an English rugby legend join their club, those yet to register for NatWest RugbyForce only have until 13th May to secure Greenwood or Moody for their club. NatWest RugbyForce registrations are now open via [englandrugby.com/natwestrugbyforce](http://englandrugby.com/natwestrugbyforce)

## TREV THE REV SIGNS UP FOR FIRST 15 AT 60

Trevor Jacquet, the Church of England Chaplain at Belmarsh Prison, signed registration forms for his first XV debut for Charlton Park RFC on January 31st 2016, just three days before his 60th birthday, having previously played for their second and third team.

He was eager to prop against Brighton in London One League South (Level 6) and, given his steady performance the club was delighted, while wondering if he is the oldest player to register to play for a club at this level?

Charlton Park had a real front row problem, having lost several props to injury and Trev the Rev had been helping to shove opponents around in the second and third teams, and still played in the City League with high-standard players. His philosophy is “once you’ve got yourself into the right position, the rest is in the head”.

Says Charlton Park Hon Sec Andy Potts, “As a club we are keen to develop our young players and allow them to grow into front row positions. By playing Trevor is, in effect, allowing us to develop our younger props before they step up to the first team.”

Trevor is a charismatic enigma, although his four sporting sons, two of whom are ‘3peat’ British American Football champions, would prefer to say “stubborn”. Trevor’s day job may be Church of England Chaplain at Belmarsh but he wears his religious convictions lightly, although always visible. He coaches Blackheath Ladies team in his spare time, as well as finding time to be a Primary School Chair of Governors and President of the Chaplains’ Union.

Trevor remembers watching his father playing for a Sutton and Epsom social side in the fifties. “It will be good to play those old rivals from my younger days at Old Walcountians,” he said, with Park’s league fixture at Sutton & Epsom, when Trev was hoping to see some of his old friends.

He first played first team rugby in the 70s, and has come up against Tim Rodber, Rory Underwood and John Gallagher, as well as Martin Offiah and Andy Ripley on the sevens circuit. One of his former opponents from schooldays is Tim Bryan, ex Oxford University and Harlequins centre, who is now the Prison Chaplain at HMP Wandsworth.

Trevor says he still loves playing, particularly with his sons

at Charlton Park, “but recovery takes a little longer – I’m just about recovered from one season when the next comes round!”. In fact, he has sometimes played five times in 15 days if required to turn out for the Prison XV as well as club and City League. His careful healthy eating regime includes an “addiction to chocolate and biscuits”.

Now Park’s oppositions know about him, and you can’t miss him with his white hair and pony-tail, he is feted in true rugby tradition wherever Charlton Park play, and particularly once it becomes clear that he is not to be patronised. The scrum is steady, for the first time this season, allowing the team to discover the luxuries of playing on the front foot.

And his quiet and positive attitude makes him a leader. Trevor is amazed by the attention he is getting. He is recognised by the club and many others as a real illustration of club loyalty and rugby values. He stresses the importance of reliability, emphasising to the youngsters that you don’t cry off except for real emergencies.

Trevor is a personification of Charlton Park and rugby’s core values – teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline and sportsmanship. And his is a story well worth telling.





# CALLING ALL FUTURE RUGBY WRITERS

NICOL McCLELLAND

With the future stars of rugby starring in the World Rugby U20 Championship in Manchester this June, the RFU is looking for future rugby journalists.

If you know someone who dreams of a career in sports journalism, this is the competition for them. Winners' work will be printed in the Manchester Evening News and on **England Rugby.com**, as well as them gaining a media VIP experience at the World Rugby U20 Championship final plus match tickets, enter as follows:



- 300 word match report submitted on any school or club game, or any rugby-related story of your choice. This might include a report on an England U20 or senior player from your home town or region. The report must include a quote from a player or coach, relative or head teacher. Entries to be received by Monday May 30.
- Winners will be selected from three age groups: U13s, U16s, U20s. The three winning reports will be published in the Manchester Evening News, on **EnglandRugby.com** and **WorldRugby.org** w/c Monday June 6.
- The winner will receive four match tickets to the World Rugby U20 Championship final, as well as the opportunity to interview an England player, take part in post-match media and write a report for **EnglandRugby.com**.
- Two runners-up from each age group will receive four tickets to a World Rugby U20 Championship game of their choosing.
- Include your name, age, school and rugby club (if applicable). Note: For those under 18, parental permission must be given.
- Entries should be emailed to [worldrugbyu20championship@rfu.com](mailto:worldrugbyu20championship@rfu.com)

See the Future Stars of Rugby at the World Rugby U20 Championship in Manchester this June. For more information, including how to buy tickets, visit <http://www.englandrugby.com/u20championship> #FutureStarsOfRugby

# NATWEST SCHOOLS CUP PIONEERS AT ALLIANZ PARK

CHARLOTTE HARWOOD

On Wednesday 20th April it will be 25 years to the day that King Edward School, Stratford won the very first NatWest Schools Cup final against Bishop Wordsworth Grammar School from Salisbury.



To celebrate the 25-year anniversary, the schools' current senior teams will re-play the game at the home of Saracens, Allianz Park. Both schools have invited the players from the original game to attend and will hold a short presentation post-match. **Kick-off is at 2.30pm. For further updates follow @SchoolsCup on Twitter.**



All rugby clubs depend on volunteers and the RFU's Pack to Family programme has been involved in a number of events across the country, including the RBS Six Nations. As Twickenham hosted Ireland and Wales 20 former Pack members put their Rugby World Cup training to the test by become Spectator Services Volunteers. Pack to Family now wants to help local tournaments, so if you need volunteer help just contact [newvolunteer@rfu.com](mailto:newvolunteer@rfu.com) with the name of your tournament, the date, the host club and the details for the volunteer coordinator.

Hemel Hempstead took this opportunity when they played host to the Hertfordshire Under 11s and 12s County Tournament when by advertising the event to Pack members they obtained 10 extra volunteers to assist with a number of roles across the event.

Liz Gibson became a member of the first Spectator Services team following Rugby World Cup 2015 involvement as a volunteer interviewer throughout the Try Out Phase of the Pack and match days at Twickenham Stadium in the Spectator Services team. "I work in a school where the children have benefitted from rugby" said Liz "I wanted to give something back to the game and I would definitely recommend volunteering in rugby- everyone is so friendly and there are lots of ways to help. Volunteers would have no problem finding a role that they could really enjoy."

# CONTRACTING PLAYERS

PAULA ROWE

Following a recent case of a club that failed to comply with RFU Regulations concerning contracting players and was relegated and a club official and players sanctioned as a result, the RFU wants to remind everyone about the relevant Regulations and the Player Registration Process.

All clubs and players are reminded that if they give or receive any monetary or non-monetary 'material benefit', as defined in RFU Regulation 1, in return for playing rugby union on any basis, the club and player must at all times comply with all regulatory and legal requirements.

The RFU has in place a number of Regulations that must be adhered to if a player receives any material benefit for playing rugby union. The definition of material benefit is broad and includes: "money, consideration, gifts or any other benefits whatsoever contracted, promised or given to a person or at his direction, but does not include reimbursement of proper expenses incurred for reasonable travel, accommodation, subsistence or other expenses incurred in relation to the Game and as particularised in RFU Regulation 7.3."

Therefore, if a **club (or other third party)** pays a material benefit to any player (whether playing in the community or professional game), there must be a contract in place with that player (RFU Regulation 7.2) and the player must be effectively registered as a

contracted player (RFU Regulation 14.6.3) in accordance with the specific process set out for Contracted Players.

**Clubs and Players** are also reminded that there are certain legal requirements that must be followed if providing or receiving any material benefit, for example by complying with:

- Applicable immigration laws for players coming from abroad and/or not holding a British passport.
- All tax requirements imposed by HMRC (such as PAYE, income tax payments, auto-enrolment etc.).
- Employment legislation.
- National minimum wage legislation.

Further information about these requirements can be found under section 11/12 of Player Registration Guidance: [www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-members/player-registration/](http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-members/player-registration/)

It is important that you are aware that failure to properly comply with the Player Registration Process may constitute a breach of Regulations and failure to comply with legislation may constitute unlawful conduct.

For technical questions about the Game Management System, please contact the GMS Support Desk - **020 8831 6651** or [gms@therfu.com](mailto:gms@therfu.com)



# SAM & MIKE HELP ELTHAM COLLEGE PLAYERS REACH POTENTIAL

Director of Rugby, Sam Howard, joined Eltham College in January to develop the skills of players across all age groups and abilities and the results are beginning to show already with the U15 sevens team winning the Kent Cup last month (March).

Sam's background as a professional player and coach has seen him play fly half and full back for Exeter Chiefs and Bedford Blues, before becoming three times consecutive winning coach at Dulwich College in the NatWest Schools Cup competition.

Sam's knowledge and expertise further strengthens the Eltham College sports department, where coaches with international and national experience train students in rugby, hockey and cricket. These include Rugby World Cup 2015 Samoan international Mike Stanley who also joined Eltham College in January as part of a joint venture with Old Elthamians RFC, where he will play until the end of the season.

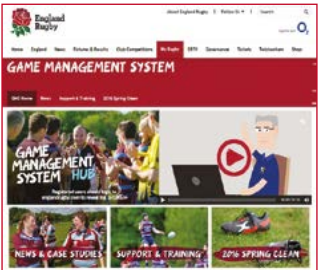
Eltham College students are benefitting from the ever strengthening links with Old Elthamians as they learn from professional players with a wealth of experience and knowledge. The High Performance Athlete Programme in the school also nurtures each student's skills and talents, and is supported by the excellent facilities including 70 acres of playing fields and an on-site sports centre.

All students are encouraged to reach their sporting and academic potential and Sport Scholarships are available for 11+, 13+ and 16+ entry to talented performers.

For more information visit the website [www.elthamcollege.london](http://www.elthamcollege.london)



# SPRING CLEANING FOR GREAT PRIZES



TOBY JONES

The RFU has launched a support mechanism to help clubs perform a 'spring clean' of their membership information in the Game Management System (GMS), enabling clubs to get the best from the system.

All clubs updating their data in GMS from now until 30 June will automatically be entered into a draw to win an incredible top prize of catered hospitality for 10 at Twickenham for the Old Mutual Wealth Series, England v Argentina. There's also five great 'money can't buy' packages to win, which include kit, equipment, resources and England Rugby 2016 Grand Slam merchandise.

Find out more and follow step-by-step guides via the new GMS hub at [www.englandrugby.com/GMS](http://www.englandrugby.com/GMS)

Benefits for clubs - Clubs with clean membership information can improve their communications and better harness their members' support. Using GMS to the full ultimately helps with playing numbers, volunteers, revenues and admin! It also places the club in a great position to receive support and resources from the RFU.



# GUERNSEY TASTIC!

PAULA ROWE

A record number of teams representing every school on the Island of Guernsey took part in the annual Canaccord Genuity Wealth Management Primary Schools Tag Festival, with 42 teams, and 420 players at the Footes Lane Rugby pitch, the home of Guernsey RFC.

In two festivals for school years 3 - 4 and 5 - 6 the Rugby Development team of Steve Melbourne, Rachel Merrien and Callum Gladstone managed to run eight leagues simultaneously. Referees did a sterling job, with local secondary schools and colleges, Guernsey Rugby and the RFU qualifying 22 new Level 1 referees aged 14 and upwards at a pre-Festival course. Volunteers came from every part of the Island's rugby community.

The games were all closely contested and this year saw the debut of Le Rondin, a purpose-built Special Primary School and Centre catering for pupils (aged 3-11) with a wide range of learning difficulties. Gaining the confidence of these young players has been the job of Guernsey Rugby Association Community Rugby Coach Rachel Merrien and her hard work saw the team make it to the quarter-finals of the Year 5-6 festival and awarded Year 5-6 Fair Play Trophy.



# NATWEST SCHOOLS DAY

## BROMSGROVE HOLD ON TO SILVERWARE

BROMSGROVE	18
QEGS	10

Bromsgrove School had the rare distinction of retaining the U18 NatWest Schools Cup after an intense examination by Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield. Their victory was led by number eight Beck Cutting, who scored two of their three tries, finishing off one in the first half, then 11 minutes into the second half taking a quick tapped penalty and beating two opponents to score.

QEGS, at 18-10 down, mounted some terrific attacks in the last 20 minutes but Bromsgrove's defence held. The champions, unbeaten this season, scored first at Twickenham via a dropped goal from fly half James Taylor, before QEGS' Joe Gatus ran on to Tom Allott's long pass for the first try of the match. Three minutes later QEGS grabbed a second, prop Nathan Youngs forcing his way over from a rolling maul.

With QEGS 10-3 ahead, they lost number eight Harry Clarke to injury and Bromsgrove struck twice before half-time, Cutting and wing Cooper Bent taking advantage of sweeping moves. Bromsgrove turned round 13-10 up, the tense second half making Cutting's try crucial.

Tony Windo, Director of Rugby for Bromsgrove, said: "We are delighted to retain the title. We were telling the lads in the build-up to look at what the All Blacks had said at the World Cup, that it's always more difficult to retain a trophy than to win it. It was an all-round team effort."

Trevor Barker, QEGS Director of Rugby, said: "Bromsgrove were just that bit more powerful and we lost our shape at times. Overall I'm really proud of the team and their performance."

## DR CHALLONER'S LIFT U15 VASE

DR CHALLONER'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL	19
SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL	10

Three tries from James Tunney ensured that Dr Challoner's Grammar School from Amersham lifted the U15 NatWest Schools Vase on their first appearance at Twickenham.

After 10 minutes Challoner's took the lead with a try by Tunney. Full back Huey Chadwick took Challoner's deep into Sir Thomas Rich's territory and good handling by prop Sid Dey, wing Blake Morris and captain Ed Griffiths helped put No.8 Tunney over, Monty Weatherall adding the conversion.

Sir Thomas Rich's fly half Daniel Walker converted a penalty shortly after, but Challoner's soon scored their second try as Tunney ran from a deep angle on to a pass. Weatherall's conversion sent his team 14-3 ahead at half-time.

Tommies twice went close to replying, as centre Matthew Lampitt was tackled into touch at the corner, followed by flanker Oliver Edginton being held up on the tryline. From the resulting scrum, Oliver Gordon took the ball to the right and Walker timed his pass beautifully to put Lampitt through for a try that Walker converted. With 10 minutes remaining Tunney settled the result, storming to his hat-trick from the base of a scrum.

Chris Duggan, Dr Challoner's head coach, said: "James is a big player for us but the key is the way the other boys rally round and react to him. We are an all-round sporting school and to win a team event on a national scale means a lot to us."

Rhys Davies, head coach for Sir Thomas Rich's, said: "The message I have given to our boys is this is not the end of the process, it is just the start and it should be the springboard to greater things. Reaching the final was testament to their character and hard work."

## U18 VASE FOR BIRTHDAY CAPTAIN

NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR BOYS	17
ST AMBROSE COLLEGE	12

A dropped goal seven minutes from time by 15-year-old scrum half Connor Tupai secured the U18 NatWest Schools Vase, who edged out Twickenham debutants St Ambrose College from Altrincham.

It was 7-7 at the break. St Ambrose scored first when number eight Ciaran Booth was at the back of an irresistible rolling maul, fly half Jacob Daldry adding the conversion. Northampton hit back after 26 minutes when Tom Rowlatt secured a lineout, setting the platform for flanker Callum Inwood to finish a well-executed drive and Thomas Holliday to slot the extras.

The second half started in blistering fashion as Connor Doherty went over for St Ambrose with a try from a scrum in midfield, before Northampton made it 14-12 when Joshua Arimoro collected the loose ball for a 30-metre sprint after Tupai had charged down Daldry. Jake Johnson kicked the subsequent two points.

But it was left to Man of the Match Tupai - whose father Paul is a former Bedford, Northampton Saints and Samoa international forward - to settle the result when he dropped a goal from 30 metres out. Tupai's grandmother Mary had flown in especially from New Zealand, and Connor said: "It was my first drop goal ever and a great way to celebrate our captain Matthias Farmer's 18th birthday today!"

Mark Lee, Northampton School for Boys Director of Rugby, thanked St Ambrose for taking part in the pre-match minute's silence for Zac Forskitt, who played for the school in the 2013 U18 Cup final and died earlier in the week aged 20 after serious illness. Lee said: "It was very emotional and may have affected the boys to begin with, but when we managed some continuity, I felt we dominated the game."

Nigel Handy, Director of Sport for St Ambrose College, said: "We just didn't have enough of the ball although we started really well in the first 20 minutes. After 32 years at the school it was a brilliant experience for me to be at Twickenham as a coach and just to watch the boys play here."



## SEDBERGH SECURE U15 CUP

SEDBERGH SCHOOL	24
WELLINGTON COLLEGE	17

Sedbergh School's clinical play saw them beat Wellington College to lift the U15 NatWest Schools Cup after a 14-year absence from the competition.

Wellington scored first through wing Alex Wilson but Sedbergh had a 24-7 lead by half-time thanks to tries from No.8 Harry Hill and centres Fraser Jones and George Barber. Hill burst clear in the sixth minute, followed by Jones touching down after fending off a Wellington tackle. A third try, in the 26th minute, came when Will Haydon-Wood won possession on the 22-metre line and put Barber in to score.

Wellington struck back after the break with a Will Sinfield penalty but Sedbergh defended well, despite having lost captain and prop Ben Patchett to a leg injury. Wellington grabbed a second try six minutes from time when scrum half Jamie Miller forced his way over and Sinfield's conversion setting up a tense finish, but Sedbergh holding on for their maiden NatWest Schools Cup victory.

Chris Swainson, Sedbergh head coach, said: "We were excellent in the first half. The team did everything that we asked. In the end we had to hang on a bit but we came through. It's a marvellous feeling."

Kevin Tkachuk, Wellington's Master in Charge of Rugby, said: "I think the right team won if the match is judged on that first half. We scored first but after that we gave away too many penalties and were turned over too often. That was the difference."




## THE WILKINSON EFFECT

Being an England mascot at Twickenham is a once in a lifetime thrill. At the RBS 6 Nations England v Wales match Christy Jordan, aged nine, said "I play for Beccehamians. Chris Robshaw is my favourite player and I just haven't got the words to say how good this is. I feel like one of the England team."

For seven-year-old Harry Cooper and eight-year-old Ben Duguid the day was amazing. But it was 12-year-old Sidcup full back Samuel l'Anson who was totally overcome when he met Jonny Wilkinson. "He has been my hero since I was three years old and it just hit me," he said.

The England Rugby Junior Supporters Club is just £10 to join and offers the chance to be an England mascot.





**TOUCHLINE**

Editorial input with pictures to: Touchline Editor, Patricia Mowbray  
Email: [patriciamowbray@rfu.com](mailto:patriciamowbray@rfu.com) Direct Line: 0208 831 6514  
Correspondence to:  
Patricia Mowbray, Touchline Editor, Rugby Football Union, Rugby House,  
Twickenham Stadium, 200 Whitton Road, Twickenham TW2 7BA.

Mailing and Distribution: Enquiries or updates  
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THE FOLLOWING WHO GENEROUSLY SUPPORT THE GAME









