

## **Macclesfield RUFC**

### **Minutes of Annual General Meeting**

**31<sup>st</sup> May, 2016**

**Held at the Priory Lane Clubhouse**

#### **1. Introduction**

The chairman welcomed the members and declared the meeting quorate (Appendix 1). Apologies received were noted (Appendix 2).

#### **2. Remembrance of members deceased this year**

A minute's silence was held in remembrance of:

David Allen – former player and member

Alan Hollinson – long-standing member and club auditor

Ron James – long-standing member

Alan Johnson – hon. life member, past-secretary, chairman and president

Philip Jones – long-standing member

Peter Ross – former player and member

#### **3. Approval of the minutes of AGM held 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2015**

The minutes of last year's meeting were formally presented (they were first made available on the club website on 1st June 2015). There were no questions from the members and the minutes were approved as an accurate and complete record of the meeting.

**Proposed:** Stephen Branch

**Seconded:** Albert Simpson

#### **4. Chairman's report**

The chairman presented his report for the season. The main points were:

- The season had been one of huge success across the club both in terms of competition and progress made against our strategic plan. Giles Heagerty has successfully achieved promotion back to National Division One following last year's relegation. The rugby played has been effective and entertaining reflecting the ability and commitment of the head coach and his team. The chairman was pleased to announce that Giles has taken on the role of Director of Rugby. The second team won their league and contributed the majority of players that won the Cheshire Cup. The third team have managed to stay in a very competitive league despite disadvantages stemming from a lack of continuity of playing personnel and the fourth team continues to provide enjoyable social rugby for older members and a first taste of adult rugby for players coming up through the colts.
- It is important to maintain this structure as a single entity to ensure the sustainability of the club and we must continue to make efforts to support the second, third and fourth teams to the extent that is affordable. The chairman paid tribute to Jason Walker who is stepping down from his role as captain of the fourth team for maintaining such a thriving side in the face of the usual difficulties associated with a team at this level.
- The mini and junior rugby continues to thrive – it was recognised that the plans for the Director of Youth Rugby were not successful but plans are in place to correct this for

next season. The chairman laid out the approach to re-establish the colts as a successful team and a conduit to the adult sides.

- Funds remain a constant source of anxiety - the prudent financial management under Peter White has ensured the financial viability of the club but this is on a “hand-to-mouth” existence. One large bill could put us in considerable difficulty. The chairman reassured the members that the over-riding principle is to run the club within budget and within means. Revenue forecasts for next year are properly conservative but the groundwork laid on marketing and the appointment of a Business Development Director should see increases next financial year.
- Social activities this year have continued to flourish (Christmas lunch, an expanded Ladies’ Lunch, Players’ Dinner) but we have also seen a hugely successful re-introduction of the Sportsman’s Dinner and a club tour of 41 members to Jersey. Plans are already in place for a similar trip next year.
- The development of the Priory Park Site is moving to the next stage following the resounding approval of the EGM held in January. We anticipate submitting the planning application in the next few weeks but, given a turnover in personnel at the planning department, a delay on decision making is anticipated. He did not think the rejection of the application from King’s School would affect our initiative. He emphasised the need for members to write to the council in support of the proposal when it is submitted.
- The chairman recognised the commitment and contribution of many volunteers (Appendix 3) without whom the club simply would not function.
- The chairman then looked forward to the challenges of next year as the first team competes in National Division One with resources and budget that is much smaller than the majority of teams we will face. He again emphasised the financial challenge and asked if anyone knew of sponsors or donors who would be able to contribute, they should put them in touch with the club.
- The chairman raised the issue of people who don’t pay their membership or subscriptions and yet still use the club and its facilities freely. When funds are so tight and we rely so heavily on volunteers, this situation is unacceptable. The chairman used his statement to announce that there will be a clampdown on these individual next season.

There were no questions from the members on the chairman’s statement.

## **5. Finance Report**

Peter White gave a brief overview of the finances of the club over the last year but emphasised a full picture would be presented at the financial AGM in September when audited accounts would be available. The main points were:

- We continue to exist on a hand-to-mouth existence with no capacity to build up reserves. In forecasting terms, costs are fairly fixed and can be predicted with a measure of certainty. In contrast, revenue is much more variable. This year has seen a decline in gate receipts and player subscriptions whilst revenue from the bar was stable (largely due to additional, successful functions). Sponsorship remained roughly constant with a turnover of sponsors being matched by new partners. The revenue for the telephone masts remains constant but the deal with DSA has been re-negotiated and greatly reduced. Given this overall picture, the focus for next year must be on increasing sponsorship, ensuring all revenue due is obtained (especially membership and

sponsorship) and maintaining and growing the social calendar so that we can avoid unduly excessive increases in membership fees.

- Against a breakeven budget set for the financial year, he expects to report a small trading loss.
- The Finance Director thanked all those who have supported him over the year including the bar staff, the grounds' maintenance team, the gate team and Derek Laidlaw.

## **6. Rugby reports**

### **6.1. First team**

The chairman read a report prepared by the first team head coach. The main points were:

- The team completed an extremely successful season with a playing record of P29, W26, L3 (the final game against Harrogate being cancelled by mutual agreement and with the sanction of the NCA).
- There has been much greater continuity of personnel this year – this has been due to a number of factors including better rotation of players to manage workload and enhanced medical procedures and personnel.
- New players have been signed for next year that the head coach is confident will make us competitive. Only one player from the current squad will not play in the forthcoming season.
- Giles also outlined the structure of the coaching and support team for next year and finished by putting on record his thanks to the club and volunteers.

### **6.2. Second team**

The report for the second team was presented by Iain Taylor:

- The season has been extremely successful for the second team. In the first half of the season, their record was P12, W9, L3 – in the conference competition post-Christmas the side went unbeaten to secure the title (to Iain's knowledge, no side have done this previously). This was achieved with a very high points for/against ratio and a team with an average age of around 23.
- The second team also contributed the bulk of the side that won the Cheshire cup.
- Iain emphasised the need to maintain the link through the three social sides to ensure competitive teams could be fielded and younger players moved through the levels.
- He also outlined plans to increase the number of pre-match lunches organised prior to second team home fixtures.

### **6.3. Third team**

The third team report was presented by James Keep:

- The team managed to be competitive in a high standard league despite having a high turnover of players supplementing a core squad. Their playing record was P26, W9, D1, L15 although 3 games were lost in the closing minutes and a further three by 10 points or fewer.
- The team was strengthened by the availability of colts and by support from the second team and Paul Bartle at King's School.
- James described plans to increase the number of social events for the third team and approaches to maintain links with students who were away at University but would be available during vacations or when they have completed their studies.

#### 6.4. Fourth team

The fourth team report was presented by Jason Walker:

- The side finished 5<sup>th</sup> in their league with a final record of P24, W12, D1, L11 (1 concession).
- They used 80 players overall and only once completed a fixture with fewer than 15 players.

#### 6.5. Mini and junior section

The report for the mini and junior section was presented by Phil Mason:

- This has been Phil's first season as chairman of the section and he emphasised the challenges of managing 10 age groups. He summarised the success of the various sides and described some of the investment made to strengthen the resource of the section (matching jackets for all coaches, purchase of the container for kit storage etc.).
- Support for the various events (ball boys, family days) was variable and he is looking at ideas to improve turnout.
- He felt that the Director of Youth Rugby has not been a success initially but has gradually improved. Plans to bring all coaches to at least level 1 were described as well as better planning to manage demand for pitches (particularly during the months of inclement weather).
- Phil recorded his thanks to Bill and Bev Roberts, Paul Jakobowski, Jonathan Marsh and Sarah Davies.

### 7. Election of Executive Officers

The following members were proposed for the various positions:

		<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	Peter Harper	Clive Hammond	Keith Bennett
<b>Dir. Finance</b>	Peter White	Keith Bennett	Clive Hammond
<b>Dir. Sales/Marketing</b>	Charles Halle	Clive Kirkham	John Webster
<b>Dir. Comm. Activity</b>	David Mair	Barry Day	Mike Keeling
<b>Secretary</b>	Tim Peakman	John Webster	Dave Armstrong

There being no other nominations, the above were elected for a further year.

**Proposed:** Sir Nicholas Winterton

**Seconded:** Clive Hammond

### 8. Confirmation of election of honorary members

The chairman announced the following:

Bill Roberts – Honorary Life Vice President

### 9. Any other business

- In response to a question about gypsies encamping on the grounds, the chairman outlined the steps taken to remove them. He also described plans for extra security and improvement of the barrier at the main entrance but emphasised that given the club is

regularly accessed by legitimate users on a daily basis, the effectiveness of the measures taken can only be limited. A member who had served in the police force noted that the problem was particularly acute at this time of year.

- A member asked the chairman to expand on the plans for next year's colts that he had mentioned in his report. Given his involvement in this team, the secretary detailed the plans for the development of the team and the aim to re-establish the colts as a key component of the club. The member suggested we write to the current U18 players (i.e. those leaving to go to university) inviting them to come and play for the club during their vacations. A member suggested that a special membership category could be created to facilitate this.
- A number of members discussed ways of maintaining a flow of players between the social sides that balanced the need to maintain the fourth team, avoid falling foul of the rules around unfulfilled fixtures and not asking players to play at a level that was either too good for them or one that they no longer wanted to play at. The discussion also touched on the availability of colts' players for a Saturday fixture with one member emphasising that, given the increased physicality of modern rugby, two fixtures in a weekend was excessive and risked injury.
- The secretary reminded members of the plans for a memorial board to honour members who have died on active service. He encouraged those present that if they knew of any such members they should let him or Bob Jenner know in the next few weeks.
- Barry Jones noted that he felt the committee were doing a good job in taking the club forwards and asked that his views be minuted.

The chairman thanked all members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20.10.

## **Appendix 1 – members present**

Mr G. Allen  
Mr K. Bennett  
Mr H. Bowen  
Mr M. Brown  
Mr R. Davenport  
Mr K. Dobson  
Mr S. Fry  
Mr J. Howarth  
Mr R. Hadwin  
Mr C. Hammond  
Mr P. Harper  
Mr P. Harwick  
Mr D. Holden  
Mrs H. Holden  
Mr B. Jenner  
Mr P. Jakobowski  
Mr B. Jones

Mr C. Joyce  
Mr M. Keeling  
Mr D. Laidlaw  
Mr E. Lee  
Mr J. Marsh  
Mr S. Mashader  
Mr P. Mason (non-voting member)  
Mr T. Peakman  
Mr A. Simpson  
Mr B. Smith  
Mr J. Walker  
Mr D. Way  
Mr J. Webster  
Mr J. Weston  
Mr P. White  
Mr D. Wilkinson  
Sir N. Winterton

## **Appendix 2 – apologies received**

Mr J. Brown  
Mr B. Cooke  
Mr B. Day  
Mr C. Dempsey  
Mr G. Dempsey  
Mr B. Fawcett  
Mr C. Halle  
Mr M. Harding

Mr P. Harper Snr  
Mr G. Heagerty  
Mr C. Jones  
Mr M. Jones  
Mr C. Kirkham  
Mr G. Lewis  
Mr W. Offer

### Appendix 3 – individuals recognised by the chairman in his report

Bill and Bev Roberts	Unstinting work and for being the `face of the club` for 20 + years.
Jonathan Marsh	Doing an invaluable job taking over from Bill & Bev, combining this with the newly appointed Business Directors role & Match Day host
Geri and her bar staff Elaine, Sonia, Anne etc.	Fantastic bar service.
Gate team led by Colin Joyce	Sterling effort by everyone, too many to name.
Terry Robson & Derek Laidlaw	4 <sup>th</sup> official duties
Albert Simpson	Liaising with the referees and other match officials and mentoring Terry & Derek
John Knight	Fixture secretary for `social sides`
Barry Jones	Organising and handling of international tickets.
Tony Close	Now taken over from Barry
David Wilkinson	Match day, commentator, and raconteur.
Sir Nicholas Winterton & David Rutley MP	For continued support over the season
Ground Staff - Webbers, Nemmie, Dave Holden, Barry Day, John Davies, Steven Fry Roger Hadwin, Bill Roberts & Jock Brown	Colossal efforts in maintaining the grounds
All of the minis, juniors and colts team coaches and administrators	For their hugely important roles in introducing youngsters to our great game and showing the patience of saints in nurturing and coaching these stars of the future.
Phil Mason – MJ Chairman	Difficult job of running the MJ section with all the differing factions. Also a great help on match days
Ross & Simon – Blues physios	No coincidence we`ve had less injured players this season
Coaching Staff & support, Giles, CJ, Marshall Gadd, Matt Coleridge & Howard Hughes	Gelling into a great team as results have shown
Dave Mair, David Wilkinson & Jonathan Marsh	David especially for taking on the challenge of organising the very successful Sportsman`s Dinner
Jim Curtis	Handling the disciplinary issues like a seasoned barrister
Derek Laidlaw	Washing the strips each week and saving the club a fortune.
Mickey Jones	Organising – yet again! – the Beer festival – an extremely important revenue stream for the club.
Sarah Davies and Bev Roberts	Fantastic efforts organising the Ladies` Lunch
Captains of all social teams	Difficult job and much appreciated.
Mike Keeling	Organising `Super Saturday Lunches` and

	chasing membership payments.
Clive Hammond	Support and advice and for representing the club at NCA meetings
Tim Peakman, David Mair, Pete White & Charlie Halle	For their tireless efforts in running this club and supporting the Chairman