

KENT RFU DRIVE FOR QUALITY RECOGNITION IN KENT CLUBS



In order to assure parents, carers, teachers and young players of the high quality of rugby within Kent rugby clubs, Kent RFU is set to encourage clubs with teams under the age of 18 to work towards and attain the RFU “Mini & Youth Seal of Approval”.



Kent currently has only 14 Clubs with the accreditation which also includes Sport England’s “Clubmark”. This figure is below the national average and does not reflect the great rugby been delivered by so many people across Kent. To encourage clubs to attain the required standard Kent RFU are setting out a ‘road map’ to assist clubs to achieve the award over the next couple of seasons. The road map will advocate a series of targets to focus clubs on the important issues.

Director of RFU Community Rugby (Andrew Scoular) explains, *“The Mini & Youth Seal of Approval is a method of ensuring high quality provision of rugby in clubs. The accreditation recognises the effort and achievement of volunteers in reaching the required standard of a club committed to the development of Rugby Union”.*

The first target on the Kent Road Map will be for clubs to demonstrate that they meet the standards set out concerning Equity, Medical and Welfare by January 2010. The standards include:

- Owning codes of conduct for all players, spectators and volunteers and a disciplinary process.
- Ensuring players’ welfare is safeguarded by having a trained Club Welfare Officer and volunteers in each age group.
- All adult volunteers at the club hold a CRB certificate
- Having an Equity Policy and a team of representatives aware of equity issues for which training is available.
- Have an agreed procedure for accidents and emergencies
- Securely hold parental, contact and medical information of players
- Ensuring first aid equipment and a ‘first aider’ is present at all sessions

Achieving Seal of Approval will be a key requirement for Clubs wishing to apply for and receive funding from the RFU for developing facilities. Previously accreditation has been a condition of receiving funding however accreditation will now be a prerequisite. Helping Clubs to start and complete the process as soon as possible will ensure this opportunity is more accessible.

All of the 2010 Kent Mini Midi Festivals will be hosted by Clubs with the Seal of Approval which should send a positive message to all involved. Debbie Park, Chair of the Kent Mini Midi Committee and said, *“As a parent myself, and in children’s best interests, I believe it is not too much to ask that any club at which my child plays sport, particularly rugby, should be able to assure me that my child will be looked after in an appropriate manner”.*

Holding the Seal of Approval also demonstrates to schools that standards are of the required level. Nathan Hazeldene, Kent School Sport Manager, advises, *“Schools and School Sports Partnerships increasingly prefer to work with clubs that hold Sport England’s Clubmark or their own Governing Body equivalent - in rugby terms the Seal of Approval. Sports clubs across the country should make every effort to ensure they meet the standards set out by their respective Governing Body”.*

Guthrie Miller Kent Sport Leisure and Olympics’ Club and Volunteer Development Officer is keen to point out the benefits. *“Sports clubs who have embarked on the journey to accreditation such as Addington Cricket Club, Ashford Hockey Club as well as Rugby Clubs in Kent have all discovered real benefits and rising standards both on and off the pitch.*

If you are interested in further information about accreditation please visit these pages on the [RFU Website](#) or if you would like to support your Club please contact Andy, Matt or Sylvia at the Kent Rugby Development Office on 01622 605060.