

**Northwich Rugby Union Football Club**  
**Annual General Meeting held at 7.30pm on 22nd May 2007 at Hartford Social Club**  
**MINUTES**

**Present:** C Naylor, T Rawling, R Owen, R Heath, S Mills, S Wood, J Simpson, A Bown, G Robinson, A Stanley, M Penny, J Carroll, K Dean, I Dale, D Townsend, J Brunlees, M Naylor, J Blower, D Sutton, R McLaverty, T Pickering, S Bridle, S Galbraith, B Johnson, J Carter, L Gough, A Blades, J Miritana, J Cartman, C Heywood, S Rawling, K Naylor, J Cosgrove, S Taylor, R Smith, C James, R Walker, S Cheetham, C Atherton, C Moore, D Walker, R Heath, P Clarke, A Chubb, J Baker, S McCormick, D Stevenson, D Akrigg, N Wilson, A Oultram, T Kineally, R Phillips, K Houghton, P Naylor, M Thompson (as signed in).

Ron McLaverty took the chair and welcomed all to the meeting.

**Apologies** were received from: J Brotherton, B Williams, S Campbell, W Davies.

**Minutes of the 2006 AGM** were unanimously approved and there were no matters arising.

**Chairman's Report:** Colin Naylor gave his report for the year 2006/7. A copy is attached.

- There were no questions arising.
- The meeting thanked Sam for his hard work for the year.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jim Brunlees presented his report. Key points were:

- The Club is still in a sound financial position with a final cash balance of £8291 compared to £13454 last year but has stock in the shop to the value of £5030 so the net worth is £13321 – virtually the same as last year.
- Although expenses continued to rise income just kept pace.
- Both Senior and Junior subs income was appreciably up reflecting both our growing membership and improved subs collection especially the standing order system.
- Festival income was down at £3189 due entirely to receiving no VRBC funding.
- The following question was raised for Jim to address:
  1. The cost for the Community Coach was queried and it was explained this is £2000 which is our annual contribution to this VRBC post. The Committee are to review its continuance.
  2. Player funding was clarified..
  3. Kit purchases were clarified.

The meeting thanked Jim for his hard work over the last year.

**Secretary's Report:** Trevor Rawling gave the report, a copy of which is attached.

- There were no questions and the meeting thanked Trevor his work in the last year.

**Fixtures Secretary's Report:** Trevor Rawling gave the report, a copy of which is attached.

- A question was raised about the league structures for next year. Trevor confirmed the situation for 2s and 3s which has been finalised and advised that the 1<sup>st</sup> team's league will not be finalised until the end of the month.

**Senior Rugby Report:** Steve Wood gave the report for the senior rugby section, a copy of which is attached.

- There were questions but the statement was made that the Women's Section will need more support next season.
- Steve and all the Senior Rugby staff were thanked for their hard and successful work.

**Junior Section Report:** Simon Bridle presented the report, a copy of which is attached.

- There were no questions but the meeting thanked Simon and all the Junior Section staff for the continuing excellent job they all do to ensure our Junior Section is the foundation of the Club's future.

There was a short comfort break.

## Subscriptions:

The agreed subscriptions for the 2006/7 season are:

<b>Membership Category</b>	<b>Annual Subscription</b>
Senior Player	£50 or £4 pm by SO
Senior non-player	£35 0r £3 by SO
Women players	£35 0r £3 by SO
Senior Non Player	£30
Junior Player (single)	£30
Junior Player (multiple)	£50
Family	£75

Senior Match Fees will be £3 per home game.

The above decisions were approved unanimously.

It was clarified that 'Family Membership' can only cover a Senior Player and his/her children who are under 18 on 1<sup>st</sup> Sept of the subs year.

## Election of Officers:

Colin Naylor was unanimously re-elected as club chairman.

The following officers were unanimously elected for the coming year.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>
Vice Chairman – Rugby	Steve Wood
Vice Chairman – Administration	Trevor Rawling
Vice Chairman – Community Development	Phil Clarke
Vice Chairman – Records	Kevin Dean
Hon Treasurer	Jim Brunlees
Hon Secretary	Trevor Rawling
Fixtures Secretary	Paul Taylor
Junior Chairman	Bob Phillips

## Election of Captains:

There were 2 nominations for 1<sup>st</sup> XV captain – Steve Campbell and Rick Smith.

There were single nominations for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> teams.

The following were elected to be team captains for the coming season:

First XV	Steve Campbell with Rick Smith as Vice Capt
Second XV	Rob Heath (VC to be appointed)
Third XV	Ian Dale with Dave Sutton as Vice Capt

## Election of player's representatives:

Steve Galbraith, Adam Bown and Natalie Wilson were unanimously elected as player representatives to the committee.

**Cheshire RFU Representative:** Ron McLaverty kindly agreed to continue with this role. The Club thanks Ron for his work in this area.

**Northwich Festival:** Tim Pickering reported as follows:

- It was a good Festival last year and we made £3000+. The drop being due to the lack of monies from VRBC
- The Women's Rugby was a good event and will be repeated, hopefully with more teams.
- The Strongman was excellent and promises to be a high class event this year.
- Tim encouraged all members to support the Saturday night event this year and to be on hand to work on the Monday at the Festival.
- The meeting thanked Tim for the terrific job he is doing with the Festival.

**Other Business:**

- Confirmation was given that all the new training lights will be in place for the next season.
- Phil Clarke announced the 'Go play Rugby' project and asked for support when it takes off.
- It was confirmed that Ray Owen will not be doing the catering next year. Ray was thanked for his tremendous support and the committee will have to find a replacement.
- The Tour was very successful with 58 senior players going. S Galbraith and B Johnson were thanked for their hard work organising it.
- It was announced that the former Weaverham Rugby League Team will be playing at our place on Saturday's through the summer season under the name Vale Royal Stags.
- It was confirmed that we are officially in the Guinness Book of Records for holding the world's largest Tag Tournament!
- The Schools Tag Tournament was announced and will be on Thursday 24 May at 1.30pm and helpers are needed.

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Chairman's Report Season 2005/06.

As I said at the very pleasant Annual Awards ceremony at the Oakland's last Saturday season 05/06 was in comparison with many previous seasons a successful one.

For once we were not scrapping to avoid relegation and all three senior teams won more games than they lost.

The South African arrangement worked well and thanks are due to Mike Penny, Rob Heath and Chris Chudleigh in particular. On a personal note I gained the impression that the three enjoyed their experience and the manner in which they were accepted by our members is creditable.

Chris Dale and Gaz Davies are off on a reciprocal visit and I have warned both that they are ambassadors of the club and that I expect them to behave accordingly.

Chris Chudleigh has been a big success but equal credit should go to Rob Heath for the manner he has managed the first XV set up. The captains have worked hard and Jonathan Simpson set a fine example in his first season of captaincy.

There is still friction within selection system and although I can't put my finger on it there appears to be a 'them and us' mentality creeping into the relationship between the 2<sup>nd</sup> XV and the 1<sup>st</sup> XV and also, to a certain extent, towards the Committee. It is vital that the whole club and particularly the senior section are totally focused on moving the club forward and I know that some members do not like to hear it but when push comes to shove this means sometimes giving priority to the 1<sup>st</sup> XV. Yes, we should strive for equity across the whole section but in the real world we all know that occasionally this is not possible.

The cup run and the second half of the season performance was fantastic and it all goes to prove that success brings commitment and that this leads to further success. The club is now in a special position. We have a good, young squad and hopefully a few will join us. Now is the time for players to commit to the future and to realise the benefit of staying loyal to Northwich.

The Colts and Ladies had mixed fortunes and struggled somewhat. But they turned out and the Colts more than achieved their objective of feeding players into the senior section.

On the non playing side we are still in the hands of Vale Royal Borough in terms of developing the Moss Farm site. Slow progress is being made but our present set up will be with us for a season or two yet.

On the back of winning the Cheshire Community Club of the year for three years in succession the hard work of the junior section was finally rewarded when the club picked up the BBC Award at the end of November. The section can now concentrate their efforts totally on the task of ever improving the quality of junior rugby at Northwich.

We say goodbye to the provision of food by Ray Owen but hopefully there may be something Ray can do when the laundry review is completed. We also say thank you to Kevin Dean who is stepping down from his Vice Chair duties. Kevin has been part of the 'spine' of the club for many, many years. Kevin you will be missed.

There are many other issues I could report upon e.g. The Festival, the showers, whether to have steak and kidney or meat and potato; but later in the meeting a new committee will be voted in and it will be their job to get things sorted during the break in order to ensure we hit the ground running in September.

Sam.

## Fixtures Secretary's Report Season 2005/6

1. Fixtures went well for the 1<sup>st</sup> XV with only one game having to be rearranged and we accommodated our cup games comfortably.
2. The Regional leagues continue to do a great job for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> team fixtures and their league games coupled with their cup matches meant we had few friendlies and we only used the pool once.
3. The Women's fixtures got changed around a bit in the latter half of the season but we accommodated them all OK.
4. We were provided with refs by the Society for all 1<sup>st</sup> XV, 2<sup>nd</sup> XV and Women's matches and most of the 3<sup>rd</sup> team games. One 2<sup>nd</sup> team ref failed to turn up but Tim Pick covered the game. Thanks to all the volunteers who refereed this season – without you the games would not have happened.
5. Thanks to Ray and Moss Farm for supporting our home fixtures in the catering and bar departments.
6. Work on next season's fixtures starts now and I will need input from coaches and captains regarding pre-season and other friendlies.

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### **Junior Secretary's Report**

The start of season was punctuated with the usual bumps in the road to be over come, some we handled better than others. We found ourselves without Junior Colts coaches following the decision of one of last years U16 coaches to drop down to the U7's (thereby solving a perennial problem) and of the other one to retire. Thankfully Stuart Mills stepped in assisted by Mike Naylor and a variety of Senior players to ensure that the team was kept together. Unfortunately, all involved were not aware of the rules governing Colts matches and the age groups of players allowed to play. This resulted in us playing over age players and being called to task over this, which put us in trouble with the Cots League and Cheshire RFU. Whilst the Colts league were willing to accept that this was an honest mistake and accepted us back into the league once we had confirmed that we had resolved the issue, Cheshire tried to ban the whole Junior Section from the Cheshire Cup for 12 months (sentence suspended). However, we lodged an appeal and Northwich's answer to "Rumpole of the Bailey" Trevor Rawlins successfully presented our case, such that our sentence was reduced to a 12 month suspended sentence for just the offending team.

Also at the start of the season our shop manager Laraine, quit and so Eleri Phillips was recruited to fill that role along with Leanna Miratana who has run the shop on a Saturday for the benefit of the Senior section. I think all would agree that the shop has been a great asset this year.

Following the opening game of the Junior Season - U15's vs Winnington Pk (won 43 – 0!) Our Chairman Simon was taken ill and diagnosed some time later with a cancerous brain tumour. The initial prognosis was not good, but following surgery and intensive chemo and radio therapy, I am pleased to announce that Simon's future, whilst by no means assured, is looking a lot brighter than it did. Simon has decided to stand down this year as Junior Chairman and I am sure that you will all join with me in thanking Simon for his great leadership and in wishing Simon all the very best in the future.

Simon's replacement is Bob Phillip's, husband of Eleri (the shop), he also has 2 sons playing in the Juniors.

### **Junior Fixtures Secretary's Report:**

We were able to field teams at all age groups from U7's to Junior Colts this season and we did so with a modicum of success. After failing to register a single win in the Colts League, the Junior Colts went on to win the Colts Shield, much to their amazement. The U10's won the Cheshire Plate and the U9's and U11's were Plate finalists.

This season also saw the largest number of Junior Tours ever for the club as the U12's, U13's, U14's and U15's all went on tour. The U12's visiting the Team Tours International Rugby Festival in Wales, the U14's & U15's visiting the same fixture, but in Scotland and the U13's who went to Cardiff to see the EDF Cup Semi Finals and to play against some local teams.

The U14's were the only ones to return with silverware, managing to win the U15's shield at the Ayr competition (Scotland have different age rules, hence them playing at U15's). The U15's came 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the U16's cup, but there was no silverware for this.

All teams have continued to make progress and we look to the U13's for a shining example of how to develop a team. At the start of the season 6 of the best players from the U12's decided to either give up the sport in favour of soccer or move to Winnington Park. This ripped the heart out of the team and left them barely able to raise a side and when they did, they were getting hammered.

However, coaches Steve Vandersteen and Steve Jones set about the task of rebuilding the side and have done so with huge success. The team finished the year with 8 straight victories and one defeat, which was to Sandbach, a team unbeaten at this age for 2 seasons.

This success was the result of a huge amount of work by the “two Steve’s” but also supported by the likes of Dave Khanylie and Voyou, who ran coaching sessions in the emerging school of Rudheath, which has been a source of new talent. They head towards the new season contemplating whether they need to run two teams – a fantastic turn around.

We continue to promote training and development for our coaches and almost all have committed to remain in post for next season. The one exception being the U10’s Coach, Phil Morris who’s son has elected to do soccer next year. So if anyone would like to help a talented young team develop into a good U11’s side, please get in touch with myself or Bob Phillips.

I would like to close by thanking all the coaches, referees, helpers and parents for their effort and support throughout the year and please remember that whilst the senior season may have finished, the Juniors move into running tag tournaments to help keep rugby at the forefront of the local children’s mind. Last season, Northwich RUFC was acknowledged as a World Record holder when our Yr 5 & 6 tag tournament was adjudged to have been the largest ever recorded. A big thank you to Kevin Jones for masterminding that World Record bid and if you would like to help, or see what happens at one of these festivals, be at Moss Farm this Thursday from 1pm.

**Ken Houghton**

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**Honorary Secretary's Report**

The major feature this year has been the virtual 100% conversion to all correspondence and communication to Clubs from the RFU and Cheshire RFU to e-mail format.

This has greatly reduced the quantity of hard copy correspondence and postage. Also it has enabled better distribution from the Secretary to the rest of the Committee and the Club Website and is a welcome move. However it does require everyone to be disciplined about checking, reading and replying to their e-mails.

Apart from the routine secretarial tasks the major work has been:

1. Coordination of the development of the Club Strategic Plan – still in progress.
2. Coordinating the discussions relating to the possible new Clubhouse. Thanks to Phil Clarke, Ken Houghton, Tim Pickering and Jan Cartman for their valued support.
3. The administration requirements related to our EDF Senior Vase Campaign, particularly from the quarter final stage to the final itself. This was pretty intensive and thanks to Phil Clarke, Rob Heath and Bryan Johnson for their terrific support.

**Fixtures Secretary's Report:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> XV fixtures were made particularly complicated due to our phenomenal success in the EDF. This led to a lot of rearranged league fixtures plus the need to squeeze in our Cheshire Vase matches. This led to two of the Cheshire matches being played under lights midweek thanks to the cooperation of both Sale FC and Wilmslow. Again the use of e-mail within the club was invaluable for communicating changes and consulting 1<sup>st</sup> XV management. Despite the problems we got all the matches played except for the home game v Oldershaw – which they pulled out of.

The Miller Homes NW Regional leagues were again a terrific success from a fixtures point of view with virtually no cancelled matches, a full fixtures list and little rearrangement for both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> XV's.

The Manchester and District Referees Society gave us great support and covered virtually all our home games including the majority of 3<sup>rd</sup> XV home matches. Thanks go to Paul Taylor, Phil Clarke and Tim Pickering all of whom provided ref cover when the society could not do it.

E-mail has been used increasingly to confirm fixtures and referee appointments with a big saving in time and phone costs.

Trevor Rawling

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**Vice Chairman (Rugby) Report**

Following the 11<sup>th</sup> hour withdrawal of Chris Chudleigh from the role of Club Coach Mike Penny stepped forward and in his first season has proved his value to the club. With support from Danny Townsend, Andy Stanley, Donny Phillips, Jed Hill and occasional guest coach's sessions were for the most part well attended. As with previous seasons we still suffer when the bad weather kicks in and numbers drop off. My thanks to all the coaches who have respected our premier pitch and managed sessions without inflicting any damage to the hallowed turf. We will have excellent lighting in place next season which will provide plenty of illuminated space for all to in.

Players in:	Players out:
Gary Bell	Chris Dale
Rick Smith	Hugh Jones
Mike Gallimore	Andy Joseph
David Khanyile	
John Keegan	

The South African connection was still in place with David Khanyile coming across the water. It was also pleasing to see Vuyol Pasiya return to us outside the formal arrangements. It is hoped that we will continue our ties South Africa as this recruitment source will play a major part in any future successes.

The pre-season efforts of Rob Heath and Phil Clarke ensured we were well prepared. With new kit, additional sponsorship and a self financing professional match day program Northwich certainly posted their intentions. I would like to thank Rob Heath and Steve Campbell for their Friday afternoon trips to Leigh to collect the programs in readiness for match day.

We have never been better prepared for a season's rugby and this preparation was the key to our success. The approach to every match was professional and consistent with only one hiccup at Burnage, which sent understandably Mike Penny into orbit. This approach earned us the respect of the appointed referees who in almost all cases paid tribute to way we conducted ourselves.

Our achievements for the season certainly exceeded our expectations. We were looking for promotion to North 2 West but the EDF Senior Vase and the Cheshire Vase successes were certainly a bonus. Unbeaten in all competitive matches is fact that will go down in the Clubs history. It has been said that this success will never be repeated. However never is a long time and we should not lower our sights.

In addition our 2<sup>nd</sup> XV gained promotion by finishing runners up in the league a fantastic achievement well done to Andy Stanley and his squad. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> XV also gained promotion on merit finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in the league once again under the command of Ian Dale assisted by Dave Sutton.

The ladies squad missed out on promotion by the narrowest of margins. We sustained too many injuries for our last match at York and the victory we needed for promotion eluded us.

Our success has been punctuated by the support we have received this season which has been superb. From day one we have had increased numbers attending all 1<sup>st</sup> XV matches both home and away. This was highlighted by the numbers that travelled to Twickenham and those who made the effort to welcome the team home.

I would like to thank all the Captains and the Coaching team for their efforts throughout the season not forgetting Mel Houghton for keeping almost everybody fit and able to play and George Stoker for his assistance and support on match days. It has been a tremendous effort by all concerned.

**Steve Wood**