



COVID-19 And the Premature End of the 2019/20 Rugby Season From Friday 20th March 2020.

It seems a very long time since the announcements last Monday from the Government and the RFU which meant the temporary suspension of Rugby Union across England. Today we have all received the communication from Bill Sweeney RFU CEO that season 19/20 is ended.

I want to assure clubs that we all at both RFU and Kent understand the dire effect of this inevitable decision on club finances and morale. We are working quickly to provide a relief fund and advice to clubs on how to handle this current and unprecedented situation. In order for you to help us with the way we administrate this we need you to do a thorough assessment of what an end to the season at this stage looks like financially, to your club in lost revenue and profitability.

Please let those referred to at the end of this note or the County office have your assessment of financial loss.

In the meantime, the RFU are liaising with Government regarding potential grant funding announced by the Chancellor for small businesses, potential for rate relief or holidays, VAT 4th quarter deferred payments due and Sports Council grants. This is to ensure we can give you the right advice where relevant to tap into these sources of finance or relief.

In addition work is being progressed rapidly to provide an RFU/ Kent County RFU relief fund for clubs utilising RFU funds and County reserve funds- the latter normally from County reserves through the Small Facilities grants administered by Nigel Fray our volunteer facilities manager.

All of these measures which are being worked on as I write to you are due for ratification at our County Executive Conference Call next Tuesday and at an RFU Board meeting to be held on the 25th April and I will report back to you next week. These measures will clearly not totally restore your losses but I hope will go a long way in providing advice on how to approach additional financial support and some finance as well.

In the meantime if there are any issues or concerns you have about the current situation created by the COVID- 19 virus and your club please contact us or the RFU RDO's for Kent and we will be available to help wherever we can. Our aim is to ensure that as we leave the 2019/20 season with 70 clubs in Kent membership we will commence the new season whenever that is with the same 70 clubs and their volunteers.

I recognise that inevitably Rugby may not be your greatest concern right now but I wanted you to know that we are ' on the case'.

Keep Safe.

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