

WALES RUGBY LEAGUE

2014 - 2015 Annual Report



Rugby League European Championship
Wales Squad 2014



Welcome by WRL Chairman Brian Juliff

This has been another year of continual change for Wales Rugby League which has produced significant successes in terms of governance and performance, plus on field success from quality young players enjoying this exciting sport.

At the beginning of 2014, the board at WRL were facing an exceptional inherited 'black hole' in our accounts following on from negligence and financial incompetence, which led to an overspending against forecasts and budget of £115,000 during 2011/2012.

This aligned to a funding reduction from the RFL put considerable pressure on our business, which necessitated a stringent policy on cash control as well as resources. We were forced into an austerity programme that challenged our very existence, but due to some amazing support from players and volunteers we are now emerging as a strong, vibrant and optimistic National Governing Body with the correct values and processes driving our business.

During 2014, the company "My Club Betting" stepped forward as a major and record investor in Wales Rugby League and shared in the ambitious plans to take Wales through radical reformation at community and international level over the next four years. This support has given us the uplift we were looking for as we build towards qualifying for the 2017 Rugby World Cup. They joined a portfolio of commercial partners such as our fantastic kit supplier Raging Bull.

The appointment of John Kear to the position of head coach at Wales Rugby League in late summer 2014 was enlightening because of John's positive and supportive nature. The absence of many senior players from Wales in the 2014 European Championships allowed John to provide debuts to many rising stars.

In terms of successes there was no better than the Bronze Medal achievement by the Wales under 19 'Nines' squad under the guidance of Jon Ellis at the inaugural Commonwealth Games pilot competition. This team was packed with players who can play at this level for another two years and offer us great optimism for the future. Similarly the South Wales Scorpions under 19 squad showed high levels of skill, pace and power in their fixture list by only losing on one occasion all season.

It was also encouraging to witness the success of the Maesteg AASE programme led by Jon Ellis and gratifying to watch our boys develop their rugby league skills alongside an educational programme in conjunction with Coleg y Cymoed.

Super League clubs Widnes and St Helens signed two players each from our Academy system. WRL also ran international teams at under 16 and 19 age groups.

Six players represented Wales in the European Championship from South Wales Scorpions and two from North Wales Crusader whilst 12 new caps were introduced to the senior Wales team.



Newly appointed Head Coach Latham Tawhai took the Wales Students to runners up in the British Student Championship and nine Wales players toured South Africa with the Great Britain Student Lions in 2014.

We had the pleasure to witness a Welsh Club side win the National Conference South with Valley Cougars becoming 2014 Champions. They will be joined in the 2015 competition by Torfaen Tigers and Gwendraeth Valley Raiders which considerably strengthens the quality of competition for our players in South Wales next season.

Bridgend Blue Bulls once again showed their Rugby League credentials by winning the Conference Cup and becoming Harry Jepson Trophy 2014 Semi Finalists.

In terms of the development of Rugby League in Wales, it was a pleasure for the WRL to take control of the South Wales Scorpions, at the commencement of the 2014 season. Mike Grady our head coach, would of course, have wished for more pre-season time but, thanks to the support of Paul Emanuelli, Phil Carleton, Ash Bateman and many other senior players plus the passion of administrators like Ian Golden, Gareth and Julie Laugharne, Ian Lovell, Stuart Hogg etc, we managed to pull together a competitive team. The culture and spirit that has evolved within this group has forged a sustainable, progressive pathway club for our highly successful youth development teams.

The South Wales Scorpions have elected a new board of directors (a subsidiary board reporting to WRL) chaired by WRL board member Ian Curzon that is supported by three members of the Mountain Ash committee and offers some real encouragement for future commercial and supporter growth.

In North Wales, head coach Clive Griffiths and the Crusaders faced a very difficult year after their promotion to the Championship. It was no surprise to witness the quality of opposition in this league but the amazing win at Halifax RLFC at the start of the campaign gave great optimism. Disappointingly this could not be replicated often enough as our boys faced powerful squads from eventual champions Leigh plus the likes of progressive and ambitious teams such as Featherstone, Sheffield Eagles etc and were forced in to submission and eventual relegation. The upside of this is of course the renewed rivalry between the Crusaders and Scorpions for the coming 2015 campaign.

Junior development in the north has been outstanding this year thanks to the work of Allen Jones and his volunteers. The north also led the way in the exciting sport that is Wheelchair Rugby League with Bob Wilson running a side at North Wales Crusaders and assisting in our Wheelchair international side – only the third year we've run a side in this sport.

There's a lot more that you can read about in these pages, but all in all, despite many challenges on and off the playing surface, 2014 proved to be another entertaining and productive year for Rugby League in Wales and I look forward with optimism and excitement to the coming season.

Cymru-Am-Byth,

Brian Juliff, Chairman, Wales

International Team Games and Results

Wales Senior Men's

2014 European Championships (Oct / Nov)

SCOTLAND 42 WALES 18 Att. 2036

FRANCE 42 WALES 22 Att. 5225

WALES 14 IRELAND 46 Att. 1293



Wales U19s Nines

Commonwealth Championships, Glasgow (June)

SCOTLAND 6 WALES 18

WALES 10 AUSTRALIA 34

WALES 34 JAMAICA 0

PAPUA NEW GUINEA 12 WALES 6 (Semi)

WALES 20 CANADA 8 (Bronze Medal Game)



Wales U18s

Junior Internationals (Oct / Nov)

ENGLISH LIONS 32 WALES 14 @Wigan

WALES 86 IRELAND 12 @ Wrexham



Wales U16s

Junior International (August)

WALES 18 ENGLAND 46 @ Mountain Ash

Wales Wheelchair

Four Nations Tournament, Medway (Sept)

Wales 10 Ireland 58

Wales 13 Scotland 34

England 80 Wales 6



New Wales Wheelchair Head Coach Alana Sargent

Wales Dragonhearts

Celtic Nations Cup (Aug)

SCOTLAND BRAVEHEARTS 18 WALES DRAGONHEARTS 16

WALES DRAGONHEARTS 22 IRELAND WOLFHOUSES 28

Wales Students

Home Nation Championships (April)

WALES 72 IRELAND 0

WALES 72 SCOTLAND 6

ENGLAND 32 WALES 20



9 Welsh Students went on tour with Great Britain to South Africa in 2014

Wales Rugby League ran 7 International Teams in 2014

Playing 8 Nations from across the World in 19 Games

Scotland x 5 Games

Ireland x 5

England x 4

France x 1

Australia x 1

Jamaica x 1

Papua New Guinea x 1

Canada x 1

WRL also travelled abroad and provided support to a further 3 nations in 2014: Denmark, Germany and Sierra Leone.

Including Wales, WRL directly engaged with 12 Nations from across the globe in 2014 to help support the growth of rugby league

Junior Pathway Teams

WRL ran two regional representative sides in 2014

WRL South Wales U19s Academy (May to August)

South Wales 54 Coventry Bears 6

Oxford 12 South Wales 52

South Wales 19 Gloucestershire All Golds 26

London Skolars 0 South Wales 40

South Wales 54 London Skolars 10

South Wales 38 Gloucestershire All Golds 32



17 year old Regan Grace signed for St Helens RLFC.

One of 8 players who signed professional from the U19s programme

WRL South Wales U16s Academy (Feb to July)

South Wales 6 Wakefield Trinity Wildcats 58

Sheffield Eagles 48 South Wales 12

South Wales 44 North East Thunder 30

South Wales 22 Widnes Vikings 42

Wigan Warriors 82 South Wales 4



Sian Pryce-Jones signed for Widnes Vikings.

One of two who signed professional from the U16s programme

WRL Cap Presentation at the Millennium Stadium Dec 2014



AASE

WRL concluded the “Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence” (AASE) programme in September 2014 with thanks to Maesteg Comprehensive School, Skillsactive, Wigan Warriors RLFC and Coleg y Cymoed.

Rugby League was one of four sports in Wales to run a pilot programme on behalf of Welsh Government and the 17 young players who took part had a thoroughly good time

Successful AASE Pilot for Wales Rugby League

Regan Grace signed for Super League
Champions St Helens RLFC.
1 of 7 AASE to sign professionally



2 went to play pro' in France



13 Played for Wales U19s against England and Ireland



6 Played for Wales U19s Nines Team
Winning Bronze Medal in the Commonwealth Champ's.
Played Jamaica, Scotland, Australia, Canada and
Papua New Guinea



Thank You Maesteg

The community of Maesteg were an integral part of Wales Rugby League in 2014 as the High School hosted the AASE programme and the local rugby club hosted the South Wales Scorpions RLFC.



Picture in Maesteg (left to right)
Wales Rugby League COO Chris Thair,
Wigan Warriors and Welsh International
player Rhodri Lloyd and Senior Teacher at
Maesteg Comprehensive School Stuart
Hogg.

Professional Clubs

The 2 clubs in Wales played 49 Professional Games in 2014

North Wales Crusaders RLFC

28 Professional Games

3 Attendances over 1100

44 Players Used

2 Welsh Internationals

A driving force behind the games growth in North Wales



New
Head
Coach

South Wales Scorpions RLFC

21 Professional Games

448 Highest Attendance

38 Players Used

6 Welsh Internationals

WRL owned and ran the club in 2014/15



The UK professional rugby league season kicked off in February 2015 and this involved 52 first generation welsh players across 8 clubs who have come through the WRL system.

The 2 Professional Clubs Remain Strategically Important to WRL as they:

- Improve depth and quality of players for the Wales International Squad
- Build the Sports Profile
- Assist Recruitment and Retention of Players in Community Game
- Act as in integral tier in the pathway system for welsh players and coaches
- Drive the Commercial Success of the Sport

Community Game

Bridgend Blue Bulls RLFC

Champions

Men's 2014 Welsh Conference



Valley Cougars RLFC

Champions

Men's Conference South League*

* The only Welsh team in the UK league



Cardiff Spartans RLFC
U14 Champions



Casnewydd Saints RLFC
U15 Champions

Flintshire Falcons U18s.
One of 62 Club Teams in 2014





WRL has set up new volunteer led Management Groups in 2014 to run the North Wales and South Wales conference leagues.

EMPOWERMENT

WRL, through the RLEF, has trained 2 new coaching tutors and 2 new match official tutors to help deliver courses and develop the domestic infrastructures

2013 & 2014 Trend Analysis

	Adult Players			Junior Players			Total Players			Clubs			Teams		
	2013	2014	Diff	2013	2014	Diff	2013	2014	Diff	2013	2014	Diff	2013	2014	Diff
SW Con	360	302	-58	597	248	-349	957	550	-407	23	14	-11	35	20	-15
NW Con	116	99	-17	208	274	+66	324	373	+49	5	6	+1	17	20	+3
FE&HE	144	124	-20	20	85	+65	164	209	+45	6	8	+2	7	9	+2
L' 4 All	30	29	-1	52	0	-52	82	29	-53	6	2	-4	10	2	-8
Tier 3	77	72	-5	0	0	0	77	72	-5	2	2	0	2	2	0
Pathway	28	32	+4	102	25	-77	130	57	-73	3	1	-2	6	2	-2
Int'nal	116	116	0	40	44	+4	156	160	+4				7	7	0
TOTAL	871	774	-97	1019	676	-343	1890	1450	-440	45	33	-14	84	62	-20

Following all the necessary austerity cuts to staff and programmes in 2013, participation levels dropped in the 2014 season by 440 players to 1450.

The above table shows registered players and does not include school participation levels

WRL engaged an additional 10,000 people in schools coaching and competition programmes in 2014.

Wales Rugby League supports and runs many school competitions which culminate in national finals from Y7 through to Yr 13.

14 Years of Amazing Growth in Wales

	Player Participation			Clubs		Domestic Club Competitions
	1 Session	6 Hrs	Club Member	Clubs	Teams	
2000	110	110	110	2	2	0
2014	10,500	6000	1450	33	62	2

WRL Operational Delivery

WRL delivers 27 Programmes and each one requires improvement. With less staff and more delivery in 2014/15 it was a very stretched year.

Whilst delivering all WRL programmes we took over a professional club, completed the AASE pilot, fought a legal case until May, conducted an independent financial review and run 13 representative teams.

		2013	2014
Community (15)	South Wales Men's Conference		
	South Wales Junior Conference		
	North Wales Men's Conference		
	North Wales Junior Conference		
	Bespoke Community Grants		
	Wales Dragonhearts		
	Match Official Courses / Societies		
	Wheelchair / Wales WC		
	Primary Schools		
	Secondary Schools		
	FE / HE		
	Wales Students		
	Street Rugby		
	Coaching & Safeguarding Courses		
	International Mentoring & Support		
Performance (8)	Wales U14s Regional x 2		
	South Wales Scholarship U16s		
	South Wales Academy U19s		
	AASE / BTEC		
	Wales U16s		
	Wales U18s / U19s		
	Wales Nines		
	South Wales Scorpions		
M Int	Wales Men		
Central	Commercial Events		
	Comm's: Website / Social Media / Press / Year Books / Monthly Mag'		
	Governance		

Key

	Listed Programme
	Delivered
	Not Delivered

Commercial

WRL signed the biggest commercial deal in its nine year history in October 2014 with My Club Betting which was launched during the international series.



WRL continued into a 3rd year with fantastic kit supplier Raging Bull



Communications

WRL continue to run their website, have over 6000 twitter followers and around 4000 likes on Facebook.

WRL also produce a monthly rugby league magazine for South Wales and an annual year book



All Wales Rugby League publications including their 32 page monthly magazine, Annual Year Book and international matchday programmes have a dedicated **Welsh language** page

Governance and Staffing

Wales Rugby League received a higher governance score from Sport Wales through their self assurance process and remained in the top grading category of green to reflect the National Governing Body continued progress in governance.



WRL launched two comprehensive papers in March 2015, the new national strategy and plan, to provide the sports direction and milestones through to 2019.

2014/15 will be the last full year operating under the old constitution as Wales Rugby League accepts a number of reforms and becomes a limited company.



Mark Jones, WRL National Development Manager, remains the only WRL fulltime employee and is the lead officer on all community matters.

Left: Mark Jones is pictured left delivering rugby league in Sierra Leone in 2014



Chris Thair, WRL Chief Operating Officer, remains on a 3 day a week contract and is the lead executive.

Left: Chris Thair is pictured second from right outside Sport Wales headquarters in 2014 after speaking to officials from Germany RL and Denmark RL Federations on governance in a mentoring event set up by the RLEF

Other central and community staff in 2014/15 include WRL Acting Junior Pathway Manager Jon Ellis (part time 20 Hours), WRL Media & Communications Manager Ian Golden (part time 10 hours per week), WRL Admin Officer Stephanie Hutchinson (part time 8 hours pw), Crusaders Community Coach Adam Daniels (WRL fund 8 hours pw) and WRL also part fund Allen Jones' full time rugby league community coach position in North Wales alongside other partners.

Volunteers remain the key ingredient to all the staffing that surround and support the teams of players. The work of volunteers is invaluable to Wales Rugby League

WALES RUGBY LEAGUE
YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2015
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 INCOME

	£
Community Courses	830
Community Wales Dragonhearts	4499
Community Gate Income	580
Community Wales Students	8840
Community Wales Wheelchair	4666
Sport Wales	54750
International Cap Charges	2364
Education (AASE)	66836
Junior Pathway Kit Orders	3545
RFL	141350
RLEF	14950
RLIF	27459
Interest	17
Sponsorship	12500
Internationals	4371
Other Revenue	13795
South Wales Scorpions RLFC	109147
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TOTAL INCOME	470,499

2. EXPENSES

	£
AASE Programme	44468
U14 to U18 Junior Pathway Delivery	19112
U14 to U18 Junior Pathway Kit Orders	22879
South Wales Scorpions RLFC	101539
Community Course Costs	1743
Community Delivery	2958
Community Match Officials	2662
Community Rep' Teams	11700
Community International Cap Costs	2234
Bank Charges, Audits and Accountancy	2928
Performance Men's International Team	55762
Event Delivery	2603
Governance and Services	4992
Meetings, It, Post and General Expenses	766
Staff & Consultants Central & Media Services	41500
Staff & Consultants Community	47498
Staff & Consultants Community Junior Pathway	16369
Travel	4132
Vehicles	13441
Depreciation	734
TOTAL EXPENSES	400,020
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	<u>70,479</u>

WALES RUGBY LEAGUE
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2015

FIXED ASSETS

Office equipment		734
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CURRENT ASSETS

Debtors	37500	
NW Crusaders	34500	
Accrued Income	0	
Stock	2081	
Cash at Bank	47457	<u>121538</u>
		122,272

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Creditors	24973	
Loans	0	
Accruals	20000	
Tax and Social Security	<u>-1123</u>	<u>43,850</u>

NET ASSETS

78422

REPRESENTED BY:

CAPITAL AND RESERVES

Balance brought forward	7943
Excess of Income over Expenditure in the year (Profit in Year)	70479
Carried Forward	78422

Commentary to the Accounts

The end of year position of seventy thousand pounds profit will mean Wales Rugby League will be in a far better position moving into 2015/16.

Whilst the financial recovery is complete there are lower income levels expected in 2015/16 from Sport Wales and the RFL. Such large fluctuations in annual income means Wales Rugby League remains in a status of change, which is challenging when trying to maintain continuity in programme delivery. A good financially prudent culture now exists across all the programmes and it is a credit to the staff and volunteers who lead these that we continually make best use of our limited resources to maximise output.

South Wales Scorpions remains standalone and no additional financial resources from WRL other than the time of the COO (which is considerable) are put into the club. Many programmes are now expected to be self sustaining and cost neutral to Wales Rugby League. Whatever they raise as income can be used to add value to that particular programme and it is important to note WRL wishes to make no profit from such programmes. These include South Wales Scorpions, Wales Wheelchair, Wales Dragonhearts and Wales Students etc.

The Sport Wales grant award of £54,750 assisted with offsetting the £105,367 direct staffing costs, £42,000 of U14-U18 junior pathway costs and £35,500 costs related to community delivery. Total costs £183,000. We continue to represent good value for money to Sport Wales as their investment is tripled. Sport Wales do not currently fund our elite performance programme and it is hoped this will change as the sport moves towards gaining a place in the 2017 Rugby League World Cup in Australia.

Company cars have been phased out of the organisation since 2013 and expenditure on vehicles will be far lower moving forward, if not zero, as we move towards having no company cars.

The high levels of income from the community representative sides and junior pathway regional teams is due to large kit orders from players. They take up the opportunity to buy discounted WRL merchandise through official partner Raging Bull however no profit is derived from this activity.

The balance sheet reflects a good position of having £122k of assets. This is broken down into £47.5k of cash in the bank, £2k of stock (Deeside weights, kit and equipment), two main debtors: £17.5k from the RFL and £20k from a sponsor (total £37.5k) and a repayment of £34,500 from the North Wales Crusaders

The £44k of liabilities is reflected in £25k of creditors which will all be dealt with in the first quarter of the new financial year. £10k of this figure includes the last of the inherited debts taken on when taking over the Scorpions, which is owed to Wigan Warriors from 2012&13 seasons relating to dual reg' and loan players. The £20k accrual is what WRL wish to reserve against the sponsorship debtor. The listed £1.1k is taken due to an overpayment to HMRC.

Much of the extra income for 2014/15 happened in the December to March period and therefore WRL had a very tight cashflow position throughout the first three quarters of the financial year. This was exasperated by the fact little funding was carried forward from the previous year and WRL had no cash reserves. Whilst the end of year position is good the financial management for first three quarters remained very difficult. Moving forward we are in a much better position!