Project and Budget Brief Sheet Season 2025-26

Portfolio Director	Tony Lenderyou
Person Running Project / Event	Alan Gardiner

Project / Event Descriptor (Aims / Targets)

Colts 7's County Cup

Aim - To develop a range of exciting and varied playing opportunities with the core focus on player development and retention in the game for these important transitional phase in the player rugby journey.

I am pleased to confirm the reinstatement of the Colts 7's County Cup which was last held in 2019. The 3 clubs that play in the Borders League (Alnwick, Morpeth and Tynedale) regularly take part in Borders 7's cup, with 7's having a rich heritage in the Scottish Borders.

There has been a very positive response to the return of this event by all 10 active Northumberland clubs which have entered:

- Alnwick
- Berwickshire
- Blyton (Blyth / Ashington)
- Gosforth
- Northern
- Novos
- Morpeth
- Percy Park
- Tynedale
- Whitley Bay Rockcliff

Location: Alnwick RFC
Date: Wednesday 17th September
Attendance: Squads of 12 = 120 Players

Pitch / Facility Hire		
Catering (@£6pp)	10 teams x 12 players per squad – 120 players 2x coaches per squad = 20 coaches 3 Referees + Physio = 4	£864
Referees (@£25 per referee)	Three referees	£75
Pitchside Physio Provision (County Physio @ £30 per hour)	One physio x 3 hours	£90
Trophy (Purchase)	(re purposing a trophy in kit room)	

Trophy (Engraving)		£25
Medals (@£1.75 each)		
League Winners - Presentations Evening	3 players and 1 coach x £10pp	£40
Total Costs to run event / project		£1,094

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Colts Club Festivals – Autumn Series

The Northumberland clubs colts group reported back at the end of last season the difficulty that they were experiencing in keeping all of the players in their squads fulfilled with playing opportunities due to gaps in the playing schedule of both North East and Borders Leagues along with some teams having large squads.

It has been agreed to run an Autumn series of two Club Development Festivals. Each session would start with joint training, position specific skills sessions etc. followed by a round robin festival format which may be in club teams or allocation of event teams. This is intended to be development focused and not result focused to allow players the opportunity to be exposed to different coaches, positions and to play with different players. We may look to bring in guest coaches (Falcons) local club senior team head coaches etc. if possible / available.

All 10 Northumberland teams are keen to be involved.

Largely self funded event.
Location: TBC x2
Date: TBC x2
Attendance: Squads of 23 average = 230 Players

Pitch / Facility Hire		
Catering (@£6pp)	Participating teams to be asked to make a voluntary contribution to host club catering costs.	NIL
Referees (@£25 per referee)	Three referees x 2 events	£150
Pitchside Physio Provision (County Physio @ £30 per hour)	Three hours x 2 events	£180
Trophy (Purchase)		
Trophy (Engraving)		
Medals (@£1.75 each)		
Total Costs to run event / project		£330

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Colts County Cup / Plate Competition (15's)

Always a popular event with clubs and this season all 10 active clubs in Northumberland will be participating. Last year we trailed running the plate and then the cup finals on different Wednesdays rather than one Sunday which always presented some difficulties with clubs preferring either a Saturday or Sunday fixture depending on which league they play in.

Location: TBC x2
Date: Plate Final - Wednesday 11th March
Cup Final - Wednesday 18th March

Pitch / Facility Hire		
Catering (@£6pp)	Each Final: 46 players (23 per team), 6 coaches (3 per squad) + team of three referees + physio = £336	£672
Referees (@£25 per referee)	Team of three for each final	£150
Pitchside Physio Provision (County Physio @ £30 per hour)	2 Finals x 3 hours	£180
Trophy (Purchase)		
Trophy (Engraving)	Two to engrave	£50
Medals (@£1.75 each)		
League Winners - Presentations Evening	Cup – 3 players and 1 coach @ £10pp Plate – 3 players and 1 coach @ £10pp	£80
Cup and Plate Winners Framed Photos (presented at Presentations Evening)	£50 per framed photo (losing teams will get their photos sent to club)	£100
Total Costs to run event / project		£1,232

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Colts Futures Festival (15's – U16's & U17's)

An innovative proposal specifically targeted to improve player retention in the game at this challenging transitional phase for players moving from U16's to Colts rugby. A pilot was towards the end of the 2023/24 season which was generally received as a great success. With a short lead time 120 players were involved and with the general enthusiasm and expressions of interest it was hoped to double the number of players during the 2024/25 season event. Unfortunately it was not possible to proceed to hold the event again due to safeguarding concerns expressed by RFU.

It is proposed to hold this event as a one off RFU project event to provide feedback as to organisational challenges and to the benefits of this type of approach. It can give great confidence to players ahead of the summer break as to what to expect from Colts rugby when they return only a few months later.

Clearly there are Safeguarding challenges which need to be addressed to ensure that players welfare are at the forefront and to ensure adequate risk assessment procedures are in place.

It is proposed to have a player authorisation for signed by parents / guardians once the players has been deemed physically capable by their club coach. And of course any player who is not entirely comfortable with this event does not have to take part.

County Physio and Referees would be in attendance to ensure the safe operation of the event.

Player enjoyment and retention in the sport are the principle aims and the event would be run as a friendly round robin of short games in which results would not be the focus.

Timing would be just before the Easter school break. Crucial in attracting U16's before they start exam prep.

It is planned to draw up a detailed proposal to seek RFU consent to run this event as a trial.

Pitch / Facility Hire		
Catering (@£6pp)	240 players – Food costs nil as aiming to arrange food vendors at the club.	
Referees (@£25 per referee)	Three referees	£75
Pitchside Physio Provision (County Physio @ £30 per hour)	Two Physios for three hours	£180

Trophy (Purchase)		
Trophy (Engraving)		
Medals (@£1.75 each)		
Miscellaneous	Player of the match T-shirt - £15 x 10 = £150	£150
Total Costs to run event / project		£405

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Colts Leagues Awards Night Invite (1x coach & 3x Players per team)

- Borders League Winners (x4 invites = £40)
- Borders Cup Winners (15's) (x4 invites = £40)
- Borders 7's Cup Winners (x4 invites = £40)
- North East Leagues x3 Winners (x12 invites = £120)

(Invites would only be sent to winners from Northumberland Clubs.)

County Cup / Plate and County 7's winners included above in event costs.

Pitch / Facility Hire		
Catering (@£6pp)		
Referees (@£25 per referee)		
Pitchside Physio Provision (County Physio @ £30 per hour)		
Trophy (Purchase)		
Trophy (Engraving)		
Medals (@£1.75 each)		
League Winners - Presentations Evening	Borders League Winners – 3 players and 1 coach @ £10pp Borders Cup Winners (15's) - 3 players and 1 coach @ £10pp Borders 7's Cup Winners - 3 players and 1 coach @ £10pp North East Leagues (x3 Leagues) - 3 players and 1 coach @ £10pp x3 leagues	£240
Total Costs to run event / project		£240

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Portfolio Director	~~Tony Lenderyou~~ Keith Atkinson
Person Running Project / Event	Alan Gardiner

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U21 – University / Club Development Festivals

A potential project that will require some work to develop in liaising with Universities (Newcastle and Northumbria) Clubs etc.

This is consistent with the aims of player retention within the game and aimed at providing both development and playing opportunities for younger adult players at University. The hope is that they will stay engaged with the game and may simply enjoy this offering and or hopefully play for our local clubs in Northumberland and or apply to join one of their university teams again.

Each season a significant number of freshers (age 18 / 19) attend University trials held in September and are not selected to join one of the University teams. In other words, young players that have some experience of school and club rugby and are minded to attend a trial are unsuccessful. This is where NRU could come in to help support our clubs and offer a format of rugby engagement over the season with 4 development festivals which could combine training and playing opportunities.

I suggest that an experienced working group / sub-committee is formed to explore this important area and see how stakeholders can be engaged and so offer an interesting format / event to engage these players who have, for now, not been taken up by their university team.

Budget would need to be developed based on referee and physio cover.
It is anticipated that local host clubs would rotate as venues.

Pitch / Facility Hire		
Catering (@£6pp)		
Referees (@£25 per referee)	3 per event x4 events	£300
Pitchside Physio Provision (County Physio @ £30 per hour)	4 events @ 2.5 hours each	£300
Trophy (Purchase)		
Trophy (Engraving)		
Medals (@£1.75 each)		
Total Costs to run event / project		£600