Age Grade Season Report

Overall a very successful season, Participation levels have remained fairly static which goes against the trend over previous seasons. Discipline incidents reported has dropped YOY and feedback has been generally good.

New Initiatives this season:

All age grade WhatsApp groups were brought into County control. This has improved information sharing dramatically and stopped the low level disturbances these groups were causing.

Silent Sunday. This has worked and gave the players an opportunity to be in charge of their own teams without the adults dictating. Some confusion over the name. Will change to Player led Sundays going forward.

Friday Night Lights: we had the 1st U16s Friday night lights at Percy Park, a huge success and we will increase these next season.

County Cups, we introduced forms to manage County Competitions and also made all 4 boys cups into Waterfalls. These were a huge success and very popular with host clubs and also teams.

Discipline: we led a strong campaign against touchline disturbances this has definitely been well received and successful, however complaints still come in and the general perception from clubs is that County do not take action. This really makes talking to coaches and clubs difficult. At the Forums it was very clear that issues still exist and Clubs expect County to deal faster with any issues and be more transparent.

I feel very strongly that Age Grade Discipline should work with both Safeguarding and also with the Age Grade Committee as a together approach will work. It may also be worth looking at getting someone from the age grade setup who knows the clubs and actually watches matches to be involved with age grade discipline.

Festivals: we increased the number of fun festivals this year and gave hosting to a wider range of clubs. These were all reported as very successful.

Committee: the Age Grade Committee was pretty much disbanded after a reluctance to get involved. Nicola has been superb all season and it ended up a 2 person committee supported by Claire which actually worked.

Andrew Neal, Chair Age Grade Rugby