



Annual General Meeting; Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
Whitchurch Rugby Club, Cardiff

## Report of the Hon Membership and Masterpoint Secretary

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have performed the role of Hon. Membership and Masterpoint Secretary for 3 years now. During this period there have been significant changes to the way Membership and Masterpoints are monitored and managed, mainly surrounding implementation of the online database and we still have more change to come. I am prepared to stand again for re-election at this AGM.

The following facts have been extracted from the database.

### Masterpoints

- There are 52 affiliated clubs of the WBU of which 49 issue Masterpoints)
- All clubs that issue Masterpoints at club sessions are now directly uploading those points
- All points are now directly registered for every member
- In 2014 a total of 3,542 events were uploaded generating 33,800 MP Certificates
- EBU Blue points are now being registered in the online database
- BCL now issue full value MP's for members and are directly uploading their points to the database
- MP cards have been withdrawn from use and paper certificates are no longer valid for registration
- All members can view their online account with up to the minute data at any time
- Ranking lists for all WBU members are published periodically online
- Affiliated clubs are sent a regular invoice/statement of points successfully uploaded

### Membership

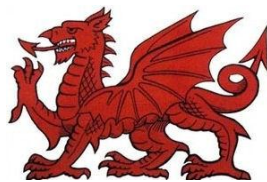
- Membership numbers have shown a slight decline in recent years (from 1722 in 2012 to 1658 in 2014)
- Renewals for 2015 are currently being processed (22 clubs are outstanding as at 28/05/15) with a 1<sup>st</sup> July deadline.
- There are approximately a dozen Direct Members each year
- With effect from 2016, clubs affiliated to the WBU will need to register ALL members of their clubs (a full member of any other Home Nation's NBO, may be excluded from this requirement)
- The WBU membership fee has not been increased for many years, (I am given to understand about 20 years!)
- Members should note that the £6.00 affiliation fee includes affiliation to the WBF and EBL

### Miscellaneous

- More than 50% of payments for Membership and Masterpoints are now made via internet banking
- Spin off benefits of the Online Database:
  - a) A Directory of Officials at Affiliated clubs is maintained and distributed regularly
  - b) Event organisers are able to access a listing of email addresses of WBU members to facilitate targeted emails for promotion of events and other relevant information

Signed: Capt. Phil Bowers





## **WELSH BRIDGE UNION**

### Individual Membership of the WBU at Affiliated Clubs

At a meeting of Council on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014, the above matter was discussed.

It was pointed out that paragraph 3.1 of the constitution requires that members of an affiliated club should be individual members of the WBU. However, over time, the wording of this paragraph has been misinterpreted by some clubs to mean that the club merely needs at least 8 of its club members to be individual WBU members in order to maintain their club affiliation.

The motion was proposed that the intended requirements of the constitution in paragraph 3.1 should be enforced, i.e. "that affiliated clubs should register ALL members at the club as WBU members with effect from the 2016 membership year". This motion was passed by an overwhelming majority of those present. A special meeting will be called to correct the ambiguity in the wording of the current Constitution of the WBU that allowed the anomaly in membership affiliations to develop.

#### Affiliated Club Survey

A short survey was sent to all club secretaries to establish how the matter of membership and affiliation is dealt with at our clubs. The results were somewhat surprising (from the 25 surveys returned) in that there is a noticeable difference in the treatment of membership between clubs in the North, from the rest of Wales. (i.e. Mid, East and West)

In North Wales, a significant number of club members were NOT individual members of the WBU. In the East and West, the vast majority of clubs ensure ALL their club members are individual members of the WBU. In Mid Wales there is an area policy that requires all members of an affiliated club to be individual members of the WBU.

In North Wales, annual membership fees for a club were reported as being minimal or zero. In the rest of Wales, the average annual membership fee for club membership varied but averaged around £10.00

In North Wales ALL clubs charge the WBU affiliation fee as an add-on to club membership. In the rest of Wales, the majority of clubs pay the WBU affiliation fee on behalf of their members out of the annual membership fee for the club.

#### Conclusion:-

Whilst it is accept that club finances are a matter for individual clubs to manage for themselves, it is clear from this survey that a more unified approach to the collection/payment of the WBU/Area Affiliation fees at affiliated clubs would be desirable.

From the data provided by clubs in the survey, it is clear that an annual membership fee at a club forms a small proportion of the annual revenue at a club (typically around 10%). If all clubs were to adopt the policy of paying the members WBU/Area affiliation directly from their collected annual membership fee for the club (as is the case for the majority of clubs in the Mid, East and Western areas) it would have minimal impact on the club finances. Clubs that currently make no charge for annual membership could introduce a small fee for ALL members to cover the cost of WBU/Area affiliation for it members. Of course in areas where there are several clubs in close proximity, there will be a certain number of members for whom a club does not need to pay because they will be registered by another club. Clubs should note that members of their club, who are registered members of another Home Nation's NBO, are exempt from registration of the WBU for normal club sessions. They can be registered as guests of the WBU and have their MP's from club sessions transferred to their NBO account under our reciprocity agreement.

An affiliation fee for a club based on the number of members that the club has, is the only fair way for the WBU to levy its affiliation fee. The registration of ALL of the clubs members should be seen as the clubs affiliation fee.

Perhaps I shouldn't say this, but, (and this is a personal view), I cannot really believe that there is such a fuss about a small annual payment to support the organisation that is essential to manage the game that we all love to play. After all, £6.00 per year is just the cost of one packet of fags or a glass of wine in a decent restaurant for goodness sake!!

I am often asked "what does the WBU do for me"? In answer to this, please see the attached document entitled "Membership Benefits".

