

The Official Magazine of Rugby League Cares

January 2017

ONE IN, ALL IN



explore.dream.discover



CRUISE
HOLIDAYS



BEACH
HOLIDAYS



SKI
HOLIDAYS



CITY
BREAKS



GROUP
FAMILY



STAG
& HEN



COMMUNITIES
& CLUBS



BUSINESS &
INCENTIVES



BIG GROUPS
HUGE %
DISCOUNTS

VISIT WWW.PURPLETRAVEL.CO.UK OR CALL US FREE 0800 40 800 80



elcome to the first edition of One In, All In, the new name for Rugby League Cares' new-look newsletter which has gone through something

of a transformation at the end of what has been another busy year for the charity.

As you can see, we have rebranded and changed the format so that our members and supporters can get a clearer understanding of the breadth of work we do throughout the sport.

In this edition we welcome a number of new partners who have recently joined the charity to assist our work, particularly the support we provide to former and current players in all levels of the game.

All Sport Insurance and Purple Travel have come on board as members of the newly-formed Rugby League Cares Business Club which aims to provide a wide range of services that help players, particularly in areas where the nature of their occupation can put them at a disadvantage.

2016 proved to be a challenging year for the charity as we continued to play an important role in assisting players successfully transitioning from the sport by awarding education and welfare grants.

We enjoyed a very successful partnership with Rugby AM and the Jane Tomlinson Appeal on the Ride to Rio challenge; and we secured grants from Curious Minds and Cape UK to support club foundations to deliver some life-affirming experiences for young people in their communities via a Cultural Partnership programme. This culminated in some terrific dance performances at major events during the year. Finally, we launched what I'm sure will be a flagship initiative for the whole sport - the National Rugby League Museum project.

The museum announcement followed an extensive and thorough consultation process which led to the forging of what is proving to be a strong partnership with Bradford City Council and we are very much looking forward to working with them in 2017 and beyond to secure support for what we are confident will be an amazing opportunity for the sport to celebrate its unique history.

As we continue to grow we have been considering the best possible structure for the charity and how this might look in the future. The aim is to create something that is optimal,

Welcome

which will deliver great outcomes for our beneficiaries and which is easy for the public to understand and support.

One of the key pieces of feedback we have received from the public is the need for clarity of understanding of what we do and why.

We are very lucky to receive amazing support from the Rugby League family, support which is vital to our work and, more importantly, those we are here to help. 2016 was a record year for donations and it is important to everyone concerned with the charity that people feel they can support us and know where that support goes.

Hopefully this new magazine will give you an insight into how people have helped us in 2016 and how you could play your part in 2017.

Finally, I hope you enjoy this new version of the newsletter and catching up about all our work. All that leaves me to say is thank you for your support in the last 12 months and here's to a successful, healthy and prosperous 2017 for everyone.

One in, all in!

Chris Rostron

Head of Rugby League Cares

We are very lucky to receive amazing support from the Rugby League family, support which is vital to our work and, more importantly, those we are here to help





About Rugby League Cares

Rugby League Cares is the sport's independent charity which works with stakeholders from across the game to provide current and former players with practical and financial assistance in areas such as education, training and welfare.

Working with club foundations, the charity also provides targeted health and wellbeing support to the sport's community, protects and nurtures the game's rich heritage and, through the RFL Benevolent Fund, supports players who have experienced life-changing injuries.

Grants to professional players for education or training are largely funded via the fines collected through the year from breaches of the RFL's Operational Rules by clubs and players.

To help fulfil its CSR role within the game, Rugby League Cares always welcomes donations no matter how big or small: to make a donation to Rugby League Cares please visit our Just Giving page, www.justgiving.com/rugbyleaguecares

For all enquiries, please email: info@rlcares.org.uk

One In, All In is produced and edited by John Ledger on behalf of Rugby League Cares. A huge thanks to all our contributors, including Gary Carter, Natasha Prout, Dave Woods and SWpix. Published by:

IGNITION
01347 821344

Printed by: **S&G Print Group**

Contents...

05

Fundraising news

From Big Ben to the Eiffel Tower

09

Sunnier horizons

How Purple Travel will help players

10

Feeding the grassroots

Community Game Raffle raises record sums

12

Suited and booted

Business leaders learn from sporting heroes

14

Question Time

RL Cares trustee Dave Woods on the charity, video refs and Ray French

16

In the Lions den

Heritage plans for tour stars reunion

19

Back from the brink

Gary Carter on how he cheated death

20

Transitioning from trouble

Ewan Dowes on life after Rugby League

22

Laying the foundations

How clubs are delivering at local level

26

Past, present and future

Former players sign up en bloc as RL Cares members

28

RFL Benevolent Fund

Support where it's needed most

30

Back to the future

The birth of the National Rugby League Museum project

32

Reaching out

How RL Cares is helping increase participation

38

It's a mystery

Calling all Rugby League detectives

40

Dance crazy

The youngsters who lit up the Four Nations

42

Unsung heroes

Recognition for our amazing volunteers

FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 1

Cross-Channel bike ride

Lifelong Leeds Rhinos fans Dean Bettinson and Kevin Walton experienced the best of times and, thankfully, none of the worst of times in June on an epic cycle ride on behalf of Rugby League Cares.

Dean and Kevin pedalled from London to Paris to raise a magnificent £1,500 for the charity and complete their own tale of two cities over four memorable days.

"We had a great time, although the last half day was a real killer because I ran out of energy very quickly," said Dean, whose Leeds-based security company UK Red sponsors the Fancam on Rugby AM.

"We could see the Eiffel Tower in the distance but it never seemed to get any nearer!

"We are both mad Rhinos fans and decided to do the ride on behalf of Rugby League Cares after chatting with Jamie Jones-Buchanan.

"The charity does some fantastic work in a sport that has given me and Kevin a lot of great memories down the years. The ride was our way of putting something back."



FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 2



Chris Hill and Paul Wellens receive a cheque for £3,000 for RL Cares from Lord Hoyle

Parliament raise £3,000 for RL Cares

Members of Parliament and peers put aside their political differences in November to raise £3,000 for Rugby League Cares at the Parliamentary Rugby League Group's annual dinner.

Staged in the historic setting of the Palace of Westminster, the dinner was hosted by the Group's President, Lord Hoyle, on the House of Lords terrace, and brought together members of both Houses of Parliament, Honorary Members, Associate Members, Group supporters and sponsors Kingstone Press and the RFL.

Celebrating its 28th year, the Group is a great supporter of RL Cares and comprises 70 members from both Houses and across all major parties.

Attendees took part in a silent auction and raffle during the course of the dinner to raise over £3,000 for RL Cares.

Group Chairman Greg Mulholland MP said: "Members of the Group are passionate about Rugby League, from the elite level to grassroots, and are delighted to be able to support the game wherever they can."

A cheque for £3,000 was received on behalf of RL Cares by guest speaker Paul Wellens, the former St Helens, England and Great Britain full-back, and England and Warrington prop Chris Hill.

FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 3**Kev's crossbar challenge**

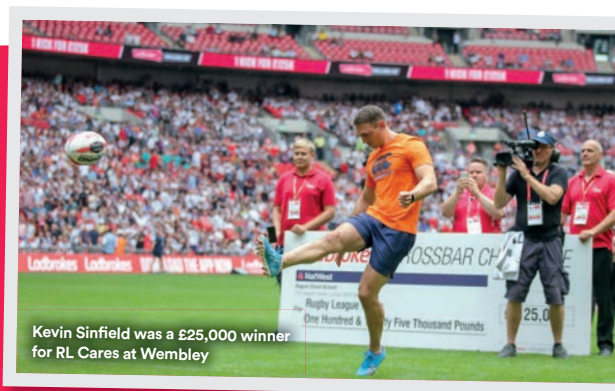
The generosity of Challenge Cup sponsors Ladbroke's ensured Hull FC and Castleford Academy weren't the only winners at Wembley in August.

While most attention focused on Hull FC's victory over Warrington Wolves in the final itself, and Castleford Academy's defeat of Brooksbank in the traditional Year 7 boys' curtain-raiser, Rugby League Cares came away from the sport's big day out with a lasting legacy.

Wembley featured a crossbar kicking challenge sponsored by Ladbroke's that saw Kevin Sinfield, the RFL's newly-appointed Rugby Director, attempt to win £125,000 for Rugby League Cares with a well-placed kick at the posts.

Although the ball sailed agonisingly close to the crossbar and just missed the target, Ladbroke's generously presented Rugby League Cares with a cheque for £25,000 as consolation to provide a massive boost to the charity's player welfare programme.

Chris Rostron, the Head of Rugby League Cares, said: "As the players' official charity, Rugby League Cares awards training and education grants to current players to help them prepare for life after rugby. This fantastic gesture by Ladbroke's will allow us to help more players gain the qualifications they need to make a success of their lives once their playing days are over. On behalf of the players I would like to thank Ladbroke's, and Kevin Sinfield, for supporting Rugby League Cares and the work we do."



Kevin Sinfield was a £25,000 winner for RL Cares at Wembley

Hundreds of players have already received help with fees for university courses, further education and vocational training from Rugby League Cares, including Motu Tony, Hull FC's Director of Football who graduated from the University of Huddersfield with a Masters degree in Business Administration two years ago.

"I'll always be grateful to Rugby League Cares for their help in enabling me to better myself by completing my Masters," said Tony.

"I left it late and applied for an education grant after I retired and whilst it wasn't easy balancing my work commitments with studying, it was manageable and I'm really pleased I did it. It's important for all players that they start thinking about what their next career move will be as early as possible: I would urge any player thinking about doing a course to get in touch with Rugby League Cares."

FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 4**On the whistle**

Rugby League's match officials get more than their fair share of criticism, but Rugby League Cares won't hear a word said against them after the men in the middle (and those on the touchlines) made a generous £350 donation to the charity.

The donation, which was boosted by £87.50 in gift aid, came from the proceeds of the raffle from their annual dinner held at Berties Banqueting Rooms in Elland.

Super League Referee of the Year Robert Hicks was not the only winner on the night, with Rugby League Cares gaining valuable resources to enable it to continue its sterling work.

"We have all been mightily impressed by the work that Rugby League Cares does and were delighted to make this donation to the charity," said Robert, who took charge of his first Super League Grand Final at Old Trafford in October.

**FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 5****Rangers raise £500**

Manchester Rangers made a generous £500 donation to Rugby League Cares after the club hosted the 2016 Conference Challenge Trophy final at its superbly-equipped Manchester Regional Arena.

The National Conference League knockout match saw Rochdale Mayfield defeat Hunslet Club Parkside 24-20 at the former Commonwealth Games warm-up venue and raise £1,000 for the Rangers.

"It was a great day and we were delighted to split the proceeds between the club's designated charity, Greater Sport, and Rugby League Cares which does such a fantastic job," said Manchester Rangers spokesman Phil Fitton.

FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 6

Matt King clocks up Great North Run hat-trick

Matt King OBE completed a brilliant hat-trick of Great North Runs in 2016 to raise almost £3,000 for Rugby League Cares.

Matt, who first did the Great North Run a decade ago and then again in 2007, was joined by a team of 10 to finish a gruelling half-marathon in sweltering conditions.

Chris Hawkins was one of just two runners to do the Ten Year Treble alongside Matt and said this year's run was easily the most uplifting.

"We had a fantastic time and the reception Matt got all along the route was just amazing," said Chris. "Before the race started the BBC showed a video film about how inspirational Matt has been and from the first metre to the last the crowd encouraged him with calls of 'Come on Matthew!' It was very humbling and gave us a big lift, especially later in the run."

Matt's team also featured Lizzie Jones, who only started training a few months beforehand, and a 53-year-old grandmother who had never run before until 12 weeks prior to raceday.

"The whole team were great and we can't thank them enough," added Chris, who hopes to do further fundraising ventures for Rugby League Cares in the future.

"It would be great to do the London Marathon with Matt but that's unlikely to happen now because the organisers won't accept our entry. We've done the New York marathon and three Great North Runs and London would make for a great set. Still, we'd certainly love to do something special on behalf of Rugby League Cares next year."

Matt was left paralysed from the neck down as a teenager while playing Rugby League for the London Broncos Academy after severing his spinal cord in a tackle.

Since then, with support from the RFL Benevolent Fund, he has gone on to achieve a first class honours degree in law, qualified as a lawyer, developed into an accomplished mouth artist and motivational speaker - and completed some amazing physical challenges.

There is still time to donate to Matt's Ten Year Treble - please visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tenyeartreble



FUNDRAISING: CASEFILE 7



On yer bike!

Their club may have come away without the sport's most coveted trophy but James Howes and Nathan March returned with special Wembley memories in August after completing a fantastic fundraising ride.

Nathan, who works for Barclays, and James, the sports and lifestyle manager with the Warrington Wolves Charitable Foundation, rode from The Halliwell Jones Stadium to Wembley in aid of the foundation and the Danny Jones Defibrillator Fund.

The dynamic duo completed the 220-mile ride in just two days and reached the national stadium in time to see Warrington take on eventual winners Hull FC in one of the most exciting Challenge Cup finals of recent years.

James and Nathan raised £3,000 in total, which was divided equally between the Wolves foundation and the defibrillator fund, which has close links with the club.

"Lizzie came along to the stadium at the start of the season to open our new sound system and spent a lot of time with some of the people who had raised money to purchase a second defibrillator for the stadium," said James.

"Lizzie handed out DJ badges to them all and made a big impression. As a way of saying thank you we decided to do what we could to raise money to buy another defibrillator through the Danny Jones fund for use by the local community. It was a great ride, but just a shame about the result on the pitch!"

TELL US YOUR FUNDRAISING STORIES!

Are you planning to go the extra mile for Rugby League Cares, the RFL Benevolent Fund or any of the sport's great charitable causes?

Maybe you've got a marathon bike ride lined up, are taking part in a fun run or are cajoling your friends into participating in some crazy stunts to enable us to continue our good work?

Whatever you are doing for Rugby League Cares in 2017, please let us know and we'll be happy to help raise awareness of your venture, and maybe include details in our next magazine. Tell us your fundraising stories by emailing info@rlcares.org.uk

RL Cares ambassador Anthony Mullally makes most of opportunities

At a time when Donald Trump has gone on to become the next President of the United States of America, a career in property development has never appeared to have so much opportunity.

However, Rugby League Cares ambassador Anthony Mullally insists his inspiration for investing in bricks and mortar has come from a more influential figure than the man with the world's most famous comb-over: his mum.

The Leeds Rhinos prop has been combining his playing career with some shrewd business dealings for a couple of years now and attributes his vision to advice from the most important woman in his life.

"My mum has always given me good advice and I already own a couple of properties. It's definitely something I'm looking to do full-time when my playing days are over," said the 25-year-old, who represented Ireland in the 2013 Rugby League World Cup.

"It's really important for players to think about life after rugby as early as they can. I



Anthony and Leeds team-mate Brett Ferres visited Little Lokos in York

remember a few years ago chatting to a team-mate who admitted that he had no idea what he wanted to do when he finished. He was 28 at the time and that shocked me. I decided then that I wouldn't be as clueless about my future by the time I got to his age.

"We get lots of good advice at Leeds from our player welfare manager Kylie (Leuluai, the former Rhinos prop) and most of the boys are aware of their options."

After completing his A-levels Mullally secured a place at university to do a sports science degree but instead chose to leave his hometown club Widnes Vikings to play in Australia.

"I went to Brisbane Broncos and played for their Under-20s team. It was a brilliant experience, second to none and I'm really pleased I did it," he said.

"A lot of the Broncos players were working part-time and the club made sure there were lots of opportunities to sort themselves out. The need to look at possible options away

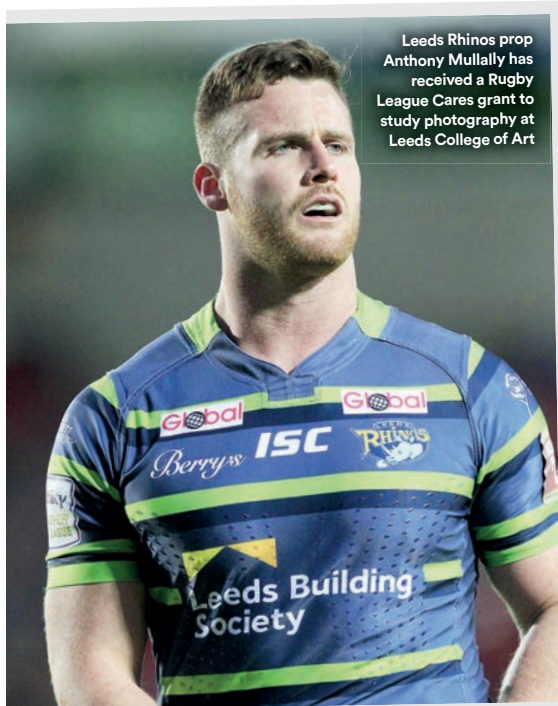
from rugby was drilled into them by the club and that's how it should be."

His time in Queensland helped Mullally realise that sports science was not for him but he has opted to return to study with support from a grant from Rugby League Cares.

"My passion outside rugby is photography and it would be great to forge some sort of career alongside my interests in property," he said. "A grant from Rugby League Cares has enabled me to enrol on a course at Leeds College of Art and I'm loving it."

"The charity does so much great work across the sport I feel privileged to be an ambassador. I visited the Little Lokos club in York, which was set up with help from a Rugby League Cares grant."

"Most of the kids hadn't played Rugby League before and it was brilliant to see how enthusiastic they were. It's really important that people continue to support Rugby League Cares, it's a fantastic charity and I can't praise them highly enough."



Leeds Rhinos prop Anthony Mullally has received a Rugby League Cares grant to study photography at Leeds College of Art

“

I remember a few years ago chatting to a team-mate who admitted that he had no idea what he wanted to do when he finished. He was 28 at the time and that shocked me. I decided then that I wouldn't be as clueless about my future



Purple Travel sign up as charity partner

Rugby League Cares' player welfare programme has gained an even sunnier outlook after the charity agreed a partnership with one of the UK's leading holiday specialists, Purple Travel.

The Sunderland-based online travel agency is the latest company to join the Rugby League Cares Business Club, which aims to provide a range of exclusive benefits and offers for the game's most important stakeholders, its players.

The RL Cares Business Club has already partnered with All Sport Insurance and AFEX as part of a player welfare programme designed to support and assist players in areas where the nature of their work can leave them at a disadvantage.

And now, having played, trained and worked hard all year, players don't have to try too hard to get the best deal for their holidays come the end of a long Rugby League season.

Purple Travel's specialist staff will use their expertise to put together tailor-made packages at the best possible prices for Rugby League players, who will also have

access to free upgrades, where available, on holidays from a wide range of operators.

Through the partnership, Purple Travel will support Rugby League Cares' player welfare programme, enabling the charity to continue providing training and education grants which allow players to plan for life after rugby when their playing careers come to an end.

Chris Rostron, the Head of Rugby League Cares, said: "I am delighted to welcome Purple Travel as the latest members of the Business Club, which is helping the charity fulfil its aims of supporting current and former Rugby League players. Our players and their families make huge sacrifices during the season and it is often difficult for them, due to their playing commitments and restrictions on the times they can travel, to find holidays that meet their needs.

"Purple Travel's expertise and best price guarantee means that wherever in the world players want to spend their hard-earned rest and relaxation time, they can do so safe in the knowledge that they have access to the best holidays at the best possible price."

Purple Travel Director Stavros Mavromatis said: "We are very excited to be working in



Purple Travel Director
Stavros Mavromatis

partnership with Rugby League Cares. We look forward to helping the charity's members, family and friends find the perfect holiday to relax, have fun or explore a new destination. We are also very proud to support the charity in all the work that it does for its members.

"Purple Travel's team prides itself on giving the best service and helping our customers tailor-make their holiday experience.

"No matter what type of holiday you are looking for, Purple Travel will offer support and expertise every step of the way!"





Community Game Raffle raises £50k

Rugby League's grassroots is looking healthier than ever before as 2017 approaches after receiving a £50,000 fundraising windfall courtesy of Rugby League Cares.

Clubs around the UK have benefited from the record-breaking cash injection after participating in the 2016 RL Cares Community Game Raffle, 100 per cent of the proceeds from which is reinvested into community and junior Rugby League.

Now in its ninth year, the 2016 raffle raised record amounts for the sport's grassroots after 50,000 tickets were sold by community clubs, junior clubs and other Rugby League groups and organisations.

Over 100 clubs have cashed in on the most successful raffle ever held to raise their own funds and contribute to Rugby League Cares, the charity which plays a key role in many areas of the sport, including player welfare, junior development and heritage.

For every £1 ticket sold clubs keep 70p, with 30p going to Rugby League Cares to fund projects like junior development grants (see page 17) to help clubs set up new Under-7s teams. The 2016 Rugby League Cares Community Game Raffle draw took place on Monday December 5 and was particularly well

The 2016 Rugby League Cares Community Game Raffle individual winners were:

| PRIZES: | WINNER (SELLING CLUB): |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1st prize: A trip to Australia for two people including tickets for England vs Australia in Melbourne in RLWC2017. | Jeff Ball (Cramlington Rockets) |
| 2nd prize: A £500 travel voucher from Travelleads. | V McGowan (Leyland Warriors) |
| 3rd prize: The ultimate Rugby League season ticket - two tickets to the SL Grand Final, Challenge Cup Final, Magic Weekend and Summer Bash. | Stewart Readhead (Nottingham Outlaws) |
| 4th prize: A day at the Races for four people. | Jack Humphries (Newsome Panthers) |
| 5th prize: A luxury hamper. | Malaikha Lloyd (England Students) |
| 6th prize: A technology bundle. | David Ditchfield (Woolston Rovers) |
| 7th prize: 2016 Four Nations RL match officials jersey signed by all participating match officials. | Garry Dunn (RAF RL) |
| 8th prize: Roger Millward and Mick Sullivan Celebration dinner brochure autographed by RL Hall of Fame members. | Johnny Roberts (Woolston Rovers) |
| 9th prize: A signed Catalans Dragons jersey. | Mrs M Brown (Upton) |
| 10th prize: A 2016 Australia-themed Four Nations ball. | Ian Turner (Hull Dockers) |
| 11th prize: A 2016 New Zealand-themed Four Nations ball. | Tom Davies (RAF RL) |
| 12th prize: A 2016 Scotland-themed Four Nations ball. | A Doig (GB Armed Forces RL) |
| 13th prize: An office chair. | John Summers (Rochdale Mayfield) |
| 14th prize: RAF Rugby League apparel. | Lee Halloes (Leyland Warriors) |
| 15th prize: RAF Rugby League apparel. | S Gregson (Hindley) |

received in the North East, where Jeff Ball was the lucky winner of the first prize, a trip for two to Australia next year, including tickets for England's Rugby League World Cup 2017 game against Australia in Melbourne.

Jeff is the chairman of Cramlington Rockets, who also became the biggest selling community club for the second consecutive year, and is delighted to be heading 'Down Under'.

"It's fantastic news, not least because I rarely win anything! I'm really looking forward to the game in Melbourne," said Jeff.

"I've acquired a few more 'best friends' since the draw when it emerged that I'd won a trip for two but I'll be accompanied by someone very special: my girlfriend Sarah. She's totally unaware of the win and I'm planning on breaking the news to her at Christmas. Hopefully she won't hear from anyone else before then!"

Cramlington are one of the game's most proactive community clubs and this year took their share of proceeds from Community Game Raffle ticket sales to over £3,700 after selling 2,779 tickets for the 2016 draw.

"The Community Game Raffle is an important source of funds for our club and it's great to raise money for ourselves and put something back into the game via Rugby League Cares," added Jeff.

"Many of our members give up their time to volunteer for RL Cares at major events like Magic Weekend and the Super League Grand Final and we're more than happy to help."

Other individual winners included V. McGowan (Leyland Warriors) who won a £500 travel voucher, and Stewart Redhead (Nottingham Outlaws) who won the ultimate Rugby League season ticket: two tickets to the Super League Grand Final, Ladbrokes Challenge Cup final, Magic Weekend and Summer Bash.

The draw was conducted by four Rugby League legends: RFL Rugby Director Kevin Sinfield MBE, two-time Super League Man of Steel Paul Sculthorpe MBE, England assistant coach Paul Anderson and Hull Kingston Rovers Football Manager Jamie Peacock MBE.

Jamie, the former Bradford, Leeds and England forward, who is a trustee of Rugby League Cares, said: "It's fantastic that so many clubs have participated in this year's Community Game Raffle and raised a record amount of money for areas of the sport where it does most good."

"I would like to congratulate all the winners and thank everyone who purchased tickets, the people who donated prizes and the amazing volunteers who folded 50,000 tickets for helping the 2016 Rugby League Cares Community Game Raffle become the most successful ever."

This year was the ninth Community Game Raffle which has now raised over £400,000, all of which has been invested into the sport's grassroots or Rugby League charitable projects.

RAF FUNDRAISERS JET INTO GRAND FINAL

The Royal Air Force Rugby League team - or at least six members - will be heading to Old Trafford in October to enjoy the 2017 Super League Grand final from the comfort of a hospitality box.

The RAF secured six of the best seats for the end-of-season title decider after being the club or group that sold the most tickets for the 2016 Rugby League Cares Community Game Raffle. The boys in blue sold a stunning 4,544 tickets as part of the sport's biggest fundraising initiative, raising almost £3,200 for their own team in the process, some of which will be used to help send serving personnel 'Down Under' for the Armed Forces RL World Cup in the autumn.

"We've got some big decisions to make about who gets to use the box but it will be put to good use!" said RAF Rugby League Director of Operations, Flt Sgt Ozzy Hicks.

"The Community Game Raffle is a brilliant initiative and we're delighted to do all we can to support it: next year we're definitely going to aim to sell more than 5,000 tickets."

The second biggest sellers were North East club Cramlington Rockets, who sold 2,779 tickets, including the one that secured the main prize of a trip for two to the 2017 Rugby League World Cup in Australia, won by their chairman Jeff Ball. The Rockets won £500 worth of Rhinos Rugby kit in recognition of their selling skills.

Upton from West Yorkshire won 25 tickets to Magic Weekend 2017 after selling 2,555 Community Game Raffle tickets, whilst Leyland Warriors from Lancashire will take to the field in 2017 wearing a fully bespoke kit supplied by BLK after selling 1,365 tickets.

Leyland's Under-13s coach Gary Hill said: "This is the third year running that we have been involved with the Community Game Raffle and once again it has proven to be very rewarding for us. The raffle is one of our biggest fundraisers as a club and over the past three years has seen us raise nearly £3,000 so we are very grateful to be able to

take part in such a well-organised event, and look forward to taking part again in 2017."

The full list of prize-winning clubs is:

- 1 RAF Rugby League**
(4,544 tickets sold)
Box for six at the 2017 Super League Grand Final
- 2 Cramlington Rockets** (2,779)
£500 of Rhinos RL kit
- 3 Upton** (2,555)
25 tickets to Magic Weekend 2017
- 4 Leyland Warriors** (1,365)
fully bespoke BLK kit
- 5 Stanningley** (1,201)
selection of signed memorabilia for fundraising
- 6 Crosfields** (1,178)
selection of signed memorabilia for fundraising
- 7 Nottingham Outlaws** (1,115)
25 tickets to 2017 Challenge Cup final
- 8 Woolston Rovers** (1,080)
25 tickets to 2017 Summer Bash

In addition, 10 clubs won lucky dip prizes for participating in the raffle: Telford Raiders, Halifax Wheelchair, Beverley, Sheffield University, Oulton Raiders, Hunslet Green, Derby City, Barrow Island, Blackpool Stanley and Leigh Miners Rangers.

The top selling schools were St Peter's Catholic High School (1,651 tickets sold) and Outwood Grange Academy (1,389), both of whom received prizes.

Rugby League Cares would like to thank BLK and Rhino Rugby for their support for the Community Game Raffle.



BUSINESS IN SPORT

IN ASSOCIATION WITH:

ALL **SPORT** INSURANCE

Business leaders from across the Northern Powerhouse region were given fascinating and valuable insights into what drives professional athletes and how best to manage and motivate them at a hugely successful event in Manchester.

The inaugural Rugby League Cares Business in Sport dinner featured a stellar line-up of speakers who entertained an appreciative audience which dug deep in the charity auction to help three fantastic causes.

Sponsored by All Sport Insurance, the dinner raised almost £10,000 for RL Cares, the RFL Benevolent Fund and the National Football Museum, which hosted an event that

is likely to become a regular feature in the RL Cares calendar.

The Master of Ceremonies for the night was BBC journalist and presenter Tanya Arnold, whose affable and relaxed manner put the four speakers at ease and allowed them to relate some compelling stories about their work.

First up was Wayne Bennett, the England Rugby League coach, who took time out from preparations for the opening Four Nations fixture against New Zealand to talk about what motivates him and how he has become one of Australia's most successful sports coaches.

Bennett said: "There are three elements to my coaching philosophy: keep it simple, care

about your players and make sure they enjoy what they're doing.

"It's important as a coach that I enjoy what I'm doing as a start: I'm better at things when I enjoy doing them and you have to assume that most people are too. You also need to have a good work ethic. You can't have fun without a good work ethic. It's good when players come off the training field having a laugh and joke enjoying each other's company.

"If I was running a business I'd want the same. People aren't good when they're under stress or insecure. That's just not an environment where people in any business can be their best. You have to care for the people you work with, whatever industry you're in. If



RFL Transitions Manager Paul Highton and guests



Head of Rugby League Cares Chris Rostron (second left) with Terry Flanagan and Geoff and Amy Derham from dinner sponsors All Sport Insurance



Former England captain Kevin Sinfield MBE told Tanya Arnold of the difficulties players face at the end of their careers

Sinfield emphasises RL players' transferrable skills

Kevin Sinfield MBE has urged the corporate world to enrich their business performance by recognising the skills and abilities that could come from recruiting Rugby League players.

The former Leeds Rhinos and England captain was one of the speakers at the Rugby League Cares Business in Sport dinner and believes his former team-mates have lots to offer in the workplace away from the rugby pitch.

Sinfield, 36, recently joined the Rugby Football League as Rugby Director after hanging up his boots and is one of the first generation of players to step into retirement having spent 20 years full-time with a Super League club.

you care you give them direction and a focus and the knowledge that you're always there for them. To care you have to have an interest in someone as a person, and not because of what their job or role is."

The importance of recognising players or staff as individuals first and foremost was echoed by Clarke Carlisle, a retired footballer and former chairman of the Professional Footballers Association who has been working with the Rugby Football League on its transition programme in recent months.

"It's incredible how sportsmen and women across all sports share the same thought processes and face so many of the same issues," said Carlisle.

"Everyone is aware that there is an issue with transition in football but we are past that stage. I am done with beating the awareness drum. We now need to start identifying solutions.

"Occasionally there are high profile stories on the front pages involving people like George Best and Paul Gascoigne but it's a fundamental problem that affects men and women in all sports. Knowing that you have to prepare for the transition from being a professional athlete at the end of your career is far removed from the actuality of what happens.

"Players go through a grieving process and people suffering from grief can be vulnerable. Instead of disaster recovery we need to focus on prevention, and that involves getting players to understand what they are as human beings not what they do as a job.

"Yes, their job is a passion but they are so much more than that. Without football I am no less of a father, no less of a husband, no less of a son and no less a member of society, but that's how I felt because my identity and the sport were inextricably linked.

"It's important for managers to think like Wayne has outlined: they need to focus on the person, not the job they do. A good manager spends time with his employees and gets to understand their normal behaviour. That way



England Rugby League's Wayne Bennett, host Tanya Arnold and ex-England striker Andrew Cole

you can spot fluctuations and understand when someone needs help. We need to educate other coaches and managers to do what comes naturally to Wayne Bennett."

Former Manchester United and England striker Andy Cole, who spent much of his career working under Sir Alex Ferguson at Old Trafford, spoke fondly of his memories of the most successful football manager of modern times.

"When I started out as an apprentice managers could and would say anything they wanted to the players and you just had to get on with it," said Cole.

"Alex was very different. He respected the players and the players respected him for it. From the day he joined the club until the day he left his manner with the players was fantastic. He pulled no punches sometimes but he was always honest. Listening to Wayne Bennett felt a lot like listening to Sir Alex."

The charity auction was conducted by Pete Emmett, in association with Frame Smart of Halifax.

The Head of Rugby League Cares, Chris Rostron, said: "We had huge expectations for the Business in Sport Dinner and the night surpassed everything we hoped for which is testimony to the calibre of all those involved.

"The speakers were superb, Tanya was an excellent host, Pete did a great job with the auction and the feedback from our guests has been universally positive.

"There are real synergies between the worlds of business and sport which aren't always obvious and I know from the messages we have received from guests since Tuesday that they found it very insightful.

"The night raised much-needed resources for three very important charities and we are very grateful to everyone who dug deep to help make it such a huge success."

"People who have been involved in professional sport always have great stories to tell," he said. "There's a massive crossover in transferable skills and abilities. Players have lots to offer the business world, certainly in difficult times. Players are accustomed to thinking and performing under pressure: as a player you deal with adversity more often than people in 'normal' jobs do and that forges in you an ability to make sound judgments.

"Most people in working life go through things like annual performance reviews but as a player you are judged on a weekly basis. You have to learn to take constructive criticism and improve week on week: who wouldn't want someone who comes from such an environment to be part of their business?

"Of course players reaching retirement will be short of experience of the business world but they learn quickly and companies have so much to gain by giving them opportunities."

Sinfield prepared for life after rugby by completing a degree and a Masters in Sports Business and he told the Business in Sport dinner how important it was for him to be able to study.

"You think you are ready to step into the big wide world when you get to the end of your career but it's never easy," he said.

"I was fortunate that I was able to study for two degrees because I was involved in a sport that allows you to, but it was tough. The welfare support offered to Rugby League players now by organisations like RL Cares and the RFL is pretty ground-breaking.

"It's been a great experience working at the RFL but it's very different to all I knew before. I've come from that dressing room environment where you can pretty much say what you want but not anymore! It's been a challenge but that's something I've embraced and something I'm sure every player will be prepared to do when they make their transition out of the game."

QUESTION TIME

with **Dave Woods...**

He is best known as the voice of Rugby League on BBC TV and radio, and Rugby League Cares is proud to count **Dave Woods** as one of its trustees. But what does being a trustee involve? Why does Dave Woods care about Rugby League? And what would he change about the sport, given the opportunity? In our exclusive interview, here is the world according to Woods:



Dave and his wife Julie Stott, the Daily Star's Rugby League correspondent

● **RLC:** When, and how did you become a trustee of Rugby League Cares?

○ **DW:** A couple of years ago. I was asked by Nigel Wood, the RFL chief executive, if it was something I'd be interested in doing and I jumped at the chance.

● **RLC:** How much did you know about the charity before you became a trustee?

○ **DW:** I didn't realise that a Rugby League charity with this breadth existed. RL Cares works very closely with the RFL Benevolent Fund, but also with lots of other RL-based charities like the Steve Prescott Foundation and State of Mind, as well as covering areas such as player and ex-player welfare, grassroots support and supporting the history and traditions of the game.

● **RLC:** What does being a trustee involve?

○ **DW:** Being a trustee means attending regular meetings, being kept in touch with the work that's being done or is in the pipeline, and offering our own insights and particular skills. The trustees have a broad range of experience from both within and outside the game.



Dave, pictured here on the television gantry with John Kear, is the voice of Rugby League on BBC TV and radio

● **RLC: Which aspect of the charity's work do you feel is most important?**

○ **DW:** They're all important, but I do particularly love the traditions of the game. So is RL Cares' role in keeping alive the history of the game and keeping ex-players very much involved in our sport is terrific.

● **RLC: How has Rugby League Cares changed during your time as a trustee?**

○ **DW:** I think it's matured as a charity. The early emphasis was on building membership from within the game and that's still important - because it gives us all a chance to belong to something we believe in. But now, thanks to the sterling work of Chris Rostron, RL Cares is getting more outside funding and grants, bringing new money in to help look after some important issues.



Green Vigo was an early hero of Dave Woods

● **RLC: What is your earliest Rugby League memory? And who was your Rugby League hero as a fan?**

○ **DW:** My dad took me to my first match when I was two-years-old, so I can't remember a time when Rugby League wasn't a part of my life. My earliest hero was Cliff Hill, then Green Vigo. In my early teens I idolised Dennis Boyd - hardest hitting tackler I've ever seen. Darren Lockyer is the ultimate hero - incredibly talented, world class as both full-back and stand-off, and he had the ability to produce a moment of unflustered



Cameron Smith is held in high regard

genius on so many occasions for club, state and country to turn lost causes into legendary victories. Favourite player to interview as a journalist is Cameron Smith, the current Aussie captain - always a gent, always interesting.

● **RLC: You are following in some distinguished footsteps as the voice of Rugby League on the BBC: how tough was it taking over from Ray French? And did you ever meet his predecessor, Eddie Waring?**

○ **DW:** It was very tough to take over from Frenchy because he was, and is, adored. He's one of the best people I know. But he is always generous with his advice as well, so I've learned lots from him. He knows everyone, the world over! And there is no better time spent than being in his company as he tells some of his tales. I never met Eddie. The nearest I came was being in a press room at the old Central Park many, many years ago and he walked through. I'd have loved to have known him.

● **RLC: If you could change one rule in Rugby League, what would it be?**

○ **DW:** Make the video ref available only for close calls in the corner to determine whether a foot or a hand has touched the line. Otherwise, it should only be available as a Captain's Call and each team has only one review per game.

● **RLC: If you could go back in time and commentate on one match from history, which would it be?**

○ **DW:** Probably the 1985 Challenge Cup Final - the best I've seen at Wembley. The two favourites that I have commentated on - both for BBC Radio - were Great Britain victories over the Aussies. The 1994 game at Wembley - Edwards sent-off, Davies flying in for one of the greatest-ever tries. And the 2006 win in Sydney - Willie Mason's punch, Sean Long's brilliance and so much more besides.

● **RLC: What do you think are the biggest issues facing the sport now?**

○ **DW:** Parochialism. There are bubbles of success throughout Rugby League land; a few clubs that are run very professionally and do very well. But to make a real impact on hearts and minds that aren't currently attached to our game, we have to think much bigger. For



Ray French - 'One of the best people I know'

instance, the clubs and the RFL need to take the marketing of the Challenge Cup much, much more seriously. It's the only competition currently on terrestrial TV giving a potential audience of millions a window to look in on our sport. When that audience does look in and sees half-empty stadiums they see us as a small, dying sport and are turned off. Clubs and the RFL are letting the sport down by not making the most of the big opportunities to sell our game to the biggest audience.

● **RLC: How important is the National Rugby League Museum going to be to the sport?**

○ **DW:** The National Museum will be fantastic. I was engaged in Rugby League by the stories my dad told about his heroes and their deeds - the Bostons, the Foxes, the Sullivans and their like. At our age we can now bask in the glorious nostalgia of what we've grown up watching. By having this museum we can capture all those tales of glory and greatness from every generation and preserve them for generations to come - sometimes through the physical evidence provided by old shirts, cups and medals, or sometimes just through the story-telling.

● **RLC: The museum aims to tell the story of Rugby League using the memories of fans: what is your favourite story from your involvement in the sport?**

○ **DW:** I'm not sure there is one story that tops any other, but could I make a suggestion for a display in the museum? An animatronic Ray French telling all his fantastic tales from the game - the matches he's played in or commentated on, the characters he's come across, the things he's seen. It would be a bit like the Abraham Lincoln animatronic in the Hall of Presidents at DisneyWorld. And you could sit there all day listening, always be amused, never get bored and never hear the same story twice.



Des Drummond, Henderson Gill and Paul Loughlin were among the Lions who came together to support England in the recent Four Nations



All our yesterdays: Mike Nicholas revisits some old memories with Lions colleagues at the 2016 Lions Association luncheon

Rugby League Lions to receive unique heritage numbers

It is one of the most famous names in world sport, a concept that dates back to 1910 and a brand which has embraced many of the greatest athletes ever to grace a rugby field.

Only those with special qualities get to play on the international stage: and there is nothing more special than being selected to represent your country in the southern hemisphere as a Rugby League Lion.

In January 2017, the importance of this noble band of brothers will be celebrated like never before when a ceremony takes place to present each Lion with his unique heritage number.

Working with Rugby League Cares, the Rugby League Lions Association has just completed the exhaustive process of researching the history of the brave men who have plied their trade in a Test series or international tournament 'Down Under' since the pioneering voyage of the original Lions 106 years ago.

Led by captain James Lomas and playing as England, the 1910 Lions defeated Australia 27-20 before a crowd of 42,000 in Sydney and then clinched the series and the Ashes with a 22-17 success in Brisbane, before drawing against a combined Australia-New Zealand team. That historic tour built on the foundations laid down by the visits to these shores of the New Zealand 'All Golds' in 1907

and the first Kangaroos the following year, and helped establish the sport that would become Rugby League as the dominant code in Australia.

Rugby League's southern hemisphere tourists are the original Lions, with the Great Britain Lions Association having formed on November 18, 1945 when 61 players met at Belle Vue, Manchester. It would be five more years before rugby union adopted the name.

In total, 582 players have represented England, Wales or Great Britain in

Test matches or international tournaments in the southern hemisphere since 1910, the most recent being the players who played for England in the 2014 Four Nations.

The first framed certificates bearing each player's unique heritage number will be presented to the tour heroes at the Rugby League Lions Association's annual luncheon at the Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford, on Saturday January 28.

Unnumbered Heritage Certificates will also be produced for each of the non-playing Lions members, including players who toured but were not selected to play, and coaching and backroom staff.

"The tradition of Rugby League Lions is one that threads its way throughout the

history of the sport and it is right and proper that the tour heroes are recognised in this way," said Rugby League Lions Association secretary John Ledger.

"The annual Lions luncheon is always a great occasion when tourists reunite to share stories and memories of their trips 'Down Under': all the Lions who attend the lunch will be presented with their framed unique heritage number. We hope to make the presentation an annual feature of the lunch with Lions who have previously

not been able to attend receiving their heritage number at the event.

"The Lions are numbered sequentially with Jim Lomas, the captain of the original Lions in 1910, listed at Number 1. It is also our intention, over time, to trace the families of lost Lions and present them with their heritage numbers."

Many Rugby League Lions attended the 2016 Four Nations fixtures as guests of the Rugby Football League, who have been very supportive of the Association.

Tickets for the Rugby League Lions Association annual lunch on Saturday January 28 cost £35 and can be purchased by contacting Katie Irwin at Rugby League Cares via info@rlcares.org.uk



RUGBY LEAGUE LIONS ASSOCIATION

Junior development grants

Rugby League Cares continues to play an important role in junior development at junior level with hundreds of youngsters getting their first taste of the sport in 2016 through support from the charity.

In the last six months of the year, Rugby League Cares awarded £500 grants to 13 clubs to help them establish new Under-7s teams and has received applications from many more clubs looking to start training for Under-7s in 2017. A host of other clubs which had received development grants in the early part of 2016 went on to achieve some success later in the year, including Barrow Island whose Under-7s players gained a new lease of life.

"Our Under-7s were playing small-sided games, mostly in the Under-8s league because there is no Under-7s league, but next year we will be attending, and hosting, more festivals that will allow Under-7s to play against children their own age," said Barrow Island's John Clegg. "The grant from Rugby League Cares has made a huge difference to our juniors."

Hunslet Warriors have seen their Under-7s team grow from five players to 15 since they received their grant from Rugby League Cares and are approaching next season in buoyant mood.

Hunslet Warriors secretary Steve Bisby said: "We have brought together a group of good, enthusiastic parents who have never been involved with Rugby League before and we are very excited with the progress the youngsters are making. As secretary and a coach I love it when new young children arrive at the club for the first year; it gives me a sense of achievement knowing we have a kit purchased with the help of Rugby League Cares for all of them to play in."

Orrell St James from Wigan have played 10 matches at Under-7 level since they were awarded a grant by the charity and have retained all 25 players for 2017. The club plans to use some of their grant to fund indoor



Hunslet Warriors have purchased a new kit with help from RL Cares

The funding support from Rugby League Cares has been invaluable in this activity and has led to us successfully completing twice-weekly training sessions for 15 enthusiastic Under-7s with the aim to run a competitive team in 2017

3G training through the winter to help keep the team together and prepare them for the season ahead - as well as have fun.

"We believe an indoor 3G solution (whilst expensive) represents an opportunity for the team to have fun, continue to build core skills whilst maintaining the ability to continue full contact and build resilience," said a club spokesman.

Featherstone Lions Under-7s used their £500 grant to purchase a new strip to replace old kit which had shirts and shorts missing and holes in the socks. The new kit helped the team grow to 21 registered players training once a week and playing small-sided games

against other teams on a Sunday morning. The Lions youngsters played almost 30 games and have retained almost all their players for 2017.

In April, Wibsey Warriors began a project interacting 10 local primary schools to deliver in-school coaching for pupils aged five to 11. The club also ran Saturday morning taster sessions for 10 weeks, prior to and after the school summer holidays, to give as many youngsters as possible the opportunity to participate.

"The funding support from Rugby League Cares has been invaluable in this activity and has led to us successfully completing twice-weekly training sessions for 15 enthusiastic Under-7s with the aim to run a competitive team in 2017," said Wibsey's Alan Redmonds.

The grants awarded in late 2016 were as follows:

- ☐ **Aspull** (Wigan)
- ☐ **Golborne Parkside** (Wigan)
- ☐ **Headingley Hawks** (Leeds)
- ☐ **Leigh Miners Rangers** (Leigh)
- ☐ **Newham Dockers** (Essex)
- ☐ **North Devon Raiders** (Barnstaple)
- ☐ **Stanningley** (Leeds)
- ☐ **Westhoughton** (Bolton)
- ☐ **Wibsey Warriors** (Bradford)
- ☐ **Wyke** (Bradford)
- ☐ **Marsh Hornets** (Cumbria)
- ☐ **Orrell St James** (Wigan)
- ☐ **Roose Pioneers** (Cumbria)



Featherstone Lions Under-7s have had a season to remember

RL Cares sees its stock soaring

Super League stars past and present were on the money to raise £10,000 for Rugby League Cares in a challenge with their counterparts from rugby union at the London HQ of currency trading company AFEX.

The players were also given a unique insight into new career opportunities outside the game as they tried their hand at buying and selling foreign currency on the international markets.

The players, who included Men of Steel Iestyn Harris and Paul Sculthorpe, Rugby League's most-capped international Adrian Morley and current players Richard Whiting, Jon Wilkin and Paul Clough, worked alongside AFEX traders on deals worth hundreds of thousands of pounds each.

The London-based company have strong links with both codes and have sponsored both St Helens and the World Club Series in recent years, as well as featuring among their management Tony Rea, the former London Broncos coach.

Rugby League won the inaugural trading day in 2015 but the union boys, who included former Harlequins and England international Ugo Monye and current Wasps player James Downey, snatched victory this year with the last trade of the day.

As well as raising money for charity, the trading day provided another opportunity to raise awareness of the work RL Cares is doing to help players prepare for life after rugby. The charity awards grants every year to players to subsidise the cost of training and education programmes that will open up new career avenues once they retire.



Rugby League stars past and present helped raise £10,000 for Rugby League Cares

St Helens captain Jon Wilkin said: "It was fantastic to get a flavour of a fast-paced international business like currency trading. There are lots of transferable skills between high level sport and business: as players we are used to analysis, self-development and people skills. Trading in currency is all about building relationships with clients and as we know, rugby equips you well to be able to get on with all sorts of people."

The experience proved to be especially insightful for Wilkin's former team-mate Paul Clough, the Huddersfield Giants-bound second row who is at an advanced stage in his preparations for a new post-rugby career.

"RL Cares provided me with a grant that will enable me to look after myself and my family once my playing days are over," said Clough.

"The grant removed a lot of the risk from the move into higher education. I've contributed to the course fees myself but it's nowhere near the £9,000 a year that many students

are facing. I've got my degree in Regulated Financial Services and I'm now doing my Masters, which will hopefully give me an edge when I hit the job market in a few years' time.

"I don't want to get to that point and people see me just as a rugby player: I'd rather they view me as a financial adviser who knows what he's talking about. That will only come with experience, which is why I do work in financial services on my days off. It's important to hit the ground running."

Chris Rostron, the Head of Rugby League Cares, said: "All the players who took part in the trading challenge had a terrific time and took away much from the experience, especially people like Paul who had expressed an interest in working in financial services. Rugby League players are by their very nature fiercely competitive, as we saw from the way they embraced the cut and thrust of the trading environment, and it was good to see them make the most of a valuable hands-on experience."

"Like all athletes, Rugby League players have short careers and there is a growing awareness among them of the need to examine new career options before they retire. However, the transition process is not always easy and that's where RL Cares comes in. Our partnership with AFEX is critical to our important work to help players prepare for life after rugby and we are hugely grateful for their support."



Ugo Monye and Paul Sculthorpe MBE captained the cross-code currency trading challenge at AFEX



Paul Clough and Danny Williams cut some important deals





What does Rugby League Cares do?

Gary Carter, the Rugby League correspondent for The Sun, outlines the role Rugby League Cares has played in his life since he was brutally assaulted a year ago...

Previously, there was one question that I never even attempted to answer: What does Rugby League Cares do? Simply put, I didn't have a clue. Well, I do now.

In November 2015, I was attacked while in London to cover the England v New Zealand international fixture at the Olympic Stadium.

One of the last things I did was send a report on Sam Burgess's return to Rugby League and South Sydney. The most important news in the game. Or so I thought.

Since then, the main story has been the Rugby League community's kindness and support as I fight back from some fairly severe injuries and illness. Not that I knew it at the time because I was in a coma, but I suffered a cardiac arrest and respiratory failure while in hospital. A brain injury after smashing your head on a kerbstone is a massive thing. Put simply, it was like starting all over again - at the age of 36.

Muscle wastage, six and a half stone of it, meant I have had to build up my body. Which was weird because I felt okay in the hospital bed. Having to learn how to walk and live again have been huge obstacles to overcome

and there are still a few to get over. Nerve bruising in my arms and a shoulder problem still have not completely gone away and these are things you cannot encourage or bring on.

Neither is the spirit in someone's heart and, when I think about it, Rugby League Cares' help has been vital in keeping that spirit alive. The fund set up to help me has been able to pay for a ramp and grabrails to be installed at my home, so I can get in. It also helped turn what was a common bathroom, with shower over a bath, into a wet room so I can at least have a shower and clean myself. It will also go towards the next stage; rehab at the BASIC centre in Salford, which specialises in therapy for people with brain or spinal injuries.

Standing on a treadmill in front of cinema screens, while hooked up to sensors so someone can monitor your muscle use, may sound very fancy. But like anything, these things cost and without Rugby League Cares' help, this would not even be a possibility. Now, though, it is and that possibility will become a reality soon as I go on the next stage of my recovery.

I recently spent an afternoon with the staff at RL Cares which highlighted to me the work

that goes on behind the scenes. Seeing staff and volunteers sat around a table folding tens of thousands of raffle tickets stubs - taking time out of their day - was a heart-warming experience. And like many things, the people paying for tickets probably thought it was nothing, the people folding those tickets probably thought it was nothing but it all adds up to something. Take it from someone who has felt the benefit of all those nothings adding up to something - it really does help.

All the cards and messages from Rugby League fans were a pillar of support during my time in hospital and to the fans of different clubs who probably thought they were doing nothing by coming up and saying hello to me - well, it was a lot more than nothing and you put a smile on my face.

So, thank you to everyone at Rugby League Cares for everything they have done and will continue to do for other people in the future.

What may seem like nothing at the time - paying for a raffle ticket - really does add up to something that can make such a difference to someone's life.

Now if anyone asks in future 'What does Rugby League Cares do?' there is your answer.

Dowes finds feet after RL Cares grant

Natasha Prout meets former Leeds Rhinos, Hull FC and England prop **Ewan Dowes** and hears how retirement has given him a new lease of life...

It's the inevitable part of every career that incites a certain level of concern for all Rugby League players: retirement, and what comes next.

For some, the thought of venturing into a post-Rugby League world is daunting and a bridge best avoided until the time comes to cross it.

That was the case for Ewan Dowes, whose hugely successful 13-year career came to an end in 2014, three years after he completed his almost decade-long stint in the black and white of Hull FC. Two years on, Ewan is now enjoying success in the financial world but he admits that his transition has not been without its challenges.

"I actually had a plan for my post-rugby career that I thought would work out fine," he recalls. "I started a Sports Science degree at Manchester Metropolitan University in 2008 and completed my first year with no problems."

Halfway through his second year, however, obstacles began to appear. With no contract renewal from Hull FC, Ewan very suddenly went from earning a steady wage to nothing at all, and was unable to afford the remainder of his tuition fees.

"I know for a fact that things have now moved on, but there was nothing in terms of support at the time," he said. "I got a letter from the club essentially thanking me for my services and wishing me luck for the future, but I was very much left to fend for myself. It was up to me to make things happen."

With no clear direction ahead, Ewan and his wife Amy moved to Australia where he played a season of lower-tier rugby for the Illawarra Cutters and Thirroul Butchers. Financial and employment worries meant the family would have to move back home after just a year, though, despite enjoying their new life 'Down Under'.

"It delayed the inevitable really, but I wouldn't change it. The standard of rugby's really high; it was quite refreshing," added Ewan. "When I got back from Australia, I had to start thinking about my next move pretty quickly."

On his return to England, Ewan's son was barely two-weeks-old, meaning his priorities took a drastic change. The family moved back into Ewan's parents' home in Cumbria, as finances came under strain and focus shifted to providing for his new family.

"It was a tough decision to make but it allowed me to get my feet back on the ground and gave me time to explore. I got a job in sales and insurance which got me into a position where I could move my family into our own house in the area whilst I finished my part-time contract with Workington Town, then later that allowed us to move back to Leeds," he explained.

For Ewan, however, the line of work he was going down didn't offer enough progression, and after a short period of time he began looking for other things.

With a little luck, and even better timing, he soon found the opportunity he was hoping for. "I sat down with a partner of St James's Place Wealth Management, to speak about my mortgage really," he said. "He ended up telling me about their academy for non-industry professionals and what's offered there. It just seemed like a great fit. It's a two-year programme and you get your qualifications six or seven months in. After that, you're ready to do business with all the necessary support offered to you."

Prior to becoming a partner with St James's, Ewan was able to gain the necessary entry-level qualifications with the help of Rugby League Cares.

"The charity funded the initial costs of the qualifications with a grant. It was a massive help, because I wasn't really in a position to fork out that kind of money," he said. "The grant allowed me to worry less about putting food on the table for my family and gave me a chance to focus as much as I could on the future. My number one priority at the time was getting qualified as quickly as possible, and the help from RL Cares meant I could do that with minimal fuss."

After successfully gaining the qualifications he needed, Ewan quickly settled into the business mindset and found that his rugby life proved more helpful than he might have thought.

"There's definitely a lot of transferable skills from sport to business; I see that when I speak to players now," he states. "Obviously I was very driven when I played and I always wanted to be the best I could be, which is what I'm doing now with my business. It's all about improving and moving up."

That drive, alongside his self-motivation and unrivalled resilience, made him a valuable

commodity for his employer. The skills he'd taken from his rugby playing days provided a solid foundation from which he could advance his career, which is a trait Ewan thinks more players should take advantage of.

"Sports people may not be the most qualified in the world, but as a shell they're people who can be trained and moulded into a fantastic employee," he said.

For Ewan, success after rugby has come from finding a career he genuinely enjoys, which is a tip he'd give to those nearing the end of their rugby journey.

"With St James's Place, it was something I was really interested in and enjoyed so I found the learning part easy," he said. "I took an active interest in it and I knew at the end of the programme I'd be in a really strong position to do this as a profession."

"I think players should explore different professions and industries whilst they're still in the sport so they can get a feel of the road they want to go down. It seems like a lot of former players rush themselves into something they don't want to be doing long term; they're just doing it as a necessity to pay off the bills. If they start planning throughout their career and find something they're passionate about, it makes that transition a lot smoother."

Ewan does, however, express his own regrets towards not reassessing his career options sooner once his initial plans to complete a degree fell through.

"I ask myself when I would've started, and with hindsight it would have been a lot sooner," he said. "I think in your early-20s, when you get your first full-time deal, is the time to start planning seriously. You're getting all this money, and a lot of the time not thinking about what you need to put it towards and when it might be best saved until."

Looking to the future, Ewan hopes to utilise his new career to help young up-and-coming players avoid the situation he found himself in.

"I'm planning on working with the scholarship-aged kids in Academies. I want to educate them on their finances and financial planning, just to get them into good habits and disciplines in preparation for when they're earning," he said.

"It's never something I thought about during my 15-year career in rugby, but I love being able to help like this. It's something I can see myself doing for the rest of my working life."

Ewan Dowes is now enjoying success in the financial world after help from a RL Cares grant (and inset during his playing career for Hull FC, Leeds Rhinos and England)



I was very driven when I played and I always wanted to be the best I could be, which is what I'm doing now with my business. It's all about improving and moving up



VIKINGS SCOOP FOUNDATION AWARD



Widnes Vikings were named Super League Foundation of the Year at the Steve Prescott Man of Steel dinner in October, an award which

recognises the high quality and sheer volume of work undertaken by the club's dedicated community team.

The Vikings Sports Foundation is delivering 31 projects across Halton, South Liverpool and the Cheshire region and has enriched the lives of thousands of people through the power of sport over the last 12 months.

With eight full-time members of staff, supported by volunteers, the foundation has established a proven track record in making a positive difference in its local community, as have many other foundations at Super League and Championship clubs.

For Richard Munson, the Vikings' Community Integrated Director, the award is acknowledgement of the dedication of his own team and that of everyone at a club which holds a special place at the heart of its community.

"It really is an achievement to get this recognition as there is some brilliant work going on in Rugby League foundations right across the country. I would like to thank the RFL and Rugby League Cares for their support," said Munson.

"I am consciously aware of the support our community work receives from all departments within the club and feel that this is a 'whole club' award as everyone has supported our vision in different ways.



Widnes Vikings' Community Integrated Director Richard Munson receives the Foundation of the Year award at the 2016 Man of Steel dinner



There is some fantastic, innovative work taking place, not just by the Vikings Sports Foundation but by club foundations at many Rugby League clubs. The foundations' relationship with Rugby League Cares is massively important because it allows us to do what we do so well

A great example of our 'One Club' culture is the way our coaches and players engage in our programmes and I would like to thank in particular Denis Betts who has supported our work, from providing us with access to the players through to actually presenting to partners on our behalf."

The relationship between Rugby League Cares and the club foundations is becoming increasingly important in the delivery of cultural, health and welfare projects.

The special status they have within their own communities, together with the unique local knowledge they possess, make club foundations the perfect vehicle for third party agencies to use as a means of addressing social issues and reaching isolated sections of society.

"In a town like Widnes the work we do is really important," explained Munson. "The club is the focal point of the local community, whether that be the stadium and its facilities or the players. Sport is a great way to inspire people: it can change lives in a positive and lasting way. We take that inspiration and deliver it in a positive way through a range of projects using our understanding of how as a club we can best support local people.

"Like a lot of towns, Widnes has issues with educational attainment and social inequality. Tackling those issues is rarely easy but by working with statutory partners we are able to deliver projects that enable and empower local people."

Those projects include the club's innovative work with people suffering from dementia to inspiring young people to live healthy and active lives by playing sport, and harnessing the influence of senior players to encourage boys to read more and gain improved literacy.

The Widnes, Warrington Wolves and Salford Red Devils foundations are all working on successful Big Lottery projects helped by Government funding secured by Rugby League Cares and provided by Curious Minds, a bridge organisation which strives to improve the lives of children and young people through great art and culture.

"Curious Minds provide expertise around arts awards and dance programmes but the work is driven by the club foundations who determine how best to engage with local people," said Munson.

"There is some fantastic, innovative work taking place, not just by the Vikings Sports Foundation but by club foundations at many Rugby League clubs. The foundations' relationship with Rugby League Cares is massively important because it allows us to do what we do so well."



Widnes first-team player Jack Buchanan and 86-year-old dementia sufferer Fred Allen met as part of the Vikings' foundation and CIC partnership



WHEN JACK MET FRED...

The innovative way in which Widnes Vikings are engaging with their local community is no better highlighted than in the successful partnership with a national charity that delivers life-enhancing support to people with special needs.

Working with Community Integrated Care (CIC), the Vikings Foundation have delivered projects promoting the health, happiness, wellbeing and inclusion of people with learning disabilities, mental health concerns, autism and dementia.

"We have supported thousands of people for three decades, enabling them to lead full and happy lives, but throughout our history we have never had a partner as ambitious and committed as the Vikings Sports Foundation," said CIC spokesman John Hughes.

"They have delivered life-changing support to our charity and the people we care for, and are a credit to their community and their sport. Week in, week out, this partnership delivers brilliant things. For two hours a week, people we support are enabled by the club to find the joy of participating in sport. The foundation overcomes any barrier that their disability or condition may create, to make the sessions accessible to all.

"The Vikings visit our dementia care homes weekly for activity and reminiscence sessions, and are engaging club legends and fans in also supporting the homes. There are few things more powerful than seeing the joy of a fan who hasn't been able to play rugby for decades enjoy passing a ball with someone wearing the famous Vikings kit, or people suddenly spark memories of cheering on their heroes at Naughton Park.

"Our Chemics Café sees us reach out to people with dementia and their loved ones each month. We give people who live with dementia in care homes and in the community a special day - meeting their rugby heroes, enjoying adapted exercise sessions and finding important advice on living well with dementia. Our staff - often people with stressful and intensive roles - have enjoyed getting fit and having fun with weekly sports sessions with the club."

The foundation has made a massive difference to the lives of many people, young and old alike, including 86-year-old Fred Allen, a resident at the St Luke's specialist dementia care and nursing home.

Mr Allen has supported the Vikings for 80 years but as his dementia developed, he lost touch with the club he loves until the intervention of the Vikings Sports Foundation. Every week Mr Allen meets the Vikings community coaches and legends at his home, for activity and reminiscence sessions. He is also a regular visitor to the Chemics Café, where he has struck up a special friendship with Widnes first-team player Jack Buchanan. When Mr Allen watched the team beat Catalans Dragons last season - his first live game in years - Jack recognised him and sprinted from the pitch to celebrate with him, creating special new memories for both men.

CASEFILE

RL CARES AWARDS



Widnes player Gil Dudson has been a regular visitor to the St Luke's Care Home with the Vikings Sports Foundation



he important role Rugby League clubs play in their communities is immeasurable. For many towns and cities, our clubs continue to provide a focal point for local pride and passion in many walks of life, not just through the performances of their sporting heroes on the field of play.

At every professional club, charitable foundations work alongside their colleagues in rugby and coaching departments to deliver significant benefits to their communities.

And as the umbrella charity for the benevolent work that takes place throughout the game, Rugby League Cares works closely with club foundations, channelling funding and expertise to allow them to deliver high quality services at a local level.

Club foundations focus on five key areas of activity - education, health, sport, heritage and social inclusion.

The volume and breadth of work they do is incredible, and much of it goes largely unsung, if not unrecognised by the wider game. Which is where the Rugby League Cares Awards come in.

The Rugby League Cares awards celebrate the work of the club foundations and acknowledge the positive and often life-changing impact they have on tens of thousands of people.

This year's awards were made at a ceremony in Manchester in November when representatives from across the game came together for a special night of celebration.

Awards were presented in five categories: Education Project of the Year, Health Project of the Year, Sport Project of the Year, Heritage Project of the Year and Best Mascot 2016. No specific award is offered for social inclusion as this overlaps with most activities.



Pupils from Tweendykes School have been regular visitors to Hull KR's stadium

★ EDUCATION PROJECT OF 2016:



HULL KR COMMUNITY TRUST

Hull Kingston Rovers have been working with Tweendykes Special School since 2007 when the club's coaches began delivering after-school activities to pupils aged between three and 19 who have severe learning difficulties and physical disabilities.

Over the last nine years the Rovers Community Trust has worked with over 300 youngsters and developed strong links with Tweendykes, which in 2011 relocated to a building within Winifred Holtby Secondary School.

For the past four years the Trust has delivered weekly physical education lessons focusing on skills and small-sided games from numerous sports, including rugby, football, cricket and rounders.

The impact of these games has been remarkable: pupils have experienced improved coordination, confidence and been able to work as a team.

A major part of the sessions has been to get pupils active - people with physical disabilities often do little exercise and tire easily but all the youngsters involved have seen their stamina and fitness improve.

The Hull KR Community Trust has also delivered a vocational education programme to pupils aged between 14 and 16. The programme supports the pupils' school studies and increases employment options post-school by helping learners with CVs, job application forms and health and safety at work procedures.

The foundation has also delivered road safety courses at Tweendykes, making a huge difference to the lives of some of the community's most vulnerable young people.

★ HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Salford Red Devils Foundation and Leigh Community Trust for the positive impact they have made on the lives of young people.

★ HEALTH PROJECT OF 2016:



VIKINGS SPORTS FOUNDATION

Widnes Vikings' project with national health and social care charity 'Community Integrated Care' (CIC) utilises every facet that sets Rugby League apart from other sports: extensive player engagement and the club's and sport's heritage, set within quality initiatives that have people at their heart.

CIC specialise in supporting adults with a range of needs, including learning disabilities, autism, mental health and dementia. The foundation's partnership with the charity involves a weekly programme of activities for their service users, families and own staff.

These include:

- * Two 45-minute inclusive sport and physical activity sessions delivered from the stadium each week for adults with learning disabilities based within CIC's two care homes and supported living accommodation;
- * Delivery of a 45-minute reminiscence session at two care homes in the town;
- * Delivery of a one-hour fitness and touch rugby session for CIC staff at the stadium;
- * Delivery of a monthly 'Chemicals Cafe' dementia reminiscence event for people with dementia involving ex-players, stadium tours, and low level physical activity.

★ HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Rochdale Hornets Foundation for their 'Fit Schools Programme' involving 2,000 children; and Warrington Wolves Foundation for their 'Fit to Tackle' programme which has seen 250 people shed a combined total of 300 stones in weight since 2015.



Memories club: Ray Abbey, Steve Lee, Barry Lee and Denis Hartley revisit their past with Hunslet



Golden oldies - Geoff Gunney, Alf 'Ginger' Burnell and the late Frank Watson enjoyed each other's company at the Hunslet Memories Club

★ SPORT PROJECT OF 2016:



HULL KR COMMUNITY TRUST

Hull KR were approached in May by Humber and Wolds Prison to coach some of their staff and inmates. After extensive risk assessments and safeguarding evaluations, the Community Trust agreed to deliver the project which has gone on to achieve remarkable success.

The prisoners involved were in a transition phase on the build up to being released and took part in a series of workshops to support their rehabilitation.

Four coaches supported the two-week programme and delivered coaching in Rugby League, physical fitness and nutrition. Some of the inmates had previously played at community level and were former team-mates of a couple of the coaches, which went a long way to breaking down barriers and building up trust.

The Trust worked with 30 prisoners and a number of staff, delivering rugby skills training, healthy nutrition advice and muscle work. Everyone who took part was fully engaged and the feedback was outstanding.

The project also proved to be a great development opportunity for the Trust's coaches, who learned much from working in an environment that was very much out of their comfort zone. One of the coaches commented that it had completely changed his views and perceptions about prisoners in a positive and non-judgmental way.

★ HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Warrington Wolves Foundation for the huge numbers of people they engage with, Rochdale Hornets Foundation for their wheelchair rugby project, and Wakefield Trinity for their outstanding Sky Try programme.

★ HERITAGE PROJECT OF 2016:



HUNSLET COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Hunslet Community Foundation won this award for their Hunslet Memories Club programme.

The club is a dementia-friendly meeting which takes place once a month in a local listed pub, which has two Hunslet RLFC Heritage rooms, offering a safe environment for ex-players, officials and fans of the club to meet, have a drink, a free lunch and talk about anything they like.

Members of the group bring memorabilia and old photographs to stir memories and bring out calls of "Do you remember when..."

Former players and Rugby League personalities make regular appearances at the club, which has proved to be an uplifting experience for many people who had been suffering social isolation.

The popularity of the Memories Club has led to an expanding heritage programme: the creation of a breakfast club once a month which provides another social hub, a Hall of Fame and the development of an oral histories record in partnership with South Leeds Academy to create an inter-generational bridge between the past and the present day.

★ HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Bradford Bulls for an arts project which inspired children to learn about the heritage of Bradford Northern and the experiences of the Bradford squad in the First World War.

★ MASCOT OF 2016:

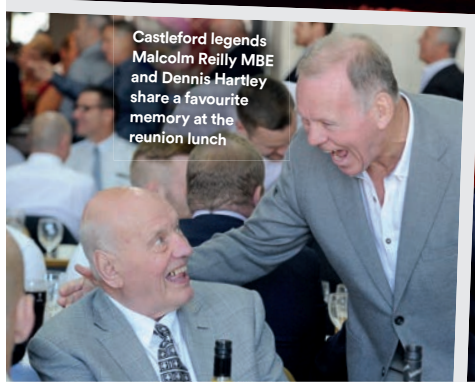


CASTLEFORD TIGERS

The Mascot of the Year was decided by an online public vote run by Rugby AM and was won by Junior Tiger, aka 'JT', who secured almost 30 per cent of votes.



'JT' of Castleford Tigers was awarded the 'Mascot of 2016' accolade



Castleford legends Malcolm Reilly MBE and Dennis Hartley share a favourite memory at the reunion lunch



MC John Kendrew and Colin Maskill encourage the Castleford past players to sign up as RL Cares members



Castleford past players Barry Johnson, Colin Maskill and Alan Hardisty with a cheque for £800 for RL Cares

Castleford Tigers Past Players Association get behind RL Cares

The important work Rugby League Cares does in support of the sport's former heroes has gained important recognition from one of the game's most active past players associations.

Following their recent reunion luncheon, the Castleford Tigers Past Players Association signed up 80 of its members to RL Cares, providing the charity with a valuable financial boost, as well as a ringing endorsement of its work.

The Castleford Past Players luncheon is a hugely successful event which this year was attended by over 250 people, including 80 ex-players who have made huge contributions to the history of the Wheldon Road club.

Barry Johnson, the former prop who was a member of the Castleford side that defeated Hull KR in the 1986 Challenge Cup Final at Wembley, said the association was delighted to give its support to RL Cares.

"Our luncheon is a terrific reunion event which brings together lots of players from different eras for a memorable

afternoon," said Barry. "We're a not-for-profit organisation which is always looking to put something back into the game. Last year we helped Castleford player Lee Jewitt when his twin sons were born prematurely by donating to the hospitals which took care of the babies.

"We have an active committee and when someone suggested we raise money for RL Cares this year everyone immediately agreed. A lot of our players are Castleford born and bred and the club still plays a massive role in its community. Rugby League Cares is all about community and the Rugby League family so it was the perfect recipient of the proceeds from the lunch.

"So much of what RL Cares does goes straight to the heart of what we're about: we know that a lot of current players have signed up as members of the charity and we wanted to be the first past players association to do the same. We weren't just donating money to a very good cause, by signing up our members we're giving them all the benefits that come from being part of a great organisation like RL Cares. I would urge all other past players associations to do the same: they have so much to gain from helping RL Cares in any way they can."

So much of what RL Cares does goes straight to the heart of what we're about: we know that a lot of current players have signed up as members of the charity and we wanted to be the first past players association to do the same

Hall of Famers celebrated in style

The careers, lives and personalities of two of the greatest exponents of the greatest game were celebrated this summer when Rugby League Cares hosted a dinner in memory of Roger Millward MBE and Mick Sullivan.

Roger and Mick were members of the Rugby League Hall of Fame who sadly passed away within a few weeks of each other in the spring: Hull KR legend Millward died in May aged 68, while the game said goodbye to Sullivan, Great Britain's most capped player, in April. He was 82.

Organised by Rugby League Cares through its commitment to championing the game's heritage, the dinner was a huge success and provided an opportunity to acknowledge the important contribution to Rugby League made by two men who commanded respect and admiration on both sides of the world.

The dinner at the Willerby Manor Hotel near Hull was attended by the Sullivan and Millward families, current and former Hull KR players, special guests and five of their fellow Hall of Fame members: Lewis Jones, Malcolm Reilly OBE, Billy Boston MBE, Alex Murphy OBE and Garry Schofield OBE.

"Roger and Mick were exceptional players who would have graced the game in any era," said Alec Murphy. "Roger's football brain was second to none; he also possessed incredible courage in defence and could read the game from the middle of the park like no other."

"I played alongside Mick at St Helens and he was a lovely man off the field: on it, he was something else. When he was at

Wigan we were sent-off for fighting in the 1960 Championship semi-final. They named him at No.6 to mark me and I knew what it felt like to be a marked man! We had a right old scrap before Eric Clay pointed us to the dressing room. He was the best winger I ever played against."

Sullivan's record in representative rugby was exceptional: in 102 games for Great Britain, England and Yorkshire he scored 120 tries and twice commanded world-record transfer fees when he went from Huddersfield to Wigan in 1957 for £9,500 and then Wigan to St Helens for £11,000 four years later.

Billy Boston was a team-mate of Sullivan at Wigan between 1957 and 1961, when the two also made for a formidable wing pairing with Great Britain.

"Sully was a great winger, one of the best and someone you always wanted on your team," said Billy. "When he wasn't on your team you had to watch him, though. He was good at coming in from the side and hurting you if you weren't on your guard."

"We had a few battles down the years when he was at Huddersfield and later when he moved to St Helens. I really got to know him when we were at Wigan; he was a lovely man and great person to be around."

"I went on a couple of tours with him and the Aussies loved him and hated him in equal measure. They were great days back then, we won the Ashes on a regular basis and we did so because we had players like Mick in our ranks."

Malcolm Reilly and Millward were members of the last Great Britain team to win the Ashes in 1970 and were good friends throughout



Roger Millward MBE



Mick Sullivan

their adult lives after first playing together as schoolboys for the Castleford district.

"I don't remember much about the game but I do recall that I played at No 6 and Roger was at No 7. You just knew he was special even then," said Reilly.

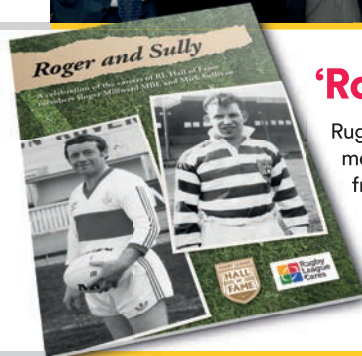
"Roger is in my top three of best players of all time, and I can't separate any of them. He's as good a player as I've ever seen. Offensively there was no-one better and in defence he had the heart of a lion, sometimes at the expense of his own welfare. I feel privileged to have played alongside him and proud of the fact that Roger Millward was my friend."



Hall of Famers Alec Murphy, Billy Boston, Lewis Jones, Malcolm Reilly and Garry Schofield helped celebrate the lives of Roger and Sully



Roger's wife Carol, their family and friends were among the guests at the Roger and Sully celebration dinner



'Roger and Sully' Commemorative Brochure

Rugby League Cares have produced a commemorative 36-page brochure celebrating the careers of RL Hall of Fame members Roger Millward MBE and Mick Sullivan. The brochure features interviews with former team-mates and friends, as well as Roger's wife Carol and Mick's daughter Michelle who give moving insights into the lives of the two men. If you would like a copy of this special souvenir brochure please send a cheque for £3 (to cover postage costs) or attach three pound coins to a piece of paper containing your name and address and send to Roger and Sully brochure offer, c/o Katie Irwin, Rugby League Cares, Red Hall, Red Hall Lane, Leeds LS17 8NB.



He is not, by his own admission, the most famous Rugby League player from Leeds. Nor even the most recognisable member of the amateur team he played for in the early-1980s. However, no player at Shaw Lane, the forerunners of the current Guiseley Rangers club, has endured as traumatic a life-changing event from playing Rugby League than Nigel Long.

Nigel has been in a wheelchair since suffering a serious spinal injury playing in a local league game in 1981 and was one of the sport's 'lost victims' until the RFL Benevolent Fund became aware of his injury almost two years ago.

Since then, the Benevolent Fund has attempted to make up for lost time by funding modifications to Nigel's home in Menston and offering support to a man who bears no resentment towards the circumstances surrounding his injury.

"I'd been playing for Shaw Lane for just a season and a half and was loving my rugby, it was a great release on a weekend after spending the week digging gas mains for British Gas," said Nigel.

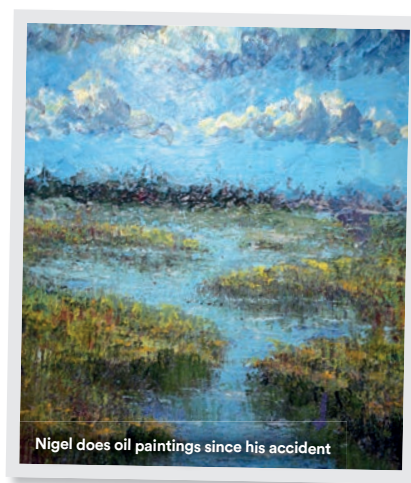
"I don't remember much about the game but I remember quite clearly what happened: it was just a straight one-on-one tackle and the other bloke's knee caught me under the chin, knocking my head backwards. The pain was terrible and I knew straight away that I'd broken my back. I had no feeling below my shoulders and I told them not to move me."

One of Nigel's team-mates that day was David Jeanes, the former Wakefield Trinity, Leeds and Great Britain player who was playing socially at the end of a successful professional career.

"I heard Jeanesy shout over to me as I lay there 'Come on Longy, you've got to get in harder than that!' I would have smiled had it not hurt so much," Nigel recalled.

"I was taken to Leeds General Infirmary and from there to Pinderfields Hospital in Wakefield. That was some journey - 15 miles at five miles an hour in an ambulance with two police motorcycle outriders. It's a shame the police weren't paying more attention because somewhere between LGI and Pinderfields my boots disappeared. I never got them back. They were a good pair of boots as well!"

Nigel was just 23 when doctors diagnosed a broken neck between the fifth and sixth cervical vertebrae. The trauma has left him confined to a wheelchair and with limited



Nigel does oil paintings since his accident



movement in both arms. He also lacks fine motor coordination in his hands, especially his right hand.

"Back in 1981 the club raised about £10,000 to help me, which was a lot of money back then, but it's not been easy at times," said Nigel, a father of two who now lives in an apartment on the site of the old Menston hospital, where BBC commentator Eddie Waring spent his last days.

"The Benevolent Fund wasn't around at the time of my accident and they were only alerted to my case last year by David Clayton at Guiseley Rangers, and since then they've been brilliant. The Benevolent Fund have gone out of their way to help me."

Like many people with limited mobility, Nigel struggles to deal with cold weather and his trips to watch Guiseley Rangers are rare nowadays, although he does follow Leeds Rhinos closely on TV.

He has gained a First Class honours degree in psychology and psychobiology with the Open University, explaining: "The psychobiology would have been really useful when I was hod carrying and digging holes!

I wish I'd gone to university as a young man, though, I would have loved to have studied medicine.

"Since the accident I've taken up oil painting and though I'm right handed, I have to use my left hand to work the brushes, although my arm isn't strong enough to do fine detail. I love it, it's very rewarding and I'll paint anything, but landscapes and nature are my favourites. I'd like to paint nudes: Swedish blondes preferably, but that's a different story!

"The room I do my paintings in was cold and draughty and the Benevolent Fund

see my kids grow up?" We are there to support them and to be there for their families, who are the ones who need to both give and receive support in their hour of need."

Like all charities, the RFL Benevolent Fund is heavily reliant on the fundraising activities of individuals and organisations and is hugely appreciative of the selfless work that takes place.

"The real heroes of Rugby League are not the players who score match-winning tries at Wembley, they're the men and women who stand out in the rain doing bucket collections and taking part in sponsored challenges because they're empathetic with the people the RFL Benevolent Fund helps," said Ball.

"Perhaps the highest profile case we've had in the last couple of years has been the tragedy surrounding the death of Danny Jones: the response from the Rugby League family towards a young mother of twin babies was incredible, but not at all surprising.

"I feel very privileged to be invited into the homes of people like Lizzie Jones and the many people we help, because in and amongst their grief and suffering is invariably a desire to put something back into the game.

"The strength of the game isn't sponsorship deals, gate receipts or TV contracts: our strength is measured in the honesty and integrity that go to the very heart of our values. We are grateful for every donation we receive, no matter how big or small."

If you would like to help the RFL Benevolent Fund please contact Steve Ball via steve.ball@rflbenevolentfund.co.uk

has installed a new level floor which has transformed it. They've also installed a new shower room for me and put in a new heating system to replace the faulty, inefficient old system which was costing a fortune to run. They've done a fantastic job, it's a wonderful charity and I can't praise them highly enough."

To make a donation to the RFL Benevolent Fund please visit www.justgiving.com/rfluk

For more details on the charity's work please visit www.rflbenevolentfund.co.uk/

The RFL Benevolent Fund

The RFL Benevolent Fund was set up to provide assistance to players who have suffered life-changing injuries and is held in high regard throughout the game.

Young men like Matt King OBE, Pete Stephenson and Jimmy Gittins, who all suffered major spinal trauma while playing the game they love, are high profile examples of players who have been supported by the charity. The initiative set up to raise funds for the wife and children of former Keighley Cougars player Danny Jones, and the support given to the family of Huddersfield Giants youngster Ronan Costello, have elevated the work of the Benevolent Fund and raised awareness of the work it does.

Yet for every story that makes headlines, the RFL Benevolent Fund quietly goes about its business making a difference to the lives of hundreds of members of the Rugby League family who are caught up in sporting catastrophe.

Steve Ball, the RFL Benevolent Fund General Manager, explained: "When tragedy strikes it's always a terrible time for the player who has been hurt but it's also a difficult time for their families as well.

"Often it's the case that an injured player is more concerned by his family and how they are coping and being supported. Medical experts are always on hand to try and put an injured player back together and we try to be there for their families.

"We have 20 people who are on our register full time and a further 40 people with serious injuries come to us each year for help after suffering a life-changing injury. They're in real crisis and wondering 'Am I going to walk again?' or 'Will I be around to

NATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE MUSEUM SET FOR 2020 OPENING

A world class facility telling the story of a world class sport is on course to be open in 2020 when the National Rugby League Museum will open within the historic Bradford City Hall.

The museum project was launched earlier this year and will be Rugby League Cares' main heritage project as the charity looks to deliver a scheme that will be a source of pride for everyone involved in the sport.

There is still a lot of work to be done before the museum opens its doors for the first time, including putting the finishing touches to the funding model, developing the interior design and themes, and, very importantly, consulting with Rugby League Cares members and the sport's supporters.



An artist's impression of how the National RL Museum might look

Rugby League Cares Heritage Manager Brigid Power explained: "We are in the early stages of planning and mapping out what we want the museum to be and what it should deliver. It is vital that we understand what people want to see and do at a sports museum like this. Our members are often flung far across the country and beyond and we are especially keen to hear what they think.

"We want to make this a museum, not just for existing Rugby League fans, but for those who know nothing about the game or its history. Rugby League has a fantastic story to tell and in telling it we know we will attract new people to the game and make them love the sport as much as we do."

Here are a few ways in which people can help:

COLLECTIONS

Museums have moved on in the last 20 years and whereas a traditional sports museum might tell the story of its sport by the shirts and caps of its famous players, we think that is too limiting. Of course, traditional memorabilia has a part to play, but we think our collections need to be broader than that. We want to see the social history of the game come to life: who are Rugby League's communities, its fans, its players? If you could donate one object or item to the museum that you believe would highlight your life and story with Rugby League, what would it be?

Collections are, of course, about more than just objects - they are photos, videos, oral recollections. We plan to collect as much as this over the next few years as possible.

Brigid Power said: "Our archives feature a rich collection of items and memorabilia from the last 120 years but there is so much more out there that we don't know about, or have forgotten about, which needs to be seen.

"The National Rugby League Museum will be the perfect place for everyone to share their memories of the sport and celebrate the heroes and moments that mean so much to them. Over the years many important items have found their way into private collections because there was simply nowhere else for them to go: the museum will provide a focal point for our history and it would be terrific to know what has survived."

RL Cares is not just looking for 'precious' objects such as trophies and medals; many fans will have their own special souvenirs such as cine movie footage, promotional posters, ticket stubs from pre-War matches, early team-sheets, cigarette cards, community song sheets from major finals and commemorative brochures.

GALLERIES

We believe that Rugby League has a very special story to tell. From the pre-1895 days when players playing 'rugby' were being fined for taking payments, through to the infamous split at the George Hotel in Huddersfield, the



RL Cares Heritage Manager Brigid Power puts the finishing touches to the Challenge Cup trophy at the official launch of the National Rugby League Museum

Bradford Council Chief Executive Kersten England and RL Cares trustee Prof Tony Collins at the museum launch

development of the game abroad, from winter to summer and the Super League era - all these important points in the history of the game need to be represented when we are telling this story and bringing it to life. What else should go in here? What stories would you like to see told?

HAVE A GO!

How do you play Rugby League? How do we let people have a go at the game? To experience the technicality and the physicality of a sport such as ours? In the National Football Museum, you can try out penalties, saving and tactics - what would be your suggestions for Rugby League?

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Museums are often a cultural hive of activity; from craft activities for the under-5s to film screenings and formal dinners. What would you like to see go on at the museum?

OUTREACH

Based in Bradford, we recognise that we are not on everyone's doorstep. How would



The National RL Museum will be housed within the Grade 1-listed Bradford City Hall

you like to engage with the museum at a distance? How can we make sure the museum works for everyone, all year round? Touring exhibitions are one idea, a significant online presence for the museum is another. Perhaps we could take our collections out to different communities?

Finally, what would make it a good day out? What makes a museum great?

"Part of the development work taking place is visiting other museums and taking the best of what they have done," added Power. "If anyone has been impressed by a museum recently, or want to tell us about other sports museums that they have enjoyed, (or otherwise!), please tell us.

"Let us know your thoughts! This is a museum for all of us and as many ideas as we get, the better it will be."

If you would like to share your thoughts on the National Rugby League Museum please contact Rugby League Cares Heritage Manager Brigid Power at bridgid.power@rlcares.org.uk

Iconic minute book search

A nationwide appeal has been launched to trace the whereabouts of one of the most significant documents in the history of both codes of rugby. To mark the announcement that the first-ever National Rugby League Museum is to open in 2020, Rugby League Cares is asking for the public's help in locating the minute book that recorded the details of the meeting that led to rugby's great split.

On August 29, 1895, rugby union clubs from across the North of England met for crisis talks about the RFU's refusal to accede to requests to compensate players who had to take time off work to play rugby on a weekend.

There was no overriding desire to professionalise rugby by following football's lead a few years earlier, merely a desire to make 'broken time' payments to men whose pay was docked by factory, mill and mine owners when they finished work early on Saturdays to join their team-mates. At the end of the meeting, 21 clubs announced their intention to break away from the RFU and form the Northern Union, which would eventually evolve into the sport of Rugby League and the RFL.

The minute book from that meeting mysteriously disappeared from the RFL's old headquarters in Leeds 50 years ago and Rugby League Cares is hoping someone will come forward with information as to its whereabouts.

Professor Tony Collins, a trustee of Rugby League Cares and the world's foremost authority on the history of rugby, said: "The minute book for the years 1895 to 1899 went missing from the old RFL headquarters on Chapeltown Road, Leeds in the early 1960s and has not been seen since. The RFL secretary at the time, Bill Fallowfield, did put out a public appeal for it in 1963 but it wasn't found. At that time, the history of sport and Rugby League's heritage didn't have the importance it has today, and the matter wasn't pursued. It's a great tragedy, not simply because we don't have the founding document of the game, but also because it is a key document of British sports history. So if anyone out there knows where it might be, please let us know."

SPORT ENGLAND PROJECTS: COVENTRY BEARS

Coventry hosted an international Rugby League double header for the first time this autumn, when the action at the Ricoh Arena provided a focus for the growing interest in the sport in the city and across the West Midlands region.

Working with Rugby League Cares, Coventry Bears have been engaging local residents since the early part of summer 2016 through Bears 5s, an innovative new social form of Rugby League.

The Sport England-funded programme, which is unique to the city and part of Coventry's seven-year strategy to become a City of Rugby, has been crafted with the aim of creating a gateway for young people who do not regularly participate in sport to experience the game, often for the first time in a new geographical area for Rugby League.

Bears 5s simple new 5-a-side Rugby League can be played as a touch rugby or a contact game and has been played in schools, parks, community centres and even summer music festivals.

Bears 5s aims to bring the game into the local community and to community events: sessions are delivered by Coventry Bears players and coaches and can be easily tailored to meet the needs of different groups.

A typical one-hour session incorporates rugby fitness skills and drills, followed



Pupils taking part in the Coventry Bears' Bear 5s innovative new social form of the game

by 10-minute versions of the small-sided game. The project has engaged over 1,400 local people already, many of whom previously would not have known about Rugby League or Coventry Bears, one of the sport's newest professional clubs who joined League 1 in 2014.

A recent highlight of the project came when some of Rugby League's top stars recently dropped in to a Bears 5s school rugby festival. Australian internationals Tyson Frizell and Jake Trbojevic joined England's Elliott Whitehead, Daryl Clark and Luke Gale at the Bears 5s Four Nations Schools Festival, played at a local sports centre and hub of Bears 5s activity. Twelve teams from eight schools battled

it out for a trophy in a five-a-side touch rugby competition, which celebrated the arrival of the Four Nations Rugby League tournament at the Ricoh Arena, where England played Scotland and tournament champions Australia took on New Zealand.

Each school received warm-ups and team talks from one of the Australian and England players, as well as the opportunity to take part in a question and answer session, before playing the game competitively.

Bears 5s continues into the New Year with a focus on engaging more local people, not just to improve fitness, but to wider engage in all Rugby League activity within the city.

SPORT ENGLAND PROJECTS: CUMBRIA

Rugby League in Cumbria is going from strength to strength with the help of Sport England investment through Rugby League Cares that is already delivering encouraging results.

Active Cumbria's 'Play Rugby League in Cumbria' programme involves a partnership with five local providers to deliver nine projects which aim to enhance existing projects and encourage new participants across the region.

As part of the Allerdale Schools Coaching project being delivered by Workington Town Community, a total of 160 pupils in Years 10-13 from two secondary schools have been participating regularly in Rugby League activity as part of the curriculum.

A further two secondary schools and a similar number of pupils will receive their activity in January. This project is also connecting BTEC students in Sports Studies and providing them with coach development training, helping to build the future capacity in the game.

The Cockermouth Titans Youth Start-up project has now been completed. This was set up to create two new youth teams (Under-16 and Under-14) in Cockermouth where there was previously no community-based Rugby League club.

Some 49 players were recruited and registered in March and received training on two nights each week. The Under-16 team played 15 fixtures up to October and the Under-14s team played 18 fixtures. Foundations are strong as the Under-16s team will remain in place next season having lost just one player.

The Barrow Raiders Super Lotto Rugby League Youth Development project was set up in October and will continue to deliver through to April. This is a multi-faceted project which focuses on bridging the gap between Under-16s leagues and open age teams, as well as creating an Under-19s team to give the area's elite youngsters the opportunity to develop towards a semi-professional career. To date, 48 youngsters have been recruited

and registered. The Under-19s team has been called 'Furness Raiders' to represent the partnership set up between the club and local Furness Academy.

GLL, the county's main leisure provider, has planned a series of Walking Rugby activity for older adults aged 50-plus at six of its sites across the county. Staff have been recruited and trained, with activity commencing in January.

A Masters project targeting men over 45 has commenced at Cockermouth and is being delivered by the Workington Town Community Trust, with further activity planned at other locations across Allerdale.

Workington Town Community Trust also has a Competitive Touch project starting up at Netherhall and Workington and their final project, Social 9s, is due to commence in the New Year.

The Copeland Rugby League Development Foundation will attract up to 45 young females into activity in January, which will be provided after school in the Egremont area of West Cumbria.

SPORT ENGLAND PROJECTS: TAGGED



A non-contact version of the game, called Tagged, has proved popular among the 12 universities it has been piloted at in the south east



EST 2016
TAGGED
#GETTAGGING

A new version of Rugby League which features all of the thrills and skills of the sport but none of the pain, is becoming a huge hit on university campuses across London and the South East.

More than 500 students - 76 per cent of whom had never played Rugby League before - have been introduced to the sport for the first time since the launch of Tagged at the start of the current academic year.

Tagged is a mixed, social version of tag Rugby League which is being piloted in 12 universities in London and the South East. It is designed to engage students who don't already play Rugby League in a less formal, non-contact version of the game. Tagged adopts the same rules as Rugby League with six tackles, play-the-balls and tactical kicks, but players are tackled when an opponent removes a Velcro tag from their shorts rather than being crunched to the ground. The initiative is being run by the London Rugby League Foundation in partnership with Rugby League Cares and is quickly becoming a popular success in the capital.

Tagged Project Manager James Szymik said: "Rugby League is going from strength to strength in the university sector with new teams joining the BUCS leagues every year. We knew there was an opportunity to launch a non-contact version of the game to reach those

students who might not necessarily be interested in playing the full contact version of the sport and compliment the growth of the 13-a-side game."

Tagged is proving popular with female players: almost 55 per cent of participants on the first term were female. Tagged is also appealing to students who may not already be participating in sport and physical activity.

Szymik added: "It's been really rewarding to see the number of students that Tagged has encouraged to get back into sport and give Rugby League a go for the first time. The offer is fun, inclusive and a great way to get both fit and make new friends."

The popularity of Tagged is being fueled by engaging activity on social media, with players using Twitter to interact with team-mates and rivals to continue the fun away from the pitch using the hashtag #GetTagging. For creative arts student Jessica Clements, a self-confessed couch potato who had never dreamed of playing Rugby League a few months ago, Tagged has become a massive highlight of university life.

"Before I started playing Tagged I wasn't doing any physical activity, I spent my spare time doing hobbies like sewing," said Clements. "My housemates persuaded me along to my first session six weeks ago and I can't imagine not playing Tag Rugby League now, I love it! I like Tagged because

it's mixed gender. Also, the people who mainly get involved with Tagged are like me so I'm not intimidated; when you come to Tagged everyone is themselves, they are all different, they all have different lifestyles yet we can play together and have fun whilst we are doing it.

"There are also the fitness benefits: I am not going to lie, I usually avoid anything to do with physical activity but at Tagged I don't realise that I am doing quite a lot of exercise whilst I am having fun playing.

"It's been amazing, I feel like it's really changed me. In my first session I wanted to stop after 10 minutes, as I was exhausted, but I am not like that anymore, I keep going for the whole hour and even sometimes we want to play on a bit longer.

"For anyone thinking about giving it a go I would say, don't be afraid, you'll be surprised how many people are like you. Don't worry about not knowing the rules or feeling silly, it's really easy to learn and a great time."

For more information on Tagged please visit tagged-rugby.co.uk or follow @TaggedRugby on Twitter



Jessica Clements



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

CASEFILE 1

A Rugby League Cares project which is giving young people from Asian communities across Bradford their first taste of Rugby League is proving to be hugely popular.

The Connecting Communities project is being delivered by the Bradford Bulls Rugby Foundation, in association with Rugby League Cares, and has made positive steps towards increasing participation within the city by introducing hundreds of boys and girls to the sport.

The foundation delivered 10 one-hour long sessions at the Police Camps at Bradford College to 68 children between August 15 and 26, and went on to deliver 10 more sessions to 70 children during the October half-term Police Camps. The Police Camps allowed the project to reach a further 60 children aged between nine and 11.

As well as delivering coaching sessions, the foundation asked the children whether



A Connecting Communities festival took place at Odsal this summer

they would continue to attend further sessions and if they knew of the local clubs in their area. The results were that the children were aware who the Bradford Bulls were but only a handful knew the names of local community clubs such as Dudley Hill or Wibsey.

On September 4, Odsal Stadium hosted a Connecting Communities festival which involved groups participating in a taster session on the pitch before the Kingstone Press Championship fixture between Bradford Bulls and Sheffield Eagles.

Ikram Butt took a group from Leeds whilst from Bradford a group of boys from the Gillingham community centre attended and participated in a session for the first time. Following the game all the youngsters were invited back to the Touchdown building for food and drinks and given Provident tickets to sit in the stands to watch the game.

For many of the Gillingham group this was their first experience of what Rugby League has to offer. Having established that crucial first connection at Gillingham, further sessions are now planned in the New Year.

On October 29 a group from the Shapla community centre lead by Humayun Islam attended the England v New Zealand Four Nations game at Huddersfield. Again most from the group were experiencing a live

Rugby League match for the first time: this in turn created interest amongst the children in participating in sessions within their local centre.

The Bulls Foundation sought the assistance of Sporting Equals and the Asian Sport Foundation to utilise their connections in the community and to arrange meetings. This has had a positive impact as from one of our meetings the foundation met Shapla sports centre and Gillingham community centre to build relationships with the people in charge of organising physical activities for local children.

On the advice of the centres, the foundation has attached its sessions on to the back of current sports sessions and are booked in for an initial 10-week programme that began on November 12. The aim for the remainder of the project is to deliver coaching in at least two more community centres as well as maintaining the sessions that are already running. There is also a plan to host another festival in the spring that will involve both the community centres and community clubs.

On the back of the partnership with Sporting Equals, Bradford Bulls Rugby Foundation Chief Executive Mark Winder was invited to the Sporting Equals 'Leaderboard' conference in London.



Boys and girls from the Asian community are engaging with Rugby League in Bradford

CASEFILE 2



The 20:20 Foundation took a trip to the England v New Zealand game at Huddersfield



A programme of activities designed to engage young people in Kirklees in Rugby League activity has enjoyed a number of significant breakthroughs in recent months.

As part of the Connecting Communities project run in association with Rugby League Cares, the 20:20 Foundation has reached out to many people from the area's Asian communities who have previously never experienced the sport before.

The foundation has established some fruitful partnerships and achieved a number of key milestones, including holding positive meetings with faith-based schools who enjoyed a live game at Huddersfield Giants.

A fun holiday programme was run alongside a girls' activity session and a twice-weekly session for men that used rugby as a health-related focus.

The foundation has meetings planned with Batley Bulldogs to link into the club's own programmes and is organising 'Introduction to Rugby' sessions at venues across Kirklees, including Crow Nest Park. Participation numbers are on track with healthy progress made in key areas.

The foundation has a series of inclusive projects and programmes planned for the coming months, including a visit to the Al Hashim Academy in Batley where a questionnaire will be circulated to all the project users.

The focus over the winter months is to concentrate on this as an activity, along with the men's and boys' sessions, and to seek more feedback from participants. In the week leading up to Christmas and New Year the project will conduct more questionnaires with Gem's group and the holiday attendees.

CASEFILE 3

The Connecting Communities project is delivering tangible results in Leeds where the British Asian Rugby Association is reaching out to much under-represented minority ethnic communities.

Working with Rugby League Cares, the Association has targeted four key community groups to work with, including the Makkah Mosque in partnership with the Grand Mosque, Ramgarhia Centre, Hamara Healthy Living Centre and Chapletown Youth Development Centre.

Whilst the project got off to a slow start for various reasons, it is now picking up pace. Events such as the Beeston Mela, a link with Bradford Bulls and being invited to watch England v New Zealand at Huddersfield have demonstrated that there is a thirst for BAME communities to engage with Rugby League. Visits to mosques, gurdwara and temples also helped to spread the message.

Activities initially began in collaboration with Sikh Sport UK at Roundhay Park and will be revisited after the New Year.

The most successful area to date is working with the Hamara Healthy Living Centre. There are 15 young people attending who are all eager to continue after the six-week sessions come to an end.

The outcome of the sessions so far are a nine-a-side team and one individual who is over the age of 16 wanting to take the first steps on a rugby coaching course. The Association has also started to deliver sessions at Hyde Park with a good turnout of 15 young people attending, with another 10 signed up for the next sessions.

In the New Year the Association plans to target once again the Ramgarhia Centre in partnership with Sikh Sport UK and work in partnership with Chapeltown Youth Development Centre by running six-week sessions in both areas.

Workshops will be delivered providing a greater awareness and understanding of the communities that the Association serves along with visits to community/religious establishments. The Association hopes to facilitate more visits to professional games with the aim of all the targeted centres developing new teams and satellite clubs.

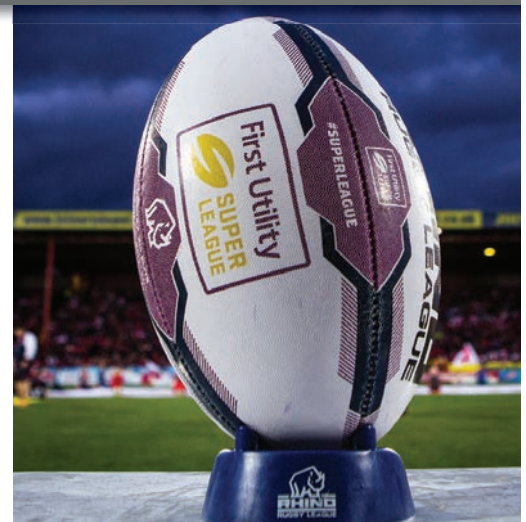


The British Asian Rugby Association is achieving results with youngsters from Asian communities in Leeds

ALL SPORT INSURANCE



Specialist Insurance For Sports Professionals



**For excellent rates on your car
and home insurance...*call us today!***



**"QUOTE RUGBY LEAGUE CARES"
+44 (0) 7773 364294**

@AllSportInsure
Visit: www.allsportinsurance.co.uk

SPORT ENGLAND PROJECTS: #UNITEDBYRL

An exciting project that has seen almost 200 women and girls play Rugby League for the first time over the last six months is changing the face of the sport in Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Active Humber has been leading the #UnitedbyRL programme across Hull, a city with a proud Rugby League tradition at professional and community level but which has limited opportunities to play the game outside the club structure - and even fewer opportunities for female players.

#UnitedbyRL brings together key partners with an interest in Rugby League and increasing participation - Rugby League Cares, Hull KR, Hull FC, University of Hull and the City of Hull Academy led by Active Humber. There has been a fantastic take up of the offer to the Colleges, University and the girls game: more than 250 participants have engaged with the activity over the last six months with around 70 per cent of those being female.

A direct outcome of the programme has seen the formation of two new Under-16 female teams based at the two



Two girls teams have been established at Hull FC and Hull KR by the #UnitedbyRL project

professional clubs, who have both committed to continue funding beyond that provided by #UnitedbyRL. The girls also had the opportunity to play at KC Lightstream Stadium before the opening Four Nations fixture between Australia and Scotland.

The University programme stepped up its activity at the start of this academic year and the early signs are positive with female students interested through their Fabu'lous programme and a healthy interest in the 'Tagged' delivery, which is a pilot outside London which links into the work of the London Rugby League Foundation (see Page 33).

The next three months are going to be very interesting to maintain the fantastic start the project has enjoyed: the female hub delivery is set to continue providing further opportunities for girls to play and teams to compete, including a request for a fixture from St Helens.

The partners will continue their commitment to working together to develop Rugby League and ensuring a real impact is seen as part of this project. Work will also take place within the community game to develop #UnitedbyRL



SPORT ENGLAND PROJECTS: NEWCASTLE THUNDER

Newcastle Thunder's community project has been busy in 2016 with community coaches delivering a range of programmes to raise awareness and increase participation levels across the region.

Since March, through the support of Sport England and Rugby League Cares, Thunder players Joe Brown and Rhys Clarke have delivered coaching in schools throughout the North East to Year 10 and 11 girls, whilst also launching Thunder Fit and Thunder Touch Rugby League, aimed at people aged over 16. All three programmes have proven successful, engaging over 700 people with the sport.

Thunder co-captain and community project coach Rhys Clarke said: "We've been running the programmes since March and have been engaging with people who've never played rugby before and who don't play much sport in general.

"With the girls, we've introduced them to a new sport that they've never tried before and they've really taken to it. The programme starts with a six-week block in their PE lessons and then we set up after school clubs for a further six weeks, with the numbers transferring over being brilliant.

"We've been in 15 schools and had over 600 girls involved and at least 10 of the schools still play competitively in tournaments we organise at the end of every half term. We've managed to get a lot of girls who have never played before playing in school teams and at local community clubs."

More recently, the Thunder Fit and Touch Rugby League programmes have also enjoyed a successful start.



Newcastle Thunder introduced girls from across the North East to the joys of Rugby League last summer

"Thunder Fit and Touch Rugby League are aimed at ages 16 and above, with Thunder Fit a boot camp based programme, with sessions that have elements of rugby in there," said Clarke.

"It's designed to get people into some form of physical activity and we try and progress people from that into playing Touch Rugby League. Currently we have a site set up at Gateshead Storm, with 22 regulars every week and as we move into the New Year, there'll be further sites running at Tyne Metropolitan College, Cramlington Rockets and Sunderland University."

A SHOT IN THE DARK

Every picture tells a story
and the Rugby League
Cares photo archive has
thousands to tell...



Sadly many of the images in
our archive have reached us
without captions or details of
the event or match at which
they were taken: and this is

where you come in.

We need your help in identifying the
magical moments from the sport's history that
are reproduced here. We also publish a series
of mystery images every week on Facebook
so please like our page and get in touch if you
can help.

We have some details for some of the
images here, including the fantastic picture of
Maurice Lindsay and Bob Ashby with
actress Glenda Jackson at the old RFL HQ at
Chapeltown Road in Leeds - but who is the
man on the right and what was the occasion?

Also, Neil Fox MBE looks on in one image
from the 1971 League Championship semi-
final, Wigan v Wakefield: who are the
other two players and, if you were at the
game, what are your memories?

There's also a picture of former St
Helens and Great Britain scrum-half Neil
Holding at one of the popular Daily Mirror
Rugby League Roadshows. Have you got
any good stories to share from attending
the roadshows? Who are the 'personality
girls'? And would you like to see the
roadshows return? Again, let us know.

Capturing the memories of fans is
highly important to Rugby League
Cares as we gear up for the opening of
the National Rugby League Museum in
2020: we want to tell the story of the
real game and we can only do that with
your input.

If you can shed light on any of the
photographs shown here or on our
Facebook page, please get in touch
with Rugby League Cares Heritage
Manager Brigid Power via email on
brigid.power@rlcares.org.uk



Danny Jones Defibrillator Fund proving Rugby League lifesaver

Unprecedented numbers of players and supporters will attend Rugby League games in 2017 secure in the knowledge that potentially life-saving equipment is at hand in case of emergency.

Over 100 community and junior clubs with more than 15,000 registered players now have defibrillators installed, many of them purchased with support from the Danny Jones Defibrillator Fund which continues to capture and reflect the goodwill of the Rugby League family.

The fund was set up in memory of Danny Jones, who tragically passed away while playing for Keighley Cougars in 2015, and is being championed by his wife, Lizzie, who has presented over 30 defibrillators in recent months. By the start of the 2017 season, every National Conference League club will have its own defibrillator and throughout the year the fund plans to roll out a series of training programmes to ensure that all clubs have volunteers who can use the equipment confidently.

"Defibrillators are valuable assets not just to Rugby League clubs but to their local communities," said Lizzie, whose efforts to raise awareness of cardiac health since Danny's death saw her recognised as Inspirational Woman of the Year by the ITV show, Lorraine.

"We are also looking at supporting clubs who wish to implement a cardiac screening programme for their players and are providing support so that clubs can purchase cabinets that allow defibrillators to be accessed by their communities."



Lizzie Jones presented a defibrillator to Wibsey Warriors in early December

At a recent meeting, the fund approved applications for grants towards the £1,000 cost of a defibrillator to the following clubs:

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Catterick Crusaders | (£750 grant) |
| Meltham All Blacks | (£750) |
| Waterhead | (£500) |
| Batley Boys | (£750) |
| Sharlston Rovers | (£750) |
| Shaw Cross | (£750) |
| Stanley Rangers | (£500) |
| Cutsyke | (£750) |



The tragic death of Danny Jones is leaving a lasting, positive legacy through the defibrillator fund

League 13 donate commemorative caps

As commemorations for the 100-year anniversary of the First World War continue, Rugby League Cares has received a donation linked to the bravery shown by players on the battlefield.

Three Rugby League players were awarded the Victoria Cross for their great acts of bravery in the Great War and their heroism was recognised by the League 13, the organisation set up to represent the interests of professional players.

League 13 has since closed and opted to donate to RL Cares commemorative caps produced for the induction of Jack Harrison (Hull FC), Thomas Bryan (Castleford) and

Thomas Steele (Broughton Rangers) into the Hall of Honour. The fourth member of the Hall of Honour is Steve Prescott MBE, a player who did so much good for the game prior to his death from stomach cancer.

Ernie Benbow, the former Chief Executive of League 13, said: "We are delighted that these caps are going to a good home in Rugby League Cares, as the custodians of the sport's heritage. We hope they will be enjoyed by people in years to come."

Rugby League Cares Heritage Manager Brigid Power said: "We would like to thank Ernie and League 13 for this generous donation of memorabilia which recognises the important contributions made by four of the game's great heroes."

"The stories of the sport's Victoria Cross winners need to be told to future generations and these caps, which will be added to our historical collections, will help ensure that they will never be forgotten."

League 13 has also donated the balance from its bank account of £1,336.33 to the RFL Benevolent Fund.



More than 1,000 young dancers helped make the 2016 Ladbrokes Four Nations a spectacular hit off the field - as well as on it - as part of our

Join the Momentum dance programme.

The dancers performed a piece called Formation Four Nations at fixtures involving England, Scotland, New Zealand and eventual winners, Australia.

The piece was created at a workshop in September, led by expert dance practitioners Jon Beney and Rhimes Leconte of ZOO Nation, where the piece was then put together by dance leaders before they brought their groups up to speed with long hours of hard practice.

The dance piece was performed to a bespoke track composed by Lee Affen which had sounds from Scotland, New Zealand and Australia, plus an added snippet of the national Anthem, 'God Save the Queen'.

Many of the participants came from Rugby League club academies and foundations, whilst others were drawn from local schools and community groups. For many of the young people this was their first taste of a Rugby League game as well as the amazing opportunity to dance on an international stage.

Rugby League Cares Dance Programme Project Manager, Sarah Elston, and Dance Practitioner Amy Burdon travelled the length and breadth of the country to get all dance groups and their leaders prepared for the tournament.

At the KC Lightstream Stadium in Hull, a cast of 84 dancers performed at the interval of the Australia v Scotland fixture where a crowd of 5,337 were entertained by the brilliant

JOIN THE MOMENTUM

performance of the dancers, many of whom had only learnt the piece that day!

Then it was on to Huddersfield for England v New Zealand at the John Smith's Stadium the next day, where a sell-out crowd of 24,070 gathered to watch the host nation's first game.

More than 200 dancers spent their morning rehearsing for what was set to be the biggest stage they may ever perform on.

A few weeks later and the Join the Momentum team were back for England v Australia at the London Stadium, where over 170 dancers performed pitchside during the interval in front of a bumper crowd of 35,569.

The Four Nations final came round so quick and with that came the last performance of Formation Four Nations at Anfield in Liverpool, where Australia and New Zealand fought it out for the trophy and 400 dancers kept a crowd of 40,042 entertained. Since then the Join the Momentum team have been overwhelmed by messages of thanks they have received from dance leaders.

Huddersfield Dance Leader Bernie Morley, who brought her dancers to the Huddersfield and Anfield fixtures, said: "A huge congrats on a job well done to everyone!" and Kelly

McCelland, Director of Eden Dance, said: "It was an incredible experience once again. Thank you for letting us be a part of it all, my group are very grateful."

Nicola Penketh of St Helens and Sutton Academy Dance Leader, said: "Thanks again for all your hard work today. The girls had a fabulous time."

Join the Momentum would like to thank all dance leaders, without whose hard work the programme would not have been delivered so successfully.

The groups which took part in the amazing experience were Hull KR Dance Academy, Little Stars, Wyke College, Knottingley Angels, Nevison Dance Team, LJ Dance Company, Passion 4 Dance, St Nicholas, Featherstone Rovers Starlights, Sutton Park, Huddersfield Giants Cheerleading Academy, Castleford Tigers Paws Dance Academy, Dolls Dance Training, Eva Lowery, Oasis Academy, DanceMode Thurrock, Hendon School, Tiffin School, Leeds Rhinos Rhinestones, Warrington Wolves Foundation, St Helens Foundation, Sutton Academy, LYDC, Bedford High School, Flixton Girls, Foxhills Academy, Eden Dance and Birkenhead.





Paul Highton is a changed man. After cycling 3,000 miles from the London Stadium to Rio de Janeiro on behalf of Rugby League Cares, life will never be the same again for the former Salford and Halifax back row.

Five months after Highton successfully completed his amazing two-wheeled journey through five countries and across two continents, he remains a physical shadow of his former self, the weight he had amassed since retiring in 2009 left behind on European tarmac and the dusty roads of South America.

Highton embarked for Brazil in late June from the former Olympic Stadium with a group of riders which included Mike Tomlinson, the husband of the late charity fundraiser Jane, and TV presenter Charlie Webster.

The riders cycled to the English Channel and then all the way through France, Spain and into Portugal where they boarded a flight for Recife in Brazil. There they were joined by Keith Senior, the Leeds Rhinos legend, for a 1,800-mile cycle ride through Brazil to the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio.

Highton may look a shadow of his former self, but it is within where the biggest changes have taken place to a man who now admits to having a whole new perspective on the world as he sets out on a new chapter in his life.

"I lost four stones from training for the ride and on the ride itself and I'm pleased to say it's not come back," said Highton. "My family tell me I'm skinnier now than when I first got back but that's down to the healthy lifestyle I'm living. People who haven't seen me for a while are taken aback, possibly because all they've seen recently are the pictures on social media of me from before, posted by 'mates' who claim I used to look like a fat Chinese man!"

"I feel very privileged to have done Ride to Rio and will always be thankful to Rugby League Cares for giving me the opportunity. It's given me a whole new focus and clarity as to what I want to do with my life. Before I went I was getting some stick - and rightly so - from family members about not having secured myself a 'proper' job since I left Salford as player welfare manager.

"I hadn't been looking too hard because I felt that I would never find something that I

enjoyed doing as much as I enjoyed playing rugby. And then I went to Brazil where many people don't define themselves by what they do and how much they love doing it because they are just focusing on surviving.

"That made me realise how lucky I am. Spending long hours in the saddle gives you a lot of time to think and I realised how much I enjoyed being involved in player welfare and helping players by giving them the benefit of my experience and the advice that no-one ever offered me when I was a player. I'm not criticising anyone or any club because that's

just how the game was back then. Thankfully Rugby League has moved on and I'm delighted to be playing some part in that continuing journey."

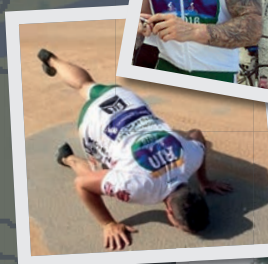
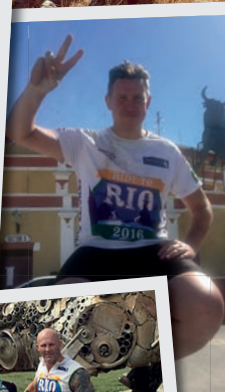
Since returning to the UK, Highton has taken on a new role as Transitions Manager with the Rugby Football League, where he works three days each week on the programmes that are helping players move into retirement outside of the game as seamless as possible. He is also helping Rugby League Cares with the charity's business development, as it builds a suite of corporate partners who can provide support and expertise to former and current players.

"I get about quite a lot visiting clubs and I'm loving it," he said. "After Ride to Rio, a 100-mile round trip to Hull to meet a player doesn't seem such a big deal!"

Ride to Rio raised over £20,000 for Rugby League Cares and the Jane Tomlinson Appeal, which provides support to young people across the UK who are undergoing treatment for cancer.

Although he has not forgotten the tiredness, the difficulty of negotiating dirt track roads, the saddle soreness or the interminable heat, Highton's nagging need for adventure continues.

"I'd love to do another fundraising trip for Rugby League Cares but Ride to Rio has set the bar really high," he said. "I spotted something on LinkedIn a couple of days ago where someone was looking at doing the Inca trail and cycling to Machu Picchu in Peru. I'd love to do that. Just don't expect me to ride there from London this time..."





The boardroom table at Red Hall was a regular hive of activity for our volunteer ticket folders



The RAF Rugby League team gave up their time to help the sport's most successful fundraising venture



Volunteers from Network Rail folded 12,000 ticket stubs for the Community Game Raffle in one day

ALL FOR A GOOD CAUSE



Like all charities, Rugby League Cares relies heavily on the time and energy of a small army of volunteers who help transform our small

administrative team into a force to be reckoned with.

Once again, the selfless acts of men, women and young people from around the country - many of whom have no direct connection with the game - have rallied to the cause in 2016 to help us do what we do best.

This summer, volunteers played an important role in lightening the pockets of generous Rugby League fans by selling T-shirts and pin badges in aid of the Danny Jones Defibrillator Fund at Magic Weekend and RugbyAM Rocks.

We also had a great group of volunteers who helped manage a static bike challenge and a bucket collection at the Super League Grand Final. However, volunteering is about more than mixing with the great and good at major Rugby League events and it is in the more prosaic setting of meeting rooms that some of our unsung heroes' most important work has taken place. This included the mammoth job of folding ticket stubs ahead of the draw for the 2016 Rugby League Cares Community Game Raffle - all 50,000 of them!

With thumbs and fingers working overdrive, volunteers from Network Rail and the Royal Air Force Rugby League team led the way in the boardrooms at Red Hall in Leeds and MediaCityUK by spending long hours triple-folding ticket stubs.

Every year Network Rail volunteers have a dedicated charity day and in 2016 Rugby League Cares became the latest organisation

to benefit from their staff's goodwill in folding an amazing 12,000 tickets in one day.

Thomas Dunmore, a design engineer with Network Rail who is involved with Little Lokos junior Rugby League club in York, said: "I'm glad of the opportunity to volunteer for RL Cares; Rugby League is something close to my heart so if I can help a charity involved with it I'm happy."

Eight members of the RAF Rugby League squad, including players, coaches and administrators, spent the full day at Red Hall on folding duty.

"We're only too happy to help and do what we can to put something back into the game," said RAF Rugby League Director of Operations, Flt Sgt Ozzy Hicks.

"The Community Game Raffle is a valuable source of funding for clubs and teams across the sport's grassroots and we think it's important to support it. There are a few sore fingers and thumbs from all the folding but no-one's complaining. We had a great day."

Organisations keep 70p from every £1 raffle ticket they sell, with 30p going to Rugby League Cares to help the charity fulfil its many roles, which include awarding grants to enable clubs to purchase the equipment they need to set up Under-7s teams.

"We sold 4,000 tickets this year and that's generated an amazing £2,800 for us," said Flt Sgt Hicks. "We still haven't decided exactly what we'll do with the proceeds but we will certainly be donating a lot of it back to charities, including Rugby League Cares."

"We'll also be purchasing training equipment that will be beneficial to multiple people within the Royal Air Force Association, and supporting the RAF players involved

in next year's Armed Forces Rugby League World Cup in Australia."

The RAF Rugby League is based at RAF Cranwell in Lincolnshire and runs four teams: the first-team, an Academy team, a women's team and the RAF Regiment's side. There are currently around 200 men and women playing the sport, many of whom were introduced to Rugby League for the first time after joining up.

This year we produced a commemorative brochure for the dinner celebrating the careers of the late Roger Millward MBE and Mick Sullivan and received great support from talented designer Gareth Wright, who generously produced the promotional literature around the event.

"On behalf of everyone involved with the charity I would like to thank all the volunteers who gave up their valuable time and energy to help us," said Rugby League Cares Operations Manager Katie Irwin.

"It would be great to namecheck everyone but there are so many good people out there! You're all brilliant, we are really grateful for what you bring to the charity and are looking forward to working with you all in 2017."

How can you get involved with Rugby League Cares as a volunteer?

We are always in need of help with fundraising, administration and events. If you would like to join our volunteers, e-mail Katharine.irwin@rlcares.org.uk with your availability and how you would like to get involved. There is something for everyone!



AFEX Global Payment and
Risk Management Solutions

Is your business exposed to currency risk? Plan ahead for 2017.

It's safe to say the result of Brexit and the US Election has made 2016 an unpredictable year for the economy and for businesses. We'll see the full impact of this in 2017, which could possibly lead us into another year of market uncertainty.

If you believe your business would benefit from a FX review on how to adjust to these two new normals, please give us a call on **+44 (0)207 004 3939** or visit **afex.com**.

afex.com

© 2016 Associated Foreign Exchange Holdings, Inc. All rights reserved.

Associated Foreign Exchange Limited, which does business under the trade name of AFEX (registered in England and Wales, Company Number 4848033, Registered Office Address: 4th Floor, 40 Strand, London WC2N 5RW), is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority under the Payment Services Regulations 2009 (Register Reference: 502593) for the provision of payment services and is registered as an MSB with HM Revenue & Customs (Registered No: 12159000). For more information, visit www.afex.com.

