**WRU STATUS UPDATE 08/07/2020**

**(Please be reminded that the updates will be moved fortnightly and the next one issued on 22nd July 2020.)**

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7. **Chairman’s comment:**
 ***We have, naturally, used these pages to talk directly about Welsh rugby, our community game and how it has been and will be affected by the current international health crisis. Of course we can’t talk about the club game without talking about the international game, the two are interlinked, but in the same way we can’t talk about the Wales without thinking of the global rugby scene.
I’d like to take a second to express heartfelt sympathy for anyone in our industry, or those affiliated to it, who may be experiencing hardship.
We have heard news this week from across the Severn that a series of redundancies will be forced upon the RFU and closer to home there are many people throughout Wales who will be worried about potential job cuts announced by their employer. These are difficult times, we remain singularly determined to ensure Welsh rugby emerges intact from this current crisis, but we also wish our many friends and colleagues well.
Further potential investment in the game could of course help and it is widely known that, over the past year, Six Nations has been involved in exclusive negotiations with CVC Capital Partners.  But it is important to note that there is no set timeline for the completion of this process. If any agreement were to go ahead, it would not be accelerated due to challenges presented by the current external environment.  Discussions are confidential, but we will keep everyone updated as and when we can, for now the full statement on the subject from Six Nations can be found below.
I must extend the congratulations of everyone on the Welsh Rugby Union Board to one of our number, Amanda Blanc, who also chairs our Professional Rugby Board.  Amanda was appointed as CEO of Aviva plc this week and is one of only six women to be currently at the helm of a FTSE 100 company.  We are delighted that she will be staying in her volunteer position with the PRB.  She is one of five women who sit in senior positions in Welsh rugby alongside Aileen Richards, Liza Burgess, Marianne Okland and Julie Paterson.  This impressive series of individuals feature in turn on the WRU Board, the PRB, the World Rugby Council and our executive board, with most sitting across more than one of each. We take no responsibility for the impressive careers that have led these individuals to their current roles, each has been appointed – or elected in the case of Liza Burgess – on their own merits, but I do think we should take pride in ourselves as an organisation that we now have five senior female figures contributing to Welsh rugby in this way. We are particularly proud of Liza’s achievement as the first elected female national director to join the WRU Board in 130 years of history, but hope that more will follow.  Next, we would also like to see one of the many women at the forefront of the community game in Wales elected to our Board as a district representative.
To literally rise up from our club-base, if you like.

Yours in rugby,
Gareth Davies
WRU chairman***
8. **Six Nations statement**
Over the past year, Six Nations has been involved in exclusive negotiations with CVC Capital Partners. These negotiations have been very constructive and forward thinking. Negotiations of this nature are complex. They can take significant time and at this point, are still ongoing. An agreement is not to be expected imminently and it would be inaccurate to present it as a formality. There is no set timeline for completion of this process, and any agreement, if it were to go ahead, would not be accelerated due to any potential challenge presented by the current external environment.
9. **Election reminder**
Clubs are reminded that voting for the National Council Member election, being contested by Nigel Davies, Ieuan Evans and John Manders, closes this Friday 10th July at 3pm. Any Club that has not already received the ballot paper should contact Rhys Williams(rjwilliams@wru.wales) directly, as soon as possible.
10. **Insport Equality Standards**

**GOING FOR GOLD**
Welsh rugby can be proud of its efforts to become more inclusive towards young people and adults with additional needs. That is the view of many within the sport, political and education sectors as the governing body aims to become the first to achieve Disability Sport Wales’ insport Gold equality standard. The WRU Disability Rugby Strategy was published just over two years ago with the clear aims of becoming a more inclusive sport for all with a ‘Jersey for All’ culture throughout the game and ensuring everyone in Wales has a chance to be involved with the national sport [LINK [bit.ly/DisRugbStrat](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1345)].
Rapid yet sustainable progress has been made in that short amount of time and community and education-based inclusive opportunities have seen a marked rise. There are now mixed ability rugby teams for adults and Inclusive Community Clubs for young people in every rugby region. Our workforce has become skilled at delivering inclusive opportunities and the Hub Programme has seen hub officers offering rugby opportunities to young people all abilities within their schools and to neighbouring SEN schools. These growing relationships have had numerous benefits with learners themselves become qualified rugby leaders and delivering some of the rugby activities, extending the inclusive rugby workforce. We now offer Wheelchair Rugby opportunities throughout Wales having secured a bank of purpose-built rugby wheelchairs and trained staff, apprentices and community coaches throughout Wales. STORY [bit.ly/wheelchairsnextlevel](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1346) Close relationships have been forged with affiliated organisations such as GBWR and Wales Deaf Rugby Union to grow those opportunities. We have ensured mixed ability and inclusive opportunities are central to our major national calendar of events, such at the Road to Principality series of community festivals and matches at Principality Stadium [SEE LINK [bit.ly/InclusionFestival](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1347) ], and at Urdd WRU 7s events, through a hugely successful partnership with Chwaraeon yr Urdd. There is also an SEN element of the WRU Digital Classroom resource, available to all schools. There has also been a huge growth in Walking Rugby, a new format of the game which greatly benefits physical and mental well-being, especially amongst older or socially isolated groups.
Having achieved the Insport ribbon and bronze equality awards in 2018, the WRU gained the silver standard last November and is now going for gold.

**‘JERSEY FOR ALL’ RUGBY AT HOME**
Disability Rugby Coach, Darren Carew, has been an integral part of upskilling the WRU’s workforce in inclusion activities and, after completing a period of rehab of his own, is now back to work. He has filmed a series of ‘Jersey For All’ inclusive rugby sessions so that participants can continue to feel part of the Welsh rugby family…. Check the WRU Game Locker this weekend (11/07/20) to take part from the comfort of your home or garden.

**WATCH THIS SPACE**
WRU coaches have also been integral to providing a range of engaging video content for this year’s virtual Insport series of events and Darren will be providing a rugby skills session for this Friday’s event – CHECK THE DISABILITY SPORT WALES WEBSITE.
The latest Coaching Corner interview on the WRU Game Locker is with Wales Deaf Rugby head coach Robert Coles and is available from today (8/07/20), complete with sign language.
We are also due to host our first Disability/Inclusion Coaching Conference - online - on Sunday 23 August, REGISTRATION VIA THE WRU GAMELOCKER.

1. **Law interpretation webinars**
National referee performance manager Paul Adams and coach development manager Gerry Roberts have joined forces to organise a series of webinar with coaches across all the divisions regarding law interpretations.
The breakdown, lineout, scrum and advantage laws will be the major focus with Championship coaches the first to join the sessions on 20th July. More webinars will follow throughout August, September and October with coaches and referees from divisions one, two three and youth all invited to bespoke sessions.
2. **Rugby News**
**CAERLEON SMASH 50TH ANNIVERSARY FUNDRAISING GOAL**
Grassroots clubs in Wales continue to shine during these difficult times, with Caerleon one of the latest to offer their much-needed support to charity. The Division 2 East club, whose head coach Jon Burgess and defence coach Chris Macey have been assisted by local boys Harrison Keddie (Dragons) and Angus O’Brien (Scarlets) this season, was due to celebrate its 50th birthday in style before the pandemic struck. Instead of cancelling their half-century celebrations outright, Caerleon struck upon an idea to mark the occasion in a meaningful fashion by running a mile for every month of the club’s existence. It would be no mean feat a total of 3,739.84 miles, during the month of June and more importantly, as of 2nd July, a sum of £3,352 has been raised for the charity."
Story: [**https://community.wru.wales/2020/07/03/caerleon-run-thousands-of-miles-to-raise-thousands-of-pounds/**](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1348)

**Donate:**[https://www.gofundme.com/f/w3cjq-a-cause-i-care-about-needs-help?fbclid=IwAR2wdp1mYEpiD\_TXZ1bGfW3ohqSM\_1EhyLUHrGYSWKj3kxnlk77K4uCS8S0](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1349)

**BACK TO TRAINING**
The professional players in Wales have been heading back into training, so it’s a chance to look forward as well as back in this week’s Welsh Rugby Union Podcast. Also, there aren’t many Wales players who can describe what it’s like to beat New Zealand, but it’s just over a year since the Wales Under 20s did just that at the Junior World Championships. Their captain was Ospreys and Wales squad hooker Dewi Lake.
More here: [www.wru.wales/audio/welsh-rugby-union-podcast-27-2020/](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1350)
Also Ospreys go back to their roots - Their usual training base at the Llandarcy Academy of Sport is currently being used as a field hospital and so Justin Tipuric’s men have returned to their early roots and will be using St Helen’s as their base as they prepare for a proposed return to playing in the Guinness PRO14 on the weekends of 22nd and 29th August
Story: [https://www.wru.wales/2020/07/ospreys-go-back-to-roots-to-prepare-for-pro14-return/](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1351)
And new head coach Delaney is delighted by the response of his [squad.as](http://squad.as) the Scarlets get back to it at Parc y Scarlets.
The players have been training in small groups for a restricted time period ahead of a targeted return to Guinness PRO14 action on August 22.
Story: [https://www.wru.wales/2020/07/delaney-excited-as-scarlets-return-to-training/](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1352)

**WILLIAMS WELCOMED TO NWRUC**
The North Wales Rugby Union Council (NWRUC) have appointed Gary Williams (Welshpool RFC) as its new secretary with immediate effect. Gary is wished all the best in the role by community rugby clubs in North Wales.’

**NEW WOMEN’S RUGBY ROLES ADVERTISED**
The WRU has launched a search for a three new posts specifically for the women’s performance programme in order to significantly raise standards in the women’s game ahead of next year’s Rugby World Cup in New Zealand and the Commonwealth Games in 2022. There will be a new Head Coach, Senior Women’s National Programme who will be responsible for the planning, implementation and delivery of the coaching programme for both the 15s and 7s international programmes in Wales, a Physical Performance Lead to design and implement a strategic programme for all aspects of physical performance for all levels of women’s rugby in Wales and a performance analyst for the female performance programme. It is expected that further coaches will be appointed to the team in due course.
Once the appointments are made, the planning will begin in earnest ahead of next year’s Rugby World Cup in New Zealand. It is hoped the new coaching team will be in place by the autumn.
More here: [https://www.wru.wales/2020/07/the-search-is-on-for-key-wales-women-roles/](https://wru.acemlnb.com/lt.php?notrack=1&s=7e1f6645b4724ab5c5295c3afd677ef7&i=485A493A1A1353)

**AND FINALLY… HAPPY BIRTHDAY NHS FROM THE WALES SQUAD!**
The National Health Service will celebrate its 72nd birthday on Sunday and Wales’ players have been busy recording ‘thank you’ and ‘happy birthday’ messages to make the occasion special. Alyn Wyn Jones, Jake Ball and George North have all lent their support and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board will be posting these images on their social channels over the weekend. Something to look out for and re-tweet to show your support for vital NHS services and Covid-19 awareness alongside the Wales captain and friends.