



SRL AGM Minutes.

AGM held in Cumulus Hotel Jyväskylä 03.03.2013

The meeting was opened at 0932

Meeting was opened by the current SRL chairman who was also designated to chair the meeting.

George Mossford and Matti Tuominen were elected to scrutinize the minutes which were being taken by Stephen Whittaker

Vote counters were selected as Bro Bannatyne and David MacDougall.

Clubs in attendance

David MacDougall	Helsinki RC
Matti Tuominen	Pori
Petter Larsson	Shamrocks
Niko Hotanen	Griffins
Karl Filtness	Jyväskylä RC
Ari Tikkanen	Kuopio
Antti Partnanen	Kuopio
Bro Bannatyne	Shamrocks
Sebastian Mikkellsson	Shamrocks
Juha Tamminen	Linna Rugby
Louis Botha	Tampere RUC
Fredrico Posch	Warriors RC
George Mossford	FRRA
Palemia Field	SRL - Chairman
Stephen Whittaker	SRL – Technical Director
Ville Siiskonen	SRL – Outgoing Treasurer
Salla Salo	SRL – Incoming Treasurer
Pyves Guiban	Rauma
Matti Keränen	Kuopio

Clubs not in attendance were Turku, Oulu, Joensuu, and Vaasa.

Agenda was unanimously agreed upon.

Minutes from previous meetings do not need to be voted on as this role is forgone when the scrutinizers go through the minutes.

*Treasurer arrived at 0941*

Discussion of current board members within the SRL.

Jouni Ränninen and Merita Valkeapää resigned in July 2012.

Stephen Whittaker resigned as Vice Chairman in July 2012 to take up the role of Technical Director in the same instance.



This meant that Mikko Korte and Katri Nummelin were promoted from their deputy board member roles to full board members.

The question was posed that was there a necessity to fill the vacant positions or wait until the autumn meeting.

Stephen Whittaker had written interest from Isaac Visser (Eagles rugby) to take a role on the board, and Karl Filtness of Jyväskylä was interested to take a position.

Unanimous vote was given to accept these two proposed candidates for immediate inclusion.

*Pyves Guiban of Rauma RC arrived at 0945*

- The SRL organizational chart was presented which explained various roles within the SRL hierarchy and who reported to who.

(Insert link to chart here)

- Player licensing was briefly presented that last year was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of online licensing and the teething problems of year one seem to have been ironed out.
- Men's National Team 15's

Due to upper division reshuffles (Armenia dropped out, and Bulgaria beat Hungary earning them the right to gain promotion from 2D) meant Finland had received another olive branch and remain in 2D, rather than in 3 where they should have been demoted to already 4 years ago.

Finland have also gone lower in the IRB rankings. Previously they were last on 96<sup>th</sup> position, they are now 100<sup>th</sup>, still last. This is due to the inclusion of American Samoa, Greece, Mauritius and UAE who all came in on 30 points.

<http://www.irb.com/rankings/full.html>

The upside of this is now the 2D group is occupied by ranked teams. 2 years ago when Finland played and beat Greece they received no IRB ranking points. Now they will, when they beat them!

- Schools rugby saw over 2000 boys and girls exposed to tag rugby with the lion's share of this amount coming from Tampere and surrounding areas.
- 4 new clubs brought game to the Finnish divisions with Joensuu, Porvoo, Kotka and Hämeenlinna all making their mark.

- Sponsorship.

Samurai continued to be the SRL's official supplier of clothing and equipment however the current contract ends at the end of July.

Eerikkilä signed a 2 year deal and the benefits that the SRL receive are also extended to clubs. With excellent facilities and equipment including a scrum machine, contact suits, rucking shields, plenty of balls, agility sets. All that's needed is to book your weekend and turn up.

Powerade continue to support the men's 15's with powerade drinks and drinking utensils.



Aussie Bar International signed a deal in 2012 to sponsor the men's 15's and the sponsorship runs for the duration of the ENC season, verbal agreements have been made for the deal to continue.

Women's 7's team have a laid plan to attract sponsors for the team and also for their specific tournaments.

Women's 15's have had a drive on recruiting player sponsorships. These individual sponsorships are paid into the SRL account and cover the cost of that players playing or kit fees.

- Ville Siiskonen has stepped down as SRL treasurer but has taken up a new role as the Anti-Doping Liaison for the SRL and clubs.

Salla Salo of WRC has replaced Ville as the SRL treasurer, Salla has previously been treasurer for WRC for the last 3 years.

Membership numbers saw a good increase over previous years which will be pleasing for the IRB and FIRA-AER as well as us.

*Insert table here*

An impressive fact is that Pori who have not been around for too long are now the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest club in the country behind Helsinki Rugby Club

Ville Siiskonen presented the accounts breakdown

*Insert content here*

For some odd reason the elected person to audit the accounts; Jonathon Cozzi had not fulfilled the task and the accounts were unaudited, therefore the board could not be released from financial obligations.

2 options were proposed, wait for Jonathon Cozzi to audit the accounts and hold an EGM, most likely at the 7's series held in Vaasa in 3 weeks' time or to elect 2 new willing volunteers to audit the accounts to ensure that they will be done, the 2<sup>nd</sup> option was unanimously agreed on and Fredrico Posch and David MacDougall volunteered to carry out the task

The annual report was unanimously accepted.

- Insurance for 2013  
Valo (formerly known as the SLU) have submitted their new insurance offering. And for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in many years the premiums amount has dropped, the insurance offered by Valo will be set at 199€ for a year's insurance, given that the likes of IF have increased their own insurance offerings by considerable amounts this was good news. The insurance offered by Optimum, via Hans Larsson Kapp was still on offer, priced at 187€ and the terms were not as favourable as the Valo option.



- Ville Siiskonen went through the anti-doping procedures, The SRL and its subsidiaries now have to comply with Anti-Doping legislations, this is also in compliance with IRB and OKM terms (The SRL's 2 biggest financial contributors).  
All National Teams have received an anti-doping lecture and are aware of the procedures and penalties of doping offences.  
Now that the SRL is part of the Anti-doping setup it means all NT's, referees and clubs are liable for anti-doping testing. These can take place on game day or at trainings and there isn't really any way to avoid them if selected. The tests are carried out without prior notice.  
If a player is using a prohibited substance as there is no other alternative then that player would need to obtain a TUE certificate from their doctor.

This also meant that the SRL legislation needed to be amended to include anti-doping wording.

This was unanimously agreed upon.

- Season Structure,  
The question was raised of what is the default structures for Division 1 games, it was confirmed that the default playing number is 12 per team and it was also noted that an agreement was made at the autumn meeting for games to be 35 minutes per half, however it is now realized that this would mean an exceptional amount of time to play the southern tournaments and a huge effort on the players.  
Playing time can be altered as long as both captains agree beforehand.

**POST-EDIT: The competitions manager was able to check the factual basis of the above after the meeting and it was incorrect. All clubs had been advised via email of the actual agreed structure on 18 Oct 2012 and this original email was forwarded once more with a letter of clarification after the meeting on 6 March 2013. The above should be disregarded therefore as it is incorrect.**

- Rauma and the Championship.  
Last season Rauma were promoted to the championship as OYUS declined the invitation, at the autumn meeting Rauma proposed that they would twin with Pori Rugby to make good any shortfall in Rauma playing numbers, it has now come to light that Rauma do not have sufficient numbers to play in the Championship due to staff cutbacks in Rauma (all of Rauma players work for Areva) this would mean that Pori would have to loan a minimum of 12 players to Rauma which Pori informed they could not do.  
Therefore this means that Rauma are not able to compete in the championship.  
2 options were presented:  
OPTION 1  
Rauma are demoted to Division 1 and with the help of the SRL and Pori, regular open days and recruitment days would be held to bolster Rauma's playing numbers.  
It was commented that Rauma have been in existence for 8 years and have always been a temporary club, looking to fold once Areva contracts were finished, it was also noted by the Rauma representative that they have no Finnish players within the club, have never tried to recruit and presented that they showed no eagerness to recruit.



## OPTION 2

This option was to disband Rauma Ice Pack and players were then free to join other clubs, most likely Turku Eagles and Pori. This was the option that the Rauma rep was championing.

Rauma did not make a good impression for themselves on this issue by arriving late, leaving early and almost falling asleep.

Option 2 was voted upon as final.

Rauma would still like to compete in Snow Rugby, Midnight Rugby and the 7's series as Rauma, but as Rauma are not in the 2013 series, special permission would need to be granted for this to happen.

Unanimously agreed that Rauma could compete in the above mentioned tournaments.

- Pori requested special permission for 2 of its players who have just been selected for the Finland A team, in the defence that if they are to play for the Country then they should be exposed to the best rugby Finland has to offer. Now that Rauma are no longer partaking in the championship that option is no longer available to these 2 players. Permission was asked that these 2 players would be able to play for Tampere Rugby Club.

This permission was granted

-this then led to several other scenarios:

Jyväskylä and Kuopio brought up a bi-directional player movement, Kuopio players are twinned with Jyväskylä now that JRC no longer fields 2 men's teams. Jyväskylä wanted the possibility to send its new players to Kuopio to play as they would not be good enough to play in JRC's championship team.

This contravenes the rules that were agreed upon in the autumn meeting and would again enable anyone to play for anyone.

It was noted that rules are made for a purpose not so that clubs can prise them apart to find loop holes and exceptions.

- Juniors rugby  
Unfortunately there are not enough active juniors in clubs to have a junior league, however ever endeavour will be made to have exhibition matches that would coincide with bigger rugby organized events such as MRT and National Team games.
- Touch season  
This was touched upon at the last meeting in the autumn and came with mixed responses, those in favour and those dead against it.  
On this occasion HRC, WRC and TRUC were interested, it was agreed that George Mossford would contact all clubs and gather interest, again.
- Rugby Ready and Laws of the Games exams  
As part of the IRB KPIs every licensed player in Finland needs to have completed these and submitted the certificate to their relevant club contact before the season starts. The exams are free of charge and online.



It was noted that Rugby Ready was fairly straight forward but the wording of the Laws of the Game was tricky even for native English speakers.  
The reason for these to be completed is to raise the rugby knowledge of all players in the country.

- 2014 preliminary discussion

This was perhaps a bit premature but a few topics were raised that would lead to further discussion in the autumn meeting.

It is proposed that a championship playing team would have a 1<sup>st</sup> XV, 2<sup>nd</sup> team and women's team within a set amount of time – this is to develop and grow the game

It was noted that TRUC have been around for a good while yet still only operate with a men's 1<sup>st</sup> team.

- Bro bannatyne spoke that Finland NT players should be looking to play top level rugby in order to give their best for NT. He proposed several scenarios of how to expand the Championship.

- Using ice hockey as an example it was noted that everyone plays each other once and then the 3 or 4 remaining games were drawn from a hat, or local derbies were played several times.


It was pointed out that Ice hockey is played on ice and that they also play their games on a Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday and the depth in squad is a whole lot bigger, plus they are paid professionals, and the derbies are money makers rather than a necessity


It was raised whether it's time to stop having no games whilst NT games are being played. This would mean some teams are at a loss of their best players, but this would affect mainly the championship teams, which means that Division 1 games could still be played.

It was noted that NT games are usually played pre and post season so don't affect greatly the season structure

- For 2014 it is noted that teams who operate more than 1 team may find that their 1<sup>st</sup> v and 2<sup>nd</sup> team may be playing in different cities as well as their women's teams, the seasons have been structured that way to accommodate those clubs with more than 1 team, but this shows an unbalance to those clubs rather than treating them all equally.

The meeting was closed at 1220

  
MATTI TUOMINEN

  
George Mossford