



**SUOMEN RUGBYLIITTO**  
**FINNISH RUGBY FEDERATION**

Member of World Rugby  
Member of Rugby Europe  
Member of Finnish Olympic Committee (NOC)  
Member of Suomen liikunta ja urheilu (VALO)

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**Agenda SPRING GENERAL MEETING 2015**

**Date: 19.04.2015**

**Location: Valo Talo, Pasila, Helsinki.**

**Time: 09.30**

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The meeting opened at 09.30

Present:

Antti Lammi (WRC), Jaakko Salo (Pori), Iiro Uotila (WRC), Mika Partanen (Kuopio RC), Bro Bannatyne (old Town Shamrocks), George Mossford (FRRA/SRL Board), Taina Kolehmainen (VASP), Steve Whittaker (Espoo/SRL TD), Chris Gibbons (Tampere RC), Palemia Field (SRL), Pasi Hirvonen (KRJ), Outi Perälä (KRJ), Ville Siiskonen (HRFUC), Sanni Virtanen (SRL YDO), Stevan Thorne (SRL General Secretary).

Absent with apologies: Isaac Visser (SRL Board member), Sauli Tyvi (SRL Board member), Petter Larsen (Old Town Porvoo). Lauri Ylönen (SRL 7's coach).

Arrived late: Iida Myllymäki (SRL Treasurer).

**2. Election of a chairman, a secretary and two scrutinizers and if necessary, two vote-counters for the meeting**

Chairman: Palemia Field

Secretary: Stevan Thorne

Scrutinizers: George Mossford, Taina Kolehmainen

Vote Counters: Antti Lammi, Ville Siiskonen

**3. The regularity and the quorum of the meeting are confirmed**

Confirmed

**4. The agenda of the meeting is agreed**

Agreed

**5. Previous meeting minutes approved**

Unanimously approved

**6. Annual Report 2014 review.**

V.Siiskonen (Helsinki RC) raised some points:





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1. He wanted clarification/an update of the budget for the TD salary on top of the World Rugby funding (6000€). C.Gibbons stated a final draft of the marketing brochure for sponsorship is now ready. The plan is to use this in order to raise funds for various elements in rugby including the TD.

The target is to have this at the end of May 2015. 95 companies have been identified both Global and National and the SRL will approach these companies for funding. This will not only cover short term funding, but also something that is more sustainable in the years ahead. The license fee will also help cover the overhead costs and it was noted by the Chairman that the TD salary is classed as an overhead.

The brochure will also be passed on to every SRL club for their use.

B.Bannatyne raised the point of clubs asking their own sponsors for SRL sponsorship, but the point was raised that the clubs sponsorship may be cut due to this.

2. The TD job description may not be clear to some clubs. Could it be communicated to the clubs the TD's roles and responsibilities. S. Whittaker has agreed that he would share this information to the clubs. It was also asked how someone could become a TD. This information was explained to those present.

Ville also asked if there was a situation where the TD could no longer fulfil his role as TD, how would his replacement take the role? The Rugby Europe method was explained. A plan will be made explaining the process of how to become the TD if the need arises.

3. For players playing abroad, what is the process (and also for teams visiting Finland). This was explained by the General Secretary. It was also noted that the new website will have a FAQ page with this information on.
4. For the Mens' NT, there were 6 people noted as management. What are the cost breakdowns of this? It was noted that the budget is for 5 people, but C. Gibbons travels at his own costs. A. Davies and I. Visser are named as Assistant coaches. It was asked whether there has been any contact with other unions regarding strength and conditioning etc. It was noted that Lauri Ylönen has been trained as a Strength and Conditioning coach by World Rugby.
5. It was asked if there any means that other people that can help with regards to the NT coaching? It was stated that for the Mens 15's NT, B..Hussey was recruited for this reason as he has excellent contacts in the RFU. For each National Team it is the ultimate responsibility of each Head Coach to appoint their coaching team, not the SRL board members, but the Board ensures that they are bringing value to their position.

Iida Myllymäki attended the meeting at 10.01

### 7. 2015 Financial information:

#### 7.1 Changes to SRL billing procedure

Holvi will now be the SRL official's billing format. This allows for an approval process as well for expenses. This process will now be added into the FAQ page on the SRL website.





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### 7.2. Changes to SRL Treasurer

Due to I Myllymäki's position as 7's NT Team manager, as well as her role as Treasurer, she has resigned her position as SRL Treasurer. Chris Gibbons will now take this role. The banking account also will to be changed from Personal Account to a Business Account.

### 7.3. General Financial information

The SRL faced a cash flow problem in 2015 due to payments that were previously received at the beginning of the year are now paid in instalments throughout the year. The accounts are yet to be audited but they will be sent to a professional auditor for final auditing. T. Kolehmainen stated it was a good move that this was the case. To date, all bills are paid, there are funds in the bank and it is the financial documentation that only needs finalising.

To move forward: The accounts are to be sent to the SRL Scrutinisers nominated in the last General Meeting. Once the scrutinisers have looked at the accounts they will inform whether the SRL needs to call an EGM to discuss. The current situation is the accounts as they are, are now cleared but for official procedure they need to follow regulated accounting procedures.

Sanni Virtanen (YDO) requested that if there is a case where Team Management are forced to use their own credit cards, they actually receive interest on the amount that they are outstanding until they receive reimbursement from the SRL. C.Gibbons noted that this should be paid at European Central Bank rates.

C.Gibbons will take the 2015 accounts. The 2014 accounts will be advised by V.Siiskonen in an advisory role only. He is free from responsibility for the accounts of 2014. This will ensure that everything is correct when sent to the auditor. The final SRL approval will be ratified at the Autumn AGM.

A timeline will be sent by T. Kolehmainen (Auditor) explaining when the SRL can receive the materials.

## 8. 2015 Domestic season

### 8.1 Womens' 7's series: expansion and sharing of final's day with Mens' 7's.

Apologies from the Womens' 7's coach for his absence, but below are his thoughts:

I strongly believe that we should expand the sevens season into 8 tournaments.

Why?

-In order to have a "proper" series where teams can concentrate and train just on sevens  
-When junior teams emerge, they will be sevens since it is much easier to put together a sevens teams than 15s -> junior athletes path into adulthood

-If we want to have a recognition from Valo and NOC we need a proper sevens season. This is also the only long term way to raise the general skill level of players and teams.





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-More teams are popping up and concentrating on sevens

-It is a good idea to have a 15s season, but realistically there are just 4 (max 5) teams who are able to field 15 players throughout the summer. Therefore sevens could be the more competitive season form.

-If we look at the development of players, we find that a player in sevens handles the ball more frequently, does more tackling, does more decisions, takes more responsibility. Therefore sevens is a superb form off increasing the skill level of players (also players wishing to concentrate on 15s, IRB S&C level 2 manual on small sided games).

When?

-It could be from November or December to May or early June (European champs usually in June).

How?

-It would mean more tournaments indoors, but also outdoor in April-June

-Each tournament could be sold to a sponsor by the organising club. Therefore the costs can be kept low.

Challenges?

-Costs if clubs do not work to find tournament sponsors

-Commitment of some clubs?

-Fields are relatively hard to book for the whole day

-If team number rises above 9, we need to consider an upper and lower tier

-The season needs set structures regarding the management of finances, responsibilities of the teams etc.

The growth of women's rugby in Finland is and will be heavily related to sevens. That is a fact. Yet I believe that 15s season should be played as it gives an opportunity to all body types to play the game (game for all) but it could be (and it is) more social form. If we wish to take the path of growth and competitiveness in Womens rugby, there is only one way: Sevens way!

*Comments:*

George Mossford will discuss with the stakeholders in the 7's series and devise a framework to move forward.

It was raised that what happens to players who only play 7's in the summer? VASP only play 7's and during the summer have the off-season where they train. The current regulations allow a player from only a 7's team can play for a team in the summer for a 15's team.

An increase in the number of tournaments would result in more indoor tournaments. With regards to the Astroturf issue (World Rugby Reg. 22). This will be raised at the World Rugby Conference in July by the Chairman.

What would be the impact to the Womens 15's teams if the focus is on 7's? Antti Lammi stated that the 7's season is played in the Winter it shouldn't clash with the Summer 15's tournament. This could possibly result in more players continuing with the game in 15's.





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*Squad numbers for the 7's tournaments:*

A proposal was made to amend the current regulations to change the amount of players in a team for the 7's tournaments (Men and Women):

Proposal:

- Per game the named players will be 12 as per World Rugby regulations.
- The amount of players per squad in each tournament raised to 15.
- A red card in the tournament would result in a ban for that tournament for that player which will result in subsequent disciplinary measures.

The proposals were unanimously approved.

A working group will be set up by G. Mossford and the Technical Director to move forward on these issues.

### 8.2. Womens 15's domestic season updates

Pori have withdrawn from the 15's season in 2015.

Iida Myllymäki left the meeting at 11.35

### 9. IRB "Get Into Rugby" (GiR) updates

The GiR coordinator visited Finland in February 2015 and he met the Women's rugby representatives and a selection of clubs. The program was explained to the attendees.

GiR was officially "launched" in Finland (it was more of a photo opportunity).

There is a 40% target for new figures for female players. Finland has a 48% attendance already for GiR events. This resulted in a small reward of tag sets which will be passed on to those that need them.

All GiR events must be recorded in the GiR tool. The TD has had to remind teams to complete this.

It was asked how the procedure for organising schools competitions. The TD has materials that each clubs can use as well as budget for this type of tournaments.

As tournaments are held out of schools hours, what are the insurance implications? Sanni stated that if it is part of a school event, then they are covered by the school insurance. If it is a club tournament then each attendee needs to understand that they are not covered by SRL and they play at their own risk. The SRL trainers and referees are covered by Valo's Tuplaturva insurance.

A schools tournament will be held in May in Porvoo, but it was raised that the information isn't shared,





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so the YDO was not aware of this.

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A schools tournament will be held in May, but it was raised that the information isn't shared, so the YDO was not aware of this.

A consistent and updated source of information needs to be set up. At the moment there are many forums and means of communication which results in good information not being shared by those that would find it useful.

### 10. Youth Rugby: information about current situation and the future

Current situation:

A camp was held in Eerikilä in October with 27 players with P. Tennet.

A "round table" meeting was attended by 4 clubs and the YDO team. A Facebook group was set up for open discussion and ideas/sharing best practices.

In November a U17's camp was setup with social activities as a reward for increasing the numbers (available from the YDO).

A proposed January selection camp was planned. But had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. A questionnaire was sent to all the clubs (including U30's due to Student Rugby) and the results showed that there were a good group of young women rugby players are active. 3 replies were classed as students (older than 20, but willing to play for a Student Team).

It was decided to combine the U20's and Students. They were then eligible to play in a 7's tournament in Moscow in 2015, but the level of rugby is very high. To be selected for this, then players must play in either the Åland camp, play in Midnight Rugby or send video footage to the Youth Coach and YDO.

There are options for the Youth to play, but some options (e.g. in Austria) are expensive. There is a tournament in Trelleborg, Sweden that there is an option to participate.

*The Rugby Europe classification of U17's, U20's need to be clarified. This info will come from the TD/GS conference.*

The Youth team also played in Snow Rugby 2015.

The Åland camp may need to be cancelled due to only 10 attendees and other foreign teams





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withdrawing due to their own plans.

Future:

A proposed payment/membership fee at the beginning of the year to confirm their participation. A plan will be made to show attendees exactly what they will receive from this fee.

The Plan is for the Men to play 15's.

*Schools Rugby:*

Tag rugby is played in schools. But at the moment there needs to be a person wholly responsible for this element.

A proposal for a 2016 schools tournament final was discussed (having the final in Hämeenlinna), but it was noted that the last time a school from one city played another city was in 2012. It was noted that this final may be "running before we learn to walk".

The volunteers issue was also mentioned. At the moment there are a lack of volunteers working on this and these volunteers are leaving.

Sanni raised the point that if the YDO, or the SRL board send out emails with instructions to pass on to the players, why are they not actually forwarded? Or if they are, why is there a lack of replies. It was stated that some clubs don't have a person that can do this.

### **11. National Team Issues 2014/15**

There are no issues raised.

### **12. Anti-doping: 2014/15 report**

According to FINADA no in-game tests were conducted in 2014

The updated prohibited substance list was distributed in December 2014 to each club.

NT had a testing in March 2015, so we can assume that more testing will take place in 2015

### **13. Next meeting arrangements:**

P. Field will step down at the next AGM. The board will be asked whether they wish to continue in their roles.





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A proposal for all the clubs to meet with the SRL board to have a workshop where all the issues can be discussed.

This was agreed and will be held in Autumn 2015 either in conjunction with the AGM or around the same time.

14th and 15th of November has been proposed. The AGM will be held on the 15th of November it will be in Jyväskylä or Tampere

**13. Closing of the meeting.**

The meeting was closed at 12.32

George Mossford

Espoo, 20.04.2015

TAINA KOLEHMAINEN

21.04.2015

HELSINKI

