



OFFICIAL LEINSTER SUPPORTERS CLUB

MINUTES OF OLSC AGM HELD IN THE LAIGHIN OUT BAR, RDS ON 7TH JULY 2012

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Jarrod Bromley, President of the Official Leinster Supporters Club (OLSC), opened the meeting at 1pm. He began by welcoming all those in attendance at what was the 5th Annual General Meeting of the OLSC.

The minutes of the 4th AGM, held in The Laighin Out Bar on 11th June 2011 were then approved by all present.

The President informed the AGM that as two of the outgoing OLSC Committee members had withdrawn their candidacy for the coming years committee and that as the number of candidates for the committee was the same as the number of committee places, 7, there would be no need for an election and the slate of candidates could be approved by the AGM by a show of hands

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Welcome to this, the fifth AGM of the Official Leinster Supporters Club (the OLSC).

Before we begin reviewing last season I would like to say thank you to a few people, firstly the committee this season & our volunteers (if you would like to be added to the list write your email address on a slip and give to one of us at the end).

I would also like to thank the team at Leinster Rugby, Keira Kennedy, Ian Murray and Mark Quinn of the Marketing side as well as Sinead Coffey and Kevin Leahy of the ticket office for all of their assistance. The clubs relationship with LR continues to grow from strength to strength.

The Club now has its own relationships with Leinster Rugby's main sponsors; we would like to say thanks to Denise Dunican of Bank of Ireland and Colin Donnelly of Diageo.

As I step down as President under the terms of the clubs constitution I would also like to take this opportunity to say thanks to my wife Alison Moore. Alison stepped down for last season from the committee but in reality didn't get much of a break, still volunteering on match day as well as listening and putting up with me working during the week!

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Moving to the season, what a season it turned out to be! It has been a pleasure to be the first elected president overseeing the club during back-to-back Heineken Cup wins. Thanks must go to Joe Schmidt, his backroom team and the entire squad for another fantastic year.

During the season supporters also said goodbye to a Leinster legend, Shane Horgan. As well as presenting Shane with a magnum of champagne at the Leinster Rugby ball we were also able to present Shane with Dublin crystal and give him the send off he deserved in front of 50k people before the Heineken Cup quarterfinal.

FUNDING

Myriam McQuinn will present the accounts for consideration shortly. The club had another solid year and was fortunate to have an increase in revenue primarily due to more people travelling on the interpro buses, the Bath transfer buses and two away games at the latter stages of the Heineken Cup (advertising/branding of the away guides).

COMMUNICATION

The Club continues to provide regular content for the official website, leinsterrugby.ie as well as match programmes.

During the season we ramped up the amount of travel information and other supporters content, given some of this is time sensitive social networking sites are ideally placed to get the information out to supporters quickly.

We have used the knowledge gained over the last few years to strategically use Facebook and Twitter at certain times of the day, we have boosted our numbers by 2500 to 10,500 over the last season on FB, our Twitter base tripled from 3k to 9k in just a season. To give you some insight the biggest area outside of Dublin where users are registered are London, then Carlow then Drogheda. In terms of countries where people are logging in from after Ireland we have the UK, US, Brazil, Argentina and Australia.

We appreciate that not everybody uses social networking so wherever possible we publish information on both the official and unofficial channels.

Twitter was also used again this season to provide updates for two untelevised away games – both from volunteers (Alison Moore for Dragons and Aisling O'Connor for Aironi).

THE LAIGHIN OUT

Our base here continues to improve, the last season saw the installation of the big screen and sound system, we also have invested in furniture, some murals and it is the desire of the outgoing committee to continue improving the supporters experience here, to this end funding has been allocated in 2012/13.

The Club has over the season secured memorabilia from the Heineken Cup final in Cardiff and Twickenham as well as a number of shield/plaques from clubs around the province. It is the intention to have these on display in time for the start of the new season.

We are also hoping to secure some items from the clubs history that were identified during the recent Leinster Rugby move from Donnybrook to UCD

We continue to work with Leinster Rugby to try and encourage the RDS to install permanent toilets.

In addition to the cosmetic improvements we held a number of supporters events this season, from Q&As to an on stage raffle, to mince pies and mulled wine after the Stephen Day fixture we also trialed complimentary finger food towards the end of the season that was received well. This base is a far cry from our beginnings of a cold windy shed and selling merchandise in the rain from a programme hut!

KEEPING IT BLUE

Flags continue to be provided at key home fixtures as well as all away Heineken Cup fixtures. The club has also invested in some giant flags which due to Health and safety issues couldn't be used in Twickenham to their full extent however they will feature in Dublin and around Europe next season.

The Club also ensures that at least 10 flags are at every single away game in the Pro12, we know that when travelling numbers are low that the players appreciate seeing even a small pocket of blue.

During the latter stages of the season the club invested in blue face paint, tattoos and hairspray to help supporters be blue, this was a success and the club hopes to continue this for key fixtures next season.

The Club also arranged a supporter's march in Bordeaux for the semi final, which had very good feedback, the concept won't work for every away fixture but will certainly be looked at again for our return visit to Clermont this season.

OLSC TRAVEL

As mentioned earlier in the communication section the travel aspect of the Club continues to grow. As we are not a bonded travel agent we are not allowed by law to sell packages that involve international travel. What we can do however is put together package information and share with our members. This is about getting information out there from various firms (Leinster Rugby sponsors and others) and the supporters can book what suits him/her.

Feedback on this has been very positive, our numbers on the road are steady given the economic climate when money is tight, an example of a package we promoted was Edinburgh away for under EUR 80 (flights and accommodation), we know that people who were not aware it could be done so cheaply booked on the back of our information. The interpro buses continue to be popular with all three fixtures covered.

For the Bath away HC fixture we handed out the ever-popular shiny blue Santa hats, this was combined with transfer buses between Bristol and Bath. The biggest logistical exercise the club has ever undertaken we covered 13 flights to make the otherwise awkward train/bus transfer seamless. Subject to numbers the club may look at arranging a similar service for the Llanelli away game (this was done the last time we faced the Welsh side in the Heineken Cup).

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AROUND THE PROVINCE

The club writes to every club in the province before each home and away game asking if any activities are being held around the game that weekend, the idea is to promote on Facebook/Twitter these with a hope to encourage people to visit their clubs as opposed to a pub to watch a game (therefore putting money back into the club), who knows the person who may never have stepped foot in the RFC may return, they may even join the club concerned.

The response rate to this has been poor with 4 maybe 5 clubs responding (often very close to Dublin and mostly always the same ones each time).

We reported at the last AGM that we intended writing to clubs to seek a shield/plaque for the bar, we are pleased to confirm we have received circa 12 of these, all of which will be on display from the start of next season.

LEINSTER RUGBY AROUND THE WORLD

Unfortunately everybody knows someone who has emigrated; the club recognizes this and during the season launched its first four overseas bases. Working with a season ticket holder/volunteer to create a home away from home to watch games (especially when they clash with a football game), we now have established email distribution lists in place with over 300 names across the first four bases.

London was the first, we acknowledge we had issues at the beginning however we now have a base at the Porterhouse in Covent Garden. McCormacks of New York was next, then McGettigans Dubai and lastly The Gaelic Club in Sydney. In Sydney over 200 people showed up to watch the HC final. The Club would like to say thanks to those who have supported this initiative. We have plans to expend these more (another in the UK and New Zealand) and to eventually arrange supporter's events and for these in the UK, transport to/from games.

In addition to the bases the clubs Blue Planet guide continues to grow with 47 venues around the globe now included, whether they live abroad or are just passing through and want to catch a game.

Finally on this subject we have established relationship with international broadcasters such as Sky Sports, SuperSport South Africa, Eurosport Asia and Setanta Canada so that if our games are not being played we can find out why and ask if a schedule change can be considered.

LADIES NIGHT

The club held the sixth annual event and in these tough times raised just under €7k, it is the Club's intention to explore our charity partner options so that we have scope to look at other charities to fundraise for in future – to date supporters have raised over €30k for Action Breast Cancer.

TICKETING

The committee continues to voice the opinions of season ticket holders in this area. The hosting of the HC final in Dublin next May will no doubt see tickets in high demand (especially should Leinster look as though they will be there). For those not aware each finalist receives a limited tickets from

the ERC, the remainder is either on public sale with a small number being retained for the ERC stakeholders/commercial partners.

Public ticket sales commenced the week after our HC win, to this end the club posted on its Facebook and Twitter links for the three official websites (Ticketmaster, Ticketnet and France Billet) so that supporters had the best opportunity of purchasing tickets early.

SUPPORTERS ISSUES

During the season the club worked on two issues concerning supporters, the first relates to ladies clothing (or the lack of), initially started by the 2009/10 committee we continue to ask the chain retailers and CCC why ladies gear is not available when the likes of Wasps, Glasgow and Cardiff (all also kitted by CCC) enjoy more selection. It should be noted that we would like to thank the Leinster Rugby Store for the work that they do in this area. They have ladies gear available however without the support of the larger retailers to satisfy minimum job lots the gear that our female supporters desire can not go in to production, this is the same gear that men enjoy in the proper Leinster Rugby blue just cut to fit women.

Another issue we raised related to the lack of TV coverage in the Pro12. A large number of our games were on TG4 or not covered at all while other provinces secured broadcast slots on RTE2. The Club attended a meeting with John Feehan of Celtic Rugby as well as Ryle Nugent of RTE Sport. The results of our meeting were published on the official website and our Facebook/Twitter. (Comments were that broadcasters show more of our games than Setanta did, broadcasters can not compete in the same market so RTE2 and TG4 can not play games live at the same time).

FINALLY . . .

The Club has changed greatly from when it was first formed, it is now seen as a one stop shop for supporters and we continue to see new faces using the services we provide, buying merchandise and coming to the Laighin Out.

I am fortunate enough to travel to most of the away games in both competitions, looking at what other clubs do for their rugby supporters both on and offline I can honestly say that I think we have the most professionally run supporters club in Europe. The level and quality of content we produce exceeds anything else available, we often receive feedback from people saying they are amazed at the service provided for a group of volunteers all of this in just a few short years. The Club has built the foundations to grow even more into the future, for that I am immensely proud.

Thank you

As Jarrod Bromley has reached the end of his second term as President, he is stepping down from the Office as mandated by the OLSC Constitution. A presentation was made to him by Ian Murray of Leinster Rugby on behalf of Leinster Rugby and the members of the OLSC in thanks for the hard work and dedication he shown over his time in the position.

TREASURERS REPORT

The Treasurer, Myriam McQuinn, reported that this had been a good year for the Club financially. The additional away games (the HEC Semi-Final and Final) meant that advertising and sponsorship revenue was received from two extra editions of the clubs popular Away Guides. The decision to run multiple shuttle buses from Bristol Airport to Bath for the HEC fixture also contributed to this, as did the two latest OLSC t-shirts for Isa Nacewa and Jamie Heaslip. There was, therefore, a surplus of income over expenditure of €3,607.08

ELECTION OF OLSC COMMITTEE FOR THE 2012/2013 SEASON

The President Jarrod Bromley advised that the Club's Constitution provided for maximum of 7 positions on the Committee. Having previously advised that two of the current season's Committee would not be standing for re-election he announced that three members had put themselves forward for election to the committee – namely Killian Byrne, Alison Moore and Aisling O'Connor. Along with returning committee members Jarrod Bromley, David Cahill, David Gough & Myriam McQuinn this brought the numbers standing for election to 7. No election was therefore needed & the new Committee was elected by a show of hands.

As was advised to members prior to the AGM, Aisling O'Connor was the sole member standing for election for President and was thus elected to the office of President for a 12-month term.

MOTIONS

No motions were received

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Thanks were expressed to the club for the organization of the march from the town centre of Bordeaux to the Stade Chaban Delmas before the HEC Semi Final against ASM Clermont Auvergne. It was asked whether it would become a regular occurrence. It was stated that it was felt that rather than it being something that was done at every away match, it would be something that would be done when the occasion and the venue were appropriate to such an event.

A question was asked as to whether the Club was responsible for rent and overheads for The Laighin Out Bar premises. It was stated that rent and overheads were covered under the agreement between Leinster Rugby and the RDS and the only expenses the club incurred were those voluntarily entered into, e.g. the purchase of furniture or framed versions of the t-shirt artwork.

Ian Murray of Leinster Rugby addressed the AGM, expressing the thanks of both Leinster Rugby and the Team for all the effort and hard work the members of the OLSC have done over the season.

CLOSE

With there being no further business to conduct, Jarrod Bromley brought the meeting to a close.