



Irish Rugby Football Union

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Annual Report 2015/2016

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Irish Rugby Football Union
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& Committee

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OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE

President

M. O'Sullivan

Vice Presidents

S.R. Hilditch
P. Orr

Hon. Treasurer

T. Grace

Immediate Past President

L.P. Magee

Chairman Management Committee

D. Madden

Committee

G. Barrett
S. Bayley
M.P. Coghlan
N. Comyn
M. Cunningham
G. Drennan

L. Galvin
J. Gibson
G. Hamilton
D. Kavanagh
K. Lyons
I. McIlrath
J. O'Driscoll
M. Quinn
J. Robinson
R. Ryan
T. Hennessy
P. Whelan

World Rugby Board

J. O'Driscoll
P. Whelan

Six Nations Committee

P. Browne
P. Whelan

EPCR

P. Browne
P. McNaughton

Celtic League

P. Browne
G. Fitzgerald

Lions

T. Grace

FIRA

J. O'Driscoll

Trustees

A.R. Dawson
T.J. Kiernan
W.S.H. Lavery
Dr. S. Millar

Chief Executive

P. Browne

National Coach

J. Schmidt

STANDING COMMITTEES

Management

D. Madden - Chairman,
T. Grace, P. Whelan,
J. O'Driscoll, M. O'Sullivan,
S.R. Hilditch, G. Hamilton,
I. McIlrath, K. Lyons,
D. Kavanagh (co-opted),
P. Browne, K. Potts,
D. Nucifora and S. McNamara.

National Professional Game Board

G. Hamilton - Chairman,
D. Nucifora, P. Browne,
4 Provincial CEO's, R. Ryan,
J. Hartery, E. Reddan (player)
and G. Keegan (Irish Institute
of Sport).

Rugby

I. McIlrath - Chairman,
G. Barrett, S. Bayley,
N. Comyn, L. Gavin, P. Orr,
M. Quinn, J. Robinson,
J. Boyd (Ulster Rugby Chair),
P. Brady (Leinster Rugby
Chair), G. Malone (Munster
Rugby Chair), T. McDonagh
(Connacht Rugby Chair),
S. Walker and G. Black.

Finance

T. Grace - Chairman,
D. Madden, L. Galvin,
J. Gibson, M.P. Coghlan,
J. Robinson, P. Browne,
K. Potts, C. O'Brien,
F. O'Rourke (co-opted)
and L. Quinn (co-opted).

Commercial and Marketing

K. Lyons - Chairman,
T. Grace, S. Bayley, D. Devaney,
P. Dean, P.R. Browne, P. Power
and S. McNamara.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT MARTIN O'SULLIVAN



It was a great honour for me to be elected President of the Irish Rugby Football Union as the first member of the amalgamated UL - Bohemians club and I share with my club and the Munster Branch a great sense of pride and privilege.

At the conclusion of a memorable experience, I am delighted to put on record my appreciation of all those who helped me in my myriad duties, including my fellow members on the Union Committees and IRFU staff and equally my family and partner Edel, who performed her own supportive role admirably.

The Union is fortunate in the calibre of its Committee personnel, working in tandem with its professional staff. It exacts great dividends from the value of meeting and forming relationships with committee people from other countries, thereby enhancing the high reputation internationally in which the IRFU is held.

We are honoured with the support received from our National leaders and in this regard I would particularly like to acknowledge An Uachtarán Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina, who invariably grace our home internationals with their presence.

Throughout my term in office, visiting so many clubs and touching base across the grassroots landscape - which is in effect where my heart lies - I was especially

delighted to meet with our vast army of volunteers across the Island, who so loyally help to administer our game across the clubs, schools, referees, third-level and women's sections.

Meeting passionate volunteers and learning about their clubs was a particular highlight. I am conscious that the primary role of the IRFU is to promote and propagate the game and support our clubs. We cannot relax in execution of that task, nor be overly deflected by other challenges. The game is built on the work of volunteers and they, in my view, have always been and continue to be the real heroes of Irish rugby.

The growth and sustainability of our game is of paramount importance. We need to continually review what we do and adapt to our rapidly changing society. Nowadays people of all ages have considerably more options on which to spend their leisure time. We need to ensure that we have propositions for all of them within our game so as to guarantee that it remains strong and continues to make a powerful contribution to individuals and to the communities in which we live.

Already we see great progress in development of floodlighting and all weather facilities which allow our games to go ahead at different, nontraditional times and not be negatively influenced by poor weather. Clubs are to be commended for these developments.

President's Report

It was a great honour for me to be elected President of the Irish Rugby Football Union as the first member of the amalgamated UL - Bohemians club and I share with my club and the Munster Branch a great sense of pride and privilege.

A feature of our game in Ireland has been the welcome expansion and development of our rural clubs. Our base historically has been mainly in urban areas and work needs to be done to arrest any perceived decline in numbers playing in those areas. It is generally acknowledged that rugby has strong positive values and provides excellent role models. We constantly hear the benefits received from involvement in sport and it is our responsibility to ensure access to our sport for all who wish to be involved.

Clubs generally are at different stages of development. Some do wonderful work in recruiting new players and in organising and coaching teams. Others have tremendous facilities, while more have great fundraising capacity. What struck me forcibly on my travels was that the solutions to all our challenges lie within clubs themselves and it is incumbent upon us to identify ways of sharing information on successful good practices among all our clubs so that improvements continue across the board. The well-being of our club and grassroots game is fundamental to the wishes of the IRFU and I am greatly sustained that it will ever be so. The online club player survey launched this season which invites everyone to air their views on how they see their place in Irish rugby and how they would like to see the game evolve into the future is a helpful and popular initiative. Searching questions such as - "Should the Ulster Bank League players receive awards or payments"...

"Would you like to see a change in the season from traditional September to April,"... "Would you remove yourself from the pitch in case of concussion or other injuries"... I see as a further demonstration of the Union's concern for the welfare of the club game and its participants.

The growth of women's rugby is particularly encouraging with new teams popping up all over the country. The success of our international XV's and Sevens has greatly assisted this growth. We now need all our clubs to open their doors to women of all ages and encourage their involvement in our great game. Historically, this season saw the inclusion for the first time of a woman on the IRFU Committee. Mary Quinn has made a very positive contribution thus far.

The physicality of our game attracts a lot of participants. It is a core aspect of rugby which should not be removed. Notwithstanding that, it is vitally important that the welfare of our participants remains a top priority. We are proud of the leadership we have shown in that area and intend to continue to do whatever is required to ensure that our players are protected. The assistance and commitment to high standards of player welfare of all involved with players and teams is vital in that regard.

I must congratulate IRUPA on the initiatives they have launched, particularly around the area of mental





wellbeing, complementing the work that the IRFU also do in this area. On my visits to clubs my feedback was that there is much acknowledgement and regard for this and many other initiatives that the Union put in place during the season. Helpful programmes that the clubs spoke to me about related to a cross-section of issues. For instance, the concern of bullying in the club environment; the issues of concussion and other potential injuries; guidelines on the mental health awareness project called Mind Ur Buddy in association with Pieta House, the suicide and self-harm crisis centre; the partnerships with the Government's jobs programme called Connect Ireland whose aim is to stem the flow of emigration and how it has taken its toll on rugby clubs; and the partnership with Sport Ireland in the IRFU's Keep Rugby Clean anti-drugs education programme.

Our National senior team provides a big shop window for our game, along with producing impressive role models. Their success and that of all our representative sides is admirable, particularly when one looks at our relatively small population. I congratulate all involved on the continuing excellence of their commitment and performances. What is clear is that if we are to increase our competitiveness in the professional and international arenas we need to quickly embrace new ways of doing things. We cannot hope to compete with the major Nations in terms of scale or finance so



it is vital that we maximize our potential in all aspects of planning and preparation.

Rugby World Cup 2015 was a wonderful event and a great personal experience for me. Though the outcome was disappointing for us all, we must acknowledge the debilitating effect of injuries incurred during the tournament and subsequently in the RBS 6 Nations. RWC 2015 saw the last appearance of Paul O'Connell in an Irish jersey. Paul has been an outstanding player and ambassador for Irish rugby and in thanking him for his contribution, I wish him well for the future.

And speaking of the future, I am greatly sustained that Irish rugby is in safe keeping, notwithstanding the many challenges the game faces.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

PHILIP BROWNE



A theme over the course of the last season has been that of change, changes in the National Team and its management, changes in how we deliver and embrace high performance, changes in the competitive environment in European rugby, and the need to consider change within Irish Rugby. Change is not something that comes easily to representative organisations such as the IRFU or to any sport where there are of course disparate views as to how the sport should respond to changes not only in the rugby environment but in society as a whole. There are many great things happening in Irish Rugby at all levels in the game through the hard work of volunteers in clubs and schools with the support and partnership of the professional staff of our Provincial Branches and the IRFU. However, there is only one certainty and that is that “standing still” in a changing environment is not a long-term option or credible strategy. The challenge for all administrators in Irish Rugby, voluntary and professional, is how to embrace and lead change in a coherent and strategic manner and how to vision beyond the sometimes narrow and parochial, for the benefit of the game nationally across the island.

The 2015 Rugby World Cup in England was a remarkable event, well organised, well attended and full of interest. Whilst the Irish team performed creditably, the crushing disappointment of the quarter final against Argentina can be put down to a number of factors but in the main to the loss of key players and decision-makers. The post-tournament review highlighted that there still remain some systemic issues in Irish rugby which hold back the development of players, leaving the Irish team vulnerable when the core of more experienced players are unavailable. These issues are being addressed by the new High Performance Strategy agreed by the IRFU in

September, where there is a goal to produce higher performing players more quickly through a better resourced and quality pathway. This will in time ensure that our Provinces and the National Team have a greater pool of quality and experienced indigenous players to draw from.

The retirement of Paul O’Connell following injury in Rugby World Cup meant that for the first time in some 16 years neither of Ireland’s two iconic players of the modern era, O’Driscoll and O’Connell, were available, leaving some big boots to fill in the Six Nations. The injury hang over from Rugby World Cup and a particularly demanding schedule in the Six Nations made for a challenging campaign for Joe Schmidt and the team, further compounded by more injuries during the campaign. Despite the challenges Ireland came third in the tournament and but for small margins might have done even better. Perhaps most encouragingly, in keeping with the theme of change, was the introduction of five new caps, none of whom looked out of place in the international environment. The building of depth of quality and experience in the Irish squad is so important in this stage of the team’s transitional development. Further tests await the Irish team in the summer tour to South Africa and the team will be joined by new Assistant Coach, Andy Farrell, who will fill the position vacated by Les Kiss after Rugby World Cup.

All is change in the European rugby environment with the growing dominance of those clubs in France and England with deep financial pockets. The size and quality of the playing squads that these clubs can assemble from around the world has changed the balance of power in Europe to the detriment of our Provinces/IRFU who simply cannot match the playing

Chief Executive's Report

A theme over the course of the last season has been that of change, changes in the National Team and its management, changes in how we deliver and embrace high performance, changes in the competitive environment in European rugby, and the need to consider change within Irish Rugby.

budgets of these teams. There is no question that the Provinces should continue to aspire to European success but expectations may need to be tempered in the new financial reality that has emerged, driven by the huge television rights fees generated in the Aviva Premiership and the Top 14 tournaments, along with the increasing levels of private investment in professional clubs in those leagues. The attendant risks to the Irish professional game are potentially profound and one of the key mitigation strategies is to invest in our pathway to develop better quality players more quickly through a more effective pathway - a key element of the new High Performance strategy. There is no doubt that we have the athletic potential in Ireland, the key is to be more effective in how we “mine” and develop that potential.

An extension of this new European order is the difficulty that faces the PRO12 as a competition operating in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales - three rugby markets which are a fraction the size of those in England and France. The Italian market has not really delivered, not helped by the poor performances of the Italian teams and what appears to be a lack of investment in those teams. Change is required if the PRO12 is to remain a meaningful tournament. The revenues generated by the tournament need to double or treble if the participating clubs/provinces are to remain competitive with the clubs in the English and French leagues. Such an increase in values will

require some radical change to the tournament and how it is structured. The expansion of the tournament into new territories is probably a prerequisite and the first steps are being taken now in relation to a new strategic plan for the tournament. Part of this has been to appoint a dedicated Managing Director for the PRO12 and to take the organisation out from under the “administrative wing” of the Six Nations. Martin Anayi, an experienced sports marketing professional has been appointed to this position and in consultation with the participating clubs/provinces will be bringing forward plans to reinvigorate and expand the PRO12.

Alongside the theme of change sits finance. Whilst there is change all around us, there is little scope for incremental uplift in the revenues generated by the Provinces and the IRFU to compare with that in the English and French markets. Much of the IRFU revenue generated around the international game is contracted out for the next number of years, the IRFU sponsorship portfolio has little scope for growth, attendances at the Aviva Stadium are by and large at capacity. A similar situation pertains in most of the Provinces, albeit there is still some scope for uplift in attendances. New sources of income continue to be explored along with innovative ways of repackaging our commercial portfolio to generate increased revenues. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the professional game in Ireland can no longer rely on the IRFU being the “lender of last resort” as the IRFU no longer has the capacity to absorb the increasing cost of the professional game as the Provinces struggle to respond to the inflating player market in England and France. This means that the IRFU and the Provinces will have to be more clever and effective in the use of available resources and financial prudence will require that Irish rugby must live within its means.





It is plain to see that the changing “rugby economy” in Europe is a source of concern to our Provinces and indeed the IRFU and the National Team. This is exacerbated by the ongoing difficulties in reaching agreement between Tier 1 Unions on the international fixture list post-2019 when the existing international fixtures schedule expires. This debate centres around an aspiration to create a more sensible global season which would deliver inter-hemisphere international fixtures of greater meaning and value. To date the discussions have not produced a solution that is any better than the season schedules currently in place, particularly when taking player welfare criteria into consideration. The aspiration to generate additional revenues from a new and more meaningful schedule of international fixtures may not be realised. SANZAR Unions have made it clear if there is no change to the global fixture schedule then current financial arrangements for June Tours and Autumn international fixtures will be reviewed. This further layer of volatility and uncertainty makes it imperative that the IRFU manages its affairs with prudence for the benefit of the game in Ireland.

Change is not confined to the professional game albeit the impact of change in the professional game can potentially have profound consequences for the financing of the grassroots game in Ireland. It is clear that societal changes along with demographic changes through emigration and internal migration in Ireland have had an impact on the amateur game in some parts of Ireland, particularly the mid-west. The competition structures at different levels of the game have been reviewed at provincial level to ensure that playing opportunities are provided for those who want to play the game. At IRFU level there has been a lengthy review of the Ulster Bank League (UBL), the impact it has on players, clubs, administrators and it has become evident that some clubs simply cannot sustain meaningful participation in the UBL. There is also the question of how the professional game interfaces with the club game and the UBL, with disparate views amongst clubs as to the inclusion or exclusion of professional players in the top divisions of the UBL. Equally there is concern that there is a disconnect between the professional game and the

amateur game which is not healthy and with this some uncertainty as to the role played by clubs in the development pathway. Consensus within the club game in relation to these issues is hard to achieve which inevitably results in a reluctance to change. Whilst this may seem the most convenient option it generally means that the underlying issues facing the league and its clubs are not addressed in a meaningful way. There is no further need to review the UBL but there is a real need to consider how to change it to address the issues that have been well identified.

The Rugby World Cup has now firmly established itself as one of the mega events on the World Sporting calendar. In 2012 the IRFU took a decision to proactively examine the feasibility of Ireland hosting the event and conducted a detailed study which concluded that Ireland did indeed have the capacity to successfully stage a Rugby World Cup. Thus it was that, in October of 2014, the IRFU, with the support of both Governments, announced its intention to bid for the rights to host RWC 2023.

Since then the process has advanced considerably with the appointment of a Bid Director, Kevin Potts (IRFU COO), and a RWC 2023 Oversight Board under the chairmanship of Dick Spring, former Tánaiste and rugby International. The bid team draws on the internal expertise of the IRFU's Commercial, Communications and Rugby Departments and is backed by a group of external experts covering every aspect of tournament hosting. We have also had wholehearted support from the GAA who have made their stadia available for the tournament and we are greatly appreciative of their positive approach to assisting with this major project.

We are now at a significant juncture in the bidding process, The Applicant Phase, which is due for submission by September 2016 and our Bid Team remains convinced that Ireland is well positioned to deliver a hugely successful tournament for World Rugby.



This optimism is underpinned by the bid's unqualified support from every quarter, including both Governments, the ideal combination of large and intimate stadia to host full houses for every match, our well established international tourism credentials and the commercial support available through our own native companies and the extensive representation of the world's major corporations in Ireland.

There is a tremendous momentum about the bid team and we can be certain that the proposition put before World Rugby, on behalf of the IRFU and Ireland, will be compelling.

The hosting of Women's Rugby World Cup in Dublin and Belfast in 2017 assumes great significance in the context of the 2023 bid as Irish rugby will have the opportunity to showcase our capacity to organise a significant international rugby tournament prior to decisions being taken in relation to bidding for Rugby World Cup 2023. The final decision will be taken by World Rugby Council in November 2017.

In the context of all this change and the significant decisions and considerations that will be required of the IRFU over the next couple of years and beyond, it is incumbent on the IRFU to review its governance to ensure that it will be capable of dealing with the challenges that it will be facing including running Rugby World Cup 2023. A review of IRFU governance is to be carried out by a Working Party whose membership is drawn from the Branches and the IRFU. The purpose of the review is to ensure that the IRFU continues to operate efficiently and effectively and can develop as a modern and dynamic leading sports organisation. In that regard we need to ensure that we have a Governance Structure that is robust, effective, accountable and democratic. The Governance Review Working Party

will thoroughly assess and review IRFU governance structures and will provide recommendations to the Committee of the Union about changes that it feels will lead to a more effective organisation that is fit for purpose to deal with the challenges ahead.

One of the key issues facing the sport over the last eighteen months has been the issue of player welfare and in particular the concerns about concussion and the perception that the game has become increasingly physical with increasing prevalence of serious injury. The tragic death of Ben Robinson during a schools match in Ulster in 2011 brought the issue of concussion to the top of the IRFU agenda and the response has been centred around education and research. Education of all the key people involved in our game – players, coaches, match officials, doctors, parents – is crucial and educational programmes have been rolled out to schools and clubs, tailored for the particular audiences. Research is also critical and the IRFU Medical Department has commissioned independent research into rugby injuries which over time will help to inform with facts. The way in which the game is coached is also critical and the emphasis on good technical coaching and the phased introduction of the tackle to older children are important elements of how we make the rugby pitch a safe environment for players. Equally the provision of the short forms of the game in terms of Tag and Touch ensures that Rugby can be made available for all and at all levels of contact. This whole area is one that will need our constant attention and the IRFU must be seen to be both responsible and authoritative on the issue of injuries and concussion. Part of that is to demonstrate that the benefits of playing the game outweigh the potential risk of injury and the “Spirit of Rugby” programme which is referred to elsewhere in this report will be a key element in promoting the values that underpin our game and which are those of a responsible caring sport.





NATIONAL TEAM

RBS 6 Nations

The 2016 RBS 6 Nations Championship, following almost immediately after the 2015 Rugby World Cup was always going to be indicative of the strength in-depth of Irish Rugby and reveal some new exciting players. With the retirement and injury list mounting, Ireland faced into the competition and competed without some of its experienced leaders including Paul O'Connell and Peter O'Mahony. This adversity was off-set by the solid and new leadership of Rory Best, while revealing some exciting young and new caps, Stuart McCloskey, C.J. Stander, Josh Van Der Flier, Finlay Bealham and Ultan Dillane.

The most difficult opening fixtures against Wales, France and England saw Ireland placed fifth in the table, but consecutive and convincing victories against Italy and Scotland saw this developing Ireland team finish the tournament in a credible and satisfying third place.

With young, exciting players pushing for recognition through the Provinces, the next period should see more competition for positions and greater options for head coach, Joe Schmidt.

RWC 2015

The RWC saw Ireland win their pool with strong victories over Canada, Romania, Italy and France. This placed the team into a quarter final against Argentina who had finished runners up to New Zealand in their pool. We were beaten by a better Argentine team on the day which consigned Ireland to yet another RWC QF exit. The team was challenged due to a lengthy injury list of key players from the previous weeks encounter against France.

Rugby World Cup Review

After completing the review of the RWC 2015 it became apparent that a number of issues that were present after the review of the 2011 campaign were still prevalent and require addressing if Irish Rugby is to overcome the challenge of progressing further than the QF stages of future RWCs. The World Cup campaign was impacted by injuries to key players, highlighting the lack of depth within the squad – an area where emphasis has been and continues to be placed.

Strategic Plan

The High Performance Strategic Plan aims to tackle many of the issues outlined from the review of the RWC 2015. The vision of this Strategic Plan is “to drive a performance system that demands developmental and competitive excellence”. At a broad view the Strategic Plan has short, medium and long-term outcomes. The short-term outcomes lie within the development of the National Talent ID programme, the Elite Player Performance Pathway, and a high performance philosophy ingrained with staff and throughout delivery. The medium-term outcomes consist of a robust structure and competition model established for schools and clubs to ensure continued player progression and development, vigorous operational programmes that reflect the player's development requirements to continue to meet the demands of the game, and lastly player depth with a minimum of 3 quality players per position for the National Team. The consistent success of the National and Provincial teams falls within the long-term outcomes of the Strategic Plan which in turn provides economic certainty to effectively resource and develop the domestic and professional game in the country and ensures the quality of systems and structures underpinning Irish performance at National and Provincial level are world class.

WOMEN'S XV

Ireland Women played their first November Test match away to England on Saturday 14th November 2015. Teams were level up until the 78th minute when England crossed the line and touched down from the back of a maul winning 8-3. While the result didn't go in Ireland's favour, it was an opportunity to grow the depth in the squad and try out new players with the introduction of 9 new caps.

Over 3,000 supporters attended Donnybrook Stadium to see the team get off to a winning start beating Wales 21-3, with three new caps.

A double header in Twickenham Stadium saw the women's team on the wrong end of a 13-9 scoreline.

Ireland got back to winning ways by beating Italy 14-3 in Donnybrook Stadium, with three new caps.



In the final game President Michael D. Higgins was in attendance as Ireland ran in eight tries and finished the Six Nations with a 45-12 win in Donnybrook.

In total, 14 new caps have been introduced to the squad since last November thus expanding Ireland's International player pool ahead of the Women's Rugby World Cup 2017.

PROVINCIAL TEAMS/PROFESSIONAL GAME

Irish teams were to the fore in the Guinness Pro 12 throughout the season with Connacht being the highest placed Irish team for the majority of the campaign. The prize of qualification to next seasons Champions Cup led to a very competitive campaign. History was made this season with the tremendous victory for Connacht in the GUINNESSPRO12. Throughout the season they had shown team-spirit, determination and drive to win and the tournament got the result it deserved, and one that few would begrudge.

Connacht's journey to their first trophy has been long, and at times it has been hard, but for the players, coaching staff, management, volunteers, supporters and all the people that played their part in developing the game in the province over the years – congratulations. This was a great result for Irish Rugby, which continues to invest in Connacht, and in recent years increased resources have been put to great use. All of rugby applauds this achievement, and we look forward to more next season.

For the first time Irish Rugby was not represented in the knock-out stages of European Rugby Champions Cup. Connacht reached the Quarter Final stage of the European Rugby Challenge Cup losing away to Grenoble by one point.

AGE GRADE RUGBY REPORT ON NATIONAL SQUADS

Under 20

JWC 2015

Ireland finished second in their group after beating Argentina (18-16) and Scotland (24-20) and losing to New Zealand (25-3) and finished seventh overall after losing to Wales (22-12) and beating Scotland (17-9) in the play-off matches.

6 Nations 2016

Ireland finished 3rd in the tournament with memorable victories over England, Italy and Scotland after losing to Wales and France.

Under 19

The annual International Series with the French U19's took place in Limerick this season and the two match series being shared after France won (9-18) the first match and Ireland (32-21) the second.

Under 18

5 Nations Festival

This season England, Ireland, Italy, Wales and Scotland participated in a 5 Nations Festival hosted by the WRU. Ireland played 3 matches losing to England (12-15) and Italy (22-17) and beating Scotland (43-0).



Chief
Executive's
Report**3 Nations Festival**

The IRFU hosted the third annual festival with teams staying in The Kings Hospital School and matches taking place at Ashbourne RFC. The festival proved to be very competitive with Ireland losing to France (10-23) and beating England (21-17) in their last match.

REFEREES

The 2015/2016 season saw major refereeing appointments for IRFU Match Officials. John Lacey and George Clancy both refereed in the RWC and in the RBS 6 Nations. Andrew Brace, Sean Gallagher and Frank Murphy refereed in the U20 6 Nations while in June 2016 Andrew Brace will referee in the U20 World Championship. This season also saw two Irish referees in the Women's 6 Nations. Finally Sean Gallagher and Frank Murphy refereed European Nations Cup.

SEVENS**Women**

The Irish National Women's 7's programme underwent a season of quick transition. With new staff in place the team prepared well for the European Grand Prix Tournaments held in Russia (Kazan) and France (Brive) in June. The team finished fifth in this series which enabled them to qualify for the European Olympic Repechage that was held in Portugal. Although narrowly beaten in the final by Spain the team earned qualification for the World Olympic Repechage that will be held in Dublin in June of this year.

The teams placing in Europe also earned them qualification for the World Series Qualifier which was held in Dublin last August, where a top two placing saw them reenter the Women's World Series as a core team.

A massive step up in quality awaited the team in the first tournament in Dubai in December. The team finished 12th in the initial two tournaments (Dubai and Sao Paulo) before improved in Atlanta (9th) and Victoria (Canada) 11th. The team is now able to push the more experienced teams.

Men

The Irish Men's 7's programme was started in the lead up to the summer of 2015 through a series of Talent Camps giving opportunity to both club and aspiring pro-players in the provincial academies to expedite their development through the shorter version of the game.

The team started in the bottom division of the European Championships (Div 4) in June 2015. Winning both Div 4 and Div 3 has gained access to the European Olympic Repechage to be held in Lisbon in August. The team will face the best teams in Europe that had not already qualified for Rio Olympics through the World Series. Ireland entered this tournament as the bottom seed and achieved a top three finish to gain entry into the World Olympic Repechage to be held in Monaco in June 2016.

The team will play in the European Championships in June seeking promotion to the European Grand Prix Series the following year.

RUGBY DEVELOPMENT

During the season we welcomed Ian McIlrath as the new chair of the Rugby Committee and immediately he oversaw the modernisation of the Rugby Committee with the co-option of Provincial Rugby Committee Chairs to ensure a greater alignment between the IRFU and Branches. Similar to the Professional game, work has been ongoing in developing a new strategic plan (2016-2020); a process which has included engagement with internal and external stakeholders, and reviewing insight provided by the Economic and Social Research Institute. The plan is

Chief
Executive's
Report

built around the requirement to grow the male and female game primarily within our clubs and schools and acknowledges the opportunities afforded with Sevens being an Olympic Sport and other formats (i.e. small-sided contact games, and modified forms such as Touch and TAG) which assist both in the retention of existing players and in the recruitment of new (and lapsed) participants. Further, it prescribes the development of robust systems of governance and management for the game of rugby; and the promotion and marketing of rugby and of the values with which the game should be played – respect, integrity, inclusivity, fun and excellence.

Spirit

To promote and activate the values of Irish Rugby, the IRFU developed a new initiative called the 'Spirit of Irish Rugby' (SPIRIT); consisting of workshops, programmes and initiatives, delivered through branches, clubs and schools, covering areas such as anti-doping, player welfare and diversity.

Through Spirit, the IRFU has continued its Mind Ur Buddy initiative with Pieta House to reduce suicide through a 'peer led' buddy support and training programme within rugby clubs. This season saw four workshops run with 72 club members attending.

With the enactment of the new safeguarding legislation, a series of workshops were held across the country to provide information and training to over 80% of our Club Welfare Officers. A panel of rugby specific tutors have been trained and will continue to roll out Safeguarding workshops across the country. After a number of years of service, Pat O'Connor stood down as chair of the Safeguarding Committee, and we welcome Peter O'Brien as the new chair.

The National Disability Committee met six times. A large part of its work included the provision of resources for clubs, including standard Tag Disability laws, coaching guidelines and club guidelines for those wishing to set up a disability section.

Game Development

This season there was 168,000 adult players (XVs) participating in rugby football across the four provinces, with approximately 43% playing six or more games. The focus in 2016/17 season will be to increase the percentage playing six or more games through promotion of social rugby and reviewing the league structures to maximise the opportunity for players to participate.

For the last two seasons the IRFU has focused on increasing the number of youth teams which i.) Had an accredited coach and ii.) Played a minimum of 12 games. This approach resulted in a significant increase in the number of teams and games played in youth rugby; during the season there was 137 youth leagues or cups, with 1,301 teams participating (U13-U19) – during the 2016/17 season the focus will continue on coaching and games played with the objective to increase the number of teams by 5%.

The schools system is extremely vibrant with 81 leagues and 1,088 teams playing 11,322 games across the four provinces. The IRFU acknowledges the significant challenges faced by schools due to changes in teaching guidelines and the reduction in rugby orientated teachers. The IRFU has worked with the Ulster Branch to pilot a teacher training programme to support rugby coaches/players who have ambitions to become teachers, and it is intended that this programme will be rolled out in the other provinces.

During the season the IRFU Age Grade Committee undertook a comprehensive player welfare review of Youth and School rugby. A series of recommendations linked to laws, communication and promotion, competition models and coaching are scheduled for implementation in the 2016/17 season to increase the enjoyment and player welfare of our young players.

Further, IRFU Coaching Course content and related accreditation requirements have been updated to ensure the quality of coaches continues to develop and to re-emphasise best practice in the areas of safety and technical knowledge. Provincial development staff continue to undergo specific training in the areas of course delivery, accreditation support and technical competence in order to enhance the service provided to coaches across all levels and all regions.

The IRFU's Tag Rugby programme, sponsored by Volkswagen, was enjoyed by over 9,000 people across 19 rugby club venues. The leagues are complimented by beach tag events and the All-Ireland Finals day in Old Belvedere RFC. Cadbury Boost Touch saw its first active year and 45 teams took part in adult competitions around Ireland while more than 2,000 students participated in third-level colleges and universities. One of the highlights of the season is the National and Provincial Aviva Mini Rugby Festivals, with over 2,000 boys and girls participating from 120 clubs.



Girls Age Grade Rugby continues to grow in each Province, with a mixture of 7's, 10's, 13 and 15 aside. To expand the reach of female rugby, the IRFU piloted a new format referred to as GX7s (7 aside, half pitch rugby) for secondary schools. From provincial qualification, school teams participated in a National Finals Day in Aviva Stadium. A total of 56 schools participated in the pilot, which will be expanded next season to accommodate both boys and girls school teams.

The IRFU Women's Long Term Player Development model was launched in August and provides guidance on the development of the female player. This model is the first of its kind in any union and was endorsed by World Rugby and Sport Ireland.

Give it a Try-Girls Mini's was launched during the year and resulted in over 50 clubs run separate girls mini sections; the IRFU held 15 Girls Mini Rugby blitzes across the country with participation ranging from between 100-200 girls at each blitz.

IRFU Competitions

The 2015/16 season saw the Ulster Bank League move to 5 Divisions of 10 clubs playing home and away for the first time. The final was again played in the Aviva Stadium in early May and saw Clontarf FC beat Cork Constitution FC in a thrilling encounter which was televised live on RTE. St Mary's College RFC won Div 1B and Naas won Div 2A to earn promotion to Division 1 for the first time in their history. Division 2B and 2C was won by Highfield RFC and Old Crescent RFC respectively. Galwegians RFC hosted Cork Constitution FC in the Bateman Cup final live on RTE with Cork Constitution FC emerging victorious. Enniscorthy RFC won the Ulster Bank Junior Cup Final for a second time in three years.

The Women's Interprovincial Series was won by Munster, while the Women's AIL champions were Old Belvedere for the third time in a row. The Womens' All Ireland Cup commenced in January, and resulted in Galwegians RFC winning the All Ireland Cup, Railway Union RFC winning the All Ireland Shield and St Mary's RFC the All Ireland Plate. The IRFU AON Club 7s Festival was held in St Mary's RFC for U18s, Provincial clubs (Junior) and AIL clubs (Senior) with over 20 clubs participating.

Clubhouse - Database for Rugby Development

The IRFU further enhanced the Clubhouse database system, with deployment of the Education Management System (EMS) and the Club Development System (CDS) modules during the year. The EMS has improved the efficiency of administration in both the running of IRFU coaching courses and subsequent coach accreditations. The CDS enables clubs to administrate memberships, take payments online, electronically manage teams and team sheets, and communicate directly with specific groups within their clubs increasing their ability to attract sponsors and entice past members to renew their memberships. A number of technology projects will see the IRFU working with real time information relating to the ever increasing demands on staff, Branches and Clubs. The Development Officers' online reporting portal rolled out in September 2015 allows staff to log all work carried out in the community, ensuring that we are deploying resources in the most effective way. This is also supported by an Online Education system, which has seen the roll out of a Concussion course for Professional Players and a Nutrition course piloted with U16s player.

COMMERCIAL AND MARKETING

The economic climate remains very challenging but the Commercial and Marketing operation of the IRFU is working well under IRFU Sub Committee led by Chairman Ken Lyons and Director Padraig Power, and his department in the IRFU.

The Ireland Team continues to be one of the most attractive sports marketing platforms in Ireland for brands and through our sponsorship portfolio we continue to develop, fund and promote our game. The RWC in 2015 offered an ideal platform for our partners to execute campaigns which promoted and drove awareness of our game and the Team.

The Union extend heartfelt thanks to all of our sponsors for their support during this past year.

Our family of sponsors continues to develop and this past season marks some changes. We thank Three Mobile Ireland with whom our relationship after several seasons as our Team sponsor comes to an end, with special mention to CEO Robert Finnegan, CCO Elaine Carey and all their team for the support they have shown and for the innovative campaigns they have run around the Team, in particular in the fight against homelessness in Ireland.

Canterbury continue to provide rugby products that are of an extremely high performance quality which deliver a tangible benefit to our representative teams. Sales of the Ireland kit are always a strong indicator of both the popularity of the Team and the economy and we are pleased to state that the future is positive in this regard. To CEO Chris Stephenson and Commercial Director Sean Kavanagh we offer our thanks.

Our relationship with Diageo and the Guinness brand, one of our longest and most committed partners, led by Head of Sponsorship Rory Sheridan, and his team continue to support our game and we look forward to working with them in the future.

We are pleased to have renewed several partnerships this season with Ulster Bank, PWC, Volkswagen, DHL and Dove Men+Care. New partnerships that we welcome to the rugby family include Aer Lingus, as official airline, and Glenisk yoghurt.

I would also like to acknowledge once again all of our sponsors including Aviva, RBS, Sony, Eden Park, Aon, DHL, Lucozade Sport, Cadbury, Gilbert, Tipperary Crystal, Lease Plan and to our many other partners listed elsewhere in this document, we are most grateful for your valued contribution and continued support.

Marketing and Game Promotion

Match attendances and live TV remain the key promotional and marketing performance indicators for where and how our sport stands in the National consciousness. In addition and of great significance too for our commercial partners whom we rely on to drive awareness and excitement around our marquee days in the Aviva and abroad.

In a Rugby World Cup year with the Guinness Summer series replacing the usual autumn schedule, we are delighted to confirm that match attendances for our two home games were on budget as expected. Irish attendance and fans support at Ireland match venues during the RWC were nothing short of outstanding! Over 90,000 people at Ireland versus Romania in Wembley was an astonishing sight. Truly, we are very fortunate to have the best rugby supporters in the world for our Ireland Team.

The palpable excitement around RWC was augmented by the wide variety of consumer and community activity undertaken by the Team through open training sessions and 'meet and greet' opportunities. The efforts of Head Coach, Joe Schmidt, Team Manager Mick Kearney, the National management staff and all the players in delivering a positive, friendly and professional face for Irish rugby are greatly appreciated by every stakeholder group in Irish rugby.

Viewership figures for RWC 2015 and especially for Ireland games were in top 3 most viewed programmes on TV in Ireland and indeed, figures for the 2016 RBS 6 Nations continued to hold up strongly illustrating just how strong the support for rugby is.

Match Day attendances figures for our three RBS 6 Nations 2016 fixtures against Wales, Scotland and Italy were also very positive with three sold out games.

Positive progress also continues to be made in promoting all of the domestic game programmes and grassroots rugby initiatives under the Union umbrella. The Ulster Bank sponsored 'Your Club Your Country' IRFU Grand Draw is a significant marketing initiative which continues to deliver for the clubs who participate. This past five seasons has seen over €3m raised for the club game in this country.

The Patrons Club

The Patrons Club offering was improved this year by the appointment of a dedicated Client Relationship Manager, Linda McCoy, who will oversee the interactions with ten year ticket holders on match day in Aviva Stadium.

Linda's experience in Croke Park will bring an even greater attention to detail in how we interact with our valued patrons. We are committed to adding value to the Ten Year ticket offering. This past season we undertook our biggest ever away trip - over 200 guests joined us in Paris.

We also ran a fully subscribed travel offer for Twickenham in addition to all of the regular contact and priority sale windows for other events.

I thank our ten year and premium ticket holders for their continued support.

Chief
Executive's
Report**The Supporters Club**

The Supporters Club saw strong growth on the back of the Rugby World Cup and the availability of tickets for the RBS 6 Nations. The club continues to offer value for money. Going forward we will be looking at other ways to enhance the membership and integrate with new platforms over the coming year.

Webshop

Our online shop, which launched in late 2014, was hugely successful in the first full year of trading. Revenue targets were exceeded and with over 600,000 people visiting the site and 67% ordering more than once it continues to offer an excellent sales platform.

Irish Rugby Digital

Irish Rugby reached a number of significant digital milestones as the IRFU became the first sporting body in Ireland to break the 1 million mark in social media followers across facebook and twitter.

The IRFU also won the inaugural Irish Sports Federation Social Media award in November for the #ShoulderToShoulder campaign that brought supporters on the Rugby World Cup journey and built the fan base in the lead up to and during the tournament.

Just as important as the engagement at the top end of the game has been the underlying goal of turning fans into supporters and supporters into stakeholders by interaction with our online community to promote grassroots involvement – be that through our Aviva Mini Festivals, Concussion awareness or #Eat2Compete – our nutrition advice videos for young players.

Irish Rugby TV added to our usual offering of live team announcements, women's internationals and club games with the two day broadcast of the Women's Sevens Dublin tournament. Over 3.5 million minutes of Irish Rugby were watched on our live streams throughout the season.

Digital campaigns also contributed significantly to ticket revenues for the Guinness Summer Series.

Regular emails and tailored offers are well received with open rates and conversions well above industry standard. Our 'Black Friday' offer resulted in over €100,000 in revenue alone.

MEDICAL

Player welfare continues to be a very important priority for the IRFU with the ongoing work of the medical department in the areas of education and injury prevention.

SAFE-Rugby

SAFE-Rugby, the IRFU rugby specific one day first aid programme continues to provide coaches, doctors, physiotherapists, parents and players with practical tuition on rugby specific injuries. The SAFE-Rugby programme now in its third year continues to expand, delivering 42 courses this season with over 768 people attending from clubs and schools nationwide. The National and Provincial team physiotherapists and doctors at all age levels attended a Level 3 course in the AVIVA Stadium in April. The programme also provided Irish Heart Foundation Basic Life Support and Defibrillator training to 212 students and teachers at School's level.

All clubs in the Ulster Bank League must have a Level 1 SAFE Rugby trained coach. All other clubs and schools coaches are recommended to attend a Level 1 SAFE Rugby course and all medical professionals working with these teams are advised to attend a Level 2 SAFE Rugby course.

Concussion

The IRFU continues to drive a programme of education addressing the prevention and management of Concussion. 19 concussion road-show educational evenings were delivered throughout the country with support material also distributed.

The use of Hawkeye video technology in RBS 6 Nations at Aviva Stadium has also proved helpful in the identification and assessment of potential concussive incidents. A specific educational video was introduced for all professional players.

Research

Audit and research are an essential part of the medical departments work. We are currently collaborating with World Rugby and University College Dublin in the management of concussion and with Trinity College on the biomechanical forces in concussion injuries. The injury surveillance

Chief
Executive's
Report

study in schools rugby in Ulster is ongoing. We are also supporting a number of other medical research projects in the area of concussion management in children and adults.

Anti-doping

The IRFU once again commissioned anti-doping tests through the Sport Ireland, supplementing Sport Ireland's National Anti-Doping Programme.

Details of the tests performed are outlined below:

2015/16 ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME

In Competition	Players Tested
Senior XV	15
Emerging Ireland	02
National U20	09
Under Age	08
EPCR and Pro 12 League	24
AIL Club	04
Women's XV	02
Women's Sevens	07
Men's Sevens	01
Out of Competition	Players Tested
Senior XV	79
National U20	18
Age Grade	08
Provincial Squads	39
Women's Sevens	35
Provincial Academy	18

CHARITABLE TRUST

Three new members were invited to join the Trust Committee this year as part of the Trust's succession planning – Fiona Coghlan, Former Captain of the Ireland Women's Team, John Trainor from Onside and John Quinlan, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon in Tallaght Hospital. In addition, Jim Gibson from the IRFU Committee replaced Declan Madden who had been appointed Chairman of the Union.

The number of injured players supported by the Trust remained at 33, and the year has seen major technological advances in the support that can be provided.

Further innovation too, has boosted the Trust's fundraising calendar. A very successful Dinner was organised in London during the World Cup, a Corporate Patron's Scheme has been developed, and together with Co-Operation Ireland a walk and cycle to mark the 1916 Rising and the Battle of the Somme is planned for May

Committee

Retiring from the IRFU is immediate Past President, Louis Magee. He was elected to the IRFU Committee in 2003. He has held a variety of key roles in the Union. Our thanks and best wishes go to Louis and his wife, Susan.

Other departures for the 2015/16 season included Finbarr Crowley and Peter Boyle, both longstanding members of the IRFU Committee. Finbarr Crowley was elected to the IRFU Committee in Season 2003-'04, he held a variety of roles and was Chairman of the Management Committee from 2009 to '15. Our best wishes to him and his wife, Brega.

Peter Boyle was the longest serving member of the IRFU Committee since first becoming a delegate in 1985-'86, Peter has served on a number of Sub Committees, was President of the IRFU for Season 2006-'07 and was also one of the IRFU's delegates on the International Rugby Board/World Rugby, European Rugby Cup and Six Nations Committees. Best wishes to him and his wife, Joan.

Also departed in the 2015/16 season were Des Lamont and Ben Gormley. Des was elected to the IRFU Committee in 2011 and served on various Sub Committees. Best wishes to him and his wife, Peelo.

Ben Gormley was elected to the IRFU Committee in 2012 and sat on the Domestic Game Committee and Commercial Sub Committee. Best wishes to him and his wife, Anne.

Obituaries

P.J. Reid - 4 Caps - 1947/48

1948 Grand Slam winning team

J. Fortune - 2 Caps - 1963/64

M. O'Flanagan - 1 Cap - 1948

1948 Grand Slam winning team



HON. TREASURER'S REPORT TOM GRACE



I am pleased to present to you the Union's financial statements for 2015/16. The Union had a good year in financial terms enjoying a surplus of just over €5m against a budgeted surplus of under €1m. If amortised costs and income are removed the Union achieved a close to breakeven result in net cash terms.

As I have done in the past it is my intention to report primarily on the Union's accounts and to limit my comments on the consolidated accounts to reconciling any significant differences between them and the Union's accounts. In 2015/16 the surplus in the consolidated accounts amounted to €7.3m compared with the Union only result of €5.1m. In the consolidated accounts the amortisation of the Union's investment in joint venture and subsidiary undertakings is replaced with a share of the losses in Aviva Stadium and Thomond Park and depreciation on the car-park asset and this results in the €2.2m difference between the two.

The Union's total revenues improved by €2m from €74.1m to €76.1m due to a combination of factors. International Rugby income which includes gate receipts, broadcasting income and net Rugby World Cup income improved by €2.8m. Gate receipts recorded a slight decrease due to the warm-up programme gate receipts being less than those generated by the Guinness Autumn Series last year. The reduction in Six Nations prize-money was offset to some extent by an overall increase in Six Nations broadcast revenues arising from an early renegotiation of the related contracts. Other broadcasting income increased significantly due to pooling arrangements in relation to warm-up matches. The final component of the increase in international Rugby income arises from the net revenue generated by our participation in Rugby World Cup 2015.

Sponsorship and commercial income improved by €0.6m due to new sponsorships together with contractual increases in existing agreements. Provincial income was up by €0.9m due to European prize-money received for the 2014/15 competition and an increase in net monies received in respect of the Pro12 competition.

The Union are grateful for the retention of Irish Sports Council funding of over €2.6m which was further enhanced by additional equipment funding from the Government together with Women's Sevens funding from the Olympic Council of Ireland.

Other income is made up of World Rugby grants, rents and interest receivable. The decrease of c. €0.3m year on year is largely due to declining exchange rates in the last quarter of the year, lower interest rates and a reduction in grants.

In total the Union's costs have increased by c. €4.8m from €66.2m last year to €71m in 2015/16. The professional game costs in Schedule 3 includes all of the operational, logistical and preparation costs of the National team together with player and management costs. The decrease in match, tour and camp costs is due to no tour taking place in a Rugby World Cup year, operational savings and the different cost profile of warm-up matches. The increase of over €5m in player and management costs arises from the necessity to provide against operational amounts due from the Munster Branch in light of their current financial difficulties. In addition to this the Union has paid an additional unbudgeted amount of €250k to each Province to assist with the difficulties being experienced by all in the player contracting market. Insurance costs also increased significantly over the year.

Hon. Treasurer's Report



I am pleased to present to you the Union's financial statements for 2015/16. The Union had a good year in financial terms enjoying a surplus of just over €5m against a budgeted surplus of under €1m. If amortised costs and income are removed the Union achieved a close to breakeven result in net cash terms.

Elite player development is made up of funding for the four Provincial academies, the high performance unit and eight representative teams. The increase of €0.7m is less than the increased budget allocation provided to this area due to programmes not being in place for the full year.

The increase in domestic and community Rugby costs of over €1.1m is largely due to an increase in the agreed budget for the domestic game for 2015/16. In addition to this budgeted increase insurance costs also rose significantly and this increase has been absorbed by the Union. Marketing costs increased by almost €0.2m due to increased levels of activity, staffing and sponsorship costs.

The significant reduction in grounds and facility costs is due to a refund received in respect of VAT from Aviva Stadium who successfully negotiated a reduction in the applicable VAT rate to be charged on license fees.

Administration and overheads increased by over €0.6m due to a major refurbishment carried out at the Union's headquarters together with the net costs of the Rugby World Cup 2023 bid and Women's Rugby World Cup in 2017.

The net assets in the Union's statement of financial position shows an increase of €6.1m to just over €72m. This improvement is greater than the reported surplus and arises due to an improvement in the net liability of the Union's defined benefit pension scheme which is taken through the statement of comprehensive income rather than through the Union's income statement. You will also note (note 20) a prior year adjustment necessitated by FRS102 which requires us to include a full annual leave provision in respect of all employees.

Creditors and accruals fall significantly due to the absence of deferred income relating to Rugby World Cup 2015, warm-up match ticket sales and ISC grants. Debtors and prepayments increase due to scheduled amounts owing in respect of ten year tickets and corporate boxes.

As I mentioned earlier in my report one of our Provinces is experiencing financial difficulty and one of the main reasons for this is poor match results. It is no secret that the increased revenues available to French and English clubs are having a serious inflationary impact on player remuneration. The Union's response to this is to increase the player funding going forward for the Provinces but more significantly to invest greater amounts into our player development pathways from the grassroots game upwards. In our budget for 2014/15 an additional €3.2m was allocated to elite player development and €800k to the domestic game. In 2015/16 we have enhanced the domestic game investment by a further €1.2m. It is the view of the Union that these increased investments in our game represent the most effective way forward for the Union given the financial constraints under which we operate. That is not however to rule out any other courses of action and the Union and Provinces together will identify and assess alternative strategies over the next twelve months and beyond.

In conclusion I would like to thank all of those inside and outside of Irish Rugby who have contributed to the Union's financial performance during the year. I could not perform the role that I do without the continued support and advice of my Committee colleagues in particular those on the Finance Standing Committee. I would also take this opportunity to thank the Union staff in particular Conor O'Brien and his team in the Finance department.

THE IRFU WISHES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS & SUPPLIERS OF IRISH RUGBY



Sponsor of the Ireland Senior Team and Ireland Wolfhounds, Official Mobile Telecommunications Partner to the IRFU



Official Kit Supplier to the IRFU



Match Sponsor of the Guinness Series, Official Beer Supplier to the IRFU



Official Car Supplier to the IRFU and Sponsor of IRFU Tag Rugby



Supporting Irish Rugby



Official Formal Outfitters to the IRFU



Sponsor of the RBS 6 Nations Championship



Official Airline of the Irish Rugby Team



Sponsors of Community Rugby, the Ulster Bank League and RugbyForce



Official Express and Logistics Partner to the IRFU



An Official Partner of the IRFU



Official Chocolate Bar of the IRFU Sponsor of IRFU Touch Rugby



Stadium and Insurance Partner to the IRFU, Sponsors of the Aviva Mini Rugby Festivals



Official Sponsor of the U.20, U.19, U.18 and Ireland Schoolboy Teams



Official Sponsor of the Irish Women's Team



Fleet Management Services



Official Supplier of Match Balls



Official Technology Sponsor of the IRFU



Official Betting Partner of the IRFU



Official Sports Drink of the IRFU



Official yogurt & partner of the IRFU



Official Media Supplier to the IRFU



An Official Supplier to the IRFU



An Official supplier to the IRFU

ACCOUNTS

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UNION INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

		2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Income:	Schedule			
Representative matches	1	72,295,701	70,194,760	65,760,553
Other income	2	3,814,311	3,949,433	3,984,788
		<u>76,110,012</u>	<u>74,144,193</u>	<u>69,745,341</u>
Expenditure:				
Professional game costs	3	37,600,703	32,983,398	31,913,684
Elite player development	4	7,466,126	6,733,212	5,750,329
Games support costs	5	320,641	330,717	310,886
Domestic & community rugby	6	9,587,545	8,443,731	8,023,808
Marketing	7	1,736,811	1,563,396	1,261,355
Grounds	8	901,564	3,317,902	2,988,832
Administration and overheads	9	6,323,692	5,740,972	5,119,957
Depreciation	(Note 4)	1,210,502	1,213,288	1,210,224
Amortisation of financial fixed assets	(Notes 8 & 9)	5,907,292	5,907,292	5,907,292
		<u>71,054,876</u>	<u>66,233,908</u>	<u>62,486,367</u>
Surplus for the year		<u>5,055,136</u>	<u>7,910,285</u>	<u>7,258,974</u>

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

CONSOLIDATED INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

		2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Income:	Note			
Representative matches		72,295,701	70,194,760	65,760,553
Other income		3,898,311	4,054,433	4,089,788
Share of loss of joint ventures	8	(2,768,415)	(1,868,812)	(1,975,715)
		<u>73,425,597</u>	<u>72,380,381</u>	<u>67,874,626</u>
Expenditure:				
Professional game costs		37,600,703	32,983,398	31,913,684
Elite player development		7,466,126	6,733,212	5,750,329
Games support costs		320,641	330,717	310,886
Domestic & community rugby		9,587,545	8,443,731	8,023,808
Marketing		1,736,811	1,563,396	1,261,355
Grounds		901,564	3,317,902	2,988,832
Administration and overheads		6,406,152	5,842,278	5,221,258
Depreciation	4	1,710,502	1,713,288	1,710,224
Amortisation of goodwill	5	366,563	446,754	162,547
		<u>66,096,607</u>	<u>61,374,676</u>	<u>57,342,923</u>
Surplus for the year		<u>7,328,990</u>	<u>11,005,705</u>	<u>10,531,703</u>

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

UNION STATEMENT OF OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Surplus for the financial period	5,055,136	7,910,285	7,258,974
Actuarial (loss)/gain on assets	(419,000)	1,386,000	86,000
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities	342,000	840,000	335,000
Effect of changes in actuarial assumptions	1,089,000	(3,630,000)	-
Total surplus relating to the period	6,067,136	6,506,285	7,679,974
Total surplus recognised since the last annual report	6,067,136	6,506,285	7,679,974

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Surplus for the financial period	7,328,990	11,005,705	10,531,703
Actuarial (loss)/gain on assets	(419,000)	1,386,000	86,000
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities	342,000	840,000	335,000
Effect of changes in actuarial assumptions	1,089,000	(3,630,000)	-
Total surplus relating to the period	8,340,990	9,601,705	10,952,703
Total surplus recognised since the last annual report	8,340,990	9,601,705	10,952,703

UNION STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
General reserve	63,453,965	56,947,680	49,267,706
Ground development reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Financial assistance to clubs reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Balance at 1 May	65,993,441	59,487,156	51,807,182
Total recognised surplus relating to the period	6,067,136	6,506,285	7,679,974
Balance at 30 April	72,060,577	65,993,441	59,487,156

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
General reserve	77,876,719	68,275,014	57,322,311
Ground development reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Financial assistance to clubs reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Balance at 1 May	80,416,195	70,814,490	59,861,787
Total recognised surplus relating to the period	8,340,990	9,601,705	10,952,703
Balance at 30 April	88,757,185	80,416,195	70,814,490

UNION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 APRIL 2016

	Note	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Tangible fixed assets	4	31,756,725	33,332,741
Financial fixed assets			
Loans to clubs	6	1,743,978	1,582,253
Other loans	7	9,661,778	9,661,778
Joint ventures	8	76,055,111	81,462,403
Investment in subsidiary undertaking	9	7,000,000	7,500,000
		94,460,867	100,206,434
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	10	17,207,534	14,794,004
Cash at bank and in hand		15,351,199	17,682,010
		32,558,733	32,476,014
Current liabilities			
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	13,990,607	21,860,457
		13,990,607	21,860,457
Net current assets		18,568,126	10,615,557
Total assets less current liabilities		144,785,718	144,154,732
Pension liability	12	(2,884,000)	(3,820,000)
Deferred ticket fund	13	(64,743,532)	(68,128,949)
Deferred naming rights fund	14	(5,097,609)	(6,212,342)
		72,060,577	65,993,441
Financed by:			
Union funds		72,060,577	65,993,441

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 APRIL 2016

	Note	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Tangible fixed assets	4	38,756,725	40,832,741
Intangible fixed assets	5		
Goodwill		8,904,607	9,786,700
Negative goodwill		(3,559,407)	(3,788,729)
		5,345,200	5,997,971
Financial fixed assets			
Loans to clubs	6	1,743,978	1,582,253
Other loans	7	9,661,778	9,661,778
Joint ventures:	8		
Share of gross assets		190,264,195	195,134,976
Share of gross liabilities		(102,882,149)	(105,270,723)
		98,787,802	101,108,284
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	10	17,268,587	14,857,160
Cash at bank and in hand		15,367,685	17,699,221
		32,636,272	32,556,381
Current liabilities			
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	14,043,673	21,917,891
		14,043,673	21,917,891
Net current assets		18,592,599	10,638,490
Total assets less current liabilities		161,482,326	158,577,486
Pension liability	12	(2,884,000)	(3,820,000)
Deferred ticket fund	13	(64,743,532)	(68,128,949)
Deferred naming rights fund	14	(5,097,609)	(6,212,342)
		88,757,185	80,416,195
Financed by:			
Union funds		88,757,185	80,416,195

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Cash flows from operating activities		
Operating surplus	7,328,990	11,005,705
Deposit interest receivable	(428,390)	(144,938)
Unwinding of discount (Note 14)	609,076	576,924
Depreciation	1,710,502	1,713,288
Profit on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(84,486)	-
Movement in shares of net assets of joint venture, Union share of capital contribution and effect of conversion of loan to capital	2,768,415	1,869,516
Amortisation	366,563	446,754
Movement in provisions against loans to clubs	(20,402)	(46,944)
Movement in debtors	(2,411,427)	(1,998,781)
Movement in creditors	(7,874,218)	2,862,576
Current service costs less return on investment on pension	366,000	412,000
Pension fund contributions	(290,000)	(314,000)
Transfer to revenue – deferred naming rights	(1,723,809)	(1,390,476)
Transfer to revenue – corporate boxes and ten year tickets	(11,213,324)	(13,739,276)
Net cash (outflow)/ inflow from operating activities	(10,896,510)	1,252,348
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest received on bank deposits and other loans	421,229	124,138
Interest received on loans to clubs	7,161	20,800
Net advances to clubs	(141,323)	(191)
Repayment by Munster Branch IRFU	-	100,000
Disposal of tangible fixed assets	450,000	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-	(938,397)
Net cash inflow/ (outflow) from investing activities	737,067	(693,650)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of bank loans	-	(7,082,496)
Proceeds on sale of deferred tickets and boxes	7,827,907	9,435,963
Net cash used in financing activities	7,827,907	2,353,467
(Decrease)/ increase in cash	(2,331,536)	2,912,165
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	17,699,221	14,787,056
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	15,367,685	17,699,221

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

1. Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently, except as stated below, in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the accounts.

a. Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in Ireland.

Information on the impact of first-time adoption of FRS 102 is given in note 20.

The preparation of financial statements in compliance with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires the Committee to exercise judgement in applying the Union's accounting policies (see note 2).

b. Basis of consolidation

The group accounts include the accounts of the parent undertaking and its wholly owned subsidiary undertaking, Lansdowne Car Park Limited.

c. Goodwill

Goodwill is the difference between the fair value of the consideration given on the acquisition of a business and the aggregate fair value of the separate net assets acquired.

Goodwill is being amortised through the income statement in equal instalments over its estimated economic life of up to a maximum of 20 years on a straight line basis.

Negative goodwill is amortised through the income statement in equal instalments over the remaining life of the asset to which it relates. This is considered to be 20 years.

Goodwill is reviewed for impairment at the end of the first full financial year following acquisition and in other periods if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable.

On transition to FRS 102 it was determined that there was no change in circumstances that would amend the useful life over which both goodwill and negative goodwill were being amortised. The goodwill is linked in all cases to the life of the underlying fixed tangible assets which is considered to be 20 years.

d. Fixed tangible assets

Fixed tangible assets are shown at their historic cost net of any capital grants received or receivable.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

e. Depreciation

Depreciation is charged in order to write off the assets over their expected useful lives, on a straight line basis, at the following annual rates:

Land	Nil
Stands, buildings, etc.	2.5%
Car park	5%
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	33.33%, 25% and 12.5%
Computer equipment	20% and 33.33%
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	Nil

f. Joint ventures

The Union's 50% interest in New Stadium DAC and Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited are accounted for in accordance with 'FRS 102: Part 5 Associates and Joint Ventures'.

In the individual accounts of the Union, investments in joint ventures are treated as financial fixed assets and valued at cost less provisions for impairment in value. The provision for impairment in value of these investments is based on the estimated useful lives of the underlying fixed assets, which is estimated to be 20 years, and written off on a straight line basis. The estimated useful life for calculating amortisation in the individual accounts of the joint ventures is significantly longer than 20 years.

In the consolidated accounts, the Union's share of the profits less losses are included in the income statement. The Union's interest in the net assets is indicated as a financial fixed asset in the statement of financial position at an amount representing the Union's share of the fair values of the net assets at acquisition plus the Union's share of post acquisition retained profits or losses.

The amounts included in the accounts of the Union are taken from the management accounts of the joint ventures made up to the Union's year end. Audited accounts of the joint venture companies made up to 30 April are not available as both joint ventures have different year ends to the Union.

g. Financial fixed assets

Investments

Investments are valued at cost. These are reviewed annually and provision is made where it is considered that there is an impairment in value.

Income from investments is recognised in the income statement in the year in which it is receivable.

Investment – subsidiary undertaking

In the individual accounts of the Union, the investment in and advances to the Union's wholly owned subsidiary, Lansdowne Car Park Limited, are valued at cost less provisions for impairment in value. The provision for impairment in value is based on the estimated useful life of the underlying fixed asset, which is estimated to be 20 years, and written off on a straight line basis.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

h. Grants

Capital grants received are set off against the cost of related fixed assets.

Grants towards revenue expenditure are released to the income statement as the related expenditure is incurred.

i. Foreign currencies

Functional and presentation currency

Items included in the accounts are presented in 'Euro', the currency of the primary economic environment in which the entity operates (the 'functional currency').

Transactions and balances

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction or at a contracted rate. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are retranslated at the rate of exchange ruling at the statement of financial position date or the contracted rate. All differences are taken to the income statement as part of the fair value gain or loss.

j. Pension costs

The Union operates a defined benefit pension scheme for certain employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Union.

A defined benefit plan defines the pension benefit that the employee will receive on retirement, usually dependent upon several factors including age, length of service and remuneration. A defined benefit plan is a pension plan that is not a defined contribution plan.

The liability recognised in the statement of financial position in respect of the defined benefit plan is the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting date less the fair value of the plan assets at the reporting date.

The defined benefit obligation is calculated using the projected unit credit method. Annually the Union engages independent actuaries to calculate the obligation.

The present value is determined by discounting the estimated future payments using market yields on high quality corporate bonds that are denominated in sterling and that have terms approximating the estimated period of the future payments.

The Union also operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees. Pension benefits are funded over the employees' period of service by way of contributions to insured funds. The Union's contributions are charged to the income statement in the period to which they relate.

k. Deferred ticket income

Monies received in respect of corporate boxes and five and ten year tickets have been treated as deferred income and have been released to the income statement over the period to which they relate based on the estimated number of fixtures and the expected admission prices. Details of the amount deferred are set out in note 13.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

l. Liquid resources

In the statement of cash flows, liquid resources include cash on deposit at banks with more than 24 hours' notice.

m. Financing

Amounts received in respect of the transfer to the counterparty of the Union's contributions receivable under its stadium naming rights agreement (see note 14) are recorded as deferred income. Interest is accrued using the rate implicit in the financing agreement and is charged to the income statement in the period to which it relates.

2. Significant judgements and estimates

When preparing the financial statements, the Committee undertakes a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions about the recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. These are continuously evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The following are significant judgements made in applying the accounting policies of the Union that have the most significant effect on the financial statements:

Allowances for impairment of trade receivables

The Committee estimates the allowance for doubtful trade receivables based on assessment of specific accounts where the Union has objective evidence comprising default in payment terms or significant financial difficulty that certain parties are unable to meet their financial obligations. In these cases, judgement used was based on the best available facts and circumstances.

Impairment

In assessing impairment of intangible assets, the Committee estimates the recoverable amount of each asset based on expected future cash flows with the use of a suitable discount rate.

Deferred ticket income

In assessing the release of deferred ticket income, the Committee estimate the number of future matches, future ticket prices and rates of inflation in order to calculate the release of income in the current and future periods.

3. Income and expenditure recognition

Income and expenditure are recognised in the season in which they arise and are incurred.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

4. Tangible fixed assets

Union	Cost at 30/04/15 €	Additions €	Disposals €	Cost at 30/04/16 €
Premises and grounds	50,397,154	-	(664,582)	49,732,572
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,497,273	-	-	7,497,273
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	368,713	-	-	368,713
	58,263,140	-	(664,582)	57,598,558
	Accumulated depreciation at 30/04/15 €	Charge for year €	Disposals €	Accumulated depreciation at 30/04/16 €
Premises and grounds	17,437,318	1,206,447	(299,068)	18,344,697
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,493,081	4,055	-	7,497,136
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	-	-	-	-
	24,930,399	1,210,502	(299,068)	25,841,833
Net book value	33,332,741			31,756,725

Consolidated	Cost at 30/04/15 €	Additions €	Disposals €	Cost at 30/04/16 €
Premises and grounds	50,397,154	-	(664,582)	49,732,572
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,497,273	-	-	7,497,273
Car park	10,000,000	-	-	10,000,000
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	368,713	-	-	368,713
	68,263,140	-	(664,582)	67,598,558
	Accumulated depreciation at 30/04/15 €	Charge for year €	Disposals €	Accumulated depreciation at 30/04/16 €
Premises and grounds	17,437,318	1,206,447	(299,068)	18,344,697
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,493,081	4,055	-	7,497,136
Car park	2,500,000	500,000	-	3,000,000
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	-	-	-	-
	27,430,399	1,710,502	(299,068)	28,841,833
Net book value	40,832,741			38,756,725

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

4. Tangible fixed assets (cont'd.)

(i) The Union consider the accumulated cost, less related depreciation, on expenditure capitalised in respect of the previous stadium at Lansdowne Road as relating to enhancing the value of the land on which the stadium is situated. As stated in note 8, the Union is in receipt of annual rental income of €750,000 for this land. The net amount included within premises and grounds in respect of this expenditure is €5,718,538.

(ii) Under a Memorandum of Understanding dated 10 December 2007, the Union entered into arrangements with the Munster Branch IRFU and Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited to redevelop the stadium at Thomond Park. As part of these arrangements, the Union advanced a loan to the Branch (note 7) and acquired a 50% interest in Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited (note 8). In addition, the Union have granted an option to the Branch to acquire the freehold interest that the Union holds in Thomond Park. The option price will be based on the original cost of the grounds to the Union adjusted for inflation by reference to the Consumer Price Index from the date of the granting of the option.

This option will be exercisable by the Branch on the earlier of ten years from the date of practical completion of the stadium or by 1 January 2019.

The accumulated cost of the old stadium, less related depreciation, amounts to €3,448,672 and is included within premises and grounds.

5. Intangible fixed assets

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Goodwill arising on share of New Stadium DAC		
Cost		
At 1 May	12,144,850	7,848,417
Effect of conversion of loan to share capital and premium	-	4,360,207
Union share of movement on capital contribution	(246,208)	(63,774)
At 30 April	11,898,642	12,144,850
Amortisation		
At 1 May	(2,358,150)	(1,661,481)
Charge for the year	(635,885)	(696,669)
At 30 April	(2,994,035)	(2,358,150)
	8,904,607	9,786,700

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

5. Intangible fixed assets (cont'd.)

As part of its investment in the development of the Aviva Stadium, the Union incurred certain expenditure, which was not directly advanced to the joint venture company. In addition, the Union's capital contribution exceeded 50% of the overall capital contribution made to the joint venture company.

The effect of conversion of the loan to share capital and premium, and the excess capital contribution, which represents the fair value of the cost of the development of the stadium over the Union's share of the separate net assets of the joint venture company, have been treated as goodwill.

This goodwill is being amortised over a period of 20 years on a straight line basis.

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Goodwill arising on share of Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited		
Cost		
At 1 May	(4,538,474)	(4,498,474)
Union share of movement on capital contribution	(40,000)	(40,000)
At 30 April	(4,578,474)	(4,538,474)
Amortisation		
At 1 May	749,745	499,830
Credit for the year	269,322	249,915
At 30 April	1,019,067	749,745
	(3,559,407)	(3,788,729)

Negative goodwill arose on the Union's share of a capital contribution in Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited.

Negative goodwill is amortised through the income statement in equal instalments over the remaining life of the asset.

6. Loans to clubs

Interest on loans to clubs is generally charged at a rate of 1%. Terms of repayment are generally over 10 years.

Loans to clubs included in the statement of financial position are net of provision where applicable. Provisions against loans to clubs at the year end amounted to €556,503 (2015: €576,905). The movement on these provisions has increased net income by €20,402 (2014/2015: €46,944 increase, 2013/2014: €57,981 increase).

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

7. Other loans

	30/04/16	30/04/15
Union and Consolidated	€	€
Loan to Munster Branch IRFU	9,661,778	9,661,778
<hr/>		
Amount due within one year	4,400,000	200,000
Amount due after one year	5,261,778	9,461,778
<hr/>		
	9,661,778	9,661,778

The Union advanced funds to the Munster Branch in order to assist with the development of Thomond Park. The amounts advanced are secured on the Branch's share in Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited and on the loan advanced by the Branch to that company. Interest is chargeable on the loan to the Branch based on the effective cost of funds to the Union.

The schedule of loan repayments is as follows:

30 April 2016	€200,000
30 April 2017	€4,200,000
30 April 2018 - 30 April 2026 (per annum)	€500,000
30 April 2027	€761,778

The loan is to be fully repaid by 30 April 2027.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

8. Joint ventures

The Union holds 50% of the ordinary share capital of New Stadium DAC and 50% of the ordinary share capital of Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited (companies formed to develop the Aviva Stadium and Thomond Park respectively).

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Investment at cost		
- New Stadium DAC	108,145,832	108,145,832
- Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited	5	5
	108,145,837	108,145,837
<hr/>		
Amortisation in respect of New Stadium DAC		
Accumulated balance carried forward	(26,683,434)	(21,276,142)
Charge for the year	(5,407,292)	(5,407,292)
	76,055,111	81,462,403

On 11 September 2014, the union exchanged the existing loan to New Stadium DAC for 1 ordinary share of €1 nominal value. The excess of the liability at that date, over the nominal value of the share received was recognised as share premium. This also gives rise to additional goodwill as referred to in note 5.

Disclosures in respect of New Stadium DAC, based on the company's management accounts, required under 'FRS 102: Part 5 Associates and Joint Ventures' are as follows:

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Share of turnover	5,184,413	5,888,424
Share of operating loss	(2,053,386)	(1,251,145)
Share of tax	-	-
Share of loss after tax	(2,053,386)	(1,251,145)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

8. Joint ventures (cont'd.)

	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Share of fixed assets	173,980,210	178,760,702
Share of current assets	2,211,586	1,586,978
Share of gross assets	176,191,796	180,347,680
Share of current liabilities	(1,148,343)	(406,291)
Share of non-current liabilities	(89,833,363)	(92,927,273)
Share of gross liabilities	(90,981,706)	(93,333,564)
Share of net assets	85,210,090	87,014,116

Disclosures in respect of Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited, based on the company's management accounts, required under 'FRS 102: Part 5 Associates and Joint Ventures'.

	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Share of turnover	1,098,178	1,055,693
Share of operating loss	(715,029)	(617,667)
Share of tax	-	-
Share of loss after tax	(715,029)	(617,667)
Share of fixed assets	13,941,873	14,583,991
Share of current assets	130,526	203,305
Share of gross assets	14,072,399	14,787,296
Share of current liabilities	(207,088)	(243,804)
Share of non-current liabilities	(11,693,355)	(11,693,355)
Share of gross liabilities	(11,900,443)	(11,937,159)
Share of net assets	2,171,956	2,850,137

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

8. Joint ventures (cont'd.)

The Union has entered into lease agreements with each of these companies to lease land on which the stadia have been redeveloped on the following terms:

Company	Term of lease	Annual rent
New Stadium DAC	99 years from Dec 2005	€750,000
Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited	55 years from Oct 2006	€9,600

The rents due became payable during the year ended April 2011 in the case of Thomond Park, and became due from May 2010 in the case of the Aviva Stadium.

9. Investment in subsidiary undertaking

	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Cost		
At 1 May	10,000,000	10,012,314
Repaid during the year	-	(12,314)
At 30 April	10,000,000	10,000,000
Amortisation		
At 1 May	(2,500,000)	(2,000,000)
Charge for the year	(500,000)	(500,000)
At 30 April	(3,000,000)	(2,500,000)
	7,000,000	7,500,000

The Union owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of Lansdowne Car Park Limited, a company registered in the Republic of Ireland whose registered office is at 10/12 Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4.

The Union advanced funds to the company in order to finance the construction of a car park located adjacent to the Aviva Stadium. The Union are amortising the investment in the subsidiary over the expected useful life of the car park which is estimated to be twenty years. The loan is unsecured, interest free, has no fixed date of repayment and is repayable on demand.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

10. Debtors and prepayments

	Union		Consolidated	
	30/04/16	30/04/15	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€	€	€
Provincial branch balances	-	522,766	-	522,766
Sponsorship debtors	3,822,050	2,425,812	3,822,050	2,425,812
Ticket debtors	3,392,562	752,133	3,392,562	752,133
Other debtors	12,874	7,928	73,927	71,084
Prepayments and accrued income	9,780,137	10,911,272	9,780,137	10,911,272
Stock of sportswear and equipment	199,911	174,093	199,911	174,093
	17,207,534	14,794,004	17,268,587	14,857,160

Trade debtors and short term receivables above are stated net of provision, where applicable. Provisions against debtors at the year end amounted to €4,958,935 (2015: €1,722,445). The movement on these provisions has decreased net income by €3,236,490 (2014/2015: €115,283 decrease; 2013/2014: €255,466 decrease).

Included in ticket debtors above are amounts receivable in two to five years of €2,530,136 (2014: €448,000).

11. Creditors

	Union		Consolidated	
	30/04/16	30/04/15	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€	€	€
Accruals	10,739,129	13,697,594	10,774,695	13,737,528
Income received in advance	3,151,771	8,063,246	3,169,271	8,080,746
PAYE/PRSI	56,815	53,788	56,815	53,788
VAT	42,892	45,829	42,892	45,829
	13,990,607	21,860,457	14,043,673	21,917,891

12. Pension commitments

The pension entitlements of certain employees of the Union arise under both a defined benefit scheme and a defined contribution scheme which are funded by annual contributions by the Union to separately administered pension funds.

The latest actuarial valuation for the defined benefit scheme was dated 1 August 2014. The assets of the fund, which amounted to €8,676,000, showed that, on an immediate discontinuance basis, the assets of the fund were adequate to meet the plan's statutory minimum funding liabilities. The assets represent 91% in aggregate of the benefits which would accrue to members at the valuation date after allowing for future salary increases. The actuarial report is not available for public inspection.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

12. Pension commitments (cont'd.)

The valuations employed for FRS 102 disclosure purposes have been updated by the scheme's independent and qualified actuary to take account of the requirements of the accounting standard in order to assess the liabilities of the scheme as at 30 April 2016. The valuations have been completed using the projected unit method. Comparative amounts which were previously prepared under FRS 17 have been restated for FRS 102. The FRS 102 transition adjustments are detailed in note 20.

The amounts recognised in the income statement are as follows:

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
<i>Amounts charged to income statement:</i>		
Current service cost	340,000	336,000
Total operating charge	340,000	336,000
<i>Amounts charged to finance cost:</i>		
Net finance expense	18,000	71,000
Total charge to the income statement	358,000	407,000
Actual return on scheme assets	(274,000)	1,624,000

Actuarial gains of €1,012,000 (2014/15: €1,404,000 loss) have been recognised in the statement of other comprehensive income.

The amounts recognised in the statement of financial position are as follows:

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Present value of funded obligations	(11,033,000)	(11,971,000)
Fair value of scheme assets	8,149,000	8,151,000
Net pension liability	(2,884,000)	(3,820,000)
	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Opening defined benefit obligation	11,971,000	10,592,000
Current service cost	340,000	336,000
Interest on scheme liabilities	209,000	307,000
Actuarial (gain)/ loss	(1,431,000)	2,790,000
Benefits paid	(56,000)	(2,054,000)
Closing defined benefit obligation	11,033,000	11,971,000

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

12. Pension commitments (cont'd.)

Changes in the fair value of scheme assets are as follows:

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Opening fair value of scheme assets	8,151,000	8,274,000
Expected return on scheme assets	145,000	238,000
Contributions by employer	290,000	314,000
Contributions by scheme participants	50,000	58,000
Actuarial (loss)/ gain	(419,000)	1,386,000
Pension levy	(12,000)	(65,000)
Benefits paid	(56,000)	(2,054,000)
Closing fair value of scheme assets	8,149,000	8,151,000

The fair value of the major categories of scheme assets as a percentage of total scheme assets are as follows:

	30/04/16	30/04/16	30/04/15	30/04/15
	%	€	%	€
Equities	33.0	2,698,000	34.0	2,755,000
Bonds	33.0	2,706,000	32.0	2,649,000
Property	2.0	119,000	1.0	98,000
Cash/Other	2.0	160,000	1.0	73,000
Global Absolute Return Strategies Fund	30.0	2,466,000	32.0	2,576,000
		8,149,000		8,151,000

The principal actuarial assumptions as at the reporting date were:

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	1.80	1.80
Rate of increase in pensions payment (pre 2009)	5.00	5.00
Rate of increase in pensions payment (post 2009)	1.80	1.80
Discount rate	2.10	1.75
Inflation assumption	1.80	1.80

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	years	years
Life expectancy of male/female currently aged 65	22.8/25.0	22.7/24.9
Life expectancy of male/female at 65 currently aged 45	24.7/27.1	24.6/27.0

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

13. Deferred ticket fund

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Amounts brought forward prior to stadium redevelopment		
At 1 May	-	2,462,892
Transfer to revenue account	-	(2,462,892)
At 30 April	-	-
	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
Amounts received for Aviva Stadium		
At 1 May	68,128,949	69,969,370
Transfer to revenue account	(11,213,324)	(11,276,384)
Proceeds in respect of tickets sold during the year received and receivable	7,827,907	9,435,963
At 30 April	64,743,532	68,128,949

14. Deferred naming rights fund

The Union entered into an arrangement with Hibernian Aviva Group plc ('Aviva') in respect of naming rights for the stadium. The Union, the Football Association of Ireland and New Stadium DAC will receive payments over a ten year period which commenced in July 2010 in return for the naming rights to the stadium. The Union agreed to transfer the rights to future elements of these payments in return for an upfront payment of €8,333,333. These funds, together with other amounts received, are shown as deferred naming rights and will be released to the income statement over the period of the naming rights agreement.

	30/04/16	30/04/15
	€	€
At 1 May	6,212,342	7,025,894
Unwind of discount	609,076	576,924
Transferred to income during the year	(1,723,809)	(1,390,476)
At 30 April	5,097,609	6,212,342

The financing element of the arrangement is secured over future payments receivable from Aviva only.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

15. Revenue grants

The following grants were received and used for the stated purpose in the year ended 30 April 2016.

	30/04/16	30/04/15
<i>Irish Sports Council</i>		
- game development and participation	€2,250,843	€2,250,843
- women in sport	€114,000	€114,000
- high performance women's sevens	€275,000	€275,000
<i>Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport</i>		
- capital sports grant	€93,790	-
<i>Olympic Council of Ireland/IOC Solidarity Funding</i>		
- women's sevens	€77,047	-
<i>World Rugby</i>		
- game development and participation and elite player development	Stg£200,000	Stg£250,000

16. Commitments and contingencies

Commitments under operating leases

On 12 November 2010 the Union entered into an operating lease in respect of property at 10/12 Lansdowne Road at an annual rent of €350,000. This lease will expire on 31 December 2023 with a tenant only break clause on 31 December 2018. The amount charged in respect of this rent in the current period amounted to €350,000. During the year the Union incurred operating lease rentals on motor vehicles amounting to €196,244. The commitment in respect of existing lease agreements on vehicles within twelve months amount to €195,657 and after twelve months amount to €31,674.

Contingencies

In terms of agreements between the Union, the Football Association of Ireland, New Stadium DAC and the Government for the provision of grants amounting to €191 million for the redevelopment of the Aviva Stadium, the Union have agreed that in the event that the land on which the stadium is built is not used for sporting and recreational activities for a period of thirty years from the date of payment of the grants, the grants or a portion of the grants could become repayable.

In terms of agreements between the Union, the Munster Branch Irish Rugby Football Union, Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited and the Government for the provision of grants amounting to €9 million for the redevelopment of Thomond Park, the Union have agreed that in the event that the Stadium is not used as a facility for the playing of Rugby Union and associated social, recreational and cultural activities for the people of Munster and surrounding district for the period of fifteen years from the date of payment of the grants, the grants or a portion of the grants could become repayable.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

16. Commitments and contingencies (cont'd.)

Contingencies (cont'd.)

The Union have pledged the lands at Thomond Park as security in respect of any liability which may arise in this regard.

The Union issued a joint and several letter of undertaking in conjunction with the Football Association of Ireland to secure a bank guarantee issued by New Stadium DAC, trading as Aviva Stadium, in favour of Iarnród Éireann in the amount of €2,250,000.

17. Related party disclosures

The Irish Rugby Football Union is controlled by the Council of the Union.

The day to day affairs are managed by a Committee comprising various members, the majority of whom have been elected.

The Committee consider that all material transactions with related parties have been adequately disclosed in these financial statements and the notes thereto.

18. Financial risk management

The Union has exposure to three main areas of risk - foreign exchange currency, liquidity risk and customer credit. To a lesser extent the Union is also exposed to interest rate risk.

Foreign exchange transactional currency

The Union is exposed to currency exchange rate risk due to a significant portion of its receivables and operating expenses being denominated in non-euro currencies. The net exposure of each currency is monitored and managed by the Committee on a continuous basis.

Liquidity risk

The objective of the Union in managing liquidity risk is to ensure that it can meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due. The Union expects to meet its financial obligations through operating cash flows. In the event that the operating cash flows would not cover all the financial obligations the Union has credit facilities available.

Customer credit

The Union may offer credit terms to its customers and allow payment of the debt after delivery of the goods or services. The Union is at risk to the extent that a customer may be unable to pay the debt on the specified due date.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

19. Financial assets and liabilities

	30/04/16 €	30/04/15 €
Union		
Financial assets measured at amortised cost	28,613,290	26,038,035
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	13,890,900	21,760,840
Consolidated		
Financial assets measured at amortised cost	28,674,343	26,101,191
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	13,943,966	21,818,274

20. First time adoption of FRS 102

Union	As previously Stated at 30 April 2015 €	Effect of transition €	FRS 102 as restated 30 April 2015 €
Tangible fixed assets	33,332,741	-	33,332,741
Financial fixed assets	100,206,434	-	100,206,434
Current assets	32,476,014	-	32,476,014
Current liabilities	(21,256,225)	(604,232)	(21,860,457)
Total assets less current liabilities	144,758,964	(604,232)	144,154,732
Non-current liabilities	(78,161,291)	-	(78,161,291)
Union funds	66,597,673	(604,232)	65,993,441

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

20. First time adoption of FRS 102 (cont'd.)

Consolidated	As previously Stated at 30 April 2015 €	Effect of transition €	FRS 102 as restated 30 April 2015 €
Tangible fixed assets	40,832,741	-	40,832,741
Intangible fixed assets	5,997,971	-	5,997,971
Financial fixed assets	101,108,284	-	101,108,284
Current assets	32,556,381	-	32,556,381
Current liabilities	(21,313,659)	(604,232)	(21,917,891)
Total assets less current liabilities	159,181,718	(604,232)	158,577,486
Non-current liabilities	(78,161,291)	-	(78,161,291)
Union funds	81,020,427	(604,232)	80,416,195

Union	As previously Stated at 30 April 2015 €	Effect of transition €	FRS 102 as restated 30 April 2015 €
Income	74,144,193	-	74,144,193
Expenditure	(65,485,676)	(748,232)	(66,233,908)
Surplus for the year	8,658,517	(748,232)	7,910,285
Actuarial movement on pension	(1,548,000)	144,000	(1,404,000)
Total surplus for the year	7,110,517	(604,232)	6,506,285

Consolidated	As previously Stated at 30 April 2015 €	Effect of transition €	FRS 102 as restated 30 April 2015 €
Income	72,380,381	-	72,380,381
Expenditure	(60,626,444)	(748,232)	(61,374,676)
Surplus for the year	11,753,937	(748,232)	11,005,705
Actuarial movement on pension	(1,548,000)	144,000	(1,404,000)
Total surplus for the year	10,205,937	(604,232)	9,601,705

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

20. First time adoption of FRS 102 (cont'd.)

Explanation of changes to previously reported profit and equity:

- a) Inclusion of a full annual leave accrual
- b) Accounting for defined benefit obligations in accordance with FRS 102.

21. Comparative amounts

Certain comparative amounts have been reclassified to conform with the current year presentation.

22. Approval of accounts

The accounts of the Union were approved by the Committee on 30th June 2016 and signed on its behalf by the Honorary Treasurer and the Chief Executive.

STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee is responsible for preparing accounts, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Union at the end of each financial period and of the surplus or deficit for the period. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, for safeguarding assets, and for preventing and detecting fraud and other irregularities.

The Committee confirms that suitable accounting policies have been consistently applied, that reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates have been used in the preparation of the accounts, and that it is appropriate to assume that the Union will continue in being and to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

We have audited the accounts on pages 26 to 52 which comprise the Union and consolidated income statement, the Union and consolidated statement of other comprehensive income, the Union and consolidated statement of changes in funds, the Union and consolidated statement of financial position and the consolidated cash flow statement with the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland), including Financial Reporting Standard 102.

Respective responsibilities of the Committee and the auditors

As explained more fully on page 53, the Committee is responsible for preparing the accounts giving a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the accounts in accordance with Irish law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Union's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Committee; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the accounts

- give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of affairs of the Union as at 30 April 2016 and of the surplus of income over expenditure of the Union for the year then ended.
- have been prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland.

Grant Thornton
Registered Auditors
Chartered Accountants

Molyneux House
Bride Street
Dublin 8

Date: 30th June 2016

INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

Schedule 1: Representative matches

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
International rugby income	39,610,945	36,790,118	33,356,304
Commercial income	9,161,895	8,566,907	6,148,748
Deferred ticket income	12,937,133	15,129,752	15,919,527
Provincial competition income	10,585,728	9,707,983	10,335,974
	72,295,701	70,194,760	65,760,553

Schedule 2: Other income

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Other rugby income	294,957	337,280	339,462
Revenue grants	2,810,680	2,639,843	3,015,825
Other income	708,674	972,310	629,501
	3,814,311	3,949,433	3,984,788

EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

Schedule 3: Professional game costs

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
National tours, camps and squads	123,760	934,619	832,640
National match costs	2,511,503	3,064,765	3,172,874
Player and management costs	34,965,440	28,984,014	27,908,170
	37,600,703	32,983,398	31,913,684

Schedule 4: Elite player development

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Wolfhound/Emerging Ireland teams	105,764	232,352	248,640
Women's representative teams	1,758,559	1,825,204	1,428,745
Sevens	219,595	121,795	-
Under 20s	517,397	493,002	466,410
Age-grade teams	348,581	404,871	392,639
Academies	2,422,012	1,768,449	1,580,507
High performance unit	2,094,218	1,887,539	1,633,388
	7,466,126	6,733,212	5,750,329

Schedule 5: Games support costs

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Referee costs	320,641	330,717	310,886
	320,641	330,717	310,886

EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

Schedule 6: Domestic & community rugby

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Club Ireland	63,590	71,032	76,039
Domestic competitions	279,192	284,237	223,595
General development costs	574,151	641,218	640,904
Development resources	330,724	270,377	153,363
Coaching courses	237,743	218,729	243,784
Youth and schools	348,797	261,611	125,642
YDO and provincial staff	3,265,619	2,737,349	2,948,681
Clubs and schools support	1,135,942	1,367,726	1,174,628
Referee development	601,404	544,959	531,947
Leisure and community programmes	333,682	345,863	248,854
Community rugby and other funding	2,416,701	1,700,630	1,656,371
	9,587,545	8,443,731	8,023,808

EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2016

Schedule 7: Marketing

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Marketing	1,258,051	1,126,673	847,538
PR and communications	175,450	125,692	136,270
Website	303,310	311,031	277,547
	<u>1,736,811</u>	<u>1,563,396</u>	<u>1,261,355</u>

Schedule 8: Grounds

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Licence fees, rates and insurance	517,527	2,882,361	2,824,206
Repairs and renewals	167,947	289,278	117,313
Other facilities	216,090	146,263	47,313
	<u>901,564</u>	<u>3,317,902</u>	<u>2,988,832</u>

Schedule 9: Administration and overheads

	2015/16 €	2014/15 €	2013/14 €
Governance costs	354,298	360,544	377,620
Salaries and pension	2,791,254	2,926,246	2,528,659
Printing, postage and stationery	229,759	136,961	126,435
Rates, rent, insurance and telephone	781,616	668,504	612,183
Office maintenance	734,707	363,907	559,061
Professional fees	954,093	849,764	585,109
Miscellaneous administration costs	477,965	435,046	330,890
	<u>6,323,692</u>	<u>5,740,972</u>	<u>5,119,957</u>

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