# March 2026 - College Update



Dear Colleagues,

We are entering a very hectic part of the season with the various competition Semi-Finals all being played and over the coming weeks we have the 7's competitions, AoC Sport Men's Prem Final, AoC Sport Girls Prem Final, England Colleges Boys Cup Final and the ACE Girls Final. We wish all of the teams who have progressed through to these final games good luck in their finals.

Furthermore, the festival programme has been a huge success over the season with 1700 players participating. These festivals would not be possible if it was not for the extremely hard work of all of our regional festival coordinators to whom we are extremely grateful. These festivals have proved to be a huge success and offer outstanding opportunities for colleges to introduce rugby to their students.

On 3rd June 2026 England Colleges will be running a Conference at Warwick University which will offer key notes from Megan Jones, James Cooper and Sarah Cox along with a number of workshops for you to attend covering aspects such as T1 Rugby, Playing Opportunities, Rugby Ambassadors and the ACE Girls programme while also providing the opportunity to hear how Brave Mind can support your learners. We very much hope that you will all join us for what will be a very enjoyable day as well as being an opportunity for you to converse with colleagues from across the country.

Best Wishes

Martin Tucker
*ECRFU Chair*
*(Principal, Truro and Penwith College)*

## Important Message from the RFU

Rugby Football Union

As you will be aware, personal injury claims are being pursued by certain individual rugby players against World Rugby, the Welsh Rugby Union and the RFU. These claimants are represented in those claims by their solicitors, Rylands Garth.

As part of the ongoing litigation, Rylands Garth have been contacting various clubs to submit Data Subject Access Requests or similar requests for documents/information in relation to the claimants. In addition to contacting clubs, we have been informed that Rylands Garth have recently contacted a claimant's former college. This may suggest that Rylands Garth have already contacted, or intend to contact, other schools, colleges or universities.

If you receive a Data Subject Access Request or similar document/information request from Rylands Garth, please note that you can contact the RFU's solicitors, Weightmans LLP, for assistance. Weightmans LLP are representing the RFU in relation to the ongoing litigation proceedings, and they will be able to offer guidance to your members, including the approach that can be taken in response to any document/information requests from Rylands Garth.

Should you need to contact Weightmans LLP, any correspondence should be directed to Stephanie Wilson (stephanie.wilson@weightmans.com), with Dan Kenny (danielkenny@rfu.com), RFU Senior Legal Counsel, in copy. Please note that any guidance provided by Weightmans LLP in relation to a request from Rylands Garth for documents/information will not come at any additional cost to your members.

## Regulation 15 – Update

Please keep a look out for updates with regards to Regulation 15 (Age Grade Rugby). There will be a number of changes in this regulation that will come into effect for the 2026/27 season with some then coming into place for 2027/28. It is very important that once these have been fully finalised and circulated that you area ware.

Updates once available and confirmed will be shared through the GMS links with all member colleges. Please make sure your details are correct on GMS.

## England Colleges Cup Semi Finals

The England Colleges Cup Semi-Finals took place at Aylesbury RFC on Wednesday 25th February with the following teams taking part:

**Hills Road 6th Form College v Hartpury College Men's 5XV**

Following a very physical and competitive game where both sides showed excellent commitment throughout. It was the bench for Hartpury that pushed on and achieved the win as they came on in the second half with the final score being Hartpury College 38 Hills Road 12.







**Hills Road Sixth Form** **Hartpury College**

**Thomas Rotherham College v The 6th Form College Farnborough**

The second semi-final was between Thomas Rotherham College (TRC) and Farnborough Sixth Form College. This proved to be a very close encounter throughout the 70 minutes with both teams relentlessly pushing each other for the win.

The game went right to the end in the balance with TRC trailing by 2 points as the game entered the last few minutes. TRC pushed hard to score a try and hold out to the whistle winning 24 – 21.






**England Colleges Boys U18 Cup Final** **Stourbridge RFC Wednesday 18th March 2026**

**Hartpury College Vths v Thomas Rotherham College KO 11.30am**

## Festival Series update

**England Colleges Festival update**

Now that the February festivals have all taken place and have had the player numbers reported, we are delighted to share the most up to date numbers with you.

| Month | Number of Players |
|---|---|
| | |
| January / February 2026 | 289 |
| November / December 2025 | 439 |
| October 2025 | 568 |
| September 2025 | 404 |
| **Total Number of players** | **1700** |

As with last year, February events proved tricky to run, with ski trips, course work, exams, and the weather all creating problems! In planning for next year these issues will be considered in the planning.

We have now had 1700 players take part in the Regional College festivals this season, which is over DOUBLE the number of players that we had taking part across all of 2024/25, and a real testament to the hard work the coordinators are putting into this work.

We have one final set of festivals planned for 11th March 2026, and these will be T1 Rugby events, with a view to these kick-starting the T1 Rugby Series event that we have planned for May at Sixways. Festival coordinators are working hard to ensure these will be a huge success and round off what has been a brilliant season for the Regional College Participation Festivals.

Our thanks go to Katy Cuddington (RFU) and all of the regional coordinators who work in the colleges.

## SANIX World U18 Rugby Tournament 2026

England Colleges wish both Exeter College and Worthing College good luck when they travel to Japan to play in the SANIX World U18 Rugby Tournaments in Fukuoka.

Exeter College will be playing in the U18 Boy's competition while Worthing College will take part in the Girl's U18 competition.

**Exeter College:**

As the college prepare to travel to Japan, Jon Hill says; "We are absolutely delighted to have been chosen as a college to represent the England Colleges RFU out in Japan at the SANIX World Youth Rugby Tournament.




"We intend to fully embrace the opportunity and have been actively raising funds to ensure that we cannot just look the part, but also ensure that we are able to fully immerse ourselves in the local culture when we are out there with planned excursions.

"We are working towards our fundraising total and currently it looks like each student will only have to pay £500 each to spend 10 days in Japan which is incredible! We have a whole range of sponsored kit working with local businesses and each player and coach has a personal sponsor. We plan on experiencing the bullet train and a trip to Hiroshima, and some more local shrines and landmarks and look forward to playing against some of the world's best Under 18's sides. We have also had a guest talk from the local Japanese Society based at the University of Exeter to give us some great insight into Japanese Culture and what to expect.






*(Exeter College squad receiving a talk from the Japanese Society at Exeter University)*

"There is huge excitement at the College right now in what has already been a really successful season for the College".

**Worthing College:**

Worthing College will be playing at The Allianz Stadium on 19th March against Hartpury in the Girls ACE Final. Following this they will be into their final preparations as they ready themselves to travel to Japan to play in the Girls U18 SANIX 7's competition against countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Japan and others.



**England Colleges RFU wish Exeter College and Worthing College good luck in their participation in the SANIX Tournament.**

## England Colleges Conference 2026 – 3rd June 2026

### England Colleges RFU Conference 3rd June 2026 at The Scarman, Warwick University

On **Wednesday 3rd June 2026** England Colleges will be running a conference open to all colleges to attend. At the conference you will be able to hear from Meg Jones (Women's RWC Winner), Sarah Cox and James Cooper with the opportunity to attend workshops on Volunteering, T1 Rugby, Playing Opportunities, the Girls ACE programme and hear from 'Brave Mind' on how they can work with you and your players and hear examples of how they have worked with several colleges.

The full details of the programme and venue will be shared very soon via your GMS link so please do look out for this detail and the booking process.

Please put the date in your diaries and join the conference to engage with the various developments across the College rugby sector from enrichment activity through to performance.

**England College Conference: Warwick University, The Scarman: 3rd June 2026**

## Results Results Results!!

Ensuring your results are submitted to AoC Sport is essential. None submission of results and lengthy delays mean that fixtures when reported appear void and as such reflects very disappointingly upon the sector as a whole.

It is the responsibility of every college to ensure that you submit the result of each and every game, notify AoC Sport if the game has been re-arranged or if it has been cancelled altogether and so is void.

Planned v played data is viewed regularly by the RFU. As England Colleges seek funding to support the game across the sector this data of planned v played is absolutely vital.

**Please ensure your coaches submit the results of their games on the day.**

## GMS Information

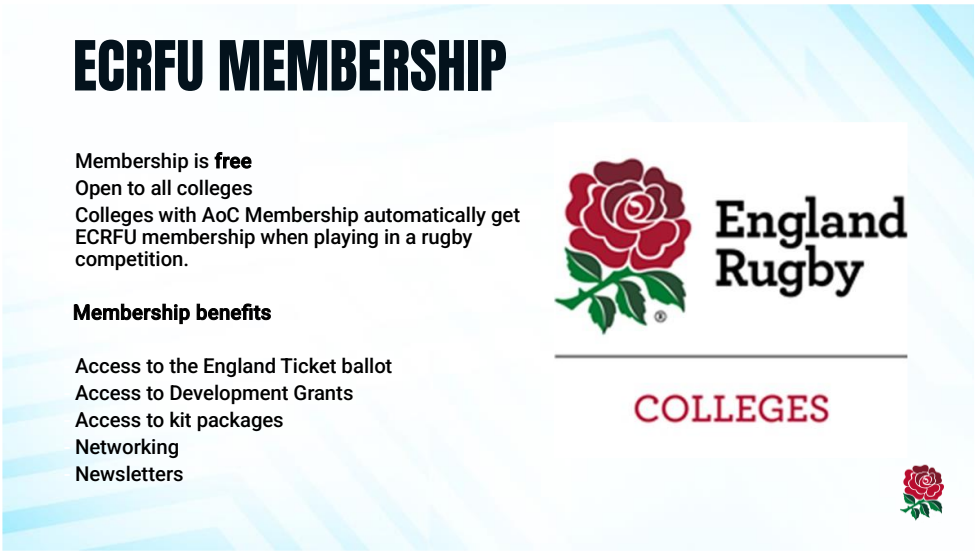
**Important:**

Please ensure that your college details are correct and up to date on your GMS page. This is vital to ensure you receive communications in a timely fashion and also receive the ticket ballot details.

**Please do check names, emails and all contact details are up to date.**

## England Colleges Membership

Colleges already registered as members **please ensure that you log onto your GMS account and update all details** to ensure that you receive all communications and information about developments as well as details regarding the International Ticket Ballot. The individuals assigned to the Golden Roles are key contacts and need to be regularly updated when staff change or you will not receive the information you require.




## Your Regional ECRFU Rep

England Colleges RFU is the advocate of College Rugby within the RFU and, as the national Constituent Body, works hard to ensure the voice of the college sector is heard.

The role of the England Colleges Rep is a key one in ensuring this dialogue takes place and all views are clearly represented.

| ECRFU Reg Rep | College | Contact Details | Region |
|---|---|---|---|
| James McKeown | Runshaw College | McKeown.J@runshaw.ac.uk | **North West** |
| Andy Douthwaite | Hereford VIth Form | AD@hereford.ac.uk | **West Midlands** |
| Dale Smallman | Shrewsbury College | dales@shrewsbury.ac.uk | |
| Naz Deen | Corams | naz@coramsfields.org.uk | **London & Kent** |
| Trevor Martingell | Kent | t.martingelll@btinternet.com | |
| Tim Peck | Leyton | Timothy.Peck@leyton.ac.uk | **London & East** |
| Mark Rugman | Worthing College | M.Rugman@worthing.ac.uk | **South East** |
| Chris Wall | Exeter College | chriswall@exe-coll.ac.uk | **South West** |
| Glenn Channing | South Devon College | glennchanning@southdevon.ac.uk | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Evan Woodworth | Bishop Burton College | Evan.Woodworth@askham-bryan.ac.uk | **East** |
| Robert Green | Bede Sixth Form College | robert.green@stockton.ac.uk | **North East** |

**Stay in Touch** **@EngRugColleges**

**www.englandcollegesrfu.com**