



Message from the president

Dear Members,
As you are aware the season came to an abrupt end on the 12th March 2020 with the suspension of all rugby activity. Now that society is slowly getting back to normal Garda Westmanstown RFC is planning for a safe and responsible return to rugby activity in our Club. We are following the guidelines issued by the IRFU and in this regard have recently appointed a Covid 19 Club Safety Officer. These guidelines also provide for Club Compliance Officers for each team, those Officers must be present at all team activities. We will be in contact with Coaches and Team Managers regarding the appointment of Compliance Officers in the near future. Players will be required to complete a pre-return to rugby personal assessment declaration at all training sessions. Details of the guidelines are available at; <https://www.irishrugby.ie/return-to-rugby-for-clubs/>
All on-pitch elements of a return to rugby for Clubs will be guided by the Government. The IRFU is working towards a graduated return to rugby for Clubs. It proposes commencing with reduced and skill based activities before progressing to non-contact versions of the game. Our Club members and their families are requested to stay safe and continue to comply with the State advice with regard to personal hygiene and social distancing. Garda Westmanstown RFC remains

committed to a safe and responsible return to rugby activity and look forward to all of you returning to play and support our Club next season.

Yours in rugby,
Batty

Covid-19



The club are currently coordinating the return to rugby with the IRFU, Mick Flynn has been appointed as the club Covid Safety Officer. There are a number of steps that need to be completed before we can return including the preparation of a Covid safety document and the appointment of compliance officers for each team. The most recent correspondence from the IRFU is that we will have a return to competition in September.

Fingal Sports Sustainability Competition



Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

We have been successful in a local competition run by Fingal County Council and have been awarded €2000. The competition was for Sports Clubs to be more environmentally aware and reduce single use plastics and reduce water waste. The

club put 3 initiatives together to make the club more environmentally friendly.

- eliminate single use plastic
- water refill point
- monthly sports gear swap days for members

Already work has started by cleaning up around the club. We will be getting more persons involved in the initiatives once the lockdown restrictions are eased.

For now, it's just to make you aware and get thinking on how we can do more for environment and our club.

Please note all sections of the club are welcome to come up with new ideas how to promote environmental changes we can implement. It is about educating our club members.

Team news

U7

Our u7 had a great start to the season learning some key starting skills and some of them played in their first matches and all doing well. Unfortunately, our season came to an early end, but I hope you have all been practicing at home with your mams, dads, brothers and sisters. I would like to say a big thank you to all the parents from the coaches for putting in the time bringing our future rugby stars to training and to the matches cause we all know how much they enjoy it. Hopefully, we will all be back up in the club at the start of the season ready to take on whoever stands in our way. Stay safe from all the u7 coaches, Dave.

U8



U8's 2019/2020: - what's another year!

Well we started off well in September full of hope - but then we got a sign that things were not going to be good; Dublin beat Kerry for the 5-in-a-row!

We prepared for the World Cup - we practiced our Japanese - little did we know how useful it would become when COVID-19 came along.

o Kon'nichiwa (Hello)

o Ohayōgozaimasu

(Good morning)

Aneta joined our coaching staff - we (the other coaches) are all still sore after her military drills!

Our team has certainly developed in this year and we have a team with natural instinct which is great for the future. We played a number of games in the season which were very encouraging as the team learnt from it.

Sin-bin is not what we thought we would need to learn about at U8, but we did have to learn about it also.

But the most important thing about the year was - we had lots of FUN: the cold Friday nights at training, the muddy pitches on Sunday, and the four-seasons Sunday when

we hosted the games which really tested the love of rugby of all present. We even got Westmanstown RFC in the Lucan St. Patrick's Day Parade 2020!

Looking forward to the new season, Dominic.

U9

The U9's had a busy season and welcomed a number of new players this year. There were a couple of rule changes which included having scrums and lineouts (both uncontested) for the first time, so early training sessions focused on these areas.

We had a busy few weeks before Christmas with matches against Coolmine, Tallaght, Suttonians, Terenure and St Marys. In the new year, our opponents were Suttonians, St Brigids, Malahide and Ashbourne. Our last home blitz was against Old Belvedere and De La Salle on the 8th of March before the season unfortunately ended prematurely. We had a great turnout all season and managed to field two teams consistently. As the season progressed, we spent a lot of time practicing our defensive / tackling, and this paid off in some of the later matches when we came up against bigger opposition.

Many thanks to all the kids and parents who participated this year, whether it was playing, helping in the coffee shop or bringing the kids to matches and training. Special well done to all the kids for their hard work and for picking up on the new skills so quickly, hopefully we will all be back in action this September! Brian.

U10



The 2019/20 rugby season might have been short, but it saw our u10 players going from strength to strength. The u10 squad of girls and boys welcomed many new players during the season. Training every Friday evening and Sunday morning with the help of our dedicated team of coaches, the u10 players had fun developing their fitness, flexibility and rugby skills including passing, tackling and rucking. A competitive bunch, the title of "the muckiest" was often hotly contested by the time we did our cool-down.

The growing skills, love of rugby and team spirit of the Westmanstown u10s were evident as we fielded several teams for matches at home and away against Clontarf, Old Belvedere, Stillorgan/Rathfarnham, Greystones, Clondalkin, Old Wesley, and Suttonians. It was a short but action-packed season.

A big thank you to my fellow coaches who show such enthusiasm come hail or shine, to the parents and guardians who help out with the refreshments, side-line

support and encouragement; and who take such great photos. Colette Reid

U11



It was another great year for the u11's with the team going from strength to strength. We had 54 players registered with more than 40 turning up for most matches. The new players took to it like ducks to water and integrated seamlessly into the squad. Even though the season was shortened we managed to complete most of our fixtures. We were very competitive in a very strong group that consisted of Terenure, Coolmine, Suttonians, St Mary's and Lansdowne. Unfortunately, our end of Season session at The Rugby Academy had to be cancelled but we will get there later in the year. Ronan.

U12

The U12 2008 squad started their last season of mini rugby full of well-founded optimism. Almost the entire of the previous season's squad returned full of enthusiasm and having grown an extra few inches over the summer. The main absentee was coach Dave Barden who, after 5 years with the squad, bravely took up the role of head coach

of the club's U7 team. This left Alan Murphy, Dave Casburn, Ronan Kelly, Henry Mooney and Brian Horan, joined by Fabio Garganego, to try keep tabs on the squad.

Training (which took place on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays) was well attended from the outset with numbers growing as the weeks went on. Matches could not come quick enough for this superb squad who showed great skill, camaraderie and sportsmanship throughout the season. As ever, visiting teams were treated to a tough time on the pitch and fine hospitality off the pitch as parents stocked and staffed the coffee dock each week.

Off the pitch, the squad enjoyed a tour of the Aviva Stadium followed by a half time appearance in the RDS during the Leinster v Dragons Pro 14 fixture in November. By this time, plans for the much-anticipated Easter Tour to Milan 2020 were well underway. Huge credit goes to the parents committee who put so much work into organising what was to be the rugby trip of a lifetime. Flights, accommodation, tournament entry, buses, day trips, dinners and a send-off by the Italian Ambassador were all arranged prior to the tour having to be cancelled. While desperately disappointing for everyone involved, the squad learned that there was more to life than rugby and messages of support were sent to Pirati Rugby.

While 2019/20 saw huge developments in the skills and abilities of our squad, special mention must go to two players in particular. While both Maia O'Loughlin Brophy

and Viola Garganego used to surprise the opposition with their skill and determination, they became well known and respected throughout the Metro area as exceptional players. They will be very much missed by the players, coaches and supporters who had the pleasure of watching them over the last number of seasons and will both, no doubt go on to be serious rugby players in the future. After an eventful 2019/20 season, Westmanstown 2008s are looking forward to progressing next season to Youth Rugby and the wide expanses of the full-sized pitch. Alan.

U13



At the start of the season, the U13 team overcame seamlessly the challenges of transiting to playing fully fledged rugby. The team, composed of amazing committed & talented players, worked hard to become a strong pack of forwards, especially in the scrum, and a lethal bunch of fast backs, both respected by the best U13 teams in Leinster.

The U13s had a very respectable season with 18 matches played and finished mid table in league 2 (out of 4 in the Leinster province).

With the crisis, the team was unable to complete its objective of having a good run in the plate.

This group is promised to a great future and will have, for sure another successful

season next season, we are all looking forward to it! Ed.

U14



The U14s played the last match in Westmanstown before the lockdown. At that stage we were greeting each other with elbow taps! We had one new player and two re-joined the club just before lockdown began. We fielded a team for every match and registered four wins in 2020. A great start to the season and we look forward to building on this when we get the go ahead to play again. In the meantime, we are encouraging the lads to stay fit and be ready to take on the new season! Pa.

U17

As the season progressed into the second half after the Christmas break, the combined team of Ratoath RFC & Westmanstown RFC under 17's went from strength to strength. Numbers increased at training on both Wednesday & Friday evenings and the players showed a renewed energy & eagerness to get out & perform on the pitch on the weekends. Unfortunately, the cancellation of a number of games due to bad weather

& opposition teams not being able to field meant the players didn't get the opportunity to showcase how well they had gelled together over the previous few months. One particular match against Seapoint RFC in late February stands out in particular, as both forwards & backs put on their best display of the season in a stunning try fest victory against a team that had beaten them only a few weeks earlier. With the team of both players & coaches on a high, it was unfortunate that the sudden halt to the season brought about by the Covid-19 Pandemic deprived the combined under 16/17 team of further victories & the opportunity to play in the end of season play offs of the North East Area League & Division 1 Metro School/Youth Leagues. Plans are afoot for where the team goes from here for the coming season, with all players & coaches enthusiastically on board & looking forward to a safe return to rugby. Special mention deservedly goes to Adrian, Alan & Yvonne from Ratoath RFC who excellently coached & mentored the under 17 team throughout the season. Congrats also to Westmanstown player Ray Bruen who represented the club with pride on the victorious Shane Horgan Leinster Metropolitan Representative team. The future looks bright for Ray & we wish him all the best with his future rugby endeavours. Stay Safe & enjoy the off season, Damien.

Women



The women's team started the season with a lot of changes having a number of players head abroad for Erasmus for the year, some new players joining with no rugby experience and a new coach. They struggled a little with the league matches but improved consistently from week to week, a testament to the work put in by the ladies at training. Unfortunately, due to health reasons Rory was unable to continue as coach and Ray Mooney took over to finish out the season. The ladies were joined by some Navan RFC players just before Covid-19 called a halt to the season and were looking forward to the cup competition. The annual team trip to Flanders 10s festival also fell foul of the global pandemic. The women are looking forward to getting back to rugby and hoping to recruit new players for the coming season.

Men





Garda Senior XV section came into the season having added well to their numbers and entered into Metro Cups and Leinster League 2b. With the team under new captaincy of Eoin Cannon and vice captain Lorcan Murphy.

The season started brightly with a trip to Newry RFC for Garda RFC first game against the men from Co. Down. The game was played in great spirits and competitively with a strong showing by the Garda Team.

The Metro Cup followed with excellent showings especially on a Friday night in DSLP where extra time was required against a strong DLSP side to win out.

With this Garda raced into a semi-final of a Metro competition to be played later in the season. Which Garda narrowly lost out to Dublin Dogos.

The Leinster Senior League start with a mixed bag of fortunes. With good showings from the team, but little reward for their efforts.

Consistency was the key and as the season progressed the team began to find its feet.

Before the season was finalised COVID-19 struck and stopped what could have been a strong finish to the season by the men's section. With numbers ever growing and the full establishment of a competitive 2nds side for the forthcoming 20-21 season. The future is bright.

We are always looking for new players and volunteers

of any type.

We are a community club for all

Sponsorship



There are lots of opportunities for companies to get involved, from pitch side signs to team jerseys to sponsoring an event taking place. If you feel you or your company can help in any way, please contact info@westmanstownrfc.com

Coaches



The club are currently looking for coaches and team managers at all levels from U7s up to senior men and women. We have options for everyone who wants to get involved. We are particularly interested in getting the youth girls teams back up and running in the club and need coaches to do so.

If you are interested, please email gardarfcsec@gmail.com.



If you want to get in touch about anything in this issue or have any stories or news items you would like included in future issues, please get in touch Karen Mooney gardarfcpro@gmail.com

Did you know facts:

-The origins of Rugby are sketchy, but everyone has agreed on a nice little story anyway.

General consensus is that the sport is named after Rugby School where the game was first played. It's said to have originated in 1823, when William Webb Ellis caught the ball while playing a game of football, and ran to the opponents goal with it.

Maybe this happened, maybe it didn't, who knows, but the trophy presented for winning the Rugby World Cup is named the 'William Webb Ellis Cup', after that rebellious schoolboy.

-The first rugby balls were made from pig bladders.

Initially rugby balls were plum-shaped and made of pigs' bladders. As rubber inner tubes became more prevalent at the end of the 19th century, Rugby School requested that their balls remain asymmetric to distinguish them from footballs. Over time, the oval shape has become even more pronounced, making them easier to catch, hold and run with.

-Someone died from blowing up too many diseased pig bladders.

Richard Lindon was instrumental in the design of the modern-day rugby ball, but his poor old wife paid the ultimate price after breathing in the air from one too many diseased urine sacks. She fell ill with lung disease, and subsequently passed away.

-The US Olympic rugby team is the most successful.

Who'd have guessed the current reigning Olympic rugby champions are the Yanks? Certainly not us. The sport has only featured in the

Olympics four times – 1900, 1908, 1920 and 1924 – but of those few appearances the US is also the most successful, winning in both 1920 and 1924.

Is that about to change? A seven-a-side version of rugby will make an appearance in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.

-The notion of singing a national anthem before a sporting event originated at a rugby match.

Everyone knows the New Zealand All Blacks dance the haka before the start of a match. But on the 16th November 1905 in Cardiff, the Welsh responded to the traditional war-dance by breaking into song.

They sang 'Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau', the country's national anthem, in a stirring

first. Nowadays, of course, it's done at the beginning of most international sporting events, as well on receiving medals and prizes.

Although, if you ask Americans why we sing the national anthem, they'll tell you it originated at a World Series baseball game in 1918. *-Originally no points were awarded for a try.*

At first, crossing the touchline with a ball earned you the opportunity to try and score a goal, get it? Goals were scored by placing the ball on the ground and kicking it through the goal posts.

Now, a try is worth 5 points in rugby union, and 4 in rugby league. Players then get a chance to earn an extra two points by scoring a conversion (kicking it through the goal posts).

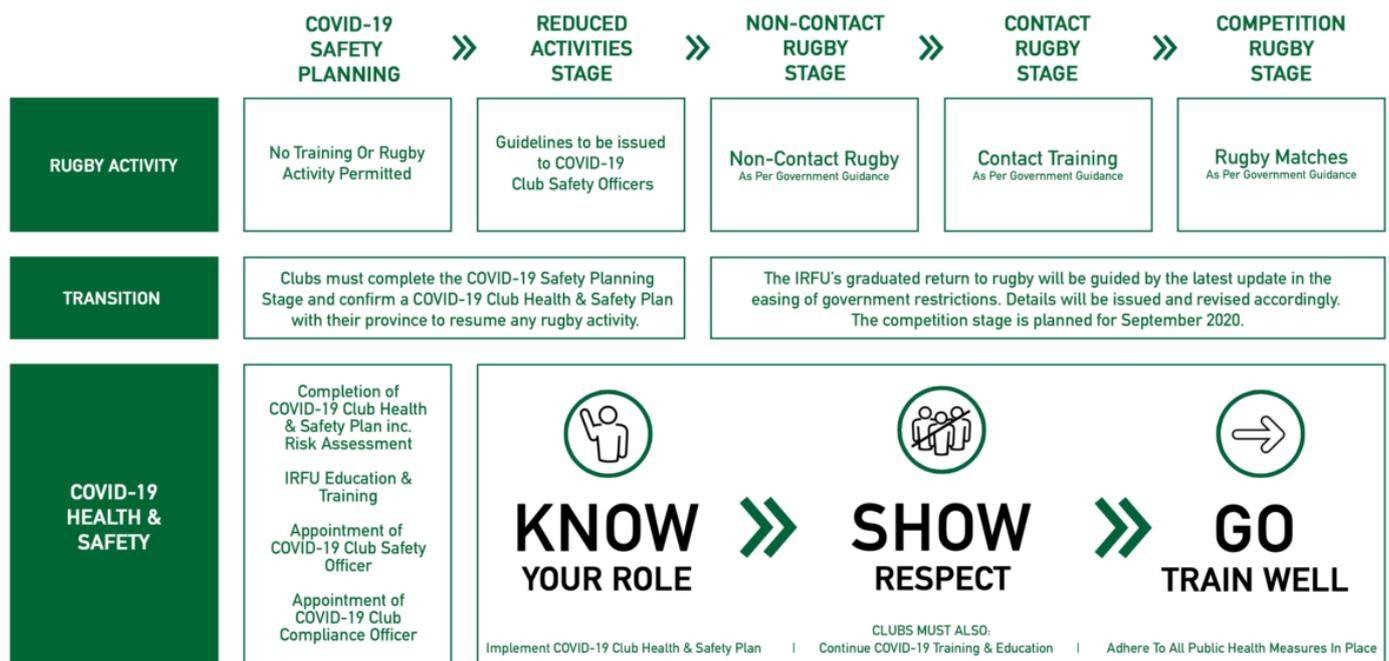
-The same whistle has been used for the opening Rugby World Cup game since 1905.

It turns out rugby players are a sentimental bunch, using the same whistle to open the first game of the World Cup since 1905. It's known as the Gil Evans whistle, named after the Welsh ref to first use it.

-Rugby influenced the invention of basketball.

To keep his players in peak physical condition in the off-season, James Naismith invented basketball as the perfect indoor activity. Naismith was a versatile athlete, and used his experience in football, lacrosse, hockey, baseball, and of course rugby, to develop the new sport of basketball.

IRFU RETURN TO RUGBY GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS SUMMARY ROADMAP



ALWAYS:



STAY AT HOME
IF FEELING SICK



OBSERVE HAND HYGIENE
& COUGHING ETIQUETTE



KEEP SOCIAL
DISTANCING