

Sportsmatch Awards Record Funding to Rugby League

Date: 22 March 2006

Sportsmatch announced a record boost of funding for **grassroots rugby league** this month, thanks to the commitment of six first-time sponsors, each of whom are supporting a range of rugby league initiatives across the country.

Sportsmatch, the government's grassroots incentive scheme, has matched their sponsorships, pound for pound, representing a combined investment in the sport of **£431,000** for March alone.

The five schemes, which range from coaching programmes for schools, to a community-based project designed to combat drug and alcohol abuse, will together benefit over 33,500 children and young people this year, many of whom will be playing rugby league for the first time. Further details of the schemes are outlined below:-

Club	Scheme Background	Expected No. of participants	Sponsor	Combined Investment From Sponsor / Sportsmatch
Dewsbury Rams	Schools coaching programme, culminating in series of mini tag rugby tournaments	5000	Patterson Tankers Ltd	£100,000
Halifax RLFC	Community scheme, targeting young people, providing rugby league activities as positive alternative to drugs and alcohol	18,000	Clarksons CTF Enterprises	£31,000
Hull Super League Ltd	Schools coaching programme to teach basic skills to help establish a new league structure	3600	International Sports Clothing (UK) Ltd	£100,000
Leeds Rugby Foundation	Programme to help drive forward expansion of rugby league for women and girls in Leeds	2250	Wetheralds Painter & Decorator	£100,000
Warrington Wolves	Two year coaching programme to help establish a new schools touch competition for 10 secondary schools in Warrington	4200	Robert Foden Estates (Carus Homes)	£100,000

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Mike Reynolds, Director, Sportsmatch, said;

“The five rugby league schemes which have received Sportsmatch funding this month, all involve first-time sponsors of grassroots sport. We believe this reflects the growing relevance which the commercial sector is placing on the development of sport at this level.”

He added;

“Matched funding from Sportsmatch not only ensures the schemes can deliver increased benefit to the wider community through increased participation levels, but also enhances the benefits for the sponsor themselves. It is through such schemes that we find sporting stars of the future.”

Andy Harland, Development Manager, RFL said;

“It is very encouraging to see that clubs are attracting this level of sponsorship and with additional funding from Sportsmatch, even more children and young people will be encouraged to take up the game.”

Sportsmatch has awarded matched funding to twenty-nine grassroots rugby league schemes in the last year, representing a combined investment to the sport of over **£1m**. One of the most successful of these, is The Powergen Champion Schools Tournament, which won the Best School’s Grassroots Scheme at the Sportsmatch Annual Awards 2005.

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For further information please contact Emily Watkinson or Debbie Egerton at brandRapport on 01483 209814 / 17

Notes for Editors:

Sportsmatch is the government's business sponsorship incentive scheme for grass roots sport. It is funded by *Department for Culture Media & Sport* through Sport England and administered by the Institute of Sports Sponsorship. Sportsmatch matches commercial investment in approved community sports development programmes.

Since its inception in 1992, Sportsmatch has awarded over £37 million and funded more than 5,000 projects across the country. Its matching awards have attracted over £45 million worth of commercial sponsorship funding and encouraged more than five million participants into grassroots sport.