



Irish Rugby Football Union
Annual Report





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Accounts

Office Bearers & Committee

President

P.A. Orr

Vice Presidents

I. McIlrath
N. Comyn

Hon. Treasurer

T. Grace

Immediate Past President

S.R. Hilditch

Chairman Management Committee

D. Madden

Committee

G. Barrett
M.P. Coghlan
M. Collopy
M. Cunningham
G. Drennan
J. Gibson

T. Hennessy

D. Kavanagh

A. Leddy

J.D.H. McKibbin

D. Millar

T. O’Beirne

J. O’Driscoll

M. Quinn

R. Ryan

J. Robinson

J. Sheerin

P. Whelan

World Rugby Board

J. O’Driscoll

P. Whelan

Six Nations Committee

P. Browne

P. Whelan

EPCR

P. Browne

P. Whelan

Celtic League

P. Browne

G. Fitzgerald

Lions

T. Grace

FIRA

J. O’Driscoll

Trustees

A.R. Dawson

J.D. Hussey

D.V. Healy

Dr. S. Millar

Chief Executive

P. Browne

National Coach

J. Schmidt

Standing Committees

Management

D. Madden - Chairman

P.A. Orr

T. Grace

P. Whelan

J. O’Driscoll

G. Barrett

T. O’Beirne

D. Devaney

I. McIlrath

D. Kavanagh (co-opted)

P. Browne

K. Potts

D. Nucifora

S. McNamara

National Professional Game Board

T. O’Beirne - Chairman

D. Nucifora

P. Browne

M. Kearney

G. Keegan

B. Gavin

F. Sowman

K. Keane

E. Reddan

D. Millar

R. Ryan

G. Barrett

Rugby

G. Barrett - Chairman

N. Comyn

P. Orr

M. Quinn

J. Robinson

J. Gibson

M. Cunningham

D. Kavanagh

I. McIlrath

D. Millar

J. McKibbin

S. Black (Ulster Rugby Chair)

P. Brady (Leinster Rugby Chair)

B. Smith (Munster Rugby Chair)

R. Lahiff (Connacht Rugby Chair)

S. Walker

G. Black

Finance

T. Grace - Chairman

D. Madden

P. Orr

A. Leddy

J. Gibson

M.P. Coghlan

J. Robinson

P. Browne

K. Potts

C. O’Brien

F. O’Rourke (co-opted)

L. Quinn (co-opted)

Commercial & Marketing

D. Devaney - Chairman

T. Grace

T. O’Beirne

M. Collopy

P. Dean (co-opted)

G. Hamilton (co-opted)

P. Browne

P. Power

S. McNamara



President's Report

PHILIP ORR

It was a great honour and privilege to be elected President of the Irish Rugby Football Union for the 2017/18 season and what a magnificent season it has been for rugby in Ireland with winning the Triple Crown and the 2018 NatWest 6 Nations Championship with a Grand Slam in Twickenham on St. Patrick's Day.

The IRFU had the privilege of hosting the 2017 Women's World Cup in Dublin and Belfast in August, which very quickly kicked off my year as President in welcoming the teams, coaches, and their management and guests from all over the world. The tournament organisation in both Dublin and Belfast was an outstanding success and as the Chairman of World Rugby, Bill Beaumont stated afterwards 'It was a very special and ground breaking event, which broke all records and raised the bar yet again for the next host'.

The profile and growth of the Women's game in Ireland has been remarkable and has continued during the season and I must congratulate Joy Neville on receiving the World Rugby Referee of the Year Award for 2017. Another highlight was the ceremony in the Aviva stadium when I presented over 100 caps to the women who had represented Ireland from 1993 to 2005 prior to the Irish Women's Rugby Football Union becoming integrated into the IRFU.

I took the opportunity to attend a number of Ulster Bank League and PRO14 matches where I was made very welcome. John Callaghan, Chairman of the IRFU Charitable Trust, ensured that one of those occasions was when I was invited to Armagh to attend the Bateman Cup semi-final when City of Armagh hosted Cork Constitution with Sligo hosting Lansdowne in the other semi-final.



I also attended the Ulster Bank Junior Cup Final between Ashbourne and Kilfeacle and District in Portlaoise RFC, and the attendance at all those matches is testimony to the popularity of our game all over the country. I attended the Leinster Provincial Towns Cup Final in Wicklow RFC where Enniscorthy regained the title from Tullow in what was another great occasion for provincial rugby in Ireland.

The 2017 Guinness Series in November was a further success story with victories over South Africa, Fiji and Argentina in a packed Aviva stadium which was a sell out for all three matches. However, we also received bad news during November when our bid to host the Rugby World Cup in 2023 was unsuccessful. We were especially disappointed to learn that our PRO14 partner nations had not supported Ireland. This result was no reflection on the huge amount of work that had been done by Kevin Potts and his team over the previous years in constructing a world class bid which was formally acknowledged by World Rugby as good enough to stage the event.





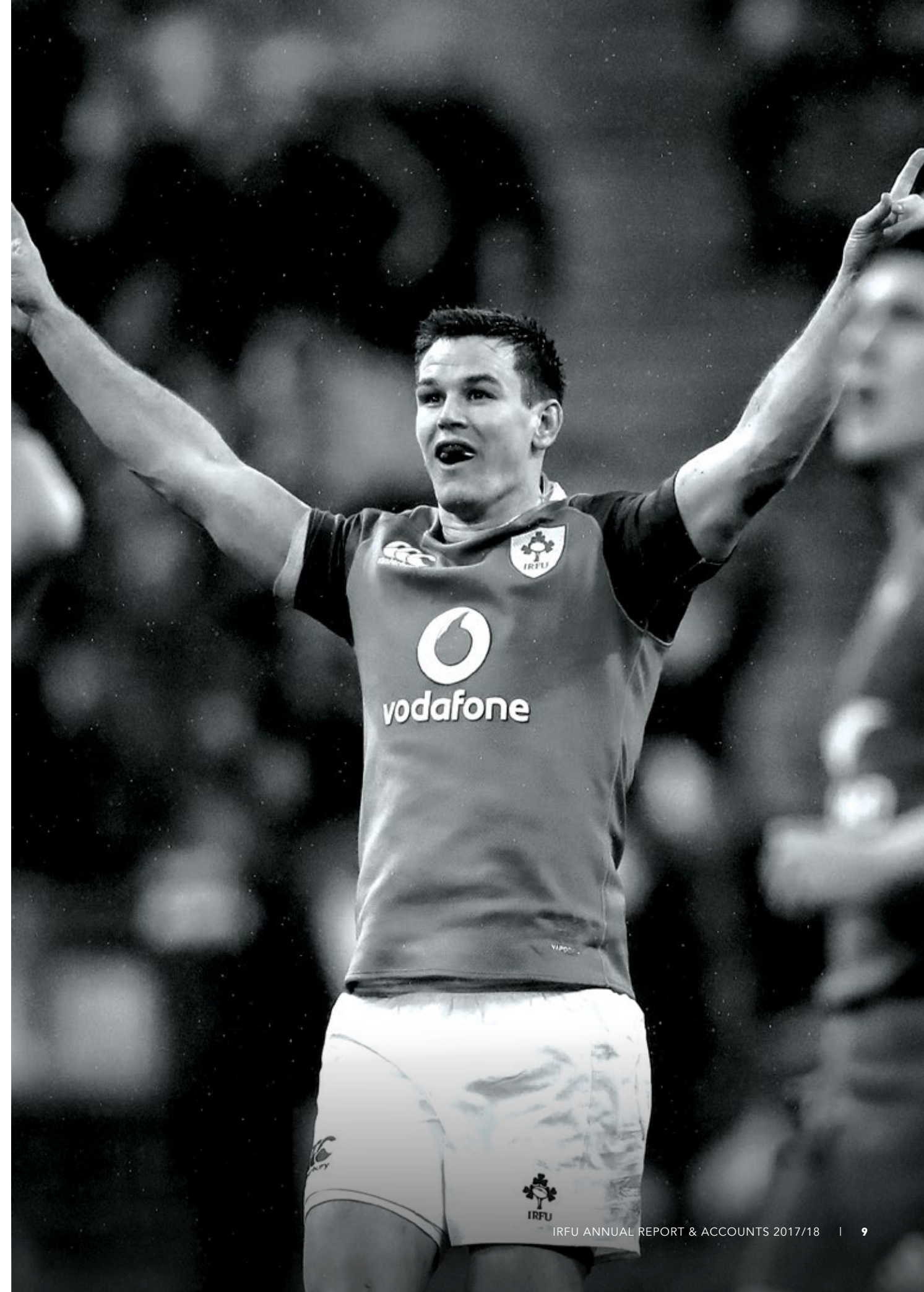
The 6 Nations in February and March followed on after the success of the Guinness Series and I don't believe anybody would have even dreamed of a possible Grand Slam, when in the 78th minute of our first match in Paris, Ireland dropped out on their own 22 still trailing by 2 points after France had just missed a penalty kick at goal. We then witnessed the unbelievable 5 minute 41 phase play with every Irish player handling the ball and Johnny Sexton landing a drop goal in the 83rd minute to win the match.

Following the victory over France, the three home matches with bonus point wins against Italy, Wales and Scotland set the stage for the final showdown with England in Twickenham on St. Patrick's Day. Those are the days that dreams are made of, and this season our national team allowed our dream to become a reality, when they beat England in the final game and Ireland won the Triple Crown and also achieved a Grand Slam in the 2018 NatWest 6 Nations Championship. There was an added bonus in that our U20 and Women's teams both came third in their Six Nations finishing behind France first and England second in both cases.

The success in the 6 Nations was followed two weeks later with Leinster and Munster winning their quarterfinals of the European Rugby Champions Cup. While Racing 92 were too strong for Munster, Leinster dug deep to secure a historic fourth European Rugby Championship, in Bilbao on 12th May. Congratulations to Leo and all this team and management.

There have been so many events I attended during the season and it was a very special occasion to attend the 90th anniversary dinner of Ards RFC as my father and uncle were founder members of the club and the Orr family were well known in the Newtownards community. I am also looking forward to attending Gorey RFC's 50th anniversary celebrations and also Malone's 125th anniversary dinner when they will be also celebrating their promotion to Division 1B of the Ulster Bank League.

As I approach the conclusion of this memorable year as IRFU President I would like to take this opportunity to thank my wife Anne who was very supportive at all times and a great help as I performed all my duties throughout the year. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Union Committees and the staff of the IRFU for all the support and assistance I have received during the year and also thank my club Old Wesley and the Leinster Branch who I have represented over the years and helped me on the road to becoming President of the Irish Rugby Football Union for 2017/18.





Chief Executive's Report

PHILIP BROWNE

It has been a twelve months in which outstanding performances on the pitch at both National and Provincial level grabbed news headlines, while off the pitch, the Rugby World Cup 2023 bidding process and the trial involving Patrick Jackson and Stuart Olding were widely covered and debated.

Men's National Team

To concentrate on the rugby first, it has been an exceptional year for the National Team. A successful tour to the USA and Japan, with a team minus the eleven players selected for the Lions tour in New Zealand, saw Ireland beat the USA and Japan twice, providing Joe Schmidt and his coaching team with plenty of food for thought in terms of squad selection and depth. In the Guinness Autumn Series three wins were recorded against South Africa, Fiji and Argentina where injuries and a level of rotation provided more playing opportunities for emerging talent. A warm weather training camp in Spain in January was followed by an exciting and exceptional NatWest 6 Nations campaign culminating in a third Grand Slam in Irish Rugby history won in the final match against England in Twickenham. There were many exciting moments involving small margins but perhaps the extraordinary sequence of phase play at the death of the first match against France in Paris ending in Johnny Sexton's drop goal sticks in the memory most of all. Without that quality of execution by the entire team there would have been no Grand Slam. Ireland are now second in World Rugby rankings with an unbeaten run



of twelve matches – a great testament to the hard work of the players and the coaching and management team under Joe Schmidt. A tricky tour to Australia looms on the horizon and then into a twelve month countdown to RWC 2019 in Japan. It will be a critical eighteen months.

More information regarding the National Team fixtures can be found on irishrugby.ie.

Provincial Teams

At Provincial level both Leinster and Munster have flown the flag in European Champions Cup competition. Leinster winning their pool unbeaten and going on to knock out the reigning champions, Saracens, in the







quarter final at the Aviva Stadium and then beating Llanelli Scarlets in a packed semi-final at the Aviva Stadium. Munster also achieved a home quarter final following a tough pool schedule, knocking out previous three time champions Toulon but came up short in the other semi-final against a powerful Racing 92 team in Bordeaux. Leinster went on to play Racing 92 in the final held in Bilbao. The final was played in difficult wet conditions and was very much a war of attrition between two excellent teams. Leinster got ahead on the scoreboard for the first time in the seventy eighth minute and held on to win their fourth European Cup title. In the Challenge Cup Connacht too achieved a home quarter final, falling ultimately to Gloucester at that stage. Ulster had an inconsistent European season and were unable to make the knock out stages of the Champions Cup.

The PRO12 evolved into the PRO14 this season with the late introduction of two South African franchises, Southern Kings and the Cheetahs, to a revamped tournament comprising of two conferences of seven teams. The need for the PRO12 to expand into new territories had been identified and backed by all participants to help grow the interest in the tournament and its brand which would otherwise be limited to the constraints of the local markets of the participating clubs. With the restructuring of the Super Rugby tournament an opportunity arose to take in the two South African teams with accompanying benefits in terms of access to the large rugby market in South Africa. The enlarged tournament has not been without its challenges in terms of travel and scheduling and also the fact that the late agreement compromised the two South African teams in terms of retaining their squads. However, the overall feedback from the various

stakeholders has been positive and there is no doubt that the South African teams will only get stronger which will be for the benefit of all participants. The Celtic Rugby organisation that runs the PRO14 has similarly being going through a transformation, moving to new offices in Dublin and increasing the professional capacity of the organisation to ensure that the tournament delivers the commercial and rugby objectives required of the participants. A key task aside from improving the profile/value of the brand and the financial distributions to the participating clubs will be to ensure a sustainable programme for the recruitment and development of quality match officials which is integral to the future of the tournament.

At the time of writing the both Munster and Leinster have reached the semi-finals, with Leinster playing Munster at home in the RDS. The winner to play the winner of either Glasgow or Scarlets from the other side of the draw. Connacht came sixth in Conference A and Ulster came fourth in Conference B, Ulster gaining the right to play off against Ospreys to be the final PRO14 team in 2018/19 European Champions Cup.

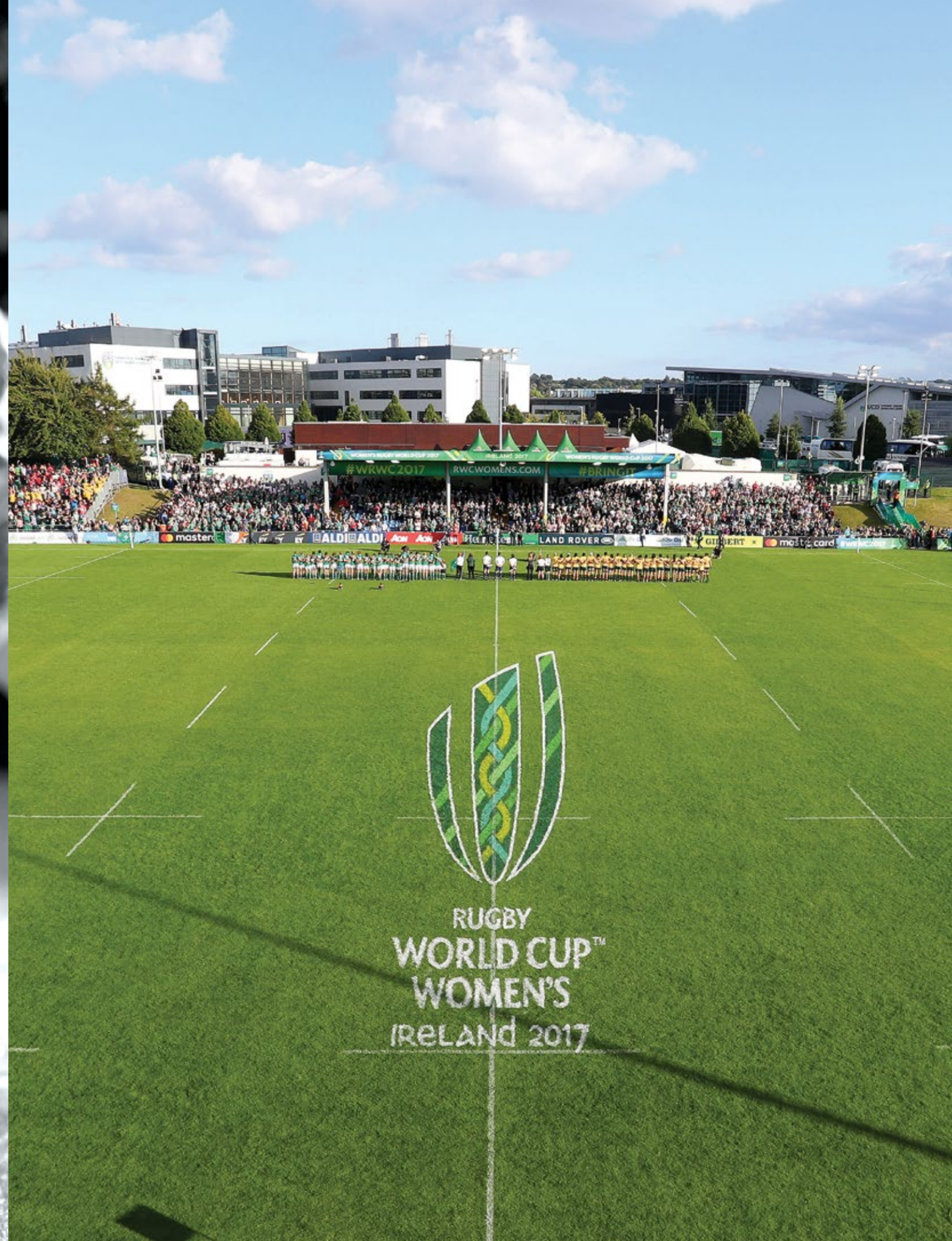
Women’s XV

One of the great successes during the past twelve months was the hosting of the Women’s Rugby World Cup in Dublin and Belfast in August 2017. The staff of the IRFU and Ulster Rugby put a huge effort into ensuring the tournament ran efficiently and effectively. The pool stages, hosted in UCD Belfield, were a great success for players and spectators alike, with two match pitches in operation as well as training pitches. Large crowds attended, particularly for the matches involving the

Ireland woman’s team and there was a great atmosphere around the specially created fanzone. In Belfast the finals were played in Queens University and Kingspan Stadium. The good work done by Ulster Rugby staff in marketing the event ensured that there were record crowds with over 17,000 people attending an excellent final. It was a great collaborative effort involving IRFU and Ulster Rugby staff, University College Dublin, Queens University Belfast, local authorities and tourism bodies, all combining to deliver a world class international event. World Rugby expressed their delight with the record breaking event and Irish Rugby can be proud that the 2017 Women’s Rugby World Cup has set the bar for any future hosts of the tournament. There was an excellent legacy programme put in place around the tournament which helped promote the Women’s game across Ireland and certainly the increased interest in the Women’s game has been reflected in the recruitment and participation figures this season.

The performance of the National Women’s team in the Women’s Rugby World Cup indicated that there is a significant gap between the top four nations and Ireland, ranked eighth. This rightly has placed a focus on the Women’s game and the strategy for the Women’s game in Ireland. Whilst the Irish Women’s team is the “shop window” for the game it is clear that much work needs to be done to bring the emerging Women’s game to a point where it is sustainable and capable of supporting a national team that can deliver the performances that all aspire to. Immediately after the Women’s Rugby World Cup a review process was initiated with the appointment of an independent review group co-chaired by Mary Quinn of the IRFU Committee and Su Carty, former







international and former president of the IWRFU. A comprehensive review of all aspects of the Women's game from club to international level was presented to the IRFU in March and findings from this review will form key inputs to the IRFU strategic plan 2018-2023.

Women's 7s

7s rugby is currently an Olympic sport and is seen by World Rugby as very important in the promotion and growth of the game. 7s in the Irish environment provides a very important pathway for players who may not come through the traditional schools or youth systems. It has been somewhat neglected in the past but has been championed by High Performance Director, David Nucifora, and Director of 7s and Women's Rugby, Anthony Eddy, who both have seen first-hand in Australia and New Zealand how the 7s game is an important tool in player development.

Currently the Irish Women's 7s team participates in the World Rugby Women's Sevens Series which involves five international tournaments. They are currently ranked ninth and following second place in the Europe qualifying series last summer, are scheduled to participate in the Rugby World Cup Sevens tournament in San Francisco in August.

The U18s 7s programme continues to develop and provide a pathway for athletes into the Senior National Programme. The U18s won the UK school games and finished fifth in Rugby Europe and claimed a bronze in Rugby Europe tournament.

Men's 7s

The Men's 7s Programme competed in the Rugby Europe Grand Prix Tournament for the first time having qualified comfortably through the lower divisions. The Grand Prix Tournament is a strong and very competitive series of four tournaments with several of the teams already competing on the Men's Sevens World Series (MSWS). The Ireland men's team won two of the four tournaments and finished a narrow second overall behind Russia. As a result of this performance the men's programme qualified for the SWS qualification tournament in Hong Kong during April 2017 with the opportunity to win core status on the MSWS in 2018/19. The team also qualified for the 2018 Sevens RWC in July 2018.

The team was narrowly beaten by Japan in the semi-final of the Hong Kong tournament and their performance in the Grand Prix series during 2018 will provide them with the opportunity to compete again in Hong Kong in 2019.

The Men's 7s programme continues to provide a pathway for players and also the opportunity for players to earn provincial XV's contracts. The following players from the 7s programme have earned provincial contracts – Tom Daly, Barry Daly, Adam Byrne, Rory O'Loughlin (Leinster), Alex Wootton, Dan Goggin (Munster) and Nick Timmonney (Ulster).

It is important to also recognise the potential of the Ireland Youth U18s National 7s team that compete in Rugby Europe U18s 7s Championships. The team came second this year, having won the tournament in 2016 and 2017.

Strategic Planning

The IRFU enters a new strategic plan cycle for the period 2018-2023 and a considerable amount of work is being carried out across all parts of the organisation to ensure that the new plan can be finalised and can commence



in summer 2018. As part of the final plan there will be an objective assessment of how the IRFU has performed against the 2013-2017 strategy. The intention is to be in a position to publish this new framework and assessment of the previous plan by the end of summer 2018.

Rugby World Cup 2023

A huge amount of effort was put into producing a world class bid for Rugby World Cup 2023 by a team involving the IRFU, Deloitte, the government of the Republic of Ireland, the Northern Ireland Administration and various state organisations across the island of Ireland. An intensive programme to inform all World Rugby voting members, their Unions and or Regions was undertaken and whilst there was significant support for the Rugby World Cup to be hosted by Ireland, the nature of the selection process required that a recommendation be made by Rugby World Cup Ltd. to the voting members of World Rugby.

The recommendation issued by Rugby World Cup Ltd. indicated that whilst any of the three bids was capable of delivering a world class tournament, the recommendation was to award the tournament to South Africa. There were significant flaws in the report that underpinned this recommendation and it was challenged by both France and Ireland but to no avail. The recommendation was a surprise to many as evidenced by the fact that it only received thirteen out of thirty nine votes in the opening round of voting. Regrettably some Unions felt committed to follow the recommendation and that effectively ended the chances for the Ireland bid.

There is no doubt that the Irish bid was world class as has been acknowledged by World Rugby and great

credit is due to those involved in producing a bid of this quality. To ensure that any lessons can be learned from the experience, a review of the Irish bid process is being undertaken on behalf of the Irish Government and the IRFU is participating fully in this review.

Whilst the outcome was a great disappointment there is no doubt that the level of cooperation between the IRFU, GAA, governments North and South and the various State organisations is now a model for any bid for international sports events in Ireland. We should never rule out bidding for a Rugby World Cup in Ireland at some point in time in the future and the experience gained will stand us in good stead.

Belfast Trial

The other major off pitch matter was the trial and subsequent acquittal in Belfast of two international players.

The extensive reportage of the details of this trial opened up a countrywide public debate on the values expected of those who are held up as role models and by association placed a very serious spotlight on the values of Irish Rugby itself.

The national debate continued for the nine week duration of the trial and longer, creating polarised and emotional views. For the IRFU it is important that the values that our sport holds out, those of respect, inclusivity and integrity, are absolutely front and central to the club and schools game and to those that work for the IRFU.

Going forward we will be working hard to explain and promote these values and programmes will be put in place to do so.



IRFU Age Grade Rugby Report on National Squads 2017/2018

***Under 20
Junior World Championship 2017 - Georgia***

Ireland finished ninth overall after losing their group matches v Italy (21 - 22), Scotland (28 - 32) and New Zealand (3 - 69) and beating Samoa (52 - 26) and hosts Georgia in (24 - 18) in their last two matches of the tournament.

6 Nations 2018

Ireland finished third in the tournament with victories over Scotland (30 - 25) and Italy (38 - 34) and losing to France (24 - 34) v Wales (38 - 41) and England (15 - 48).

Under 19's

Ireland played international matches v Japan winning the first match (40 - 25) and losing the second match (24 - 40). The first match against France U19's Ireland won (46 - 17) with France winning the second match (45 - 20).

***Under 18's
Under 18 Clubs v Portugal U18***

A team was selected after the interprovincial matches to play in an international match against Portugal U18 in Lisbon with Ireland winning the match (46 - 27).

U18 International Series – Wales 2018

Ireland U18 Schools kicked off their international season with a match v France U18 in Dublin losing the match 39 to 20. The team faced Italy (W20 - 17), Wales (L36 - 28) and Scotland (L19 - 17) in the 6 Nations U18 Festival in Wales with France now also participating in this festival.



Ireland U18 Clubs and Schools

The U18 Clubs and Schools played international matches against Canada U19 in Dublin winning the first match (56 - 17) and the second match (51 - 12). The annual fixtures against England U18 Counties took place in Portsmouth with Ireland losing both matches (15 - 13) and (32 - 29).

Referees

Dudley Phillips was appointed Head of Referees and the 2017/2018 season saw the creation of a seven strong High Performance Referee Team, including Andrew Brace, George Clancy, Sean Gallagher, John Lacey, David Wilkinson, Frank Murphy and Joy Neville. This was the first time the IRFU had a team of full-time professional referees. The team have officiated in the Women's Rugby World Cup, the PRO14, the Champions and Challenge Cups, the November Internationals, the Six Nations and the Junior World Championships. They will continue to officiate during the summer internationals and on the Sevens World Series.

We thank and congratulate Dudley, all our referees, and the refereeing department.

Rugby Committee

After three seasons as Chair of the Rugby Committee, Ian McIlrath progressed to Senior Vice President, and Greg Barrett took over as the Chair. Further enhancement of the Rugby Committee structures and process have occurred to ensure alignment of decision making between IRFU and Branches in both committees and staff in developing rugby. Further modernisation will occur during the 2018/19 season, including the commencement of specific female and male leadership programmes to develop our future leading volunteers.

This season was the last for Gordon Black, Rugby Administrator Manager. For the last thirteen seasons Gordon has overseen the operation of the Ulster Bank League. He is a familiar face at matches across the provinces and is respected for his administration of league and application of the regulations. We wish Gordon the very best in his retirement.

Ulster Bank League

In the Division 1A final, played in the Aviva stadium, Lansdowne beat Cork Constitution in a thrilling encounter, a repeat of the Bateman Cup final, which Lansdowne also secured. The Ulster Bank Junior Cup final was a hard-fought battle between Ashbourne RFC and Killeacle and District RFC, with the defending champions Ashbourne RFC prevailing.

The Women's AIL Final was between UL Bohemians and Old Belvedere. Following a challenging game, UL Bohemians captain Fiona Hayes lifted the Women's All-Ireland League trophy for a second year in a row after the table toppers overcame Old Belvedere 15-0. However, a number of Women's AIL teams struggled this season due to player numbers and coaching issues and the IRFU will be reviewing the league and will be required to make a number of changes to ensure that it remains the showcase of women's rugby in Ireland.

Munster won the Women's Interprovincial Series in December 2017, beating Leinster in the final game of the series in Thomond Park to win on points difference.

Spirit

The Spirit of Rugby programme was launched this season, and is designed to endorse the values of the Irish Rugby and, through educational workshops and practical rugby programmes, support players, coaches, volunteers and parents to make the right choices on and off the pitch. A key initiative this season was the launch of a 'side-line behaviour' programme which included 'Respect our Players' video consisted of National Team players promoting positive side-line behaviour. Many clubs engaged in the IRFU 'Silent Side-lines' weekend to promote the message of positive side-lines behaviour by parents and coaches. As well as promoting respect for young players, it also gives players a chance to develop their tactical knowledge and decision making without distraction.

To ensure compliance with legislation, risk assessment templates were completed and club action plans reviewed from each club and over 4,000 Garda Vetting Processes were completed. To support clubs with the implementation of the legislation, the IRFU convened over 30 safeguarding courses during the season with further support to Club Welfare Officers given through visits by Spirit staff, factsheets and ongoing communication through the Clubhouse system.

Through Spirit a series of youth consultation sessions were held at national, provincial and club level to gather the thoughts of Age-grade Players on how they are experiencing the game now and their desires for the future of rugby. A partnership with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs is on-going in this area to ensure an inclusive approach and a tool-kit for Club Welfare Officers expected for the coming season.





Anti-doping

The education of players and parents is paramount to the IRFU. In addition to operating an Anti-Doping Testing Programme with Professional, Academy and Age Grade Regional Squads, the players also undertake extensive education. During the season 22 anti-doping workshops were held, aimed primarily at Age-Grade elite players as they embark on their rugby career; the education programme also included male and female professional players and club members in the amateur game. In addition, educational workshops in anti-doping and nutrition were operated across a number of 'A' schools; next season the education programme will be expanded to include Development Schools to ensure the 'keep rugby clean' message is widely distributed to a younger audience.

Disability Rugby

Disability Rugby has expanded this season through the assistance of Sport Ireland Dormant Account funding and CARA. Six new clubs were established with a Tag programme for players with an intellectual disability. Growth in this area of the game will continue in the 2018/19 season with work on mixed ability with the four-nations and planned partnerships with other areas of disability.

Participation Programmes

Aldi's partnership with the IRFU entered its second year and the programme has gone from strength-to-strength with over 1,100 schools and almost 100,000 school children participating in the programme. Key to this programme is the teacher resources available on-line and the establishment of a Play Rugby teacher programme in collaboration with the Department of Education; 100 teachers undertook the course during the summer.



Tag and Touch Rugby

The IRFU's Tag Rugby programme, sponsored by Volkswagen, reached 11,000 players in spring, summer and autumn leagues, across 23 venues; including Buccaneers RFC, Garryowen FC, Greystones RFC and Wicklow RFC as new venues. We continue to work with the clubs to use the programme to increase revenue, player and volunteer recruitment. This season also resulted in our best supported beach tag events to date in Portstewart. The TAG season finished with the All-Ireland Finals day in Old Belvedere RFC where 60 teams come from all over Ireland each year to contest national titles; the event has grown each year on year.

The IRFU Touch Rugby programme saw over 60 teams take part in structured adult competitions around Ireland as well more than 4,000 students at third level colleges and universities. 2018 will see the launch of new initiatives in Touch Rugby alongside newly announced programme sponsor Lucozade Sport. Touch Leagues will continue to operate in Cork, Limerick, Dublin and Belfast, with Secondary School and third level initiatives, and an exciting Rugby Fitness pilot programme all rolling out in spring/summer 2018.

Coach Development

The IRFU and Provincial Coach Development units remain committed to positioning Irish Rugby as a world leader in coach development practice and behaviour. With this objective front of mind 2017/2018 saw the improved and increased service of new and existing coaches across all sectors and formats, whilst simultaneously commencing new initiatives that will facilitate future success and effectiveness. This has directly resulted in an

increase in coach accreditation percentages. In addition to modernising the courses (particularly Stage 4), there has been continued development of learning resource, use of the HIVE Learning Platform and introduction of mobile friendly online coaching course feedback process and coach observation reports. Next season the three key objectives will be the implementation of the eLearning platform, review of coach accreditation and re-accreditation process and a review of the IRFU Long Term Player Development (LTPD) model.

Women's Community Rugby

The highlight event of the season was the hosting of the Women's Rugby World Cup; in support of the tournament the IRFU implemented an Impact Beyond programme over the course of the previous season. Central to the programme was the Trophy Tour, which saw the WRWC trophy travel over 20,000 kilometres promoting the WRWC. The Ambassador programme recruited almost 90 volunteers to the women's game and helped promote rugby across the country, as well as increasing participation in areas. The target recruitment of 2,017 new players was surpassed, with a total of 4,780 new registered players.

In parallel, **Give It a Try Third Level Roadshows** and **Give It a Try Girls Summer Rugby Programme** continued. The Third Level Roadshows visited 13 colleges/universities last year and culminated in a beginner's rugby festival in November 2017. This programme will be rolled out across the provinces next season. Following the success of the Women's Rugby World Cup 38 clubs will participate in girls' summer rugby, up from 10 clubs last year.





Age Grade and Third Level

This season 2,000 players from 120 clubs participated in the Provincial Aviva Mini Rugby Festivals culminating in the National Festival at Aviva Stadium on Saturday, 19th May following provincial festivals in City of Armagh RFC, Galway FC and Corinthians RFC, Tullamore RFC and UL Bohemian RFC. Our grassroots sponsor, Aviva, is incredibly supportive of the mini rugby programme.

As in previous years the IRFU supports schools rugby through the Schools of Ireland Scheme. 86 schools received financial support to operate rugby programmes, with approximately 19,000 participants, supported by over 1,100 coaches. This season these schools participated in 10,879 matches.

Third Level

Over the past few seasons the IRFU has increased the investment into Third Level Rugby and entered into partnerships with institutions for the provision of development officers, as well as Funding Agreements with Student Sport Ireland (SSI) and the Irish Universities Rugby Union (IURU). The IRFU works closely with Student Sport Ireland (SSI) to manage men's and women's rugby across third level institutions. In total over 40 men's and 16 women's teams participate in the Leagues with 46 teams participating in Cup competitions.

This season the IRFU in partnership with IURU launched the University 7s League, designed to create a performance level platform for 7s rugby for female and male players. The IRFU and the IURU have confirmed a three-year plan to develop and grow a men's and women's student's 7s programme.

On Sunday March 11th, the **Irish Students' Team** secured a 33-17 win against Scottish Students at the University of Edinburgh. The Irish side were captained by Cian Bohane of UCC, with the squad being made up of players from 12 different Colleges and Universities.

Commercial and Marketing

We are pleased to report the ongoing success of our Commercial and Marketing programmes. Under the Chairmanship of Damian Devaney, the IRFU is well positioned to commercially maximise the opportunities that present.

We wish to extend thanks to all of our commercial partners and sponsors for their support during this past season, without whom the success on the pitch and the financial spin offs, cannot be achieved.

To Vodafone CEO Anne O Leary, we offer our heartfelt thanks. As our team sponsor, this past season has seen even more engaging with award winning communications and promotional campaigns rolled out under the banner of the 'Team of Us'. The positive profile and the awareness that this drives really helps push our sport in the national consciousness.

To our family of sponsors, we are grateful for your continued support. This past season has seen significant renewals with Aviva our mini rugby and Stadium Naming Rights partner, Aon on the women's Team, Aer Lingus, Volkswagen, DHL and Lucozade Sport. We also welcome Elverys/Intersport and Blackrock Expert Services as new partners on our 7s programmes.

To our many other partners listed elsewhere in this document, we acknowledge and thank you for your valued contribution and continued support.

Marketing and Game Promotion

In this historic Grand Slam season, the Ireland rugby team remains our most effective marketing tool.

We thank all of our ticket purchasers especially our ten year ticket holders and our corporate box holders. We are very grateful for your patronage which plays a pivotal role in funding the game in this country.

In addition to the strong attendances at the National Team games in Aviva Stadium, Ireland U20s and Ireland Women enjoyed very strong support in Donnybrook Stadium for each of their 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 from the clubs who participate. This past six seasons has seen over €3.5m raised for the club game in this country.

Irish Rugby Digital

Irish Rugby continues to lead the way in the digital sphere with the largest audience for any Irish sport. An audit of our online channels showed the appetite for a diverse range of content covering all the international teams, the provinces and the club game. There is also a key role for our online channels in promoting key rugby programmes that highlight the social benefits of rugby as a family and community sport e.g. Aviva Minis, Aldi Play Rugby, and Volkswagen Tag.

The Grand Slam, naturally, marked a high point of engagement across all of our platforms with Instagram enjoying a 12% audience increase while offering excellent engagement and click through rates.

The IRFU website IrishRugby.ie is due to be relaunched in 2018. The site will move to a new platform that will combine a new look, greater search functionality and more integrated content.

The Patrons Club

The Patrons Club for Ten Year Ticket holders, continues to build a quality offering that is more than just a ‘ticket to the match’ experience. On the ground interaction on match days has served to improve the customer experience;

while regular updates and communication have increased awareness of the added benefits of membership. The annual Patrons Club trip continues to grow in popularity with our ten year and corporate audience. This season’s trip to Paris was the biggest yet.

Communications

During another busy year the communications department continued to work with internal and external stakeholders across a broad range of issues.

Special projects such as the Women’s Rugby World Cup and the Rugby World Cup 2023 bid required significant support.

A communications framework and support structure was created and delivered for the Women’s Rugby World Cup. The tournament delivered mass exposure for women’s rugby and was the most tweeted about sporting event of 2017.

A comprehensive communications plan to support Ireland’s bid for the Rugby World Cup 2023 was devised to inform and inspire. The bid involved numerous media showpiece events and promotional activities on the run up to the announcement of the successful bid by World Rugby.

The IRFU continues to innovate and evolve its communications offerings to diversify, and futureproof, the organisation. Live and pre-recorded social media formats are utilised to give our engaged audiences insight into the workings of our representative teams.

A series of mini-documentaries tell the story of both the men’s and women’s 7s squads, while engaging educational content is produced across a broad range of topics from skills to nutrition and safety.

Changes in consumer habits and rugby fans’ desire for more direct two-way communication has resulted in a repositioning of how we communicate over the past five years. This has resulted in some changes to how we work with traditional media formats. However, the symbiotic relationship we have with traditional media remains important, as we all develop our offerings for an ever changing communications environment.





The most recent RepTRAK® survey carried out at the start of 2018 ranked the IRFU as the fifteenth most respected organisation in Ireland, up eight places from the previous year. The study also ranked the IRFU among the top ten organisations in Ireland in the areas of Governance, Citizenship and Leadership. Insightful, measured and strategic management of our brand remains a strength of the IRFU and one which continues to safeguard the organisation’s values and reputation.

Medical

Player welfare continues to be the number one priority for the IRFU Medical Department with work ongoing in the areas of education and injury prevention.

Medical Department Structure

There are three new medical sub committees which report to the IRFU Medical Advisory Committee. These new sub committees advise the Medical Advisory Committee on strategy and deliver agreed policy and standards in relation to medical matters.

SAFE Rugby

The IRFU’s rugby specific Immediate Care in Rugby programme is in its fifth year and continues to grow and develop. It provides coaches, doctors, physiotherapists, parents and players with practical tuition on recognizing and managing rugby specific injuries. There have been 38 SAFE Rugby courses across all 3 levels to date this

season, with a total of 678 attendees, 140 of those being health care professionals involved in the professional or club game. As the SAFE Rugby programme runs throughout the year there will be additional courses happening during the summer break. In 2017, a total of 1,000 people participated in SAFE Rugby training.

Injury Reporting

The Medical Department continues to drive the reporting of injuries throughout the game through the use of the reportable injury system. These figures are collated monthly and used to drive areas of research and education.

The reporting of suspected concussion cases by referees within the Ulster Bank League and follow up on all reported cases by the Medical Department continues into its fourth season.

Guidelines

The IRFU Medical Department continued to review guidelines to improve player welfare and safety.

The following guidelines were developed:

- IRFU Concussion wallet card
- Communication between National Underage Team Physiotherapists and Doctors and Provincial Academy staff
- IRFU Player movement process
- Medical Advisory Committee Terms of reference
- Medical Committee structure and terms of reference

Research

Audit and research are an essential part of the Medical Departments work.

A partnership with University of Limerick was established in 2016 to conduct a large scale injury surveillance study in Developmental rugby. A PhD student (Caithriona Yoemans) was contracted for four years to carry out this project.

The injury surveillance study in schools rugby in Ulster (RISUS) is ongoing with new directions for the study being developed for next season. We are continuing to collaborate with World Rugby and University College Dublin on the use of the Y Balance test in the management of concussion.

Staff

The IRFU Medical Department has continued to develop a panel of doctors and physiotherapists that can be called on for work with underage national teams, rugby events around the country and cover for existing physios and doctors.

A new position “Head of Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy” was filled by Phil Glasgow to lead the physiotherapy and rehab services at a national level.

This season saw the further development of nutrition services throughout the Elite Player Pathway in each of the provinces, supported by a full time Performance Nutritionist for the National Talent Development pathway who also works with the National U20s players.





Anti-doping

The IRFU once again commissioned anti-doping tests through the Sport Ireland, supplementing Sport Ireland’s National Anti-Doping Programme. No anti-doping violations were recorded.

Details of the tests performed are outlined below:

2017/18 Anti-doping Programme		
In Competition Testing		
<i>Team</i>	<i>No. of Players Tested</i>	
Senior XV	05	
Provincial	14	
U20s	05	
Age Grade	07	
Women's XV	04	
Women's 7s	06	
Men's 7s	04	
Out of Competition Testing		
<i>Team</i>	<i>No. of Players Tested</i>	
Senior XV	27	
Provincial	61	
U20s	12	
Academy	16	
Age Grade	12	
Women's XV	20	
Women's 7s	29	
Men's 7s	04	

Charitable Trust

Great credit must go to our fundraisers and to the many people from the rugby network who step up to the plate to help us, and to their ability to match the rising costs. The number of seriously injured players whom the Trust support remains at 34. As recorded for the 2017/18 season, costs for the support rose to approximately €483k. Our new website, www.irfucharitabletrust.com, developed this year, gives a much greater insight to all of our fundraising efforts and to much more.

Committee

Retiring from the IRFU is immediate Past President, Stephen Hilditch. He was elected to the IRFU Committee in 2006. He has held a variety of key roles in the Union including Chairman of the Rugby Committee and also was IRFU representative on the Board of Rugby Europe. He also sat on the World Rugby Match Officials Appointments Committee for many years. Our thanks and best wishes go to Stephen and his wife, Anne.

Obituaries

William Patrick Duggan - 41 Caps – 1975/84.
Neville Furlong – 2 Caps – 1991/92.





Honorary Treasurer's Report

TOM GRACE

Once again I have the privilege to present the Union's annual accounts to you. 2017/18 was a great year for Irish Rugby and this on-pitch performance has impacted significantly on the result for the year and on the Union's finances. As in the past, I intend to focus primarily on the Union's accounts and to limit myself to explaining any significant differences between them and the consolidated accounts.



The surplus in the consolidated accounts amounted to €2.7m compared with the Union only surplus of €1.2m. The difference arises due to the inclusion in the consolidated accounts of the total revenues and costs of subsidiaries together with the relevant share of profits or losses of joint ventures along with the amortisation of goodwill. These amounts take the place of the relevant write-downs and amortisation of investments included in the Union only accounts. Further details can be found in notes 1, 5, 8 and 9 to the Union accounts.

As you can see from the Union's Income Statement the Union enjoyed a surplus of €1.2m following the deficit of €2.8m last year. This surplus was achieved despite a budgeted deficit of over €4m and I will now bring you through the key reasons for this improvement.

Revenues improved by €9.1m over the €76.6m achieved in 2017/18. €4.3m of this improvement arises in International Rugby Income shown in Schedule 1 of the accounts. Included here are gate and hospitality receipts

together with broadcasting and miscellaneous other income including Lions revenues and monies from World Rugby. This increase is largely due to the increased prize-money earned as a result of winning the Grand Slam together with contractual increases in broadcasting and Lions revenues. Also included in here for the first time is a dividend received from Aviva Stadium amounting to almost €1.2m.

Commercial income improved by just under €0.7m due to contractual increases together with new commercial partners coming on board. The increase of c. €2m in Provincial competition income is largely attributable to prize-money in EPCR and the additional revenues



generated by the inclusion of South African teams in the PRO14. The improvement of over €0.8m in other income included in Schedule 2 is due to the surplus arising on the disposal of one of the Union’s properties on Lansdowne Road.

Against budget the Union’s revenues were over €10m ahead due to better than expected attendances at the Guinness Series matches, the stadium dividend, additional commercial revenues and prize-money.

In total the international game generated over 80% of the Union’s revenues. Provincial revenues arising from the participation of the four Provincial teams in PRO14 and European competitions account for a further 14% with the remaining 5% arising from domestic and other income including grant income from various bodies including Sport Ireland and the Government as listed in Note 15 to the accounts. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of these bodies for the generous assistance they provided in 2017/18 and indeed in previous years.

Turning our attention to expenditure, costs have increased by just over €5m to €84.5m for a variety of reasons. The cost of the National team together with the Union’s contribution to the cost of the four Provincial teams is included in professional game costs in Schedule 3. The increase of almost €1.2m arises mainly from bonuses payable in respect of performance achievements at both National and Provincial level, the increased cost of touring in the USA and Japan compared with South Africa in 2016/17 and the increased funding provided to the Provincial teams on the back of the increase in Pro14 revenues.

Elite player development increases by just under €2m due to the continuing activation of the new player pathway programmes together with the once-off net cost of hosting the Women’s Rugby World Cup tournament which is included in Women’s representative teams in Schedule 4. Overall, costs in this this area were within budget. Referee costs increased by almost €0.3m due to an unbudgeted change in the structure of high performance referees within the Union arising from increased demands on personnel in this area. Domestic and community rugby expenditure increased by over €0.6m reflecting the budgeted increase in expenditure in this area together with an increase in net insurance costs.

Marketing and communications costs are split out fully for the first time and the overall increase of just under €0.1m is attributable to staff, consultancy and sponsorship costs. Administration and overheads increased by just under €1.1m due to increases in staff costs and professional fees. Professional fees include the costs incurred in relation to the Rugby World Cup 2023 bid net of the very welcome assistance received from Failte Ireland as shown in Note 15. The overall increase of €0.6m in professional fees arises from unbudgeted advisory costs in relation to GDPR and the Union’s defined benefit pension scheme together with legal costs.

Expenditure on the professional game accounted for just over half of the Union’s expenditure and when elite player development and referee costs are included it can be seen that these costs accounted for some 64% of the Union’s total expenditure. Spending on the domestic game accounted for a further 13% with the remaining 23% accounted for by marketing, communications, grounds, administration and depreciation.

The Union’s net assets improved to €70.9m reflecting the surplus for the year together with the slight disimprovement in the Union’s net pension liability the movement on which, in line with best practice is taken through the Union statement of other comprehensive income rather than through the income statement.

Debtors and prepayments increased by c. €4.1m due to increased Branch amounts due together with prize-money and corporate box debtors. The rise of €5.2m in creditors and accruals is due to increased amounts payable to Branches together with an increase in deferred income.

The Union’s cash balances increased by just over €11m during the year and among the main reasons for this are the disposal proceeds from the sale of one of the Union’s properties together with a loan repayment of €2.6m received from the Munster Branch. In addition to these two amounts the Union sold additional corporate boxes and received advance payments on five and ten year tickets which amounted to just over €7m. On the Statement of Financial Position you will see an amount of €6m described as income received in advance. This relates to the receipt of €6m during the year by the Union in respect of the future naming rights of Aviva Stadium the amortisation of which will commence in 2020/21 and will be spread over five years.



Earlier in this report I mentioned that the Union had obtained advice during the year on its defined benefit scheme and the Trustees of the scheme have agreed that from 1st August, 2018 the scheme will close to future accrual.

The general economic conditions in which the Union operates continue to improve but it is still unclear as to what impact Brexit will have on the economic climate. Outside of the broader economy the player and coach market continues to inflate at a greater rate than general inflation. As we have seen the participation of the South African teams in PRO14 resulted in an increase in funding to the four Provincial teams which has helped to keep pace with inflation but we cannot reasonably anticipate such increases every year.

Finally I would like to thank all of those whose efforts assisted me over the course of the last twelve months including my colleagues on the Union Committee with particular thanks to the members of the Finance Standing Committee for their support and guidance throughout the year. In addition to the volunteers I would also like to thank the Union staff for their assistance especially Conor O’Brien and his team in the Finance department.



The IRFU wishes to acknowledge the following sponsors & suppliers of Irish Rugby

 <p>The official sponsor of the Irish rugby team</p>	 <p>Official Kit Supplier to the IRFU</p>	 <p>Sponsor of the Guinness Series, Official Beer to the IRFU</p>	 <p>Official Sponsor of the Ireland Women's Team</p>	 <p>Official Formal Outfitters to the IRFU</p>	 <p>An Official Partner of the IRFU & the Ireland Men's Sevens Team</p>
 <p>Sponsor of the NatWest 6 Nations Championship</p>	 <p>Official Community rugby partner to the IRFU, sponsor of the Ulster Bank League and Club International</p>	 <p>Stadium and Insurance Partner to the IRFU, sponsors of the Aviva mini rugby festivals</p>	 <p>An Official Partner of the IRFU</p>	 <p>Official Isotonic Supplier to the IRFU</p>	 <p>Official Express and Logistics Partner to the IRFU</p>
 <p>Official airline to the IRFU</p>	 <p>An Official Partner of the IRFU & Title Sponsor of Ireland Sevens Rugby</p>	 <p>Official Supermarket Partner</p>	 <p>Official yoghurt and partner of Irish Rugby / IRFU</p>	 <p>Official match ball supplier to the IRFU</p>	 <p>An Official partner to the IRFU</p>
 <p>Official Sponsor of the U20, U19 & U18 and Ireland Schoolboy teams</p>	 <p>Official vehicle supplier to the IRFU, Official sponsor of IRFU Tag Rugby</p>		 <p>Fleet Management Services</p>	 <p>Official Gift Supplier to the IRFU</p>	 <p>Supporting Irish Rugby</p>



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UNION INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

		2017/18 €	2016/17 €	2015/16 €
Income:	Schedule			
Representative matches	1	81,498,313	73,064,202	72,295,701
Other income	2	4,226,083	3,521,631	3,814,311
		85,724,396	76,585,833	76,110,012
Expenditure:				
Professional game costs	3	42,336,017	41,156,891	37,600,703
Elite player development	4	10,805,084	8,908,564	7,813,491
Games support costs	5	572,811	274,112	320,641
Domestic and community rugby	6	10,588,387	9,910,590	9,240,180
Marketing and communications	7	2,028,496	1,941,583	1,736,811
Grounds	8	2,436,865	2,601,147	901,564
Administration and overheads	9	8,561,197	7,491,161	6,323,692
Depreciation	(Note 4)	1,248,678	1,189,827	1,210,502
Amortisation of financial fixed assets	(Notes 8 & 9)	5,907,292	5,907,292	5,907,292
		84,484,827	79,381,167	71,054,876
Surplus (deficit) for the year		1,239,569	(2,795,334)	5,055,136

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

CONSOLIDATED INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

		2017/18 €	2016/17 €	2015/16 €
Income:	Note			
Representative matches		84,249,726	73,064,202	72,295,701
Other income		3,135,083	3,605,630	3,898,311
Share of loss of joint ventures	8	(2,155,077)	(2,189,641)	(2,768,415)
		85,229,732	74,480,191	73,425,597
Expenditure:				
Professional game costs		42,336,017	41,156,891	37,600,703
Elite player development		13,793,483	8,908,564	7,813,491
Games support costs		572,811	274,112	320,641
Domestic and community rugby		10,588,387	9,910,590	9,240,180
Marketing and communications		2,028,496	1,941,583	1,736,811
Grounds		2,436,865	2,601,147	901,564
Administration and overheads		8,641,577	7,309,844	6,406,152
Depreciation	4	1,748,678	1,689,827	1,710,502
Amortisation of goodwill	5	365,068	366,563	366,563
		82,511,382	74,159,121	66,096,607
Surplus for the year		2,718,350	321,070	7,328,990

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

UNION STATEMENT OF OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Surplus (deficit) for the financial year	1,239,569	(2,795,334)	5,055,136
Actuarial (loss) gain on assets	(49,000)	410,000	(419,000)
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities	172,000	323,000	342,000
Effect of changes in actuarial assumptions	(169,000)	(294,000)	1,089,000
Total surplus (deficit) relating to the year	1,193,569	(2,356,334)	6,067,136
Total surplus (deficit) recognised since the last annual report	1,193,569	(2,356,334)	6,067,136

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Surplus for the financial year	2,718,350	321,070	7,328,990
Actuarial (loss) gain on assets	(49,000)	410,000	(419,000)
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities	172,000	323,000	342,000
Effect of changes in actuarial assumptions	(169,000)	(294,000)	1,089,000
Total surplus relating to the year	2,672,350	760,070	8,340,990
Total surplus recognised since the last annual report	2,672,350	760,070	8,340,990

UNION STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
General reserve	67,164,767	69,521,101	63,453,965
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	69,704,243	72,060,577	65,993,441
Total recognised surplus (deficit) relating to the year	1,193,569	(2,356,334)	6,067,136
Balance at 30 April	70,897,812	69,704,243	72,060,577

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
General reserve	86,977,779	86,217,709	77,876,719
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	89,517,255	88,757,185	80,416,195
Total recognised surplus relating to the year	2,672,350	760,070	8,340,990
Balance at 30 April	92,189,605	89,517,255	88,757,185

UNION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 APRIL 2018

	Note	30/04/18 €	30/04/17 €
Tangible fixed assets	4	28,480,804	30,566,898
Financial fixed assets			
Loans to clubs	6	1,929,351	2,039,137
Other loans	7	6,961,778	9,561,778
Joint ventures	8	65,240,527	70,647,819
Investment in subsidiary undertakings	9	6,000,000	6,500,000
		80,131,656	88,748,734
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	10	24,393,116	20,211,490
Cash at bank and in hand		16,363,285	5,255,232
		40,756,401	25,466,722
Current liabilities			
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	20,815,360	15,593,901
		20,815,360	15,593,901
Net current assets		19,941,041	9,872,821
Total assets less current liabilities		128,553,501	129,188,453
Pension liability	12	(2,674,000)	(2,531,000)
Income received in advance		(6,000,000)	-
Deferred ticket fund	13	(46,009,822)	(52,936,390)
Deferred naming rights fund	14	(2,971,867)	(4,016,820)
		70,897,812	69,704,243
Financed by:			
Union funds		70,897,812	69,704,243

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 APRIL 2018

	Note	30/04/18 €	30/04/17 €
Tangible fixed assets	4	34,480,804	37,066,898
Intangible fixed assets	5		
Goodwill		7,632,837	8,268,722
Negative goodwill		(3,044,691)	(3,290,085)
		4,588,146	4,978,637
Financial fixed assets			
Loans to clubs	6	1,929,351	2,039,137
Other loans	7	6,961,778	9,561,778
Joint ventures:	8		
Share of gross assets		181,647,541	185,984,497
Share of gross liabilities		(99,759,790)	(100,792,092)
		90,778,880	96,793,320
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	10	24,288,300	20,447,942
Cash at bank and in hand		16,577,646	6,313,202
		40,865,946	26,761,144
Current liabilities			
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	20,868,482	16,598,534
		20,868,482	16,598,534
Net current assets		19,997,464	10,162,610
Total assets less current liabilities		149,845,294	149,001,465
Pension liability	12	(2,674,000)	(2,531,000)
Income received in advance		(6,000,000)	-
Deferred ticket fund	13	(46,009,822)	(52,936,390)
Deferred naming rights fund	14	(2,971,867)	(4,016,820)
		92,189,605	89,517,255
Financed by:			
Union funds		92,189,605	89,517,255

T. Grace
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne
Chief Executive

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Cash flows from operating activities		
Operating surplus	2,718,350	321,070
Deposit interest receivable	(42,294)	(23,045)
Unwinding of discount (Note 14)	678,856	643,020
Depreciation (Note 4)	1,748,678	1,689,827
Profit on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(972,156)	-
Movement in shares of net assets of joint ventures and Union share of capital contribution	3,330,077	2,189,641
Amortisation of goodwill (Note 5)	365,068	366,563
Movement in provisions against loans to clubs	(105,504)	8,865
Movement in debtors	(3,840,358)	(3,179,355)
Movement in creditors	4,269,948	2,554,861
Movement in income received in advance	6,000,000	-
Current service costs less return on investment on pension	318,000	325,000
Pension fund contributions	(221,000)	(239,000)
Transfer to revenue – deferred naming rights	(1,723,809)	(1,723,809)
Transfer to revenue – corporate boxes and ten year tickets	(14,001,868)	(12,553,142)
Net cash outflow from operating activities	(1,478,012)	(9,619,504)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest received on bank deposits and other loans	25,616	963
Interest received on loans to clubs	16,678	22,082
Net repayment from (advances to) clubs	215,290	(304,024)
Repayment by Munster Branch IRFU	2,600,000	100,000
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(190,428)	-
Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets	2,000,000	-
Net cash inflow (outflow) from investing activities	4,667,156	(180,979)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Proceeds on sale of deferred tickets and boxes	7,075,300	746,000
Net cash inflow from financing activities	7,075,300	746,000
Increase (decrease) in cash	10,264,444	(9,054,483)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	6,313,202	15,367,685
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	16,577,646	6,313,202

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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. 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 undertakings, Lansdowne Car Park Limited and Irish International Rugby Competitions Company Limited by Guarantee.

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 tangible fixed assets which is considered to be 20 years.

d. Turnover

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, net of discounts. Turnover includes revenue earned from the sale of goods and from the rendering of services.

The Irish Rugby Football Union (the "Union"), when acting as principal, recognises revenue when (a) the significant risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer; (b) it retains no continuing involvement or control over the goods; (c) the amount of revenue can be measured reliably; (d) it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to it and (e) when the specific criteria relating to each of its sales channels have been met, as described below.

Ticket income, competition income and other event income are recognised as revenue when the related event is staged.

Sponsorship income, TV rights income and other commercial agreements are recognised as revenue based on the relevant contractual terms. Where consideration is received in kind, income and expenditure are grossed up on the basis of arm's length commercial rates.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

- e. Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets are shown at their historic cost net of any capital grants received or receivable.
- f. 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 and equipment	33.33%, 25% and 12.5%
Computer equipment	20% and 33.33%
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	Nil
- g. Joint ventures**

The Union's 50% interest in New Stadium DAC and Thomond Park Stadium Company DAC 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 of the underlying fixed assets 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.
- h. 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 undertakings

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 2018

1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

- The investment in Irish International Rugby Competitions Company Limited by Guarantee is valued at cost less provision for impairment in value. This investment has been fully provided for on the basis that it is expected to be loss making.
- i. 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.
- j. 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.
- k. 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. The Union engages independent actuaries annually to calculate the obligation.

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

The Union also operates defined contribution schemes 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.
- l. 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 2018

1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

m. Liquid resources

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

n. Financing

Amounts received in respect of the transfer to the counterparty of the Union's contributions receivable under the 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 the 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.

Information about the estimates and assumptions that have the most significant effect on recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenditure is provided below. Actual results may be substantially different.

Impairment

In assessing impairment of the intangible assets, the Committee estimates the recoverable amount of each asset based on expected future cash flows. Estimation uncertainty relates to assumptions about the determination of a suitable discount rate.

Deferred ticket income

In assessing the release of deferred ticket income, the Committee estimates 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 2018

4. Tangible fixed assets

Union	Cost at 01/05/17 €	Additions €	Disposals €	Cost at 30/04/18 €
Premises and grounds	49,732,572	15,000	(1,941,693)	47,805,879
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	7,497,273	175,428	-	7,672,701
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	368,713	-	-	368,713
	57,598,558	190,428	(1,941,693)	55,847,293
	Accumulated depreciation at 01/05/17 €	Charge for year €	Disposals €	Accumulated depreciation at 30/04/18 €
Premises and grounds	19,534,524	1,190,202	(913,849)	19,810,877
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	7,497,136	58,476	-	7,555,612
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	-	-	-	-
	27,031,660	1,248,678	(913,849)	27,366,489
Net book value	30,566,898			28,480,804

Consolidated	Cost at 01/05/17 €	Additions €	Disposals €	Cost at 30/04/18 €
Premises and grounds	49,732,572	15,000	(1,941,693)	47,805,879
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	7,497,273	175,428	-	7,672,701
Car park	10,000,000	-	-	10,000,000
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	368,713	-	-	368,713
	67,598,558	190,428	(1,941,693)	65,847,293
	Accumulated depreciation at 01/05/17 €	Charge for year €	Disposals €	Accumulated depreciation at 30/04/18 €
Premises and grounds	19,534,524	1,190,202	(913,849)	19,810,877
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	7,497,136	58,476	-	7,555,612
Car park	3,500,000	500,000	-	4,000,000
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	-	-	-	-
	30,531,660	1,748,678	(913,849)	31,366,489
Net book value	37,066,898			34,480,804

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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 above in respect of this expenditure is €5,078,470.
- (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 DAC 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 DAC (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 €3,046,858 and is included within premises and grounds above.

5. Intangible fixed assets

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Goodwill arising on share of New Stadium DAC		
Cost		
At 1 May	11,898,642	11,898,642
At 30 April	11,898,642	11,898,642
Amortisation		
At 1 May	(3,629,920)	(2,994,035)
Charge for the year	(635,885)	(635,885)
At 30 April	(4,265,805)	(3,629,920)
	7,632,837	8,268,722

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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.

This additional expenditure referred to above, the effect of conversion of the loan to share capital and premium as referred to in note 8, 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.

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Negative goodwill arising on share of Thomond Park Stadium Company DAC		
Cost		
At 1 May	(4,578,474)	(4,578,474)
Union share of movement on capital contribution	(25,423)	-
At 30 April	(4,603,897)	(4,578,474)
Amortisation		
At 1 May	1,288,389	1,019,067
Credit for the year	270,817	269,322
At 30 April	1,559,206	1,288,389
	(3,044,691)	(3,290,085)

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

Negative goodwill is being 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 €459,864 (2017: €565,368). The movement on these provisions has increased net income by €105,504 (2016/2017: €8,865 decrease, 2015/2016: €20,402 increase).

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

7. Other loans

	30/04/18	30/04/17
Union and Consolidated	€	€
Loan to Munster Branch IRFU	6,961,778	9,561,778
Amount due within one year	100,000	4,800,000
Amounts due after one year	6,861,778	4,761,778
	6,961,778	9,561,778

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 DAC 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.

A new schedule of loan repayments was agreed with the Branch during the year. Under the new repayment schedule the principal terms of repayment are as follows:

- Annual loan repayments in the amount of €100,000 plus;
- 50% of any additional multi-year ticket sales, 50% of any multi-year corporate box sales and 50% of net Thomond Park naming rights income on an annual basis.

The arrangement is to be reviewed on a biennial basis and the Union reserves the right to revert to the strict terms of the Loan Agreement following each review in its absolute discretion and/or in the event of any failure by the Munster Branch to meet the newly agreed arrangements.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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 DAC (companies formed to develop the Aviva Stadium and Thomond Park respectively).

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Investment at cost		
- New Stadium DAC	108,145,832	108,145,832
- Thomond Park Stadium Company DAC	5	5
	108,145,837	108,145,837
Amortisation in respect of New Stadium DAC		
Accumulated balance carried forward	(37,498,018)	(32,090,726)
Charge for the year	(5,407,292)	(5,407,292)
	65,240,527	70,647,819

On 11 September 2014, the Union exchanged the then 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 gave 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:

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Share of turnover	5,727,132	5,290,989
Share of operating loss	(1,769,888)	(1,744,340)
Share of tax	-	-
Share of loss after tax	(1,769,888)	(1,744,340)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

8. Joint ventures (cont'd.)

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Share of fixed assets	164,663,755	169,332,406
Share of current assets	3,635,667	3,029,218
Share of gross assets	168,299,422	172,361,624
Share of current liabilities	(1,441,620)	(1,085,046)
Share of non-current liabilities	(86,336,940)	(87,810,828)
Share of gross liabilities	(87,778,560)	(88,895,874)
Share of net assets	80,520,862	83,465,750

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

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Share of turnover	1,216,164	1,237,976
Share of operating loss	(385,189)	(445,301)
Share of tax	-	-
Share of loss after tax	(385,189)	(445,301)
Share of fixed assets	13,022,195	13,416,128
Share of current assets	325,924	206,745
Share of gross assets	13,348,119	13,622,873
Share of current liabilities	(287,876)	(202,863)
Share of non-current liabilities	(11,693,354)	(11,693,355)
Share of gross liabilities	(11,981,230)	(11,896,218)
Share of net assets	1,366,889	1,726,655

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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 DAC	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 undertakings

	Irish International Rugby Competitions Company Limited by Guarantee €	Lansdowne Car Park Limited €	Total €
Cost			
At 1 May	315,000	10,000,000	10,315,000
Additions during the year	1,100,000	-	1,100,000
At 30 April	1,415,000	10,000,000	11,415,000
Amortisation and Impairment			
At 1 May	(315,000)	(3,500,000)	(3,815,000)
Charge for the year	(1,100,000)	(500,000)	(1,600,000)
At 30 April	(1,415,000)	(4,000,000)	(5,415,000)
	-	6,000,000	6,000,000

The Union owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of Lansdowne Car Park Limited, and Irish International Rugby Competitions Company Limited by Guarantee. Both companies are registered in the Republic of Ireland and their registered office is at 10/12 Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4.

The Union advanced funds to Lansdowne Car Park Limited 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 20 years.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

9. Investment in subsidiary undertakings (cont'd.)

The loan is unsecured, interest free, has no fixed date of repayment and is repayable on demand.

Irish International Rugby Competitions Company Limited by Guarantee was set up in order to run the Women's Rugby World Cup 2017. This venture is not expected to generate profits and for this reason the Union decided to fully provide against its investment. The accumulated losses relating to this venture to 30 April 2018 amounted to €1,390,325. It is the intention of the Union to wind up this company in the near future.

10. Debtors and prepayments

	Union		Consolidated	
	30/04/18	30/04/17	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€	€	€
Sponsorship debtors	6,188,793	3,769,618	6,188,793	3,769,618
Ticket debtors	3,661,630	3,404,966	3,661,630	3,404,966
Other debtors	6,457	2,118	6,457	2,118
Prepayments and accrued income	14,354,876	12,911,084	14,250,060	13,147,536
Stock of sportswear and equipment	181,360	123,704	181,360	123,704
	24,393,116	20,211,490	24,288,300	20,447,942

Trade debtors and short term receivables above are stated net of provisions, where applicable. Provisions against debtors at the year end amounted to €3,067,224 (2017: €4,967,120). The movement on these provisions has decreased net income by €86,647 (2016/2017: €8,185 decrease; 2015/2016: €3,236,490 decrease).

Included in ticket debtors above are amounts receivable in two to five years of €1,775,000 (2017: €1,570,970).

11. Creditors

	Union		Consolidated	
	30/04/18	30/04/17	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€	€	€
Trade creditors and accruals	15,630,154	11,654,171	15,665,776	11,707,228
Income received in advance	5,055,527	3,816,316	5,073,027	4,707,575
PAYE/PRSI	62,037	64,514	62,037	64,514
VAT	67,642	58,900	67,642	119,217
	20,815,360	15,593,901	20,868,482	16,598,534

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

12. Pension commitments

The pension entitlements of certain employees of the Union arise under both a defined benefit scheme and defined contribution schemes 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.

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 2018.

Subsequent to the end of the financial year, the Trustees of the scheme have made the decision that they would be closing the scheme with effect from 1 August 2018 to the accrual of benefits in respect of future service.

The amounts recognised in the income statement are as follows:

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Amounts charged to income statement:		
Current service cost	299,000	309,000
Total operating charge	299,000	309,000
Amounts charged to finance cost:		
Net finance expense	62,000	62,000
Total charge to the income statement	361,000	371,000
Actual return on scheme assets	129,000	582,000

Actuarial losses of €46,000 (2016/17: €439,000 gain) have been recognised in the statement of other comprehensive income.

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

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Present value of funded obligations	(11,797,000)	(11,326,000)
Fair value of scheme assets	9,123,000	8,795,000
Net pension liability	(2,674,000)	(2,531,000)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

12. Pension commitments (cont'd.)

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Opening defined benefit obligation	11,326,000	11,033,000
Current service cost	299,000	309,000
Interest on scheme liabilities	226,000	229,000
Actuarial gain	(3,000)	(29,000)
Benefits paid	(51,000)	(216,000)
Closing defined benefit obligation	11,797,000	11,326,000

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

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Opening fair value of scheme assets	8,795,000	8,149,000
Expected return on scheme assets	178,000	172,000
Contributions by employer	221,000	239,000
Contributions by scheme participants	38,000	41,000
Actuarial (loss) gain	(49,000)	410,000
Expenses paid from the fund	(9,000)	-
Benefits paid	(51,000)	(216,000)
Closing fair value of scheme assets	9,123,000	8,795,000

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

	30/04/18	30/04/18	30/04/17	30/04/17
	%	€	%	€
Equities	-	-	39.0	3,427,000
Bonds	16.0	1,474,000	31.0	2,734,000
Property	-	-	2.0	130,000
Cash/Other	84.0	7,649,000	1.0	124,000
Global Absolute Return Strategies Fund	-	-	27.0	2,380,000
		9,123,000		8,795,000

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

12. Pension commitments (cont'd.)

The principal actuarial assumptions as at the reporting date were:

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	1.90	1.80
Rate of increase in pensions payment (pre 2009)	5.00	5.00
Rate of increase in pensions payment (post 2009)	1.90	1.80
Discount rate	2.00	2.00
Inflation assumption	1.90	1.80

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	years	years
Life expectancy of male/female currently aged 65	23.0/25.2	22.9/25.1
Life expectancy of male/female at 65 currently aged 45	24.9/27.3	24.8/27.2

13. Deferred ticket fund

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
At 1 May	52,936,390	64,743,532
Transfer to revenue account	(14,001,868)	(12,553,142)
Proceeds in respect of tickets sold during the year received and receivable	7,075,300	746,000
At 30 April	46,009,822	52,936,390

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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.

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
At 1 May	4,016,820	5,097,609
Unwind of discount	678,856	643,020
Transferred to income during the year	(1,723,809)	(1,723,809)
At 30 April	2,971,867	4,016,820

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

15. Revenue grants

The following grants were received and used for the stated purpose in the year ended 30 April 2018.

	30/04/18	30/04/17
Sport Ireland (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)		
- core grant income	€2,250,843	€2,250,843
- women in sport	€114,000	€114,000
- high performance women's sevens	€220,000	€275,000
- dormant account funding for national activity plan	-	€34,200
World Rugby		
- game development and participation and elite player development	Stg£200,000	Stg£200,000
Failte Ireland		
- Rugby World Cup 2023 bid assistance	€452,500	€767,500

In addition to the above revenue grants, the consolidated financial statements include grants received by a subsidiary company, Irish Rugby Competitions Company Limited by Guarantee, in the amount of €487,804 and £1,185,000 in respect of hosting the Women's Rugby World Cup 2017.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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 €332,927. The commitment in respect of existing lease agreements on vehicles within twelve months amount to €321,712 and after twelve months amount to €101,500.

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 DAC 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.

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

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

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.

19. Financial assets and liabilities

	30/04/18	30/04/17
	€	€
Union		
Financial assets measured at amortised cost	33,284,245	31,812,405
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	26,685,681	15,470,487
Consolidated		
Financial assets measured at amortised cost	33,179,429	32,048,857
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	26,738,803	16,414,803

Financial assets measured at amortised cost include loans to clubs, other loans, debtors and prepayments. Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost include accruals and income received in advance.

20. Comparative amounts

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

21. Approval of accounts

The accounts of the Union were approved by the Committee on 31 May 2018 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 year and of the surplus or deficit for the year. 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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Irish Rugby Football Union (the “Union”), 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 for the financial year ended 30 April 2018, and the related notes to the financial statements, including the summary of significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements are accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council including FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (Generally Accepted Accounting Practices in Ireland).

In our opinion, the Union’s financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Union’s affairs as at 30 April 2018 and of its surplus for the year then ended and
- have been prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (‘ISAs (Ireland)’) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the ‘responsibilities of the auditor for the audit of the financial statements’ section of our report. We are independent of the Union in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Ireland, namely the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA) Ethical Standard concerning the integrity, objectivity and independence of the auditor, and the ethical pronouncements established by Chartered Accountants Ireland, applied as determined to be appropriate in the circumstances for the entity. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the Committee’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate or
- the Committee have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Union’s ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS’ REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Other information

Other information comprises information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. The Committee are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies in the financial statements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Committee

As explained more fully in the Statement of Committee’s responsibilities set out on page 75, the Committee of the Union is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements giving a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, including FRS 102, and for such internal control as they determine necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Committee is responsible for assessing the Union’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Committee either intends to liquidate the Union or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Committee are responsible for overseeing the Union’s financial reporting process.

Responsibilities of the auditor for the audit of the financial statements

The auditor’s objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes their opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (Ireland), the auditor will exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. The auditor will also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for their opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Union’s internal control.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS’ REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Responsibilities of the auditor for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Committee’s use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Union’s ability to continue as a going concern. If they conclude that a material uncertainty exists, they are required to draw attention in the auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify their opinion. Their conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of the auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Union to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a matter that achieves a true and fair view.

The auditor communicates with the Committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that may be identified during the audit.

Where the auditor is reporting on the audit of a group, the auditor’s responsibilities are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the group financial statements. The auditor is responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the audit, and the auditor remains solely responsible for the auditor’s opinion.

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

This report is made solely to the Union’s members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Union’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Union and the Union’s members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

GRANT THORNTON

Chartered Accountants and
Statutory Audit Firm
Molyneux House
Bride Street
Dublin 8
Date: 31 May 2018

INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Schedule 1: Representative matches

	2017/18 €	2016/17 €	2015/16 €
International rugby income	42,235,936	37,933,469	39,610,945
Commercial income	11,158,173	10,478,441	9,161,895
Deferred ticket income	15,725,677	14,276,951	12,937,133
Provincial competition income	12,378,527	10,375,341	10,585,728
	81,498,313	73,064,202	72,295,701

Schedule 2: Other income

	2017/18 €	2016/17 €	2015/16 €
Other rugby income	314,477	365,469	294,957
Revenue grants	2,584,843	2,674,043	2,810,680
Other income	1,326,763	482,119	708,674
	4,226,083	3,521,631	3,814,311

EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Schedule 3: Professional game costs	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
National tours, camps and squads	1,379,463	993,567	123,760
National match costs	3,771,993	3,361,467	2,511,503
Player and management costs	37,184,561	36,801,857	34,965,440
	42,336,017	41,156,891	37,600,703
Schedule 4: Elite player development	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Wolfhound/Emerging Ireland teams	-	-	105,764
Women’s representative teams	3,019,235	2,155,495	1,758,559
Sevens	483,526	268,136	219,595
Under 20s	611,380	460,331	517,397
Age-grade teams	447,388	400,668	348,581
Academies	2,929,136	2,758,686	2,422,012
High performance unit	3,314,419	2,865,248	2,441,583
	10,805,084	8,908,564	7,813,491
Schedule 5: Games support costs	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Referee costs	572,811	274,112	320,641
	572,811	274,112	320,641

EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Schedule 6: Domestic and community rugby	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Club Ireland	78,214	37,612	63,590
Domestic competitions	324,622	279,635	279,192
General development costs	760,511	636,679	574,151
Development resources	270,327	299,568	330,724
Coaching courses	327,695	269,171	237,743
Youth and schools	498,092	334,900	348,797
YDO and provincial staff	3,786,281	3,419,938	3,265,619
Clubs and schools support	1,130,436	1,332,509	1,135,942
Referee development	550,867	553,889	601,404
Participation rugby	612,154	545,183	333,682
Community rugby and other funding	2,249,188	2,201,506	2,069,336
	10,588,387	9,910,590	9,240,180

EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Schedule 7: Marketing and communications	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Marketing	1,093,277	1,413,428	1,258,051
PR and communications	661,871	172,134	175,450
Website	273,348	356,021	303,310
	2,028,496	1,941,583	1,736,811
Schedule 8: Grounds	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Licence fees, rates and insurance	2,123,842	2,255,236	517,527
Repairs and renewals	162,137	289,972	167,947
Other facilities	150,886	55,939	216,090
	2,436,865	2,601,147	901,564

EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2018

Schedule 9: Administration and overheads	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	€	€	€
Governance costs	373,757	390,524	354,298
Salaries and pension	3,224,373	2,925,900	2,791,254
Printing, postage and stationery	90,173	103,850	229,759
Rates, rent, insurance and telephone	858,431	741,775	781,616
Office maintenance	498,825	500,446	734,707
Professional fees	2,953,897	2,359,039	954,093
Miscellaneous administration costs	561,741	469,627	477,965
	8,561,197	7,491,161	6,323,692





Irish Rugby Football Union
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