

# CLUB review

The Official Voice of the Northern Ireland Federation of Clubs - Vol. 22 - Issue 1 2009

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# Minutes of the Executive Meeting

**Hosted by Anheuser Busch in the Europa Hotel, Belfast on Saturday 13th December 2008**

The Chairman opened the meeting, and thanked those present for their attendance. The Secretary read the minutes of the last meeting, which were passed as a true record, proposed and seconded by Gerry Gallagher and Philip Mallon without amendment.

Correspondence was read out and expanded upon where necessary. One letter in particular was from a company reminding us about the hazards of asbestos. They are prepared to visit any club, that thinks it has asbestos present in its building, to carry out an inspection and provide advice on appropriate procedures.

Letters have been forwarded to Diageo and InBev in regard to the double hike in prices in the same year. The suppliers have justified it by quoting the escalating costs in power and materials, which were at an all time high at one time, but there has been a dramatic drop in prices of power, fuel and products used in brewing bringing them to an all time low. Clubs, similar to other business sectors are under tremendous pressure with some going out of business and others being on the brink.

A financial report was presented by the Treasurer. Copies were distributed and the Treasurer went through the report in detail, providing explanations where necessary. The report was subsequently proposed and seconded as a true record by Brian McCartney and Philip Mallon.

The Chairman gave a run down of contacts via our helplines. Outlining meetings with David Hilditch M.L.A., Vice-Chairman of the Social Development Committee, Oasis and N.I.A.C.T.A. representatives. Also covered were details of proposed meetings with respective political parties, two of which have already taken place, those being the meetings with Anna Lo M.L.A. of the Alliance Party and Fra McCann M.L.A. of Sinn Fein who both sit on the Social Development Committee.

There has been no progress on implementation of the liquor license review. At the moment the Minister appears to be tinkering with parts of it, seemingly unwilling to implement the amendments we seek. It has been proposed we request clubs to lobby both the Minister, Margaret Ritchie M.L.A., and their local M.L.As. to express their concerns in respect of the apparent lack of action to implement at least some of the amendments we seek which would go some way to assisting clubs in what are extremely difficult times. We are aware that penalty points are to be introduced and so-called happy hours are to be outlawed, among other issues.

As there was no further business the meeting was closed. The Chairman extended thanks to Brian Brannigan of Budweiser for sponsoring the meeting, for providing refreshments upon arrival and for the Christmas lunch which followed.

Bob McGlone,  
Secretary to the Federation

# Submission for Amendments to the 1996 Clubs (N.I.) Order & Accounts Regulations

*Federation final draft prepared following consultation with Solicitor Maura Mckay*

## HISTORY

### 1. Consultation - November 2005 - January 2006

On 1st November 2005 a consultation paper "Liquor Licensing - The Way Forward" was launched by the Department for Social Development under David Hanson MP commencing a consultation process into the Government's proposals for comprehensive reform of the legislation governing the sale and supply of alcohol in Northern Ireland. This included a review of certain aspects of the law governing the operation of registered clubs, presently contained in the Registration of Clubs (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. The consultation period was for a period of three months concluding on the 31st of January 2006.

### 2. Analysis

An analysis of the responses received as a result of the consultation process was issued in July 2006. The analysis indicated that there were 963 written responses. It confirmed that meetings had been held with a range of key stakeholders

*continued on page 4*

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and elected representatives to hear their views on the proposals for change.

### 3. Draft Order

Arising from the consultation process David Hanson MP indicated that he intended to introduce reforms in two stages, the first set of reforms during 2007 and the second set in or about 2009 coinciding with the reform of local government. A draft order "The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2007" was issued for consultation with the consultation period concluding on the 28th of February 2007. At that time the anticipated implementation date of the draft Order was October 2007.

### 4. Contents of Draft Order 2007

The draft Order included the following provisions relating to registered Clubs:-

#### Part III

#### Section 9 - Provision for additional permitted hours

On weekdays from 11 in the evening until 2 in the morning of the day next following and on Sunday from 10 in the evening until 12 in the evening. Such orders would not be granted unless a Court was satisfied that there would be no undue inconvenience to persons residing in the vicinity.

*Essentially this draft provision would put clubs on an equal footing with other licensed premises in that instead of only 52 late nights per year they would be entitled to have 365 late nights.*

#### Section 10 - Provision for exceptional permitted hours

This would cover specific sporting or other important international events.

*A similar provision was to be introduced for other licensed premises.*

#### Section 11 - Provision for extension to hours of Children's Certificate

This would allow children on club premises until 10.00pm in the evening instead of 9.00pm.

*A similar provision was to be introduced for other licensed premises.*

#### Section 12 - Provision for immediate closure of registered clubs for a period not exceeding 24hrs

The powers to do so would be vested in both the Courts and a Senior Police Officer.

*A similar provision was to be introduced for other licensed premises*

#### Section 13 - Provision for changes to the existing penalty points system

#### Section 14 - Provision for relaxation of the obligatory requirements for the systems of control and accounting in registered Clubs

#### 5. Restoration of Assembly

The draft Order was not implemented due to the restoration of the Assembly.

#### 6. Ministers Statement November 2008

In November 2008 the Minister for Social Development Margaret Ritchie MLA issued a statement to the Assembly outlining her plans for changes to the law on liquor licensing and registered clubs.

#### 7. Contents of Ministers Statement

The Minister outlined her immediate reform proposals which were to include, with Executive agreement, urgent legislation to strengthen enforcement measures and ease the bureaucratic burden on clubs. She then went on to outline her longer term intentions. She referred to her review having the benefit of the

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work done by her predecessor David Hanson MP, which she stated had provided her with a comprehensive information base upon which to build and proceed. She indicated that her review was carried out against the backdrop of the review of public administration. Her review resulted in proposals to introduce reforms in two stages:-

### First Stage Reforms

By short bill to make provision:-

**(1) for new closure powers to allow the police and courts to immediately shut down for up to 24 hours initially, individual licensed or club premises.**

*(This had been included in the draft 2007 Order)*

**(2) to introduce a new system of penalty points (this largely refers to licensed premises and not Club premises which already have a penalty point system).**

**(3) to introduce a statutory proof of age scheme which would specify, for the first time, acceptable proof of age documents for the purposes of licensing and registered clubs law.**

*(This was not part of the draft 2007 Order.)*

**(4) to introduce more appropriate accounting requirements for registered clubs.**

*(This had been included in the draft 2007 Order)*

### Second Stage Reforms

The second stage reforms proposed in the statement are general reforms not specific to registered clubs for example the transfer of powers relating to licensing from the courts to local Councils and so these submissions are not intended to address the second stage reforms in any detail.

### No further consultation

The statement confirmed that as these issues had already been consulted upon...

***"I do not believe that further consultations on the proposals of my draft bill will be necessary. Indeed I believe it would unnecessarily delay important measures to provide greater safeguards for the community."***

It is not clear from the Minister's statement whether her new draft bill will cover only those items numbered (1) – (4) above or whether it will also include the matters contained in the draft 2007 Order at Sections 9, 10, and 11 but her statement makes no mention of them.

### Submissions on behalf of the N.I. Federation of Clubs

1. If it is indeed the case that Sections 9, 10 and 11 have inexplicably been removed from the first set of reforms to be introduced by the Minister, the Federation wish to press in the strongest terms for their immediate re-introduction. In the event that for some reason a decision has been taken not to grant extended opening hours to licensed premises and clubs until 2.00am, (originally Section 9 in the 2007 draft) at the least clubs should be given parity with other licensed premises and should be permitted to open until 1.00 am on such week nights as the club chooses, (and Sundays until 12.00 midnight) rather than being restricted to the arbitrary figure of 52 late nights as presently provided for in the 1996 Order.

2. In addition to the matters addressed by Sections 9, 10 and 11, the Federation of Clubs would also wish the following

matters to be included in a revision of the law governing the operation of registered clubs:-

(i) The repeal of the current restriction on the ability of registered clubs to advertise events taking place on the Club premises, presently contained in Article 38 of the 1996 Order. The Federation believe there is no justification for the continuation of such restriction and indeed, if Clubs are to be supported within the community because of their contribution in terms of social capital, they have to be permitted to communicate as widely and as freely as possible with their membership and the local community.

(ii) The repeal of the requirement for registered clubs to advertise in two local newspapers the fact that they are renewing their licence. The notice of application for renewal is served on the Police and the Council both of whom are entitled to object should they wish to do so. If a club premises has an entertainment licence, renewal of such licence is advertised in the press and any disaffected local resident is entitled to object should they so wish. The requirement to advertise notice of renewal cannot be justified and is an unnecessary and disproportionate expense for Clubs, particularly small clubs to have to bear.

(iii) The penalty points system, instead of being made more stringent should be repealed. A Magistrate dealing with an allegation against a Club is best placed to decide the appropriate penalty having heard all of the facts and any mitigating circumstances and his discretion should not be fettered by an inflexible penalty points system.

(iv) The Federation strongly supports recent Child Protection legislation requiring all those working with children to be

*continued on page 6*

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properly vetted and registered. The Federation believe that Clubs, not just those which children frequent, should have a prohibition against any person on the Sex Offenders register from acting as an official.

(v) The Federation believe that Article 5 (5) (i) of the 1996 Order is incongruous with the dispensations elsewhere in public life whereby those with unspent convictions and out on licence may be elected to government but may not hold office in a club. This Article should be repealed.

## In Memoriam

JOE ELWOOD • 1936 - 2009

*The Chairman, Officers and Executive Committee of the Northern Ireland Federation of Clubs extend their condolences to the family of their esteemed member Joe Elwood who passed away on 30th January 2009.*



*Joe was a respected and long standing member of the Federation for many years, as evidenced by the attendance at his funeral service. He will be greatly missed by his many friends in the private member club sector.*

# Minister Ritchie's Statement of November 2008

The following emanates from an announcement by the Minister Margaret Ritchie M.L.A. which provides an insight to proposals for reforming liquor licensing to include the registration of clubs' Order; for the first time in twelve years. The Federation submission on page three outlines the amendments we are requesting.

### **The proposed new law would:-**

**Give the police and courts tougher powers to deal swiftly with disorderly behaviour by allowing them to close licensed premises immediately for up to 24 hours.**

**Introduce a new penalty points system which would allow them to target premises that persistently break the law.**

**Introduce new proof of age measures which would help tackle the scourge of underage drinking.**

**Ease the bureaucratic burden on private members' registered clubs by modernising their accounting requirements.**

Margaret Ritchie said, "Stricter enforcement measures are needed to address problems of public health, public disorder

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and underage access to alcohol. These problems affect all of us, one way or another, and all of us must face up to our common duty to develop adequate responses. Licensing law alone cannot solve the problems but, in conjunction with initiatives by other Executive Ministers, PSNI, the licensed trade and the community sector, it can help make a difference."

The Minister further indicated that, in a major shake up, following the Review of Public Administration, she aims to **transfer courts' current responsibility for licensing and registered clubs' regimes to district councils** and to simplify and harmonise controls on the sale & supply of alcohol.

Further there would be **no change to the current "surrender" provision** under which an existing licence for a pub or off licence must be surrendered to a court before a new licence of either type may be granted.

Subject to Executive agreement, she plans to legislate for change in two stages and is hoping to introduce her first Bill in the Assembly before summer 2009.

Subject to Executive agreement, the proposed Bill would amend the Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and the Registration of Clubs (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 to.

**Enable a court to order licensed premises or registered clubs in an area of actual or anticipated disorder to close for up to 24 hours in the first instance; repeal the Secretary of State power to close premises or reduce opening hours to preserve public order; enable a senior police officer to close**

**with immediate effect for up to 24 hours specific licensed or club premises where disorder or noise nuisance is occurring or imminent;**

Enable a court, following conviction, to endorse penalty points on a licence or certificate of registration. **The court would have some discretion** but for serious offences, such as underage sales endorsement would be mandatory. Premises which accumulated 10 penalty points within any three year period would have their licence or certificate suspended for a period between one week and three months;

**Introduce a statutory proof-of-age scheme specifying acceptable proof-of-age documents for the purposes of licensing and registered clubs law.**

The documents would be: passport, photocard driving licence, Northern Ireland Electoral Card and any PASS-accredited photo identity card. Power would be provided to make regulations specifying other age cards if necessary. Premises would be required to display specified signage describing the new scheme and it would be an offence to fail to display the signage. The scheme would complement PSNI's test purchasing power which is expected to come into effect in 2009;

Create a more flexible accounting system for registered clubs which recognised the differing requirements for small, medium & large clubs, reduces penalties for certain offences and introduces guidance on control of accounts, cash holdings and receipts. PSNI has acknowledged that financial mismanagement which previously existed in some clubs is no longer in evidence and that more flexible arrangements would be in order.

*continued on page 8*




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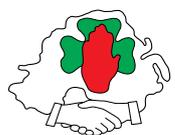
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The Minister has it in mind to introduce further legislation, to bring about more fundamental changes, **once the Review of Public Administration is complete in 2011** and new local government arrangements are in place. Controls on the sale & supply of alcohol would be simplified and harmonised by:

**Transferring responsibility for the liquor licensing and clubs' regimes from the courts to the newly-formed district councils;**

Introducing six statutory licensing objectives to underpin the new regime: promotion of public health; promotion of public safety; prevention of crime & disorder; prevention of public nuisance; protection of children from harm; fair treatment of all stakeholders.

**Abolishing the current 12 licence categories in favour of personal & premises licences.**

## Diageo Takes Responsible Drinking Online

Diageo, the world's leading spirits, wine and beer company, which employs 500 staff across 4 sites in Northern Ireland is launching an innovative website designed to promote responsible drinking worldwide.

DRINKiQ.com is a global resource for all interested parties to share programmes and tools designed to fight alcohol misuse and help individuals make responsible choices about

drinking – or not drinking. Diageo has a long history of promoting responsibility and DRINKiQ.com is the next step in that global effort.

“There are many valuable initiatives that exist to address the issue of alcohol abuse, and DRINKiQ.com supports these efforts by showcasing them to the community and connecting them with like-minded individuals and groups,” said Allison Ofor, Head of Corporate Relations, Diageo Northern Ireland. “We’re confident that DRINKiQ.com will be a source of best practices that will drive responsible drinking among all legal drinkers.”

Through its innovative design, visitors to the site can provide information to post on DRINKiQ.com. DRINKiQ.com also features unique tools such as videos of experts answering commonly asked questions about alcohol issues, information on how to responsibly host events and parties, and other downloadable resources. It also provides macronutrient information about Diageo brands through KnowYourDiageoDrink.com

“What sets DRINKiQ.com apart is its ability to provide visitors with a forum in which they can engage in a conversation with people who share their interest in responsible drinking,” said Allison.

A key feature of DRINKiQ.com is The Responsibility Channel, an online community where consumers, parents, teachers, government officials, retailers and others can post and share videos and programs they have found effective in addressing alcohol-related issues.

The content of DRINKiQ.com focuses on five key areas:

### 1. Facts About Alcohol

Information about alcohol and how it affects the body. In addition to web content, the site also features video interviews with experts from around the world.

### 2. Resource Centre

An extensive library of resources from Diageo, non-governmental organisations, government bodies, educational institutions and others, to provide visitors with the opportunity to share and learn from a range of programmes they can adapt and repurpose.

### 3. Diageo & Responsible Drinking

An overview of Diageo's history of promoting responsible drinking, examples of its efforts to combat alcohol misuse and information detailing its points of view on specific topics such as drink driving and underage drinking.

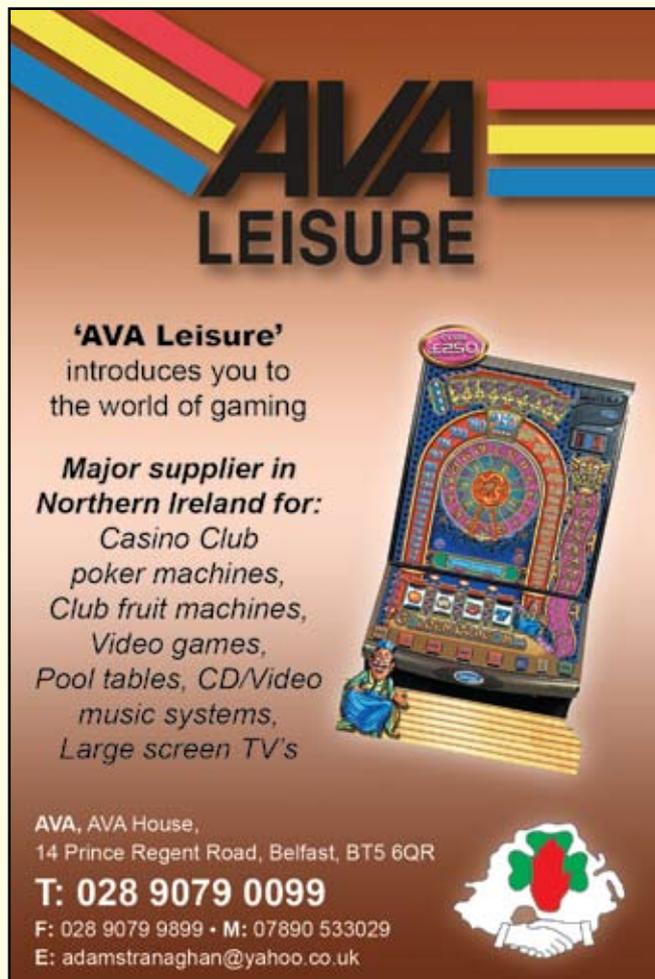
### 4. Around the World

A collection of case studies showcasing Diageo's responsible drinking initiatives from around the world.

### 5. Links

A comprehensive list of links to organisations and government agencies from which visitors can learn more about responsible drinking.

DRINKiQ.com will soon offer content specific to more than twenty-eight countries and will be available in more than fourteen languages. There are also plans to add Spanish language content to the US site. To view the site and learn more about responsible drinking visit [www.DRINKiQ.com](http://www.DRINKiQ.com)



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# 1759 – 2009 That's Guinness Time

*Guinness celebrates rich legacy of iconic advertising campaigns. Much loved old favourites given contemporary twist in new advertising campaign to mark 250 years of Guinness*

Earlier today, Thursday, 8th January 2009, Guinness launched its latest advertising campaign to mark a very significant milestone, as it celebrates its 250th Anniversary.

The new advertising campaign pays homage to 80 years of Guinness advertising campaigns with some of the much loved, historical Guinness advertisements making a welcome return.



The television campaign entitled “Classic Ads” uses a created device – The Guinness Advertising Time Machine, to show a series of re-runs of some of the most popular Guinness advertisements over the last 80 years. The iconic advertisements include, 1955 ‘Sea Lion’, 1955 ‘Toucan’, 1974 ‘30 seconds of Darkness’, 1977 ‘The Island’, winner of a Silver Lion at Cannes and a Clio in New York and 1981 ‘Big Wave’. The ads are shown through the Time Machine, which has been designed to give the ads an historical context. The end frame for each ad marks the celebration of 250 years of Guinness.

The outdoor campaign sees the return of some of Gilroy’s most recognised characters, namely the Toucan, Ostrich and Pelican ‘on location’ in familiar settings around the country, from Dublin to Cork, Galway and Belfast. The Toucan can be seen taking in the views of Dublin city, perched on top of the Spire on O’Connell Street, while the Ostrich decides on a contemporary mode of transport, as it catches the Luas at Stephen’s Green.

Around the country, the Toucan can also be seen perched on the Galway Hooker monument in Eyre Square, flying over Patrick’s Street in Cork and also over the Big Wheel in Belfast.

Grainne Wafer, Senior Marketing Manager, Guinness said, “This year we are celebrating 250 remarkable years since Arthur Guinness made the momentous decision to sign a 9,000 year lease on the famous St. James’s Gate brewery. In 1959, when we were 200 years old, we launched the first ever ad campaign in Ireland so thought it appropriate to revisit our advertising



history by bringing back some of the much loved historical Guinness advertisements.

The Gilroy campaign is one of the most commonly recognised campaigns in the Guinness advertising lexicon and remains some of the most evocative and potent advertising campaigns of all time, so it was only appropriate that we would re-introduce some of the old favourites to celebrate 250 remarkable years of Guinness”.

The new Guinness campaign, to mark the significant milestone of 250 years, launches today with Guinness “Time Machine”, featuring some of the most iconic Guinness advertisements throughout the years. The series of ads will run for three months across all channels.

The first phase of the outdoor campaign will commence on Monday 12th January followed by the second phase, which will commence on Monday 26th January.

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<sup>†</sup> Source NITGI 2007 \*Source - ABC, ABC MGN Jan-Jun 2007



# Licensing Advice

*Based on experience*

Overcrowding in licensed premises has appeared again in the local media recently. Whilst this may be wishful thinking for many clubs in the current economic climate, you should ensure that you have adequate systems in place to maintain your licensing obligations in respect of both liquor and entertainment. Remember that if you hire out a function room for an event, it remains the responsibility of the club, not the hirers, to ensure it is not overcrowded.

At Robert G. Sinclair & Company we provide a full range of licensing advice and representation. We have extensive experience of routine licensing matters in addition to the more complex issues that can arise. The firm has acted in cases that involve objections and injunctions which have been instigated by both other traders and the local council. If you encounter difficulties, Robert G. Sinclair & Co Solicitors can help you achieve the results as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We have recently been appointed as Solicitors to act for Diageo Northern Ireland and are privileged to act for such a high profile company. This is in addition to our commercial department which deals with commercial leases, rent reviews, contracts and all property transactions.

The litigation department can advise you on all employment issues ranging from contract of employment to employment disputes. We have an experienced litigation team who deal

with personal injury claims, all contractual property and commercial disputes. Overall, Robert G. Sinclair & Co aim to provide a proactive, efficient and individual service and strive to achieve the best possible results for our clients. If you need assistance in any of the topics above, please do not hesitate to contact us whereupon we will be happy to assist.

## Federation Attend C.O.R.C.A. Meeting

The C.O.R.C.A. meeting in November focused on the many problems clubs are encountering throughout the UK. The North West delegate outlined that 25% of the workforce of a particular supplier have been made to reapply for their jobs. The economic situation is playing a role with the general consensus being that massive changes may come about, such as the ceasing of brewery deliveries.

Details of the Scottish Licensing Act were conveyed, outlining that formal legislation comes into effect in September 2009. This will include not having to renew a registration unless a change has taken place.

The issue of leasing agreements was raised by the Chairman, Philip Smith. It appears these agreements are still causing problems. The Chairman would like this matter placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

Kevin Smyth expressed disappointment with the negative attitude of the Parliamentary group. It is anticipated an editorial piece will be submitted by a Minister for inclusion in the CIU journal. Meanwhile it was reported that on the mainland, vending machines may have to be removed from club premises.

Latest news on the VAT reclaim issue is that a meeting between industry representatives and HMRC is being arranged. We are informed that those claims already lodged are still good. This issue will again be on the agenda of the next meeting.

The Federation Chairman, John Davidson, accompanied by Treasurer, David Larmour, Assistant Chairman, Brian McCartney and PRO, Harry Beckinsale, updated those in attendance on Federation activity in respect of the rates issue, providing copies of correspondence received from the Inland Revenue in London which supports the Federation view in respect of allowances for those engaged in amateur sport.

C.O.R.C.A. Chairman, Philip Smith, conveyed details related to Sky Television in that clubs within a user group may benefit from a special consideration.

The election of C.O.R.C.A. officials will take place at the next meeting which is to be held in Edinburgh in April.

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# More Fruits of Success From Magners

Magners Irish Cider is branching out with another addition to its family tree. This month will see the official launch across Northern Ireland of Magners Mid-Strength, a variant of the hugely successful Magners Irish Cider but with a lower alcohol content.

Magners Mid-Strength is being launched to satisfy a growing demand from consumers for a lower alcohol drink that offers full refreshment and the familiar taste of Magners. It was a big 'ask' but the Magners team is about to roll out a product which meets all the taste demands . . . with just half the alcohol content at 2.3% ABV.

Gavan Morris Marketing Manager Magners Irish Cider is understandably delighted at this latest dash of innovation from the brand, which is credited with single-handedly reinvigorating the cider sector, making cider one of today's liveliest performers in a hugely competitive marketplace.

He said, "Consumers and, indeed, the licensed trade, have come to expect innovation from Magners and we are confident that this latest development will earn an enthusiastic reception.

We have always believed that the secret of success is to move not just with the times, but ahead of them. We have sensed for some time that a public appetite is emerging for high quality products that offer low ABV without compromising on taste."

He continued, "Magners Mid-Strength will undoubtedly generate its own devotees and that our main market will be found amongst those increasingly discerning consumers who give thought to the food and drink they choose.

They are savvy and knowledgeable and will move across the Magners portfolio, selecting the appropriate product for a particular occasion. Sometimes that will be Magners Original . . . sometimes Magners Light and, when they want to keep a tab on their alcohol consumption, Magners Mid-Strength could be the perfect choice. It's all about giving consumers increased choices."

Sainsburys NI Buyer Michael McCambley also commented, "Sainsburys are aware of the ever changing market we are in and are always keen to ensure that our customers needs are satisfied through innovation from our suppliers. Sainsburys and Magners have worked well together on previous launches, such as Magners Light, and we are delighted to be the first store selling Magners Mid Strength to the public across NI".

The new Magners Mid-Strength will have its own, highly distinctive packaging to deliver standout in fridge and will be fully supported with a broad based marketing campaign.



Gavan Morris (left), Magners Marketing Manager is pictured with Michael McCambley, Sainsburys NI Buyer.

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# Alcoholic Drink Banned for Glamorising Deadly Drugs Cocktail

Shelves across the UK are being cleared of Speedball beer because it is promoting the illegal drugs mix that killed Hollywood stars John Belushi and River Phoenix.

The Independent Complaints Panel has upheld a complaint under the Portman Group's Code of Practice brought by Alcohol Focus Scotland that the beer's marketing is associated with illicit drugs.

Speedball is the name given to the potentially lethal practice of combining heroin and crack cocaine to give both sedative and stimulant effects. The drink is marketed by its producer, BrewDog, as a "class A ale" containing "a vicious cocktail of active ingredients" which creates a "happy-sad" effect.

David Poley, Portman Group Chief Executive, said the drink's marketing is grossly irresponsible, "The blurring of alcohol and illicit drugs fosters unhealthy attitudes to drinking and trivialises drug misuse. BrewDog is profiteering from the scourge of illegal drugs, mocking the misery caused by misuse. The company is seriously misguided in its claim to be educating and preventing people from misusing drugs. We are taking urgent action to protect the public from exposure to such negligent marketing."

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## Dismissing Staff For Ill Health

Prior to dismissing an employee for reasons of ill health, an employer should find out the current medical position. This will involve obtaining, with the employee's consent, a report from the employee's general practitioner and, if appropriate, his consultant. Medical reports obtained by an employer should not be disclosed to third parties without the employee's consent.

The Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 gives individuals a right of access to medical reports relating to them, which is supplied by medical practitioners for employment purposes. An employer may not apply to a medical practitioner for such a report without the employee's consent. The employee is entitled to see the report before it is disclosed to the employer and to withhold consent to the report being supplied. There is also provision for the correction of errors. If there is a failure to comply with the Act, an application may be made to the court.

Once the employer is properly informed of the employee's state of health and the prognosis, the employer should consider the requirements of the business, the employee's past sickness record and whether the employee could be offered an alternative position more suitable to his state of health. The employer should also consider whether the employee should be regarded as disabled and, if so, whether any reasonable adjustment should be made for the employee. The employer should consult the employee and any trade union representative before dismissing him but an employer will not act unreasonably if an offer of alternative employment is made to the employee at a reduced rate of pay where this is the only suitable alternative employment which is available for him. The employee is not under an obligation to volunteer information about his prospects of recovery to his employer.

### IMPROVEMENT

Where the problem is not long term absence but persistent short absences caused by various minor ailments, a medical examination has little purpose. The employee should be told what level of attendance he is expected to attain, the period within which that is to be achieved and that dismissal may follow if there is no sufficient improvement. The situation should then be checked to see whether absence is reduced below a reasonable level. A second warning would be appropriate in marginal cases.

## Equality Bill

The Government's Equality Bill is now going through Parliament and is expected to become law next year. It means, among other things, all women with limited rights will become full members. They will also have to pay the same subscription as men even if they do not want to. Clubs accepting women will not be able to revert to being men-only clubs. A full list of questions and answers about the Bill will appear next month.



*'Leading the way in renewable energy'*

Airtricity Supply has been in the NI market since 2002. It now has almost 10,000 customers. Airtricity supplies 100% renewable energy to a range of businesses, from heavy industrial plants to hotel chains to the smallest office. It is currently the 3rd largest electricity supplier in NI and has ambitious plans to grow its customer base in the coming years.

Airtricity plans for 2009 include offering renewable electricity to domestic customers and gas to commercial customers in Northern Ireland, all at competitive rates.

Airtricity has 14 wind farms in operation throughout Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland resulting in almost 400MW. A further 9 wind farms totalling almost 400MW are under construction with a global pipeline of over 10,000MW. The company's goal is to protect the future of our planet by delivering renewable energy with passion, innovation and integrity.

Airtricity is the renewable energy development division of Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE). SSE, based in Perth, Scotland, is an integrated electricity and gas provider, listed on the London Stock Exchange with a market capitalisation of around €19 billion. SSE is the UK's largest generator of renewable energy.

**Development:** Airtricity currently has 3 operating windfarms in Northern Ireland generating approximately 38MW of power. Current construction at Tappaghan, Co Fermanagh and Slieve Divena will produce a 39MW capacity, while a further 167MW of generation is in planning, increasing the overall generating capacity in Northern Ireland to 244 MW.

Airtricity's commitment to the supply of Northern Ireland's energy needs represents an investment here of close to £500m. These projects also use local contractors and industries, from servicing to civil engineering, helping to build the economy through local projects.

In the immediate area around each new windfarm project, Airtricity establishes a Community Fund enabling the local community to share the financial benefit from the site. Other community projects in Northern Ireland include the sponsored walks which raised over £10,000 for charity. As a member of Business in the Community NI, Airtricity is one of a growing number of firms willing to demonstrate their commitment to corporate social responsibility in Northern Ireland.

**The Environment:** Airtricity Supply offers 100% renewable energy to its customers and is the only supplier that can exclusively do so. Switching to Airtricity will significantly reduce your CO2 emissions, thereby reducing your company's carbon footprint. The onus on businesses to take responsibility for the future of our environment will only increase into the future and every step you can take to save energy and reduce your costs will become increasingly more important to you.

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**Join over 10,000 businesses in Northern Ireland who have already made the switch to Airtricity.**

**At a time of what can only be viewed as financial turmoil the Federation are keen to find ways in which its member clubs can reduce overheads.**

**Airtricity offer a means via which a club can reduce its electricity costs. Calling the above number or the local club representative Damien McGlinchey on 0771 4613116 could prove most beneficial. It's most certainly worth the price of a telephone call.**

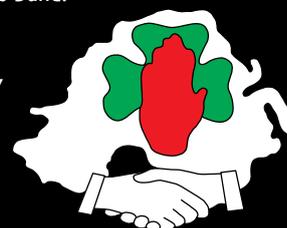
## **IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR MEMBERS**

*The Annual General meeting of the Northern Ireland Federation of Clubs will be held on Saturday 14th March 2009 in the Member's Rooms, King's Hall, Belfast commencing at 10am. The past twelve months have been very eventful and we would encourage management committees to ensure their club is represented.*

*The Dinner & Dance will be held on Saturday 25th April 2009 in the King's Hall and this year we are delighted to have secured the services of leading comedian William Caulfield who received a standing ovation on his last appearance at the event. He is of course also recognised for his tribute to the late great James Young.*

*We are also fortunate to have signed up top local cabaret & dance band 'Contrast' featuring the fabulous voice of Janeen Whithers who in recent years has been working as part of Van Morrison's band.*

**This will be a wonderful night so please book early by telephoning Fiona on: 028 9045 9864 or the Federation PRO on 07889 681714**



# We're here for music.

The Performing Right Society (PRS) is now PRS for Music.

It's easy to take great music for granted. We're so used to having it around, sometimes we don't even think about it. We forget that, at some point, a songwriter has put serious effort into creating something special. Here at PRS for Music, we never forget. We're here for music. The music creators we represent create the world's music and we're here to help you experience the benefits of it.

You might not know that you need a licence. We want to make it easy for you to get the legal permission you need to use music in your business. Playing music enhances the environment for customers and staff, can improve productivity and increase profits. Whether it's for background music, live music, using a TV or a DJ, we're here to help you.

Covering more than 10 million songs and 60,000 music creators, our Music Licence will give you unrivalled choice and the reassurance that your company complies with the law.\*

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PRS for Music is the trading name for Performing Right Society Limited.  
\*Applies to copyright music controlled by PRS for Music.  
Other licences may also be required.

# Music Licensing For Your Business



PRS for Music (formerly known as the Performing Right Society) exists to help businesses and community groups get access to some of the world's best loved music, while making sure that songwriters, composers and publishers are rightfully rewarded. In January 2009, PRS for Music changed its name to better communicate the purpose of the organisation.

PRS for Music gives businesses the permissions needed to play 10 million pieces of music, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and at a competitive rate. Currently there are approximately 350,000 licensed businesses in the UK.

Without PRS for Music, businesses would have to negotiate separately with millions of music owners around the world every time they wanted to play a piece of music. PRS for Music makes this process easy.

Music Licences are tailored according to the size of business and the way in which music is played or performed (eg radio, TV, live, karaoke, jukeboxes). There are a wide range of licences available to exactly suit each businesses needs.

PRS for Music plays a vital role in ensuring that creators receive royalties for the use of their work. Many of songwriters and composers are small businesses, with 90% of members from PRS for Music earning less than £5,000 a year in royalties.

PRS for Music operates according to UK law – the 1988 Copyright Designs and Patents Act. This law gives composers, songwriters and music publishers the right to earn from their creations when this work is performed or played in public.

**For free advice on whether your business needs a music licence call 0800 068 4828.**

# Managing Violence

The Health & Safety Executive, working with local authorities, have developed a "tool kit" to assist employers, including clubs, to reduce the risk of work-related violence in licensed or retail premises. The tool kit provides practical advice on how to conduct a risk assessment, and how to take action to prevent or control work-related violence. It contains information on a wide range of possible control measures on good practice.

The main focus is on tackling work-related violence towards employees, but some of the control measures could also help employers reduce the risk of violence to members, associates and guests, and reduce the risk of crime on the club premises.

The leaflet summary information in the Tool Kit can be found on the Health & Safety Executive website at: [www.hse.gov.uk/violence/toolkit/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/toolkit/index.htm)

## Risk Assessment is an Essential Task

Many clubs do not seem to appreciate identifying hazards for workers at risk and taking action to solve the problems is now a legal requirement. Each club must carry out its own risk assessment and ensure the club is a safer and healthier workplace and is also a safe place to come and spend an evening.

European Safety in Health at Work Week took place between October 20 and 24. It started a two year campaign aimed at employers, workers and safety representatives to promote the benefit of completing and implementing risk assessments.

Risk assessment is the process of evaluating health and safety risks arising from hazards within the club. A hazard is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, machinery, equipment, or even an open drawer. The risk is the chance or probability either high or low, that someone at work or a member could be harmed by these or other hazards.

### **CLUBS SHOULD TAKE THESE FIVE STEPS:**

- Step 1:** Identify hazards and those who are at risk;
- Step 2:** Evaluate and prioritize risks;
- Step 3:** Decide on preventative action;
- Step 4:** Take the action;
- Step 5:** Monitor and review.

There is a general lack of awareness in clubs of what is required and how to carry out a risk assessment. Additionally, many believe that when a risk assessment has been carried out, it is often considered a "one-off" action and is not sustained.

Fire assessments are also important and fire officers can come in at any time to check that the club has done a risk assessment specifically for fire issues.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has launched a pack which is available on line at: [www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns](http://www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns)

## 48 Hours Deal OK

The Government has agreed a deal with the European Union, which has to be ratified by the European Parliament but is expected to be approved.



Temporary staff will receive the same pay and conditions as permanent staff after 12 weeks' work. Although covering more than a million employees it is doubtful if clubs will be affected.

The trade-off, however, is good news for clubs as employers and stewards as employees. There will remain the possibility of an opt-out on 48 hour working when it is in both sides' interests.

## Magners Light Launch Stylish New Website



This month's fashionable offerings from the style house of Magners Light includes the launch of its very own dedicated website [www.magnerslight.com](http://www.magnerslight.com). Stylishly themed with the brand's bright colours, its user-friendly design makes navigating the useful information on offer a delight to surf. You'll find everything from the latest news about the brand and its style associations, a photo gallery, downloads and ad campaigns. The website will offer a style guide to which people and venues are hip and stylish this year, announced at the Magners Light Style Awards, the glitziest and most glamorous party of the year, which takes place on 5th February in Café Vaudeville.

Gavan Morris, Marketing Manager for Magners Light says; "I'm delighted to launch the new Magners Light website at such a busy time for the brand. It is designed to help us develop Magners Light's online strategy and presence, which will ultimately help the brand get closer to the product's end consumers and their needs."

Another annual stylish association that is being officially launched this month, is the Magners Light Spring into Summer fashion shows which will later descend on St George's Market. A Something Old, Something New themed night is planned for Tuesday 24th March and a Deadly Designer night for Wednesday 25th March. Further details and ticket information are available on the new website.

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# Seminar at Sport N.I.



**Mr John Davidson**  
Chairman, NIFC.

The House of Sport provided the setting for a seminar specifically to address the Clubs Legislation and the rates issue. An important body of representatives from major sports bodies were briefed on the background and substance of the Federation submissions which were designed to ease the bureaucratic burden on management committees.

The meeting was opened by Sport N.I. Chief Executive, Eamon McCartan, who spoke in glowing terms of the work of the Federation and the contribution made by our Chairman John Davidson. He went on to explain the role played by the Northern Ireland Sports Forum and its Chairman Ken Nixon. The Federation Chairman, John Davidson proceeded to outline the detail of our submission and the reasoning behind the amendments we seek. N.I. Sports Forum Chairman, Ken Nixon interceded to expand on the details being outlined, encouraging comment from delegates in attendance.

Overall there was undeniable agreement that the Minister needs to act immediately if irreversible damage is to be avoided. In fact a number of clubs have already closed with others teetering on the brink.

From a Federation perspective the Minister seems to be adopting much with which we have no objection while at the same time ignoring issues which would not compromise her in any way. Issues such as advertising to inform members of club events, in the same manner afforded to other licensed trade sectors. Not affording private member clubs the ability to make announcements in the press is at best discriminatory.

It is most frustrating that those in power appear to ignore the contribution made by private member, sports, social & recreational clubs. How would the Assembly propose to replace that contribution, financially and otherwise? This seminar formed part of the Federation ongoing process of lobbying respective political parties at the assembly and at Westminster. Clubs have an important role to play by forwarding correspondence to the Minister and/or their local M.L.A. or M.P. outlining serious financial and administrative problems caused by current legislation. added to by the economic recession.

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# Committees Need to be Aware of Noise Issues

Environmental health officers seem to be using their powers to issue Abatement Notices against premises more and more. They have always had powers to do so since the arrival of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Such notices are often used as a result of problems having been experienced by neighbours of a club as a result of their operation. Common examples are where residents are unable to sleep due to live or recorded music from a club.

However, with the arrival of the smoking ban, more Abatement Notices are being issued as a result of noisy members congregating outside premises or indeed as a result of smoke itself entering premises through an open window.

It is worthy of note that Environmental Health Officers are under a positive duty to investigate any complaints received by them as otherwise they may themselves be subject to a legal challenge in the form of a Judicial Review. This means that complaints should not be taken lightly!

Abatement Notices are normally issued after some form of warning has been issued either verbally or more commonly in writing. It is essential to respond to such warnings and to enter into immediate dialogue with Environmental Health Officers with regard to any problems. It is also eminently sensible to follow up any conversations with written confirmation so that correspondence can be produced to the Magistrates in the event that the matter goes further.

Once in place the Abatement Notice remains until it is withdrawn by an Environmental Health Officer. The only caveat to this is that there is a right to appeal within 21 days of the issue of notice and it is therefore crucial to consider issuing such an Appeal as otherwise the future of the notice is entirely within the Environmental Health Officer's hands.

The imposition of the notice can be appealed on a number of grounds. The Operator can argue that there is no nuisance or no reasonable grounds for believing that a nuisance is about to occur or recur as the case may be. Even if there is a nuisance the Operator can argue that "best practicable means" have been used to prevent the occurrence of the nuisance.

Equally the notice can be appealed on the basis that the local authority have refused to accept remedial proposals put forward by the operator and not given the operator a chance to demonstrate that such proposals would remedy the problem.

## £20,000 Fine

Regardless of any appeal any breach of the notice may result in proceedings being taken against the operator in the Magistrates' Court with potential fines of up to £28,000 for each breach proved. The local authority would have to prove the breach beyond any reasonable doubt. One club was fined £8,000 a couple of years ago.

# Access Control For Your Club

## 'A simple explanation'

This is the ability to control who comes in to your premises and when they can come in using a technological solution.

There are a number of ways of doing this ranging from simple intercom solutions to the more advanced computer based key fob systems. Each has its own advantages and depending on your requirements can be tailor made.

As the credit crunch deepens and costs must be closely monitored it is possible to install an automated system allowing you to economise on door staff quiet times.

Taking first the simple intercom, this can be cabled back to the main bar area and coupled with a CCTV camera will allow bar staff to admit customers/members who would press the intercom button. The member will be seen on the monitor, usually installed in the general bar area, and after identifying themselves to staff would be allowed access to the club. An automatic door closer should be fitted to the front door thus ensuring that the door has closed firmly behind them.

If there is a long walk to the bar from the door other cameras should be positioned in the hall to record what is happening and if visitors are diversifying off the proper entry route.

More advanced systems are now available ranging from key fob and swipe card operation up to biometric readers using fingerprints, hand scanners and retinal scanners.

One of our recent installations used key fobs as the operating device. Each club member is given a key fob unique to themselves. Entry to the club is gained by addressing or holding the key fob in front of a vandal-proof reader unit connected back to a master control unit which is then connected to a computer. The system is then able to do a number of things including seeing how often the member has attended the club, what time they entered and what time they left and most importantly if a disciplinary offence has taken place they may be barred electronically from entering.

The system can be programmed with different entry times depending on daily opening times and exit times. This takes the onus off bar staff for allowing access and also operating the system.

Reports can be used to see how loyal a member really is and club officials can gauge activity levels of customer attendance on each night. Even if door staff are on duty, members would still be able to use their key fobs.

Intercom units can be interfaced with a key fob entry system also allowing bar staff to let in members who have forgotten their key fob.

Virtually any type of existing door can have access control devices interfaced onto it. These range from simple electrically operated mortice locks to electronic magnetic

locks and shear locks. The type chosen depends on what sort of door you have.

As well as keyfobs, swipe cards are also available, however we find that fobs are less prone to damage.

### SECURITY RISKS

The most common security risk/breach of an access control system is through tailgating or piggybacking which refers to the practice of an unauthorised person following an authorised person through an opened door.

Tailgating implies that the person who has received authorisation is not aware that another person has followed them through the door, while piggybacking implies that the authorised person has agreed to let another person through the open door.

This can be detected by careful placement of CCTV showing both outside and in the entrance hall. A good CCTV monitor located in the bar area helps greatly.

A good access control system will save any club money in the short/medium term and if used properly will pay for itself over a period of time depending on the sophistication of the system.

It must be emphasized that each system should be tailor made to the club's requirements and club officials should have great input into what sort of system they want.

## Beware of Fake Vodka

Clubs should be aware that there are thousands of potentially lethal bottles of fake vodka flooding the streets. Crooks pass off counterfeit and watered down vodka as the real thing with genuine brand labels. A fake bottle can be potentially lethal, according to trading standards officers, but they are only a small percentage of what is available.

The bulk of this fake vodka comes from Eastern Europe where counterfeiters lace it up with toxic levels of industrial chemicals such as methanol. The most common counterfeit brands are "Kereoff" and "Glen" vodka.

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# Fighting Against the Economic Downturn

by Martin Malseed

In consideration of the current economic downturn and the plight many clubs are faced with I feel it important to give consideration to a Federation statement in Club Review some issues ago which read "Those who prepare best suffer less".

While local publicans talk about the trend where customers preload on alcohol before going out for an evening and eminent high street retailers are shutting their doors the duty falls on club officials to create a business model which will survive in the period ahead.

The business of today, 2009, is in no way similar to that of the last thirty years where clubs were a beacon and refuge for members to come out and relax in a friendly environment. There's no point looking back on every fundraiser for example saying we used to do this and it worked so let's do it again.

## IMPORTANT POINTS CLUB OFFICIALS SHOULD CONSIDER

**Opening hours:** Are we just opening for the sake of it, in other words does the traffic coming through the door warrant the hours or number of nights the club is open. Staying open with only a few members coming through the door does not make good commercial sense!

**Offers:** There is one successful pub chain who are continually promoting deals and offers to customers whether in food or drink terms. Their business plan could be looked at and some thought put into adopting a similar strategy.

**Service & membership care:** At times when the world is getting more impersonal and people can at times feel less valued train your staff in looking after those who spend their money in your club. Going the extra mile to make sure there is ice and lemon and a tidy bar together with a friendly smile is more likely to make the customer come back again. Investigating a member loyalty card system where a member would get a discount against a casual visitor who is only visiting as a signed in guest .

**Costs:** Every cost should be challenged and habit buying discouraged. All expenditure over an agreed threshold should be queried discussed and a case put forward for its outlay. Does the supplier add value to the club? Is the item really needed ? Can the existing supply be discontinued without jeopardising the club?

**Member Retention:** As members assess their outlays one thing a club may consider is reducing or affording a

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subscription free year. Subscriptions vary from club to club, but if the annual subscription income is negligible as a percentage of bar profit or other income, consideration could be given to affording concessions for members such as waiving subscriptions or extending payment deadlines, always ensuring that the club rules are adhered to.

**New members:** Clubs could of course put some thought into recruitment by providing incentives for people to take up membership, giving consideration to the lifetime value of a member which is the number of years the member is with the club times their bar spend - the numbers can stack up. What do you offer or what could you offer to entice people to join? Maybe even on the big screen computer games, internet access, perhaps an unused area of the club being converted to provide a restaurant with consequent drink sales improvements. This is something a number of clubs have already implemented.

## Price Increases

The increase in the price of alcohol is alarming with respective discussions doing little to bely our concerns. The cost of raw materials appears to have dropped yet the cost of the end product continues to rise! Against this we see big cutbacks in staff and marketing, against reports of huge sales levels driven by the pound euro exchange rate. It is likely that the most affected are answerable to shareholders, leaving those at the coal face to face the music from customers.

History shows that the recent economic downturn is to a certain extent being used as a vehicle of convenience to implement cutbacks, similar to those in the great depression of the 30's. When similar scare tactics which offered to retain staff at the expense of pay rises were adopted, only for jobs to be lost in the end anyway, in other words history is repeating itself.

## N.I.F.C. HELPLINES

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## Take Action To Prevent Arson

In the last two decades arson has significantly increased as a cause of commercial fires in the UK. In 2006 there were more than 3,000 arson attacks on shops, cafes and small businesses, according to UK Fire Statistics.

### Hazards

Most malicious fires are started during hours of darkness. This does not mean, however, that premises are safe during working hours as fires are easily started in business premises that are not continuously occupied. This month, we give our top tips on how the threat of arson can be minimised at your club.

### Assessing the Risks

Carry out an arson risk assessment:

- Identify the susceptibility of your club and the security measures adopted - both internally and externally.
- Identify the potential hazards such as the presence of combustible materials or sources of ignition.
- Identify the potential arsonist such as intruders, visitors, contractors or staff.
- Eliminate, control or avoid the threat identified.
- Review existing security and fire arrangements.
- Review the assessment periodically.

### Fire protection

Keep ignition sources to a minimum.

- Regularly ensure extinguishers are in their correct positions and with any hose reels, check they are in good working order.
- All hazardous goods such as flammable liquids and gas cylinders should be locked in special stores when not in use and particularly at the end of the working day.
- Process waste and rubbish should be cleared away at the end of each day and more often if necessary. This is particularly important in storage or secluded areas at the back of the premises.

The advice is clear. Clubs must take responsibility and be vigilant if they are to avoid the risk of fire. It is only by ensuring that you have the necessary controls in place that you can secure your club and minimise hazards.

## You Need Health & Safety

Committees are responsible for a safe working environment and therefore a first aid kit must be on the premises.

A member of staff must know how to:

1. Implement the fire safety plan.
2. Know how to use fire extinguishers.
3. Conduct risk assessment.
4. Keep appropriate records.

The Institute of Occupational Safety & Health can also offer advice on (0116) 257 3199 as can the St John Ambulance on (020) 7324 4000.

## First European Tour win for Rory



Dubai provided the perfect setting for Hollywood teenager Rory McIlroy to secure his first European victory shooting a 2-under 70 on Sunday 1st February.

He finished one shot ahead of Justin Rose to become the seventh youngest winner in tour history.

This rounded off an absolutely fantastic week for Rory who started with three straight birdies, then made a double-bogey on the fifth hole and a bogey on the eighth.

However from the ninth he went on to make five straight birdies, but when he looked to be cruising to his first win he dropped three shots on three holes before scraping through with a par on No. 18 after hitting his third shot into the back of the bunker to set up a tricky shot for par.

Travelling through the snow Rory arrived back to a warm welcome by members and the media at Hollywood Golf Club..

## Your Questions Answered

Q: We have been discussing as a committee how we need to get members into the club and we have decided to have an active campaign. Is there anything wrong in this?

A: There is nothing wrong in having a campaign to get more members. Clubs should be aware that their Rule Books do state that existing members need to propose and second a candidate provided they are able, from personal knowledge, to vouch for his/her respectability or fitness to be a member; and both of them need to sign a nomination form to that effect.

The Committee must then, of course, determine whether to elect that individual and they must be aware that it is still 48 hours between someone applying for membership and being granted it.

# Irish 6 Nations Rugby Squad to Feature Five Ulstermen



Rory Best, Tom Court and Stephen Ferris.

Photograph - Darren Kidd/Presseye.com 30/01/09

Rory Best, Stephen Ferris, Tom Court, Paddy Wallace and Tommy Bowe have all made it onto the final 27 man Irish squad to face France on Saturday 7th February. The players were appearing at the Guinness Press Conference at Armagh RFC ahead of their opening RBS 6 Nations match.

Their selection gives rise to hopes of a strong local presence against the French. Their inclusion was no surprise given the recent form of a resurgent Ulster side which will also have propelled a number of players into contention for starting spots.

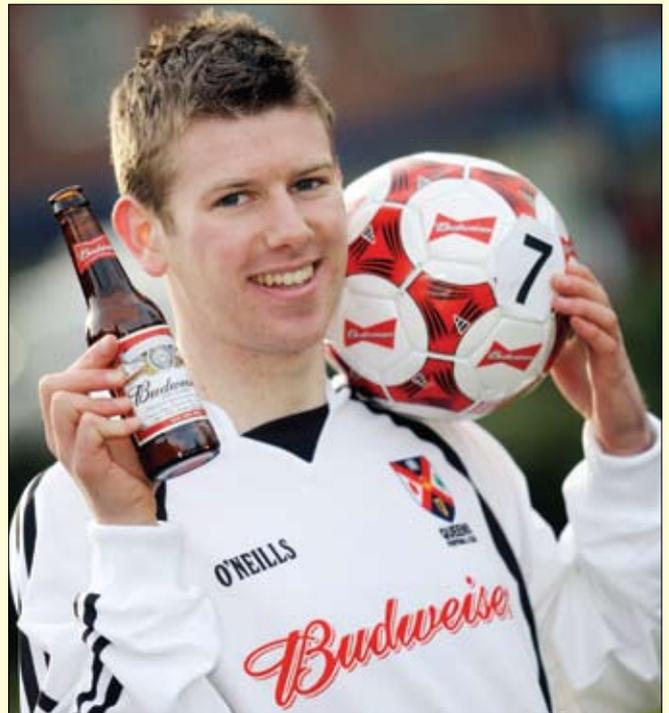
With France no doubt looking to build on their recent record in the competition, having won it four times in the last seven years, 'Les Bleus' will surely be out to stamp their authority on the Championship with a strong game against the Irish in Croke Park. But with the ghosts of a poor world cup to excise and Lions selection just round the corner the Ulster contingent will be out to impress Lion's coach, Ian McGeechan, and secure a place on the plane to South Africa this summer.

Stuart Kinch, Guinness Brand Manager, speaking at the press conference said, "This year's tournament is a very special one for us. It comes right at the start of our 250th anniversary and it gives us a great opportunity to show our support for the Irish team. Among other exciting initiatives, we are giving people a chance to win a trip to South Africa, through Guinness fantasy rugby, to watch the British and Irish Lions play.

Guinness is synonymous with Irish rugby, and as a proud sponsor of Irish rugby we are delighted to be able to bring the local players that have made it through to the final squad together. Over the years Ulster has produced some very talented players and it's great to see that continuing with the current Irish team. We wish them all the best in their efforts to bring the trophy home to Irish soil!"

Guinness is also launching its very own 'Fantasy Rugby' game for the RBS Six Nations. Log onto [www.guinnessfantasyrugby.com](http://www.guinnessfantasyrugby.com) to create your 'fantasy' team and pit your management skills against players from all over the country. The overall winner will win a trip for two to the British & Irish Lions Tour including match tickets, flights and accommodation!

# Budweiser Sponsors Local Football



Budweiser has announced it will continue to sponsor Queens University Belfast Football Club for the seventh year running. Pictured celebrating is QUB FC Team Captain Philip Prenter. The sponsorship includes a new kit and training gear for the QUB team. Budweiser is proud to support football in Northern Ireland from grass roots right through to the Barclay's Premier League sponsorship, secured until 2010. Budweiser will also support the QUB team throughout the season.

# 2009 Ulster Bank Higher Education Championship



Ard Stiurthoir of the GAA Padraic Duffy holding the Sigerson Cup, left, and Fitzgibbon Cup, right, with college and intercounty football and hurling stars, from left, T.J. Reid, Waterford IT / Kilkenny, Richie Hogan, St. Patricks College / Kilkenny, Mark Vaughan, DIT / Dublin, and Justin McMahon, St Mary's Belfast / Tyrone, at the launch of the 2009 Ulster Bank Higher Education Championship. Croke Park, Dublin.

Picture credit: Pat Murphy / SPORTSFILE

# Top Honours for Harry and Wendy at Magners Sports Awards



**Wendy Houvenaghel (right of centre) is pictured receiving her Sports Star of the Year Award from Stephen Beacom (left), Belfast Telegraph; BBC national sports broadcaster Jill Douglas and sponsor of the Awards Gavan Morris, Magners Marketing Manager.**

The Sports Awards sponsored by Magners once again brought together many of Northern Ireland's sporting fraternity to acknowledge and recognise those individuals, teams and organisations whose contribution to Ulster sport has been outstanding.

Olympic Medallist Wendy Houvenaghel lifted the top honours at Magners Sports Awards, winning the award for "Sports Star of the Year". Ulster sporting icons like the late great Joey Dunlop, Darren Clarke, Tony McCoy and David Healy have been winners in the past but Olympic silver medallist Wendy is the first lady to be named the Belfast Telegraph Sports Star of the Year.

One of those honoured on the night was former Northern Ireland and Manchester United legend Harry Gregg who is the latest inductee to the Belfast Telegraph Magners Hall of Fame. The former goalkeeper spent nine years of his career at Old Trafford the vast majority of which was as number one. After his retirement, he spent 20 years in coaching and management. After being awarded the MBE in 1995 he was given an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Ulster last



**Manchester United legend & Northern Ireland goalkeeper Harry Gregg (centre) pictured receiving the Belfast Telegraph Magners Hall of Fame Award. With Harry are, from left, David Larmour, Treasurer of the N.I. Federation of Clubs, former British boxing champion and Commonwealth gold medalist; BBC national sports broadcaster Jill Douglas; Gavan Morris, representing Magners, sponsors of the Sports Awards; and Harry Beckinsale, PRO of the N.I. Federation of Clubs.**

summer, his place among Northern Ireland's sporting greats is fully justified, and a place in the Belfast Telegraph's Hall of Fame well deserved.

# Harp Lager Football Writers Award



Linfield Manager, David Jeffrey, receives the Harp Football Writers Manager of the Month Award from Harp girl Louise Wright and (below) Mark Holland from Cliftonville FC is presented the Player of the Month Award for January from Harp girl Suzie Morrison and Terry Loughins from Harp.



# Tennent's/UGAAWA Merit Award



Rod McCrory, Inbev Ireland, with Crossmaglen's Paul McKeown, right, who was presented with the Tennent's GAA Writers Monthly Merit Award for December 2008.

It seems that Paul McKeown believes in keeping his very best displays for the big stage and for the second year in a row he played the leading role in the AIB Ulster Club Football final. Corner-back McKeown starred as Crossmaglen Rangers retained the provincial title with a replay win over Ballinderry Shamrocks to emerge with the 'Man-of-the-Match' trophy. Now he adds the Tennent's/Ulster GAA Writers' Merit Award for December 2008, as well. Ironically, Paul won the same award last year after Crossmaglen defeated St Gall's (Belfast) in the final.

"Have I won it again? That's amazing - a big shock - but a great start to the new year for me," enthused Paul when told of the award. I really enjoyed everything connected with the award last time and it is great news that I am the winner again."

The livewire number 4 contributed a special point to Cross' replay victory and smiles when he looks back on that score. "I had tried that kick dozens of times in training and never once did the ball go over the bar. When I got the pass I just didn't know what to do - whether to have a go or lay off the ball. I aimed for the posts and, thankfully, that time it went over!"

To date, he has collected three Ulster SFC medals, two Armagh senior trophies and one All-Ireland senior club medal. He has also Ulster county medals at minor and under-21 levels and now has two Monthly Merit Awards. For the latest honour he had to beat off the challenge of St Paul's Aisling Reilly who completed a grand slam of USHA Junior singles and doubles handball championship titles (from age 13 to 19) during the last week in December.

The presentation was made to Paul at a function in the Glenowen Inn, Belfast, by Rod McCrory, Inbev Ireland, on Wednesday, January 14. He received a Tennent's Sports Voucher, an engraved Belleek China vase, specially designed silver cufflinks from Omeath jeweller Gareth Mallon and training gear from O'Neill's International Sports. He will also receive two tickets to the Ulster GAA Writers' 2009 banquet.

## Snooker Snippet

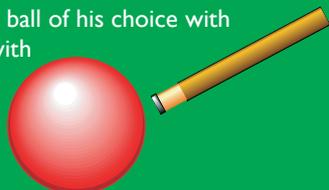
**Q. Player A pots a red but notices a chalk mark on the cue ball. Whilst pointing out this mark to the referee he touches the cue ball. What action does the referee take?**

A. 'Foul', seven points penalty.

**Q. How do you get a 155 break?**

A. This happens when a player makes a foul shot before a ball is potted, leaving a free ball.

His opponent pots a free ball of his choice with a black and follows this with a further 15 reds and 15 blacks and all the colours to give him a total of 155.



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**GREAT SPORTING EVENTS**  
 NO. 33

# 1988

## Johnson Stripped of Gold



**Ben Johnson.**

To future historians, the dominance of Ben Johnson in setting a world record of 9.79 seconds in winning the 1988 Olympic 100m title on September 24th in Seoul would not have appeared inconsistent with his 1987 World title victory over Carl Lewis in the former world mark of 9.83. But to those who had seen Johnson decisively beaten by Lewis in a 100m race at Zurich on August 17th, just a few weeks before the Games, it seemed that Lewis was on his way to retaining the Olympic crown. Even in the preliminaries at Seoul, Johnson was not convincing and only survived the quarter finals as the fastest loser after misjudging what he had to do to qualify.

In the final, however, Johnson appeared a different man. He pulled ahead of Lewis early in the race, and won by more than a metre, 9.79 to 9.92. In the time honoured cliché, Johnson expressed his preference afterwards for the title over the world record, "They can break my record, but they can't take my gold medal away." He was wrong.

Three days later, Canadian Olympic officials were informed in the early hours of September 27th that Johnson had been

disqualified because traces of an anabolic steroid, stanozolol, had been found after the mandatory drug test for Olympic medallists.

Johnson was rushed out of Seoul amid a media stampede. His disqualification ranked as probably the biggest, and certainly the most publicized, Olympic scandal of all time. His gold medal and world record performance in Seoul were rescinded, and he received an automatic two year competitive ban from the IAAF. More humiliating, perhaps, was the publicity of being seen as a cheat, and a host of lucrative sponsorship agreements - existing, planned and potential - fell around his ears.

His early protestations that he had not taken drugs, and that his urine sample must have been tampered with, were eventually abandoned, and he admitted and repented the following year during the hearings of the Dubin inquiry, an investigation into drug taking in sport ordered by the Canadian government in the wake of the Johnson case.

Carl Lewis was awarded the title of Olympic 100m champion, with Britain's Linford Christie elevated from bronze to silver medallist. But although their names are in the history books, Johnson's cheating had taken away the moment from them, and that can never be recaptured.

## Sugar Ray Champ Again



With a cavalier disregard for the massed ranks of contenders, Sugar Ray Leonard emerged from a 19-month retirement to take the WBC light heavyweight championship from Donny Lalonde of Canada on November 7th. The new fangled super middleweight (12 stone) title was thrown in to enable Leonard to become the first man to win versions of world championships at five different weights. Lalonde, a glamorous but predictable fighter, almost ruined the script when he floored Leonard in the fourth round, but the great man rallied brilliantly to knock out the Canadian in the ninth.

## Also this year...

**Football** - Ian Rush returned to Liverpool on August 18th for £2.8m, 15 months after he was transferred to Juventus for £3.2m.

**Golf** - Curtis Strange became the first player to win more than one million dollars on the US PGA Tour in a year.

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