

Club Review

VOLUME 22 - Issue 6, 2009

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Minutes of the executive meeting

Held in the Harland & Wolff Welders F.S.C.
on Saturday 5th September 2009

The Chairman opened the meeting, and announced apologies received for Philip Mallon.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and passed, without amendment, proposed and seconded by Gerry Gallagher and Tommy McMinn.

Correspondence was read out and explanations were given where necessary. One in particular from the accountant of H&W Welder's F.S.C. informing them that the application for rates relief on gaming machines over a

specified period was accepted by H.M.R.C. This should apply to all those who made the application when we were first informed some time ago.

A financial report was presented by the Treasurer with copies provided to all those present. The report was subsequently proposed and seconded as a true record of our financial standing by Jim McCaul and Raymond Connor.

The Chairman, with the assistance of the P.R.O., gave an update on Federation activities since our last meeting.

Thirty-two clubs contacted us about problems and sought assistance, since our last meeting. Meetings were also held with nineteen organisations on various problems, so the help lines are busy.

The association formed with Sky Television has proved to be very successful. Although a number of clubs have been able to reduce their monthly subscription, the new package has kept a large number of those clubs onboard with Sky as they were considering cancelling the Sky contract to reduce overheads. In addition a number of clubs are signing up to Sky. However, it should be remembered that the availability of the new terms are entirely at the discretion of Sky Television, although Ciaran Devine of Sky has been extremely helpful in accommodating all those referred to him via the Federation.

The matter of two prominent clubs was discussed. The Chairman has taken the matter up with the P.S.N.I. and the N.I. policing Board and awaits an outcome. It should be the case when the P.S.N.I. visits a club that their numbers are proportionate to the threat posed, if any. In the case under review it certainly was not proportionate, but quite the opposite.

In our submission for changes to the legislation we highlighted the reasoning behind our request in respect of "rights of entry". We would of course expect rights of entry to be exactly the same as

those applied to other sectors.

We have been made aware that information given to the P.S.N.I. by those leaving premises can be intentionally misleading. To be totally fair, the owners or management of establishments concerned may not be aware of the advice being given. Although private member non-profit-making clubs are not a contributory factor to the 'binge drinking' culture and the irresponsible behaviour we witness in the media, we would still like to see an initiative where we can all participate in reducing alcohol related problems.

A question was posed on capital gains tax. This is a tax on property being sold, and can be very expensive. We would suggest that clubs should contact their accountants and solicitors for information as early as possible.

Details of the C.O.R.C.A. meeting held on 22nd July 2009 were provided, with notification that the next meeting will be held in London on 18th November 2009. On that occasion Tom McMinn will form part of the Federation delegation.

As there was no further business, the meeting was closed with thanks being extended to John Davidson and the Committee of H&W Welders F.S.C. for hosting the meeting and for the generous hospitality provided.

Bob McGlone, Secretary



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Federation signs up to new code of practice.

The Northern Ireland Federation of Clubs recently attended a meeting at F.R.L.T. headquarters to discuss details of establishing an effective code of practice.

This recent development follows earlier meetings, however the growing problem of alcohol related illness and issues such as anti-social behaviour are very much to the fore as supermarkets play a role in driving prices downward.

F.R.L.T. Chief Executive, Colin Neill, Federation Chairman, John Davidson and P.R.O., Harry Beckinsale, together with representatives of the P.S.N.I., the D.S.D. and other interested parties discussed the issue at hand with a recommendation that contact is established with the F.R.L.T.'s parallel body in the south of Ireland.

This joint approach will hopefully aid to promote sensible and healthy drinking in the province through a code of practice by which the sales and promotion of alcoholic beverages will be regulated by the industry in Northern Ireland, although it is entirely likely that government will implement regulations such as those proposed in Scotland.

Placing a minimum price structure would unfortunately affect those who act responsibly and in particular would adversely affect the elderly who

The Chairman's View!

The many recent changes in the structure of the drinks industry is no surprise to me. I can recall from some years ago outlining the view that the future of the industry in Northern Ireland would see consolidation through the amalgamation of companies.

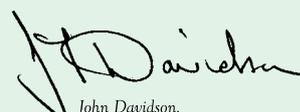
Recent developments in C&C Ireland establishes them as a very major player with the added value of increased employment in what is a depressed market. The club sector has enjoyed an excellent relationship with C&C and I wish Nicola McCleery and the C&C team continued success in this latest development.

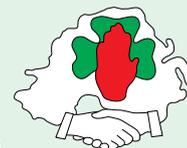
The Federation continue to pursue change to club legislation and I feel we are approaching a conclusion of some kind; what will result is not totally clear at the moment but the indications are certainly more positive.

Thankfully we have enjoyed excellent support from Ken Nixon of the Northern Ireland Sports Forum, Danny Murphy of the GAA, Eamon McCartan, Chief Executive of Sport N.I. and of course Lady Sylvia Hermon M.P. together with the M.L.A.'s from all political parties at the Legislative Assembly.

Generally clubs, like other sectors, have been going through a tough time but I am optimistic that things are on the turn. I reflect on a saying which continually comes to the surface which outlines that those who prepare best suffer less. In other words provide members and guests with good entertainment, reasonable prices and good service and you will have established a platform upon which to come out on the right side of this recession.

I have not lost sight of the fact, and fully understand, that clubs like others in the leisure industry are facing more difficult times, however with improved clubs legislation I do believe that the club sector can come through these difficulties.


John Davidson,
Chairman, NI Federation of Clubs

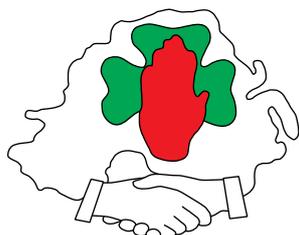


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may rely on the lower cost via which to enjoy their weekly tittle.

It is of course a fact that historically, private member clubs have not essentially been involved in the anti-social behaviour issue, obviously attributed in the main to the age groups frequenting our sector. However we are nevertheless responsible in our attitude to an issue which affects the wider community.

Members will be updated on developments as matters progress.



Secretaries queries

A club recently contacted the Federation asking if their club rules had to be displayed in their club? They said they always had but took them down when they amended some of their rules and just hadn't got round to putting them back up.

Although you may not wish to display a copy of the rules in the club it should be remembered that the secretary is obliged to make available a copy of the rules to any member who requests them. It would be awkward for a committee if a club member was disciplined for not complying with the rules if, in defence, they claimed that the rules were not available.

We also received a query about life membership and the criteria which may allow such an honour. We appreciate there will be various opinions on what should be required for this facility to be given to members and are aware that clubs may not want the floodgates to open.

For most clubs the qualification for life membership was probably established many years ago and it is fair to say the rule for this type of membership may in general have remained unchanged. It was not long ago that someone reaching 65 was considered to be elderly. It is therefore not uncommon to see a life membership qualification of say, twenty five years continuous membership, with that qualification attained by the age of sixty. It is of course up to each individual club to establish their own guidelines.

Make Arthur's Day a national holiday!



Tom Jones and Ronan Keating onstage for the Arthur's Day Guinness 250th Anniversary Celebration held at the Storehouse, Dublin, on 24th September.

(All photos by Getty Images/Getty Images for Guinness)

At 17.59 on 24th September 2009 people worldwide joined those on the island of Ireland in celebrations for Arthur's Day.

Dublin was transformed into the epicentre of the worldwide celebration when thousands of people came together to toast Arthur and enjoy performances from local and international artists in over 33 venues across Dublin, ranging from intimate gigs in 28 Dublin pubs, to 4 music venues, and a concert at the St. James's Gate brewery itself.

Whilst the hub of Arthur's Day celebrations focused on St James's Gate and Dublin city, the celebrations continued across Northern Ireland when customers raised a toast to

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Arthur's Day Celebrations

Arthur and enjoy gigs from St. James's Gate and the studio venues which were broadcast live on the night on Sky Television.

The excitement ahead of Arthur's Day heightened as people added their names to an on-line petition to make Arthur's Day a national holiday! As a result, a number of fans on the Guinness 250 Facebook page suggested the idea to make Arthur's Day a national holiday, in just four days over 6,000 people also added their names to a petition asking to make this an annual event.

In the week prior to the event preparations were in full swing as special countdown clocks around the city counted down to the minute when the nation toasted the legacy of a remarkable man. Arthur's Day flags fluttered on flagpoles across Dublin city in the build-up to the big day and signs appeared in the arrivals areas in Dublin airport welcoming all the visitors and special guests arriving into Ireland on the big day.

More than 60 artists from all over the world landed in Dublin to take over numerous venues throughout the city to mark the signing of the 9,000 year lease on the St. James's Gate brewery. Guinness signed Natalie Imbruglia and former Destiny's Child band member Kelly Roland to add to the already impressive line-up of international artists for the global festivities which included artists such as Sir Tom Jones, Estelle and the Sugababes.

The celebrations in Dublin rippled round the world, including Northern Ireland. In total, 1200 outlets in Northern Ireland were invited to join the 50 million people raising their Guinness to Arthur at 17:59



Singer Kelly Rowland performs onstage for the Arthur's Day Guinness 250th Anniversary Celebration.



Singer songwriter Paolo Nutini who performed at the Stockhouse, Dublin.



Revellers at the Arthur's Day Guinness Anniversary Celebrations held across Dublin.



Singer, Estelle, performs on stage with a fan for the Arthur's Day Guinness 250th Anniversary Celebrations.



Singer songwriter, Jamie Callum at the Arthur's Day Celebration held at The Bank in Dublin.

and were given access to the Sky TV platform that broadcasted the live music events and various gigs that took part on the night of the 24th.

Arthur Guinness and his family were responsible for some of the most well known acts of

philanthropy in Ireland. To honour and continue this legacy the Arthur Guinness Fund has been established with the aim of supporting and empowering social entrepreneurs, who have projects and initiatives that are innovative, impactful and sustainable, for the benefit of

communities across Ireland. The proceeds of the Arthur's Day ticket sales went to the Arthur Guinness Fund with Guinness & Co. donating €6 million globally to the Arthur Guinness Fund, which became active at the end of September 2009.

C&C Group make aquisition

Irish, Northern Irish and Scottish businesses of Anheuser-Busch InBev, including the Tennent's brands, for £180m

C&C recently announced that it has entered into a conditional agreement to acquire the businesses of Anheuser-Busch InBev (ABI) in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland for a total consideration of £180 million. The acquisition will be financed from a combination of the group's own cash resources and existing bank facilities and is subject to shareholder approval, regulatory consent and employee consultation.

The assets of the business being acquired include: Tennent's, Scotland's leading lager brand; The Wellpark Brewery in Glasgow; An on-trade loan book of approximately £27 million;

and distribution rights to certain ABI brands in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland, including Stella Artois and Beck's, as part of a strategic partnership with the world's largest brewer.

Tennent's Lager is Scotland's leading lager brand where it accounts for 55% of volumes of lager sold to the Scottish on-trade and around 30% of the Scottish off-trade. The business is the leading brewer in Scotland by volume, brewing Tennent's brands and also producing and selling the Stella Artois brand, which has a 5% volume share of on-trade lager in Scotland. In Northern

Ireland, Tennent's brands have approximately 25% of the on-trade draught lager market.

The Board of C&C believes that the Acquisition will develop its existing business, with potential to increase the position of Magners outside its core market.

Tony O'Brien, Chairman of C&C said, "This acquisition is an evolution of our stated strategy and clearly enhances the Group's position in the Long Alcoholic Drinks sector. Tennent's is a renowned Scottish brand, which, combined with our leading market position in cider,



represents an attractive growth opportunity for the group. The acquisition will, we believe, create operating synergies and increase shareholder value. Our management team has a strong track record of successfully managing internationally branded beverages. The Board unanimously recommends that shareholders approve this acquisition."

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International White Winemaker of the Year visits Northern Ireland

Fresh from being named International White Winemaker of the Year at the International Wine Challenge (IWC) event in London, Neil McGuigan, Australian Vintage Ltd's General Manager of Production and Winemaking, was in Belfast to lead a selection of wine reviewers and enthusiasts in a tutored tasting of the McGuigan range of wines.

The tasting event, hosted by United Wine Merchants, was held in Belfast and guests enjoyed a selection of wines from the award-winning McGuigan Label, which won four trophies, two gold, nine silver and ten bronze medals at the IWC event earlier this month. The range was also recognised at the recent Decanter World Wine Awards.

Ciaran Meyler, Wine Manager of United Wine Merchants, commented, "Neil has rightly been recognised for the outstanding quality of wines his team has been producing and I'm delighted he was able to visit Northern Ireland to discuss the McGuigan range with our guests. His knowledge of the intricacies of winemaking is fascinating and his dedication and passion are reflected in the high quality of the McGuigan label."

Neil McGuigan added, "I experienced a most hospitable welcome on my visit to Northern Ireland. Winemaking is my passion and I enjoy the opportunity to discuss this with fellow wine enthusiasts; and as the McGuigan range



Paul Schaafsma, Frank McGreevy and Harry Beckinsale.

is particularly popular with Northern Ireland consumers I was keen to hear their views on the range."

With over 30 years experience to rely upon, Neil is one of Australia's foremost winemakers and has been instrumental to the success of McGuigan Wines. He is a wine judge at a National and International level and his commitment to Australian wine continues to drive the innovation behind the McGuigan wine brand.



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Tough penalties for illegal workers

Clubs are being reminded of the importance of ensuring they are not employing illegal workers, as tough new penalties come into force. Every illegal employee found at a club can result in a hefty fine, even if you thought they were entitled to work in the UK.

The issue of recruiting immigrants who do not have the relevant work visas has been well documented recently. While the Government has launched an advertising campaign to highlight the new laws, many businesses are still not heeding the warnings.

The higher penalties come into force on February 29 and still a worrying number of bosses seem

unaware of how serious the new penalties are. If you knowingly hire an illegal worker you face an unlimited fine and a prison sentence. If you negligently hire an illegal worker then the fine is potentially £10,000 per worker so it's a huge risk to take.

In 2006 the Border & Immigration Agency raided more than 5,000 businesses leading to 22,000 people being removed from the UK. It is predicted that the new laws will see that number increase. Clubs are advised to further tighten up their recruitment procedures, ensuring they are documented and applied consistently across all employees and not just across those you may think are likely to be illegal workers.

You should check that all documentation provided by prospective employees correlates and that they are officially recognised with forms such as a passport, work permit and P45 or P60. Take a photocopy of them, holding on to them for the duration of the employee's time with the club and for three years afterwards.

Equally, it's worth noting that if you are looking to make an acquisition of another club or



business that it's important to carry out proper due diligence on this issue to avoid any future liabilities."



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PAT is the law

Portable Appliance Training (PAT) of all electrical items has been on the statute book for several years.

Clubs are reminded that all portable appliances have to be tested. Anything that has a plug and has to be inserted

into the electricity system has to be tested by an approved company every year.

All plugs and fuses also come into this. It is important to ensure that the company carrying out this work on behalf of the club is registered.

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A 'safe' bet

Ritchie reviews gambling policy, practice & law

Social Development Minister, Margaret Ritchie MLA, today announced a high-level, strategic review of Northern Ireland gambling policy, practice and law.

The legislation dates back to 1985 and is not robust enough to deal with modern gambling.

Margaret Ritchie said, "Current legislation is old, inflexible and hard to understand and the gambling market has moved on. There are new products and new ways of gambling that the current law never envisaged. It is in everyone's interests that the gambling industry is regulated effectively which is why I am initiating this review."

My top priority in taking forward the review will be public safety. Close supervision of the industry is needed to achieve responsible regulation - keeping crime out of gambling, protecting the young and the vulnerable and ensuring fairness for the consumer. Our legacy should be the creation of an intelligent regulatory system that is seen to be fair."

There is currently little hard evidence available on which to develop policy. A phased approach is therefore planned and will initially involve research, information-gathering and engagement with key interests, leading to publication of a discussion document. In



stage two the responses will be analysed and a report produced for the Minister.

Margaret Ritchie continued, "We need to have a mature, well-informed debate. My current priorities are to find out local people's attitudes to gambling, the size and shape of the gambling market and the wider economic and social impacts of gambling. I will work closely with all interests to develop a package of balanced reforms. I wish to ensure that everyone in the community has the chance to comment and I encourage them to do so as part of this process."

Make sure you don't get taken to the cleaners

Clubs are warned to be on their guard against firms which deliver supplies without them being ordered by the club.

The unscrupulous firm first calls the club to get the name of the Secretary, Chairman or Steward.

The club then receive cleaning goods to the value of £250 to £350. On the reverse of the delivery note is printed a cancellation policy, which states that if you do not want

the goods you must inform them within five working days and they charge a cancellation fee of £75 to collect. They then chase the club chairman for the money.

It goes without saying that clubs should not hand over any money to companies that supply goods that have not been ordered. Just because they have a name of a club official does not mean that official has made the order.

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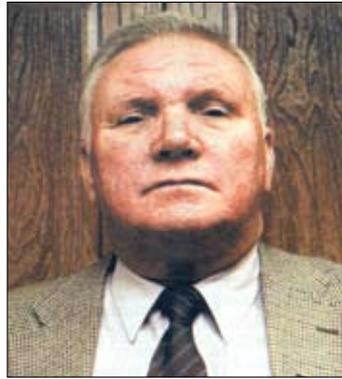
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C.I.U. elect new General Secretary

The recent C.I.U. election has voted Mick McGlasham, currently the Durham Branch Secretary, as the next General Secretary of the Union.

The challenge is one that Mick looks forward to and which will use his local and national knowledge to promote working men's clubs and the Union on the mainland.

The outgoing General Secretary, Kevin Smyth, will work with Mick for a few weeks before his retirement, after 32 years dedicated service, first as Education Secretary, then as General Secretary for the past 17 years.



Mick McGlasham

Kevin will be sorely missed by clubmen and colleagues alike but says, "I wish Mick all the best in his new post and I'm sure he will continue to take the Union from strength to strength."

New Portman Group Chairman



Seymour Fortescue.

The UK's leading drinks manufacturers have appointed Seymour Fortescue as the first external Chairman of the Portman Group. This new position is designed to provide independent leadership

on marketing and social responsibility standards for drinks producers. Previous chairs have been appointed from among the senior drinks executives who make up the Portman Group's Council.

On taking up the position, Seymour Fortescue said, "The Portman Group is already a highly respected alcohol regulator and is a key player in addressing the adverse aspects of our drinking culture. I look forward to working closely with other groups to build a consensus around actions that promote responsible attitudes to alcohol."

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Spirits fraudsters fined

Watch out if you are watering down spirits and refilling branded spirit bottles. The International Federation of Spirits Producers in conjunction with Trading Standards officers has successfully prosecuted two pubs and an Indian restaurant on the mainland and are cracking down on the practice of counterfeiting.

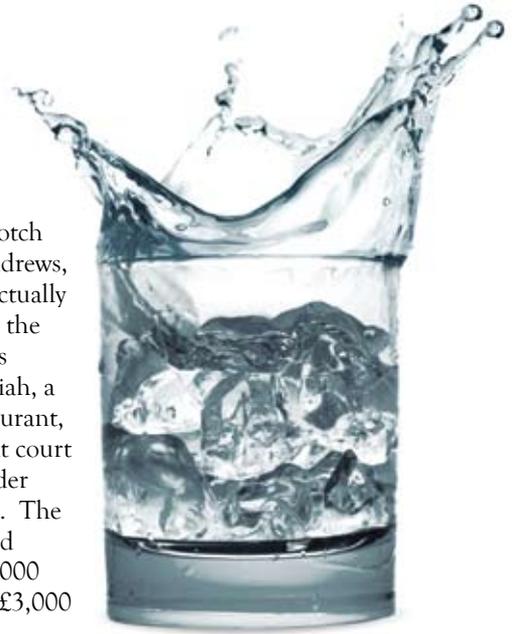
The landlord of the pub in England, was found guilty of watering spirits and refilling branded spirit bottles with supermarket brands. Trading Standards officers inspected the landlord's stock following customer complaints and discovered that premium brands of gin, vodka and whisky

had either been diluted with water or refilled with cheaper supermarket spirits. He pleaded not guilty at court and claimed that employees must have committed the offence while he was away on holiday. Further investigation revealed that the practice had been going on for some time. He was subsequently found guilty of four offences, fined £1,500 for each one plus £2,000 in costs.

Meanwhile, an Indian restaurant is to pay a total of £5,000 in fines and costs after a routine visit by Trading Standards officers found it was substituting spirits with cheaper brands and serving watered down vodka. The vodka being served had been topped up with

more than 22% of water.

The restaurant was found to have substituted Bells Scotch whisky with MacAndrews, Gordons Gin was actually Grosvenor Gin and the Smirnoff Vodka was Checkov. Khalid Miah, a director of the restaurant, pleaded not guilty at court to four offences under the Food Safety Act. The restaurant was found guilty and fined £2,000 and ordered to pay £3,000 costs.



Commenting on the conviction councillor Iain McCracken, said it was unacceptable for

restaurants to serve customers with cheaper brands and charge higher prices.



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The minimum wage

and what you need to know



HM Revenue & Customs

Q. What are the new National Minimum Wage (NMW) rates and when do they come into effect.

A. The rates increase as of 1st October 2009 is as follows:

- For workers aged 22 and over it will rise from £5.73 to £5.80 per hour.
- For those aged between 18 and 21 it goes up from £4.77 to £4.83 per hour.
- For those aged 16 and 17 it will increase from £3.53 to £3.57 per hour.
- The accommodation offset will rise from £4.46 per day to £4.51.

The new rates only apply to pay

reference periods beginning on or after 1st October 2009.

Q. I currently include tips in my employees' wages to bring it up to the minimum wage - is that still OK?

A. Following a consultation with people in the industry, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills has changed regulations so that as of 1st October 2009 service charges/tips can no longer be used by employers to top up pay packets to the NMW.

Even prior to this date, including gratuities as part of basic pay is a delicate area.

A London-based nightclub came into difficulty earlier this year over its system for tips, which involved pooling and distributing tips to staff members. This became an issue because neither employer or employee were paying national insurance on the sum, which was being used to top up employees' wages.

It is likely the Government will introduce a new industry code of best practice on gratuities in the not too distant future, so it's clearer for employers and employees.

Q. I provide accommodation for some of my staff - how does that work in relation to NMW?

A. The provision of accommodation in relation to a job does count towards the NMW - but only up to a maximum amount. As of 1st October 2009 this will rise from £4.46 per day to £4.51 per day. So, for example if you provide accommodation seven days a week to a member of staff it would be £31.57 per week which is being contributed towards a salary (7 x £4.51).

However it does get quite complicated if you charge your employee rent - it is recommended you get proper advice to make sure your calculations are correct.

Also bear in mind that although accommodation can be offset against the NMW, other benefits in kind, such as food, the use of a car or clothing cannot.

So although you can deduct a sum of money from wages to cover these elements, what is left after those deductions must still be at least the NMW.

Q. One of my workers is 21, he claims he's heard that he will now be entitled to the full adult rate of NMW. Is it true?

A. It isn't true just yet - but it will be from December 2010. From that point onwards, the full adult rate will be available to anyone aged over 21 (it's currently 22).

Q. What happens if I don't comply with the new rules?

A. The Government is getting tough. If you do break the law expect to be dealt with severely.

As of April 2009, an employer found guilty will have to pay arrears to each named worker and pay a financial penalty linked to the underpayment - up to £5,000. But in addition, it is now possible that an employer who fails to pay the NMW can now be tried under criminal law in the Crown Court and if found guilty that carries an unlimited fine.

Q. A retired gentleman does the occasional bit of work for me, mainly because he enjoys getting out and about. Are pensioners eligible for the NMW?

A. Yes, pensioners are entitled to receive at least the NMW.

If you are unsure about your particular situation please call the Federation helplines on:
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Paul is to be complimented for his old school approach when saying, "We strive to be as competitive as the next wholesaler and we will never lose sight of the fact that our customers come first."

Continued success for Sky & member clubs

The Sky Ultimate package, now available to Federation Member Clubs, has been a tremendous success and although from Sky's position it has seen a number of clubs enjoying a reduction in their monthly subscription the positive side of this is that those clubs have remained with Sky Television as opposed to cancelling the service due to an inability to continue paying the somewhat higher fee. In addition, a number of clubs have signed-up with others re-joining following bad experiences such as interrupted reception with foreign satellite services.

It is important to remember that

to qualify, your club should be registered as a sports club which is confirmed through your rates. Clubs with a minimum of 20% of their club area used for sport can apply for a rates rebate, which if granted amounts to 80% rates relief on the area used for sport. The Federation have assisted a number of clubs on this issue so please contact us if you require assistance.

The other requirement to enjoy the Sky Ultimate package is that you will be required to provide proof of membership of the N.I. Federation of Clubs, which will involve providing an up-to-date copy of your club's Federation membership certificate.

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Daffodil TEAM Nominated local charity

Marie Curie Cancer Care

Modern tills are a valuable tool

Modern tills are a valuable tool in any club secretary's armoury. They no longer act only as a safe money store, they are also capable, subject to the system chosen, of checking stock levels and stock throughput as well as acting as time clocks for staff management and monitoring staff productivity.

The minimum requirement for any system should be the separation of day-to-day sales recordings from hourly, daily, weekly and monthly lists. Operators, as best practice, should log onto the till at every sale, this is usually by a fob or pin number which should be assigned to each individual.

Till rolls should be made available to the finance committee to enable reconciliations to be carried out on stock and cash. This information can then be used for any number of purposes such as deciding on stock levels and even when staff are most needed.

Finally, please do not be afraid of technology! All suppliers of tills will offer training to both staff and management on an ongoing basis. If they don't, don't use them.

If you can set your central heating timer or video recorder at home you will have no problem with modern till systems.

Red Square Vodka stands out from the rest



Red Vodka doesn't make outlandish claims because it doesn't have to. It's a premium vodka that's great either on its own with ice or as a mixer to create your favourite cocktail. What more do you need? The answer is nothing! Red

Square Vodka is triple distilled because three times is enough to create a pure and delicious product. It is also carbon filtered because it makes the product more pure and smooth. Not only does Red Square

Vodka offer great taste, beating key competitors in taste tests, it gives outstanding margin delivery whilst offering great value to the consumer. The premium bottle design and classic imagery of Red Square gives it great presence behind the bar making it stand out from the rest. Heavily supported with a wide range of Point of Sale items and promotional activity Red Square Vodka is a key brand for United Wine Merchants.

For more information on Red Square and how we can help boost your sales please contact United Wine Merchants 028 3831 6555 or email melanie@unitedwines.co.uk

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4 ways to increase your club's income



Martin Malseed.

Increase the number of members and visitors

Some clubs are losing members, some have waiting lists to join and others used to have waiting lists. Some clubs may be lulled into taking anyone as a member, others on the other hand may be rather more selective and have interview processes and

elaborate joining systems in place. Then of course there are some people who may wish to apply for membership but do not know how to. You rarely see advertisements for clubs seeking new members.

Using a club membership database in tandem with scrutinising a visitor book and observing attendances should provide an overview of the profile of members and their guests. It would seem good sense to put some thought into the membership structure.

Many clubs are faced with an aging membership quite apart from members not frequenting their club as often as they should. Another important issue is pricing, while clubs tend to provide excellent value for their members, it is something

you may wish to monitor on a regular basis.

The reason someone seeks membership is important. It is not good enough for someone to seek membership for the sake of being a member. Committees should consider what contribution that member is going to make for the overall good of the club. After all, you have to consider the implications of the club winding up in future years, with someone who has contributed little or nothing possibly deriving the same or similar benefits as someone who has given outstanding service. Ask yourself - Why do they join? - What's in it for them? - What benefits are offered?

Armed with this information, the drive to increase membership needs to be determined. Members could be encouraged to recommend friends or colleagues to join. Non competing organisations could be approached for strategic alliances and facility sharing arrangements. Public relations efforts could educate your local community that you want them to join you highlighting in the process what your club is offering i.e. smart premises, friendly members, meal deals, competitive sporting

teams etc. All done of course within external legislation and the club's rule book.

Increase the number of times that they come back

There are people who turn up daily, weekly or at AGMs. Bar swipe card technology is an excellent way of telling who the frequent users are plus the bar team should know the regulars. People tend to stay in their comfort zones. We have all walked into bars or restaurants where the atmosphere is not to our liking. The skill in keeping custom is to run events or create an atmosphere where your member and their guests feel comfortable and at ease.

It is increasingly more important for clubs to focus on these key areas in order to develop their club.

Martin Malseed, Chartered Accountant has been involved with clubs and their management since 1975, during which time he has helped clubs in financial difficulties prosper. He has introduced systems to take the strain away from club management, now working full time in helping sports and social clubs thrive in a competitive marketplace. Martin can be contacted on 028904227376 or 07929002238 or email: martin.malseed@btconnect.com

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You just can't beat a day at the races...

Down Royal 6th & 7th November - don't miss it

Down Royal's explosive start to their National Hunt Season on 6th and 7th November, always inspires fireworks both on and off the track. The Northern Ireland Festival of Racing is now firmly established as the premier event in Northern Ireland's racing and social calendar.

The standard of racing on show over the Festival is superb. Last year, Tony McCoy made a triumphant return to Down Royal and clinched victory on Jered. Kauto Star, one of the leading National Hunt horses in the world, won the JNwine.com Champion Chase at last year's Festival, joining previous legendary winners such as Beef or Salmon, Looks Like Trouble and Florida Pearl.

With confirmation from Paul Nicholls that Kauto Star will be entered in this year's JNwine.com Champion Chase, this year's festival promises to be bigger than ever.

Off the track, Down Royal has undergone a phenomenal transformation since the Festival in 2008. A £3.75 million investment in the site has provided a full refurbishment of all the public areas, additional seating, a new food court and a state of the art hospitality building.

The Festival will see the new building and refurbished site operating at its maximum capacity with hospitality options to suit all budgets and demands,



starting from £55. Discounts are available for groups booking racecoach trips to the racecourse. On Friday 6th November, there will be a £20 Punters' Pack offer which includes - entrance to the racecourse, £5 Tote Exacta bet, access to a private

marquee, a beef roll or smoked salmon sandwich, a racecard and a WKD Core Apple Cider or glass of white wine. There will only be 500 Punters' Packs available over the festival, at a cost of £20 and they must be booked in advance.

REMEMBER REMEMBER THE 6TH AND 7TH NOVEMBER



GENERAL ADMISSION

Friday 6th, - £10
Saturday 7th - £15
Children under 16 free and OAP and student rates available on both days.
First race on both days 1:15pm (approx) and last race 4:15pm (approx)

PUNTERS' PACK - £20 per person TRACKSIDE MARQUEE FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER

There will only be 500 Punters' Packs available over the festival, at a cost of £20 and they must be booked in advance.

A Punters' Pack includes:

- Entrance to the racecourse
- Access to a private marquee
- £5 Tote Exacta bet
- Beef roll or Smoked Salmon sandwich
- Racecard
- WKD Core Apple Cider or glass of white wine.

CONTACT

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Magners League kicks off playground of the stars!



“This season’s Magners League has all the makings of another, all-action tournament,” says Gavan Morris, Magners Marketing Manager.

The Magners League has never been on such a high, with the tournament brimming with matches high in both quality and intensity between the cream of the teams from Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The competition has grown in stature, standard and in credibility and it is going to be great to watch a fantastic finale at the end of May.

Gavan added, “As title sponsors we are delighted by the continued success of the Magners League and await this season with excitement and great anticipation.

The introduction of the play-offs is yet another stage in the development of the league and with the calibre of players involved across all 10 teams; we look forward to another season of top quality rugby.”

Another new and exciting development in the Magners League is the introduction of the new Magners League Predictor Game.

Register NOW for free and the chance to win great prizes!

How to Play:

The official Magners League



Gavan Morris, Magners Marketing Manager, with the captains from the competing clubs, at the 2009/10 Magners League Launch.

Predictor Game for 2009/10 season – simply declare the win/lose/draw result of each match during the season and receive points for your successful tips.

Prizes will be awarded throughout the competition.

So log on now to www.magnersleaguepredictor.com and simply register today!

IT'S TIME TO PLAY!

Third Time Lucky for Barrie!

Warrenpoint pro Barrie Trainor made it third time lucky recently in the Magners sponsored PGA Ulster Championship at The Lough Erne Golf Resort. After being runner-up twice in the past three years, he posted a final round of 66 on the Faldo course, for a tournament total of eight-under-par 134 to collect the trophy and winner's cheque.



Sales Manager, Quinn's Reihill McKeown (left), presenting Barrie Trainor with the PGA Ulster Championship trophy.

Pictured is Paddy Ball, Regional

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Ulster GAA All-Stars Honoured

Irish News Ulster Fans' GAA All-Star team announced

The uniqueness of the Irish News Ulster GAA All-Stars is that the player selection is entirely based on fan choice, with readers selecting who they think have been the best 15 players of the Championship.

Commenting on the success of the Irish News Ulster All-Stars, Noel Doran Editor The Irish News said, "There is a freshness of counties this year in the All-Star line-up which is a great reflection of the continued health of the game in Ulster and is due recognition for the players who provided some great games across the summer. We are very fortunate to have such talent within the Ulster counties that makes the selection of 15 Ulster All-Stars such a difficult task for our readers."

Ulster GAA President Tom Daly congratulated all the award recipients and commended the Irish News for their organisation of the event. "Ulster GAA is delighted to once again be associated with the Irish News Ulster GAA All-Stars and I want to congratulate everyone who received an All-Star Award. We had a fantastic championship this year with some great games and many memorable moments and I would again commend the Irish News for the organisation of the All-Stars and for their excellent ongoing coverage of Gaelic Games."

Included in the line-up are six Tyrone players and five Antrim players who contested the Ulster Football Final this year.

To mark the 125th anniversary year of the GAA three additional awards were given

out on the night for the first time to reflect the importance of all codes within the GAA family - the Hurling merit award, Camogie merit award and Ladies Football merit award.

The achievements of Ulster's top players were recognised at an Awards Dinner in the Armagh City Hotel on Thursday 10th September. The evening was hosted by Joanne Cantwell from RTE Sport with Derek Davis, the celebrity *Bainisteoir* All-Ireland winner as guest speaker and GAA President, Christy Cooney, as guest of honour.

The Irish News Ulster GAA All-Star team of 2009 is:

Barry Gillis (Derry)
Colm Brady (Antrim)
Justin McMahon (Tyrone)
Karl Lacey (Donegal)
Gerard O'Kane (Derry)
Conor Gormley (Tyrone)
James Loughrey (Antrim)
Michael McCann (Antrim)
Kevin Hughes (Tyrone)
Tomas McCann (Antrim)
Owen Mulligan (Tyrone)
Joe McMahon (Tyrone)
Paddy Cunningham (Antrim)
Michael Murphy (Donegal)
Stephen O'Neill (Tyrone)

The coveted title of 'Player of the Year' went to Kevin Hughes of Tyrone.

The Irish News Merit Awards:

Hurling merit award:
Stephen Donnelly (Tyrone)

Camogie merit award:
Grainne McGoldrick (Derry)

Ladies Football merit award:
Edel Byrne (Monaghan).



Top Man.... Kevin Hughes from Tyrone pictured after winning the overall player of the year award at the Irish News Ulster All-Star Awards.

Pictures courtesy of The Irish News



Irish News Editor Noel Doran with Ladies GAA football Merit award winner Edel Byrne, Monaghan.

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GREAT SPORTING EVENTS

NO. 38

1977

100 years on and nothing changes



Derek Randall and Greg Chappell during the Centenary Test.

The greatest gathering of Test players took place at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. In mid March 218 of the 244 living cricketers who had played in Tests between Australia and England attended the Centenary Test.

Melbourne was swamped with souvenirs, including a specially minted gold coin used for the toss. Tony Greig called correctly and appeared justified in fielding first when Australia crashed to 138 all out. But England struggled against the pace of Dennis Lillee and Max Walker and before the sun had set on the first day were out for 95.

Australia were again in trouble until their 21-year-old new cap, David Hookes, responded to jibes from Greig by hitting the England captain for five successive fours. When the dust had settled England needed 463 runs to win and with a brilliant 174 from Derek Randall came close. But Lillee had the final say and Australia's victory by 45 runs was identical to their win in the first Test at the same ground in 1877.

Conteh stripped of title

The troubles that had dogged John Conteh since he won the world light-heavyweight title in 1974 finally caught up with him when he was stripped of his crown for refusing to go through with a

contracted defence against the Argentinian Miguel Cuello in Monte Carlo.

Conteh, once tipped to be Britain's golden boy of boxing, never fulfilled his early promise. He had made only three defences of his title while his career was beset with recurring hand injuries and promotional and managerial problems. At one time it seemed that Conteh was reserving his fisticuffs for the court rather than the ring.



John Conteh.

Red Rum is national hero

Ginger McCain had just two words to describe Red Rum's record third triumph in the Grand National, "Bloody Marvellous." And what a marvel it was. Red Rum had run in the race five times in succession and the only two times he did not win, in 1975 and 1976, he was second.



Red Rum with trainer, Ginger McCain.

It was a fairytale finale for a horse that had been passed around from pillar to post.

Indeed, Tommy Stack, the tearful jockey, had even trained Red Rum for a while. Eventually Red Rum had been bought by a retired millionaire for a few thousand guineas and sent to McCain to train in the humble surroundings of Southport sands.

As Red Rum galloped home by 25 lengths, ears pricked to the cheers of the crowd, he might have sensed that his moment had come. His first victory at Aintree in 1973 had been dismissed as the race that Crisp should have won.

But Red Rum's courage soon captured the public's imagination and he was elevated to almost superstar status. Like the Aintree fences though, Red Rum just took the endless round of celebrity appearances to open supermarkets and the other stunts in his stride.

Also this year...

Football - Nottingham Forest were promoted from the Second Division in third place and Brian Clough spent £270,000 on Peter Shilton.

Formula 1 - Renault returned to F1 and made their entrance at the British GP with the first turbo-charger. To the delight of their rivals the revolutionary engine failed miserably.

Golf - Hubert Green decided to play on in the US Open despite a threat to his life during the final round. He won by a shot with a three foot putt on the last green.

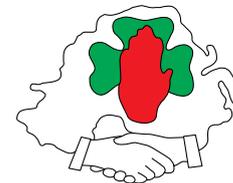
The Federation Invite New Members to Join

By joining the N.I. Federation of Clubs you will benefit from support by way of advice on a host of matters related to the day-to-day running of a club, such as those related to employment, the 1996 Clubs Order and Accountancy Regulations and rates relief to mention but a few.

Our helplines have proved most beneficial to members and are as follows:

07889 800329 - 07889 800331 - 07889 800325 & 07889 681714

N.I. Federation of Clubs Membership Application Form



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The annual membership fee is £50.00 payable to:

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