

EMERALDTM
WARRIORS
RFC

Emerald Warriors RFC Annual Report 2019-2020

MAY 2020



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INTRODUCTION

Hello fellow Warriors,

A heartfelt thank you to all our members this season for the support throughout. I'd like to express the utmost gratitude to our committee, coaching team, volunteer members, medics, supporters, sponsors, partners and stakeholders for bringing together an incredibly productive season to be proud of, working towards our vision of being the leading inclusive rugby team in Ireland and beyond.

Team performance, smashing expectations on and off the pitch, both teams finishing strongly in divisions eight and 11, with the navy team putting a huge effort in division 11 and we look forward to seeing the continued development of both teams.

In terms of fundraising, we saw the establishment of a new wave of fundraising, from the inaugural, sell-out club lotto, to the brilliantly executed and fruitful social events that will be very well remembered.

Challenges and opportunities for improvement, as well as successes, the year was not without its challenges. The club weathered a stormy start, and I am proud to say has wrapped up the year in a healthier and more stable position across key pillars of finance, membership and welfare. We kicked-off the season facing the complex challenge of getting our house in order.

To tackle the clean-up and ensure a new level of transparency was brought to the members we followed a strategic approach; establishing new roles, systems and coaching structures, delivering the Folláine Welfare Programme and to harness the positive glow from Union Cup Dublin 2019 and ensure it was brought through the club to benefit all of its members.

The following annual report was prepared to ensure that all members of the club and our stakeholders were fully informed of all the activity and achievements of the club over the last year.

*Richie Fagan,
Club President*





2019/2020 Committee Members

There were a number of changes to the club's committee throughout the year. The committee was incredibly committed and as a result had significant output across a wide range of areas and functions. Thank you to everyone involved in the committee and who contributed to sub-committees and groups throughout the year.



Richie Fagan
Club President



Michael Menton
Vice President



Tom Hogan
Honorary Secretary



Peter Ryan
Honorary Treasurer



Vincent Kabongo
Green Team Captain



Patrick Doyle
Navy Team Captain



Philip Purcell
Committee Member



Simon Murphy
Committee Member



Orán Sweeney
Committee Member



Adam O'Brien
Committee Member



Jay Newton
Committee Member



Justin Bjerkhoel
Committee Member



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In 2019/2020 we completed a full review of the club's structures and strategy to achieve our objectives;

Membership

Increasing and retaining members; new increased membership bringing through new players who never played before.

Coaching

Establish a new and expanding team in partnership with IRFU, bringing through player coaches, harnessing and nurturing the talent already within the club with a long-term vision.

Critical analysis

Assessing opportunities and strengths and addressing weaknesses and hazards; from fundraising, club management, social media presence, stakeholder engagement and seeking out the best industry advice. We set out to ensure the highest standard of club management be put in place.

Members wellbeing

As was evident from our Union Cup research, the welfare of our members and wider community needs major focus to address LGBT+ participation in sport statistics. These research findings have prompted us to establish our Folláine Welfare Program, with two dedicated trained Welfare Officers, Kayleigh Foley and John Toner, to which we are extremely grateful to for their work throughout this year.

Communication

Good communication is the key to running any successful organisation. One of our key findings was the lack of communication and transparency. To address this, we established a monthly newsletter to deliver timely information from club matches, lotto results, member updates on partnerships, and being a forum for upcoming events, social media etc.

Finance

Financially the club has never been in such a secure position, with this in mind we worked hard to establish financial and legal partners to help us plan for and oversee how our club is spending, reviewing grants annually and setting us up for the ultimate goal of own home grounds.

Fundraising

This function of the club has been taken to a new level, establishing a team within the committee on this area and doing a full audit on all past fundraising events, to deliver a strategy for the year ahead. We are extremely grateful to the Purcell family and all in Rock Bingo, for helping establish the club's first-ever lotto, assisting and covering all registration and legal costs for a license. The sell-out of our full allocation for IRFU tickets was a great achievement, demonstrating the collective drive to ensure all fundraising efforts deliver. Emerald Warriors are one of only three clubs in the country to achieve this full sale of ticket allocation this year.

Unfortunately, two key fundraisers planned which had achievable targets had to be postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The 'Queen of the Warriors' with a large number of our members participating, will be planned once Government restrictions are lifted. Our Warrior Tag Blitz, scheduled for 06 June 2020 with our partner Bank of Ireland and the four provinces, will be rescheduled in the club's 2021 calendar.

Sponsorship

Partner sponsorship is our single biggest income stream and this season sees the largest sponsor investment to date, with a line-up of top-tier sponsors - the envy of many clubs. While COVID-19 has cut short engagement and activation with our partners and its members, it's been heartening to hear in recent conversations we'll be confirming dates for a partner-member engagement day once restrictions are lifted. DLA Piper are assisting with pro-bono work around legal work and accounts which is invaluable to protecting the club going forward as ever huge thanks to them for this support.

Grants

We have been successful with receiving a second grant this year from the IRFU. Work is going into Ireland Funds, with no promise of receiving previous grants, but relationships re-established with workshops planned on showing us how to apply, manage and cultivate the club going forward.

Home grounds

The committee are single-minded in our efforts to build on the achievements of the Union Cup Dublin 2019, engagement with partners, new and old contacts, friends and fans of the club has been carried out. The ambition from the many meetings is to enter into the next stage in establishing a long-term home, which could not have been achieved without the huge success of Union Cup Dublin 2019 and immense work the club put behind making sure we had a positive hugely successful tournament. Work is ongoing with government officers, public advisers, clubs and universities in the Dublin region with the view to establish concrete options for a home ground going forward.

We will continue to explore opportunities with the IRFU for future collaboration to further inclusivity in rugby in Ireland.



Richie Fagan



VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Since the Annual General Meeting in May 2019 we have had a very successful year both on and off the pitch. The following are some of the highlights from the role of the Vice President in 2019/2020:

Recruitment

It was agreed by the club's committee to try something different in the build up to the summer open day. With a bootcamp run by Ant and Ali Lynch the idea was to attract not just new players but also attract people from the wider LGBT+ community to take part in a fitness programme that was open to anybody. This was also seen as something the warriors could offer back to the wider community free of charge. The bootcamp sessions were very well attended and concluded with the club open day which included a BBQ which was a huge success.

New Members and Season Opening Night

The role of Vice President this year involved acting as a coordinator for new members. As mentioned in other areas of this report, there were 59 new members joining the club this year and an official season opening night was held in the Mercantile Hotel during which all new members were officially welcomed to the club.

Sponsorship and support

With one large sponsor already on board (Bank of Ireland) and the Mercantile taking a more proactive interest in the club this year, it was agreed to try and look for another sponsor that could add value to the club. Meagher's Pharmacy Group was agreed as a good fit and after a number of meetings, the terms for a three-year sponsorship deal was agreed with them. In addition to financially supporting the club, Meagher's Pharmacy Group also agreed to the provision of all medical supplies and providing pitch side gear to our medical team at no cost to the club. Meagher's Pharmacy is now the club's health and wellbeing partner and supports the Folláine Welfare Programme rollout. All club members can avail of a 10 per cent discount in Meagher's Pharmacy Group outlets when they produce a membership card for the club.

Folláine
WELFARE
PROGRAM



With the deal that was struck with Kukri during Union Cup Dublin 2019, we were lucky to be able to lean on them when there was a theft of Emerald Warriors jerseys during the tournament. While a number of the jerseys were recovered after an online callout, Kukri kindly stepped in and replaced the remaining jerseys at no additional cost to the club. We would like to say a sincere thank you to everyone involved in resolving this matter.

The club's relationship with the Mercantile Group and the George has improved dramatically over the last year which resulted in the group offering several premises which they felt may be more suitable as a home bar. Monthly meetings were also arranged with The George who were happy with some changes that were made. The new management team of the George also want to engage with us more going forward and have offered to cover the cost of membership cards on top of their normal sponsorship deal arrangement.

International Gay Rugby

The Vice President took on the role as the club's IGR representative this year. This involved maintaining regular contact with the IGR and creating a line of communication for all queries. The IGR hold the Emerald Warriors RFC in high regard and Ben Owen, the current IGR President, has regularly leaned on us with queries to help Union Cup 2021.

The Ireland Funds

An early act of the current committee was to re-engage with the Ireland Funds. Throughout the year the committee has worked hard at developing this relationship which has assisted us greatly with our plans for securing a long-term plan for home grounds for the club.



Michael Menton



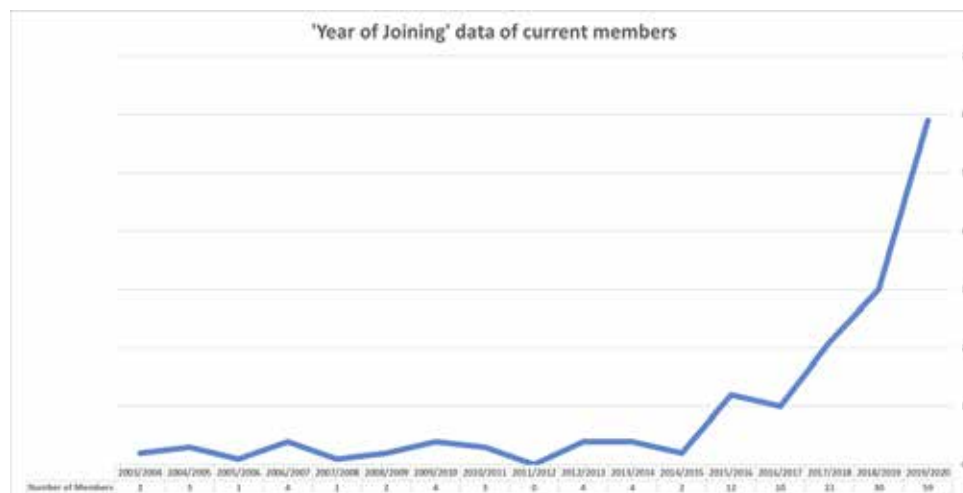
HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

The 2019/2020 season was a busy one from a membership perspective. There were a record 162 members of the Emerald Warriors RFC by the end of the season. A total of 59 new members joined the club in 2019/2020 and a total of €19,479.00 was paid in membership fees. The current average age of members is 35 years and two months.



Here is a breakdown of the current membership categories.

An analysis of the 'year of joining' of members was completed at the end of the season and it found the following:



There were 16 committee meetings held in 2019/2020. The meetings were for the most part held in person in bulthaup on Hanover Quay and towards the end of the season were held via video conference as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. In total, the committee spent over 40 hours attending committee meetings across the year.

On average the meetings lasts 2 hours and 30 minutes. There were over 220 individual actions arising from these meetings and each action was tracked until it was completed and closed. Detailed minutes were maintained of the meetings from June 2019 onwards and all records were signed off as being an accurate and fair representation of the meeting at the time of the next forum.

There were over 3,200 emails received in the secretary@ewrfc.ie email account over the 12-month period and all membership enquiries were responded to promptly. The most significant change from the Hon. Secretary's perspective was the set up and integration of the ClubForce system this year. This allows for online payment and membership registration along with a number of other functions. In 2020/2021 all membership registration will be processed through the Emerald Warriors RFC ClubForce page which will allow for a more streamlined system for managing this important function.

In August the club held an Emergency General Meeting which dealt with a number of motions put forward by the committee. There was an attendance of 56 members on the night and a further 57 members voted by proxy on the night. Draft minutes of the meeting were recorded and will be circulated to all members in advance of the 2019/2020 AGM.

The 2019/2020 season saw the introduction of two new club policies. These were the complaints management policy and the membership policy. The motivation for the development of these policies centred on empowering the members of the club and ensuring that their voice would be heard. All current club policies were made available on the club's website for the first time this year including the club constitution. In January 2020, the committee signed the Sport Ireland Disability Inclusion Charter on behalf of the club. The committee recognises that while there was significant work completed on policies and procedures this year, there is a need for further work in this area – particularly with the need to develop a club welfare policy and to update the member code of conduct and injuries policy.

The committee approved the redesign of the club tie this year and decided to introduce official club dickie bows and neckerchiefs also. A stock of these club accessories is now held by the club and are available for members to purchase through the club website. All new members will continue to be provided with a club tie or dickie bow or neckerchief free of charge when they join the club.

A risk register was developed for the club during 2019/2020 and highlighted the need to consider risks and hazards across all of the committee's functions. This was updated on a regular basis and provided a framework for the prioritisation of areas which needed to be addressed by the committee.

The role of the Hon. Secretary this year included being coordinator for the club's medics. There was a medic support at every match played with the exception of one. A huge thank you to everyone involved for offering your services free of charge and for supporting the club with this important undertaking.

The club now has an official club address for sending all post and correspondence. This is Emerald Warriors RFC, PO Box 13104, Dublin 9 and has ensured that all important documents get to the committee in a timely manner. In addition, the club has set up an official text number through which the committee can be contacted. The number is +353871452034.



The club's 2019/2020 Annual General Meeting was scheduled to take place on 27 May 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place currently it has been postponed until such time as all of our members can meet in person as per government guidance. The committee sought legal advice on holding the AGM through virtual meeting applications and liaised with a number of other clubs in the Leinster region and took the decision in the best interest of the Emerald Warriors RFC.

A lot of work had taken place in the background in preparation for the AGM and it will be held at the earliest opportunity possible. In the meantime, the committee has agreed to act as a 'caretaker committee' to ensure that the day to day business of the club is maintained.

Tom Hogan



HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

The following financial statements represent a 12-month period up to 31 March 2020. Overall, the club's finances are in a secure position and 2019/2020 saw an increase in income of 116 per cent. Membership subscriptions increased to €19,479.00 from €16,600.00 in 2018/2019 and there were significant increases in incomes from both sponsorship and fundraising activities. While there was an increase in administrative expenditure, match day expenditure was in line with that of 2018/2019. There was a total surplus of income over expenditure of €29,329.00 over the 12-month period.

Summarised Income and Expenditure Account for the EWRC Year ended 31 March 2020

	2020	2019
INCOME		
Sponsorship	25,750	4,500
Subscriptions	19,479	16,600
Grant	900	800
Fundraising Activities	19,195	10,030
Other	3,610	-
Total Income	68,934	31,930
EXPENDITURE		
Administrative	(16,496)	(3,532)
Match Day	(23,109)	(24,007)
Total Expenditure	(39,605)	(27,539)
Surplus of Income over Expenditure for the Year	29,329	4,390
Opening Reserves	34,478	30,088
Closing Reserves	63,807	34,478

Summarised Statement of Financial Position for the EWRC at 31 March 2020

	2020	2019
Fixed Assets	2,088	-
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	37,114	35,460
Debtors/Receivables	34,767	2,494
Total Current Assets	71,881	37,954
Total Assets	73,969	37,954
Current Liabilities	10,161	3,476
Total Assets less liabilities	63,807	34,478
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
Reserves	34,478	30,088
Net income for the Year	29,329	4,390
Total Capital	63,807	34,478



Peter Ryan



GREEN TEAM CAPTAIN'S REPORT

The 2019/2020 season has been a significant year for the Green Team. We have built upon the great success that was achieved last season (e.g. reaching the final of the division nine metro league and showcasing our rugby skill at Union Cup Dublin 2019 last June) by moving up to the division eight league.

Playing in the higher division league was a steep learning curve. This was brought to our attention when we played our first match against Stillorgan. We quickly identified each player's strengths and skill and focused on our weaknesses. Each player has worked hard and has been dedicated to enhancing their rugby skills. This has allowed us collectively as a team to improve and exceed the success of the previous year.



This success has been in part due to a much-improved training structure provided by the new coaching team.

We have been able to focus our training by having specific training for both forwards and backs. This focused training has led to strengthened skills in players and enhanced the ability of the team as a whole. Over the course of the season this has led us to winning games and triumphantly winning our last match of the league against Old Belvedere.

Having four coaches has benefited the club as a whole with the advanced development of both navy players and new players who joined throughout the year. As a result of this, a number of navy players have been added and greatly enhanced the green team. This is a testament to navy players who are continuously turning up to training, putting up the work and as a result becoming key players for the green team.

While there have been many successes, there have also been some challenges. A number of players sustained injuries and weeks of back to back games impacted on performance as a result of less training sessions and player fatigue. In addition to this, at times, motivation for certain players to train has been at times irregular and this has negatively impacted on learning new drills which are essential to team success on the pitch.

Despite this, the green team have achieved great success this year. We are playing at a higher level, have won matches, wore our Warriors crest with pride and demonstrated to other teams and that we have a rightful place in this league.

As captain, we have advanced our rugby skill and team development and are in a strong position to compete and win the division league eight next season.

Vincent Kabongo



NAVY TEAM CAPTAIN'S REPORT

It was an honour to be named navy team Captain for the 2019/2020 season. In what was for all of us an unforgettable year, I would like to thank the seasoned Warriors, the coaching staff and all the behind the scenes and side line supporters for guiding me in the role throughout the year.

Although many match results did not go our way this season, ultimately, we finished seventh in the metro league division 11. But the level of determination and the Warrior spirit shown by every one of us from kick-off right to the final whistle is something I truly admired as captain this year.

As the season progressed, our newest players developed an understanding of the game and our overall cohesion as a rugby team improved. It was a disappointment when Railway Union conceded, denying us our final 80 minutes together as a squad and the opportunity to show what we could do.



A selection of the navy team travelled to Newcastle for the Hadrian Cup. The tournament showcased the progress the navy team had made throughout the Metro League, earning us two victories as well as first-time tries for some of the lads. Unfortunately, we did not progress to the semi-finals but the weekend proved a great success for morale.

There is no denying that our team has grown in confidence and skill over the course of the season through the hard work of our players, coaching team, manager and supporters. I'd like to thank Morro, Finbarr, Steve, Stephen, Shane and Michael for all the support, planning and words of wisdom throughout the season.

In my role as captain of the navy team and looking ahead at the seasons to come, I feel we Warriors have two areas where we can make the biggest improvement; first, we need to turn up, to commit ourselves to our teammates, when training during the week and especially when fielding a team during a match. Second, we need to start stronger, to start playing the match from the referee's first whistle.

Too many times we let the other teams have the run of the pitch for the first half. When we did manage to engage, it was too late to catch up, let alone take the lead. Having said that, as we continue to play as a team, our performance will no doubt improve and we will climb our way up the leader board in next season's league.

Personally, it has been a joy to lead this team on the pitch. Blending new players and more seasoned Warriors has added to the enjoyment of rugby for me. I wish you all continued success in the seasons to come.

Patrick Doyle





COACHING REPORT

Pre-season fitness was carried out by Ant and Ali Lynch with two group sessions a week, starting around in July. Rugby training started on 28 August 2019. Training took place on Monday and Wednesday nights in St Marys RFC. Numbers were very high from the start. We had over 60 players at most training sessions throughout the year.

We held an open day on 31 August which was for current and new players. We recruited over 30 players from that open day alone. We had a second open day on 04 January 2020 with further recruitment of new players and members.

Training for the first four to six weeks mainly focused on the core rugby skills including passing, catching, tackling and decision making. The aim was to refresh previous players skills and to introduce new players to these core skills. Training numbers at some sessions exceeded 80 players and with two coaches the focus was to ensure that players were always moving and developing core skills.

With numbers being so high at training, the club approached Finbarr Ryan (current player) to assist with training sessions and also recruited Shane Dunne (formerly of Clondalkin RFC) to join the coaching team. Both Finbarr and Shane have added massively to the supporter and knowledge to the coaching structure.

With numbers above 60 players on an average training session, the decisions were made to have two teams compete in the Leinster Metro Leagues. The green team played in division eight of the metro league and the navy team played in division 11 of the same league. After some talks and meeting with key members of the club and the players themselves, the two teams' objectives were set out and all players agreed to them for the coming season.

The aims of the green team were promotions and to be a competitive team while the navy team aimed to be a social and development team. The coaches were very happy with these objectives as it gave the club two different channels for developing players.



The club also played in the Hadrian Cup tournament in Newcastle. There were two teams entered into the tournament. The navy team finished in fifth position in the development league and the green team won their league and the overall tournament. This continues the club's successful history in that tournament where they have lifted the cup every year they have entered in that league. The goal for next year would have the navy team win the development league along with the green team continuing their success.

With the news that these years Bingham Cup 2020 in Ottawa has been postponed until 2022 the next international tournament the club will take place in will be Union Cup 2021 in Birmingham. With the massive success from Union Cup Dublin 2019, the club will look at having a very strong and competitive presence at Union Cup 2021 and aim to reach the final in several of the leagues and bring back some well-earned silverware for the club.

TOURS

Hadrian Cup 2020:

The Hadrian Cup is a 10s tournament organised by the Newcastle Ravens, based in Northern England. The Emerald Warriors RFC has attended this tournament twice before, both times winning the Hadrian Cup trophy, so we had a standard and reputation to live up to.

This year two Emerald Warriors RFC teams attended a two-tiered tournament in Newcastle. Thirty-six members travelled, with 32 playing and four supporting. The navy team compete in the development level Antinous Plate, and the green team competed in the Hadrian Cup.

While the navy team did not make it past the pool stages, they mood was high due to winning two of their four games, playing against equally competitive teams and gaining valuable game time and experience. The green team lost their first game but this was a good wakeup call, and the players went on to win every subsequent game, including the final, and brought home the Hadrian Cup for the third time.

The members who attended this tournament enjoyed a weekend of rugby, socialising, and friendship. We represented our club in excellent fashion, proving our standard and ability on the pitch, and proving convivial and charismatic in the clubhouse. The relationships between our club and the numerous United Kingdom teams continue to grow even stronger. Union Cup Dublin 2019 went a long way to build bridges and bonds, and our attendance at Hadrian Cup strengthened these bonds and built some new ones.



The green team played all 12 games in the league winning four of 12 games played and finishing sixth in the league overall. The play navy team played 10 games and had two conceded and also finished sixth in their league.

Overall, this year has been very positive and we have taken on all the feedback from the players, members and the club's committee. We find ourselves better prepared and stronger going into a new season once all current COVID-19 related restrictions are lifted.



The Emerald Warriors RFC is very proud of everyone who attended the tournament and represented so well. A big thank you goes to the Newcastle Ravens for organising and running a brilliant tournament weekend and of course a huge thank you to the committee members, coaches and managers who helped to bring the necessary elements together (squad selection, kit, funding).

A survey completed post the Hadrian Cup weekend found that members who attended were very satisfied with how the weekend was arranged and run. Thirty-one respondents contributed to the survey and the vast majority indicated that they were happy with the cost of the weekend, the team they were allocated to play with, and the amount of game time they had. All respondents indicated that they would attend the Hadrian Cup again.

Union Cup Dublin 2019:

Three teams took part in the Union Cup Dublin 2019 which was our largest contingent ever to attend a tour. The tournament took place between 07 and 09 June 2019 in Dublin City University. The club attended and stayed collectively in the student accommodation in DCU as they would on an away tour. All teams made their respective semi-finals and put in courageous efforts but unfortunately did not win any silverware.

The club's green team were beaten in the semi-final of the Union Cup which was won by the Kings Cross Steelers I. The navy team played in the Cu Chulainn Cup and were beaten by the Leeds Hunters who went on to win that division. The teal team were beaten in the semi-final of the Challenger Cup by the Liverpool Tritons and that division was won by the Manchester Village Spartans II.



Cup 2020 has been postponed until 2022 when it will take place in Ottawa, Canada. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this year's event will not be taking place as planned. The club had completed significant work in the background preparing for this tournament and had secured the backing of a tour sponsor to offset some of the costs of travelling for our members. Further information regarding Bingham 2022 can be found [here](#).



The success of our three teams at Union Cup Dublin 2019 would not have been possible without the support of a huge team of people including the team managers, medics, sponsors, volunteers, supports, our families and friends. We would like to take this opportunity to thank every one of them again for their incredible support.

Further information about the tournament and the results can be found [here](#).

Bingham Cup 2020:

As many of our members are now aware, the Bingham Cup 2020 has been postponed until 2022 when it will take place in Ottawa, Canada. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this year's event will not be taking place as planned. The club had completed significant work in the background preparing for this tournament and had secured the backing of a tour sponsor to offset some of the costs of travelling for our members. Further information regarding Bingham 2022 can be found [here](#).

REFLECTIONS OF PLAYERS AND MEMBERS OF THE 2019/2020 SEASON

Finding a pathway back to rugby having not played the sport for nearly ten years has been an exciting, enriching, challenging and really positive experience. Joining the Emerald Warriors RFC back in September felt quite daunting and to find myself a few short weeks later sitting on the bench with the prospect of playing in the green team's season opener against Stillorgan Rathfarnham RFC was even more so. On reflection, I am quite glad that I was pushed out of my comfort zone to play on the green team this season.

While the result didn't go our way against Stillorgan that day, we were, however, dominant for periods of the match showing what we can do when fully switched on. This was probably typical of the majority of our losing performances and will be a motivator for next season. We had some great wins also including the return fixture against Stillorgan-Rathfarnham.

The winter months were a little unkind bringing injuries to some of the team including myself. However, it was great to see others including some who also joined the club this year getting game time and contributing to finishing the league on a high beating a Bective side with a very strong bench in a fantastic last quarter performance and with a great win over Old Belvedere in Energia Park.

A personal highlight was returning from injury to play with the team for Hadrian Cup which after a shaky start we went on to win. I would like to thank the Warriors medical team for their care on the side lines back in November with a special thanks to Dr Ger for all his assistance. Looking forward the 20/2021 season ahead.

Graham Flaherty.

What a great season we have just finished for the navy team. The 2019/2020 was a massive set up for us a team and we gained much to build on. We had some incredible times this year, the influx of some major new talent on to the team, existing players progressing and taking charge and season players returning to provide leadership.

This season was fun, but it was also tough, however, with good coaching, great teamwork and fantastic leadership from our captain and vice-captain we persevered. Each game we saw continued growth in the team. From the first game against Tallaght to our final match against Stillorgan, tremendous strides were made. The score lines began to change, our confidence grew and tries started to be scored. The spirit of the team was key this season, there was no blame, no back chat, and no fighting, just teammate supporting teammate. Heads were held high and the navy team were never defeated.

The players on the pitch had amazing support from the side lines, the sub bench who were always itching to get on, our team manager, our coaching staff, our medics and our great supporters. The navy team would not be the team we are without you all. Your support this year helped drive us to have the great season we just had. Roll on next season, were we are going to excel even more. We now know what we can do, we have the fire in our bellies to bring home a win.

Marcus Connolly.

As a man who came to the gay life at the ripe old age of 51 and has been a Leinster Rugby season ticket holder for many years, the Emerald Warriors was an obvious place to meet new friends.



The Union Cup afforded me my first introduction to the club where I met some very friendly Warriors on the side-line. That was enough for me to take the plunge and sign-up as a pavilion member.

I've been really impressed with the energy and creativity of the Committee to engage members including the Foodies, Ireland rugby socials and the Folláine events. I attended as many of those as I could and a few of the games. The games not only provided an opportunity to enjoy the rugby, but also to socialise with an after-match pint.

The Warriors are ever-present in my social media feeds. The player profiles and the Ant and Ali Lynch takeovers on Instagram are super. The craic on the banter group is legendary – there are a number of very sharp wits within our number. One raises one's head in the knowledge that you may be the object of friendly, if not acerbic, banter.

How might my experience have been improved? Think inclusive – in all its facets! Playing members gravitate to each other because they have had the opportunity to bond through training and competition. That bonding opportunity is not available to pavilion members. Therefore, an extra effort to engage with those members you don't already know, whether on the side-line or in the pub, would be really appreciated.

Bernard Hanratty.

I joined the warriors in August and honestly it has been the best thing I have ever done. I had gone to a "rugby school" but had never played. Something I always regretted. So when a friend asked me to come along with him to the open day I said yes. I had no experience with rugby other than watching the six nations and going to the Junior Cup and Senior Cup matches in school.

I remember how nervous I was walking through the carpark at the open day event, but immediately was put at ease by how welcoming the Warriors were. After a warm up we were all split into groups and practiced different skills. There was a BBQ after and we watched the six nations game in the clubhouse and were invited to meet up later in Street 66 in town. I had such a good time and I was really looking forward to my first training session.

After a few training sessions and nights out, my nervousness subsided and I really began to feel more comfortable and was welcomed into the warrior family. I was getting fit, learning a new skill, making new friends and most importantly having lots of fun. I couldn't wait to put on the green jersey and play my first match. Unfortunately, my burgeoning rugby career was dealt a minor setback and I injured my back at training. I had pulled something in my back and I didn't want to make a big deal about it so I sneaked off.

The injury was a little more serious than I initially thought. This was when the Warrior support programme kicked in, I was given the contact details of a physio that the club had arranged to support players and get them back playing. He gave me a plan and within a few short weeks I was able to exercise again. However due to work commitments I haven't been able to play my first match yet.

The warriors also have a very active social side too, whether it is nights out, fundraisers or the unofficial drag race Warrior viewing parties there is something for everyone to get involved with. I may not have played a match yet but I make sure to go to as many matches as I can to support my fellow warriors and even went on my first tour to Hadrian Cup. Joining the warriors is honestly the best thing I have done and I could not recommend joining enough. Once you get past the initial nerves you will have a great time.

Aaron Doyle.

CLUB KIT AND MERCHANDISE

For over three years the Emerald Warriors RFC have enjoyed a prosperous partnership with Kukri Sport Ireland for all club related merchandise. Following a very successful Union Cup Dublin 2019 where three new club kits were developed along with a bespoke range of Union Cup merchandise items, our partnership remains strong with Kukri Sports Ireland.

There were two goals set for the 2019/2020 season:

Goal 1: To redesign club merchandise for the 2019/2020 season in line with new brand guidelines, and to make these available from child to adult unisex sizing.

Goal 2: To move all club merchandise items to an online platform.

GOAL 1 - CLUB MERCHANDISE

Following a number of months of negotiations, an updated range of club merchandise was developed. Two strands of merchandise were developed and moved to two separate club shops; Bespoke and Club. In addition to the above, an Accessories shop was also established. Bespoke Shop: Bespoke designed and personalised training wear e.g. polo, vest and club jersey.

Club Shop: Emerald Warriors branded outerwear e.g. coat, windbreaker, tracksuit bottoms etc.



Accessories Shop: Club tie, dickie bow and neckerchief items hosted through ClubForce.

There are now in total, 15 Emerald Warriors branded merchandise items available to purchase through the club's website. All merchandise items are available in unisex child to adult sizing.

GOAL 2 - ONLINE SHOP

Following the development of new club merchandise items, Kukri Sports Ireland developed an online platform to advertise, manage payments and deliver items to customers globally. This site is now hosted on www.ewrfc.ie.

The club shop opened at the end of November 2019 allowing for a number of items in the club shop to be delivered before Christmas.

Going forward, the club shops will be used to sell all Emerald Warriors Merchandise, with the club shop open all year round and the bespoke shop opening on set intervals per year.





DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE REPORT

During 2019/2020 six cases were referred to the disciplinary committee. All cases were discussed in a timely manner, with relevant disciplinary action being taken where necessary.

In regards to two matters that came before Leinster Branch, we were pleased to hear positive feedback that the Leinster Branch were very pleased and impressed with the professionalism and actions taken in handling our internal disciplinary procedures.

The disciplinary committee has put in place more formal procedures for handling cases, including standard notification letters, and have linked well with the welfare team to minimise the distress of disciplinary actions for members.

Currently, the disciplinary committee is in the process of issuing a set of recommendations around the club member and committee member codes of conduct in order to address difficulties around matters relating to behaviour outside of a match play context.

UNION CUP DUBLIN 2019

Union Cup Dublin 2019 powered by Emerald Warriors hosted the largest Union Cup to date. It took place in Dublin City University from 07 to 09 June 2019 and involved 42 teams playing over 120 games of rugby over three days.

Fifteen countries were represented during the tournament during which 1200 players partook and which was supported by over an additional 1500 people. The local economy had an expected €2.5 million boost from the tournament.



The vision for Union Cup was to create the highest standard of rugby tournament through advancing International gay rugby, to generate pride in inclusive rugby, and to ensure a vibrant event experience. The first ever women's participation in Union Cup took place during this tournament with inclusion and equality being of the utmost importance.

The Emerald Warriors RFC was incredibly proud to name the cup for the women's tournament after the late Ann Louise Gilligan. Both she and her wife, Minister Katherine Zappone, were central driving forces in the road to marriage equality in Ireland. Minister Zappone was a huge supporter of the tournament and kindly did the honours of officially opening the event and presenting the trophies to the winning teams.



METRO LEAGUE REPORT

Two members of the committee shared the responsibility of attending the Metro League meetings this year. The meetings took place on the first Monday of each month and lasted approximately two hours. Metro League meetings are attended by a representative from various clubs, and various rugby and club issues are discussed and communicated at this forum. Items discussed included international ticket allocations, grant allocations, various initiatives, memberships, inter-club support, club events, and many other topics.

In total eight meetings were attended by the Emerald Warriors RFC committee representatives in the 2019/2020 season. The metro league had a special interest in the Emerald Warriors RFC this year with a view to learning from the success of Union Cup Dublin 2019 and brainstorming how a local event could be arranged within the Leinster Region. This remains ongoing at this stage.



FUNDRAISING REPORT

This year a dedicated sub-group of the committee was established to focus on our fundraising efforts. While the COVID-19 pandemic hit our plans hard, the committee made significant developments in 2019/2020 in this area. Highlights from the year include the establishment of the club lottery with a special thank you to Rock Bingo and the Purcell Family for their support during this process and the sell-out of the IRFU's 'Your Country, Your Club' Draw. The Emerald Warriors RFC were only one of three clubs in the country to sell all of our allocated tickets which resulted in a €10,000 income for the club. While some of our planned fundraising events are not taking place as initially planned (e.g. our annual 'Queen of the Warriors' event and our Pub Quiz) it is hoped that once the government restrictions relating to COVID-19 lift these will be rescheduled. The club raised a total of €19,195.00 through fundraising in 2019/2020.

In addition to internal fundraising activities this year, the club has worked on developing relationships with key charities and very worthy causes within our community. At our end of season night, the club officially handed over €8,631.00 in ticket contributions from Union Cup Dublin 2019 to BelongTo. The Emerald Warriors RFC are delighted to have partnered with this amazing organisation who provides key supports to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people in Ireland since 2003.



October 2019

Charity Lottery licence granted (sponsored by rock bingo to the sum of €1500)

November 2019

IRFU Draw - €10,000 raised through 100% of tickets being sold, Thanks to Tom Hogan for the organisation of this.

December 2019

Lotto Launched with a starting fund of €500 sponsored by Rock Bingo cork (sponsors of club lotto). Total net income for the club to date from the lotto and the sponsored €500 is €3316.50.

February 2020

Watch with the Warriors in crafty fox raised €500 after costs.

March 2020

No fundraising event took place in March (COVID) Secured Emerald Warriors as being the charity beneficiary to Rock Bingo for use of the charity lottery licence. This will equate to €7,500 per annum (post COVID)

April 2020

No Fundraising event took place in April (COVID) Queen of the warriors was due to take place with a target of €15,000 for the show. This has been postponed for a later date.

May 2020

Online bingo event for EWRFC members/non-members – expected to raise €500.

June

Tag event was planned but no figure set on how much could potentially be raised as COVID stopped this in its tracks.

July

Pub Quiz in the George could have fetched up to €1,000 but this will more than likely be postponed until later this year

SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT REPORT

The Emerald Warriors RFC are honoured to have such a wide range of well-established organisations partner supporting our club with sponsorship being the club's single biggest income stream in 2019/2020. This year saw the largest sponsor investment in the club to date. These partnerships align to our values and vision and go beyond a monetary value with their passion and willingness to see us grow and prosper into the future. The club's total income from sponsorship this year was €25,750.00 with an additional €9,500 goods and services provided to us by our sponsors and partners. The Emerald Warriors RFC are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported us this season.

Bank of Ireland

As our main partner, Bank of Ireland have extensive core values in diversity and inclusion along with an incredible passion for rugby. With such active diversity and inclusion programmes in their organisation, it clearly demonstrates that they live by what they say making this partnership a truly authentic and exciting one. Bank of Ireland deservedly won the 'LGBT+ Employee Resource Group' award at this year's GCN Gala awards. We are one of a very few International Gay Rugby clubs sponsored by such an established corporate partner.



The George/Mercantile Group

The George and the Mercantile Group are our longest running proud partners and this season they have opened up the use of their venues within their group for not just social and fundraising events but meeting spaces and assisting on advice with their business development team on boasting fundraiser events. The George has been servicing our LGBT+ community for over 30 years, embracing and playing part to the evolutionary cultural and social change in Ireland. They play a pivotal role in fighting for LGBT+ rights and equality and we are incredibly proud to be associated with them.

Meagher's Pharmacy

The focus for health and wellness on and beyond the pitch has never been so important in our club this season. We are honoured to call Meagher's Pharmacy our wellbeing partners. Meagher's is at the forefront of an industry embracing the evolving role of pharmacy whilst delivering new innovative services at the core of our community. Meagher's are contributors to our Folláine Welfare Programme, suppliers of our medical kits with further plans for our member engagements for seasons ahead.

Rock Bingo

Rock Bingo have extensive experience in the charitable fundraising arena, raising over €100,000 for charities such as The Down Syndrome Centre Cork, HOPE Foundation, SERVE, Pearse Celtic FC (All ability team), Greenmount National School, Deerpark CBS. In addition, they have contributed a vast amount of spot prizes to fundraising events last year (2019) and successfully broke Guinness Book titles. The Emerald Warriors are incredibly grateful to the support from the Purcell Family in 2019/2020 and their assistance and guidance in the club's lottery.

Kukri Ireland

Kukri came on board as our sportswear manufacturer for Union Cup Dublin 2019 providing full kits for referees and volunteers and provided our merchandise including supplying our club with all new kits. We have experienced all that Kukri pride themselves on which includes quality, passion, diversity, professionalism and teamwork. They have been fantastic to work with and were very enthusiastic to see us succeed. We are looking forward to working with Kukri in the future as they help us with expanding with our new online store.

DLA Piper

DLA Piper came on board this season to assist with helping us elevate the standards in the running and operations of our club with pro bono legal work. Diversity and inclusion are key to DLA Piper's global identity. As a global business law firm, with a diverse client base, their pro bono practice is consistent with our vision to be "truly local, truly global".

Supporters of the Emerald Warriors RFC

Alive Coaching

Tom Hennesy from Alive Coaching contacted the club expressing how impressed he was with our work in the community. We are looking forward to building our relationship further with the team in Alive Coaching and wish to express our gratitude for their generous donation.

Ant and Ali Lynch

Ant and Ali Lynch came on board this year to assist with our first ever boot camps during the summer of 2019. Ant and Ali were very taken with our club as we were with them. They provided free anchor fitness classes to our members with discounted services to Emerald Warriors RFC to which we are extremely grateful for and look forward to an expanding on this in the future.

Emily Cramp

Emily Cramp worked as head of communications for Union Cup Dublin 2019. Emily has extensive experience with Premiership Rugby, public relations work in cultural change - having set up a hugely successful agency in the United Kingdom, and assisted with the YES campaign for Marriage Equality in 2015. We have been honoured to have Emily at the end of phone or email to assist with cultivating and expanding on leads following the positive glow from Union Cup Dublin 2019. One of the major successes of Union Cup Dublin 2019 was changing the perception of members of LGBT+ community in sport in Ireland, Europe and beyond along with the promotion of the Emerald Warriors RFC.

bulthaupt

The team in bulthaupt in Hanover Quay have support the club this year by hosting a range of meetings including regular committee meetings. This has been done at no cost to the club and the committee would like to express its sincere thank you to all the team there for this incredible support.

SOCIAL EVENTS



04 June
BOI Breakfast for new club jersey

29 June
Pride event- supported by BOI we were welcomed by them to their morning meet. We also for the first time had the Leinster Branch and the IRFU reps walk with us.

06 July
Captains Dinner

07 August
Warrior boot camp with Ant and Ali Lynch which went on for six weeks.

31 August
Open day

31 August
Season Opening event in Mercantile welcoming all new players to the club.

28 September
Watch with the Warriors

09 October
IRFU Seminar for all players in the mercantile with Colin Moran, Physio Supports, and Medic Supports also.

12 October
Watch with the warriors





19 October
World Cup Matches.

03 November
Free Anchor classes offered to members.

25 November
Folláine Event - Mental health and suicide awareness

07 December
Club Christmas Party

05 December
Folláine Event - Sexual health and wellbeing



04 January
Open Day

08 February
Watch with the Warriors

23 February
Match and Mimosa

28 February
End of season match and event in Old Wesley

23 April
Live club lotto draw from Cork

06 April
Emerald Warriors RFC online training with Ant and Ali Lynch commences

09 May
Feed the Heroes Run

16 May
Online Fundraising Bingo event for club members and friends

FOLLÁINE WELFARE PROGRAMME

A major focus of the committee this year was on the development of a welfare programme for the club. From early on a need was identified to increase our output in this area and from research findings available through Union Cup 2019, it was clear that the statistics around mental health in the LGBT+ community were not positive.

The 'Folláine Welfare Programme' initiative is designed to support mental health and wellbeing of club members both on and off the pitch, and has been incorporated into the club's long-term strategic plan.

Our Folláine Welfare Programme, meaning 'wellbeing' when translated from Irish, is driven by the club's welfare officers John Toner, Kayleigh Foley and our health and wellness partner, Meagher's Pharmacy.

To date we have completed two successful events through this programme:

On 25 November 2019 Kayleigh Foley presented on Mental Health and Suicide Awareness in St. Mary's RFC.



Our second event took place on 05 December 2019 in Bank of Ireland in Trinity College. This event focused on sexual wellbeing and the use of PREP. It was delivered by our wellbeing partners Meagher's Pharmacy Group and was supported by our in-house medics also.

While the club had a number of other events planned for the summer months these have now been postponed as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions imposed. These events will take place in the near future.

Thank you to everyone involved in helping to develop, support and promote this initiative in 2019/2020.



IGR REPORT

IGR is International Gay Rugby – an organisation of member clubs of primarily gay and inclusive rugby clubs. IGR are an associate member of the Federation of Gay Games and are recognised by the World Rugby as the representative LGBT+ organisation.

The objectives of IGR are:

To do our part to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or identification and to promote good health through the playing of rugby by

1. Providing opportunities for the LGBTQ+ community to compete in welcoming, inclusive rugby clubs that are primarily LGBTQ+ /LGBTQ+ friendly
2. Eliminating homo & transphobia in rugby through community outreach & competitive play Working with governing bodies to improve acceptance of LGBT athletes at all levels
3. Co-ordinating the largest amateur rugby union tournaments in the world and
4. Providing our members with support and resources in the areas of club organisation, recruitment, retention, fundraising, event management, and, regional and national union relations.

As a member of the IGR the Emerald Warriors RFC partake in one major tournament each year - either the Bingham Cup or the Union Cup. We have a club representative from the committee who is involved in the board (via online forums) for votes on various items and motions throughout the year. The main function of this board is to approve new club memberships and also to disseminate communications to all member clubs. In 2019/2020 the club's representative was Michael Menton who partook in all meetings and votes on behalf of the committee.

2019/2020 has been a tough year for the IGR with some fallout of accusations of racism which we have all seen play out through online forums. A new board will be appointed this year and will remain in place for a two-year cycle. Further information can be found on the IGR website.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Effective communications play an increasingly important role in modern rugby clubs. The 2019/2020 season saw the introduction of new communication methods, to provide timely, streamlined and informative updates to members.

To provide these effective communications, Emerald Warriors communicate through a number of new and existing communication channels:



Email: Important or text heavy club updates.



SMS: Time sensitive or reminder updates.



Social: Internal and external communications through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and website.



eNewsletter: A summary of each month including important past and future updates for members.

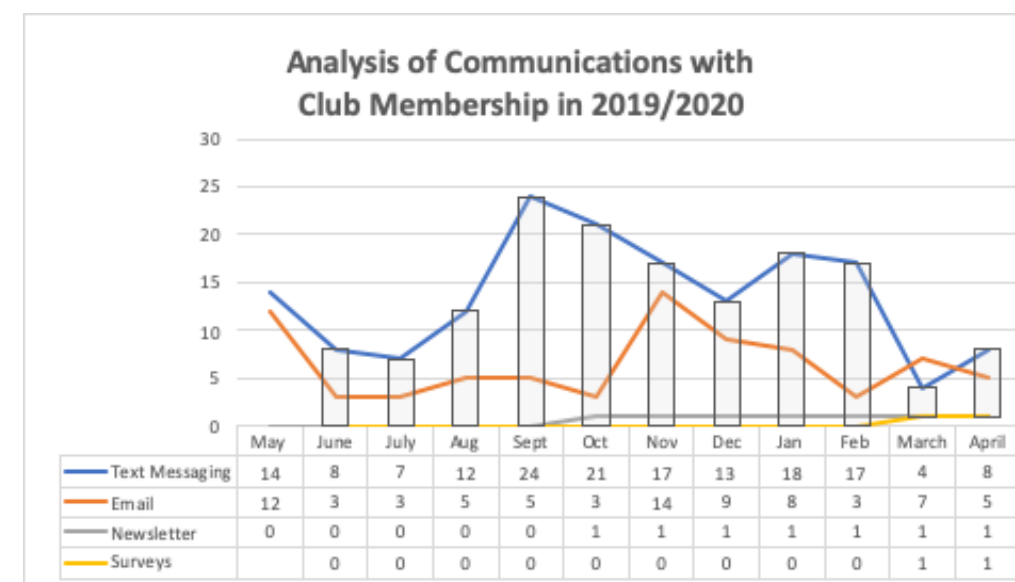


SurveyMonkey: Tool for gathering annual summaries of the season or tournaments.



Clubforce: Online membership function, lotto and club accessories store.

Due to a significant increase to membership in the 2019/20 season, a strategy was implemented to spread communications through a variety of channels, based on the content and urgency of the update. This was to prevent one area of communications not to be overloaded, reducing the possibility of important information being missed. There were nearly 250 communication points across the 2019/2020 season with the general membership of the club.



Text Messaging

Text Messaging was the most popular method of communication to Emerald Warriors members with a total of 163 sent to members in 2019/2020 to date. Upon registering as a member with Emerald Warriors, all members are added to the 'EWRFC Members 19/20' text message group. A number of other groups were formed to facilitate direct communication with sub-groups within the club – note that only the total number of messages issued through the official members group have been included in the figures here. Notifications within the 'EWRFC Members 19/20' text messaging service

predominately focused on training or match updates during the rugby season. Due to variable weather conditions, uncertainty of training and match venues proceeding during the 2019/2020 season, text message totals are higher at these times.

A variety of information is shared within the 'EWRFC Members 19/20' text messaging group including but not limited to fundraising, internal and external events, AGM updates, attention to emails sent, Bingham Cup 2020 and much more.



Email

Email was the second most popular method of communication with members of Emerald Warriors RFC this year. There were 77 emails sent to the general membership in 2019/2020 to date. Upon registering as a member with Emerald Warriors, all members are added to the '2019/2020 Members' email group. There were a number of additional email groups established for varying sub-groups e.g. pavilion members, sub-committees etc.

Peaks in communication via email can be linked to significant topics for club communication e.g. Annual General Meeting, Bingham Cup 2020, club fundraising and six nations.



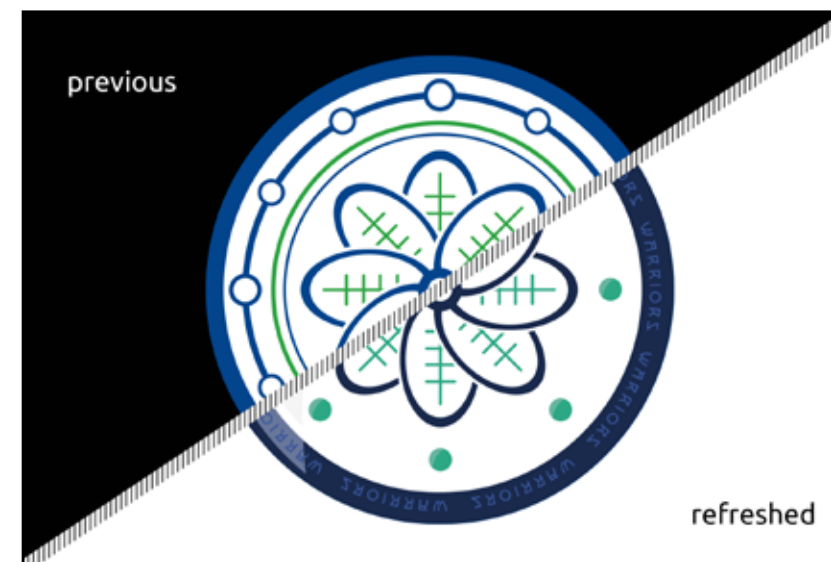
Newsletter

The Emerald Warriors RFC Club Newsletter was introduced towards the end of 2019, to help collate the large amounts of information disseminated to club members. To date, seven newsletters have been circulated to our members. Since the introduction of the club newsletter, we can see a decline in the amount of emails and text messages sent to club members, which aligns to the overall strategy being implemented.

The club newsletter is sent on a monthly basis and its central objective is to summarise what took place in that month and what to look forward to in the next month. It is hoped that in the near future our newsletters will be archived on the club website.

Survey Monkey

A club survey was circulated in April 2020 to review the 2019/2020 rugby season and the performance of the club overall. A detailed summary of findings of the survey can be found on page 19. In May 2020, a survey was circulated for all members who attended the Hadrian Cup in Newcastle this year. Findings from this survey can be found on page 11. Earlier in the year the committee circulated a survey to all members from the 2018/2019 season who had chosen not to renew their membership in 2019/2020. In addition to general surveys, the club uses survey monkey for nominations for officer roles, committee members and disciplinary committee members each year. To date in 2019/2020, this function has been used in the preparation for the Emergency General Meeting in August and will again be used for the Annual General Meeting when it takes place following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.



Branding

Emerald Warriors RFC is proud to unveil its refreshed brand look and feel to reflect the evolution of the club over the last 17 years. To a backdrop of Ireland leading cultural change for equality, and Irish rugby ranking in the top five in the world, our club's membership is now five times what it was five years ago.

Using the Union Cup Dublin 2019 platform, the Emerald Warriors RFC has firmly established a prominent presence at grassroots club level reaching finals in Leinster Metro leagues, at national level as the leading sports club on diversity and inclusion, and at a European level, rewriting how brands

and sporting institutions collaborate to change perceptions around LGBT+ participation in sport.

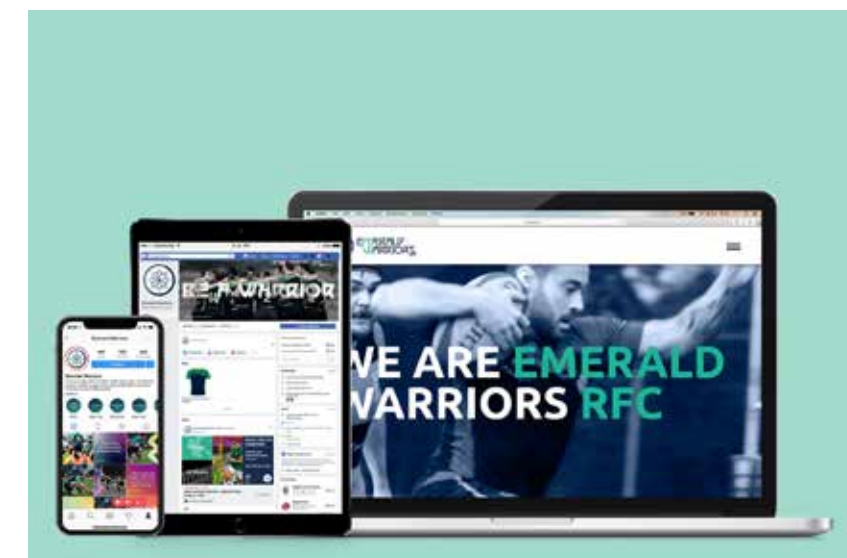
As such, we believe now is the time for the club's visual presence as a brand to reflect its achievements to date and its vision for 2020 and beyond, in a time where digital and social media is central to its success and identity and ambitious club and its members.

SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM REPORT

What a year it has been! I'd first like to thank all the members of the social media team over the last year for putting in so much time and effort into bringing our socials from what they were to what they are today. In addition to this, if it wasn't for the members who engage regularly with the club across all our different platforms we wouldn't be in the current position. You are helping spread the message of the Emerald Warriors to the wider community.

Our Twitter posts have reached over 200,000 people, with a mere 2,308 followers this is incredible. Our highest performing tweet is one of the recent Ant & Ali Workouts, that had a 14.7 per cent engagement rate. GCN's 'In & Out' retweet which featured our incredible player/coach Finbarr Ryan had 2,225 impressions from it alone. Twitter is an area that we are working closely on and learning that the rugby community lives more here than the other platforms.

Instagram has been incredibly successful over the last 12 months. With an incredible 101 unique posts creating 173,000 impressions reaching 134,500 users. The average engagement rate is 5.38 per cent per post, however, the recent post about Frontline workers racked up a staggering 11.38 per cent engagement rate. Our top Instagram post over the last 12 months is one of our Folláine Welfare Friday posts regarding the community call initiative in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating 3,036 impressions. Currently our Instagram stats are made up of 9,117 likes across





461 posts from a total of 3,969 followers. We continue to engage with followers on this platform and note that a lot of new membership enquiries have come through this route. It remains an important avenue for spreading our message of who we are and what we do to new users with a view to further increasing our membership.

Facebook has been our top performing platform over the last 12 months. We have gone from 4,618 likes to 5,574 in 12 months. Our top performing post was the announcement of same sex marriage in Northern Ireland in October 2019 reaching nearly 10,000 users and performing 800 per cent better than the average post. Coming in behind this as our top performing posts were; a club member who got married, Bank of Ireland coming onboard as a sponsor for the next three years with the release of new kit, and Emerald Warriors RFC taking part in Dublin Pride 2019. Overall, our 444 photos, 129 links, 59 videos and 51 statuses have been shared 3,817 times, causing 1561 comments and 30,576 reactions by users.

Again, this couldn't have been done without the help of the members engaging with us and resharing the message on our platforms. We want to continue to grow over the course of the next 12 months. We want to continue injecting new ideas and fresh energy into our social media platforms, this coupled with the incredible work that has been done by the graphics team and content creation team thus far means the sky is the limit for the next year. As always if you feel you are interested in any way shape or form of helping out, get in touch!

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with stakeholders is crucial to the success of any organisation and is an important function of the club. We are part of several wider communities, working with organisations with a diverse range of stakeholders from the grass roots rugby, LGBT+, sponsors, education etc.

We've spent a huge amount of time this year building our relationships, bonds and understandings in our immediate and wider communities. Key stakeholder opinions and insights are incredibly valuable building collaborative partnerships and new relationships which generate value. Here is a list of groups we are actively engaged with in 2019/2020:

- Diageo Marketing Summit
- The Ireland Funds
- TU Dublin - D&I and Sports Dept
- IRFU
- Leinster Rugby
- Bank of Ireland
- OutLaw
- Onside
- Kukri
- BeLongTo
- GCN
- Gala Awards
- RTÉ
- DCC
- DCU
- Sporting Ireland
- Dublin Pride



CLUB SURVEY FINDINGS

Summary Stats	
Survey	2019 – 2020 Club Season
Open / Closed Dates	03 to 13 April 2020
Total Questions	56
Average Completion Time	15 to 20 minutes
Respondents	78

Reviewing the performance of Emerald Warriors as a club, to its members, is an important ongoing project for the Emerald Warriors Committee. The club survey, designed to review the 2019/2020 season, was sent to all club members in April 2020.

Overview

The Emerald Warriors club survey focused on a number of key areas including membership, rugby, coaching and training, injury, external fitness, communications, events and club demographics. All questions were entered into the club survey monkey account, with a link sent to all members via the committee@ewrfc.ie email account.

The survey was classified as an 'open' survey, with individual emails not linked to a response. The below summary of key results are grouped into the following categories:

- CLUB PROFILE & SOCIALS STATS
- COACHING & TRAINING
- EVENTS
- COMMUNICATIONS

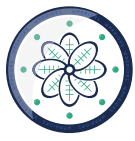
Review of Findings

Overall, the Emerald Warriors Club RFC survey for 2019/2020 portrays a very positive year, making good impacts on individuals lives and improvements in areas compared to the 2018/19 club survey.

Further improvements can always be made and a number of recommendations have been put forward for review by the club's committee.

Summary Recommendations

1. Retention of members should be explored annually.
2. Around 70 per cent of players received an injury in the 2019/20 season with only 15 per cent availing of the club physio services. This should be looked at in terms of injury prevention to reduce this number next season.
3. A number of recommendations were put forward by members for areas of improvement to training, league preparation and individual performance. This has been forwarded to the coaching team.
4. Connections to club sponsors could be strengthened.
5. The club constitution rated lower in terms of the clarity for club members.
6. Bullying as a topic should be explored by Emerald Warriors RFC in terms of the culture of the club.

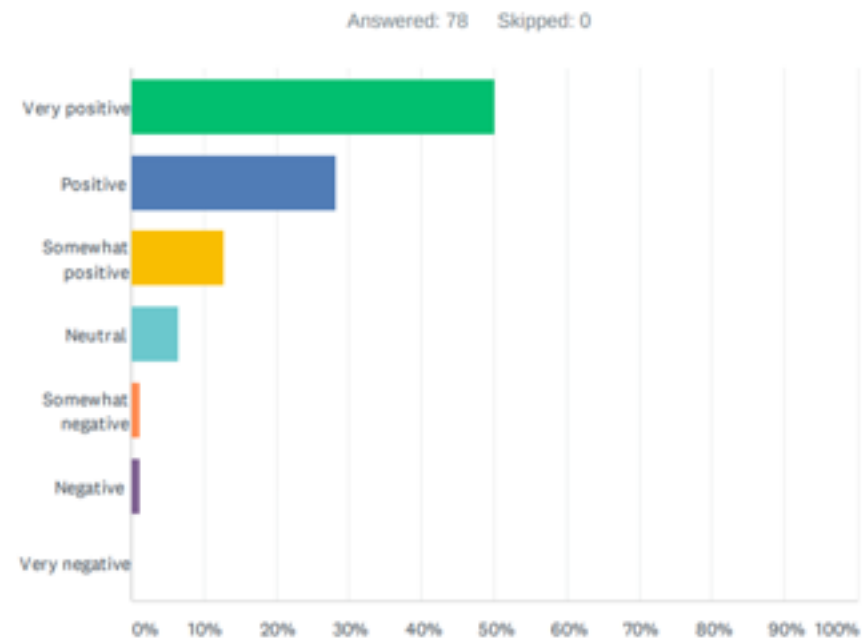


CLUB PROFILE & SOCIAL STATS

Impact of Emerald Warriors on Members

Over 91 per cent of respondents outlined that the Emerald Warriors has made a positive impact on their life, as outlined in the below chart.

Q10 Since joining Emerald Warriors RFC, has this made a positive or negative impact on your life?

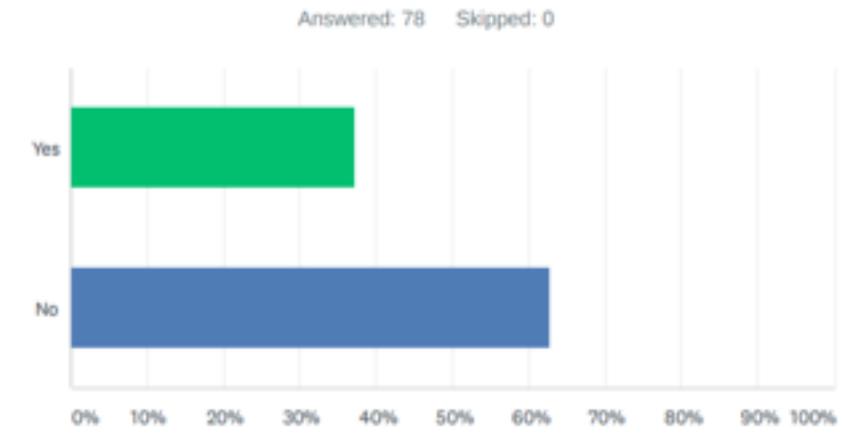


In addition to the above, almost 85 per cent of members feel involved with the LGBT+ community as a member of Emerald Warriors, with 92 per cent of members' families and friends aware they are a member of an LGBT+ and inclusive rugby club. Over 86 per cent of members identify as 'cisgender'.

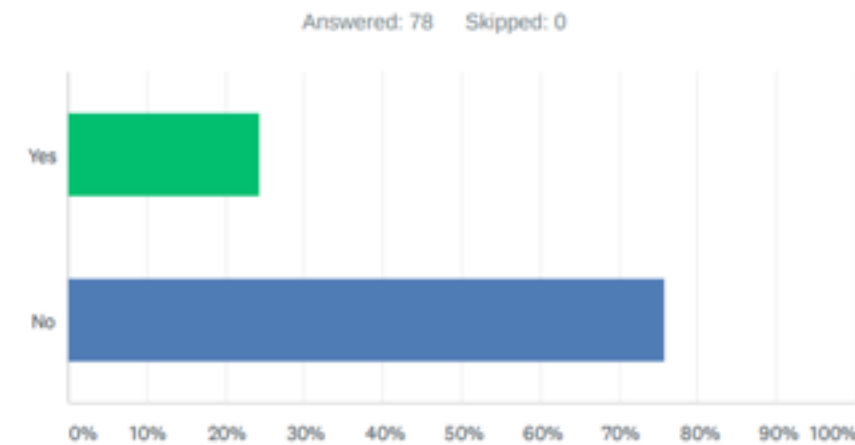
Quality of Life Factors

Members were asked to rate their quality of life factors before joining and since joining under the following headings: *confidence, happiness, relationships, friendships, health, fitness* and *mental health*. Responses based on quality of life factors before joining were centred around two, three- and four-star ratings. Rating since joining predominantly clustered around three, four- and five-star ratings which is a noted improvement.

Q17 Before joining Emerald Warriors RFC, did you experience homophobic actions or language in your everyday life?



Q18 Since joining Emerald Warriors RFC, have you experience homophobic actions or language in your everyday life?



Experience of homophobic actions or Language in everyday life

Members were asked about their experience of homophobic actions and language in their everyday life before and since joining Emerald Warriors RFC. A positive difference can be observed where the 'yes' figure decreased by just less than 15 per cent.

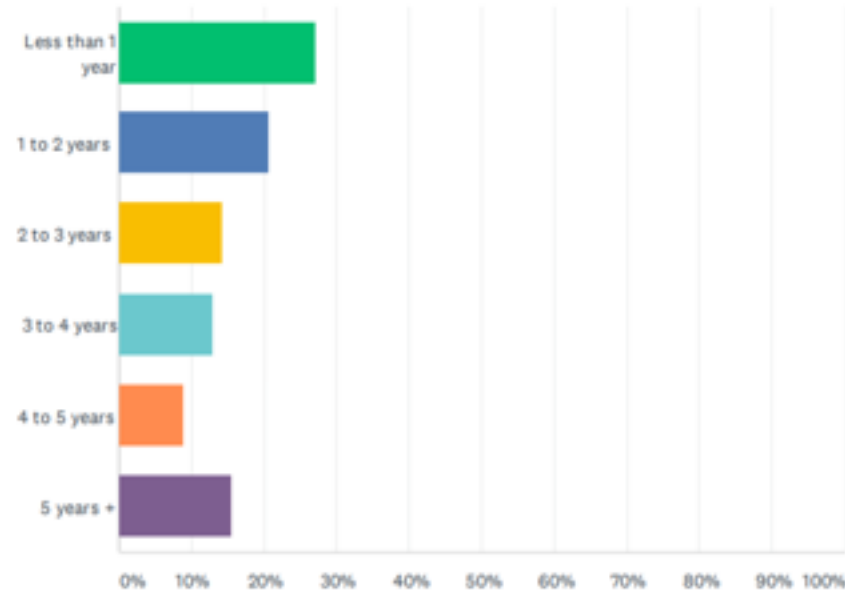
Length of Membership

Members who have been part of Emerald Warriors for less than one year make up the greatest portion within the club (27 per cent). It can be observed that as length of membership increases; between one and five years, the number of members decrease. There can be a variety of reasons for this, however, it is recommended that retention of members should be a focus for the Emerald Warriors RFC Committee for the 2020/2021 season.



Q2 How long have you been a member with Emerald Warriors RFC?

Answered: 77 Skipped: 1

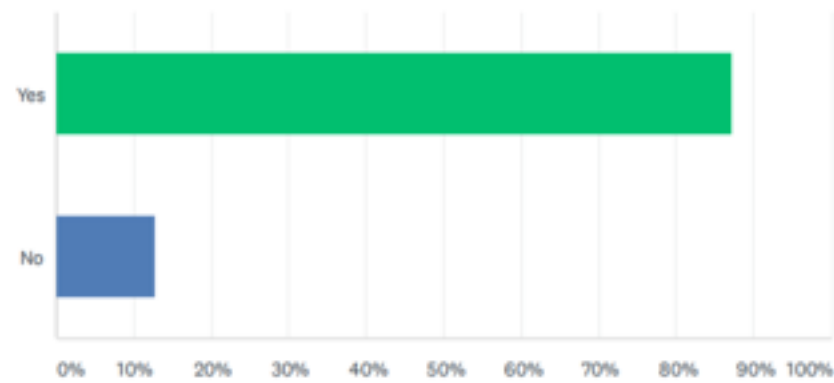


Club Recommendations

Almost 90 per cent of members advised they would recommend Emerald Warriors RFC to a friend, as seen from the below chart. In addition, over 90 per cent of members outlined they would like to see Emerald Warriors RFC own their own grounds in the near future. It was noted that almost 68 per cent of members do not feel connected to club sponsors, which could be explored further.

Q7 Would you recommend Emerald Warriors RFC to a friend?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 0

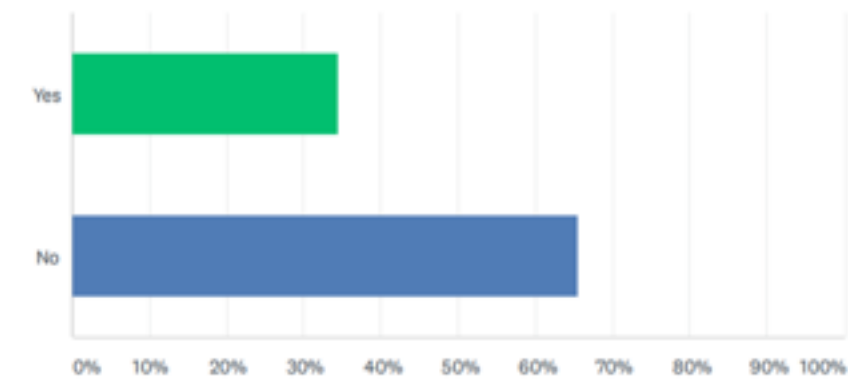


Previous Rugby Experience before joining Emerald Warriors

Around 65 per cent of members advised they had never played or experienced rugby before joining Emerald Warriors RFC.

Q9 Before joining Emerald Warriors RFC, had you played rugby competitively in the past e.g. with a club or school team?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 0



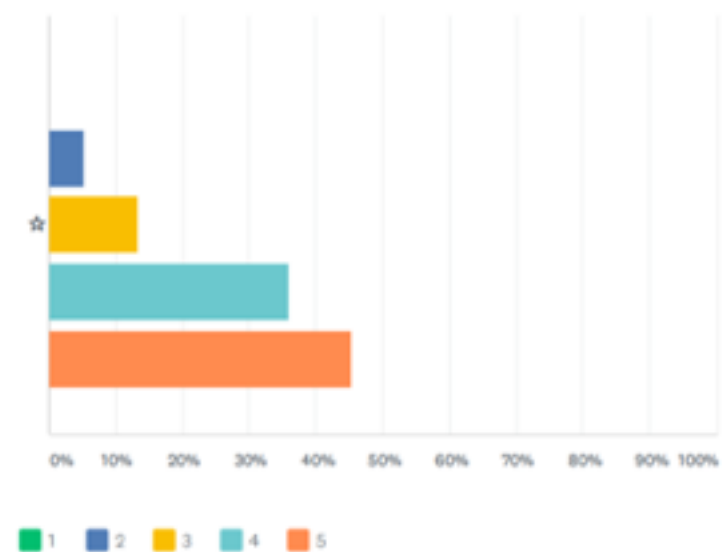
COACHING & TRAINING

Coaching Team Rating 2019/20

On average, the coaching team rated as 4.21 out of five stars in terms of the coaching provided for the 2019/2020 season. This is improvement in comparison 2018/19 survey results on the same question. Also, on average, the quality of the training provided during the 2019/20 season was rated as 4.16 out of five stars.

Q22 How would you rate the coaching team for the 2019/20 season?

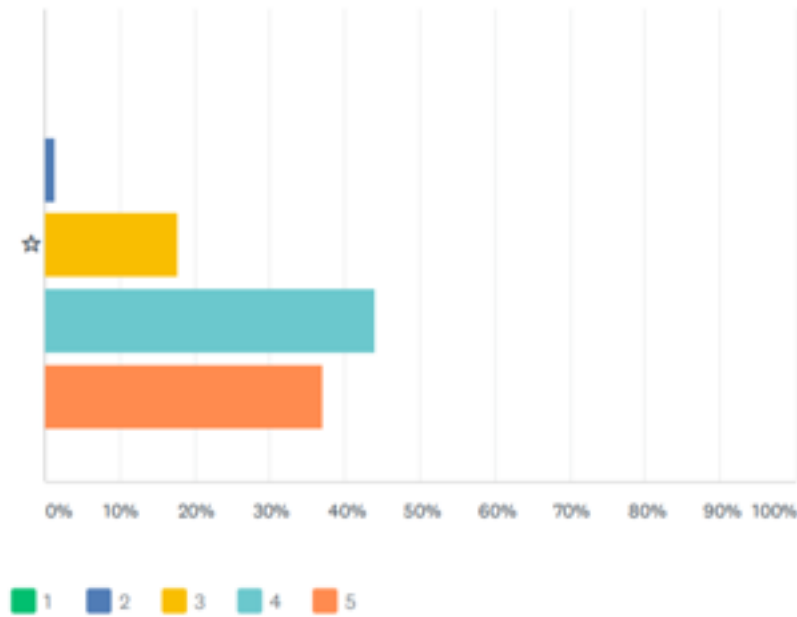
Answered: 75 Skipped: 3





Q27 How would you rate the training provided during the 2019/20 season?

Answered: 73 Skipped: 5

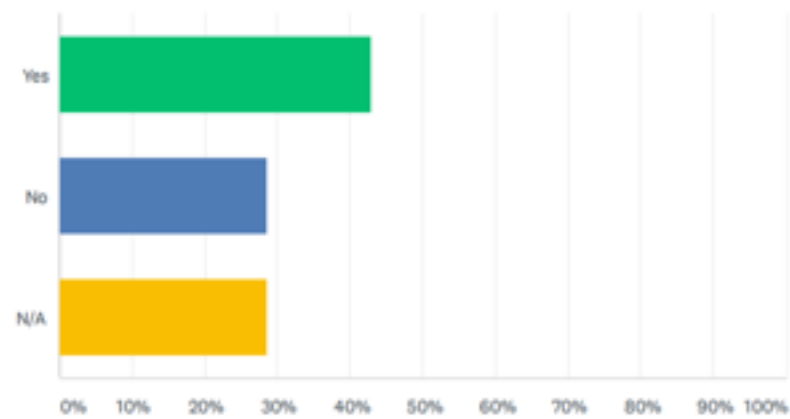


Match Preparation

Members were asked if they felt they were sufficiently prepared to enter the 2019/2020 league season based on training and coaching provided. The majority of respondents stated that they did feel sufficiently prepared.

Q29 Did you feel sufficiently prepared for matches, to commence the 2019/20 season?

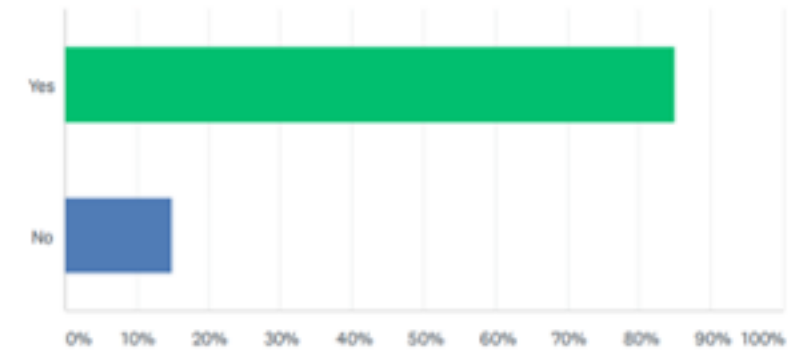
Answered: 77 Skipped: 1



Eighty per cent of members highlighted an improvement to their rugby knowledge in the 2019/2020 season. This shows an increase when compared to the 2017/2018 survey results. Almost 85 per cent of members also expressed they had made personal improvements during the 2019/2020 season.

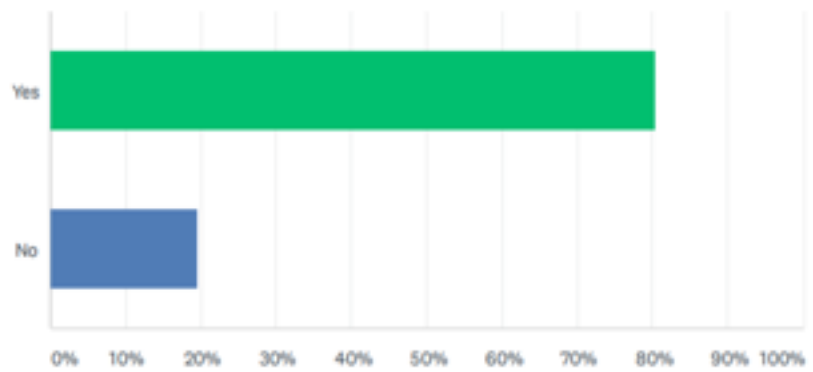
Q24 Do you feel you have made improvements in the 2019/20 season?

Answered: 73 Skipped: 5



Q16 Do you feel your knowledge of rugby has improved this season?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 2



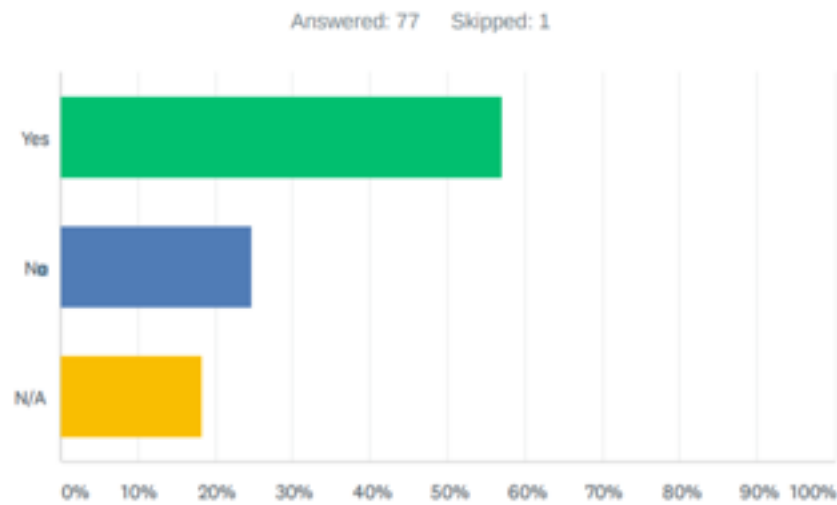
The 2019/2020 rugby season was rated on average of 3.4 out of five stars by members, with almost 80 per cent of members rating the season with three stars or higher. Similarly, commitment to the season from members was rated on average as 3.73 out of five stars, with almost 80 per cent of members rating with three stars or above. Finally, over 90 per cent of respondents felt their commitment to training was reflective of the playing time they received.



Injury

55 per cent of respondents confirmed they were injured while at training or playing a match this year. This represents a high injury rate to players which should be monitored on an ongoing basis with injury prevention in the mind of players and coaches. In addition, almost 12 per cent of participants reported that they received a repeat injury to the same location while 10 per cent reported to have received a concussion.

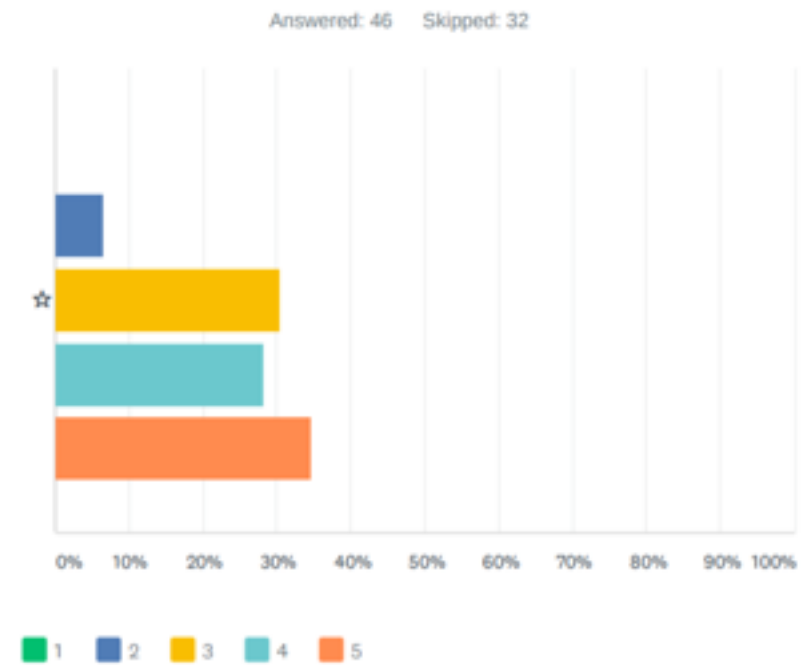
Q32 Have you been injured while at training or playing a match for Emerald Warriors RFC during the 2019/20 season?



Folláine Welfare Programme

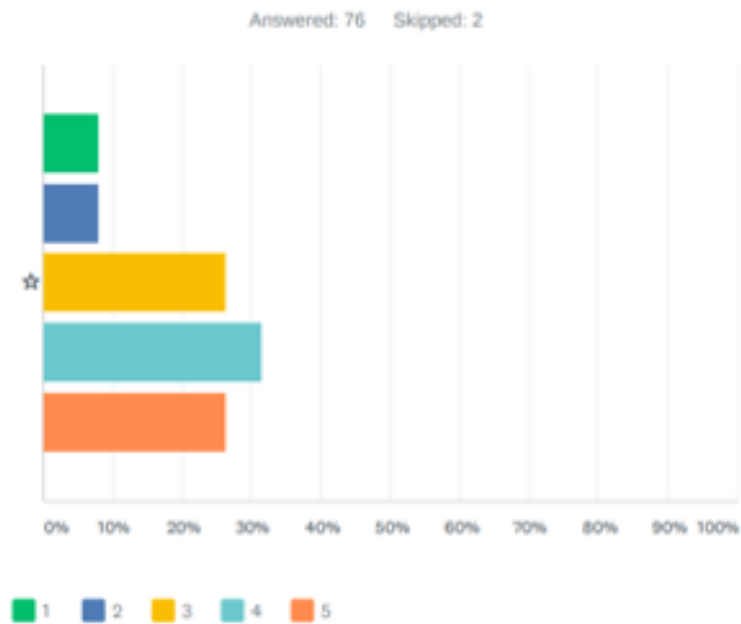
On average, members rated the Folláine Welfare Programme at 3.91 out of five stars, with over 93 per cent of respondents rating these events between three- and five-star ratings. 50 per cent of members advised they attended one or more Folláine Welfare Programme events throughout the year with 76 per cent finding the information useful, even if they were unable to attend (information was shared with all club members via email or club newsletter after the events).

Q38 If answered Yes to the above, overall, how would you rate these Folláine events?



EVENTS

Q40 How would you rate the events organised in the 2019/20 season?

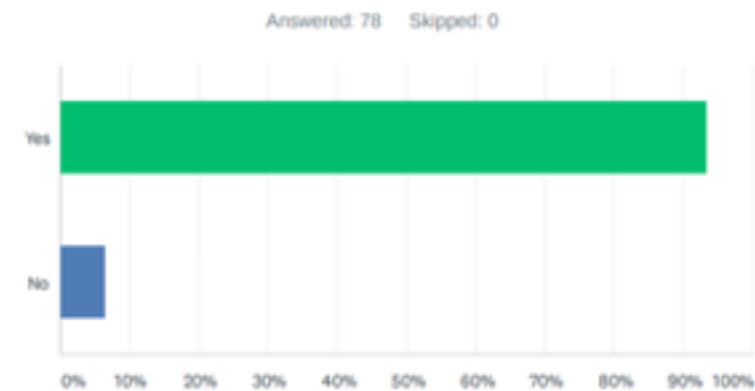


Club Events

Over 80 per cent of events facilitated by Emerald Warriors RFC were strongly rated between three and five stars as seen below. 67 per cent of respondents also felt they contributed sufficiently to fundraising events for the Emerald Warriors RFC this year.

COMMUNICATIONS

Q50 Do you feel you receive enough information about Emerald Warriors RFC?



Levels of Communications

Over 93 per cent of members indicated that they felt they received sufficient levels of communications from Emerald Warriors RFC throughout the year.

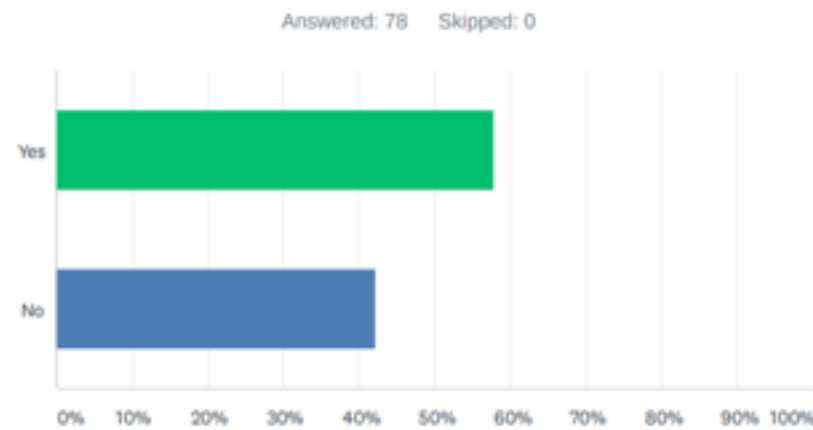


Text message was voted as the best form of communication to contact members with a time sensitive update, with email voted the most popular for general updates. Instagram was voted the most popular social media platform, with evenings as the most active time members are on social media.

Club Constitution

Almost 60 per cent of club members have read the Emerald Warriors RFC Club Constitution. The Constitution rated as 3.45 out of five stars for user friendliness and 55 per cent of members felt it provided sufficient clarification. It could be recommended for improvement to be made in this area.

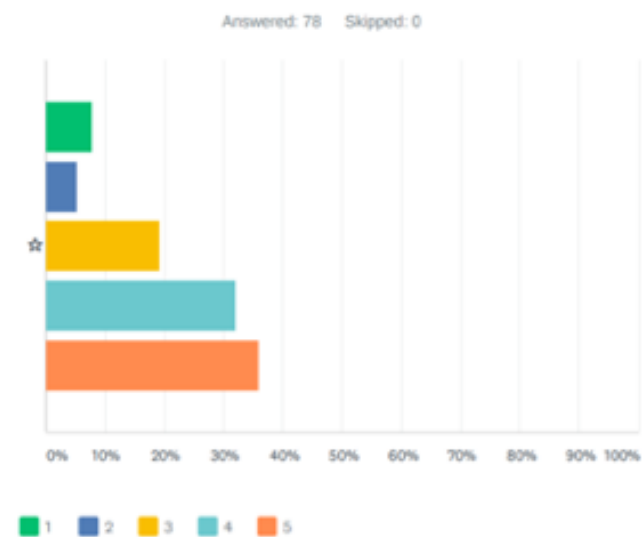
Q52 Have you read the Emerald Warriors RFC Club Constitution?



Committee Performance

The Emerald Warriors Committee was rated an average of 3.83 out of five stars for their performance in 2019/2020, with over 87 per cent of members rating the performance with three stars or above.

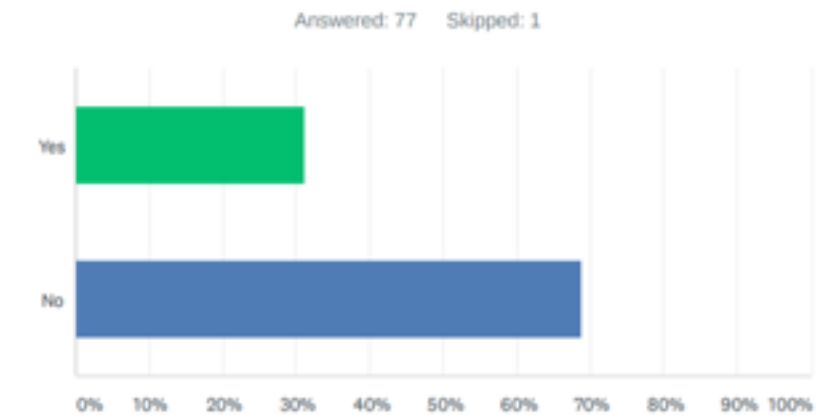
Q55 How would you rate the performance of the current Emerald Warriors RFC committee?




Bullying

Members were asked if they had ever felt bullied within Emerald Warriors RFC or do they feel there is a culture of bullying within the club. Over 30 per cent indicated that they had felt bullied within the club. It would be recommended that this is explored further by the club Committee going forward.

Q51 Have you ever felt bullied within Emerald Warriors RFC or do you feel there is a culture of bullying within Emerald Warriors RFC?





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