



PRESS RELEASE

HITCHIN RFC WIN PRESTIGIOUS RFU PRESIDENT'S XV AWARD, SUPPORTED BY QBE

London, 18 May 2010

Hitchin RFC has won a President's XV Award, supported by specialist business insurer QBE, in acknowledgment of their initiative to promote the development of rugby at a grassroots level.

Hitchin was presented with the President's XV Technology Award in recognition for creating an innovative website that has helped to completely transform the running of the club and improve efficiency both on and off the field.

The website, created by first team prop Richard Stidolph, incorporates a number of advanced features. These include a club-member database that allows for easy selection and notification of each week's teamsheets, a performance monitoring system that helps the club's coaches track statistics, and a section that helps to develop detailed training plans.

Each year the President's XV Awards, supported by QBE, recognise and reward projects that have been run in a voluntary capacity at rugby organisations.

Amongst some stiff competition it was Hitchin's innovative thinking that set them apart from the other entries. The RFU received a record 296 entries this year, representing a 33% increase on 2009 entries.

The club was awarded with a cheque for £500 and a special trophy to mark the achievement, handed over by the RFU at a special awards night presented by Brian Williams, Immediate Past President of the RFU.

The President's XV judging panel this year included RFU President John Owen, Immediate Past President Brian Williams, Senior Vice President Richard Appleby, Junior Vice President Willie Wildash, RFUW President Gill Burns, England's most-capped player Jason Leonard



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and Paul Morgan, editor of Rugby World magazine. QBE was represented on the day by Senior Underwriter John Warwick.

Peter Tasko, Club Chairman, Hitchin RFC said: “All local sports clubs want to achieve success on the pitch, but it is also important for them to be well run and efficient in communicating with players and other members. Our new website does this brilliantly and we are very proud that this fantastic piece of work by Richard Stidolph has been recognised by the RFU and QBE as the best technological achievement by a club across the country.”

John Owen, President of the RFU, commented: “It’s gratifying to see clubs like Hitchin coming up with creative solutions to help develop and progress our game. There are so many volunteers across the country working hard to support rugby in their area, who all deserve praise for their ongoing commitment”.

“The winning President’s XV schemes have demonstrated a great deal of creativity in coming up with imaginative ideas to benefit rugby in the community, and Hitchin is no exception. We are delighted to be celebrating and rewarding their success. No doubt the example they set will be followed by volunteers across the country.

Steven Burns, CEO of QBE European Operations, added: “As Official Insurance Partner of England Rugby, QBE is proud to be involved with such a prestigious scheme. Supporting the President’s XV Awards forms part of our commitment to supporting rugby at a grassroots level.”

“The innovative thinking demonstrated by the Hitchin RFC is typical of the dedication shown by club volunteers all over the country, and we are pleased to be able to recognise their achievements.

For more information on the President’s XV Awards, please visit www.qbeurope.com/rugby

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Notes to editors

About QBE

Founded over 100 years ago, QBE is a specialist business insurer, now operating out of 47 countries across the globe. We have been active in the UK since 1904, originally within the marine insurance market, but branching out more recently to offer commercial insurance to companies across the UK. At the end of 2009, the Group's turnover was over £7.2bn.

We provide insurance for a broad range of business categories, including property, motor (commercial, bus and fleet), public and product liability insurance, employers liability insurance, professional indemnity, leisure and sport, marine, energy, aviation, and bloodstock.

About the RFU

The Rugby Football Union is the National Governing Body for rugby union in England and supports participants and fans from the grassroots to the national team.