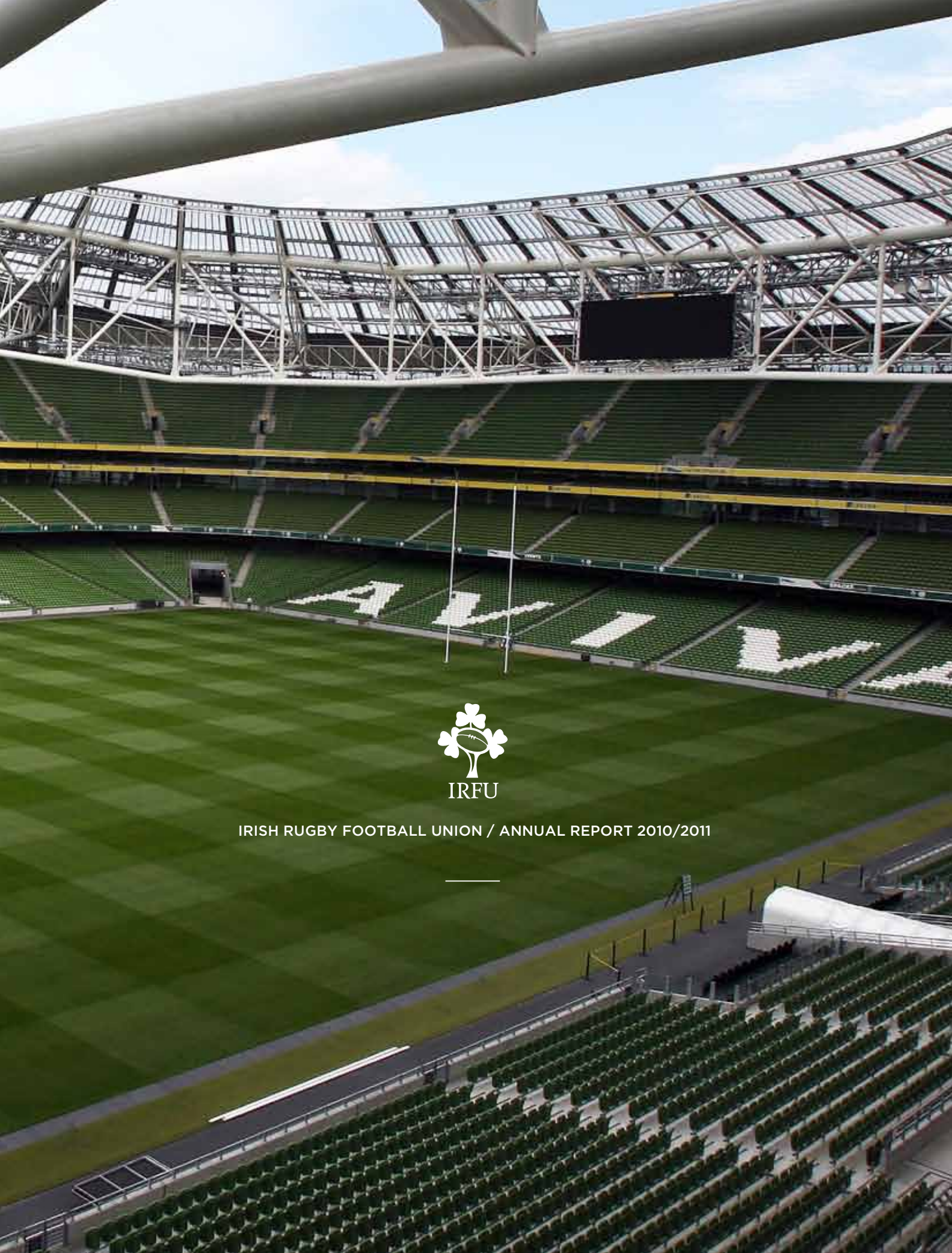




IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION / ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

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THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PAST SEASON HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN THE RETURN HOME TO THE AVIVA STADIUM, OUR STATE OF THE ART FACILITY AT LANSDOWNE ROAD.

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

C.C. POWELL

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AS I HAVE ALWAYS TAKEN THE VIEW THAT AN ASSESSMENT OF ANY RUGBY SEASON INCLUDES ITS ABILITY TO SUSTAIN INTEREST FROM FIRST DAY TO LAST, I BELIEVE THAT THE 2010/11 SEASON WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE TO BE PRESIDENT OF THE UNION IN A YEAR WHICH TICKED SO MANY BOXES IN ITS DELIVERY AND WHICH ALSO DEMONSTRATED MUCH REASON FOR OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE.

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Saturday July 31st was a landmark day when it was my proud honour on behalf of the IRFU to make the welcoming address for the first ever match at our new Aviva Stadium. The Presidents of all of our clubs and the Principals of our schools were the special guests for the day in recognition of their key role in the game in Ireland. The game between the U.20 Development Squads of Leinster/Ulster against Connacht/Munster was a unique occasion which marked the dawning of an exciting new era for Irish rugby and the Stadium which will be to the benefit of all facets of our game on this island and be a fitting home for international rugby.

The manner in which the capacity filled Stadium reverberated in celebration as the curtain came down on the first RBS Six Nations Championship to be played there, made another telling statement on the season. On the last day of what had up to then been a topsy-turvy tournament from an Ireland perspective, England came in high expectation of a Grand Slam victory. How uplifting it was for the Nation to witness one of Ireland's finest ever performances.

I believe that display, and our consequent fourth place World ranking, is an endorsement and justification of the hard work done by our Union down through the years in putting in place such solid structures to our game. That foresight and commitment is being re-paid by the style of rugby being developed across the provinces and at national level by Declan Kidney and his Management Team. At all times Brian O'Driscoll and his squad played some very positive and attractive rugby as they continued their development towards RWC 2011, when I hope they get their due reward.

The four internationals in November's Guinness Series were always a very ambitious undertaking. A combination of factors coupled with the economic downturn made it impossible to sell out the stadium for all four games. Thankfully, this was not repeated in the RBS Six Nations matches in the Spring. Nevertheless, the Committee

undertook a thorough examination of all aspects of the games in November. The outcome of the report will chart the way forward on all aspects of ticket allocation and distribution in the future.

The manner in which Ireland ended their season against England was also a timely injection of new confidence and that Leinster should become Heineken Cup champions for a second time – highlighted by a quite incredible performance in the final – a week before meeting Munster in the Magners League play-off decider, provided a celebratory finale to the season. The double success for Irish rugby also underscored the depth of talent currently in the game in Ireland and the value of the Union's Player Management Programme.

Apart from the performance of our teams, one other key area of the game continues to perform to world standards. I refer to our referees and it is a just reward for everyone involved to see Alain Rolland and George Clancy selected for the World Cup, with Simon McDowell going as a touch judge. Our thanks also to Alan Lewis who retires from refereeing following an outstanding international career.

In referring to the structures upon which Ireland's rugby model is devised, it was reinforced to me during my term of the excellent work done for our game across the island by those we are fortunate to have on our Committees. The calibre of their contributions, allied to their hard work and dedication, is a key reason our game functions so effectively at all levels.

The Commercial and Marketing Committee, under the chairmanship of Pat Fitzgerald and with Padraig Power as Department Director, are key to our financial stability. I believe Irish rugby is also benefiting by good player management. Thanks to the Representative Game Committee, chaired by Martin O'Sullivan and our Human Resources



Director, Maurice Dowling, the Union has managed to retain the services of our top players at home in face of offers to play outside the country. This means we are able to utilise such key assets as Brian O'Driscoll, Stephen Ferris, Ronan O'Gara, Paul O'Connell, Johnny Sexton, et al, as highly marketable allies at provincial and national level. We are the envy of many other Nations in this regard!

A happy consequence is that the general growth of the sport worldwide is mirrored in Ireland by way of increasing popularity and growing numbers. I have seen evidence of this, most notably at the lower age levels. In this regard I pay due tribute to the Union's Stephen Hilditch and Scott Walker and their Domestic Game Committee for the work they oversee in engaging with the Branches, clubs, schools, colleges, universities, etc. - and with the women's game - in order to ensure that the correct pathways and development processes are in place. A good manifestation of this work was seen in the triumph by the Ireland Schoolboys team in claiming a first ever FIRA-AER U.18 European Championship in Tarbes, France. That this was highlighted by victories over France and England makes a telling statement. Congratulations to Terry McMaster and his management/coaching team and of course to the squad who demonstrated such skills, commitment and ambition. To underline the value of our twin-track approach, it was equally satisfying to see the U.18 Club Side also go through their three games unbeaten.

I reiterate the IRFU's assurance that the wellbeing of rugby at grassroots is, and will forever be, a priority. My experiences over the last season have demonstrated to me that there is an acknowledgement of this at grassroots, because what struck me on my travels around the clubs was the recognition and respect accorded to the IRFU and its Presidents.

I also noted the sense of spirit and camaraderie in senior and junior clubs and schools that I visited and the rewards this has brought to such clubs as Bruff and Seapoint. It was heart-warming to experience at close quarters the tremendous commitment and hard work being done by so many volunteers. Given the economic and social pressures, this commitment is needed more than ever.

The joint announcement by the IRFU and Ulster Bank of a new partnership that has seen the Bank become the official Community

Rugby Partner to the Union, until 2014, was another season's highlight for me. As well as including title sponsorship of the Ulster Bank League, the arrangement also embraces a new club volunteer initiative, called Ulster Bank Rugby Force. It offers clubs the chance to receive funding to renovate their facilities and this season attracted a total entry of seventy-six clubs from throughout the island. The four lucky winners announced were Ballina, Wexford Wanderers, Thomond and Ballymoney RFCs. They are each in receipt of a €5,000 support package, so there is obvious incentive for more clubs to take part going forward.

Another initiative which highlighted the Union's conscientious concern for the amateur game was the launch of the IRFU Club Excellence Awards, when eight clubs received awards under a pilot scheme – Ballina, CIYMS, Clondalkin, Galway Corinthians, Midleton, Randalstown, Seapoint and Suttonians. The Club Excellence Awards Scheme is a well thought out programme and I view this enterprise as a most timely and significant one.

On the issue of administration, my year in office provided me with an even deeper sense of acknowledgement of how well the governance of the game on this island is conducted. In the busy Lansdowne Road HQ of the Union, I observed at close hand the compatibility between our professional staff and the Committee volunteer force and likewise in our provincial Branches. Philip Browne, our Chief Executive, as always masterminds and coordinates everything superbly. His talented and dedicated team work to effect liaising with a dynamic Management Committee headed by Finbarr Crowley and onwards to the many Sub Committees. The personnel involved bring many and critical skill-sets to the job of running one of the major governing sports bodies on the island. The IRFU and its Branches are very fortunate in this regard.

The role of President is a time consuming and very busy one which I enjoyed thoroughly and I would like to thank the Union staff for their help and friendliness, as especially demonstrated to me by Grainne Fulham in the manner in which she managed me and my busy diary. Finally, I wish to pay a special tribute to my wife, Gill, and children Bob, Lynn and David, whose support throughout was fundamental to my memorable experience as President.



## HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

T. GRACE

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ONCE AGAIN I AM PRIVILEGED TO PRESENT TO YOU THE FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE IRFU FOR THE 2010/11 FINANCIAL YEAR.

DURING THE YEAR THE UNION HAS HAD TO OPERATE IN AN UNPRECEDENTED ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT. THIS WAS CHARACTERISED BY A MASSIVE REDUCTION IN DISPOSABLE INCOME AND HUGE UNCERTAINTY AS TO FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

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The problems experienced around the Guinness Series in November have forced the Union to review its future revenue streams as they cannot be relied upon today with the traditional certainty we once had. In this regard it has been necessary to review the pricing policy for international match tickets. This in turn has led to a reduction in the Union's forecasted future revenues which has necessitated a reduction of the Union's future expenditure plans.

You will note that the Union has prepared for the first time consolidated accounts to reflect the investment in Aviva Stadium, Lansdowne Car Park and Thomond Park. It should be noted that the Union does not have a controlling interest in either Aviva Stadium or Thomond Park Stadium and whilst it has board representation on each, both entities produce their own operating budgets and are managed independently of the Union. Accordingly, in this report it is my intention to focus on the Union's own financial statements.

Overall the Union enjoyed a surplus of €6.7m in 2010/11 against a budgeted surplus of €6.8m. Whilst I am very pleased that the Union reached its budget it is important to note that this surplus is in reality a "paper profit" only. In terms of actual operating cash flow the Union effectively generated no cash over the year. This is largely due to two factors. Over €14m of the Union's income, reflected in the financial statements in the form of amortised ticket and naming rights income has already been spent on the construction of the Aviva Stadium. Therefore this is not available for the Union to spend on its operations. Conversely the depreciation charge of €7m does not represent a cash spend for the year. You will note that

while no cash was generated from operations during the year the net cash position of the Union has deteriorated by €12m. This is principally explained by capital expenditure of €12m on the stadium project.

The effects of last year's cost review continued to favourably impact the Union's costs in 2010/11. As I mentioned above, the true impact of the reduction in ticket prices will be felt in future years. The Union must cut its future expenditure in order to spend only what it can realistically generate in the current economic climate. A second cost review exercise was also undertaken this season and some of the financial benefits of this accrue to 2010/11 although most will be felt in 2011/12 and in future years. Like most organisations the Union will continue to monitor its cost base and seek efficiencies and savings on an ongoing basis.

International rugby income is made up largely of gate receipts and broadcasting income. Overall the Union suffered a loss of c. €5m against budget on the Guinness Series in November and the revised pricing for the Six Nations. The Union's share of Six Nations income is €1m ahead of budget due to a combination of prize-money and favourable exchange rates. A further €1.2m positive variance was as a result of new broadcasting agreements outside of the Six Nations and gate receipts for the Barbarians and the O<sub>2</sub> Challenge matches earlier in the year.

The Union's commercial income has held up well against budget and last year's results. I am pleased to report that our three major sponsors who account for over 80% of this income are all contracted for at least the next three years. As mentioned earlier

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the current economic environment is extremely challenging and I pay tribute to the efforts of the Union's Commercial and Marketing Committee for their achievements over the last year.

ERC and provincial income increased by €2.6m. Whilst a significant portion of this is due to new sponsorship and broadcasting contracts, the success of our provincial teams in the Heineken Cup over the last two years has resulted in considerable prize-moneys received by the Union. This is a welcome return for the significant level of investment made every year by the Union in professional provincial rugby and helps us to maintain our investment in the grassroots of the game.

Funding from the Irish Sports Council increased by c. €280k due to a one-off special grant for specialised sports equipment. The importance of this funding to the Union cannot be overstated. It allows the Union and the Branches to deliver numerous programmes that are vital to increasing and retaining participation at all levels of the game. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Irish Sports Council for their continued support during what we all know are extremely difficult times.

Other income fell largely due to the absence of interest income as the Union was in a net debt position for almost the entire year.

Costs have increased by c. €5m over the €57.5m reported last year. However depreciation increased by €5.9m due largely to the depreciation for the first time of the Union's investment in the Aviva Stadium.

I am pleased to report that cash expenditure actually fell year on year by c. €900k. This was due largely to the early implementation wherever possible of cost savings and the continuation of phased reductions arising from the previous cost review. As indicated earlier it is vital that we keep our cost base under constant review in these challenging times especially as our future income streams are not as certain as they traditionally have been.

The Union's balance sheet shows the substantial investment made in Aviva Stadium over the last three years and how this investment has been funded by the Union.

On the balance sheet you will see amounts totalling €107m for deferred ticket and naming rights income. This represents the proceeds of the Union's forward sale of premium seats, boxes and naming rights net of amounts charged to income in the current year. This is essentially a form of long term liability as it represents a future obligation of the Union and restricts our ability to generate additional annual income. You will note that the Union's net cash position was some €11.5m in debt and as I alluded to earlier the expectation would be for this position to worsen each year until 2013 when the Union goes to market with a substantial tranche of its old East Stand ten year tickets.

Also included in the balance sheet are amounts advanced to Branches in respect of stadium development loans. Two of



these loans are in arrears and both of the Branches concerned have indicated that they are working to address this situation.

Overall the Union remains on track to meet its long-term funding targets. While it is difficult to forecast during normal times the current economic environment makes any accurate projections very difficult. Thus any assumptions used in the preparation of such forecasts are all-important and I can assure you that the Union has spent considerable time in assessing the validity of our major income assumptions and will continue to keep them under constant review.

One of the responsibilities of the board of any company is to identify and manage the risks facing that company. The Union's Management Committee is the entity tasked by the Union to carry out these duties and I believe that it is important to highlight two of the most substantial risks facing the Union:

Firstly the economic times that we live in and secondly the continuation of the professional competitions the Union participates in.

The former requires no further elaboration by me but the latter merits some expansion. You will have noted from the income and expenditure account that €28.4m was spent on funding the professional game this year. Of this €22.8m relates to the Union's cost of running the four provincial professional teams. This year we received €9.3m from the participation of the four provinces in the various competitions. This leaves a net cost to the Union of €13.5m which it funds from the gate receipts, broadcasting and commercial revenues generated by the National Team. Any future reduction in international game or provincial competition revenues would necessitate a matching reduction in the level of support provided by the Union across all of its activities including the provincial teams.

In conclusion I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for the support they gave me during what has been a difficult year. I would also like to thank the staff at the Union office for their efforts during the year and in particular Conor O'Brien and his accounts team ably led by Fiona O'Flaherty and Sharon Coffey for their assistance throughout the year.





## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

P. BROWNE

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THE CONTINUED DETERIORATION OF THE ECONOMY IN IRELAND HAS BADLY IMPACTED ALL ASPECTS OF SOCIETY OVER THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS AND OUR SPORT HAS NOT ESCAPED UNSCATHED. THERE SEEMS TO BE NO PROSPECT OF AN EARLY AMELIORATION OF THESE CONDITIONS AND ALL UNITS WITHIN THE GAME WILL HAVE TO ACT WITH PRUDENCE TO ENSURE THAT OUR SPORT EMERGES IN A REASONABLE CONDITION WHEN THE ECONOMY HOPEFULLY RECOVERS. THE DIFFICULTIES ARE NOT CONFINED TO IRELAND AND THERE IS CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC DOWNTURN ON THE GAME WORLDWIDE TO THE EXTENT THAT THE IRB HAS ORGANISED AN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE AT THE END OF MAY TO CONSIDER THE ISSUES AND HOW THEY MIGHT BE BEST ADDRESSED.

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The difficult economic conditions and their impact on rugby have manifested themselves in various different ways. There is a noticeable reduction in disposable income which has led to a negative impact on match attendances, demonstrating that ticket prices are not as elastic as thought. This was most noticeable in the Guinness Series of four international matches in the new Aviva Stadium in November. A combination of factors all led to a poor take up of tickets for three out of four of these matches including the rapidly deteriorating economic climate, the addition of an extra match to "open" the new stadium which led to four matches on consecutive weekends, the bundling of all four matches together and a pricing strategy that did not reflect the new conditions. Clubs that took their full allocation of tickets were left with significant numbers of unsold tickets and a significant potential loss. The IRFU acknowledged that it had made mistakes in the pricing of tickets in the new stadium and appointed a Working Party of club and Branch representatives to find a fair, equitable and practical solution to the problem of how to treat unsold tickets being held by clubs. This group was chaired by Senior Vice President, John Hussey. The report of the Working Party was referred to the specialist international sports consultancy in Deloitte UK for their consideration following which the IRFU agreed that it would absorb the shortfall in budgeted revenue arising from the unsold tickets. It was also agreed that a modern system of selling and distributing tickets would be needed if the IRFU is to optimise the revenues from international matches. Whilst the preferred channel of ticket distribution will continue to be the clubs, there will be matches where the IRFU will have to access other web based sales channels. This will entail payment up front for tickets which will provide greater control of tickets and a greater degree

of management information needed to allow efficient operation of the Aviva Stadium.

Following the difficulties in the Guinness Series a Working Party was established to review the pricing strategy and the price tiering of seats in the new stadium for the 2011 RBS Six Nations matches. Outside expertise was drafted in to the Working Party. The consequence of this was reduced ticket prices, with 2011 Six Nations ticket prices being reduced in light of the difficulties in the autumn. This has had and will continue to have a significant impact on the IRFU revenues with a negative budgetary impact across all areas of expenditure. Further downward price adjustments will exacerbate this problem, a problem which is reflected in some of the provinces, Munster already having reduced their ticket prices for next season. There will be a further review of ticket pricing for international matches in 2012 to be carried out by a group which will include some expertise from outside the IRFU.

The economic crisis has obviously had a negative impact on public finances and this has resulted in a reduction of government support of the sports sector. The main casualty has been the Sports Capital Programme but the annual Irish Sports Council operational grants have also been impacted and are likely to be further impacted given the tightening of public finances. The operational grant to the IRFU is used to help fund the underage participation programmes and the Domestic Game Committee have adjusted budgets accordingly to ensure the most effective use of the reducing operational grant from the Irish Sports Council. The IRFU together with the GAA, FAI and the Federation of Irish



Sport continue to work closely together to ensure that there is proper recognition of the important role of sport in society and the benefits of continued investment in the sports sector.

Given the new financial constraints budgets have not only been reviewed within the Domestic Game context but also within the Professional Game as well. More effective use of resources, financial and otherwise, being the focus of our efforts. This is a challenging process particularly given the market for professional players in Europe remains very competitive and is artificially inflated in some cases where club benefactors can offer deals that target the most talented players in both the northern and southern hemispheres. Market intelligence, co-ordinated through our H.R. Director, Maurice Dowling, is key in this process and we continue to develop links with other Unions and clubs to ensure that our decisions in this area are well grounded and based on information that has been independently validated from a number of sources. The IRFU remains strong in its commitment to keeping as many Irish players as possible at home and thankfully has been successful in retaining the vast majority of the National Squad and ensuring that they will continue to ply their trade with Irish provinces.

On a more positive note the potential threat to IRFU revenues posed by the proposal from Minister Eamon Ryan to list Six Nations and Heineken Cup as "free to air" events has receded following a significant effort by the IRFU and others, i.e., the Six Nations and ERC to rebut the rationale put forward by Minister Ryan for his proposed change to the current listing. A detailed submission was made to independent consultants, Indecon, appointed by Minister Ryan to review the matter. The Indecon report concluded that the IRFU would lose significant revenues but did not agree with the quantum put forward by the IRFU. With the election of a new Government it has recently been confirmed that there will be no change to the current list of "free to air" events, so IRFU revenues remain secure for the time being.

The Aviva Stadium has been successfully opened and is now operating as envisaged. It will be the financial engine for the sport for many years to come, providing revenue generating opportunities that were not available to the IRFU in the past. The IRFU's

contribution to the stadium was financed by way of advance sales of premium seats and corporate boxes and by bank debt which is due to be repaid in 2013. The advance sale of some 10,000 seats in the stadium, monies that have been already spent but which have to be amortised into the profit and loss account annually, together with depreciation, means that the Union can return a profit but is running a cash deficit. Future renewals of ten year seats and corporate boxes will be important to IRFU cash flows and our business plan and this will be a focus for the Union and its Commercial and Marketing Committee.

Moving away from things financial, the issue of Sevens Rugby continues to remain up in the air. A working party chaired by Frank Sowman prepared a very detailed report on the options open to the IRFU in relation to Sevens Rugby and the introduction of Sevens to the Olympics in 2016. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are many positive aspects to Sevens Rugby it is also acknowledged that it does not replace or complement the elite player development pathways for the Fifteens game. It is also a significant additional cost centre with little scope for generating sufficient revenues to cover its costs. Given the small playing base in Ireland and our financial constraints, it will require very careful consideration in deciding how best to engage with Sevens Rugby and the Olympics to ensure that we do not damage the Fifteens game which generates the revenues for Irish rugby. No decision has been taken as yet until such time as the IRB provides clarity in relation to the qualifying arrangements for the 2016 Olympics. As it stands at the moment it seems that a six or seven figure investment would be required to enable an Irish Sevens team to be competitive, yet there may only be twelve teams competing in the Olympic competition. Womens Sevens in many ways may be a more attractive option than the Mens version but it again comes with a significant price tag. In the meantime while waiting for IRB guidance on qualification arrangements, the IRFU has supported the development of provincial club Sevens tournaments leading to a national competition. This will hopefully increase the interest in Sevens Rugby and increase the pool of players who may be able to progress in that version of the sport.

More than ever the IRFU needs to keep its eye on the "big picture" and its strategy both medium and long term. A group has been



set up to look at what is termed “Vision 2020” and as part of that process will be engaging in market research and wider consultation. This will inform the Union in relation to its next strategic plan which will be drawn up over the next twelve months or so. The game seems to go through significant change after each RWC so we can expect some further evolution in the professional game over the next six to twelve months and Irish rugby needs to be robust enough yet flexible to deal with those changes as they arise. The Strategic Plan also needs to deal with the amateur game in schools and clubs to ensure that the grass roots foundation of the game in Ireland remains healthy and vibrant. There has been tremendous work done at club and schools throughout the country, making the most out of the growth in interest and popularity of the game. The capacity of our clubs and the volunteers that run our sport at club and schools level is potentially the limiting factor in the growth of the game at present, given the huge numbers who have come into the game at mini and youth level over the past few years. This challenge has to be met if rugby is to consolidate its position as one of the main sports of choice in Ireland and this will be a fundamental building block of our next strategic plan due in 2012. It is worth noting that the majority of KPIs set out in the 2008-2012 plan “Build on Solid Foundation” remain on target despite the difficult times we live in.

## **NATIONAL TEAM**

The National Team toured New Zealand and Australia in June 2010 with a slightly extended touring party, taking in two test matches against New Zealand in New Plymouth and Australia in Brisbane, with an additional special match to mark the centenary of the NZ Maori team in Rotorua. This was a tough touring schedule but provided opportunities for players to experience some of the RWC 2011 venues in New Zealand as well as opportunities for the National Team Management to view some developing and fringe players given the additional match. It was as anticipated a very tough schedule of matches, not helped by some significant injuries which prevented a full complement of first choice players travelling. In spite of this there were some good showings in all three matches. Ireland were competing well against New Zealand but the sending off of Jamie Heaslip effectively ended the match as a contest with New Zealand winning comfortably by 66:28

though Ireland gamely scored four tries. This was followed by the match against a very experienced NZ Maori XV which was full of exciting rugby, much of it played by the Irish Team which narrowly lost 31:28. The Australia v. Ireland match in Brisbane could also be perceived as “one that got away” with Ireland having the momentum in the closing stages of the game and but for some poor decision-making and unforced errors Ireland should have won this game. The final result was 22:15 and more details of these fixtures are to be found in the statistics section. Despite the fact there was no win recorded there were plenty of positives to be gleaned from the tour with one notable feature being the award of five new caps and in particular mention should be made of Rhys Ruddock, Captain of the Ireland U.20 team playing in the IRB U.20 World Championship in Argentina, who was called into the full Irish National Squad as an injury replacement and gained his first full cap against Australia, performing with great credit.

The November Guinness Series was a four match series with a special match against the reigning South African World Champions to mark the first international at the new Aviva Stadium. This was followed on consecutive weekends by Samoa, New Zealand and Argentina. This match programme again provided the National Team Management with a good opportunity to view a wider group of players in advance of the RBS Six Nations and always with one eye on RWC 2011 in New Zealand. In total thirty players took part in these matches. The series ended up with a narrow defeat to South Africa 21:23, a match that Ireland should really have won; a win against an improving and tough Samoan side 20:10; a loss to New Zealand in a hard fought encounter 18:38; and a victory over Argentina 29:9. Whilst the result against South Africa was particularly disappointing there were glimpses of the emerging style of game over the series that Declan Kidney and the team are trying to arrive at and encouragingly the emergence of new players who are capable of playing international rugby which has been an important objective for the National Team Management.

Expectations for the Irish Team in the RBS Six Nations Championship were obviously not as buoyant as twelve months previously. Whilst it is always better to be playing France and England in Dublin there was a tricky opening match against Italy in Rome. Italy have proved to be tough opponents in the past and this match was no exception,



with the added frisson that Ireland and Italy are drawn in the same pool in RWC 2011. Unforced errors and poor handling left Ireland in a situation where Italy remained very much in contention right up to the final whistle and Ireland held on for a 11:13 victory thanks to a last minute drop goal by O'Gara. The following weekend at a full house in the Aviva Stadium there was a much better performance. Ireland played with width and pace, putting France under significant pressure and the emergence of a more solid Irish scrum set piece was important. Again the margins were small with a very exciting and tight conclusion to the match which Ireland lost by 22:25 despite having outscored France by three tries to one. In both these matches referee interpretation of the tackle/maul led to a number of penalties being awarded against Ireland at critical junctures in the matches. It subsequently transpired and was acknowledged that an incorrect interpretation of the relevant Laws was in use which was to Ireland's disadvantage. The next match in the series was in Murrayfield against Scotland which was a typical abrasive encounter but Ireland were the stronger side, showing greater ability than Scotland to break down the opposition defence, Ireland winning by 18:21, the penalty count against Ireland once again keeping the opposition in the game. The results going to Wales left Ireland still playing for a Triple Crown and potentially the Championship. In yet another tight contest where Ireland showed the greater adventure, a try scored from a very basic error by the match officials involving an illegal quick lineout resulted in a Welsh try from which Ireland were unable to recover, losing the match by six points in a final score of 19:13. The final match of the Championship was in Dublin against England with England playing for a Grand Slam. It all came together for Ireland with the team playing at a much greater level of intensity than in previous matches and being dominant in all facets of the game over an English team that never found its stride. Ireland were outstanding in defence and attack and it was perhaps the best Irish performance of the previous eighteen months, winning by 24:8. Ireland ended up third in the Championship having been somewhat frustrated in losing close matches that could and indeed probably should have been won. However, the final match against England demonstrated that the Irish Team is moving closer to finding its preferred style of play which is exciting to watch, scoring ten tries for four against over the course of the Championship. Furthermore the Irish scrum set piece has developed and progress has been made.

Hopefully the team can replicate the form shown against England when they participate in the RWC in New Zealand in September. As preparation for the RWC a programme of four test matches has been arranged over the four weekends in August, against Scotland away, away and home against France, and against England at home. The team departs for New Zealand in early September and we wish them well for a successful tournament.

#### **PROVINCIAL TEAMS/PROFESSIONAL GAME**

In another eventful season the provinces performed well in Magners League and the European competitions, Heineken Cup and Amlin Cup.

In the Magners League, including two Italian teams for the first time, Munster topped the league phase of the competition by a considerable margin, recording only three losses from twenty-two fixtures. Leinster and Ulster had late runs in the final weeks of the competition to secure second and third place in the league phase, respectively. This ensured home semi finals for Munster against Ospreys and Leinster against Ulster, with Leinster and Munster progressing to an all Irish final in Thomond Park at the end of May. This all Irish affair did not disappoint and Munster won the honours after eighty minutes of intense and absorbing rugby - the final score 19:9. It was a fitting finale to a great Irish provincial season. Whilst Connacht did not feature in the knockout stages they had perhaps their best Magners League season finishing seventh out of the twelve participants and picking up six losing bonus points which highlights their increased competitiveness. The introduction of the two Italian teams has been successful with Treviso in particular proving their competitive worth. There is no doubt that their participation in the Magners League will enhance their competitiveness and that of the Italian national team. The interest in the competition continues to grow with over one million attending matches this season and over 500,000 television viewers tuning into the league weekly. Once again the provincial derby matches were big occasions with Leinster v. Munster in the Aviva Stadium attracting a capacity attendance of 50,000. The Magners League continues to be the critical competition underpinning professional rugby in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Italy. The competition is now administered through the



Six Nations/British Lions organisation under the direction of Chief Executive, John Feehan, which will provide an enhanced and more professional operational and commercial programme. One area that will receive special attention is that of match officials to ensure that the quality of officiating matches the quality of the rugby being played. Celtic Rugby Ltd. is working with European Rugby Cup Ltd. and the six Unions to improve the development and coaching of match officials. In the meantime new improved disciplinary procedures have been implemented this season to remove any perception of bias arising from disciplinary procedures falling to each Union in respect of their own clubs. There is much optimism for the future growth of this competition.

In the European competitions, Heineken Cup and Amlin Cup, the results were equally positive in that Leinster and Ulster reached the quarter final stages, bridging a twelve year gap in the case of Ulster. Munster, for so long the standard bearer of Irish provincial rugby, failed to reach the knockout stages for the first time in thirteen years. They did however drop down into the quarter finals of the Amlin Cup in the first season of this new format, beating Brive away to set up a home semi final against Harlequins. However an unusually flat and error ridden performance by Munster in Thomond Park allowed Harlequins to dominate the match winning by 12:20. This new Amlin Cup structure has been very successful in growing the interest in that competition, with four Heineken Cup teams dropping down and giving the Amlin Cup real credibility. In the pool stage of the Amlin Cup Connacht had good wins against Bayonne home and away but the unexpected round one loss against Cavalieri proved expensive and whilst finishing second in their pool, failed to qualify for the knockout stages.

With both Leinster and Ulster reaching the Heineken Cup knockout stages there was the prospect of potentially two Irish home semi finals. As it turned out, Ulster, playing away, could not get by the abrasive and direct Northampton team and their participation ended at the quarter final stage. It was a much improved performance from Ulster over the course of the season and their objective of reaching the knockout stages of Heineken Cup was realised. Leinster on the other hand had a home quarter final against Leicester and in front of a capacity attendance in the Aviva Stadium produced a very professional performance to beat

a resilient Leicester team by 17:10. Given the draw this meant a home semi final against Toulouse on 30th April, again at a full house in the Aviva Stadium. In what was an intense and high quality match with both sides fully committed, Leinster won by 32:23, demonstrating how far this Leinster team has come in terms of being able to produce eighty minutes of all encompassing rugby. It was an enthralling match and Leinster well deserved winners secured a place in the Heineken Cup Final on 21st May in Cardiff against Northampton. In a quite extraordinary final match Leinster turned a 22:6 half-time deficit into a stunning comeback victory of 22:33 to cap a very fine season, winning the Heineken Cup for the second time in three years – a remarkable achievement.

The Laws of the Game and their interpretation have continued to be a point of debate within the game during the season. As alluded to earlier there was controversy over the interpretation of the tackle and maul during the Guinness Series in the autumn and the earlier matches in the RBS Six Nations. Further clarification from the IRB has been provided in this area and it was acknowledged that Ireland had been perhaps harshly treated by the earlier interpretations. There is continuing concern about the scrum engagement and whilst there is a moratorium on any changes to the Laws this side of the RWC, it is likely that there will have to be reconsideration of the “crouch, touch, pause, engage” approach.

The quality of the game is dependent on the quality of our match officials and a greater degree of emphasis is now being placed on the development, coaching and performance appraisal of match officials. The Magners League in particular is drawing from a small pool of match officials and it has been recognised that neutral appointments are not feasible as the majority of teams are from Wales and Ireland leaving neutral appointments to be made from Scottish and Italian match officials. Instead a merit based appointment system has been put in place, managed by the Referee Managers in each of the Unions. The problem is not confined to the Magners League and there is now a much greater degree of collaboration between ERC Ltd., Celtic Rugby Ltd. and the IRB and Six Nations to ensure there is a greater investment in recruitment, development and coaching of match officials for the benefit of all tournaments and competitions in the professional game.

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The balance between the needs of the National Team and the needs and aspirations of the provincial teams continues to be an interface that requires very close management by the Union. It is critical with our small playing population that the international players are not overplayed and in particular that they are getting the appropriate amount of game time at the right points in the season in terms of their preparation for international rugby. "Foreign" players in the provinces who can at times hold down positions in the provincial teams to the detriment of both Irish international players and players who need game time to progress towards international selection. The Player Welfare Programme has become increasingly formalised to ensure that there is a clear understanding of when international players are not available and when they are available and expected to play for their provinces. Whilst there is inevitably disagreement from time to time between the Union and the provinces in relation to this policy, it has by and large worked well as evidenced by the fact that Munster only lost three matches in the Magners League, and by the performances of Ulster and Leinster in the Magners League and Heineken Cup. The aim is over time to reduce our reliance on "foreign" players replacing them with the product of our provincial academy programmes. However, in the short term there will continue to be the need for quality "foreign" players to bolster the provinces when the international players are not available. This makes commercial and rugby sense, provided this policy does not inhibit the development of Irish players, particularly in those positions where we are weak.

Our reliance on "foreign" players can only be reduced by ensuring that our provincial academy and elite player development programmes are effective. Considerable work has been done in this area by the provinces and their high performance staff and also by the Union under the management of Allen Clarke. Leinster in particular have refined their Academy and High Performance model to something approaching international standards. The relationships with schools and clubs and their involvement in the process is critical to success and Leinster have managed to foster these positive relationships and in doing so have shown the way to the other provinces. However, continued emphasis and investment in this area is vital in terms of player succession planning. There has been a full review of the entire elite player pathway from provincial underage levels from age sixteen right up to the Ireland U.20 and provincial professional squads under the guidance of the Performance Committee. The Performance Committee and its subsets are responsible for reviewing and assessing the performance of all the elite teams and the elite player pathways. Part of that process is twice yearly reviews with the provincial team managements, twice yearly reviews with each provincial academy, annual review of all Irish representative teams with their team managements and of course regular review and liaison with the National Team Management. This has proved to be a highly valuable process where there is oversight of the entire high performance programme, one of the recommendations coming out of the Genesis Report in 2007.

During the course of the year a detailed review of the governance of the professional game in Connacht was carried out. Arising out

of this review the IRFU and Connacht Branch agreed to transfer the running of the professional game, both on and off the pitch, to a Professional Game Board chaired by the well known businessman, Jimmy Staunton. The other members of the Board are drawn from the commercial and business community in Connacht and beyond with a view to giving the professional team the best possible chance of commercial success which is needed to ensure that the team is successful both on and off the pitch. The IRFU has agreed to provide some additional levels of funding to assist in retaining and recruiting players. It is hoped that a three year plan under the guidance and direction of the Professional Game Board will see the Connacht team start to become more commercially viable and an attractive proposition for sponsors and the public alike.

The new governance structures in Leinster, Munster and Ulster have bedded down this season and the consensus is that the structures are working well and benefiting from the experience of individuals who have been brought into the new structures from outside the game.

Niall Woods who has been the Chief Executive of the Irish Rugby Union Players Association since its inception resigned to pursue other business interests and has been replaced by Omar Hassanein, who brings his experience from working for the Australian Rugby Union Players Association. Best wishes to both Niall and Omar in their new roles.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIVE TEAMS**

The Ireland "A" team, now rebranded as the Irish Wolfhounds and coached by Eric Elwood, played two fixtures during the season, against Scotland "A" in Galashiels, losing heavily by 32:13 in a poor performance. This was followed by a match in Dublin against the England Saxons, where a much improved performance against a strong English side resulted in a 20:11 victory. These matches continue to be important in giving the National Management opportunities to view fringe players however the cost of staging these fixtures and the difficulty in finding suitable times to play the fixtures in an already congested season means that it is unlikely that there will be more than one or two such fixtures in any given year.

The Ireland U.20 team is an important part of the elite player development programme and, under the coaching of Allen Clarke and managed by Michael Kearney, participated in the IRB U.20 Junior World Championship in Argentina in June 2010. Whilst proving very competitive the team narrowly lost two critical matches, to France by 25:22 and to Argentina by 24:21. They beat Samoa comfortably and lost heavily to eventual finalists England. The team was placed ninth overall and the experience gained will no doubt assist in the development of these players.

For the 2010/11 season Mike Ruddock was appointed as Coach along with Manager Michael Kearney. There were some notable victories in the U.20 Six Nations Championship, including a victory against a very strong English team. However there was some frustration for the team in that a number of the talented U.20 squad were required by their provinces for Magners League duty which clashed with the



U.20 fixtures. The view was taken by the Union that priority should be given to the provinces for good commercial and rugby reasons and given that U.20 rugby is a stepping stone to provincial professional teams, then the provincial teams should have priority.

No such clash occurs for the 2011 U.20 Junior World Championships to be held in Italy in June and with a full complement of players available it is hoped that there will be a good performance in this tournament.

The National Schools (U.18) team were crowned FIRA-AER U.18 European Champions for the first time following an excellent 17:8 victory for Terry McMaster's well-drilled Schools team over England. England's heavier pack had an advantage in the scrum but Ireland were sharper in most other facets of the game. Their decision-making, composure in possession and ability to take the right option time and again helped them maintain their lead in muggy, wet conditions at the Stade Maurice Trelut.



The National Youth (U.18) team played three international fixtures against Germany U.18 (win to Ireland 54:0), England Clubs and Schools (resulting in a draw; 23:23) and France U.18 (win to Ireland 27:14). Included in the squad were a number of exiles players who have progressed through the enhanced screening and assessment programme now operated by the Irish Exiles.

The International Club team played two fixtures, away to Scotland and home to England. Both Games were hard fought fixtures, with the Irish Side eventually winning both Games (Sco 30:Ire 32; Ire 16:Eng 8). The high standard of both games indicates the strength of Irish Senior Club Rugby.



The Irish Women's national team has had a demanding season. In August 2010, the team competed in the Women's RWC held in Surrey, England. A tough pool round saw a credible performance against England (Eng 0:Ire 27) and wins over USA (Ire 22:USA 12) and Kazakhstan (Ire 37:Kaz 3). Unfortunately in the quarter finals a fatigued squad could not repeat the winning performance against the USA (USA 40:Ire 3), and eventually the squad achieved a seventh place following a resounding win in the playoff against Scotland (Ire 32:SCO 8).

Following the Women's RWC, eight players retired from national duty and in a short space of time the National Coach, Philip Doyle, was able to form a national team with a crop of developing players which achieved a commendable third place overall in the Six Nations. The Six Nations was also the final tournament for Rachel Reid, who over her seven seasons as manager of the Women's team has made a significant contribution to Irish performances at international level.



### DOMESTIC GAME

The game in Ireland continues to grow, and through the Domestic Game Committee, chaired by Stephen Hilditch, the IRFU has implemented a number of financial and operational programmes to support the growth of the game. At this point it is important to acknowledge the help of the Irish Sports Council in financially supporting the IRFU's rugby development activities.



	<b>Ulster</b>	<b>Munster</b>	<b>Leinster</b>	<b>Connacht</b>	<b>Total 2010/11</b>	<b>Total 2009/10</b>
Senior Males	7,087	5,862	10,320	2,347	<b>25,616</b>	25,440
Senior Women	698	790	1,354	137	<b>2,979</b>	2,764
Age Grade (Club)	4,852	8,190	12,023	5,011	<b>30,076</b>	30,103
Mini Rugby	4,800	7,023	11,900	1,957	<b>25,680</b>	24,602
<b>Total Club Numbers</b>	<b>17,437</b>	<b>21,865</b>	<b>35,597</b>	<b>9,452</b>	<b>84,351</b>	<b>82,909</b>
<b>School Rugby Programmes</b>						
Age Grade (Secondary Schools <sup>1</sup> )	11,830	4,950	11,652	2,300	<b>30,732</b>	30,464
School Development Programme <sup>2</sup>	9,800	8,263	15,865	4,812	<b>38,740</b>	39,707
<b>Total Participants (School &amp; Club)</b>	<b>39,067</b>	<b>35,078</b>	<b>63,114</b>	<b>16,564</b>	<b>153,823</b>	<b>153,080</b>

<sup>1</sup> Playing as part of a Secondary School League

<sup>2</sup> Male and female who participate in a six week rugby programme conducted in schools (using either Play Rugby, TAG, Lep Rugby or Mini Rugby)

The continued success of our National and Provincial Teams has been felt by our clubs who have witnessed a strong growth in the number of mini and youth players. The challenge for the Union is not recruiting players but in retaining players through age grade and maximizing the volunteer resources in clubs and schools to managing the growth of numbers in the game. The table above indicates the growth of the game over the last twelve months.

A key programme implemented this season and supported by the Irish Sports Council, was the Play Rugby Programme. Play Rugby is designed to create a link between primary schools and clubs, which is not reliant on Development Officers for delivery and maintenance. Designed as a teaching resource, the programme is supported by an online web resource consisting of coaching manuals, videos and games, and is widely used by teachers and age grade coaches. Play Rugby Packs have been well received by primary schools and their value has been recognised outside the rugby community with local sports partnerships including them as sporting resources.

This season the IRFU also launched the Club Excellence Award, which recognises clubs which achieve high standards in club management and organisation both on and off the pitch. A Project Group under the leadership of Diarmuid Kelly and Chris Webster

undertook a pilot of the scheme this season, which resulted in the following clubs becoming the first recipients of the Award; Clondalkin RFC, Suttonians RFC, Seapoint RFC, Galway Corinthians RFC, Ballina RFC, Midleton RFC, CIYMS RFC and Randalstown RFC. Each of the recipient clubs received their award in front of their peers at a pre-match international luncheon. It is important to acknowledge the support of Sport NI in developing the Award. The Scheme will be fully implemented from the beginning of the 2011/12 season.

Over the last twelve months the Domestic Game Committee has surveyed schools and clubs to better understand the issues facing volunteers in light of the economic uncertainty that prevails. The feedback from clubs and schools will allow the Union to make informed decisions as to how best to provide appropriate support for volunteers and ensure the game continues to grow despite the current economic conditions.

#### **All Ireland League and Cups**

This season saw changes to the AIL Cup, with the senior competition reverting to the Bateman Cup format which was last played in the early seventies. The winner of the Bateman Cup was Bruff RFC who edged out Dungannon in a close fixture



(Bruff 24:Dungannon 18). The Junior Cup Final was a match of high quality; Crosshaven had a hard fought win over Monivea, with the final score (17:9) not truly reflecting the closeness of the encounter.

During 2010/11 season we welcomed Ulster Bank as new sponsors of the All Ireland League. This season the Ulster Bank League has produced some stunning rugby. In the final weeks of the competition there was one weekend where ten fixtures influenced whether a club was demoted or promoted. This intensity of the competition was demonstrated during the Ulster Bank League playoffs where Cork Constitution defeated Young Munster (19:9) and Old Belvedere defeated Clontarf (22:20) to progress to the final. The final at Donnybrook was a close and hard fought encounter between the Cork Constitution and Old Belvedere. Cork Constitution were outscored by three tries to one as Old Belvedere claimed the Ulster Bank League Division I trophy for the first time in the club's history with a 22:17 win.

The format for the Ulster Bank League will change in 2011/12, with a two division format and the introduction of rolling subs. These changes were introduced after detailed consultation with Branches and Clubs, led by Ian McIlrath, and will create an Ulster Bank League structure which will allow club rugby to continue to thrive. The prospect of change has created a vibrancy in senior clubs, and also in Qualifying League clubs where each provincial winner is automatically promoted to the Ulster Bank League. Therefore in 2011/12 the new clubs entering the Ulster Bank League will be: Sligo RFC, Boyne RFC, Cashel RFC and Armagh RFC.

A new initiative launched this season was the "Friday Night Lights" which saw supporters increase from 400 to 3,000 at local derby matches. Next season, the IRFU will more actively promote the playing of evening fixtures under floodlights as it increases the number of supporters from the local community and provides an enjoyable experience for our amateur club players.

### Women's Rugby

The Women's game continues to grow under the leadership of Michael McLoughlin and through the continued support of the Irish

Sports Council 'Women in Sport' Grant. The Women's All Ireland League continued to gain strength, with an expanded season structure of home and away fixtures in Division I. Across Division I and II twenty-nine teams competed.

The IRFU also implemented its Play Rugby Programme for secondary school girls. The programme was linked to clubs establishing age grade teams, who then participated in small sided blitzes in each province. Although in it's first season of rollout, clubs which embraced the programme have achieved good success in establishing womens age grade teams.

It has been three years since the IRFU became an integrated Union, managing the affairs of both the Men's and Women's game. During this period the programme of implementation has been fully embraced by the IRFU and Branches. As a means of ensuring continued growth of the Women's game, a National Workshop was held in January 2011 which brought together the women's leading volunteers, provincial and IRFU staff, to discuss the future direction of women's rugby in Ireland. Through consultation with the Branches, a new and innovative plan will be developed for growing the Women's game which will be incorporated into the new IRFU Strategic Plan for 2012-16.

### Coaching and Training

The IRFU Coach Development Department has continued to meet the demands of club and school coaches through formal accreditation and ongoing professional development. Through the continued dedication of (primarily) volunteer coaches and the support of provincial and national development staff, the profile of coaching and level of continuing professional development throughout clubs and schools has never been higher. With IRFU coaching courses mapped across five stages of the Long Term Player Development Pathway (LTPD), the needs and capacities of the players of our game are at the forefront of all coach education and the feedback received from coaches at all levels of course is overwhelmingly positive in this regard. The Coaching Department is presently pursuing FETAC recognition for it's 5-stage accreditation programme, which will place the IRFU as a leading NGB in Coach Development.



The demand for coaching courses in the provinces this season was again very high with forty Mini Rugby, twenty Foundation Level, and eight Level 1 coaching courses delivered by our provincial development staff and tutors. Nationally a Level 2 coaching course (six days) and an Assistant Level 2 coaching course (two days) were delivered during the summer months. In order to fully support this programme, the Coach Development Department responsibilities extend to the training and accreditation of professional staff as both course tutors, who deliver on courses, and coach observers, who undertake the practical observation aspects of coach accreditation at Stage 3 (Level 1) and Stage 4 (Level 2). All staff training initiatives are undertaken with the aim of providing the highest levels of service to the coaching community and thanks are due to the staff of the Development Department for their work and to the Branches for their pro-active efforts in both devising and supporting such initiatives.

### Age Grade Rugby

Age grade rugby continues to grow due to the heightened awareness of rugby throughout Ireland as well as the focus on participation, development, inclusion and enjoyment. Clubs and schools are adhering to the non-competition policy in mini rugby. Through youth rugby, coach development initiatives have enhanced the standard of coaching, resulting in more players remaining in the game. The Aviva Mini-Rugby Festivals are becoming a regular fixture in the calendar, and involve both boy and girl teams from each province. As mentioned earlier, the Play Rugby Programme has been successful in primary schools, and there have been a number of festivals in each Branch which in some cases have been attended by over six hundred primary school children.

Over the last three years the IRFU has implemented a number of age grade initiatives and policy changes to maximise participation. With the significant growth of the game over recent seasons the IRFU is currently reviewing existing age grade and adult rugby regulations. This exercise involves Youth, Schools and Women stakeholders and the sharing of best practice across each sector. The outcome of this exercise will be to enhance the players' experience and ensure that they transition to the adult game.



The Union again operated the Schools of Ireland Scheme, with seventy-eight schools participating in the Scheme. All of these schools returned information on their respective rugby programmes. The data highlighted that across the seventy-eight schools there are over eight hundred teams coached by thirteen hundred coaches who participate in approximately 10,800 fixtures. This indicates the vibrancy of the school game and its importance to the future of Irish rugby.

### Child Welfare

The Child Welfare Policy document is in its third season and will be reviewed and updated for the start of the 2011/12 season. The feedback is positive regarding our structures and processes for dealing with incidents. The implementation of Garda Vetting started this season and we hope to have all participating clubs complete this by the end of 2011.

### Development Programmes for Clubs

The Club Support Scheme continued again this season and is only possible through a contribution from the professional game from each province. It is an important principal that a component of the provincial professional game revenues are being invested into clubs. The Scheme provides support for areas of the game that the IRFU believe require greatest attention. These include, coach development, adult/U.21/women's team participation, referee development, child protection and club development, etc. Branches are now administering the Scheme directly, with any provincial surplus been reinvested by the Branches into local club initiatives.

We continue to recognize the role played by schools and/or clubs in the development of professional players. Through the 'Reward for Player Development Scheme', close to €90,000 has been awarded in the last year to clubs and/or schools who contributed to the development of Ireland's professional players.

The IRFU continues to support development of all age grade and women's rugby by fully funding team insurance and heavily subsidising the insurance costs of adult sides.



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### IRFU Leisure Rugby

The IRFU Leisure Rugby programme creates the opportunity for participants to participate in a 'Lite' form of rugby during the summer months - Tag Rugby. Key to the success of the programme is the social and enjoyable dimensions of the programme. In 2010, the IRFU focused on maximising the number of teams in each venue; in total six hundred and ninety teams participated in an eight week programme of Tag Rugby across eighteen venues. In addition over eighty teams competed in four Beach Tag events. It should also be noted that the Leisure Rugby Programme also creates the opportunity for referees to maintain their competencies over the summer break - a total of three hundred and forty-two association/society referees participated in the programme. In 2011 season, the Leisure Rugby Programme will be responsible for the implementation of the IRFU Club 7s programme, which will consist of provincial qualifiers, progressing to an All-Ireland Championship.

### Community Rugby Programmes

The IRFU policy is that all Community/Social Inclusion activities should be conducted in partnership with rugby clubs rather than in isolation. To facilitate this, the IRFU/Branches are actively engaging with Local Sports Partnerships to explore opportunities to jointly operate Community Rugby Programmes. Some of the initiatives being undertaken by the IRFU/Branches are outlined below:

The continued recruitment and retention of players in Ballymun, Ballyogan, Tallaght and Swords. Close co-operation occurs between the IRFU Leinster Branch and the Dublin City Council, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council and Fingal County Council, respectively, on these initiatives. During the 2010/11 season the focus of these programmes changed from increasing participation, to linking the programmes to established clubs in the area through the deployment of Community Rugby Officers.

The Donegal Community Rugby Project has been extended for a second period of three years; with the emphasis for the next three years on supporting the club volunteers and growing the three new youth clubs. The Ulster Branch has appointed a Community Rugby Officer who will have a remit for Clubs/Schools in Donegal and the three adjoining border counties. During the 2010/11 season Rugby Development Officers delivered six week rugby programmes in fifty-nine primary and secondary schools in the Donegal County.

During 2011, the IRFU expanded its Gaeltacht initiative by operating projects on the Dingle Peninsula (Corca Dhuibhne RFC), Connemara (Ghaeltacht RFC) and Donegal clubs (Tir Chonail RFC). This includes the production of rugby literature in Irish and the linking of Gaeltacht communities through blitzes and rugby open days. This summer, the IRFU will award grants to a number of school boys or school girls for places in the Colaiste Gaeilge Corca Dhuibhne. Munster Community Rugby Officer for West Kerry, Shane O'Rourke, will deliver rugby training sessions in Gaeilge to attendees of the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht. This will culminate in the students participating in the IRFU Beach Tag Rugby Festival on Ventry Beach on the Dingle Peninsula.

### Third Level Rugby

The IRFU has re-structured the Third Level Sub Committee (TLSC), reporting to the Domestic Game Committee, to support the governance, management and competition structure of Third Level Rugby. The TLSC will now contain representatives from each provincial Colleges Committee. Colleges are also affiliating to the Branches. This allows the IRFU to service the colleges as "mid-week clubs."

College competitions are ongoing and include six divisions of men's rugby, two divisions of men's fresher rugby and two divisions of a men's development league totalling forty-eight teams. The women's college league has just completed and featured twelve teams this season. The University Clubs have also competed for the Dudley and Conroy Cups this season.

The IRFU has had advanced discussions with the Colleges and Universities Association of Ireland (CUSAI), with the aim of utilizing the organization to manage and coordinate competitions, both 7's and 15's, at third level. It would be hoped that this partnership can be agreed by the middle of 2011.

The IRFU has entered into partnership with a number of academic institutions to part fund Community Rugby Officers to develop the game within the student population; institutions supported by the IRFU include Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin City University, the University of Limerick, NUI Galway, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Carlow IT, Cork Institute of Technology and Queens University.

### MEDICAL

A strategic review of the Medical Department of the IRFU has been performed which has led to plans to introduce a new format for the IRFU Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) and IRFU medical operations. The MAC will now include representation from the players' association (IRUPA) and additional medical expertise from neurology, cardiology, respiratory medicine and others if required. The MAC will be chaired by an independent chairperson. In addition, a new Education and Research Group will be formed to help develop, promote and source cutting edge science in rugby related areas with priorities in player welfare, injury surveillance and player durability. The Medical Department will have an International Expert Advisory Group benchmark and review its activities every three years.

In September, the Medical Department ran a well attended Concussion Workshop for doctors and physiotherapists involved in the game. The speakers included local, national and international experts in the field of concussion to include Dr. Mark Lovell from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre the developer of the online concussion testing system – ImpACT. Professor Michael Molloy gave an update on the IRB Concussion Regulation and the progress of the IRB Concussion Working Group.

This year has seen the introduction of a new rugby specific first aid programme for doctors and physiotherapists involved in the



professional game. The programme is called SAFE – Rugby (Standard Approach to Field Emergencies). The first of these occurred in May with twenty-four participants and a Faculty of twelve. Our colleagues in the Scottish Rugby Union assisted with the development of this programme. The programme will dovetail with the SRU programme and become mandatory in three years time. The SAFE-Rugby programme is an important development that will ensure that all of our doctors and physiotherapists are kept up to date in emergency skills.

The Medical Department also has a number of ongoing research initiatives in concussion, groin injury, body composition measurement and Vitamin D levels and in GPS monitoring.

**ANTI-DOPING**

The IRFU once again commissioned anti-doping tests through the Irish Sports Council (ISC) supplementing the ISC National Anti-Doping Programme. No adverse findings were reported. Details of the tests performed are outlined below.

**2010/11 Anti-doping Programme**

*In Competition Testing*

Team	No. of Players tested
Senior XV	10
U.20	06
ERC and Magners League	08
AIB League Club XVs	24
Women	04

*Out of Competition Testing*

Team	No. of Players tested
Senior	50
U.20	05
Provincial Squads	40
Clubs	15
Provincial Academy	10
Women	05

**CHARITABLE TRUST**

As it moves into its fourth decade of existence, the need for a strong and vibrant IRFU Charitable Trust was never more important. Furthermore, while the country continues to suffer economically, the needs of our thirty-three injured players have not diminished in any way. In fact, the Trust anticipates that they will grow significantly in the future.

This year, the total level of assistance granted will be in excess of €193,000, which is slightly less than previous seasons, but substantially larger than the level of the generous grants allocated by the IRFU. As a result, the Trust has undertaken substantial and varied fundraising ventures. These have included the now annual Friends Dinner, an O<sub>2</sub> sponsored Rugby Ball, Fun Runs, a Charitable Trust Weekend in Ulster, a Sports Quiz night, a white collar boxing tournament and many other events. In addition to raising much needed monies, these functions have greatly helped in raising the profile of the Trust.

Once again, many private individuals have shown great generosity to the Trust by way of donations, and bequests. However, this year the Trust received an enormous boost from the Stuart Mangan Trust, which made a major contribution, following Stuart's sad demise in August 2009.

Other contributions were gratefully received from the proceeds of the Irish Legends v. English Legends match held on the eve of the Ireland v. England game, and there was also a wonderful Gala Concert held on behalf of the Trust in the National Concert Hall, Dublin organised by Mrs. Irene Trenier and her family.

The monies raised in this, and other years, has resulted in the Trust being able to provide a much needed increase in the level of service available to the injured players, over and above straight financial contributions. This includes regular direct contact, and other facilities, as well as organising such events as the second weekend for the players and carers in the Share Centre in Enniskillen which took place last June.

It is obviously important that the services and assistance provided by the Trust continue and improve. To do so, it is equally obvious



that continued support will be required from the rugby fraternity in general, and not left to the IRFU on its own. In that regard, clubs and individuals can provide immediate help by contributing annually to the Friends of the Charitable Trust Schemes. Sadly, despite the obvious need, the Trust reports a drop in income from this source. As a result, this year the income from the Friends Scheme is likely to produce about €70,000 only. This is an invaluable regular source of income for the Trust. Therefore, it appeals to all involved in rugby throughout Ireland to contribute to our courageous players - they more than deserve support!

I would like to thank Jeff Smith for his service to the Charitable Trust since 2003, he now steps aside as John Callaghan takes the Chair.

## FACILITIES

The first year of operation of the Aviva Stadium has been most successful with twenty-six fixtures on the international pitch, eleven of which were rugby fixtures. In addition there were two concerts. This is a significant number of fixtures for a pitch that was only seeded in March 2010 and there has been some considerable wear and tear on the pitch but despite this it has stood up remarkably well. The non-event day business of meetings, conferences, etc. has also been reasonably buoyant despite the effects of the recession. There have inevitably been teething troubles as the operations team have become used to how the building operates and also it has taken time for patrons to familiarise themselves with the facility. The more recent matches in 2011 have operated very smoothly with little complaint or fuss and the match day experience has been a good one for most patrons.

The wrap up of the project is not finally complete until the end of May this year when snagging will be finally complete, but it is satisfying to note that the project will have been completed on schedule and within budget. The Chair of the New Stadium Ltd. has recently rotated to John Delaney of the FAI who will hold the post for two years before it reverts to an IRFU appointed Chair. Noel Murphy stepped down as an IRFU Director during the year and has been replaced by Pat Fitzgerald. Many thanks to Noel Murphy for his contribution to the project since its inception.

Good news was received in respect of Ravenhill with the announcement of a £14.7m grant from the N. Ireland Government towards the redevelopment of Ravenhill. This will result in three new stands being developed bringing the capacity to greater than 15,000 along with more modern spectator facilities with revenue generating potential. This project will take two to three years to complete but will provide Ulster Rugby with a much improved facility in what is a good location in the heart of Belfast. Further developments at Newforge will enhance the training facilities for the Ulster team.

Leinster are in the final stages of completing a new administrative and training centre for the professional team in a joint venture arrangement with UCD, funded by a generous benefactor. This will put Leinster facilities on par with any of the major rugby clubs in Europe and will continue to facilitate the growth and success of the game in Leinster. Discussions continue with the RDS Arena which would increase the capacity of the current facility and which would provide better spectator accommodation and facilities in place of the current main stand.

Training facilities for the National Team still are problematic. Having committed to the Abbotstown National Sports Campus project, the current recessionary times have put that project on hold. There is likely to be some limited development of facilities for other sports in Abbotstown but this will not meet the requirements of the National Team. The best that can be done at present in Abbotstown is to maintain our position in the overall site masterplan in the hope that funds will become available in time to allow the original vision of a world class training facility for the National Team to be progressed. In the meantime other alternatives for the short to medium term are being investigated.

Outstanding facility developments still remain including the future of Musgrave Park and custom designed training facilities for Munster along with the development of more appropriate spectator facilities at the Galway Sports Ground for Connacht. Financing any projects such as these will be difficult in the current economic and financial circumstances but that does not prevent progressing plans and both Munster and Connacht continue to review their facility strategies.

RBS SIX NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

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# IRELAND 24 ENGLAND 8

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THE FINAL MATCH OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP WAS IN DUBLIN AGAINST ENGLAND WITH ENGLAND PLAYING FOR A GRAND SLAM. IT ALL CAME TOGETHER FOR IRELAND WITH THE TEAM PLAYING AT A MUCH GREATER LEVEL OF INTENSITY THAN IN PREVIOUS MATCHES AND BEING DOMINANT IN ALL FACETS OF THE GAME OVER AN ENGLISH TEAM THAT NEVER FOUND ITS STRIDE. IRELAND WERE OUTSTANDING IN DEFENCE AND ATTACK AND IT WAS PERHAPS THE BEST IRISH PERFORMANCE OF THE PREVIOUS EIGHTEEN MONTHS, WINNING BY 24:8.

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## COMMERCIAL AND MARKETING

Similar to the previous twelve months, the economic backdrop against which the Union has been operating has been extremely difficult. The challenge for the Commercial and Marketing Committee, chaired by Pat Fitzgerald, and the Commercial and Marketing Department has been to try to maintain current revenue streams and to try to create new ones.

The highlight of this past season has undoubtedly been the return home to the Aviva Stadium, our state of the art facility at Lansdowne Road. Our thanks to Aviva Marketing Director, Paul Kelly, and all his colleagues for their generous sponsorship of the Stadium and the IRFU. The naming rights of the facility have been clearly successful as a marketing platform as evidenced by just how quickly the name Aviva Stadium has been adopted by the Irish public and media alike. We opened the stadium with a game against South Africa as the first of four international matches in November. The impact of a rapidly deteriorating economic climate and our ticketing distribution policies starkly illustrated that rugby is not immune to the recession as we did not succeed in having full houses for some of the games as had been expected. The lessons have been learned from the experience and with a restructured tiered seating pricing structure, we were again full for the visits of both France and England in the RBS Six Nations.

It has been a very busy season and the following outlines the headlines of that activity.

### Sponsorship Programme Update

As sports sponsorship continues to develop in Ireland as a more effective tool in the marketing mix, it is gratifying to note that Irish rugby brand again performs strongly as an attractive marketing platform for brands and organisations as evidenced by the latest On-Side Sponsorship Report. Testament to the strength of the Irish rugby brand is that now more than 2.1 million Irish people consider themselves to be rugby fans. Of these, more than 900,000 describe themselves as 'avid fans'. Three in four Irish males are now rugby fans and six out of ten eighteen to twenty-four year olds and 72% of forty-five to fifty-four year olds are part of this community. This again reinforces our long held view that

the relationship between Irish rugby and Corporate Ireland is an important one, of mutual benefit to both parties.

Our thanks to Danuta Grey of O<sub>2</sub> who stepped down as CEO earlier this year. Her steadfast support and contribution to Irish rugby has been immense. We are very grateful and wish her every success in the future. She has been replaced by Steve Shurrock who we are delighted to be working with. Our thanks also to Damian Devaney, O<sub>2</sub> Marketing Director, who has also moved on to pastures new.

Thanks to Puma MD, Tony Ward, and all his team. The quality of the kit both in its on field presentation and technical efficacy speaks volumes. We look forward to deepening the relationship as we move forward.

I would also like to acknowledge our appreciation to RBS as sponsors of the Six Nations and to Guinness as our official beer and Guinness Series sponsors. In particular, I would like to welcome Ulster Bank on board as our new Community Rugby Partner - a vibrant and successful club game is vital to Irish rugby and your support is extremely valued.

There are many other sponsors and partners listed elsewhere in this document to whom we are most grateful for their continued support.

The RWC in September and October will greatly raise the profile of the game here and we look forward to working with all our partners to maximise the platform that it will offer.

### Marketing and Communications Review

Much of the marketing effort this past season has been concentrated on increasing participation in the game and supporting rugby department initiatives and programmes with our contracted players providing significant support in these initiatives.

The broadcasting viewership figures this past season were also excellent with RTE recording strong growth and also on the BBC, our viewership has held up very well in the UK delivering an avenue for all Irish rugby supporters there to follow the National Team.

'Against the Head' which appears weekly on RTE, has transmitted more Ulster Bank League, Cup and Club international rugby than ever before with more matches this season being streamed live both on RTE's website and on Irish Rugby TV and with more Heineken Cup and Magners League matches on Sky, RTE and TG4 there is great televised rugby on offer to the public which is of great benefit for our sponsors and partners.

We have also continued with issues of *In Touch* the official magazine of the IRFU published which were again distributed free with the Irish Independent resulting in a circulation of over 200,000 copies and a readership figure of nearly 500,000 people per issue.

In terms of the fun side of the game Tag rugby is performing very well opening up a new market of rugby enthusiasts into the game and it has proven to be a very significant source of revenue to the clubs involved during the traditionally fallow summer months. This summer we hope to have more than 12,000 players playing in over seven hundred and twenty teams across forty venues.

### Irishrugby.ie

Our website Irishrugby.ie again has grown and continues to develop. Irishrugby.ie underwent a re-design this year making it an even more valuable resource for players, coaches, supporters and media.

This year also saw the launch of a number of key Rugby Development online initiatives including the IRFU Technical Model, which outlines the guiding principles for the development of rugby, and [www.irishrugby.ie/playrugby](http://www.irishrugby.ie/playrugby) to enhance the Play Rugby offering to parents, teachers and coaches as they look to introduce rugby in a fun and interactive way to schoolchildren.

Tag rugby has continued to grow and [www.irfutag.ie](http://www.irfutag.ie) has grown with it. The site also has a whole new look with fully integrated Social Media links that capitalise on the social nature of the game.

### Irish Rugby Supporters Club

The Club continues to provide a conduit between supporters and the Ireland Team while also being a key commercial element of our online offering.

Our Match Day Event for the Ireland v. Samoa game sold out in record time and proved a huge hit with members who got to meet Andrew Trimble and Denis Leamy after the game.

Our regular RBS Six Nations charter flight saw us returning to Wales and although the result was not what we wanted the day proved very popular with our members.

The opportunity to purchase tickets for the games in November and the RBS Six Nations saw the club contributing strongly to the overall IRFU revenue stream with tickets being snapped up in record time.

### COMMITTEE

Our thanks as ever to the volunteers who make things happen in the game in our schools, clubs, Branches and the Union itself.



The Union is committed to providing greater levels of support to clubs in terms of recruitment and training of volunteers, be they coaches or administrators, as the effective operation of the game is dependent on the competencies, skills and experience of those who volunteer within our game.

John Callaghan finishes his term of office as Immediate Past President and retires from the IRFU Committee. He joined the IRFU Committee in season 2000/01 having served as President of the Ulster Branch in 1998/99, the year Ulster won the Heineken Cup. He was a very active member of the IRFU Domestic Game Committee making a significant contribution to youth rugby, University and Colleges rugby and refereeing in particular. Our thanks and best wishes to John and his wife, Mabel, on his retirement from the IRFU Committee.

### OBITUARIES

#### Moss Keane

52 Caps (Ireland), British and Irish Lions

#### Rev Robin Roe

21 Caps (Ireland), British and Irish Lions, Barbarians

#### Prof Barry Bresnihan

25 Caps (Ireland), British and Irish Lions

#### Hubert O'Connor

4 Caps (Ireland)

#### Ben Robinson

Carrick Fergus Grammar School

#### Dion Glass

4 Caps (Ireland), IRFU Committee 1997-2004

#### Patrick Moss

Former Secretary of the IRFU

Finally my thanks to the hardworking staff of the IRFU based at Lansdowne Road and out in the provinces for their continuing commitment and professionalism which reflects so well on them and on Irish rugby.



## ERC HEINEKEN CUP FINAL

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# LEINSTER 33 NORTHAMPTON 22

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LEINSTER WON BY 32:23, DEMONSTRATING HOW FAR THIS LEINSTER TEAM HAS COME IN TERMS OF BEING ABLE TO PRODUCE EIGHTY MINUTES OF ALL ENCOMPASSING RUGBY. IT WAS AN ENTHRALLING MATCH AND LEINSTER WELL DESERVED WINNERS SECURED A PLACE IN THE HEINEKEN CUP FINAL ON 21ST MAY IN CARDIFF AGAINST NORTHAMPTON. IN A QUITE EXTRAORDINARY FINAL MATCH LEINSTER TURNED A 22:6 HALF-TIME DEFICIT INTO A STUNNING COMEBACK VICTORY OF 22:33 TO CAP A VERY FINE SEASON, WINNING THE HEINEKEN CUP FOR THE SECOND TIME IN THREE YEARS - A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT.

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# OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE

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## President

C.C. Powell

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## Vice Presidents

J.D. Hussey      W.B. Glynn

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## Hon. Treasurer

T. Grace

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## Immediate Past President

J.R. Callaghan

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## Chairman Management Committee

F. Crowley

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## Committee

P.J. Boyle M. Cunningham  
G. Drennan      C. Fitzgerald  
P. Fitzgerald      L. Galvin  
S.R. Hilditch      T.H.N. Jackson  
D. Keohane      K. Lyons  
L.P. Magee      I. McIlrath  
M.J. McLoughlin      M.J. O'Sullivan  
J. O'Driscoll      P. Orr  
P. Whelan

---

## International Rugby Board

P.J. Boyle      P. Whelan

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## Six Nations Committee

P.J. Boyle      P. Whelan

---

## European Rugby Cup

P.J. Boyle      P. Browne

---

## Celtic League

P. Browne      P. Orr

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## Lions

T. Grace

---

## Trustees

A.R. Dawson      T.J. Kiernan  
W.S.H. Lavery      Dr. S. Millar

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## Chief Executive

P. Browne

---

## National Coach

D. Kidney

---

## Director of Operations & Strategic Development

K. Potts

---

## Director of Rugby

E. Wigglesworth

---

## Director of Human Resources

M. Dowling

---

## Director of Commercial & Marketing

P. Power

---

## Financial Controller

C. O'Brien

---

## Domestic Game Manager

S. Walker

---

## Medical Director

Dr. C. McCarthy

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FIRA UNDER 18 CHAMPIONNAT d'EUROPE TOURNAMENT

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## IRELAND U.18 17 ENGLAND U.18 8

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IN FRONT OF MORE THAN 5000 SPECTATORS AND LIVE ON EUROSPORT 2, IRELAND LIFTED THE “JUSTIN BRIDOU” SHIELD FOR THE FIRST TIME FOLLOWING A SPIRITED PERFORMANCE AGAINST A STRONG ENGLISH SIDE.

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# STANDING COMMITTEES 2010/2011

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## MANAGEMENT

**F. Crowley**, T. Grace, P.J. Boyle, P. Whelan, M. O'Sullivan, P. Fitzgerald, L.P. Magee, C.C. Powell, J.D. Hussey, S.R. Hilditch, D. Keohane (co-opted), P.R. Browne, K. Potts and E. Wigglesworth.

## REPRESENTATIVE GAME

**M.J. O'Sullivan**, T.H.N. Jackson, L. Galvin, P. Orr, P. Whelan, Chairmen of 4 PTMC's, P.R. Browne, E. Wigglesworth, P. McNaughton, M. Dowling, C. O'Brien and N. Woods.

## DOMESTIC GAME

**S.R. Hilditch**, I. McIlrath, G. Drennan, M. Cunningham, M.J. McLoughlin, D. Keohane, L.P. Magee, C. Fitzgerald, S. Walker and G. Black. Chairs of provincial Domestic Game Committees will be co-opted at the discretion of the Chair.

## FINANCE

**T. Grace**, F. Crowley, L. Galvin, T.H.N. Jackson, K. Lyons, S.R. Hilditch, P.R. Browne, K. Potts, C. O'Brien and L. Quinn (co-opted).

## COMMERCIAL AND MARKETING

**P. Fitzgerald**, P. Orr, G. Drennan, K. Lyons, T. Grace, P.R. Browne, P. Power, K. Richardson and J. Redmond.

## PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

**L.P. Magee**, M.J. O'Sullivan, T. Grace, P. Whelan, F. Crowley, P.R. Browne and E. Wigglesworth.

MAGNERS LEAGUE GRAND FINAL 2011

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MUNSTER 19 LEINSTER 9

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THIS ALL IRISH AFFAIR DID NOT DISAPPOINT AND MUNSTER WON THE HONOURS AFTER EIGHTY MINUTES OF INTENSE AND ABSORBING RUGBY - THE FINAL SCORE 19:9. IT WAS A FITTING FINALE TO A GREAT IRISH PROVINCIAL SEASON.

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# SUB COMMITTEES 2010/2011

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## DISCIPLINARY

**P. Orr**, Union Committee Members, P. Barriscale, H. Blake, J. Carroll, M. Coghlan, R. Cole, N. Comyn, T. Dalton, J. Glackin, D. Glass, D. Hurley, H. Logan, D. Martin, H. McKibbin, M. McParland, Dr. B. O'Driscoll, P. O'Connor, G. Spotswood, G. Black and co-optees as and when required.

## APPEALS

**W.B. Glynn**, Union Committee Members, P. Barriscale, H. Blake, J. Carroll, M. Coghlan, R. Cole, N. Comyn, T. Dalton, J. Glackin, D. Glass, D. Hurley, H. Logan, D. Martin, H. McKibbin, M. McParland, Dr. B. O'Driscoll, P. O'Connor, G. Spotswood, G. Black and co-optees as and when required.

## EXILES

**J.D. Hussey**, L.P. Magee, J. O'Driscoll and S. Walker.

## REGULATIONS

F. Crowley and P. O'Connor.

## AGE GRADE

**D. Keohane**, G. Drennan, M. Cunningham, H. Kruger, S. Walker, A. Clarke, G. Spotswood, plus nominee from Schools, nominee from Youth, Branch co-option from relevant Committee.

## SCHOOLS

**G. Drennan**, C. Fitzgerald, H. Kruger, P. Cafferky, E. Geraghty, D. English, K. Patton and L. Balfe.

## YOUTH

**M. Cunningham**, M.J. McLoughlin, H. Kruger, B. Mescal, H. Woodhouse, T. McCoy, R. Stewart and W. Gribben.

## THIRD LEVEL

**I. McIlrath**, M.J. McLoughlin, E. Hogan and D. Carrigy. Representatives from the Irish Colleges Rugby Union, Irish Universities Rugby Union and Branch co-option from the relevant Committee.

## MEDICAL

**W.B. Glynn**, Dr. C. McCarthy, Prof. A. Tanner, Dr. T. O'Sullivan, Dr. J. O'Donnell, Dr. W. Rainey, Dr. B. O'Driscoll, Dr. G. O'Driscoll, Dr. E. Falvey, C. Steele and B. Green.

## REFEREES

**J.R. Callaghan**, O.E. Doyle, T. Aplin, B. Stirling, B. Smith and D. Templeton.

## COACHING

**L.P. Magee** and D. Keohane.

## A.I.L. LEAGUE

**I. McIlrath**, G. Black, O. Allen, J. Neary, E. Hosty, P. Deering and D. Workman.

## A.I.L. WORKING PARTY

**L. Galvin**, I. McIlrath, S. Walker and G. Black.

## WOMENS

**M. McLoughlin**, D. Lynch, C. Bergin and Branch Nominees.

## CHARITABLE TRUST

**J.F. Smith**, G. Drennan, M.J. McLoughlin, C. Fitzgerald, Dr. C. Beirne, J. Doherty, S.O. Campbell, P.F. Madigan, J.D. Hussey, Dr. L.N. O'Mahony, J.E. Gallagher, M.A. Quinn, W. Dawson, E. Feely, K.D. Crossan, N. Woods and S. Huey.

## STRATEGIC REVIEW COMMITTEE

**F. Crowley**, K. Potts and one member from each Standing Committee.

## GOVERNANCE STEERING GROUP

**F. Crowley**, K. Potts and Chairmen of four Branch Management Committees.

## NATIONAL TEAM REVIEW GROUP

**M. O'Sullivan**, T. Grace and P. Whelan.

## PLAYER CONTRACT REVIEW GROUP

**M. O'Sullivan**, T. Grace and P. Whelan.

## IRFU NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

P. O'Connor.

## IRFU NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE OFFICER

H. Kruger.

## REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

**J.D. Hussey**, T.H.N. Jackson, F. Crowley and T. Grace.

## REPRESENTATIVES

### Directors of Stadium Company

J.D. Hussey, P. Fitzgerald, P. Browne, J. Delaney, P. McCaul and M. Cody.

### IRB and Six Nations Representatives

P.J. Boyle and P. Whelan.

### ERC Representatives


P.J. Boyle and P.R. Browne.

### FIRA Representative

S.R. Hilditch.

### Celtic League

P. Orr and P.R. Browne.

A blurred photograph of a large stadium filled with spectators. In the foreground, a green ball is partially visible on the right. The background shows a large crowd of people in the stands, and several players in white and black uniforms are on the field. The stadium's roof structure is visible at the top.

THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION OF THE AVIVA STADIUM HAS BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL WITH TWENTY-SIX FIXTURES ON THE INTERNATIONAL PITCH, ELEVEN OF WHICH WERE RUGBY FIXTURES.

**GILBERT**

synergie



IRFU

matchball

SIZE : 5



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# THE IRFU WISHES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS OF IRISH RUGBY

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Sponsor of the Ireland Senior Squad and Ireland Wolfhounds,  
Official Mobile Telecommunications Partner to the IRFU



Official Kit Supplier to the IRFU



Sponsor of the RBS 6 Nations Championship



Stadium and Insurance Partner to the IRFU,  
Sponsor of the Aviva Rugby Festivals



Match Sponsor of the Guinness Series,  
Official Beer Supplier to the IRFU



Official Betting Partner of the IRFU



Sponsors of Community Rugby,  
the Ulster Bank League and RugbyForce



Official Supplier of Match Balls



Official Soft Drink of the IRFU



Official Sports Drink of the IRFU



Supporting Irish Rugby



Official Partner of the IRFU



Official Snack of the IRFU



Official Express and Logistics Partner to the IRFU



Official Spirit of the IRFU



Official Partner of the IRFU



Official Car Supplier to the IRFU



Official Sponsor of the U20, U19, U18 and Ireland Schoolboy teams



Official Shirt Supplier to the IRFU



KENNEDY & McSHARRY  
MANSHOP

Official Outfitters of the IRFU



Official Supplier to the IRFU



Retail Partner to the IRFU

31.07.2010

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# AVIVA STADIUM

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THE AVIVA STADIUM HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY OPENED AND IS NOW OPERATING AS ENVISAGED. IT WILL BE THE FINANCIAL ENGINE FOR THE SPORT FOR MANY YEARS TO COME, PROVIDING REVENUE GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES THAT WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO THE IRFU IN THE PAST.

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# UNION INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

		2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
		€	€	€
<b>Income:</b>	<b>Schedule</b>			
Representative matches	1	64,607,545	55,177,452	49,648,864
Other income	2	4,669,285	4,015,795	7,304,903
		<hr/> 69,276,830	<hr/> 59,193,247	<hr/> 56,953,767
<b>Expenditure:</b>				
Professional game costs	3	33,468,858	35,085,224	31,813,262
Elite player development	4	2,696,181	3,075,965	3,324,060
Games support costs	5	653,674	685,444	695,459
Domestic & community rugby	6	10,006,093	11,123,465	10,560,626
Marketing	7	1,198,796	1,256,362	1,146,115
Grounds	8	2,441,118	944,713	612,332
Administration and overheads	9	4,984,668	4,203,944	5,680,234
Depreciation	(Note 3)	1,380,261	1,157,220	1,186,103
Amortisation of financial fixed assets	(Notes 7 & 8)	5,699,966	-	-
		<hr/> 62,529,615	<hr/> 57,532,337	<hr/> 55,018,191
<b>Surplus for year</b>		<hr/> <b>6,747,215</b>	<hr/> <b>1,660,910</b>	<hr/> <b>1,935,576</b>

**T. Grace**  
Honorary Treasurer

**P. R. Browne**  
Chief Executive

# CONSOLIDATED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

		2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
		€	€	€
<b>Income:</b>	<b>Note</b>			
Representative matches		64,607,545	55,177,452	49,648,864
Other income		4,773,352	4,015,795	7,304,903
Share of loss of joint ventures	7	(4,730,518)	(576,225)	(577,575)
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		64,650,379	58,617,022	56,376,192
<b>Expenditure:</b>				
Professional game costs		33,468,858	35,085,224	31,813,262
Elite player development		2,696,181	3,075,965	3,324,060
Games support costs		653,674	685,444	695,459
Domestic & community rugby		10,006,093	11,123,465	10,560,626
Marketing		1,198,796	1,256,362	1,146,115
Grounds		2,441,118	944,713	612,332
Administration and overheads		5,069,126	4,203,944	5,680,234
Depreciation	3	1,880,261	1,157,220	1,186,103
Amortisation of goodwill	4	370,511	-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		57,784,618	57,532,337	55,018,191
<b>Surplus for year</b>		<hr/> <b>6,865,761</b>	<hr/> <b>1,084,685</b>	<hr/> <b>1,358,001</b>

**T. Grace**  
Honorary Treasurer

**P. R. Browne**  
Chief Executive

## UNION STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Surplus for the financial period	6,747,215	1,660,910	1,935,576
Difference between expected and actual return on pension scheme assets	(127,000)	751,000	(1,574,000)
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities	76,000	254,000	61,000
Effect of changes in actuarial assumptions	(237,000)	(1,357,000)	416,000
<b>Total surplus relating to the period</b>	<b>6,459,215</b>	<b>1,308,910</b>	<b>838,576</b>
<b>Total surplus recognised since the last annual report</b>	<b>6,459,215</b>	<b>1,308,910</b>	<b>838,576</b>

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Surplus for the financial period	6,865,761	1,084,685	1,358,001
Union's share of capital contribution relating to joint ventures	-	-	2,500,000
Difference between expected and actual return on pension scheme assets	(127,000)	751,000	(1,574,000)
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities	76,000	254,000	61,000
Effect of changes in actuarial assumptions	(237,000)	(1,357,000)	416,000
<b>Total surplus relating to the period</b>	<b>6,577,761</b>	<b>732,685</b>	<b>2,761,001</b>
<b>Total surplus recognised since the last annual report</b>	<b>6,577,761</b>	<b>732,685</b>	<b>2,761,001</b>

## UNION RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN UNION FUNDS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
General reserve	23,376,910	22,068,000	21,229,424
Ground development reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Financial assistance to clubs reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Balance at 1 May	25,916,386	24,607,476	23,768,900
Total recognised surplus relating to the period	6,459,215	1,308,910	838,576
Balance at 30 April	32,375,601	25,916,386	24,607,476

## CONSOLIDATED RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN UNION FUNDS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
General reserve	24,740,440	24,007,755	21,246,754
Ground development reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Financial assistance to clubs reserve	1,269,738	1,269,738	1,269,738
Balance at 1 May	27,279,916	26,547,231	23,786,230
Total recognised surplus relating to the period	6,577,761	732,685	2,761,001
Balance at 30 April	33,857,677	27,279,916	26,547,231



# UNION BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 APRIL 2011

	Note	30/04/11 €	30/04/10 €
<b>Tangible fixed assets</b>	3	37,324,589	38,682,368
<b>Financial fixed assets</b>			
Loans to clubs	5	1,027,475	1,693,200
Other loans	6	10,661,778	10,411,778
Joint ventures	7	98,799,358	101,897,898
Investment in subsidiary undertaking	8	9,500,315	-
		119,988,926	114,002,876
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors and prepayments	9	13,485,647	12,422,122
Cash at bank and in hand		9,730,370	12,268,490
		23,216,017	24,690,612
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Bank Loans	10	21,282,084	11,238,476
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	19,619,488	23,304,871
		40,901,572	34,543,347
<b>Net current liabilities</b>		(17,685,555)	(9,852,735)
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		139,627,960	142,832,509
Pension asset	12	381,000	475,000
Deferred ticket fund	13	(98,838,047)	(108,226,893)
Deferred naming rights fund	14	(8,795,312)	(9,164,230)
		32,375,601	25,916,386
<b>Financed by:</b>			
Union funds		32,375,601	25,916,386

**T. Grace**  
Honorary Treasurer

**P. R. Browne**  
Chief Executive

# CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 APRIL 2011

	Note	30/04/11 €	30/04/10 €
<b>Tangible fixed assets</b>	3	46,824,589	38,682,368
<b>Intangible fixed assets</b>	4	7,039,702	7,122,349
<b>Financial fixed assets</b>			
Loans to clubs	5	1,027,475	1,693,200
Other loans	6	40,092,114	38,028,551
Joint ventures:	7		
Share of gross assets		217,065,416	220,441,505
Share of gross liabilities		(153,273,630)	(151,919,199)
		104,911,375	108,244,057
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors and prepayments	9	13,611,572	12,422,122
Cash at bank and in hand		9,730,517	12,268,490
		23,342,089	24,690,612
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Bank loans	10	21,282,084	11,238,476
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	19,725,635	23,304,871
		41,007,719	34,543,347
<b>Net current liabilities</b>		(17,665,630)	(9,852,735)
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		141,110,036	144,196,039
Pension asset	12	381,000	475,000
Deferred ticket fund	13	(98,838,047)	(108,226,893)
Deferred naming rights fund	14	(8,795,312)	(9,164,230)
		33,857,677	27,279,916
<b>Financed by:</b>			
Union funds		33,857,677	27,279,916

T. Grace  
Honorary Treasurer

P. R. Browne  
Chief Executive

# UNION CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

	Note	2010/11 €	2009/10 €
<b>Net cash (outflow) inflow from operating activities</b>	15	(4,288,109)	4,264,584
<b>Returns on investments and servicing of finance</b>			
Interest received on bank deposits and provincial loan balances		97,380	581,784
Interest received on loans to clubs		12,032	14,891
		109,412	596,675
<b>Capital expenditure and financial investment</b>			
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets		(22,482)	(100,807)
Investment in joint ventures		(2,101,426)	(70,716,985)
Net repayment from (advances to) clubs		717	(132,271)
(Advance to) repayment by Munster Branch IRFU		(250,000)	3,850,000
Advances to subsidiary undertakings		(10,000,315)	-
		(12,373,506)	(67,100,063)
<b>Net cash outflow before management of liquid resources</b>		(16,552,203)	(62,238,804)
<b>Management of liquid resources</b>			
(Increase) decrease in short term deposits	16	(446,602)	29,783,821
<b>Financing</b>			
Bank loans		10,043,608	11,238,476
Receipt of deposits on tickets and boxes		3,970,475	16,379,874
Receipt of naming rights		-	8,583,333
		14,014,083	36,201,683
(Decrease) increase in cash	16	(2,984,722)	3,746,700

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 1. Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently, except as stated below, in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the accounts.

### a. Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis in accordance with accounting standards generally accepted in Ireland. Accounting Standards generally accepted in Ireland in preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view are those published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and issued by the Accounting Standards Board.

### b. Basis of consolidation

The group accounts include the accounts of the parent undertaking and its wholly owned subsidiary undertaking, Lansdowne Car Park Limited.

The group accounts include the results of Lansdowne Car Park Limited from the date it commenced to trade.

### c. Goodwill

Goodwill is the difference between the fair value of the consideration given on the acquisition of a business and the aggregate fair value of the separate net assets acquired.

Goodwill is being amortised through the income and expenditure account in equal instalments over its estimated economic life of up to a maximum of 20 years on a straight line basis.

Goodwill is reviewed for impairment at the end of the first full financial year following acquisition and in other periods if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable.

### d. Fixed tangible assets

Fixed tangible assets are shown at their historic cost net of any capital grants received or receivable.

### e. Depreciation

Depreciation is charged in order to write off the assets over their expected useful lives, on a straight line basis, at the following annual rates:

Land	Nil
Stand, buildings, etc.	2.5%
Car park	5%
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	33.33%, 25% and 12.5%
Computer equipment	20% and 33.33%
Grounds purchased & leased to clubs	Nil

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

### f. Joint ventures

The Union's 50% interest in New Stadium Limited and Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited are accounted for in accordance with 'Financial Reporting Standard 9, Associates and Joint Ventures'.

In the individual accounts of the Union, investments in joint ventures are treated as fixed asset investments and valued at cost less provisions for impairment in value. The provision for impairment in value of these investments is based on the estimated useful lives of the underlying fixed assets, which is estimated to be 20 years, and written off on a straight line basis.

In the consolidated accounts, the Union's share of the profits less losses are included in the income and expenditure account. The Union's interest in the net assets is indicated as a fixed asset investment in the balance sheet at an amount representing the Union's share of the fair values of the net assets at acquisition plus the Union's share of post-acquisition retained profits.

The amounts included in the accounts of the Union are taken from the management accounts made up to the Union's year end. Audited accounts of the joint venture companies made up to 30 April are not available as both joint ventures have different year ends to the Union.

### g. Financial fixed assets

#### *Investments*

Investments are valued at cost. These are reviewed annually and provision is made where it is considered that there is an impairment in value.

Income from investments is recognised in the income and expenditure account in the year in which it is receivable.

#### *Investment - subsidiary undertaking*

In the individual accounts of the Union, the investment in and advances to the Union's wholly owned subsidiary, Lansdowne Car Park Limited, are valued at cost less provisions for impairment in value. The provision for impairment in value is based on the estimated useful life of the underlying fixed asset, which is estimated to be 20 years, and written off on a straight line basis.

### h. Grants

Capital grants received are set off against the cost of related fixed assets.

Grants towards revenue expenditure are released to the income and expenditure account as the related expenditure is incurred.

### i. Foreign currencies

#### *Functional and presentation currency*

Items included in the accounts are presented in 'Euro', the currency of the primary economic environment in which the entity operates (the 'functional currency').

#### *Transactions and balances*

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction or at a contracted rate. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are retranslated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date or the contracted rate. All differences are taken to the income and expenditure account as part of the fair value gain or loss.

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 1. Accounting policies (cont'd.)

### j. Pension costs

The Union operates a defined benefit pension scheme for employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Union.

Current service costs, past service costs and gains and losses on settlements and curtailments are charged to the income and expenditure account. Past service costs are recognised over the vesting period or immediately if the benefits have vested. When a settlement or a curtailment occurs, the obligation and related plan assets are re-measured using current actuarial assumptions and the resultant gain or loss is recognised in the income and expenditure account during the period in which the settlement or curtailment occurs.

The interest cost and expected return on assets are shown as a net amount in the income and expenditure account as other finance costs or income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised immediately in the statement of total recognised gains and losses.

Pension scheme assets are valued at fair value at the balance sheet date. Fair value is based on market price information and in the case of quoted securities is the published bid price. Pension scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method and are discounted to their present value using a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent currency and term to the scheme liabilities. Pension scheme surpluses or deficits are recognised in full on the balance sheet.

The Union also operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees. Pension benefits are funded over the employees' period of service by way of contributions to insured funds. The Union's contributions are charged to the income and expenditure account in the period to which they relate.

### k. Deferred ticket income

Monies received in respect of five and ten year tickets have been treated as deferred income and have been released to the income and expenditure account over the period to which they relate based on the estimated number of fixtures and the expected admission prices. Details of the amount deferred are set out in note 13.

### l. Financing

Amounts received in respect of the transfer to the counterparty of the Union's contributions receivable under its stadium naming rights agreement (see note 14) are recorded as deferred income. Interest is accrued using the rate implicit in the financing agreement and is charged to the income and expenditure account in the period to which it relates.

### m. Liquid resources

In the cash flow statement, liquid resources comprise cash on deposit at banks with more than 24 hours notice.

## 2. Income and expenditure recognition

Income and expenditure are recognised in the season in which they arise and are incurred.

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 3. Tangible fixed assets

Union	Cost at	Additions	Cost at
	30/4/10		30/4/11
	€	€	€
Premises and grounds	49,458,757	-	49,458,757
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,474,791	22,482	7,497,273
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	368,713	-	368,713
	57,302,261	22,482	57,324,743
	Accumulated depreciation at 30/4/10	Charge for year	Accumulated depreciation at 30/4/11
	€	€	€
Premises and grounds	11,475,718	1,189,178	12,664,896
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,144,175	191,083	7,335,258
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	-	-	-
	18,619,893	1,380,261	20,000,154
<b>Net book value</b>	38,682,368		37,324,589

Consolidated	Cost at	Additions	Cost at
	30/4/10		30/4/11
	€	€	€
Premises and grounds	49,458,757	-	49,458,757
Car park	-	10,000,000	10,000,000
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,474,791	22,482	7,497,273
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	368,713	-	368,713
	57,302,261	10,022,482	67,324,743
	Accumulated depreciation at 30/4/10	Charge for year	Accumulated depreciation at 30/4/11
	€	€	€
Premises and grounds	11,475,718	1,189,178	12,664,896
Car park	-	500,000	500,000
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7,144,175	191,083	7,335,258
Grounds purchased and leased to clubs	-	-	-
	18,619,893	1,880,261	20,500,154
<b>Net book value</b>	38,682,368		46,824,589

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 3. Tangible fixed assets (cont'd.)

- (i) The Union consider the accumulated cost, less related depreciation, on expenditure previously capitalised in respect of the previous stadium at Lansdowne Road as relating to enhancing the value of the land on which the stadium is situated. As stated in note 7, the Union is in receipt of annual rental income of €750,000 for this land. The net amount included within premises and grounds in respect of this expenditure is €7,550,971. The Union ceased to provide for depreciation on this expenditure when the previous Stadium ceased to be used.
- (ii) Under a Memorandum of Understanding dated 10 December 2007, the Union entered into arrangements with the Munster Branch IRFU and Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited to redevelop the stadium at Thomond Park. As part of these arrangements, the Union advanced a loan to the Branch (Note 6) and acquired a 50% interest in Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited (Note 7). In addition, the Union have granted an option to the Branch to acquire the freehold interest that the Union holds in Thomond Park. The option price will be based on the original cost of the grounds to the Union adjusted for inflation by reference to the Consumer Price Index from the date of the granting of the option. This option will be exercisable by the Branch on the earlier of ten years from the date of practical completion of the stadium or by 1 January 2019.

The accumulated cost of the old stadium, less related depreciation, amounts to €4,239,791 and is included within premises and grounds. The Union have ceased to depreciate this expenditure and propose to carry this amount pending the possible exercise of the option.

## 4. Intangible fixed asset

	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€
<b>Goodwill</b>		
Goodwill arising on acquisition of share in New Stadium Limited	7,410,213	7,122,349
Less: Amount amortised	(370,511)	-
	<u>7,039,702</u>	<u>7,122,349</u>

As part of its investment in the development of the Aviva Stadium, the Union incurred certain expenditure, which was not directly advanced to the joint venture company.

In addition, the Union's capital contribution exceeded 50% of the overall capital contribution made to the joint venture company.

The additional expenditure referred to above, and the excess capital contribution, which represents the fair value of the cost of the development of the stadium over the Union's share of the separate net assets of the joint venture company, have been treated as goodwill.

This goodwill is being amortised over a period of 20 years on a straight line basis.



# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 5. Loans to clubs

Interest on loans to clubs is generally charged at a rate of 1%. Terms of repayment are generally over 10 years.

Loans to clubs included in the balance sheet are net of provision where applicable. Provisions against loans to clubs at the year end amounted to €665,008 (30/4/10: €Nil). The creation of these provisions has reduced income by €665,008 in the current year (2009/2010:€Nil)

## 6. Other loans

	30/4/11	30/4/10
Union	€	€
Loan to Munster Branch IRFU	10,661,778	10,411,778
Amount due within one year	3,894,778	2,658,778
Amount due after one year but within five years	5,887,000	5,756,000
Amount due after five years	880,000	1,997,000
	10,661,778	10,411,778
<b>Consolidated</b>		
Loan to Munster Branch IRFU	10,661,778	10,411,778
Loan to New Stadium Limited	29,430,336	27,616,773
	40,092,114	38,028,551

The Union advanced funds to the Munster Branch in order to assist with the development of Thomond Park. The amounts advanced are secured on the Branch's share in Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited and on the loan advanced by the Branch to that company. Interest is chargeable on the loan to the Branch based on the effective cost of funds to the Union.

Under the terms of the loan agreement, it is to be repaid on a phased basis over the next number of years and amounts outstanding are not to exceed the following:

30 April 2011	€7,753,000	30 April 2014	€3,114,000
30 April 2012	€6,767,000	30 April 2015	€1,997,000
30 April 2013	€5,741,000	30 April 2016	€880,000

The loan is to be fully repaid by 30 April 2017.

Although the repayment terms under the agreement have not been met as at 30 April 2011, the Committee are confident that these amounts are recoverable and no provision is necessary.

The loan to New Stadium Limited is interest free and has no fixed terms of repayment.

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 7. Joint ventures

The Union holds 50% of the ordinary share capital of New Stadium Limited and 50% of the ordinary share capital of Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited (companies formed to develop the Aviva Stadium and Thomond Park respectively).

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	€	€
Investment at cost less amortisation		
- New Stadium Limited	74,568,983	74,281,120
- Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited	5	5
Loan to New Stadium Limited	29,430,336	27,616,773
	<u>103,999,324</u>	<u>101,897,898</u>
Less: Amortised in year in respect of New Stadium Limited	(5,199,966)	-
	<u>98,799,358</u>	<u>101,897,898</u>

No formal terms of repayment have been agreed in relation to the loan to New Stadium Limited.

Disclosures in respect of New Stadium Limited, based on the company's management accounts, required under 'Financial Reporting Standard 9 Associates and Joint Ventures' are as follows:

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	€	€
Share of turnover	3,993,514	-
Share of operating loss	(4,076,179)	-
Share of tax	-	-
Share of loss after tax	(4,076,179)	-
Share of fixed assets	198,707,804	191,246,005
Share of current assets	818,775	11,418,000
Share of gross assets	<u>199,526,579</u>	<u>202,664,005</u>
Share of current liabilities	(8,708,110)	(13,131,000)
Share of non current liabilities	(127,735,878)	(122,374,234)
Share of gross liabilities	<u>(136,443,988)</u>	<u>(135,505,234)</u>
Share of net assets	<u>63,082,591</u>	<u>67,158,771</u>

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 7. Joint ventures (cont'd.)

Additional disclosures in respect of Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited, based on the company's management accounts, required under 'Financial Reporting Standard 9 Associates and Joint Ventures' are as follows:

	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€
Share of turnover	1,308,555	1,343,383
Share of operating loss	(654,339)	(577,105)
Share of tax	-	880
Share of loss after tax	(654,339)	(576,225)
Share of fixed assets	17,012,294	17,142,710
Share of current assets	526,543	634,790
Share of gross assets	17,538,837	17,777,500
Share of current liabilities	(2,310,831)	(2,750,153)
Share of non current liabilities	(14,518,811)	(13,663,812)
Share of gross liabilities	(16,829,642)	(16,413,965)
Share of net assets	709,195	1,363,535

The Union has entered into lease agreements with each of the above companies to lease land on which the stadia have been developed on the following terms:

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 7. Joint ventures (cont'd.)

Company	Term of lease	Annual rent
New Stadium Limited	99 years from Dec 2005	€750,000 p.a.
Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited	55 years from Oct 2006	€9,600 p.a.

The rents due became payable during the year ended April 2010 in the case of Thomond Park, and became due from May 2010 in the case of the Aviva Stadium.

## 8. Interest in subsidiary undertaking

	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€
Share capital	2	-
Loan advanced	10,000,313	-
Amortised in the year	(500,000)	-
Balance 30 April	9,500,315	-

The Union owns 100% of the ordinary share capital of Lansdowne Car Park Limited, a company registered in the Republic of Ireland whose registered office is at 10/12 Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4. The company commenced trading during the current year.

The Union advanced funds to the company in order to finance the construction of a car park located adjacent to The Aviva Stadium. The Union are amortising the investment in the subsidiary over the expected useful life of the car park.

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 9. Debtors and prepayments

	Union		Consolidated	
	30/4/11	30/4/10	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€	€	€
Provincial branch balances	2,687,296	2,865,465	2,687,296	2,865,465
Sponsorship debtors	865,624	1,520,338	865,624	1,520,338
Ticket debtors	3,198,375	1,358,177	3,198,375	1,358,177
Other debtors	64,487	20,615	190,412	20,615
Prepayments and accrued income	6,539,687	6,440,539	6,539,687	6,440,539
Stock of sportswear and equipment	130,178	216,988	130,178	216,988
	13,485,647	12,422,122	13,611,572	12,422,122

Trade debtors and short term receivables above are stated net of provision, where applicable. Provisions against debtors at the year end amounted to €3,824,304 (30/4/10: €3,380,327). The creation of these provisions has reduced income by €443,977 in the current year (2009/2010: €1,326,257).

## 10. Bank loans

Bank loans are secured by an all sums mortgage and charge over certain properties owned by the Union. The loan is repayable by 22 June 2011 and while it is expected that the loan will be rolled over, the terms of the agreement state that the loan is repayable on demand. On that basis, the loan is reflected as due within one year.

## 11. Creditors

	Union		Consolidated	
	30/4/11	30/4/10	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€	€	€
Accruals	14,629,576	16,530,816	14,729,049	16,530,816
Income received in advance	4,943,255	6,731,568	4,943,255	6,731,568
PAYE/PRSI	38,245	35,749	38,246	35,749
VAT	8,412	6,738	15,085	6,738
	19,619,488	23,304,871	19,725,635	23,304,871

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 12. Pension commitments

The pension entitlements of certain employees of the Union arise under a defined benefit scheme which is funded by annual contributions by the Union to a separately administered pension fund.

The latest actuarial valuation for the scheme was dated 1 August 2008. The principal assumptions made by the actuary were that the rate of return on investment would exceed the increase in pensionable salaries by 5%. The assets of the fund, which amounted to €3,241,000, showed that, on an immediate discontinuance basis, the assets of the fund were adequate to meet the plan's statutory minimum funding liabilities. The assets represent 64% in aggregate of the benefits which would accrue to members at the valuation date after allowing for future salary increases. The actuarial report is not available for public inspection.

The valuations employed for FRS 17 disclosure purposes have been updated by the scheme's independent and qualified actuary to take account of the requirements of the new accounting standard in order to assess the liabilities of the scheme as at 30 April 2011. The valuations have been completed using the projected unit method.

The amounts recognised in the income and expenditure account are as follows:

	2010/11	2009/10
	€	€
<b>Amounts charged to income and expenditure:</b>		
Current service cost	188,000	258,000
Gains on settlements and curtailments	-	(848,000)
<hr/>		
Total operating charge (gain)	188,000	(590,000)
 <b>Amounts charged to finance (income) cost:</b>		
Expected return on scheme assets	(338,000)	(253,000)
Interest on scheme liabilities	275,000	302,000
<hr/>		
Other finance (income) cost	(63,000)	49,000
<hr/>		
Total charge (credit) to the income and expenditure account	125,000	(541,000)
<hr/>		
Actual return on scheme assets	211,000	1,004,000
<hr/>		

Actuarial losses of €288,000 (2010: €352,000) have been recognised in the statement of total recognised gains and losses.

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 12. Pension commitments (cont'd.)

The amounts recognised in the balance sheet are as follows:

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	€	€
Present value of funded obligations	6,154,000	5,571,000
Fair value of scheme assets	6,535,000	6,046,000
<b>Net pension asset</b>	<b>381,000</b>	<b>475,000</b>

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	€	€
Opening defined benefit obligation	5,571,000	4,795,000
Current service cost	188,000	258,000
Gains on curtailments	-	(848,000)
Interest on scheme liabilities	275,000	302,000
Actuarial loss	161,000	1,103,000
Benefits paid	(41,000)	(39,000)
<b>Closing defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>6,154,000</b>	<b>5,571,000</b>

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

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	€	€
Opening fair value of scheme assets	6,046,000	3,745,000
Expected return on scheme assets	338,000	253,000
Contributions by employer	258,000	1,271,000
Contributions by scheme participants	61,000	65,000
Actuarial (loss) gain	(127,000)	751,000
Benefits paid	(41,000)	(39,000)
<b>Closing fair value of scheme assets</b>	<b>6,535,000</b>	<b>6,046,000</b>

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 12. Pension commitments (cont'd.)

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

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	%	%
Equities	55.7	53.4
Bonds	37.5	40.0
Property	2.1	2.0
Cash/Other	4.7	4.6

The principal actuarial assumptions as at the balance sheet date were:

	<b>30/4/11</b>	<b>30/4/10</b>
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	2.00	2.00
Rate of increase in pensions payment (pre 09)	5.00	5.00
Rate of increase in pensions payment (post 09)	2.00	2.00
Discount rate	5.25	4.80
Inflation assumption	2.00	2.00
Rate of return on plan assets	5.62	5.47

Amounts for the current and previous four periods are as follows:

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Defined benefit obligation	(6,154)	(5,571)	(4,795)	(4,719)	(5,004)
Fair value of scheme assets	6,535	6,046	3,745	4,713	5,127
Surplus (Deficit) in the scheme	381	475	(1,050)	(6)	123
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities (%)	1	5	-	4	2
Experience adjustments on scheme assets (%)	(2)	12	(42)	(23)	3



# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 13. Deferred ticket fund

	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€
At 1 May	22,991,157	27,333,946
Transfer to revenue account	(6,018,318)	(4,342,789)
Closing balance	16,972,839	22,991,157
Amounts received on new Aviva Stadium tickets and boxes carried forward	85,235,736	68,855,862
Transfer to revenue account	(7,341,003)	-
Further amounts received during the year	3,970,475	16,379,874
At 30 April	81,865,208	85,235,736
	98,838,047	108,226,893

## 14. Deferred naming rights fund

The Union entered into an arrangement with Hibernian Aviva Group plc ('Aviva') in respect of naming rights for the stadium. The Union, the Football Association of Ireland and New Stadium Limited will receive payments over a ten year period commencing in July 2010 in return for the naming rights to the stadium. The Union agreed to transfer the rights to future elements of these payments in return for an upfront payment of €8,333,333. These funds, together with other amounts received, are shown as deferred naming rights and will be released to income and expenditure over the period of the naming rights agreement.

	30/4/11	30/4/10
	€	€
At 1 May	9,164,230	-
Received in respect of future payments	-	8,333,333
Transfer from income received in advance	-	250,000
Other amount received during year	-	250,000
Unwind of discount	464,415	330,897
Transferred to income during the year	(833,333)	-
At 30 April	8,795,312	9,164,230

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

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 15. Reconciliation of operating surplus to net cash (outflow) inflow from operating activities

	2010/11	2009/10
	€	€
Operating surplus	6,747,215	1,660,910
Interest receivable	(109,412)	(596,675)
Unwinding of discount (Note 14)	464,415	330,897
Depreciation	1,380,261	1,157,220
Amortisation	5,699,966	-
Provisions against loans to clubs	665,008	-
Movement in debtors	(1,063,525)	(3,489,025)
Movement in creditors	(3,685,383)	11,421,046
Current service costs, curtailment gain less return on investment on pension	64,000	(606,000)
Pension fund contributions	(258,000)	(1,271,000)
Transfer to revenue – deferred naming rights	(833,333)	-
Transfer to revenue – five and ten year tickets	(13,359,321)	(4,342,789)
<b>Net cash (outflow) inflow from operating activities</b>	<b>(4,288,109)</b>	<b>4,264,584</b>

## 16. Analysis of changes in net (debt) funds during the year

	30/4/10	Cash flow	30/4/11
	€	€	€
Cash	4,988,548	(2,984,722)	2,003,826
Liquid resources:			
Short term deposits	7,279,942	446,602	7,726,544
	12,268,490	(2,538,120)	9,730,370
Bank loans	(11,238,476)	(10,043,608)	(21,282,084)
<b>Net funds (debt)</b>	<b>1,030,014</b>	<b>(12,581,728)</b>	<b>(11,551,714)</b>

## 17. Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net (debt) funds

	2010/11	2009/10
	€	€
(Decrease) increase in cash	(2,984,722)	3,746,700
Cash flow from liquid resources	446,602	(29,783,821)
Increase in bank loans	(10,043,608)	(11,238,476)
<b>Movement in net (debt) funds</b>	<b>(12,581,728)</b>	<b>(37,275,597)</b>
<b>Net funds at beginning of year</b>	<b>1,030,014</b>	<b>38,305,611</b>
<b>Net (debt) funds at end of year</b>	<b>(11,551,714)</b>	<b>1,030,014</b>

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 18. Revenue grants

The following grants were received and used for the stated purpose in the year ended 30 April 2011

	30/4/11	30/4/10
Irish Sports Council		
- game development and participation	€3,388,000	€3,108,500
International Rugby Board		
- game development and participation and elite player development	Stg£250,000	Stg£100,000

## 19. Commitments and contingencies

### *Capital commitments*

Under the terms of agreements to develop the Aviva Stadium the Union have a capital commitment of €4,191,175 (2010: approximately €34,500,000).

### *Commitments under operating leases*

On 12 November 2007 the Union entered into an operating lease in respect of property at 10/12 Lansdowne Road at an annual rent of €475,000. This lease expired on 12 November 2010 and on that date the Union entered in to a lease agreement in respect of the same property for an annual rent of €350,000 which will expire on 12 November 2015. The amount charged in respect of this rent in the current period amounted to €403,500. During the year the Union incurred operating lease rentals on motor vehicles amounting to €349,974. The commitment in respect of existing lease agreements on vehicles all of which expire within twelve months amount to €191,541.

### *Contingencies*

In terms of agreements between the Union, the Football Association of Ireland, New Stadium Limited and the Government for the provision of grants amounting to €191 million for the redevelopment of the Aviva Stadium, the Union have agreed that in the event that the land on which the stadium is built is not used for sporting and recreational activities for a period of thirty years from the date of payment of the grants, the grant or a portion of the grant could become repayable.

In terms of agreements between the Union, the Munster Branch Irish Rugby Football Union, Thomond Park Stadium Company Limited and the Government for the provision of grants amounting to €9 million for the redevelopment of Thomond Park, the Union have agreed that in the event that the Stadium is not used as a facility for the playing of Rugby Union and associated social, recreational and cultural activities for the people of Munster and surrounding district for the period of fifteen years from the date of payment of the grants, the grant or a portion of the grant could become repayable.

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## 19. Commitments and contingencies (cont'd.)

The Union have pledged the lands at Thomond Park as security in respect of any liability which may arise in this regard.

The Union issued a joint and several letter of undertaking in conjunction with the Football Association of Ireland to secure a bank guarantee issued by New Stadium Limited, trading as Aviva Stadium, in favour of Iarnrod Eireann in the amount of €2,250,000.

## 20. Comparative figures

The figures for prior years have been restated, where necessary, so as to be on a consistent basis with those for the current year.

## 21. Approval of accounts

The accounts of the Union were approved by the Committee on 16th June 2011 and signed on its behalf by the Honorary Treasurer and the Chief Executive.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee is responsible for preparing accounts, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Union at the end of each financial period and of the surplus or deficit for the period. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, for safeguarding assets, and for preventing and detecting fraud and other irregularities.

The Committee confirms that suitable accounting policies have been consistently applied, that reasonable and prudent judgments and estimates have been used in the preparation of the accounts, and that it is appropriate to assume that the Union will continue in being and to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

# INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

We have audited the accounts on pages 34 to 57 which comprise the Union and consolidated income and expenditure account, the Union and consolidated statement of recognised gains and losses, the Union and consolidated balance sheet and the Union cash flow statement with the related notes. The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on pages 41 to 43.

## **Respective responsibilities of the Committee and the auditors**

As described on page 58, the Committee is responsible for preparing the accounts in accordance with applicable law and the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland).

Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

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

Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

## **Basis of audit opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Committee in the preparation of the accounts, and whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Union's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

## **Opinion**

In our opinion the accounts give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of affairs of the Union as at 30 April 2011 and of the surplus of income over expenditure of the Union for the year then ended.

**Grant Thornton**  
**Registered Auditors**  
**Chartered Accountants**

24-26 City Quay  
Dublin 2

Date: 16th June 2011

# INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## Schedule 1: Representative matches

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
International rugby income	33,234,443	36,004,280	32,516,016
Commercial income	8,689,379	8,140,749	7,229,550
Deferred ticket income	13,359,321	4,342,789	4,348,376
ERC and provincial income	9,324,402	6,689,634	5,554,922
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	64,607,545	55,177,452	49,648,864

## Schedule 2: Other income

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Other rugby income	589,391	317,747	680,373
Government Grants	3,388,000	3,108,500	4,079,750
Other income	691,894	589,548	2,544,780
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4,669,285	4,015,795	7,304,903

# NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## Schedule 3: Professional game costs

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
National tours, camps and squads	925,059	685,776	853,478
National match costs	4,085,621	4,053,606	4,424,520
Player and management costs	28,458,178	30,345,842	26,535,264
	<u>33,468,858</u>	<u>35,085,224</u>	<u>31,813,262</u>

## Schedule 4: Elite player development

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Wolfhounds - Irish "A" team	102,488	485,683	464,590
Under 20's	381,169	474,585	459,223
Sevens	-	-	294,909
Academies	1,276,019	1,227,186	1,117,528
High performance unit	379,267	338,358	358,112
Fitness programme	557,238	550,153	629,698
	<u>2,696,181</u>	<u>3,075,965</u>	<u>3,324,060</u>

## Schedule 5: Games support costs

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Referee costs	358,957	344,017	315,313
Medical costs	294,717	341,427	380,146
	<u>653,674</u>	<u>685,444</u>	<u>695,459</u>



# EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## Schedule 6: Domestic and community rugby

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Under 19s	93,485	92,745	87,991
Irish schoolboy team	181,342	164,773	201,230
Irish youth team	153,930	206,787	193,392
Women's team	326,268	153,159	220,011
Club Ireland	52,196	68,205	49,757
Domestic competitions	332,268	567,978	433,071
General development salaries	310,832	494,633	549,410
General development expenses	85,812	99,207	119,714
Development resources	215,281	18,370	34,432
Coaching courses	262,375	228,680	242,369
Youth and schools	425,824	393,002	345,771
YDO and provincial staff	2,644,309	2,469,751	2,412,664
Clubs and schools support	2,394,832	2,068,649	2,147,446
Referee development	523,922	475,216	474,492
Leisure and community rugby	480,144	480,504	789,305
Community rugby and other funding	1,523,273	3,141,806	2,259,571
	<b>10,006,093</b>	<b>11,123,465</b>	<b>10,560,626</b>

# EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2011

## Schedule 7: Marketing

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Marketing	785,108	795,402	663,200
PR and communications	130,395	130,881	149,503
Website	283,293	330,079	333,412
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,198,796	1,256,362	1,146,115

## Schedule 8: Grounds

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Licence fees, rates and insurance	1,996,925	401,079	360,934
Repairs and renewals	134,143	149,495	113,555
Other facilities	310,050	394,139	137,843
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,441,118	944,713	612,332

## Schedule 9: Administration and overheads

	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
	€	€	€
Governance costs	394,739	357,886	595,715
Salaries and pension	2,076,603	1,771,095	2,419,124
Printing, postage and stationary	186,047	167,336	218,175
Rates, rent, insurance and telephone	699,136	776,237	905,642
Office maintenance	282,143	226,957	337,363
Professional fees	1,058,560	669,099	858,905
Miscellaneous administration costs	287,440	235,334	345,310
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4,984,668	4,203,944	5,680,234

## NOTES



IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION, 10/12 LANSDOWNE ROAD, DUBLIN 4  
[WWW.IRISHRUGBY.IE](http://WWW.IRISHRUGBY.IE)

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