

Local schools do battle in mini-rugby tournament

Rugby

ACADEMY Playing Fields at Roughfort was the centre of attraction on Saturday morning when a large number of parents turned out to support their sons in the mini-rugby tournament with a visit to Ulster Branch headquarters at Ravenhill as the prize.

This qualifying event for the Northern Ireland finals was the 1st organised by Chris Sturgess of the Academy club and the four top teams proved to be Ben Madigan Preparatory Department, Carrick Model Primary, Glengormley Primary and Ballyclare Primary.

These four had won through from their sections which had been played off on a round-robin league basis, but Ballyclare and Glengormley fell at the semi-final hurdle leaving Ben Madigan and Carrick Model to contest the final.

In recent years the Academy lads coached by Ray Cromie have dominated this event but they were rocked back on their heels when Jock Cooks' battlers from Carrick Model took the lead with a well worked try.

Ben Madigan's good support play and fluent handling however won the day and their captain Clarke Rainey who had been an impressive runner

Ben Madigan beat Carrick

Model to scoop top spot

when in possession scored the crucial try which gave his side a 3-1 win.

CUP

He received the Nash Cup from Academy Rugby Club President Chris Sturgess and both finalists received medals.

In the play-off for third place Glengormley came

from behind to beat Ballyclare Primary 4-2 in a keenly contested game between two well matched teams.

Ben Madigan and Carrick Model will represent the Newtownabbey - Carrickfergus - Larne area in the Ulster finals which will be played at Ravenhill on Saturday, June 18.

Section 1 - Glengormley Primary 0, Carrick Model 2; Ben Madigan Preparatory 'B' 3, Glengormley Primary 1; Carrick Model 8, Ashgrove Primary 0; Glengormley Primary 2, Ashgrove Primary 0; Ashgrove Primary 0, Ben Madigan Preparatory 'B' 7;

Carrick Model 3, Ben Madigan Preparatory 'B' 0.

Section 2 - Ben Madigan Preparatory 'A' 6, Abbots Cross Primary 0; Ballyclare Primary 0, Whiteabbey Primary 0; Ben Madigan Preparatory 'C' 1, Ben Madigan Preparatory 'A' 6; Abbots Cross Primary 0, Ballyclare Primary 6; Ben Madigan Preparatory 'C' 2, Whiteabbey Primary 3; Ben Madigan Preparatory 'A' 3, Ballyclare Primary 0; Whiteabbey Primary 6, Abbots Cross Primary 1; Ballyclare Primary 5, Ben Madigan Preparatory 'C' 0; Ben Madigan Preparatory 'A' 4, Whiteabbey Primary 0; Abbots Cross Primary 4, Ben Madigan Preparatory 'C' 4.

Semi-finals - Ballyclare Primary 2, Carrick Model 4; Ben Madigan 4, Glengormley Primary 0.

Play-off for third place - Ballyclare Primary 2, Glengormley Primary 4.

Final - Carrick Model 1, Ben Madigan 3.

Local schools successful in mini-rugby tournament

WHITEABBEY Primary School, Ben Madigan Preparatory School and Ballyclare Primary School emerged as the top three teams in the South East Antrim mini-rugby tournament at Academy RFC grounds on Saturday morning which attracted entries from schools in the Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus and North Belfast area.

All three had been involved in a ding-dong battle for the two qualifying places in the Ulster Branch finals at Ravenhill later this month and Ballyclare Primary must have been disappointed at missing out after taking points from both Whiteabbey and Ben Madigan and going through the entire morning undefeated.

A vital point dropped to Carrick Model in the opening match proved to be crucial and allowed both their opponents to advance but Whiteabbey took home the Nash Cup after defeating Ben Madigan in an exciting sudden death play-off after both teams had finished level at the top of the table on six points.

Ken Knox, senior vice-president of Academy RFC, praised the sportsmasters and coaches from the various schools and neighbouring rugby clubs for having devoted so much time and talent to coaching

these young rugby enthusiasts.

Commenting he said: "The standard was surprisingly high despite the cold wind. I saw good handling skills and plenty of open rugby combined with lots of courageous tackling and I hope that most of these lads will continue to enjoy their rugby when they move up to the secondary sector. It was encouraging also to see so many interested parents here; their support is vital."

Mr Knox presented the Nash Cup to the winning Whiteabbey Primary captain Jonathan Davis while Iain Knox (Ben Madigan) and Tony Livingston (Ballyclare Primary) received plaques.

The tournament was once again successfully organised by Chris Sturgeon of Academy RFC and the umpires were Robin Logue (Randalstown), Harry Jacobs (Ophir), Ian Lough (Larne) and Terry Dunlop (Ballyclare).

Results

Ben Madigan B 0
Whiteabbey A 4; Carrick Model 1 Ballyclare 1; Ben Madigan A 7 Ben Madigan B 0; Whiteabbey A 3 Carrick Model 1; Ben Madigan A 1 Ballyclare 1; Ben Madigan B 0 Carrick Model 4; Ballyclare 2 Whiteabbey A 2; Carrick Model 0 Ben Madigan A 3; Ben Madigan B 0 Ballyclare 7; Whiteabbey A 1 Ben Madigan A 1
Play-off Ben Madigan A 0 Whiteabbey A 1.

Following a tournament in Glengormley in midweek the teams had been seeded in to two groups with Ashgrove, Greenisland, Glengormley, Whiteabbey B and Ben Madigan C not involved in the qualifying stakes.

Competition in this section was keen also with several close finishes but enjoyment was the order of the day without the pressure of points being at stake.

Results

Ashgrove 0 Greenisland 0; Glengormley 1 Whiteabbey B 3; Ben Madigan C 0 Ashgrove 1; Greenisland 4 Glengormley 2; Ben Madigan C 0 Whiteabbey B 4; Ashgrove 3 Glengormley 1; Whiteabbey B 4 Greenisland 1; Glengormley 4 Ben Madigan C 1; Ashgrove 1 Whiteabbey B 2; Greenisland 3 Ben Madigan C 1.