

## **Pendle are crowned Tag Rugby Champions of the Ribble Valley**

**The annual Ribble Valley Tag Rugby Qualifier took place on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March at Clitheroe RFC with a record 16 teams taking part in a feast of tag rugby played in glorious sunshine & perfect pitch conditions.**

**The competition, which was organised together with Ribble Valley Borough Council, the RFU and Clitheroe Rugby Union Football Club, is the borough's largest rugby competition of it's kind.**

160 children from local schools gathered at Clitheroe RFC to compete for the tag rugby bragging rights in the Ribble Valley & the standard did not disappoint many spectators who showed up to support their children. Schools were put in to 4 groups of 4 with the top two from each group to qualify for the knockout quarter finals.

Group A consisted of Waddington/West Bradford, St Micheal/St Johns, Bolton by Bowland & St Marys Osbaldeston 2 with the big highlight of the group was a thrilling 8-8 draw between the top two of Waddington/West Bradford & St Micheal/St Johns.

Group B was fought by Salesbury 2, St Marys Osbaldeston 1, Mellor 1 & St Josephs with a fantastic 4-2 win for St Josephs against St Marys giving them qualification with group winners position but only on tries scored along with Mellor 1.

Group C consisted of Salesbury 1, Pendle, Chatburn & Mellor 2 with the main game being Pendle's win against Mellor, 4-1, to secure their passage to the quarters along with group winners Chatburn who were 3 wins from 3.

Group D was a much closer affair competed by Simonstone, Brookside, Gisburn & Grindleton which came down to a 5-4 win by Grindleton over Brookside & then Gisburn's final 3-1 win over Simonstone meant that Grindleton & Gisburn scrapped through.



The quarter final line up was decided through a ranking system, 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, of the top 2 teams from each group & again some unbelievable tag rugby was played by all teams. Club volunteer referees Graeme Tindall & John Wardle did amazingly well keeping up with the end to end play, without these 2 & student with Jacob Shorrocks, today would not have been possible so hats off to the volunteers for their hard work throughout the day. Chatburn 3 v 5 Pendle, Grindleton 1 v 2 St Josephs, St Micheal/St Johns 1 v 3 Gisburn & Waddington/West Bradford 2 v 3 Mellor1. Were the results from the quarter finals & the semi final fixtures saw Pendle pitted against St Josephs & Gisburn facing Mellor 1.

The Semi Final scorelines seem to show that the games were one sided but that was far from the truth, Pendle came away 7-3 winners & capitalised on handling errors from a tiring St Josephs team & Mellor's superb defence gave them a 4-1 victory over Gisburn.

So the Grand Final would be competed by Pendle & Mellor, who in fact qualified in 8<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> place respectively, so they really upped their games in the knockout stages. In a close & tense final a scoreline of 2-1 in favour of Pendle was justified but credit to Mellor who gave some real scares along the way. All 3 tries in the final were created from superb running support play which left the crowd applauding both teams.

Pendle now go on to represent the Ribble Valley at the Lancashire Youth Games Finals to be held at Preston Grasshoppers RFC on April 26<sup>th</sup>.



The 4 Semi Finalists- Gisburn (top left), Mellor (top right), St Josephs (bottom left) & Pendle (bottom right)

Martin Powell  
RFU Community Rugby Coach Clitheroe