

Rugby league players left defenceless after funding pulled



Rugby League players have been left defenceless after the union representing them had its funding pulled.

The Rugby League Players Association (RLPA) – a branch of GMB Union – has represented playing staff for years and helped recoup thousands in unpaid wages during the Toronto Wolfpack pay scandal, along with other high profile cases.

Lead rep at the branch was former Great Britain international Garreth Carvell, whose role was funded by the Rugby Football League, via a charity called Ruby League Cares (RLC).



Now, with another pay scandal brewing at Salford Red Devils, the RLPA has suddenly had its funding pulled, leaving players with no representation.

Pete Davies, GMB Senior Organiser, said:

“When clubs fail to pay players, their families face immediate crisis and no amount of kind words will pay their bills.

“Our rep had a strong voice within the game and was working with the governing body on many issues including Salford.

“RLC pulled the funding for his post smack bang in the middle of yet another pay crisis that has hit the sport.

“They did this whilst making up ‘player ambassador roles’ that achieve nothing and they have, in my opinion, played their part in exacerbating this crisis.

“One officer at the club, supported by RLC, described non-payment of players as ‘not a union issue’.

“That is appalling and shows that there is a strategy at play to block our RLPA branch from reaching out to help.

“It takes a strong trade union challenge to get those unpaid wages into those players' pockets.

“It’s what we continue to do for the members who were left high and dry at Toronto.

“I see no value at all that the RFL are getting for the £300,000 they give to the RLC and it’s time the RLPA got this resource directly.”

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Member requiring help?

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