

# LSRUR newsletter

January 2010

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Happy New Year to all and hopefully we will get some rugby soon. It is going to be interesting in the next three months how we cope with re-arranging the fixtures and how this will affect the County Cup Competitions. Can I remind any fixture secretaries reading this they must advise the appointment secretaries of any changes as soon as they know of them, do not presume they already know.

Congratulations to the referees promoted at the December Grading Meeting and good luck in justifying your new grades. A list of the grades is enclosed and you will see there is a "President's Grade". This is being awarded to the more experienced referees, like myself, who will no longer be promoted and, instead of causing a log jam for the new referees, will be given the President's Grade and the appointment secretaries will know the level of game they are capable of. You will see if you are awarded this grade you are joining a very select band.

I have been asked to re-iterate the system for exchange referees. On most exchanges we arrange for three referees to travel. All three must travel in one car and the Society will pay the expenses to one referee. Exchange expenses should



be sent direct to me and will be paid immediately. If there are any circumstances where a second vehicle is thought necessary you must have checked PRIOR to travel with the Exchange Secretary or myself as treasurer. All exchanges are made within a radius allowing same day travel.

I would also like to confirm the expenses for members living outside of Leicestershire travelling for internal games. Expenses will be paid from the County Border to the club and back to the Border. If you have any queries on this please contact me.

I would like to thank all the people who helped with the visit of the French Referees. Rob Debney kindly arranged the visit and many people made a real effort to make sure they got to their games, enjoyed themselves and received a report. Special thanks also to those members who put them up in their houses. I am told they have gone

MEMBERS MEETING -  
MONDAY January 25th

**BELGRAVE  
CLUBHOUSE 7:30**

back having had a great time and with a very positive view of Leicestershire. We look forward to hopefully visiting them in March/April.

We are all very proud of our handbook and I am sure, like me, you find it a very helpful tool. For many years Kerrel alone arranged sponsorship and advertisers to cover the cost. We now need to assist in finding advertisers. We only charge £45 for a half page and £75 for a full one. About 1000 copies are circulated to referees and clubs and is a necessary item for Rugby in Leicestershire. Would you see if you can obtain any advertisers, check they would like to and let me know so we can make contact.

Good luck for the rest of the season and I look forward to seeing you at Belgrave Rugby Club on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Member's Meeting  
January 25th -**

**Paul Westgate will be attending to talk about refereeing schools and youth rugby. He'll have a presentation of about 40 minutes.**

Paul is an RFU Level V Elite Coach. He has previous experience of coaching at club level with Exeter and Nuneaton while he has also been involved with Somerset, England Counties and England under-21s. Some of his other achievements are becoming Director of Rugby at Eastbourne College, Sussex, and working with the Cambridge University Varsity squad. Paul is currently working as Director of Sport at Uppingham School

**Dave Edkins will also be delivering on whistles and their importance!!**

## LSRUR End of Season Dinner

Nearly half way through the season we can now start looking towards our dinner. Year on year this is a fantastic evening. This season it is being held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and our guest speaker is Ian Robertson.

Members please ask around your family and friends to join us on **23<sup>rd</sup> April—2010**

# Scrum time!

The scrum is one of those areas of the game where, according to the assessor, you can have a brilliant game. The same observer might think you're having a complete 'mare of a game and, the thing is, you might not be doing anything different this week, when your scrum management is poor, to last week, when it was good.

*So what's the difference between last week and this week? Simple question, simple answer. The players.*

The players (yeah, yeah and the context of the match, league status, old scores to settle, etc, etc) are the people who determine how "good" a game you will have at scrum time.

We've learned to manage the tackle by means of a simple 1, 2, 3 basis:

1 – tackler moves,

2 – ball carrier releases the ball

3 – arriving players stay on their feet

And, by and large, these simple management rules allow the tackle zone to be managed effectively and make the miscreant easy (well, easier) to spot and penalise IF it's appropriate to do so if we consider the application of law 8.

So can we do anything to influence the way players respond to scrum time in the same way as we do for the tackle?

We already deliver a front row briefing where we outline the scrum engagement sequence. We often ask them to crouch on our request, and to follow the sequence, culminating in the engagement. We ask

them to hold the scrum straight and square and to hold their 'push' until the ball comes in. The scrum is, after all, a pushing contest, not a pulling one...

First scrum comes, and we run through the verbal sequence, but have we gone through a checklist to make sure we get as good a scrum as we could? Do we have a checklist for the scrum, in the same way as we do for the tackle?

Consider this, then

Pre-engagement:

Binds – the loose head's shoulder needs to be visible to give his opposite number room to engage. Check to see if you can see it, as opposed to it being hidden behind the hooker's left shoulder;

Square – when they're bound, are both front rows square to each other and parallel to the lines across the pitch;

Pillars – the 4 props. The old saying is that you should be able to lay a table cloth across them and it be flat. It's a good rule of thumb.

Engagement:

Wait until they're settled before you begin the sequence. Once you've started, remember to blow the whistle IF you need to stop the engagement process at any stage.

Try to keep a steady cadence with your engagement. Don't, for the love of God, try to catch them out by varying the length of the pause. If there's a reason NOT to engage them, BLOW YOUR whistle and reset them.

Hit and hold. If the gap

was right, and the table was flat and steady, there's no reason why the engagement should go pear shaped unless the props aren't listening.

If they engage early and it's (blindingly) obvious who triggered it, treat them to a free kick, BUT DO IT EARLY in the game.

Post-engagement:

Look at the binding. At this stage be aware of it so that IF it causes a problem, you've something to say to the guy who isn't binding properly.

Look at the feet of the loose head. Which way are they pointing? In, or out? If out, be aware of him walking round the outside of his opposite number.. or trying to.

Look at the tight head's arse. Has it swung out? If it has, he's probably trying to drive in on the hooker. Just be aware that the actions of the LH may have influenced the TH's body angle.

If it's steady, get the ball in.

Next month, with Mike Mortimer's help, we'll be looking at who has collapsed it, why and, more importantly, HOW.

Happy (and safe) scrummaging

## Mid-Season Grading Review - December 2009

The Full Grading Committee met in early December for the Mid-Season Review of grades of every active Referee. The new grades are included in this newsletter.

If you are an active Referee and your name is not on the list, please contact the Grading Secretary (Geoff Blackburn).

## The good old days??? .3.

For some years I was in the Royal Air force and, following a rugby accident, I was grounded and confined to piloting a desk at the Records Office in Gloucester. Having recovered sufficiently to play once again, I commuted, most weekends, back home to play. On this particular Saturday we were scheduled to play away to Stafford RFC. Not wishing to make my way back home, only to immediately board a coach to the game, I reasoned I could save time and mileage by arranging to meet the team at Stafford's ground.

This presented no problem to a former train spotter (anorak or what?) who considered he knew the rail network backwards. I had calculated that I could catch a train to Birmingham New Street and change there to an express heading north via Stafford, allowing me plenty of time before the game.

All went well until Birmingham where I discovered that the connecting express was over one hour late. With mobile phones still many years in the future, I was stranded and unable to contact anyone. Having spent precious cash on the rail ticket, I had no option but to wait for the delayed train. When we finally arrived in Stafford it was ten minutes to kick off. I jumped off the still slowly moving train and rushed through the ticket barrier onto the forecourt of the station. I jumped into the cab at the head of the line and called to the driver "Stafford rugby ground, quick as you can". The cab made a U-turn and headed up the ramp to a bridge over the lines and then no sooner over the bridge turned into the ground which adjoined the railway lines. "There you go mate, that will be two shilling (ten pence). I know that doesn't seem much now but, given the less than generous service pay in those days, it was a significant dent in my drinking kitty when added to the rail fare.

	<b>Grade</b>		<b>Grade</b>
Phil Alcock	<b>10</b>	Mike Jones	<b>8</b>
Chris Ashton	<b>5D</b>	Richard Keenan	<b>11</b>
Martin Ballard	<b>UG</b>	Kyle Kilbourne	<b>Prob</b>
Adam Barlow	<b>7D</b>	Tom Kilburn	<b>UG</b>
Nick Bartlett	<b>12</b>	Rob Knapp	<b>10</b>
Paul Bennett	<b>9</b>	Jeffery Knight	<b>14</b>
Mick Birchall	<b>8</b>	Mark Lacey	<b>Prob</b>
Jonathan Bird	<b>9</b>	Nick Lacey	<b>Pres</b>
Peter Bower	<b>8</b>	Peter Langley	<b>Prob</b>
Martin Bromley	<b>8</b>	Mark Leavesley	<b>5</b>
Jeremy Brooks	<b>7D</b>	Chris Lewin	<b>11</b>
Tom Brucciani	<b>Prob</b>	Tim Livesey	<b>12</b>
John Budulis	<b>7</b>	Paul MacMillan	<b>9D</b>
Roger Cairns	<b>10</b>	Ross Martin	<b>6D</b>
Mark Callum	<b>UG</b>	Dave Measey	<b>10</b>
Jonathan Chadburn	<b>12</b>	Andy Miller	<b>10</b>
Kenneth Claricoats	<b>10</b>	David Palmer	<b>11</b>
David Clarkson	<b>6D</b>	Michael Palmer	<b>11</b>
David Cottom	<b>11</b>	Jon Petzing	<b>6D</b>
David Cox	<b>8</b>	Ian Pollock	<b>10</b>
Rhys Davies	<b>RFU</b>	Shaun Porter	<b>5</b>
Rob Debney	<b>RFU</b>	John Power	<b>8</b>
Donald Dixon	<b>11</b>	Robert Price	<b>11</b>
Malcolm Eames	<b>14</b>	Mitch Prior	<b>Pres</b>
Mark Elliott	<b>RFU</b>	Mark Priestley	<b>10</b>
John Exton	<b>14</b>	Martin Ryan	<b>11</b>
Fred Farndon	<b>RFU</b>	Paul Sandford	<b>8</b>
Luke Fenton	<b>10</b>	Edwin Silkstone	<b>10</b>
Keith Fisher	<b>10</b>	Mike Sleight	<b>10</b>
David Flick	<b>10</b>	Wayne Spencer	<b>7D</b>
Ken Foster	<b>8</b>	Richard Stainton	<b>12</b>
Martin Fox	<b>RFU</b>	Alan Steane	<b>9</b>
Aidan Friend	<b>9</b>	Joe Staniford	<b>Prbn</b>
Stephen Gammage	<b>RFU</b>	Alan Steane	<b>9</b>
Greg Garner	<b>8</b>	Lance Sullen	<b>12</b>
Guy Gasper	<b>6</b>	Richard Tudor	<b>Pres</b>
Geoff Gay	<b>11</b>	Nigel Tyers	<b>UG</b>
Paul Gibson	<b>UG</b>	Peter Tyers	<b>UG</b>
Richard Hadkiss	<b>8D</b>	Rod Waterfield	<b>11</b>
Jim Hankers	<b>9</b>	Rob Watson	<b>10</b>
Roy Harbour	<b>Pres</b>	Andrew Whitman	<b>12</b>
Dulcie Hardwick	<b>10</b>	Ian Whittle	<b>Prbn</b>
Clifford Hawkins	<b>9</b>	Dave Williams	<b>8</b>
Tim Hayter	<b>9</b>	Martin Williams	<b>8D</b>
John Hill	<b>6</b>	Kerrel Wills	<b>Pres</b>
Nick Houghton	<b>6</b>	Duncan Wilson	<b>5</b>
Mark Hunt	<b>5</b>	John Wilson	<b>12</b>
Stewart Hutcheon	<b>10</b>	Julian Wise	<b>Prob</b>
Michael Hutchins	<b>8</b>	Ian Wright	<b>11</b>
Glenroy James	<b>9</b>		
John Jameson	<b>6</b>		
Charlie Jefferson	<b>Prob</b>		



## Petz Corner

### The Pitch, Weather & Abandonment

It's January 8<sup>th</sup> and looking outside everything is white and it is snowing – hence no trip to Liverpool to do New Brighton v Wilmslow in North 1 West. But a little known Law (1.1(b)) at the front of the book mandates the playing of rugby on grass, clay, artificial grass and snow, as long as the underlying surface is safe to play on (i.e not concrete, asphalt or perma-frost). So if you have blue/red paint then snow covered pitches may still be a surprising option, although I don't fancy the clay.

But what about Match Day (within 3 hours of KO). Well, then the decision of pitch fitness is down to the Regulations (18.1.1(e) - another book or in reality the RFU website – and not in the Law Book) and the two Captains, and only if they disagree (one thinks its good, the other doesn't), is the Referee brought in to form an opinion.

However the Law Makers and the Regulation Writers don't necessarily provide any guidance as to how to gauge safety, and may not have legislated for some of the more bizarre reasons a pitch may be unfit for play.

An hour before KO on a bitterly cold February afternoon (not technically freezing but loads of wind chill) two League teams are going through their rigorous (tiring ?) warm up routines. The pitch is damp but firm with a reasonable impression of grass, nice white lines etc and no frost. Fifteen minutes before KO, the Teams have gone inside, either to reduce the chance of hypothermia, gain psychological superiority through group shouting, or just use the Gents.

At this point the Referee notices but pays scant regard to a small puddle that has formed at the side of the pitch. The Ref goes in (clearly to reduce hypothermia, use the Gents, and have a group hug with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Team Ref and his Assessor) and wanders out with 5 minutes to go. Now the puddle has grown and has started to gently flow onto and across the 22.

Spectators staving off hypothermia by nursing mugs of tea and coffee have started to take interest in this new type of pre-match entertainment, especially because the growing pond has started to smell. Time to get the Home Officials and clear up the mystery. With looks of dismay and whispers of "drain rods" the Ref is reliably informed that the toilets and sewer are overflowing and liquid sewerage is making a run for it across the pitch. The grass is already growing.

So match abandoned ? Well it is an option, but thankfully 15 minutes later we have juggled spare fit and unfit pitches, shifted 2 matches, 4 teams, 8 post protectors and 28 flags and managed to KO both games by 2.30pm. As for the spectators, well we were now so far from the Club House that they all gave up and watched the International in the warmth.