

## **Society Assessor Development Officer Report**

Once again, our assessing resources have been stretched to the limit this season, as we have only had four regular Society Assessors. With 46 incoming Exchange Referees having to be covered as a priority, it has limited our ability to assess Society Referees to the degree that we would have wished. But thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm, come rain or shine of Brian Packer, Don Hope and David (Bomber) Wells and Dave Williams, we have managed to achieve 129 reports of which 83 were for 57 of our Society Referees. Following an injury during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the season, Dave Williams agreed to help out. But he then decided that he so much enjoyed assessing that he offered his full services thereafter. So I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to all four Society Assessors for all their efforts. We were also delighted that Don Dixon has recommence assessing – and we welcome him back.

Calls for additional help were put out at Members Meetings, and we received a number of offers of assistance, especially from Josh Burgess, Duncan Chandler, David Edkins, Tony Gardiner, Greg Garner, Cliff Hawkins, Nick Houghton, Nick Lacey, Louis Massarella, Paul MacMillan, George Richardson, Simon Walker and Kerrel Wills. Their reports and comments were very much appreciated.

Currently, we have three Match Observers (Assessors) on the RFU National Panel (total 16). John Haggart, Mike Jones and Geoff Blackburn. They have been appointed to a mixture of National 1 & 2 matches. Ironically, the success of our three Panel Match Observers has meant that they have rarely been available for Society games. John has been involved in carrying out experimental performance reviews with the Refs. This requires a time line to be completed by watching the match DVD and asking the Referee as to why /why not a decision was made; or what his views are of certain incidents once he has had the opportunity of reviewing the DVD himself.

As mentioned at the start of this report, we have been struggling for experienced Assessors this season. We would warmly welcome any Members who, through retirement from refereeing, wish to maintain their keen interest in the sport; or have short/long-term injury. Assessing can be very rewarding. It ensures a longer-term close involvement in the sport and is an invaluable help to the Society. It is also a possible alternative route to achieving higher levels of rugby for more ambitious Members.

Geoff Blackburn 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017