

Society Assessor Development Officer Report

Our assessing resources have reached a critically low level this season, with only three regular Society Assessors. With 28 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. We managed to cover all but one of these appointments. But thanks principally to the dedication and enthusiasm, come rain or shine of Don Hope, David (Bomber) Wells and Dave Williams, we have managed to achieve 80 reports of which 52 were for 43 of our Society Referees.

Calls for additional help were put out at Members Meetings, and we received a number of kind offers of assistance, especially from Duncan Chandler, Don Dixon, David Edkins, Mark Elliott, Keith Fisher, Andrew Forsythe, Tony Gardiner, Nick Houghton, Nick Lacey, George Richardson, Simon Walker and Kerrel Wills. Their reports, willingness to help and comments were very much appreciated.

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 we move forward into a new season, we would warmly welcome any Members who would like to try their hand at assessing, through retirement from refereeing, who may wish to maintain their keen interest in the sport; or have short/long-term injury. Firstly, it will be of enormous help to the Society, as it will give us the ability to assess and develop more of our own Society Referees. It will also provide the medium/longer term sustainability of the assessing team. Assessing can be (and is) very rewarding. It ensures an ongoing close involvement in the sport. It is also a possible alternative route to achieving higher levels of rugby for more ambitious Members.

An RFU Assessor Development course organised in late April was attended by ten Members. We can only hope that this will have inspired and encouraged a number of those attending who were not already Assessors to take up the challenge and rewards of assessing in the coming seasons.

Geoff Blackburn 23rd April 2018