



Leicestershire Society of Rugby Union Referees

January 2016

Next Meeting- 25 January 2016 @ Belgrave RFC

Dates for your diary:

1. 16 January 2016- Fitness test, 11.30 @ Victoria Park
2. 25 January 2016- Monthly members meeting @ Belgrave RFC
3. 15 April 2016- Annual Dinner more details tbc
4. 16 May 2016- AGM

To all those officiating in cup and league competitions, Paul Macmillan has spent a painstaking amount of time collating rules and regulations into one document, which is available on the website. He has given up hours of his time- so you do not have to!

Grading Committee – Process Summary

General

The Full Grading Sub Committee meet twice yearly to review all active referees.

The meetings are December and May, to give mid season and end of season reviews.

At the last meeting in December 2015, all 91 referees were reviewed with only seven being re-graded.

From these statistics alone, it should be noted that every ref is considered but few are re-graded.

Points considered

Primary measures are assessment reports and coach and mentor feedback.

We seek to assess each referee at least once per season to ensure capability, and if the referee wishes to be considered for re-grading, they can request additional assessment. This is subject to the availability of our limited number of assessors and is not the sole indicator for re-grading.

It should also be noted that re-grading can mean going to a lower level as well as being moved up. This can be at the referees request, or performance/ fitness, or player safety.

In conjunction with these, there are many other measures considered including:-

The amount of appointed games refereed recorded by the society.

Referee fitness.

Club, player and peer feedback.

Training session and members meetings attendance.

This feedback can relate to management, communication skills and application of laws, and also side issues such as dress standards, punctuality, along with feedback to players & coaches post match.

Also considered are the refs own wishes indicated, for example, happy as I am, want to move up, or indeed, want less demanding games.

Summary

Re-grading is not a 'by right' affair and is seen by the Committee as a major reward for consistent outstanding performance. Being good in our competitive Society is not enough, one must be at least 'very good' at their level for consideration.

The majority of fixtures within Leicestershire are at levels 9 and 10, and the majority of our referees are at this level too.

The Committee consider every referee at every re-grading meeting and a lot of time is given to this task to ensure a fair review for all.

To be successfully re-graded will be the result of hard work, attention to detail, personal review and self management, along with the necessary abilities to perform at the next level.

Peter Bower – Hon Grading Sec January 2016

Referee Grades Dec 2015

No16 11.01.16

Name		Grade		Innactive
Josh	Burgess	6DF	M. Mortimer ©	
Louis	Massarella	6DF	Eric Carveth ©	
Tom	Brucciani	6		
Richard	Hadkiss	6		<u>Y</u>
Nick	Houghton	6		
Ross	Martin	6		<u>Y</u>
Jonathan	Bird	7		<u>Y</u>
Peter	Bower	7		
Jeremy	Brooks	7		
Jenny	Burrows	7	G.Garner ©	
Tony	Gardiner	7		
Simon	Hincks	7	Peter Bower (M)	
Rob	Knapp	7		
Paul	MacMillan	7		
Ben	Raynor	7		<u>Y</u>
Martin	Williams	7		
Ross	Neale	7DF	Mark Elliott ©	
George	Richardson	7DF		
Peter	Connor	8DF	M. Mortimer ©	
Khalil	Bherani	8		
Duncan	Chandler	8	Dave Edkins (M)	
David	Cox	8		
Dulcie	Hardwick	8		<u>Y</u>
Richard	Henson	8	T.Brucciani (M)	
Thomas	Hurdley	8		<u>Y</u>
Charlie	Jefferson	8		
Sam	Kincaid	8		
John	Ryan	8		
Paul	Tilley	8	N.Houghton (M)	
Dave	Williams	8		
Nick	Bartlett	9		
Ray	Bates	9		
Paul	Clayton	9		
Keith	Fisher	9		
Rob	Haines	9		
Gavin	Hill	9		
Barney	Matthews	9	Dave Edkins (M)	
Andy	Miller	9		
Ian	Pollock	9		
Alan	Steane	9		
Colin	Story	9		
Julian	Wise	9		
Rupert	Burton	10		
John	Carr	10		
Elliott	Coombs	10	Tony Gardiner(M)	

Karl	Craig-West	10		
Andrew	Forsyth	10		
Myles	Halley	10		
Chris	Haywood	10		
Martin	Prince	10		
Edwin	Silkstone	10		
Mike	Sleight	10		<u>Y</u>
Nigel	Smith	10	Kerrel Wills (M)	
Richard	Stainton	10		<u>Y</u>
Andrew	Torrens	10		<u>Y</u>
Kieran	Walters	10	N.Houghton (M)	
Jaswinder Singh	Nagra	11		
Rob	Blackler	12		
Peter	Harris	12		
Will	Hayter	12		
David	Henderson	12		
Mike	Ingram	12		
Declan	Lawlor	12		
Jonathon	McGrath	12		
Jim	Parsons	12		
Joe	Symonds	Jnr		<u>Y</u>
Mick	Birchall	Pres		
Martin	Bromley	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Roger	Cairns	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Malcolm	Eames	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Mark	Elliott	Pres		
David	Flick	Pres		
Guy	Gasper	Pres		
Clifford	Hawkins	Pres		<u>Y</u>
John	Hill	Pres		
Mark	Hunt	Pres		
John	Jameson	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Mike	Jones	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Jeffrey	Knight	Pres		
Nick	Lacey	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Mark	Leavesley	Pres		<u>Y</u>
Kerrel	Wills	Pres		
Duncan	Wilson	Pres		
Jason	Hill	Prob		
David	Clarkson	RFU		<u>Y</u>
Rhys	Davies	RFU		
Martin	Fox	RFU		<u>Y</u>
Stephen	Gammage	RFU		
Greg	Garner	RFU		
Jon	Petzing	RFU		
Wayne	Spencer	RFU		

91 Total

71 Active

	M = Mentor
	C = Coach

LSRUR Training Planner January-April 2016

Continuing Development Training (open to all)			
January 2016	Subject	Venue	Trainer
Mon 4			
Wed 13	Lineout	CFS 7.30pm	Paul Macmillan
Sat 16	Fitness Test (Yo Yo)- 11.30am	Victoria Park	Paul Macmillan
Mon 25	Society Meeting	Belgrave RFC	
February 2016	Subject	Venue	Trainer
Thur 4	Scrum	CFS 7.30pm	Paul Macmillan
Wed 10	When the ball is out of play	CFS 7.30pm	Paul Macmillan
Mon 15			
Mon 22	Offside	CFS 7.30pm	Paul Macmillan
Mon 29	Society Meeting	Belgrave RFC	
March 2016	Subject	Venue	Trainer
Thur 10	Player Game Management	CFS 7.30pm	Paul Macmillan
Sun 13	Mentor/Coaching Practice 12-5pm	Loughboro' Uni	Paul Macmillan
Mon 21			
Mon 28	Society Meeting	Belgrave RFC	
April 2016	Subject	Venue	Trainer
Wed 6			
Mon 11			
Mon 18			
Mon 25	Society Meeting	Belgrave RFC	

- Training sessions will begin at 7:30pm and last for approx. 1 hour
- Programme may change as and when suitable mid-week fixtures arise for the development squad referees.
- *Central Fire and Rescue Station, Lancaster Rd, Leicester. (Attendees must inform Paul Macmillan of their intention to attend at least 24 hours prior to the event).
- **Games will include training for development referees as part of a Team of Three and observation exercises for remainder. (Further information will be available nearer the time).

Society Members Meetings			
Date	Subject	Venue	Trainer
25 Jan 7.30pm	Lineout	Belgrave RFC	Paul Macmillan
29 Feb 7.30pm	When the ball is out of play	Belgrave RFC	Paul Macmillan
28 March 7.30pm		Belgrave RFC	
25 April 7.30pm		Belgrave RFC	

Please note session location and timings or changes will be updated via the LSRUR website at least 1 week prior to event. Anyone wanting more information should contact the Society Training Officer (Paul Macmillan) directly: paulmacmillan@hotmail.co.uk 07817 356541.



New Kit Sponsorship

Dear Members,

As you will be aware, next season there will be a new kit issue to all referees who have done 10 games this season.

The committee have decided to offer some minimal sponsorship opportunities on the shirt and shorts.

There will be a position on each sleeve, the centre of the back just below the collar, and on the shorts.

If anyone would like their company logo to appear please contact me ASAP to secure a position before I canvass private business's directly.

Sleeves and back are only £500.00 each plus a small art work charge, and the shorts are only £250.00 plus art work charge. This is a one off payment for the next two years on the kit. We are also offering a page advert in the hand book to any kit sponsor free of charge.

One sleeve has already been taken so please let me know ASAP if you want to avoid disappointment.

Best wishes

Peter Bower

Hon. Grading Secretary, Grading Committee.

Peter.bower@sky.com

“Odd shaped balls.” By Tom Brucciani

Familiar as we are (or should be!) with the laws and terms of our wonderful game, how many of us know their origins and adaptations over the years? Why is a try called a try? Why do we call for a mark? Why do we call “offside”?

The answers lie in rugby’s origins and a read of the first draft of rugby’s laws written in 1845 by three pupils of Rugby school (aged 16-17) -no “old farts” back then, will give some great material to bore dinner guests and win pub quizzes. For those too lazy to google, here are a few gems to fill some column inches

Impact players are for wimps:

Once the game started, no-one could absent themselves from the match except in case of extreme emergency and then only with permission of both captains. *“the punishment for absenting oneself from a match, without any real and well-grounded reason, be left to the discretion of any praepostor”*. That doesn’t sound too bad until you read *“All matches are drawn after five days, but after three if no goal has been kicked”*. Still think you are match fit?

Concussion protocols? Bah!

EVERYONE was expected to join the match – *“in consequence of the great abuse in the system of giving notes to excuse fagging, &c. and otherwise exempt fellows from attendance at the matches, no notes shall be received which are not signed by one of the Medical officers of the school, and countersigned by the Head of house”* If you had lessons, then you had to pitch up as soon as you finished.

Offside? Onside?

“A player is off his side if the ball has touched one of his own side behind him, until the other side touch it.” i.e. a player was taken “off” his side and unable to participate until he was put back “on” his side

If at first you don’t succeed.....

“A ball touched between the goalposts may be brought up to either of them.....” If you grounded the ball you could have a “try” at kicking a goal – back then, the only way to score. Hence a “conversion” of the try into points

Kick em’ where it hurts....

“A player standing up to another may hold one arm only, but may hack him or knock the ball out of his hand”

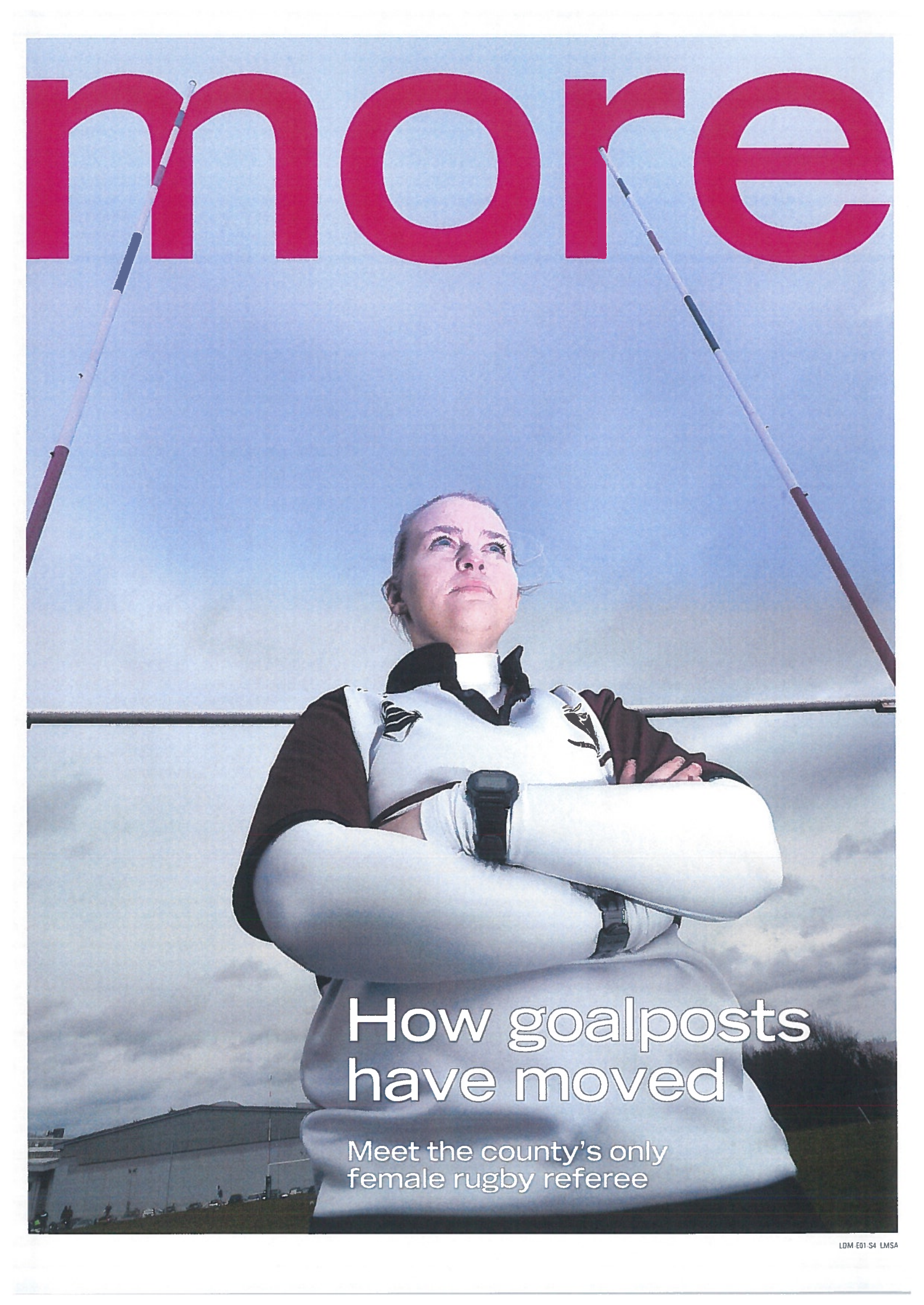
although to be fair

“No hacking with the heel, or above the knee”

Football is not Soccer!

And finally, just to make a point, “Football” was always of the physical rugby variety rather than the synchronized swimming of soccer. Mostly played in public schools and on village holy days, it was generally brutal and frequently involved brawling mobs. It was in 1847, when the former pupils of public schools, fed up with arguing over which version to play and less than keen on Rugby school’s more violent law book, set up the “Cambridge Rules” which formed in large part the basis of Association Football’s rules in 1863. Softies!

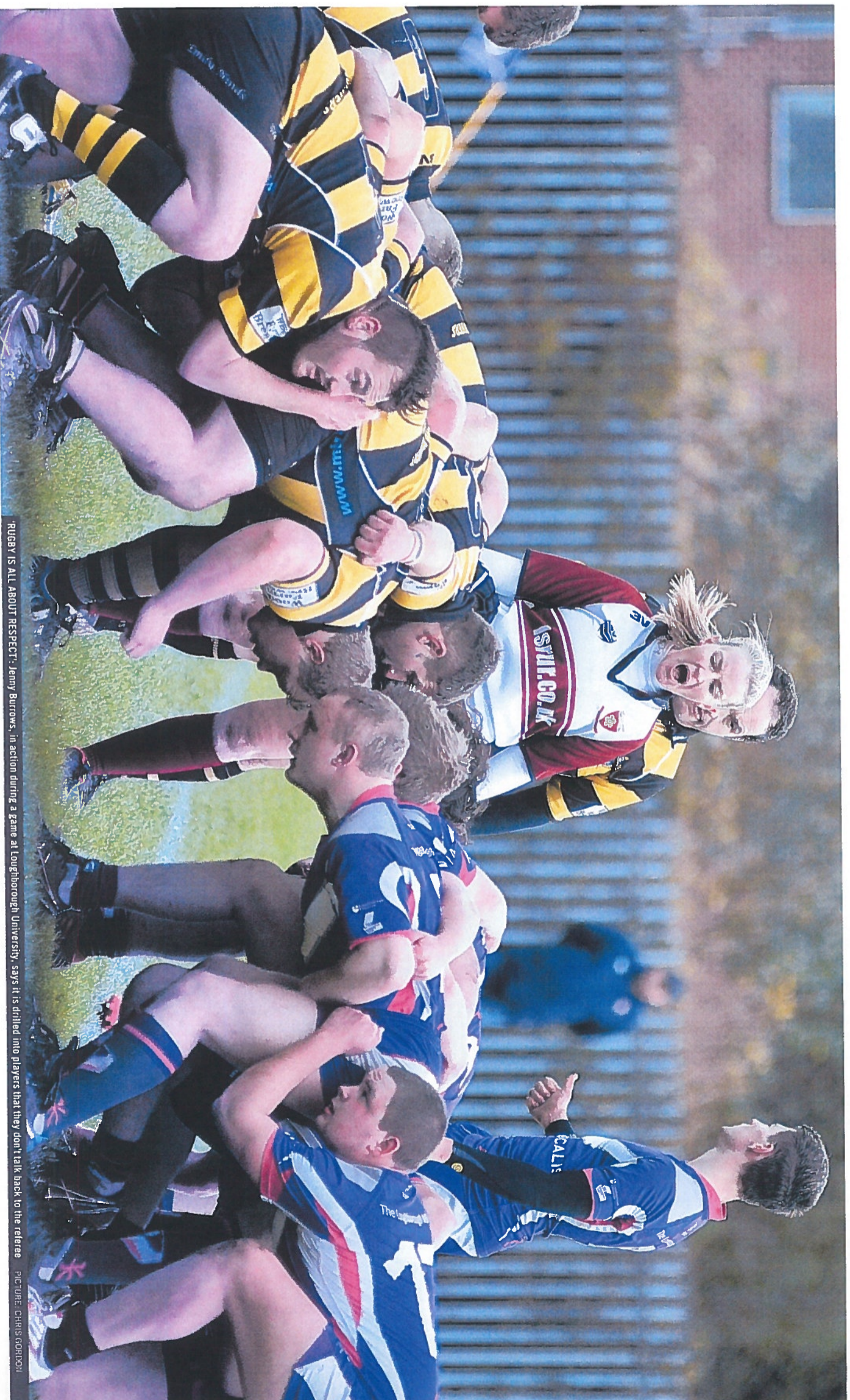
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How goalposts have moved

Meet the county's only
female rugby referee

'When I step out on to the rugby pitch, I don't think of myself as a woman. For those 80 minutes, I'm a referee'



RUGBY IS ALL ABOUT RESPECT: Jenny Burrows, in action during a game at Loughborough University, says it's drilled into players that they don't talk back to the referee

PICTURE: CHARLIE GORDON

H

ER name is Jenny Burrows. But you can call her "Sir". Or if you're under 12, "Miss". But not "Ma'am". "I don't like Ma'am," she says with a grin. "I'm too young to be Ma'am."

Alternatively, if you want to steer clear of awkwardness, stick to "ref". It's easier. Jenny is Leicester's only woman rugby referee and one of a handful in England and

At a slightly-built 5ft 3ins, Jenny Burrows is dwarfed by the two sets of rugby players but, make no mistake, she is in very much in charge. Here, Jenny talks to **Sarah Staples** about what inspired her to become Leicester-shire's only woman rugby referee

the UK. "I have players say: 'What do we call you?' I say: 'Well, what do you normally call the referee?' And if they say: 'Sir', that's fine. Let's keep it simple."

If you're about to turn the page thinking this story isn't for you, stick with us: this is about more than rugby. It's about change.

I played rugby in my 20s. I say played. I ran around with a ball, tried to avoid being tackled, spent a bit of time in A&E, cemented two life-long friendships.

It was the mid-1990s. During my five years with clubs in England and Scotland, I never saw a woman ref. Our coaches were men. Few teams meant few fixtures. Our skill level—and many of us had never played a team sport before, let alone contact one—was low.

We had no roots in the game, no footsteps to follow. We thought of ourselves as some sort of pioneers. Of course, we weren't. Women's

games were played as early as the 1880s, as what the Victorians politely called exhibition matches—circus freak shows with a thin veneer of respectability. By 1993, the year I fell into playing for my college team, 20th-century women's liberation had done a lot, but it didn't run to racing down the wing.

If our play was poor, attitudes off the pitch were worse. I remember a conversation with an ex-player who told me all the women players he knew were lesbians or man-eaters.

He didn't use the word lesbian though, he used something much, much nastier. Let's draw a line under that.

It's 2016. The England Women's Rugby team are world champions. Grassroots women's rugby is stronger than ever. Later this year, women's—and men's—rugby sevens will be part of the Olympics in Rio for the first time. And after two hours of talking to

29-year-old Jenny, in a cafe on the outskirts of Loughborough, I leave feeling hopeful, jubilant. A lot can happen in 20 years. Like acceptance.

THE first game Jenny took charge at was a veterans match at Melton Mowbray in 2011. It was a cloudy, October afternoon. Mild, for the time of year. Jenny felt the slight sick feeling of fear in her stomach.

She pulled up in her car, already dressed in her black shorts and bright-coloured rugby top. "I didn't know what facilities they would have for me to get changed, so I turned up in my kit."

She met Noel Manchester, the man who trained her at the Leicestershire Society for Rugby Union Retirees (LSRURU). Quietly, he went over some of the things she had learned in her two-day course, building

her new fragile confidence brick by brick. "You can't walk out on to a pitch a quivering wreck," she says. "They've will see it and start using it."

What happened next is the same thing that happens at rugby grounds up and down the land: at 3pm, on Saturday afternoons

Both teams fogged out on to the pitch. Jenny blew the whistle, battle commenced. "There was a lot of kicking the ball, I remember that. Veterans do that, because they don't want to run as much."

They haven't got the legs, she laughs. And this is all she remembers. For 80 minutes, nothing existed but what was happening on that muddy patch of grass. "No-one made me feel out of my depth. Everyone was polite, respectful."

"That's the thing about rugby; it's based on respect. One of the first things that's drilled into you as a player is that you don't talk back

at the referee. I came off and felt, 'I can do this.' I was surprised how much I enjoyed it."

Noel was waiting for her. She walked over, part-dazed, part-elated. Well done, he told her, you had a good game.

Now go back and shake the players' hands. It was the one piece of rugby etiquette she had forgotten that afternoon.

THIS is an interview of two halves. The first hour is spent talking about Jenny's playing days; how she fell into the game as a pupil at Gidhaxton Sixth Form College.

The then 15-year-old Jenny was supposed to be playing netball one afternoon when her match was cancelled. The school's girls' rugby team had a fixture through, and they were down on numbers. One of Jenny's friends asked her to step in.

understand the rules. I had no idea what I was supposed to be doing. I was there to make up numbers."

It wasn't the ideal way to be introduced to a new sport. She enjoyed it, though. For a while afterwards, she played rugby and netball, but then the rugby started to take over.

"My mum was worried. I was her little girl. But my dad was dead supportive from the start. Mum was supportive, too, very supportive, but I think she would have preferred me to stick to netball."

Jenny's PE teacher at Gidhaxton played for a women's team in Leicester, Stoneysgate. They had just started up, and were looking for players.

There weren't many teams to choose from in Leicester. Leicester Forest East had a

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THE BIG INTERVIEW

FROM PAGE 5

women's team, as did both universities. Leicester Tigers, one of the biggest names in rugby union, didn't – and still doesn't.

"Playing for Stoneygate opened up a new world. When I first joined, they took me back to basics. I learned how to tackle, using tackle bags and tackle shields.

"We did handling drills (learning how to pass). Then we started working on more technical moves. We trained twice a week, with games on Sundays."

Ex-Scotland international prop Vicky Galbraith was one of the players Jenny met through Stoneygate.

"She taught me a lot. Speak to anyone who played alongside her, and they'll tell you she had a massive impact on the team. When you play alongside someone who has played at a higher level, it makes you raise your own game."

Galbraith, she adds, died from cancer two years ago. "For me, she was always one of the big influences."

Jenny loved the training, the banter, the laughs with the girls. But she didn't like getting tackled. No player does. It was that ominous feeling, she says, of walking out on to the pitch and thinking: "Today I'm going to get battered".

She snapped a finger. Broke a collarbone. Injured her back. Not many players leave the game without the scars to show for it.

"But for me, it was always about the teamwork, the camaraderie. It doesn't matter what happens, the person next to you has got your back – that was what I loved.

"I made a lot of friends. A lot of my friends were rugby-based. They still are."

It was the noughties. A woman playing rugby, even one as slightly built as 5ft 3ins Jenny, didn't raise as many eyebrows as it had done a decade earlier.

"I think people finally accepted that rugby isn't a man's game," she says. "A lot of teams now are opening up and having women's teams."

What about the muddy kit, the boot cleaning? That's the least good bit about the game, isn't it? "Dad cleaned my boots and Mum washed my kit," she jokes.

I'll put that in, I warn her. You think you took a battering on the pitch, just wait until you get home and face your parents.

She laughs.

JENNY was playing for Stoneygate when she met Dulcie Hardwick, the first woman ref she had ever seen.

Jenny, who was working as an accountant after studying for a maths degree, had started to think about retiring from the game.

But after nearly 10 years as a player, she couldn't contemplate not having the sport in her life. Dulcie officiating one of her matches made her consider that training as a ref could be her next step.

It was part of a deal she made with her mum, primary teacher, Anita. There had been too many trips to A&E. She worried, as mums do.

Jenny made a pact with her: she would carry on playing for the 2011 season, but train as a ref as well.

"By Christmas that year, I stopped playing. I loved being a ref and that was it."

"When I go out on the pitch, I don't think of



TWICKENHAM TOURNAMENT: Jenny Burrows, centre, with other officials at the World Women's World Rugby Sevens last year

myself as a woman. For those 80 minutes, I'm a referee."

Four years ago, when Jenny started refereeing, she set a target: to officiate in a match at Welford Road.

A year after qualifying, she walked out on to the hallowed turf as assistant ref for the women's varsity match between Leicester and De Montfort University.

In 2014 and 2015, she refed the same game. "To walk out at Welford Road, what can you say? Amazing experience."

Her sporting goalposts moved. Jenny set her sights on Twickenham. By May this year, she ticked that box as well, as assistant referee at the World Women's Sevens tournament in the play-off for third and fourth place.

"Running out at Twickenham, that was beyond my expectations," she says. "I never expected, when I started out, to do anything like that. And it was brilliant to have a woman ref, refing a women's game of rugby. Because if there is a women's game, there should be women refs."

Where next? Jenny wants to keep doing what she's doing, building up her experience. And who knows where it will take her?

In the here and now, her weekends will be spent rather less glamorously, usually refereeing anywhere from Market Harborough to Coalville, Loughborough or Lutterworth.

A few weeks ago, she got so cold officiating at a game, that her mum had to drive her home because her hands had stopped working.

Referees don't get paid. They give up their time, free of charge, every weekend throughout the season.

"It doesn't bother me that I don't get paid. I do it for the love of the sport and because without a referee, the game wouldn't go ahead," she says.

Normally she covers one game a weekend, through the season.

"It's not about the referee. Yes, we're there, yes, we've got a part to play. But the game is for the 30 players on the pitch.

"If you're whistle-happy, the game is going



MORE PEOPLE

to keep stopping and lose its flow. Some of the older boys still think: 'she won't know the game, she won't know the laws'.

"I kind of shock them, because they don't expect me to have played for 10 years. So I do know."

Safety is Jenny's primary role. Making sure the game is played within the rules, and trying to make sure they walk off rather than being stretched away.

"Players will say: 'He's done this, he did that'. Sometimes you have to say: 'Look, I didn't see it. If I didn't see it, I can't react to it'.

"I make mistakes. Every ref makes mistakes. The captain of a team will say: 'Surely that's a penalty or a card?' You say: 'That's my decision, play on'. And that's it. The players accept that.

"I'll talk to them in the bar afterwards. I freely accept I'm not perfect. No referee is."

Her pet hate, the niggles that get her back up, is what appears on social media after a game.

"I hate players speculating, slating refs after a game. There are clubs where you see it on Facebook. For me, refs are harder on themselves than anyone else could be.

"At the end of the game you will be loved by 15 players and hated by 15 players.

"That's the same story for every referee."

AFTER the game, Jenny will go into the bar for a drink with the players.

"During the match you have to rein the banter in because they have still got to respect you during the match.

"I don't want them to think they can use the banter to break laws. But after the game, the banter is hilarious.

"There's some that hold back because I'm a woman. You typically get a player: 'You can't swear, there's a lady present.' I'll usually turn round and say: 'Where is she?'

"I'll give as good as I get. The guys take the mick out of a decision I made on the pitch, I'll come back with a quip. It's a way of defending yourself."

Jenny has a scar on her little finger, a war wound from her days as a player. She met her boyfriend, Simon, through the game. Rugby's given her a lot, and not all of it visible to the naked eye.

"I'm an accountant, which means I have to go into meetings and be confident. If I can deal with 30 men on a pitch baying for each other's blood," she says, "I can deal with a suit in an office."

I've spent a lot of time thinking about this story: Jenny, rugby, my past, her future.

Illness, not injury, stopped me playing in the late '90s.

I found my boots a few years ago, lying forgotten in a plastic bag in the garage, still mud-caked from the last training session.

I don't miss it. Other things took rugby's place.

But I've watched the game from a distance, and followed, like a proud grandmother, the next generation. They are digital to our Betamax: stronger, fitter, able to read the game.

They have roots. They have women like Jenny, officiating.

I'm being sentimental, but I can't help myself. I know how far we have come.

I'd like this to be the start of the women's rugby story. Not the end. [m](#)