

Leicestershire Society of Rugby Union Referees

May 2015

AGM MEETING-11TH MAY

VIPERS RFC 7.30PM

Dates for your diary-

Saturday 1st August– Family fun day at Bosworth Water Park

24th August– First members meeting of the 2015/2016 season.



132 ...

days until RWC Kicks off
on the 18th September
2015!

FEATURED REFEREE OF THE MONTH...



GEORGE RICHARDSON

JB: What is your current level?

George: Level 7DF

JB: Why did you start refereeing?

George: To develop myself into an IRB referee, so I could get the best view in the world for high profile games.

JB: Best thing about refereeing?

George: Always being respected on the field— no matter how wrong I may get a decision.

JB: ... and the worst?

George: Filling out red card reports.

JB: What do you do for a living?

George: Studying a Bsc Sports Science with applied biochemistry.

JB: What would your tour nickname be?

George: That would require me to break the unwritten rule...

JB: Where would you most like to referee (country and/or stadium)?

George: Under the purple lights at Murrayfield— England v Scotland

JB: Which referee do you admire most and why?

George: Wayne Barnes as his interpretation of the breakdown is refreshing to see— provides a fast game

JB: If you could— which one law would you alter/amend and why?

George: Refusing to set up the maul at the lineout, I like to see the mauling contest.

JB: If you were going on tour with the society and had to room with another referee, who would you choose and why?

George: Josh Burgess and Ross Neale, it would be like rooming with a married couple; entertaining and comically sarcastic.

JB: Tell us an interesting fact about yourself.

George: I got to the final 10 of the Junior Apprentice but had to pull out due to rugby commitments.

A week in the life of a level 8 on standby.....

11-30 Thursday night received text Old Newts v Deepings, re-arranged league game which the league administrator had insisted they play on Easter Saturday. Both clubs not happy about it but not playing could lead to a points deduction & could even mean Old Newts would not get promoted.

Kicked off, game pretty even, then after 20 minutes rolled my ankle & went down like a sack of ****, blowing my whistle to stop the game whilst in free-fall.

A bit of magic spray & some hastily acquired strapping later I thought I've got to see this through due to the circumstances. It turned out to be a great game, the lead changing hand various times, with Newts coming out on top 35-27.

About a week later, Friday morning 8-30 fixture comes through, Market Harborough 2 v Wellingborough 2, nice friendly game to start winding down the season. Paul Tilley calls to confirm & tells me that the reason I got the game is because the original referee (who shall remain nameless to protect the guilty) had to cry off because he hurt his leg/back whilst trying to kick a fox that was attacking one of his chickens!

Anyway, game kicked off & two minutes in, I ran straight into the back of a player (who should have been moving faster than me!) & my top lip connected with the back of his head. Blew the whistle to stop the game (it's harder than you think with a fat lip!), swilled the blood out & carried on. After about 20 minutes noticed a man waving madly at me from the touchline, the ball went out so I went to ask him what his problem was. "Sorry sir but the first team ref has pulled a fetlock, you'll have to do it" he said. I conferred with Brian Packer who was assessing the original ref, who was on exchange from Bristol & he said it was OK as it was only a level 7. So there I was from a level 9 friendly to a level 7 league local derby! (Harborough v Oakham).

Both teams agreed that I did the best I could and was equally consistent for both sides. (Translation: you were cr*p but fair!) They were grateful that they did not have to replay it. It was a good experience & I enjoyed it, especially as many handshakes & offers of beer from both sides meant I didn't feel too bad afterwards.

Mick Birchall

Caption Competitions!

All appropriate suggestions will be published in the next newsletter!



'So its ten games for the shirt and how many for the car'

'I wish the kids would stop cleaning my shirt on that dirty car' Tony Gardiner

'Why have all you blokes got my reg number on your shirts? Peter Bower



'Which one of you left the seat up in the changing room?' Noel Manchester

Leicestershire Society of Rugby Union Referees AGM 2013/4

12th May 2014

There were 34 members present.

The president welcomed everyone to the 117th AGM

John Haggart opened the meeting

1. **Apologies;** Messrs. Roberts, Waterfield, Singh, Rob Carr, R P Mason, Burnham, Davies, Ord, Neale, Burrows, Spencer, Hope

2. **Minutes of the previous AGM** held on 13th May 2013

These were proposed by **Brian Packer** and seconded by **Greg Garner**

3. **Matters Arising.**

There were no matters arising

4. **Annual Reports.**

Hon. Secretary. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed for acceptance by **Tom Brucciani** and seconded by **Rob Knapp**.

Hon. Appointments Secretary. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed for acceptance by **Dick Sharp** and seconded by **Keith Fisher**.

Hon. Mid-week Appointments Secretary. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed for acceptance by **Martin Williams** and seconded by **Mark Elliott**

Hon. Sunday Appointments Secretary. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed for acceptance by **Greg Garner** and seconded by **John Hill**.

Hon. Training Officer. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed for acceptance by **Josh Burgess** and seconded by **Kerrel Wills**.

Hon. Society Adviser Development Officer. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed for acceptance by **Paul Gibson** and seconded by **John Haggart**.

Hon. Exchange Secretary. No Report Submitted for.

Hon. Recruitment Officer. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Report proposed for acceptance by **Josh Burgess** and seconded by **Mark Elliott**.

Hon. Chairman. Report circulated prior to the meeting. Report proposed for acceptance by **Geoff Blackburn** and seconded by **Greg Garner**.

Hon Grading report circulated prior to the meeting. Report proposed for Acceptance by **John Hill** seconded by **Keith Fisher**.

k) There was no Federation report

- l) Hon. Promotions report was circulated prior to the meeting, No questions. Report Proposed for acceptance by **Roger Woolley** and seconded by **Noel Manchester**

B) Change to the Rules of the Society.

There are no changes to the rules of the society

. c) Election of Officers.

	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded
President	J. Haggart	R. Davies	M. Elliott
Secretary	J. Hill	R. Davies	N. Lacey
SADO	G.Blackburn	R.Davies	J.Hill
Training	P.Macmillan	G.Garner	J.Hill
Promotions	Josh Burgess	J. Haggart	R. Neale

C) Any Other Business.

Nick Lacey informed the membership that expenses have been paid and that the committee will keep subs the same as will club subs and expenses, he also asked for members expenses to be submitted as the books need to close by the end of May. Nick also praised the organisation of the annual and felt it would break even or make a slight loss.

Alan Steane was presented with the trophy for the contribution to junior rugby by the president

Brian Mudford asked about the receipt of the reports for the AGM it was deemed that the current system is adequate .

Kerrel asked if members could submit their sizes for the new kit next season.

John Hill explained the Rugby World ticketing system and how it works to the membership and the allocation of tickets.

The AGM will take place on 11th May 2015

The meeting closed at 20.15.

We've reached the end of another season and Leicestershire still seem to bucking the national trend by having as many, if not more, referees than there are games to referee in a weekend. I'm proud when speaking with referees, society and federation officials from other parts of the country to be able to say that we cover 98% of Saturday matches that are notified to us in an appropriate timescale and that figure is largely to the credit of the Saturday appointments team in the guise of Mark Elliott and Kerrel Wills.

That's not to say that the rest of the game suffers. On the contrary, Tom Brucciani and Rob Knapp have both increased the number of games that we have appointed referees to, and the reports we get from the clubs are that our referees are still seen a valuable contribution to the games while Wayne Spencer and the grading committee have ensured that exchange games have been appointed, sometimes as teams of three, and the feedback from those appointments especially has been excellent, which tells me that Leicestershire referees are held in esteem by clubs all over the country and not just within the County.

Running teams of three has meant that we have been able to offer different development opportunities to our match officials, and Paul Macmillan has worked hard to ensure that the opportunity to learn has been available to all referees, not just the few who have chosen to make use of the training sessions he has delivered.

We need referees to be able to make that work and bucking that national trend of losing referees is exactly what Noel Manchester has enabled us to do by ensuring anyone who expresses a desire to become a referee has the right support and mentoring to ensure a sound start to his, or her, refereeing career. Leicestershire has seen a net **gain** of 6 referees this season without counting any retirements that we don't yet know of. Manchester and the North-West has seen a nett **loss** of 30 at the time of writing.

Despite moving out of the county, Nick Lacey continues to support us as Treasurer and keep us on the straight and narrow looking after the financial wellbeing of the society, and it is an acknowledgement of his commitment to us that Nick attends at least one meeting a month. He, with the more than able support of John Haggart, have once again arranged an annual dinner for the rugby community of Leics, this year with more than 300 diners. For my own part, I'm happy that circumstances forced us to move back to Leicester Tigers for our dinner, not that the City stadium had let us down previously. Nor was it their fault that the change in venue was forced on us, but Tigers have done nothing to disappoint and in my opinion, we've seen three of the most successful and enjoyable dinners I can remember, there.

John has also been the prime mover in the organisation of the Presidents Lunch at Ansty Hall, and for all those who have not been able to enjoy that occasion, you have missed out. I'd like to thank John for all his hard work and his support for me over the last three years. His knowledge and counsel have been sought and available for me, and have been to the benefit of the society.

Our success has not just been limited to the officiating side of the game – through the good mentoring of Geoff Blackburn, our assessors are sought after at National level as well as Federation and Group – our congratulations should go to Mike Jones who has been elected to assess at the next level.

Geoff has also been able to ensure that every referee has been assessed this season, some more than once if they have requested it.

It all leaves me with a sense that the committee has done a good job for Leics rugby this season again, and before anyone suggests that my comment may seem a little self-congratulatory, please consider all the above comments and ask that if we could do better, what would better look like. When you've reached that point, tell us or, better still, put yourself up for election when a suitable position comes vacant on the committee. New blood always brings new enthusiasm and that is always needed, along with older wisdom and experience, to take any organisation forward.

John Hill is the glue that has held this committee together, and his support for the society and for leics rugby is unwavering. He will also be a new father this summer, so my thanks, and congratulations to him for all his efforts this season.

And that's it. Well, not quite.

The committee can only work with the material we're given to work with, and that is you, the membership and the clubs. We appreciate that there is a huge amount of goodwill both ways, and that goodwill has made our jobs so much easier, so the thanks that are also due to the refereeing community – all of you.

Enjoy your summer. Our first member's meeting of next season will be on Monday 24th August at Leicester Vipers RFC.

So if we don't cross paths during the summer break, I look forward to seeing you all there.

Thanks

Regards

Rhys Davies

Chairman

EXCHANGE REPORT

There was in total 70 exchange games. The standard of reports that came back were a credit to yourselves and the society. Thank you for those that went out, especially the referee's that stepped in at the last minute and made the exchanges run smoothly.

Wayne Spencer

Report of Hon., Grading Secretary - Season 2014-15

The full grading committee reviewed all 94 active referees in December and regraded nine individuals. The end of season Full Grading Committee Meeting will take place April 20th when again the grades of all LSRUR Referees will be reviewed in preparation for next season. All re-graded Referees will be informed shortly after that meeting.

The current spread of our Referee grades are as follows (includes some inactive):

Level	RFU	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Jnr	Prob	Pres	UG	U16	Total
Nos	6	1	4	10	17	15	15	2	1	-	1	9	19	-	-	100

Overall this has been a mild winter allowing most fixtures to be held as scheduled, and due to the fine work of our SADO Geoff Blackburn, all active refs have been watched.

Also, all Refs who requested an additional assessment were catered for.

The Grading Committee is most grateful to all Assessors, Advisers, Coaches, Mentors and other Members of the Society (listed in SADO report) for their commitment and time in assessing the Referees and their valuable contribution.

The criteria for regrading is published on the LSRUR website.

We are blessed with more refs than games on a lot of weeks, and this, combined with only two level eight teams, make climbing through the grades more difficult than ever.

This in turn makes the task of the grading committee, more difficult than ever too.

This situation is a mixed blessing, as it does mean we are able to offer a level of competence to all levels, rarely seen in other societies.

Do bear with me though, if that expected regarding does not come!

Peter Bower Hon Grading Sec.

March 2015

LSRUR 2014-15 Training Report

This we have had training sessions on:

‘Grey’ areas of law
Player management
Scrum
Positioning
The breakdown
Assistant Refereeing
Foul play

We have had five training games where we watched a team of three and discussed the situations in the game.

Attendance has been good all year with an average attendance of just over 6 people.

The RFU has delivered three Level 2 refereeing courses; one level 1 refereeing children CPD; one Game Management CPD and one Assistant Referee CPD.

Referee sessions with players/coaches were offered to clubs but none took this offer up officially. However some clubs contacted referees that they knew and some sessions were delivered.

As always, training is open to everyone. An up to date schedule is kept on the website and if you want to be included on the email reminder list then please get in touch.

Paul Macmillan

Promotions Secretary Report

A big thank you to all that contributed to the Newsletter this year, without contributions by members it would be nigh on impossible to produce the Newsletter.

A special thank you to Jon Petzing ,I am sure all members of the society would agree that ‘Petz Corner’ is the highlight of the majority of editions. Special thanks to Paul Macmilan, Noel Manchester, Mick Birchall and everyone else on the committee for your continued support in my first year on the committee.

On the 1st August, we will be holding a family fun day at Bosworth Water Park, hopefully an opportunity for the whole family to relax and socialise with other member’s families. We are planning to run a BBQ, as well as some fun (but potentially competitive), sporting events, 5-a-side football, touch rugby, qwik cricket, rounders etc. More information to follow soon.

Josh Burgess
Promotions Secretary

Report of Honorary Society Assessor Development Officer – Season 2014-15

The start of this season really stretched our assessing resources, due partially to the exchange fixtures that had to be covered, but also due to the lack of experienced Assessors (for a number of reasons). Calls for help were put out at Members Meetings, and we received a number of offers of help, particularly from Greg Garner, Nick Houghton and Rob Knapp. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and all the other Members who responded positively. Fortunately, by December, we were back at full strength. Ironically, our task within Society has not been made any easier by the impressive ongoing success of our senior Assessors on National Panel and Group duties and thus being unavailable for Society appointments.

Currently, we have three Match Observers (Assessors) on the RFU National Panel (total 16). John Haggart, Mike Jones (having joined the Panel at the start of this season) and Geoff Blackburn. They have been appointed to a mixture of National 1 & 2 matches. Mike was also appointed to the England Counties U18 v France and Ireland Counties U18 v France games; and Geoff to one B&I Cup game. Due to business commitments, Mike Carr left the National Panel mid-season and will be missed.

I should like to mention the experienced stalwarts of the Society Assessing team. Our grateful thanks go to Paul Gibson, Brian Packer (who has thankfully returned to 'full-time' assessing), Nick Lacey and Dave Wells, all of who have given their support and valuable contributions throughout the season.

Don Hope was of great assistance throughout most of the season, his bowling commitments just denying us of his availability during the early and latter weeks of the season; David Edkins who has combined assessing with his other Society coaching responsibilities; Don Dixon who has decided to recommence assessing – we look forward to his renewed enthusiasm and input.; and we welcomed John Bland who has recently joined us from Manchester Society.

Rich Plant-Mason has been obliged to temporarily give up assessing due to business commitments.

Together, at the time of writing, we were able to assess 57 Society Referees (83 reports) and assess 40 incoming Exchange Referees. A grand total of 123 assessments.

As mentioned in each end of season report, we would 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 17th April 2015

Midweeks Appointments Secretary's Report

LSRUR AGM May 2015

Midweek rugby across Leicestershire has had another busy year with encouraging signs of growth in schools rugby - more U13, U14 & U15 games are coming through across the county. There has also been an increase in the quality of games on offer with university sides moving up the leagues and some strong performances in the national cups from local schools. There have been some top quality games on offer in midweek and I know that several members have had some really enjoyable games – I am sure this was reflected in the players' experience too!

Once again I would like to thank all the referees who have helped cover midweek games this year (sometimes at short notice, and sometimes several times in short succession). It is very much appreciated - so many willing volunteers makes the job much easier. It is most certainly appreciated by the various schools and clubs we referee in Leicestershire, as proved by their frequent compliments about our service and standards as a referees' society.

Particular mention should also be made of the numbers of new referees who have volunteered to help in midweek. It is great to see them get involved in so many grass roots games at schools and I have no doubt that the experience gained will be of benefit to them and the society as they progress.

Finally, a reminder that the chief method I use to contact referees for games is email. If any member wishes to be considered for midweeks but does not find using email convenient, then please get in touch and I will endeavour to ensure you are given every opportunity to be appointed to available games.

Thank-you once again for all of your help and enjoy the close season.

Tom Brucciani

Midweeks Appointments Secretary

Sunday Appointments Report

Ladies and gents let me start by thanking everybody who has turned out on Sunday's this season. The usual core of refs has been bolstered greatly with new faces. We have covered more games than last year, in one week alone 27 refs were appointed. Also please pass on my thanks to your clubs for their help, because of their early notification of games most fixtures were appointed by Wednesday which I will try to continue. Next season as with this please try to let me know your availability as soon as possible, my time will be stretched with the arrival of another Knapp in July so your continued help will be greatly appreciated.

When I've visited clubs around the county this season the sheer numbers of kids playing our game seem to multiply, this can only lead to a healthy future for the sport, please remember whether you're on colts, 17s, 16s, 15s, 14s or 13s without you the future of our game dies.

Rob Knapp

Secretary's Report

LSRUR AGM May 2015

Another season draws to a close and as a society we have had a very good season. To cap this the dinner was a great success, due to the hard work of the dinner committee but a huge thanks should go to John Haggart who's hard work ensured the good numbers.

The ticket sales for the Autumn Internationals were slow but we sold out of our allocation of Six Nations tickets, showing a small profit. We also managed to get several of our members World Cup Tickets for the tournament starting in September.

On discipline, we were slightly down before Christmas with a sharp increase after the break, it is still important for us to receive reports as soon as possible, but within 24 hours as the player dismissed cannot play until he appears before a panel, whether guilty or not as the case may be.

All in all at the end of my 10th year as Secretary of LSRUR its been a great year again and I look forward to welcoming you to the AGM on 11th May at Vipers RFC

John Hill

Hon. Secretary

Recruitment and retention officer's report: 2014-2015.

First, I must thank Cliff Hawkins for stepping in and helping, following the retirement of Gary Kilbourne. Cliff has made a significant contribution to the mentoring of this season's new members. I also thank those members who put me in touch with potential new recruits.

This has been a season of highs and lows in respect of the number of new members passing through their probationary period. At the start of the season we were down to only two, having lost Brionny Cleall, who left Loughborough University to continue her studies at Exeter University, whilst Freddie Cracknell one of our younger recruits, decided not to continue.

At the AGM, Andrew Torrens of the Ulster Society applied to join us , having moved into the County. Sadly he has not yet started due to a long term injury.

As the season progressed, a few new members arrived and the season's tally now stands at seven. This is below the average but far better than was feared.

The following have completed their probationary games and have been awarded their Society kit:- Elliott Coombes, Peter Connor, Andrew Forsythe, Chris Hayward, Jim Parsons and Kieran Walters. Additionally, we welcomed Khalil Bheriani of the Ontario (Canada) Society who is taking a two year post graduate course at Leicester University and has also qualified for his Society kit.

So, at the end of another season, the list is yet again nearly empty. So to all members the message is (as always). Please spread the word and send me the details of anyone showing interest in taking up the whistle.

Noel Manchester.







