

# THE WHISTLING BUSTARD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DORSET AND WILTS SOCIETY OF RUGBY UNION REFEREES

August 2007

## EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General meeting will be held at Salisbury RFC on Monday 3 September at 1930hrs to consider the Financial Accounts for the last year and to pass on information for the coming season.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly Training Meetings will be held as follows:  
DORSET at the Langton Arms on Mondays at 1930 hrs:

October 1: Effective Communication. A DVD of Tony Spreadbury refereeing the Dorset & Wilts Cup Final 2006.

November 5: Offside.

February 4: Ruck / Maul.

March 3: TBD.

WILTSHIRE at Devizes RFC on Thursdays at 1930 hrs:

October 4: Effective Communication. A DVD of Tony Spreadbury refereeing the Dorset & Wilts Cup Final 2006.

November 8: Offside.

Wiltshire meetings have been poorly attended. Your committee will be reviewing future options depending upon attendance this autumn.

Joint Meetings will be held:

December at a time and place to be decided.

January 14 at 1930 at Salisbury RFC. Andy

Melrose and Steve Harland will talk to us.

Any volunteers willing to deliver an interesting topic to Dorset and Wilts referees should contact Richard Shore.

## FEDERATION TRAINING DAY

No date or content have yet been agreed. Members will be notified when details are known.

## ANNUAL DINNER

At our Annual Dinner combined with the Dorset & Wilts RFU on 2 June we invited Richard Glynn-Jones (RFU Ref Mgr), Steve Harland (RRDO) & Bobbie Haynes (RFU) and Simon Thomas (Chairman Hants Society) as our Society guests. Fifty five attended the event altogether.

## CHILD PROTECTION REGISTRATION

All referees should be cleared by the CRB through the RFU. (Clearances obtained through other employers or different sports bodies are not acceptable). If you are not cleared then you will not be eligible for appointment to any games which involve teams at age 18 or under. Application forms for clearance may be completed at any Society meeting but it would be helpful if you would notify the Training Officer or the Secretary in advance of your intention to do this. Alternatively it may be more convenient to submit your application through the Welfare Officer at your local club. If you have difficulties in making arrangements to apply for clearance then please contact the Secretary.

There are four sections of the application form that you will need to complete and for one of these you will need details of all addresses lived at during the past 5 years. An independent authorised person fills in the fifth section and in order for him/her to do this they will require to see the following documentation:-

1. Passport  
or
2. Driving Licence
3. Official Document showing National Insurance Number
4. Utilities Bill or Bank Statement, \*  
\* (To confirm address)  
\* document should be less than three months old

If you do not have either 1 or 2 from the above list the following documents can be accepted:

Birth Certificate  
Marriage Certificate

Clearance is usually completed in 4-6 weeks following submission of the form. The applicant will then receive a disclosure certificate. Members are asked to inform the Secretary of the date and the

number on this so that the Society's records may be kept up-to-date.

### **APPOINTMENTS/INSURANCE**

A reminder that when referees officiate at local schools or clubs as a favour, and if logged in to be appointed by the Society Organiser to be covered by the Society insurance, the school or club would be charged the fee. If a referee is officially appointed by the Society to any match, a fee is charged. Therefore any referees wishing to continue to carry out local favours without a Society appointment will be covered by only the club's or school's insurance.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

This season will see the return to monthly referee appointments. Referees are asked to assist in the process by ensuring that availability returns are completed and returned to the Appointments Secretary by the 15th of the preceding month to allow for appointments to be made by the 22nd of each month. The season will also see the introduction of weekly re-appointers, details of which will be published on the website shortly.

Forthcoming Fixtures A full list of all known forthcoming fixtures will be maintained on the website allowing both clubs and referees the opportunity to view forthcoming fixtures, and for Clubs in particular to maintain a visible record of changes as and when they occur.

### **SPONSORSHIP**

We seek further sponsorship for more kit, so if you have any contacts please pass them on to Robin Miller.

### **SOCIETY WEBSITE**

Society website:

<http://www.dorsetandwiltsrefs.org.uk/>

Don't forget to look at the website frequently, not only the appointments page but all the other pages which are continually updated with information to help and, hopefully, interest you. For example the 'links' page points to all the important RFU pages including Rugby First.

There is even a copy, and back issues, of The Whistling Bustard :-)) which can be found on the 'news' page.

### **CHANGES TO LAWS, REGULATIONS & INTERPRETATIONS NEXT SEASON**

As you all know by now, Law Changes are now promulgated to take effect from 1 January.

I will give an update on IRB Law Rulings on 3 September, when there will also be an opportunity to answer any queries.

### **REFEREE/ADVISER GROUPINGS**

These are being finalised and will be published by 21 Aug.

### **FITNESS ASSESSMENT & TESTING**

1. Fitness assessment/testing will be held on Sun 12 Aug and Sun 26 Aug - venues to be confirmed.
2. The assessment will be made using the JAM Test. This is based on a walk, jog, run schedule on a triangular circuit (18m x 17.6m x 16m), using a beep system.
3. All L5, L6, L7 & L8 referees should attend the first session, to allow re-testing at the second session if necessary. Membership of Development Squads will be dependant on satisfactory performance. All other referees are welcome to attend to see how well they are doing!
4. Venues and timings have been issued separately.

**Please start progressive pre-season training now. The players will and they deserve referees who can keep up!**

### **RECRUITING AND INITIAL TRAINING, INCLUDING THE ENTRY LEVEL REFEREE AWARD (ELRA)**

It is the Dorset & Wilts Referee Society's objective to provide a competent, trained and qualified referee to every rugby match in the two counties – and for most of the time it manages it, with the invaluable help of clubs using their own Club Referees for Vets, 3rd XV and junior matches, and of course for many Youth matches on Sundays. Last season, however, it was unable to cover 115 games of the 1,067 played (or 11%) with 81 active referees. The reason for the lack of coverage is that we simply have insufficient referees, but other contributory factors were:-

On some weekends up to 50% of matches have been cancelled or rearranged, often at no or very short notice, preventing re-allocation of referees. An increase in the number of youth games on Sundays.

The low level of availability of some referees. They do not referee every weekend, as they do need family time.

The high rates of turbulence of our Armed Forces referees.

The significant rate of retirements from refereeing, due to personal moves and the Society's high referee average age (at 44).

With the RFU's "goplayrugby" initiative to recruit more players likely to provide more games to cover, the referee coverage situation could well worsen.

Some Clubs in Dorset & Wilts have several Society referee members already, but unfortunately others currently have none at all. There are many qualified 'club or school only' referees (for adult and/or youth matches), who are not members of the Society, but again, not all clubs and schools have them. Thankfully Club Coaches are also becoming qualified as referees, both as an aid to their coaching and to cover emergencies.

The main recruitment channel is from the clubs in the two counties, and a constant stream of new referees is much needed (older retired players, long term injured who can't play but can still run, parents, siblings for example) for both the Society and as Club/School referees. Even better are those young referees, aged between 16 and 24 who wish to take up the whistle from an early start point, enhancing their leadership and management skills. Tony Spreadbury started refereeing at age 12! All Society Referees will be happy to talk about the enjoyment and rewards they get from doing it - just ask them. The Dorset & Wilts Society Recruitment Officer is Robin Miller on 01747 854765 or email: [robin.miller4@btinternet.com](mailto:robin.miller4@btinternet.com). He will be glad to help if you need it.

The RFU runs a very good Entry Level Referee Award, full course and application details of which are on the RFU Home Website under Community Rugby; Referee/Officiate. Alternatively, the Dorset & Wilts Referee Society Website at [<dorsetandwiltsrefs.org.uk>](http://<dorsetandwiltsrefs.org.uk>) also runs a link to the RFU website, and dates and locations of forthcoming ELRA courses are regularly posted.

Your RFU contact for detailed enquiries is Nigel Cowley on email address: [<nigelcowley@rfu.com>](mailto:<nigelcowley@rfu.com>) or telephone 07894 783378.

#### **RFU ELRA Courses**

For mini/midi, 13-19 and senior referees:

North Dorset RFC, Gillingham

9.30 to 4.30 each day

Sun 23 Sep 07 - Part 1

Sun 30 Sep 07 - Part 2

Cost £40\*

\* Young referees 16-24 may be eligible for a grant towards the costs if they join Dorset & Wilts Referee Society.

#### **DISCIPLINE**

Society referees are reminded to report all incidents of unacceptable abuse or ill-discipline, whether it is from players, coaches, spectators or club officials. They should complete the up to date proforma available on the RFU Website and always speak with the Society Disciplinary Officer (Stephen Dowse) before submitting it. Please also submit all Sending Off and Referee Abuse reports to the Society Discipline Officer (Stephen Dowse) in the first instance. This is to ensure that our approach is consistent and reports are written to meet the needs of the Disciplinary Panel process.

#### **REFEREE AVAILABILITY**

We still suffer from an occasional shortage of referees at peak times to cover all matches in the two counties. We cover over 50 clubs in an area 110 miles from North to South and 60 miles wide. Efforts are being made to recruit and retain more referees and a strategy has been prepared to achieve this. In the meantime a high level of commitment would be very much appreciated from those referees who are fit and can be available. It is also vital that you inform the Society Organiser as soon as possible after a match is cancelled or postponed, to enable him to re-assign you (and, if you do not travel, not to charge the Club!).

#### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

If you are able to plan or foresee an opportunity for good PR during the season, please give your ideas to Stephen Clements, who is keen to develop opportunities. We have excellent links with local, regional and national contacts for PR.

#### **BOB STOCK TROPHY**

In the season 2006/07 members submitted a total of 171 reports. With this number there were still clubs to whom the Society regularly appoints referees who could not be included in the final table because of the lack of reports. For 2007/08 could we please aim to raise the number of reports to exceed 300. If this is to be achieved then more referees will need to submit reports but the effort will be worthwhile if it ensures that the final table is comprehensive. So

please make a start if you have not previously contributed to the award of the Trophy.

Reports will be welcomed whether made on cards or spreadsheets. Cards will be available at Society meetings and the Secretary will send a blank spreadsheet to all members who are on e-mail, and he asks that markings are made within a few days of the match being played and that batches of reports are submitted monthly. Observing the latter will spread the task of transferring the data and will also enable shortages of reports on any particular club to be identified and remedied.

It is important to remember that marks are given for the home club only – not the visitors. The seven aspects are :-

Administration Before Game. Full marks would be earned when the game was confirmed early – say 2 days before - with details of kick off time, jersey colours, travel directions if necessary. A zero score would be awarded when the referee had to contact the club for confirmation. Intermediate marks would depend on the timing of the confirmation and the helpfulness of the information provided.

Punctuality. For full marks players from the home team would arrive in good time for briefing and stud inspection and they would not be responsible for any delay in the kick-off. Zeros would apply if the game was delayed by 10 minutes and intermediate marks would be for shorter delays and rushed preparations.

Provision of Touch-Judges. Full marks when the home team touch-judge comes to report to the referee and performs his duties competently. Zero marks when the home team do not supply a touch-judge. Intermediate marks depending on the extent to which the referee had to chase for one and how well the touch-judge performs.

Pitch Markings, Flags, etc. Full marks when the pitch is clearly marked with the lines specified in the Law Book, flags are in position, and the goal-posts are satisfactory. Marks should be deducted for lines which are faint, absent, or wrongly positioned, for incomplete sets of flags, and for any instances when the referee has to request improvements before the start of the game.

First Aid Arrangements. Full marks would be awarded when there is a trained first-aider with a fully equipped set of kit. Zero marks would be given for no provision of any equipment, and a score of 1 when there is only a bucket of water and a sponge. Intermediate marks would depend on how effectively injuries could be treated with the resources provided.

The Spirit of the Game. Full marks when the home side showed exemplary behaviour. Marks should be

deducted for foul-play, abuse, dissent, sledging, appealing for decisions, actions to annoy opponents, etc.

Care and Welfare of the Referee and Assessors Before and After the Game. For full marks the referee would be welcomed on his arrival and introduced to the captain. After the game he would be looked after in the clubhouse with food and refreshment being provided if wanted and being made to feel welcome by club members. Assessors should be welcomed in the clubhouse both before and after the game. Zero marks would be appropriate if a referee is left to fend for himself in the club-house after the game. Intermediate marks would be awarded according to the warmth and friendliness of the welcome.

### **LAW POSERS.**

1. Blue kick for touch. A Red player, who is in touch knocks the ball infield before the ball passes the plane of touch, but the ball (inadvertently) goes forward.
2. Red wing, on the Blue 22m line chips the full back; both slip and fall over. An onside Red player follows up, with no Blue player anywhere near the ball. When the ball has reached the 5m line, with the Red player 5m away, and the ball not yet in goal, a spectator, of indeterminate parentage, runs onto the field, and kicks the ball away.
3. Red, outside his own 22, kicks directly into touch on Blue 10m line, but is tackled late.

### **USEFUL DOCUMENTS TO HAVE WITH YOU IN YOUR KIT**

Law Book  
Competition Regulations  
Society Aide Memoir  
Replacements Summary  
U-19 Summary  
Sending Off Form  
Abuse Form  
Dorset & Wilts Handbook

### **TRAINING ASSISTANCE**

Your committee still seeks any members who are prepared to contribute to Society Training Evenings or those courses which the Society runs. Training material is available, and you do not have to be a RFU Certified Trainer to deliver some of the material.

Please do volunteer; a new face will provide a changed perspective from one who is way past his sell by date.

### STATISTICS ANALYSIS

Last season I was able to record data for 34 matches, at Levels 6 -10. A composite table, comparing results per game with the previous season, follows.

Season	Penalties	Lineouts	Scrum	Unsuccessful Scrum
2003/4	19	27	27	3.4
2004/5	20	25	25	5.5
2005/6	19	24	26	5.2
2006/7	19	24	24	5.3

An analysis of penalties per game for last season was:

Awarded at the Scrum: 1.4

Lineout: 0.3

Breakdown: 15

Foul Play: 1.2

(Yes, I know it does not add up to 19, there are other reasons for penalties, referees' signals are not always clear, and my recording is not perfect.)

I leave you to think about possible reasons/causes for the high proportion of penalties awarded at the breakdown, and possible solutions available to the referee, depending upon the level of the game.

I have also compared the proportion of Unsuccessful Scrums before and after the Engagement Law Change at the New Year. In the period September to December, the proportion was 1 in every 5.2 scrums; January to April 1 in every 4.0 scrums. On the face of it, the law change has not improved matters.

And finally, for those who may feel that match statistics do not help, consider a game in which there were 44 penalties ( 37 at the breakdown), no cards, 17 scrums, of which 8 did not work first time. Penalties by 20 minute period: 6/7, 7/5, 3/6, 7/3. Do these figures provide a factual base for subsequent discussion with the referee?

### REFEREES' and REFEREE COACHES' COURSES

**TOUCH JUDGE:** Will be run if needed.

**CONTINUOUS REFEREE DEVELOPMENT AWARD** has replaced the **SOCIETY REFEREE** course and will be run over two days, Sundays 18 and 25 November. I will give more details at the beginning of season meeting, when I know more about how the course will be assessed. Unlike the Society Referee Course, it is very much aimed at those who have been refereeing for two years, and for lateral development of those who have been refereeing longer, but do not aspire to higher levels.

**SOCIETY REFEREE COACH/ADVISER COURSES:** Stephen Dowse will arrange a course if necessary.

**DEVELOPMENT REFEREE and DEVELOPMENT REFEREE COACH:** Will be run on a Federation basis if needed.

### SHIRTS

I have a stock of Society:

Polo Shirts: All sizes, cost £15.00.

Track Suits: All sizes, cost £20.00.

Red Shirts: All sizes, free.

Yellow Shirts: L only, free.

Blue Shirts: S only, free.

I will bring stocks to Training Meetings.

Bill Byham has:

Ties £7.80.

Blazer/Shirt badges £1.20

### ANSWERS TO LAW POSERS

1. Advantage to Blue, else scrum to Blue 5m from touch level with where Red touched the ball.
2. Penalty Try.
3. Penalty to Red on Blue 10m line, 15m in from touch.

Any suggestions for future content to:

Richard Shore

4 Kingsley Close

Bournemouth

Dorset BH6 4JQ

Tel: 01202 426524

[shore.rg@virgin.net](mailto:shore.rg@virgin.net)