

THE WHISTLING BUSTARD

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

January 2007

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly Training Meetings will be held as follows:

DORSET at the Langton Arms on Mondays at 1930 hrs:

February: 5 Feb, A Club coach will talk.

March: 5 March, The Training and Advancement of Rugby and Football Referees, and Cricket Umpires.

WILTSHIRE at Devizes RFC on Thursdays at 1930 hrs:

February: 8 Feb, A Club Coach will talk.

March: 8 Mar, The Training and Advancement of Rugby and Football Referees, and Cricket Umpires.

A Joint Meeting will be held on January 15 at Salisbury RFC; Steve Harland SW RRDO will be presenting.

CHANGE IN SCRUM ENGAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS

You should all have received some material from the Secretary. We did have some discussion at the December Training Meetings. I should have emphasised that the new procedure also applies to junior (U-19) games. There is video material on www.irb.com.

Additional material has been circulated from Castlecroft. You have all been sent copies. To summarise the new procedure at ALL LEVELS.

1. The referee will call **“crouch”** and the front rows will crouch.
2. The referee will call **“touch”**. Using their outside arm, each prop will touch the point of the opposing prop’s outside shoulder. The props then withdraw their arms.
3. The referee will then call **“pause”**.
4. Following a pause, the referee will then call **“engage”**. The front rows may then engage.

The “engage” call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together when ready.

If front row forwards are unaware of the changes to the Scrum Law, a referee does NOT have to ask the front row forwards if they are aware of the change to the Scrum Law. He/she should carry out his/her front row brief as normal. Clearly this brief should reflect the change to the Law. Uncontested scrums because of lack of training etc is not an option, unless it subsequently becomes a safety issue.

Penalties for non-conformance with the new law are straightforward; technical infringements, e.g. props not touching or not withdrawing their arms, Free Kick. Otherwise as we have always penalised / free kicked.

The implications for referees are threefold:
A clear and thorough initial brief.

Reinforce the brief at the first scrum(s).
Sympathetic management of the uninformed and/or incompetent, especially at the lower levels, but only for the first few games.

Please also emphasise, especially to coaches, that referees can help at club training evenings, that videos are available on www.irb.com, that I have DVDs of the new procedure for loan / explanation etc.

In this season of goodwill, even to tight head props, do be prepared to help players and coaches whenever you can.

There will be an opportunity to discuss implementation of the new law at our New Year Training Meeting on 15 January, where Steve Harland will take back any concerns to Castlecroft.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES, EITHER NOW OR AFTER YOUR FIRST MATCHES, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

LAW POSERS

I ran a Touch Judge Course recently. The following are a few of the questions that the candidates most frequently got wrong.

1. A player who has both feet in touch knocks the ball in field with a hand before the ball has crossed the touch line.
2. A player who has both feet in touch kicks the ball in field before the ball has crossed the touch line.
3. The ball crosses the touch line, a player who was in touch, jumps and knocks the ball back into the field of play and then he lands in the field of play. When he played the ball he had one foot above the touch line and one above the field of play.
4. An attacking player carries the ball into the in-goal and is held up, the ball is taken from the player by a defending player who is subsequently bundled into touch-in-goal.

REFEREES' and REFEREE COACHES' COURSES

ENTRY LEVEL REFEREES' AWARD. This has now replaced Foundation Parts 1 and 2. Contact Nigel Cowley, nigelcowley@rfu.com

TOUCH JUDGE: Will be run if needed.

SOCIETY REFEREE: The next course will be run at Devizes RFC on Sunday 18 February and Sunday 4 March 2007. Applications to me please.

SOCIETY REFEREE COACH/ADVISER COURSES: Stephen Dowse will run a course at Devizes RFC on Sunday 21 January 2007. Names of volunteers to Stephen please. More Coaches and Advisers are needed, if only on a part time basis, especially in view of the part the part the Society has to play in ELRA Stage 3. Although the RFU have not stipulated that "watchers" of ELRA Stage 3 must be trained Advisers / Coaches, if you are, then we know that common and agreed standards are being applied.

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

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

BOB STOCK RETURNS.

At this mid-season point the records show that only 45 completed reports have been received for the Bob Stock Trophy. We need to have about 200 returns in order to make a fair assessment of the performance of clubs so please can we step up the rate of reporting for the remainder of the season. The green report cards or the Excel spreadsheet for electronic reporting can be obtained from the Secretary.

HELP NEEDED

Would anyone be prepared to help at the Society Referees Course next year, 18 Feb and 4 Mar? Full instructional material is available.

MANAGING THE GAME

At the December meetings, some matters were raised which needed further dissemination to those who were unable to be present.

Red Zone. This term is used to describe the area of the pitch where the attacking side has a good chance of scoring; generally in the defenders' 22m area. Management of the game is crucial here, and relatively minor decisions may become critical, and decide the result of the game.

"Difficult" Clubs and Games. It was suggested that those clubs or games which were likely to pose challenges to the referee above the level of the game, due for example to poor player discipline, or previous history, should be identified. In this way appropriate referees could be appointed, and possibly briefed on the likely challenge, bearing in mind the danger of preconceptions. Stephen Dowse and Dave Masters have this in hand, but are unlikely to make any lists public, for obvious reasons.

Scrum Throw In. It was remarked that throws into the scrum are not consistently straight, and that crooked throws were rarely penalised with a Free Kick. This denies a fair contest for the ball. Referees ensure that the ball is thrown in straight at lineouts; why not scrums?

Replacements. Even in the Deregulated Leagues, where the lowest or only side in a club may have unlimited replacements, rolling replacements ARE NOT ALLOWED under the regulations.

SHIRTS AND TRIBAL ITEMS

The Society has a variety of items for sale.

I have for sale at monthly meetings:

Polo Shirts, sizes M, L, XL, XXL £15.00.

Shirts, Powder Blue, size S, £10.00.

Shirts, Yellow, all sizes. New shirts have been received.

Shorts, navy, 42 (1) £8.00.

Bill Byham has:

Ties £7.80.

Blazer/Shirt badges £1.20

ANSWERS TO LAW POSERS

1. The touch judge does not signal touch
2. The touch judge does not signal touch
3. The touch judge signals touch
4. The touch judge signals a 22 drop out

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Any suggestions for future content to: