



Eastern Counties Rugby Union Referees' Federation

Referee Report

The Federation has had a busy end to the season with various tournaments reaching their conclusion. It was of course disappointing that the EC Cup didn't happen and the referees appointed were naturally disappointed that their appointment was cancelled. On a brighter note the EC 2nd XV reached its conclusion at Diss, again after much angst in sorting out a day for these players big day. It goes without saying that trying to find a referee of the right caliber with three days notice is a challenge, particularly on a league day, however this year the referee excelled himself and was asked by both captains to present the trophy in the absence of a representative from the CB.

A review of club charges has been carried out by the Treasurer who has presented and evidenced the fact that the Federation, whilst solvent, is currently subsidising each game to the tune of £10, a situation which obviously cannot continue. It is proposed to increase club charges by £5 over the next two seasons and cut mileage costs with immediate effect. (Mileage is always based on the current RFU agreed rate.)

The ELVs have been in existence for a season now, whilst there was much debate, they have not had the major impact predicted. 10 of the 13 will be enshrined into law and an appendix is attached to this report outlining the recommendations.

Discipline on the field continues to exercise the discipline committee. A noticeable problem is the youth end of the game and referee abuse. We would respectfully ask the clubs to police this area and have club stewards responsible to the referee who can exercise the clubs displeasure at inappropriate comments, perhaps by ejecting the offender from the ground?

Next season sees the usual challenges in replacing the referees who are retiring, there is a drive to recruit referees via the people and places campaign, initially by identifying club referees and encouraging those with the right aptitude to join their local society. Great strides have been made into referee education products and it is disappointing that the take up is not greater. Eastern Counties has been targeted with running 10 referee education evenings next season with 10 delegates per session. Lets hope we can surpass this target and have better trained referees who are prepared to develop their basic knowledge from their Entry Level Course.

The issue of technical areas will be addressed via disciplines letter to clubs and we as a federation will be requesting clubs appoint a 4th official to assist the referee in this area certainly at 5-8 and encouraging those at level 9-12 to consider the idea, I will be writing to all federation referees with a copy of the discipline letter, please help yourself to The Federation currently has no referees being put forward to the Group and hence The National Panel based on performance. With two sides at level 5 there is an ideal opportunity for referees to progress. I will Rachel Forrest, who at 23, has shown great aptitude to progress quickly up the ranks and be rewarded with an International RFUW appointment in the 6 Nations, and David Miles who has gone from ungraded to level 6 in a season which shows that the grading committee is being very proactive in its policy

We continue to be represented at National Level by Touch Judges and Paddy Lockwood an RFU assessor who gives so much time and advice freely to both referees and assessors alike. And congratulations to Paul Storey who has been appointed a panel referee coach.

I want to record my thanks to the CB for their support of referees over the season.

I would also like to record my thanks to the committee for their support and continued diligence in their duties, and special mention without making a long speech about our retiring president John Adler who has been on the ECRURF committee since before I started refereeing (not that long ago) ..its the end of an era.. the government actually brought in legislation specifically to prevent John lighting his pipe mid meeting and we shall miss his pearls of wisdom between puffs, enjoy your retirement.

Graham Cross
Chairman