

Minutes of the G. & D. Rugby Union Referees' Society AGM – 2009

Held on 19th May, 2009, at the Cheltenham Civil Service Sports Club.

The Chairman, David Payne, opened the meeting, welcomed all present and outlined the evening's programme.

1. **Attendance.** There were 38 members present with 18 apologies for absence.
2. **Minutes of the 2008 AGM.** These were accepted as a true record.
3. There were no **matters arising.**
4. **Chairman's Report.** This was e-mailed to members and hard copies sent out. The following are the main points in his report.
 - (a) All members filled out "Aspiration" forms at start of season, which the committee have used to endeavour to help fulfil through training, development, appointments and advising.
 - (b) Indebted to **Rodger Brennan** for his sterling work in the very difficult job of managing appointments. Over 1,150 Saturday and 253 mid-week games were refereed, including 39 incoming exchanges. Thanks also expressed to **Tim Lawson** for assisting with junior cup appointments, 168 out of 249 games, and **Dave Meek** for managing exchange appointments. **Tim** also congratulated on introducing his Junior Sportsmanship Award initiative, won in its first year by Cirencester U17s.
 - (c) More matches refereed this season. Less matches without a referee. Recruitment quite good. We lost 19 referees but gained 17 new/returning officials plus 13 junior/novices yet to manage a senior game. We have increased our overall number to 70 from 60 last season, although only half tend to be available each week.
 - (d) Referee Training & Development. **Debbie Innes** congratulated on her delivery of CRDA programmes, plus special sessions on ELVs, Team of Three and Scrum management, including a talk by **Nick Nelmes.**
 - (e) **Adrian Danks & Paul Vidgen** again organised the reciprocal exchanges and hosting of referees from Holland and New England, plus support of the Danish Society. **Paul** has also furthered the development of society members through Federation training sessions & conferences. **Adrian** organised a successful Annual Dinner.
 - (f) **Peter Lewis** continues to manage the appointments of coaches, advisers & assessors despite his limited resources, usually 7 from a total of 12. 223 games, including 46 exchanges were covered. The coaches & match observers have been furnished with warm weather clothing & listening kits to assist them in their roles.

- (g) Admin.- Finance Manager **Les Newcombe** continues to ensure that our finances are in a sound condition. We continue to present kit to referees successfully passing the County Exam. Thanks to **Mark Sheridan & Paul Vidgen** for their ongoing sponsorship & management of merchandise. We have also invested in warm weather coats for match observers & coaches.
- (h) Discipline. This continues to be a problem, especially touchline abuse in Junior games. However, there has been further overall improvement this year. **Clive Annetts** will be standing down after 4 years providing valuable support with reports and at County discipline meetings in his position as Society Discipline Officer. Many thanks go to **Clive** for all his work in this role.
- (i) Admin.- Following last AGM, **Mike Wallace** resigned as General Secretary. No replacement could be found so committee decided to pay an administrator to support Chairman in day-to-day business. **Helen Biggs** was appointed in June but sadly gave up in February. This position remains vacant.
- (j) **Awards.** Congratulations to **Andy MacDonald** winner of the Ray Arnold Novice Trophy and to **Peter Shortell** for winning the Clive Annetts Award for the non-committee member who has made a significant contribution during the season to the running of the Society.

And finally the Chairman, in stepping down after 4 years in the role, thanked **John Watkins** the outgoing President for his immense contribution to the Society and local rugby, coupled with the Advisers/Coaches/Mentors & Committee.

In turn, **John**, in saying a few words of departure from his position, announced that **David Payne** had been unanimously granted Life Membership of The Society to mark his years of service, especially in the role of Chairman.

Rodger Brennan was nominated & elected as the incoming President. This is the first time this post has been elected from within the serving committee.

- 5. **Society Operational Plan.** A general update of current projects was given by **Adrian Danks**. The majority remain work in progress. Further updates will be given in due course.
- 6. **Amendments to the Constitution.** There were no updates to note from last year.
- 7. **Subscriptions.** In the current economic climate Finance Manager **Les Newcombe** proposed a review of the service charges levied on all clubs & schools. He envisaged a fairly significant early settlement discount to be considered by the incoming committee as a “one off “ for 2009/2010 season. **Mike Winnell** asked for clarification of the fees structure. **Sam Collins** suggested that a precedent be avoided. **Ade Stephenson** pointed out that “rich“ clubs would be able to pay immediately but “poor“ clubs, struggling to get player subscriptions, would not be able to take advantage of this discount. A further question was asked whether the new league structure would drive any changes. Les thought not. Members’ subs are not expected to rise.

New 2-way communications kits for referee to touch judge and 1-way kits for referee to advisor will be purchased, with the help of RFU, once new communications channels are established. The existing kits will become redundant.

8. **Committee elections.** The Chairman reported that there had been no nomination/suitable volunteer for the vacant post of General Secretary. He asked that any member interested, or aware of any other person who may be interested, in the role of Secretary or a paid Admin Assistant should inform the new Chairman.

9. **The election of officers for 2009/2010 was as follows:**

		<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Secunder</u>
Chairman	John Hackett	Bob McCrudden	Ade Stephenson
V/Chairman	Adrian Danks	Colin Edmonds	Tim Chandler
Gen Sec.	Remains vacant.		
Disciplinary Officer	Barry Clark	Clive Annetts	David Payne
Finance Manager	Les Newcombe	Ade Stephenson	Fred Spong
Referee Dev Officer	Paul Vidgen	Bob McCrudden	Dan Mobley
Training Co-ordinator	Debbie Innes	Tim Lawson	Natalie Amor
Advisor & Coach	Peter Lewis	Colin Reeves	Rodger Brennan
Development Officer			
Referee Appointments Sec.	Rodger Brennan	Bob McCrudden	Andy Barnby
Members' Representative	Barry Clark	Ade Stephenson	Dave Meek

10. **Date of next meeting is 18th August 2009.**

Post-AGM comments:

Ade Stephenson asked if The Society was contemplating making The Secretary a paid post. **Les Newcombe** stated that this would only be considered as a last resort.

Tim Beddoe asked that in light of the current economic climate whether a special case could be made for any referee struggling to pay their society subscription or to finance their kit/refereeing career. **Les Newcombe** replied that each case would be considered on its merits.

Tim further suggested that the “healthy” finances of the society should be used to ensure that every referee was fully kitted out to present the best impression of all Society representatives. However, he did recommend that Orange and Cerise/Pink shirts should not be considered. He is a traditionalist after all.

And finally, the retiring Chairman asked that the members be advised that **Fergus Kirby** has been promoted to a member of the Northern Group at Level 5.

Taken in the absence of a Secretary or a volunteer from within the Committee by **Sam Collins**, (having been volunteered by Ken Sefton & Gordon Selwyn.)