

Welcome to the Northumberland Rugby Union Referees Society (NRURS).

If you are a new referee, a recruit, welcome to the world of refereeing. If you are transferring in from another Society, welcome to Northumberland.

Along with this pack you should receive a green Northumberland R.U. Handbook that contains masses of useful information. Especially:-

- Details of all Northumberland Clubs.
- Details of all members of NRURS and their contact details.
- A list of Club Fixtures Secretaries.
- And much more.

Next to your Law book the County Handbook is your most important reference. You will receive a copy annually either at Society meetings or by collection from the County Office.

The County Office, manned by Claire Sharpe, is situated at Druid Park, Woolsington, home of Gosforth RFC, one minute from Callerton Metro Station and very near the Airport. The Office is open Monday to Thursday 9-5pm and Friday 9-3pm.

If you have any problems or queries contact Claire or any member of NRURS Committee for help.

Your 'Active Referee Representative' is there to be your link with any matters that you wish raised, anonymously or otherwise, with the NRURS Committee, see County Handbook for their details.

Refereeing Structure

The development ladder is structured to support you as you gain experience and confidence so as to enable you to reach the standard of which you are capable and which fits your ambition and lifestyle.

Recruit	NRURS appointments up to level 7
L11	
L10	
L9	National Leagues – D&N 3
L8	National Leagues – D&N 2
L7	National Leagues – D&N 1
L6	NRURS and Federation appointments North 2
L5	Tend to be Northern Group appointments North 1
RFU Panel	At this level and above, all RFU appointments

The Federation.

NRURS along with the Durham and Lakeland societies work and link together as the North Federation. The Federation organises courses for "Referees With Potential" and is responsible for the development of referees close to Level 5. Membership of the 'Development Squad' is by invitation and there are well-defined entry and exit criteria.

As you develop you will learn more of the mysteries of the 'Fed'.

Training and Development

As a referee the Law Book is your bible. However, the application of Law and the management of players is an art.

Whatever your aspirations, to develop as a referee you will need training and support. The society offers this in the form of:-

- Monthly Society Meetings. See below
- Monthly Development Meetings. See below.
- Annual one day courses, usually August and 'Fed' organised.
- The society advisers and assessors. See below
- Mentors and coaches were appropriate.

Society Meetings are held at Novos RFC on the third Monday of each month starting at 7.30pm from September to March excluding January.

The **Development Meetings** are on the first Monday of the month starting at 7.30pm at Novos RFC.

It is important that you attend one or both meetings wherever possible, not just for the training but in order to network with other referees. If you have a problem someone will have been there before you and will be able to offer advice and support.

Referee **Advisers** are experienced referees or ex referees. They are there to watch a referee and discuss their performance and training needs. Advisers are not there to examine but to help you progress, to offer constructive criticism and help you better enjoy yourself. In addition to advice on the day, they will send you a report form for your ongoing reference.

Assessors are Advisers who have demonstrated particular skill in assessing whether a referee is capable of more rapid progress. They again take a snapshot of performance on the day but in more detail.

If and when an adviser/assessor makes an appearance don't try and change the way you referee, be yourself so that they can help YOU.

Appointments

For the majority of referees communication is by e-mail.

The Societies Appointments Secretary will administer your weekend appointments.

When you applied to join the Society you filled in a form, part of which asked for your availability. For the periods you indicated, unless you inform NRURS otherwise, it will be assumed that you are available. Please report any additional non-availability in good time, as rearrangements are costly and very time consuming for the Appointments Sec.

We try to send out appointments in monthly blocks but towards the end of the season, due to fixture rearrangements, this may reduce to two weekly periods.

When you receive your fixtures please check your availability for them all, not just the first week.

In the week of a fixture the home Clubs Fixture Secretary should confirm it with you. This is a chance to ask any questions you may have such as how to get to the ground etc.

In the event of no confirmation being received, at the latest by Thursday evening, then it is time for you to get busy. Contact, by phone, the club Fixture Sec. (list in County Handbook) and get confirmation. If this is not possible then inform the Society Appointments Sec.

In the event of a game being cancelled contact the Appointments Sec as he may have spare game needing a ref.

Insurance and Child Protection

Once accepted into NRURS you are covered by RFU insurance for any game to which you are appointed. This is a comprehensive policy that covers you on and off the pitch for every eventuality. However, if a club of which you are not a member approaches you to referee a game and you accept without informing the Appointments Sec., then you are not appointed and are uninsured.

It is now RFU policy that only those referees with current CRB clearance, ratified through the RFU, may be appointed to games up to U18s (all youth rugby). NRURS urges all referees to complete a CRB form. Forms can be obtained from the County Office and can be signed off by Claire Sharpe. CRB clearance from another 'area' does not count, they must be done through the RFU --- stupid we know, but that's the rule. Do not do a youth game without RFU sanctioned CRB clearance.

Expenses

There is no match fee but you can claim a mileage allowance of 30p per mile for travel incurred to and from a game. If you travel by public transport save your tickets and claim as usual.

Claims are made to the Society Treasurer at the end of December and March and then again once your season has ended. Claim forms can be downloaded from the website or obtained from the County Office.

Please adhere to the dates for submission of travel claims and be prompt with them. Give the Treasurer a ring if you have any queries.

KIT and Equipment

Once you have shown a regular commitment to the Society you will be able to purchase, at a discount price, a society; shirt, socks and shorts. The kit is courtesy of our sponsors and should be worn at all matches unless a colour clash results.

Other society regalia may be available to buy at various times throughout the year and you will be e-mailed as to its nature and availability. Contact Claire for details.

Discipline

One of your prime tasks as a referee is to keep 30 players safe and on the park.

However, sometimes no matter how well you manage and referee a game incidents occur that necessitate the use of a red card. Be sure before you use this sanction but do not opt out if you have to use it. Most referees say that they knew it had to be red the moment the offence occurred. A lot of detail needs recording at the time of the offence and before the red card is shown so make sure that you know what information is needed, it's all in the law book.

Then:-

- Do not enter into any discussion regarding the 'sending off' with players or club officials after the match. If the player concerned approaches you to apologise, accept it graciously and note this in your report.
- Carefully fill in the sending off form, downloadable from the website or from the County Office and return it, preferably electronically, within 48 hours of the incident to Claire at the County Office and to the Society Secretary. If you need help with the form, phone a friend; President, Secretary, Training etc.

The County Disciplinary Secretary will inform you of the date of the disciplinary hearing. You may be invited to attend.

Communication

Communication is a vital two way process. Please respond to letters or e-mails as quickly as possible. Claire Sharpe at the County Office will coordinate any changes to your contact details etc. and is a font of knowledge if you encounter problems. If she doesn't know the answer then she will direct you to someone who will.

Your contact details and your refereeing qualifications will be held on the RFU electronic database and that is on the RFU website www.rfu.com in the Club Pages section, which are confidential and shared with no other organisation. You are expected to keep your information on rfu.com up to date yourself. You will have a user name and password obtainable from Will Halford.

Help us to keep in contact with you by making sure your contact details are correct.

Finally.....

Refereeing is just like life, you will get out what you put in and there will be high and low points. Your other referee friends will rejoice with you on the highs and support you through the lows.

WELCOME TO NRURS.