



**HAMPSHIRE RUGBY REFEREES**  
(Chairman – Tim Bailey)



## Hampshire Rugby Referees

# New Member Welcome Booklet

Season 2023-24

## What can Refereeing Offer You

The choice is simple “**Will you watch from the touchline or stay where the action is**”

All teams and players depend on the expertise, commitment and enthusiasm of a trained referee. England recognises this. That’s why we want existing players to:

- Change their perception of refereeing
- Recognise how personally rewarding refereeing is
- Learn about the pathways that exist to support refereeing

### What you get

You are still involved with the game you love

You hold on to friendships, the fun & the banter

You are an invaluable part of England Rugby’s team of qualified referees

You stay mentally & physically fit

You feel good knowing you’re giving something back to the game You

develop great people management and communication skills

You are in the thick of it, not on the touchline

### How to Get Started

Step 1: Make contact with Hampshire Referees



Step 2: Have a chat with a referee to find out more

Step 3: Get familiar with the laws (<http://laws.worldrugby.org/> )

Step 4: Sign up for a [course](#)

Step 5: Talk with you Hampshire Referee Buddy<sup>1</sup>

Step 6: Start refereeing

## Hampshire Rugby Referees

If you decide to take up the whistle we hope that you will enjoy refereeing around Hampshire.

Whether you are a completely new referee who recently joined from an ERRA course, an active referee moving to the county or even a returning member, we will be glad to have you part of our Society.

The purpose of this booklet:

- This is to answer questions that new referees have when first starting out
- Point you in the right direction
- Offer some encouragement as you tackle your first games in the middle. Introduces you to the members of the Committee who you will have the most contact with in your first few months and who are there to help support and develop you.

We have our website and all match appointments are made through Who's The Ref. We recommend you visit both regularly to keep up to date with goings on in the society and rugby-related information, as well as the all-important appointments.

Add them as bookmarks : [Hampshire Rugby Referees](#)

[Whos the Ref](#)



**Enjoy your time whistling!**

## **Who's Who in Hampshire Rugby Referees**

(see contact details at the rear of the document)

Chairman – Tim Bailey

Tim has been a referee since the early 90s and has been involved with Referee administration since 1998 with the Royal Navy, Combined Services and as the Hampshire Secretary for the last 8 years. He has been a National Penal Assistant Referee but can often be seen either refereeing or watching referees in Hampshire.

Development – Dean Crossley

Dean is in charge of Development. He will oversee the development of all referees and reads all the referee reports. In conjunction with the Grading Committee he will decide on the grades of referees.

Match Appointments– Mark Scouler

Mark is an experienced referee with both Hampshire and the Navy. He will help you get appointments as long as you complete your availability.

Match Re-Appointments (Weekends) – Terry Burwell

Terry brings a huge amount of rugby experience to the HRR, in the past he has

held several appointments in the RFU. He maintains links with the County and clubs within the county.

Terry makes all necessary re-appointments every week i.e. when a referee becomes injured, a match gets added or cancelled. So be proactive give him a call and let him know you are available if you have no match appointed.

## Expenses

The HRR pays expenses from your home address to the matches that you are appointed to at a rate of 45p per mile, Mileage to training meetings may also be claimed at a reduced rate of 20p per mile. Expenses are claimed on a form which should be sent to Richard Showan the Treasurer or via WhostheRef.

If you live out of county you will be reimbursed from the edge of Hampshire.

We provide referees to the Isle of Wight. Expenses for these trips are slightly different, so please contact someone from the committee to discuss, if you are appointed a game there.

## Training Meetings

We have a Training Meeting for all referees every third Monday of each month during the season. They take place at Winchester RFC and begin at 7:30 pm.

They are a good way to keep updated with developments in rugby and refereeing and also to share a drink and mull over experiences with other referees

## When You Join HRR

In the beginning...

Whether you join the society via a Level 2 Course or through another referee's society, you should fill out a membership form on WTR and set up a Standing Order for £20 to be paid immediately and then annually on 1 Sep each year.

HRR Account Details Sort: 30-92-94 Account Number: 42950960

Once you have completed these forms you will not be alone Hampshire Referees will try to appoint a Buddy who will chat through any concerns. Perhaps he will invite you to go with him to a match he is refereeing or maybe you could meet up for a pint as you are now part of the team.

## Appointments Procedure

Once you have added your availability to the appointments system, the appointments team will start to allocate games for the following month, based on your availability. They will take into account your grade & development plan. You will get emails for every appointment and any changes made to them. You will

have the option to accept or reject (if you reject you will need to enter a reason) the game. The up-to-date appointments list can be viewed on our website (direct WTR feed) or WTR itself.

Doing all the appointments is a tricky activity, so please keep your availability up to date and try and avoid rejecting games if you can. We try to give everyone opportunities for interesting and challenging games, but sometimes the nature of the games we have means we have to share around the more desirable fixtures.

If you have any questions about the appointment process, please call one of the people listed below:

**If you have no match appointed and are available, or suddenly become available call Terry Burwell on 07710 472824 (weekends & weekdays).**

## Haberdashery

Our kit man – **David Martin** ([mrdavidlmartin@icloud.com](mailto:mrdavidlmartin@icloud.com)) –will point you in the right direction to obtain shirts, shorts, socks, and whistles.

Much of our refereeing kit can be purchased through an online shop.

[https://www.gilbertrugbyshop.co.uk/HANTSREFS/\\_CSmain.aspx](https://www.gilbertrugbyshop.co.uk/HANTSREFS/_CSmain.aspx)

## Preparing For You First Game

### Contact with Clubs

You should expect to receive a phone call from the home club you have been appointed to by Thursday evening at the latest. They should confirm the kick-off time and shirt colours with you, as well as offer directions if you are unsure of how to get there.

If you do not receive this call then you should contact **Terry Burwell (Re-Appointments Secretary – Weekends)** on **07710 472824** as soon as possible. We do keep a close eye on clubs which fail to make contact with their referees in good time.

Check the APPOINTMENTS section on [www.hantsrefs.org.uk](http://www.hantsrefs.org.uk) or [www.whotheref.com](http://www.whotheref.com) to make sure that you have not been reassigned to another match, which can happen right up to Friday evening. Any changes will be notified via email to you.

### Re-Appointments Procedure

There are unfortunately always changes to the appointments in the week leading up to a weekend of matches, due to several factors, such as referee injury, matches being cancelled, or new matches being set up.

It is likely that in your early stages of being in the society, your originally appointed game may change just a few days before, so please keep an eye on the website, as any changes will appear on the appointments list. We try to ensure that available referees, get a game at the weekend, so if your game does get cancelled, then you can expect to be re-appointed to another fixture.

If you are appointed to a game and then find that you are unable to do the game due to injury then you should contact **Terry Burwell on 07710 472824** as early as possible so he has plenty of time to find a replacement. Likewise, if you were originally unavailable and then find that you can do a game then contact Terry

## **Kitbag**

We would recommend carrying the following items in your kit bag for your first game.

2 Shirts (of different colours to the teams)

1 x Socks

Boots

1 x Rugby shorts

1 x Jockstrap / Pair of underpants

1 x Tracksuit (for warm-up before match)

1 x Thermal vest (for cold days)

x Whistles (always carry a spare in case your main one gets covered in mud)

2 x Watches (stopped clock and actual time.)

2 x Pencils

2 x Scorecard / Notebook with a waterproof wrapping

1 x Yellow and Red cards

1 x Coin

This list can be added to as you referee more and more. You will find that different referees have their preferences as to what they carry. Ask other refs what they have – You'll be amazed as to what some people carry!

For most of your refereeing career, you will probably be on your own and some of the changing rooms are not the safest (plus some pitches are a long walk from the changing rooms) and you want to have some things pitch side. Some referees have a waterproof bag that they can take pitch side. You can then put tracksuit etc in it just before KO and have it available as soon as the game is over. (also can have spare whistle/pencils, snack, drinks etc) And whatever Mother Nature throws at us, all will stay dry!

## **Before Leaving for your game**

Ask yourself, "Were there any points of law that I was unsure about from last week's game?" If so a good time to re-check the law book is 1-2 days before the next game, so it is still fresh in your mind.

Make sure you leave home with:

- 1) Directions to the club and clubhouse/club contact telephone numbers, and your mobile phone!
- 2) Kitbag with all you need
- 3) A smart appearance – no jeans and HRR Polo
- 4) Enough time to get to the ground

The last point is important to help you reduce any pressure or stress you might be feeling going into your first game. You should aim to arrive at the ground approx. 1 hour before the scheduled kick-off time to carry out your pre-match routines and warm up.

When you arrive at the ground, ensure that someone from the home club knows you have arrived. The best people would be the Captain of the team or a Club Official. It is a good thing to ask where the referee's changing room is. If no changing room is available then try not to change in the same dressing room as one of the teams you are refereeing. It can be an uncomfortable place to be after a match!

## **Pre-Match Routine**

You should make yourself known to both captains and get an agreement as to when you can inspect each team's studs and do the toss-up. Ask the captains what they would prefer and go for that.

Change for the match and then have a brief walk about the pitch. Check the markings and the post protectors. This is a good opportunity to get your bearings and turn your mind onto the game ahead.

Check on the state of the pitch. Remember it is not up to us to decide if the pitch is OK to play on. The captains need to agree between them. Do not get drawn into a debate between captains who disagree. If one team do not want to play, then the game does not go ahead. If it is a league game then the organisers will decide what should happen. It is not your responsibility.

The only time when you will decide on the state of the pitch is if the captains have agreed to play but you believe the pitch is dangerous/unsafe. Then you can decide that the game will not be played. The normal reasons for this are if the pitch is water-logged/has standing water, or if the pitch is frozen

Do a short warm-up to get your body suitably prepared for the rigours of 80 minutes of rugby.

## **The Stud Check**

When carrying out the stud check there are a few things you should look for:

- Check the studs on the boots of all players are safe making sure there are no sharp edges.
- To start to build a rapport with the players without appearing too authoritative or acting like a comedian.

## The Pre-match Brief

After the stud check, is a good time to carry out your pre-match brief. Nearly every ref will want to include different members of the team and mention different things. It is worth discussing your brief with your buddy but pretty much every ref would agree with the following general points:

- Be prepared. Know what you want to include in your brief.
- Be “brief”. Be clear on the points you want to make and then leave it at that
- You must cover the scrum procedure “Crouch-Bind-Set” and sure we have suitable numbers of trained front-row players
- If you are new to this and worry you may forget what to cover, have a few bullets printed on a small piece of paper you can have inside your scorecard wallet as a backup.
- Other than the scrum briefing, only include items that will help you referee the game. Your buddy will be able to give you examples of this.
- Do not say things that you may regret later. For example, if you give explicit instructions on how you will manage the ruck, players will remember that. If you then do something different during the game, players will complain. Leave yourself plenty of “wiggle” room in your brief.
- Think about how you want to answer questions, especially the obvious one, “WHEN IS THE BALL OUT SIR?”
- Set the tone for the game, “firm but fair”

## The Toss

This is best carried out in the changing room before the teams meet for their final get-together. But be prepared to be flexible, as at the lower levels teams can arrive late etc.

Make sure you have a coin with you!!!

This is the referee’s chance to get the captains onside with you and help your management of the game from minutes 1 to 80. “I will manage the match and look to you to manage your players, thanks”

Here is a guide of what you could look to cover at the toss with the captains:

- Does either side have a physio or medical officer present?
- Invite the captains to provide a Touch Judge to run the line. This can be very difficult in many games but if there are any available then try to speak to them to remind them of their duties. Line of touch and kicks at goal only
- Explain when you will expect the players on the pitch ready to KO
- Ask the home captain to toss the coin and the away captain may call.
- The captain who wins the toss has the right to kick off OR choose ends



– not both!! If the winner of the toss chooses an end the loser of the toss must KO.

## Going out onto the pitch

If this is your first game, you will almost certainly have a Match Observer (MO) with you. These are normally experienced ex-refs. They are on your side and are mainly there to make sure that you are in control and provide a safe game to protect the players. They will contact you before the game and chat with you after. They will give you some feedback and tips and tricks on how to develop yourself. (More details below)

Now you have done your warm-up exercises and briefed the captains/teams, you should be about ready to head out onto the pitch.

The main thing is to **RELAX** and **ENJOY** the game. **SMILE**. You as the referee are the sole arbiter of fact on law on the rugby pitch and having done an ELRA course you are sure to know much more about the Laws of Rugby than many of the players.

- Check that each team has 15 players (if they have that many available!)
- Check with your touch judges (if present) that they are ready.
- Check with both captains they and their teams are ready.
- Let the teams know what colour you will call them
- Tell the team with the kickoff to stay behind their kicker.
- Start your watches.
- Blow your whistle.
- **AND YOU'RE AWAY!!**
  
- If this is your 1<sup>st</sup> game, do not be afraid to blow your whistle and make a decision, but try and let the game flow if you can.
- Enjoy yourself!



## During the game

- Stay in control of the game but avoid being too autocratic.
- Try and pre-empt offences and stop them from occurring by use of your positioning, a “look” or your voice.

- Try to avoid a full “commentary of the game”. You will end up as white noise.
- Do not get into a debate about your decisions. Sell the one you have made and stick to it
- Try and ignore any negative comments from the touchline, but if anyone does go over the top, ask the captain to control any particular individuals
- If any players are making your job hard, use the captains. Remember you are a team of 3!
- Injuries
  - Keep an eye out for anyone who appears injured
  - Feel free to stop the game if you think someone is hurt. Remember this is not professional rugby and no one will complain as long as you are consistent. Restart with a scrum to the team in possession.
  - Teams should have a first aider on the pitch side.
  - Injuries are not the responsibility of the ref. If you are not medically trained then allow the teams to treat their players
  - If the injury appears serious (the player would not be able to go to work/school tomorrow) write down some details of the injury and how it occurred as you will need to complete a Serious Injury Form after the game. (See our website for the form and talk to your buddy)
- Red cards
  - In the unlikely event you give a red card, write down factual details of what happened before you restart the game. You will need to fill in a red card form after the game and it is good to have accurate notes. (See our website for the form and talk to your buddy)
- Refs Abuse: In the very unlikely event you are abused by a player, coach or spectator, keep calm. Do not engage in an argument. Use the captain of the player/coach or spectator as your friend. Try and get them to deal with the individual and get them to remove the person from the pitch/pitch- side. If the person will not leave, then do not restart the game until they do. Write down factual details of what happened before you restart the game. You will need to fill in a refs abuse form after the game and it is good to have accurate notes. (See our website for the form and talk to your buddy)

## After Your First Match

Restoring peace and tranquillity...

After your first match, you will be feeling all sorts of emotions. Make sure that once you have shaken hands with the players and walked down the tunnel you return to the solace of your changing room and take your well-earned shower.

The Bar

As in all rugby clubs around the country, this is the place to be and be seen after the

match is over.

All clubs worth their salt offer at least ONE free drink to the referees. Pop up to the bar and say you're the referee, if someone hasn't already bought you one first. There is likely to be a meal for you too! If the players are getting it, then you should too. You worked just as hard as they did.

Take the opportunity to speak with the captains and players to find out what they thought about the game. Some of the best feedback you can get is from front-row forwards and their opinions on how they thought you handled the scrum. Referees of all levels and abilities, do this on a Saturday to help improve their performances.

### Match Observers / Advisors

You can expect at some point in your first few games to be watched by an Advisor Mentor. The Advisor is there for you and your benefit. He will offer feedback on your game check that you refereed the game safely and provide advice on what you may look to improve on next time you referee.

Make the most of the time you spend with an advisor. They are all very wise fellows who have been in the game some time and have spent many weekends out refereeing. They are there to help you improve.

Typically the Advisor will introduce himself to you before the start of the match and then will catch up with you in the bar afterwards to have a chat about the game.

## And onwards...

There are many opportunities as a rugby referee to help you and support you as you gain more experience.

- Attending the monthly Society Training meetings at Winchester RFC
- Speaking to **any Committee member** who will help you to work out some goals if you would like to try going up the levels in refereeing terms.

If you have any questions about the Society and what it can do for you then do not hesitate to get in touch with someone from the Society, maybe starting with your buddy. We aim to not only recruit more and more referees but also to retain them by helping them to enjoy and develop.

**We hope that you enjoy your refereeing in Hampshire and hope that you gain much satisfaction in continuing to be a part of this wonderful sport.**

## Hampshire Contacts

Position	Name	Tel Mobile
Chairman	<a href="#">Tim Bailey</a>	07712 328513

		07710 472824
Secretary	Vacant	
Development & Safeguarding	<a href="#">Dean Crossley</a>	07717 835089
Treasurer	<a href="#">Richard Showan</a>	07768 361325
Appointments Secretary	<a href="#">Mark Scoular</a>	07912 563561
Exchange Appointments	<a href="#">Peter Topham</a>	07752 380446
Re-appointments (weekend)	<a href="#">Terry Burwell</a>	07710 472824
Appointments (midweek)	<a href="#">Terry Burwell</a>	07710 472824
Haberdashery	<a href="#">David Martin</a>	

