

# Irish Rugby Football Union

## Referee Mentoring Guidelines

### Mentoring Objectives

The referee being mentored will typically be a Trial Member or Level 1 referee. With that in mind the main objectives of referee mentoring are;

- To support the referee, with a view to retention.
- To assist and participate in the education and development of the referee.
- To identify and reinforce positive aspects of the performance.
- To suggest actions which the referee can implement to improve their performance.

### Mentor Requirements

The mentor should be competent in the following four areas:

<b>Technical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Good law knowledge.</li><li>▪ Up to date on current law applications and rulings.</li><li>▪ Up to date on IRFU referee coaching philosophy.</li></ul>
<b>Tactical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Good understanding of the game and what players are trying to achieve.</li></ul>
<b>Observational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ability to form a valued judgement on the performance of the referee in each key area of the game.</li></ul>
<b>Developmental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ability to assist and advise the referee on solutions to areas that need improvement.</li></ul>

### Match Day

#### Pre-Match

- Aim to arrive in enough time to introduce yourself to the referee and be in a suitable position before kick-off to observe the match.
- Agree a suitable place and time for post-match discussion.

#### During the Game

- Try to avoid distractions.
- Avoid discussing the referee's performance with anyone.
- Speak briefly with the referee at half time if necessary, and only if there are issues he/she can immediately address based on your observations.

#### Post-Match

- Discuss the match at the agreed time and place. It should be in an area that is discrete and away from distractions.
- The discussion must be constructive with the aim of helping the referee to learn.
- The debrief should take no longer than 15 minutes.
- Occasionally a referee may be unwilling to participate in constructive dialogue. The mentor should not prolong the discussion in these circumstances.
- Complete a written mentoring report on the relevant form and submit it to the Association/Society through the Gainline platform.

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10-12 Lansdowne Road | Ballsbridge | Dublin 4 | D04 F720

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## Mentoring Report Form

### Fact based detail

- Name of Referee.
- Date of Match and Venue.
- Teams and Score.
- Grade/Level of match e.g. Under 14 League/Cup etc.

### Observational detail

- Brief Description of Match – this section can be used to observations such as:
  - how competitive the match was.
  - the weather and ground conditions.
  - number of spectators.
  - skill levels.
  - other relevant information.
- General Description of Referee Performance – this section can be used to give a picture of the overall referee performance and his/her general management of the match, paying particular attention to player safety and welfare. Any observations on referee fitness can be included here.
- There is no requirement to score the performance.

## Positioning

Referee positioning, where relevant, should be referenced in each of the specific game areas. The priorities for referees at this level are as follows;

- Breakdown – Referee should be able to keep up with play to monitor contact situations and ensure player safety.
- Scrum – Referee should be suitably positioned to input the engagement sequence and monitor behaviour of front row players to ensure player safety.
- Lineout – Referee position should be such that he/she can ensure the lineout is correctly formed and identify any issues which impact player safety.
- General Play – Referee should ensure they are up with play to identify clear and obvious knock-ons and forward passes.

## Key Areas of the Game for Observation

<b>Tackle/Ruck/Maul</b>	<p>Referee must ensure player safety by arriving at the breakdown in a timely manner. The key priorities for are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <u>Tackle/Ruck</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Tackling team must release the ball and ball carrier and roll/move away from the tackle area.</li><li>▪ Tackled player must release the ball once isolated.</li><li>▪ Arriving players must enter the tackle from their own side and endeavour to stay on their feet.</li><li>▪ Non-participants should retire to the hindmost point as soon as offside lines are created.</li></ul></li></ul>
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<b>Tackle/Ruck/Maul (cont.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When a ruck is formed, players who did not already have their hands on the ball are no longer permitted to handle it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Maul</u></li> </ul> </li> <li>Mauls must be legally formed (no obstruction).</li> <li>Players must join from their own side.</li> <li>Deliberate collapsing by defending players to be sanctioned with PK.</li> <li>Non-Participants should retire to the hindmost point.</li> </ul>
<b>Scrum</b>	<p>Ensure the scrums are safely conducted by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the correct engagement sequence, stability is key.</li> <li>Insisting the scrums are square and steady pre-feed.</li> <li>Applying Under 19 laws when applicable.</li> <li>Making sure the scrum feed is credible and putting-in team hook the ball.</li> <li>Encouraging players to push straight and maintain correct binds.</li> </ul>
<b>Lineout</b>	<p>Referees should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be alert to the possibility of a quick throw.</li> <li>Set up and maintain the correct gap between the players.</li> <li>Check the non-throwing in team do not have more players than permitted.</li> <li>Insist the player throwing in does so without delay.</li> <li>Ensure that non-participants are back 10m before the lineout begins and remain there until it ends.</li> </ul>
<b>Advantage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore advantage only when safe to do so.</li> <li>Communicate through signal and verbally.</li> </ul>

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<b>Advantage (cont.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The non-offending team should not be under pressure.</li> <li>▪ Seeking to play advantage at foul play scenarios should be rare.</li> </ul>
<b>General Play</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observe all clear and obvious knock-ons and forward passes.</li> <li>▪ Teammates of the kicker are onside at restarts.</li> <li>▪ Players ahead of the kicker must comply with law.</li> </ul>
<b>Control &amp; Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Whistle tone is sufficiently loud, and tone varies depending on infringement.</li> <li>▪ Signals are clear, decisive and in the correct order.</li> <li>▪ Verbal explanations are brief and concise.</li> <li>▪ Downtime is used to reinforce key messages.</li> <li>▪ Referee should be aware of temperature of the match.</li> <li>▪ All foul play to be identified and appropriately sanctioned.</li> </ul>

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