

REFEREE ALLOCATIONS POLICY STATEMENT (November 2002)

This document is intended to provide, in one place, a summary of the factors that the PSRFR considers in making allocations and assignments. A summary of this policy has been made necessary by our current desperate shortage of referees. As a result the PSRFR has reached a point where it frequently cannot cover all games in our area each weekend. Thus, it is useful to set forth the considerations that go into the triage of choosing which games to cover. But it cannot be overemphasized that the principal answer to this problem is that everyone must help us get more refs. If we had enough referees every game would get covered.

Quality — First and foremost, we consider the quality of the game and the quality of the referees available to us each weekend. Even if we have a referee who is capable of working alone, we grade referees and match them with games. Sometimes no local ref may be available for a high level game because we don't think that any of the refs we have available is capable of doing the match well, in which case we may need to seek coverage from outside the area or, in a worst-case scenario, leave the game uncovered.

Experience — Closely related is the experience of the referee. At this juncture almost all of the B-side matches being covered involve situations where the PSRFR is assigning referees who are fairly new (or actually brand spanking new) to refereeing games. We have a policy of NEVER sending out a new referee alone until we are comfortable thinking (s)he can handle it. A beginning referee needs someone there to help provide encouragement and coaching — and that's how we do it.

Training — Also closely related is the need to assure adequate training opportunities for our referees. Sometimes we feel a ref is ready to move up and do faster, more challenging games. We'll give him/her an A side match (say a good Men's Div II A side). But it isn't any good to give him/her a challenging match if nobody goes to watch and evaluate his/her performance. Many (though not all) of our qualified evaluators (they take courses in it) are still referees — often pretty good ones on the B panel. When a ref is ready to move up and get a hard game, we will schedule an evaluator to do the B side match and watch the A side game — often this means that a high-level ref gives up doing a game at his normal level for the longer-term good of everyone by evaluating an up and coming referee.

League Play — Within that context we give clear priority to league matches over non-league matches. Some clubs "B" or "C" sides are actually separate sides in a lower-level division (e.g., Navy "C" plays a full schedule in Div. II College Men's). So sometimes what appears to be an odd assignment may be an assignment to a league match (over a non-league matches) that lower sides are playing.

Scheduling Changes — We give priority to schedules that come in on time. When a club changes the schedule or submits a schedule late, that sometimes creates holes which cannot be filled. Sometimes, for example, games go uncovered because the club initially told us it had a "bye" and then scheduled a match and it was too late to rearrange.

PSRFR Fees — If a club fails to pay its PSRFR fees, they don't get a ref. Period. With respect to those who do pay, we give preference to the clubs that pay our fees in a timely manner. When a club is late in

paying, we delay scheduling refs for them. We won't refuse to send a ref to a league match because a club was late, but their non-league matches get lower priority.

CIPP Compliance – At the request of the PRU Board of Directors the PSRFR does not assign referees to any match in which either team is not in compliance with all applicable CIPP requirements as determined by USARFU and the PRU.

Volunteerism — Referees are volunteers. When they make themselves available on a weekend it is with the understanding that they have promised to ref a (single) game that weekend. We cannot and do not ever force a ref to do the second match — so whether or not a B side can be covered by 1 ref (as has been suggested) depends on the willingness of the ref to do the second game. A typical situation may involve a ref who is assigned to do a matrix match for the A side. We anticipate that such a match will be fast and furious. If no one is assigned to do the B side match, the A-side ref may volunteer if (s)he can, but it is possible that (s)he may be just too damned tired to do it.

Finally, we can assure the rugby community that we do NOT play favorites. We don't say "oh we don't like those guys, don't give them a ref." We try to use the objective factors outlined above (quality, need, long-term improvement, payment, etc.) in making assignments. Our allocations officers put in more than 300 hours/season on the task and don't get a penny for their efforts. Of course, occasionally things get messed up. But any priority given to a club or a match is based upon good and solid reasons — not favoritism.