



Berkshire Society of Rugby Union Referees County Rep report to County AGM 2025

As County Representative, I act as a conduit between the CB and our Society. As part of that function I report to the County on a monthly basis on refereeing matters, and vice versa where relevant.

My reports during the season predominantly focused on referee recruitment and development. As you know Ian has taken over as chair and there are several newish members of the executive. With the help of Nick Curtin (Chair of Berkshire referees), we helped explain the referee pathway, appointment system, and particular issues we have.

Focussing on the headings of Recruitment; Retention; and Regular Availability we discussed areas where the County could help BRR including:

Recruitment/Retention

- Encourage CRefCs at clubs (committee member?) responsible for:
 - Identification and recruitment
 - Development
 - Publicising
- Encourage clubs to develop a club referee development plan in the same way as there are coach development plans
 - Encourage clubs to put the same emphasis on referee development plans as they do on coach development – eg ensuring each age group/team has at least one qualified referee
 - Work with BRR to understand key referee criteria and deliver more structured constructive feedback (both to referees directly and back to BRR, through the channels provided)
- Encourage retiring players to stay involved by refereeing
- Encourage existing club referees to attend BRR training meetings
- Consider funding for training courses:
- Support referee identification and development in the diversity initiatives.
- Help/encourage clubs to address the ongoing issue of Match Official Abuse

Regular Availability

- Encourage qualified referees that have done the course to actually referee:
 - Sunday mornings are a perfect opportunity – eg U15s/U16s/U18sB
 - If there is a Vets game might that be suitable for a newer referee rather than a more experienced one that is easy and trusted and if they can do their 5 games they can go onto BRR books.
- Recognise that timing of games can aid availability both of players and referees – eg Friday night lights
- Think about the 'Sunday offer' to referees which is generally quite different to the Saturday welcome.
 - Eg meet and greet (inc. parking), post-match hospitality, showers
 - Parental behaviour



Worthy of comment is the focus this year has moved a little from “how do we recruit” to “how do we get enough games to develop referees”.

Finally as many of you will know my family now lives in Australia and I make frequent trips down under. As such I feel that I have lost touch with rugby activities within county and I am finding myself increasingly unable to fulfil the role of representing issues properly.

Therefore I will be standing down from the role of County Rep, and Nick will take on this specific role.

I am not disappearing entirely and look forward to seeing you all around the grounds when I am here. However I will formally sign off now as your County Rep. Its been fun!

All the best

Paul

Paul Lee
County Representative
16 June 2025