

Guidelines for Assistant Referees

This paper aims to provide a degree of consistency and uniformity for those performing the important role of Assistant Referee.

Background

This document draws heavily from a paper circulated by Roger Higgins (NSWRRA) in July 2011. Although intended primarily for NSWRRA members, a number of the suggestions will prove useful to Sydney West RRA members involved as Assistant Referees.

General Suggestions

1. Report to the match Referee as early as possible to receive his or her instructions.
2. Identify the Ground Marshal for the venue and determine where he will be located in case he's needed.
3. Familiarise yourself with the ground conditions and field markings.
4. Assistant Referees must be dressed identically.
5. Carry a flag.
6. Apply the "leading and trailing" process and watch for foul play both at the breakdown and behind play.
 - Assistant Referee on near side of play to lag behind and watch back play.
 - Assistant Referee on far side of play to be slightly ahead of play.
7. Be in in-goal for corner post try situations.
8. Assistant Referee on players' bench side to control players entering and leaving the field of play.

NOTE: For some matches this duty will be handled by an appointed 'Number 4' match official. A separate procedural document available from the Resource Library provides guidance to those appointed as a Number 4.
9. Use of Sin Bin (Yellow Carded players):
 - The period of temporary suspension commences at the time the sin-binned player crosses the touchline when leaving the field of play.
 - Assistant Referee to ensure sin-binned players remain on the bench (or with Ground Marshall depending on Competition Rules).
10. Use of Blood Bin:
 - Bleeding player to be timed from the moment he leaves the field of play to the moment he returns.
 - Ensure only 15 players are on the field at any one time.

- If the bleeding player is away longer than 15 minutes of actual time, the player cannot return to the field and his replacement becomes permanent – see Law 3.10 (a).
- Temporary replacement (or returning blood bin player) is only to take the field when a break in play occurs and must report to the Referee.

11. Assistant Referees to also assist the referee by keeping time.
12. Assistant Referee to keep check on the number of non-playing members of the team entering the playing area.
13. Reserve Referee / AR1 must carry a whistle and cards and be prepared to take over from the match referee if necessary.
14. Assistant Referees to be aware of current touching judging interpretations.

Positional Play Suggestions for Assistant Referees:

These are not intended to cover all scenarios but simply to provide some general guidelines as to Assistant Referee positioning when “leading and trailing”.

Kick-off

Near Side: On 10 metre line

Far Side: Between 10 metre and 22 metre lines, ready to move quickly into in-goal.

Scrum

Near Side: Slightly back near attacking off-side line, watching the aftermath of the scrum as well as any late tackling by the back lines.

Far Side: Approximately 10 metres ahead of scrum watching aftermath of scrum, staying ahead of play, watching as play comes towards you.

Lineout

Near Side: On the line of touch – only move off it if the referee has requested or generally agreed before game or when early in-goal position is preferred.

Far Side: On 10 metre line on opposite side to referee.

Tackle / Ruck / Maul

Near Side: Move to different side to the referee, know where ball is and concentrate on possible “hot spots” (e.g. a player caught on the ground near the ball).

Far Side: Hang back to observe late arrivals and possible “off the ball” incidents.

Drop-out

Near Side: 5 metres up field but ready to move back to position on defending side of the action.

Far Side: 15 metres up field ready to move to cover the longer kick.

General Play – Kick out on the full (or kicked dead in-goal)

Near Side: Observe ball and play and signal ball out on the full (or dead in-goal).

Far Side: To assist Referee and Near Side AR by identifying the position for the ensuing lineout (or “scrum back where kicked” if appropriate).

Play Restart

Near Side: To assist referee with placement and team possession after time out.

Bob Watson
VP Registration & Accreditation
Sydney West Rugby Referees’ Association

association website: www.swrra.sportzvault.com