



SYDNEY WEST
RUGBY REFEREES' ASSOCIATION INC.

Annual Report 2019

The Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association receives funding from the following organisations.

We'd like to thank them for their generous support of rugby and encourage you to support them too.



**The Rugby Club
Foundation**

#respecttheref

Background to Sydney West RRA

From the early 1960s, Rugby refereeing in the area we now service was carried out by members of the Eastwood District RURA and the Parramatta District RURA. Following a series of discussions, at the end of the 2006 season the members of those two associations agreed to form a new district referee association to be known as Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association Inc.

Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association is an incorporated "not for profit" organisation established and operated in accordance with the NSW Office of Fair Trading's "Model Constitution for Incorporated Associations". The association's registered incorporation number is INC.9886803.

Office-Bearers and Management Committee Members

Under the Model Constitution, the Association's Management Committee is comprised of the six office-bearer positions mentioned below plus three ordinary members. The occupants of those positions in 2019 are as follows:-

President	Gary Payne
Vice Presidents	
<i>Recruitment & Retention</i>	Paul Fitzgerald
<i>Registration & Accreditation</i>	Michael Goldring
<i>Training & Development</i>	Julius Ambat
Secretary & Public Officer	Troy Daly
Treasurer	Tony Hackett
Ordinary Members of the Committee	Ian Martin
	Grant Briggs*
	(vacant)
Honorary Patron	Stuart Dickinson
Honorary Auditor	Neil Colquhoun
Honorary Legal Officer	Peter Campton

* Grant Briggs also acts as the Association's Equipment Officer

Life Members

At the inaugural meeting of Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association, members resolved unanimously that life members of the Eastwood District RURA and the Parramatta District RURA would from that date also be regarded as life members of Sydney West RRA. Since 2007 life membership has been awarded to a further group of distinguished Sydney West members. The names of those whose efforts have been recognized with life membership are listed below. We honour them and thank them for their sustained periods of service to the association, to Rugby refereeing and to referee administration.

Eastwood District RURA

Stan Chirgwin (dec'd)
Jim Millen (dec'd)

Ian Eldred (dec'd)
Robin Timmins
Bob Watson

Dick McGee (dec'd)
Owen Gillard

Parramatta District RURA

Ray Duffy
Brian Crutcher
Ken Lawler
Phillip Bell

Jim Gleeson (dec'd)
George Bennett
Colin Lawler
David Fahey
Allan Haidley

Peter Whyte
Theo Whiting
Roger Rooms
Joe Lake

Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association

Tony Hackett
Peter Smith

Chris Cunliffe-Jones (dec'd)
Paddy Watts

Lindsay Spencer
Ian Mooney

President's Report

2019 was a challenging year for Sydney West Rugby Referees Association. On balance, it was also highly successful on a number of different fronts.

I would firstly like to express the Association's sincere gratitude to two very important supporters and sponsors – **The Rugby Club Foundation** (TRCF) and **Patties Pies**. 2019 was the second year that SWRRA has benefitted from financial support from these two very generous sponsors.

TRCF has been most supportive in providing cash to allow the Association to purchase equipment needed to upgrade our equipment for referee coaching – 2-way radio sets and video cameras. This new hardware has provided SWRRA referee coaches with the tools to more effectively provide one-to-one coaching and development of our referees. SWRRA had set a target in 2019 of coaching each referee twice during the season, and whilst we fell a little short of this target, it remains a target for the 2020 season. We thank TRCF for its generosity and support in this vital area of developing referees.

Patties Pies (aka Four'n'Twenty pies) has been a long-term sponsor of AFL in Victoria and is looking to make inroads with rugby in NSW and beyond. You would have seen the Patties emblem on the back of referee jerseys in 2018 and 2019, and you will see it again in 2020. Patties has been a generous supporter of referees and its plan to extend support of grass-roots rugby (especially to clubs) will be evident during this 2020 season. Through their sponsorship, SWRRA has had the funds to increase its financial support of referees across different facets, especially being able to support referees who have been appointed to carnivals across NSW.

In 2018 we saw some progress in streamlining procedures for the centralised referee appointments system but 2019 witnessed a reversal of the progress, and we returned to appointments with very late notice. There were some serious problems with the SJRU appointments process and associated processes. This in turn had a negative impact on the number of games that did not have a referee available and to the number of games that SWRRA could appoint a referee coach to. We are hopeful, with some new strategies adopted this year that 2020 will be more consistent in appointments.

This last 12 months has seen the new-look committee working in its first year together. The loss of long-time stalwarts Bob Watson and Ian Mooney in the same year in 2019 was always going to be challenging, but I would like to publicly thank all the members of the committee for their dedication and application to the challenges we faced.

Respect Rugby is an issue that took up much of the committee's time last season. As referees, we are all individually concerned about making rugby a great experience for all – players, their parents and team officials, and all match officials. However, as a committee, SWRRA is equally concerned with the welfare of all of our referees and the need to remove the negativity that often comes from the sideline or from players in the game. All of us has a vested interest in making the Respect Rugby policy effective and ensuring that the game is played in the most positive way possible. SWRRA was not satisfied with the way Respect Rugby was managed in 2019, and has made representation to NSWRU to that effect. We have been told that the policy is to be reviewed for the 2020 season, so we will continue to monitor the administration and execution of this very important policy.

At the end of 2019 season, the Committee initiated a review process, from which two key objectives for the 2020 season were identified. The first is aimed at recruitment. The 2019 season was a relatively benign season for recruiting new referees, so SWRRA decided that it will work in a more focussed way to try to recruit new referees this year. In particular, we are looking specifically to recruit some female referees. Whilst these recruits may

initially come out of the growing "Girls 7's" competitions that are available, we are also specifically targeting adult females to join the refereeing ranks of SWRRA.

Secondly, the committee was concerned about the declining level of communication between referees and the District clubs. Since the move to centralised appointments and Sydney-wide competitions, the 'village club' culture within the 3 zones has virtually disappeared. SWRRA would like to reinvigorate the connections and relationships between the referee association and the clubs in an effort to engender improved levels of communication, and create a cooperative working environment between the two groups so that the promotion and development of rugby becomes the big winner.

Our Super Sunday season launch in March each year has now become a tradition, and has been a very useful and effective starting point for a new season. Thanks go again to The King's School for their generosity and to Jenny Pearce for liaising with the school on our behalf.

The 2020 Australian of the year, Dr James Mueke, (an eye surgeon) in his acceptance speech noted that "2020 was an auspicious year for eyesight". When we, as referees, are often accused of being 'blind', I thought this to be as appropriate to referees as it is to eye surgeons.

Enjoy 2020.

Gary Payne
President

Recruitment & Retention Report

Details of membership numbers for the 2019 season are as mentioned in the registration and accreditation report.

As stated in the registration and accreditation report the 2019 season saw us welcome 20 new members. It has been noted in previous years that the average age of our members is on the up, for better or worse, and this trend still exists.

Also noted previously was the need to increase the recruitment of referees in the 18 to 45 years age bracket. In order to do this, over the course of the 2019 season, I have attended numerous coaches and AR training evenings to attract new members to SWRRA.

More recently, as an entire committee, the SWRRA held an information evening for the presidents and management of the clubs within our district. This evening was crucial to cement relationships with what we see as key people to work with in the future for two main causes. Firstly it is important that, as clubs, they appreciate the importance of referees to the game and understand what it is that we are looking at on the field so that we can work together to improve rugby in Sydney's west. Secondly we see these people as great contacts to help introduce us to parents and, hopefully, current players who wish to become referees. As mentioned above we are working with these clubs and their existing ARs as a first port of call to enlist new members.

In terms of retention we are also working with current New South Wales Rugby sponsors, XBlades, to try and establish a relationship with them and strike up a deal that would benefit both them and all of our active members. We hope to have a selection of boots available from them for our members so that we are more uniform, for those who choose to take up the offer, by wearing XBlades on our jerseys, shorts and on our feet!

I have enjoyed this first year in the role of recruitment and retention but feel I have only begun to scratch the surface in terms of what can be done. I also plan to work more closely with schools in the area where Rugby is played and get some of the young referees who run around at the schools to become members of the Association.

One of the great things that we do as a group is our education nights. This additional information and support is crucial, in my opinion, to maintaining the quality and standard of referees that we have and therefore keeping those quality referees involved in rugby and involved with SWRRA. I feel that this education could be a drawcard to these younger refs, giving them the support they need and giving us the newer, younger members we require. This is something that we can all help with in one of two ways. Simply invite someone who you know would, or could, make a good referee along to one of these meetings or reach out to me and I will happily contact them and invite them along to learn more about our association and our offerings so that we can recruit talented referees moving forward.

Of course the "Referee Recruitment" page of our website is a great starting point where they can find everything they need to know about becoming a rugby referee and about SWRRA.

Paul Fitzgerald
Vice President, Recruitment & Retention

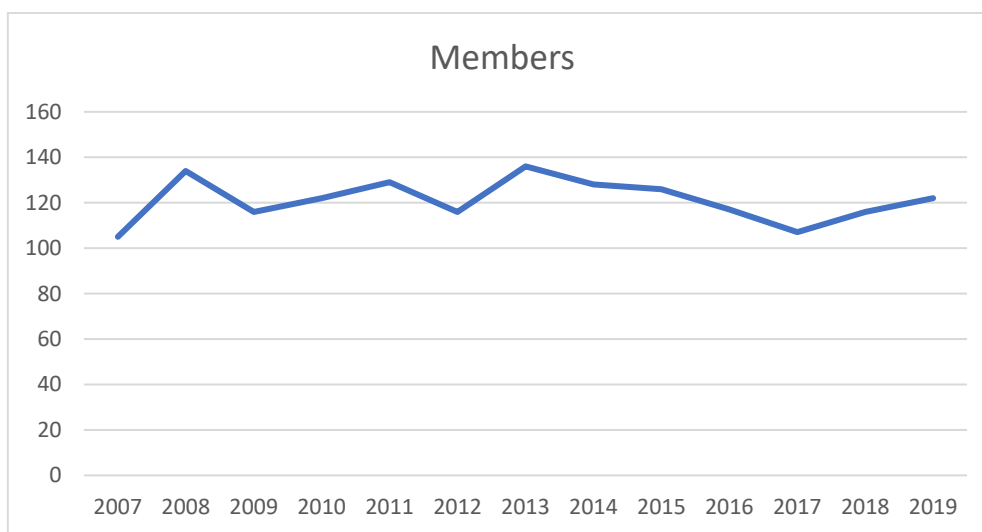
Registration & Accreditation Report

For 2019 we used RugbyXplorer (RugbyX) for registration. This was the first time that this tool was used and complicated our registration process by having to break it up into two steps. Upgrades to the tool will continue to improve its usability and value, but, in the meantime, we still have a gap in capturing the data we need to understand our members better and be able to effectively manage the association.

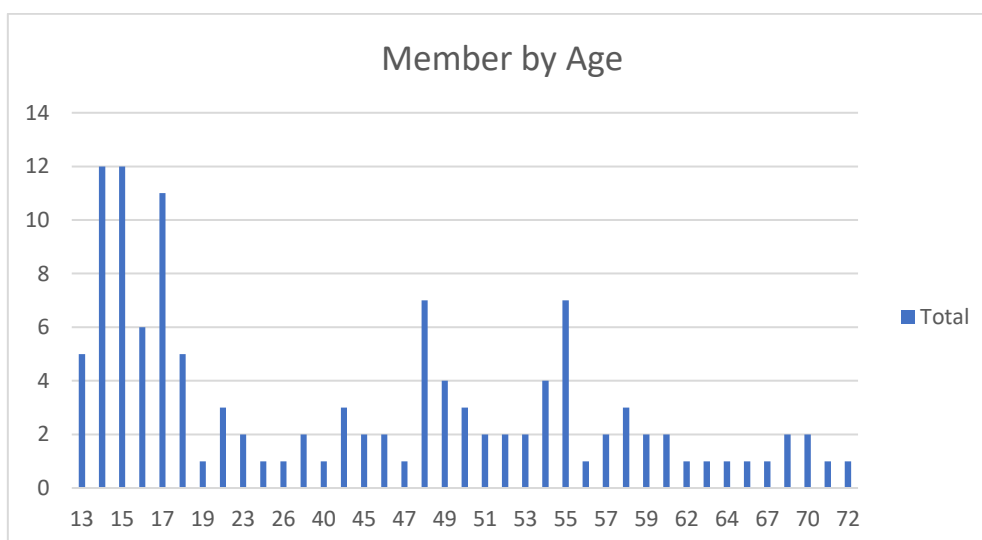
Therefore, the membership form (Step 2) will continue to be needed to enable a complete picture of our members.

Registrations by Year 2007 to 2019

The 2007 season was the first for the then newly formed Sydney West RRA. The graph below shows the movement in end of season membership numbers across each of the 13 seasons of our existence.



Average membership over the 13 year period 2007 to 2019 is 121. Our 2019 end of season figure of 122 is up from 116 in 2018.



Distribution of members by age shows that the majority of members fall into either under

18 or the 48 to 55 age brackets.

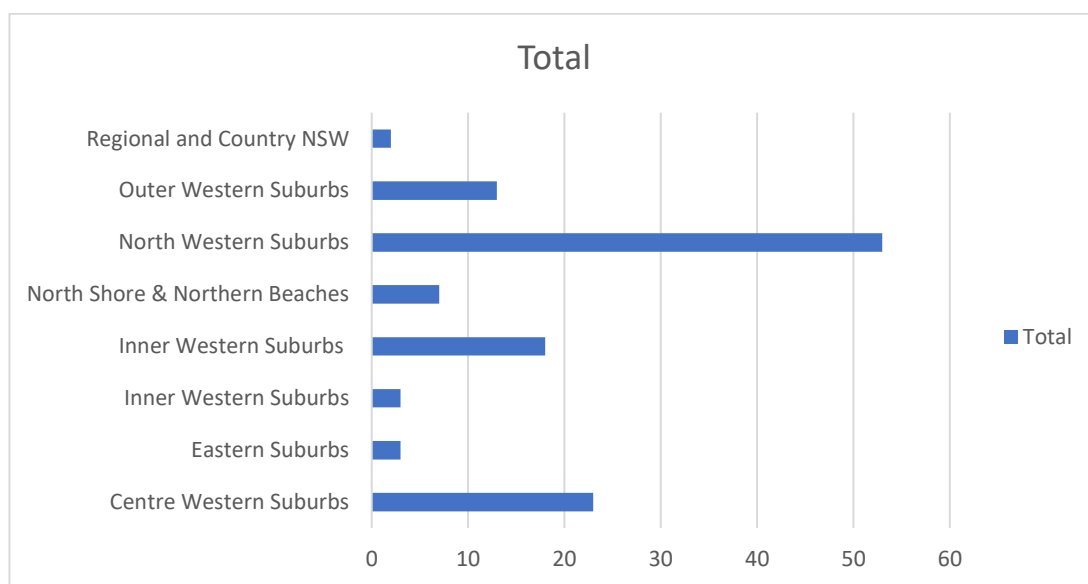
New Members

During the 2019 season we welcomed 20 new members. It is hoped that all enjoyed their first year of refereeing with us. We look forward to watching them develop and improve as match officials in coming seasons.

Joshua Buisson	Tane Dolan	Owen Lenord	Luron Patea
Isaac Busch	Mitchell Foster	Cameron Liddle	Tobias Rogerson
Fynn Carstens	Harry Hutchinson	Angus Liddle	Andrew Thompson
Arty DeGuzman	Tom Jordan	Lachlan Mortimer	Peter Tubner
Luca Di Cristo	Isaiys Katoa	Peter O'Farrell	Robert Tubner

Membership by Location

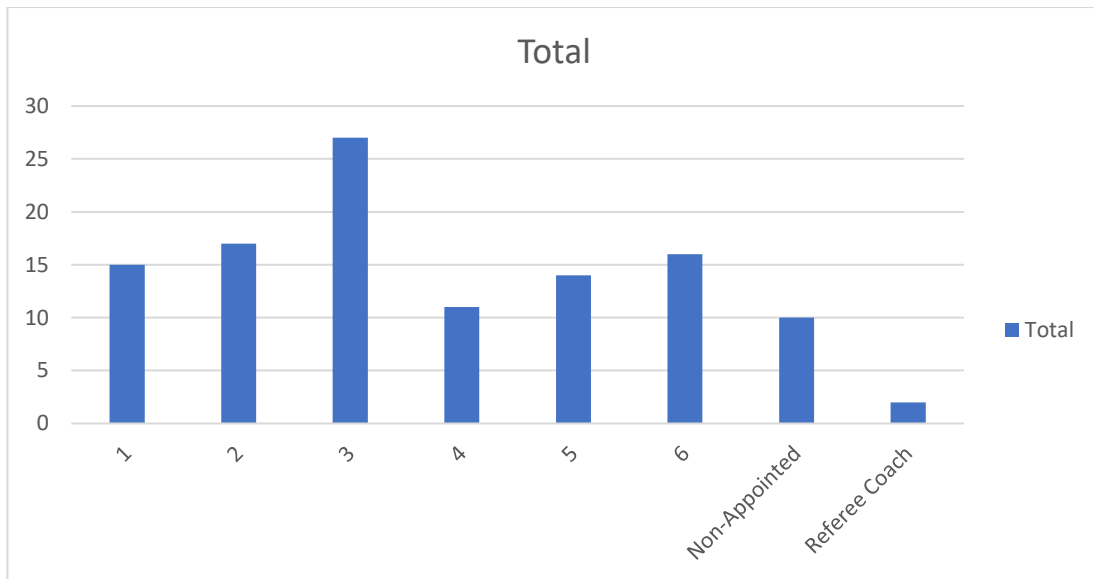
The area the association services is large by metropolitan standards and quite diverse. It contains a mix of older, established suburbs and an increasing number of shiny new ones. We are keen to engage with and support those who are working to grow and advance Rugby across our region.



The growth areas and new suburbs to Sydney's west, southwest and northwest are not just vital to the success of Rugby in NSW. They are very much essential to the association's long term future and success.

Membership by Grading Tier

The chart below shows the distribution of members at the end of the 2019 season by referee grading tier.



I thank all members for the assistance and co-operation provided to me in 2019.

Michael Goldring
Vice President, Registration & Accreditation

Training & Development Report

Pre-Season

For many members the 2019 season commenced with our Pre-Season training sessions with Chris Cottee putting us through our paces at Muirfield High School. This traditional pre-season ritual is a chance for SWRRA referees to get together for a bit of social time whilst also preparing physically for the season ahead.

Rugby Australia School Student Scholarship (SSS) Program

We had two Referees, Alec Silins and Will Taylor who were accepted into the RugbyAU School Student Scholarship (SSS) Program. As part of this, Alec refereed at the NSW Country Junior State Championships in Tamworth in May, while Will Taylor refereed at the u14 NSW State Championships in Orange over the June Long Weekend and the u13/14 Queensland State Championships in Toowoomba in July.

NSWJRU State Championships

The June Queen's Birthday Long Weekend saw the traditional NSW State Championships being played for the u12s-Opens. SWRRA members involved were:

U12s: Xander Deller, Max Goldring, Michael Golding (Coach), Callum Winchester (Coach), Josh Winchester

U13s: Grant Briggs (Coach), Jack Larkin

U14s: Will Taylor

U15s: Julius Ambat (Convenor/Coach), Todd Cummings

U13s/15s/17s Girls: Pat Cullen, Mitchell Foster, Cha Loh, Warren Price

We also had numerous Referees involved in the **NSW State Gala Days for u10s and 11s** that were held in Wyong over the July School Holiday Break:

Mitchell Foster, Tom Jordan, Lachlan Nothdurft, Lachlan Pethybridge

To round the year off the **NSW 7s State Championships** were held in Forster where several of our Referees and Coaches were selected:

Todd Cummings, Xander Deller, Jack Larkin, Callum Winchester (coach), Josh Winchester

Referee Development Carnivals

In April, we had three Referees participate at the TAS Rugby Carnival – Jack Larkin, Marco Levy and Tom Winters, as well as Ian Mooney and I assisting with coaching and mentoring a large cohort of Referees from around the state. The weekend is a wonderful development opportunity for younger referees to get experience at a big tournament, live in with other Referees and learn how to work as a team while being provided regular quality coaching to help develop their Refereeing skills.

In August the PSSA tournament was run at UWS Hawkesbury where we had Josh Winchester Referee and Todd Cummings acting as a coach/mentor. This tournament is a great opportunity to gain experience in refereeing in an intense, competitive environment over three days with feedback on their performances provided by NSWRU Referee Educators Alex Richards and Ron Mancell.

SJRU

The SJRU Finals Series were again played between teams 1 v 4 and 2 v 3, with the winners of both games moving to the following weekend's Grand Final, with "Plate Finals" in the Under 10 and Under 11 age groups only. Congratulations to those appointed to finals and grand final matches. A big thank you to those who assisted by running touch, having an

experienced referee on the sideline in these fixtures is always a welcome relief for the person in the middle.

There were some notable appointments for our Referees in Season 2019:

Our most improved Referee of the Year, Jack Larkin refereed an u13 State Championships Semi Final as well as the u13B SJRU Grand Final.

Our Referee of the Year, Todd Cummings refereed the u15 State Championships Semi Final, NSW u15 and 16s Regionals, the SJRU Opens Grand Final and late in the season Refereed the National u15 Junior Gold Cup Grand Final.

Coaching and Training

The association put forward a request for a grant from The Rugby Club Foundation for the purchase to two Soloshot cameras to aid in the Development of Referees. These have been used at State Championships and regional tournaments and we will be looking to put these to use on a weekly basis in 2020.

Our Referees wouldn't have the opportunity to progress and be nurtured without our tireless Referee Coaches. A total of 128 formal coaching reports were submitted in season 2019 with 75% of registered Referees being seen at least twice throughout the year by our coaches.

At this point I'd like to thank Alex Richards from NSWRU for providing content and facilitating our pre-season Game Management Guidelines as part of our Super Sunday and for our monthly Education Nights. The King's School for the use of their facilities for Super Sunday, Muirfield High School for the use of their facilities for Ore-Season Training, and Parramatta Leagues who kindly donate time and space at Viking's Sports Club to run our monthly Education Nights.

Season 2020 is shaping up to be an exciting year from a Training and Development perspective with a strong cohort of young Referees coming up through the ranks and the ever-growing nature of the Girls' game.

We received notice at the end of the year that 5 of our Referees were accepted into the Rugby Australia School Student Scholarship Program for 2020; this is the greatest number of Referees that the association has ever put forward for this program which is testament to the talent coming through as well as our Referee Coaches. Congratulations to Xander Dellar, Marco Levy, Jack Larkin, Riley Price and Lachlan Pethybridge – I am sure you will represent the association well.

To all in the association, thank you for your patience and cooperation throughout the 2019 season, particularly with draws coming out later in the week constantly and some very late changes to draws and accommodating these when you could. The commitment from everyone has shown to others how committed we are to the game as Referees and has made people take notice. I look forward to seeing you out on the paddock in 2020.

Julius Ambat
VP Training and Development

Secretary's Report

Firstly, let me just say that taking on the Secretary role was always going to be a challenge, not least because of the fact I am following in the footsteps of Bob Watson, whose enthusiasm, commitment and focus in the role are hard to match. On that note, I would also like to thank Bob for his advice and assistance throughout the year, and for making the transition a smooth one.

Our Committee has worked tirelessly throughout 2019, with a number of plans for further improvements during 2020. While there were a number of challenges, and some disruption caused by changes within SJRU and NSWRU, the Committee has continued to engage with these two bodies to set the direction of the Association, and advocate for all of us.

The association acknowledges the support provided by the Parramatta Leagues Club in allowing use of the Scandia Room at Vikings Sports Club for our monthly Education Nights and Referee Coach Group meetings.

We also acknowledge and appreciate the sponsorship provided to us in 2019 by Patties Foods Ltd (our jersey sponsor and the makers of the "Four 'n' Twenty" range of meat pies) and by The Rugby Club Foundation. Both of these organisations contributed significantly to community Rugby and to the association in 2019.

Meetings in 2019

The Management Committee met on eleven (11) occasions during 2019. We thank Tony Hackett for again allowing use of his firm's boardroom for our monthly Committee meetings.

The education nights conducted in 2019 were well supported by members. Once again, our thanks to Alex Richards from the NSWRU for his witty, insightful and challenging talks throughout the year, all of which have hopefully helped make us better referees.

The final education night in August doubled as our End of Season Function and Awards Night and attracted over 50 members and guests. This was a pleasing turnout for a mid-week function by a metropolitan association of our size.

Award Winners for 2019

The winners of our major awards in 2019 were as follows:-

NSWRU Zone Referee of the Year:	Todd Cummings
NSWRU Zone Junior Referee of the Year:	Will Taylor
Eastwood District JRU Most Improved Junior Referee:	Jack Larkin
Clubman of the Year:	Callum Winchester

Chris Cunliffe-Jones Spirit of Rugby Award

Despite a number of potential recipients being assessed, and some spirited debate, the committee did not identify any individual to receive the award. Given the significance of this award to the association, it was felt the best alternative was to not make an award in 2019.

Schools and Clubs

We continued our long association with The King's School, Oakhill College, Redfield College, Blue Mountains Grammar School and SCECGS Redlands. In particular, we thank The King's School for allowing use of their Centre for Learning and Leadership auditorium in mid-March for our 2019 Super Sunday event and the 2018 Annual General Meeting held

immediately prior to it.

For the past 13 seasons, Sydney West RRA members have proudly serviced senior and junior clubs in the Eastwood, Parramatta, Penrith and West Harbour Districts. In addition, a number of our referees were used to 'backfill' gaps in appointments, seeing a number of us also refereeing across the regions traditionally served by Sydney North and Sydney South RRA.

As always, we acknowledge and appreciate the support and hospitality provided by the schools and clubs throughout the 2019 season.

It is important that we continue to develop and improve our relationship with the clubs and the schools. In addition to providing access to an important source of potential referee recruits, working closer with these organisations enables players and coaches to develop a better understanding of the laws of the game and how they are applied in practice. This results in a win/win situation for all involved. A number of new initiatives will be implemented by the committee during 2020.

Website and Social Media

We have continued to develop our online presence throughout 2019, and will continue this throughout 2020.

To assist in some of these initiatives, we have updated our domain name to swrra.org; this shortened address both reflects the common abbreviation we are more frequently know by, as well as meeting the needs of our presence in the social media age.

As noted by Gary in his report, there were a number of challenges throughout the year with Respect Rugby matters. We have chosen to take the lead in promoting greater elements of respect across the rugby community through a couple of new initiatives through social media including a ***#respectheres*** hashtag, and some overt marketing on new kit to be provided to members in 2020.

Our Facebook presence continues to develop alongside our website, and I'd like to thank Michael Goldring and Julius Ambat for their efforts. We would, of course, like to recognise as many of our members as possible on those pages, so if you have any articles or photos to share, please send them through.

Troy Daly
Secretary & Public Officer

Treasurer's Report

This is the report for the thirteenth financial year of the Sydney West Rugby Referee's Association.

The 2019 financial statements are still subject to audit which is my fault due to work pressures I was unable to get them to Neil Colquhoun, the Association's honorary Auditor, but it is anticipated that the 2018 and 2019 audits will be completed within the next month or so and the audited financial statements will be posted on the Association's website at that time.

A set of the Association's 2019 financial statements (subject to audit) are attached as an annexure to this Annual Report and I would like to draw your attention to the following items:

- the financial result for the year was a surplus of \$5,281 (2018: surplus \$13,823);
- the main reason for this result was the receipt of the Association's share of sponsorship revenue from Pattie's Pies amounting to \$10,920. This was part of a larger sponsorship agreement with Pattie's and was divided up amongst the Sydney based referee Associations by NSW Rugby Union. It is expected that this sponsorship will be ongoing, at least in the short term. These funds have not as yet been fully expended but your Management Committee is considering a number of short term recurrent and some nonrecurrent expenses which will benefit the development of members refereeing capabilities and assist in the recruitment of additional referees and coaches;
- we also received a further grant of \$3,500 (2018: \$2,500) from The Rugby Club Foundation (TRCF) which was to be used for coaching and development. The funds were expended on acquiring visual recording equipment and we are required to give a written report to TRCF on those expenditures and monitor the training and development outcomes;
- we continued to fully subsidise our end of year Annual Dinner at a cost of \$3,283 (2018: \$3,194) as a gesture of appreciation to the Association's members;
- during the year additional purchases were made of kit bags and caps for new members and clothing and accessories were acquired for distribution at the commencement of the 2020 season in the form of training shirts and Assistant Referee flags which is the reason that Equipment & Clothing costs have increased to \$7,795 (net of TRCF grant) compared to 2018: \$1,992;
- fitness training which used to be run as a pre-season activity has extended to a whole of season offering and is currently costing \$2,283 (net of member contributions) 2018: \$2,244;
- NSWRU again made an administration grant of \$8,000 towards the training, development and running costs of the Association. The Association is grateful for this funding as without this amount we could not provide the development of our referees especially if the nonrecurrent funding was to cease.

We closed the year with cash at bank and on investment amounting to \$52,457 (2018: \$56,856) and have paid all our liabilities in respect of the 2019 season which stands us in good stead to be able to fund training, recruitment and development activities in 2020.

Tony Hackett
Treasurer

**Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association Inc.
Profit and Loss Statement
For the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019**

Audited financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2019 will be inserted on this page when they become available.



Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association Inc.
ABN: 43 677 017 345
Profit & Loss Statement
for the year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Income		
Member Subscriptions	1,565	1,875
Refereeing Fess - Clubs	14,885	16,475
- Schools	8,560	8,760
- Coaching	1,920	1,395
Equipment Sales	60	30
Grants - NSWRU	8,000	8,000
- NSW Rugby Club (Equipment)	3,410	2,500
Sponsorship - Patties Pies	10,920	10,920
Miscellaneous - Fitness	1,000	950
- Other	0	0
Bank Interest	380	265
INCOME TOTAL	<u>\$50,700</u>	<u>\$51,170</u>
Expenses		
Reimbursements - Referees & Coaches	23,345	24,220
- Coaching & Development Expenses	1,208	748
Meetings	348	311
Equipment & Clothing	11,205	4,492
Insurance	0	0
Recruitment	773	350
Website & IT	17	211
Miscellaneous - OFT	46	72
- Fitness	3,794	2,456
- Annual Dinner	3,283	3,194
- Super Sunday	1,400	1,293
- Postage & Stationery	0	0
EXPENSES TOTAL	<u>\$45,419</u>	<u>\$37,347</u>
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	<u>\$5,281</u>	<u>\$13,823</u>



Sydney West Rugby Referees' Association Inc.
ABN: 43 677 017 345
Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash at bank - Westpac Banking Corporation	19,554	44,301
- Term Deposit	32,903	12,555
Debtors - Refereeing Fees	0	1,240
- Sponsorship	10,920	0
Total Assets	<u>\$63,377</u>	<u>\$58,096</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors - Referee Payments	0	0
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>\$63,377</u>	<u>\$58,096</u>
EQUITY		
Accumulated Funds		
Balance at 1 January	58,096	44,273
Add: Surplus for year	5,281	13,823
Balance at 31 December	<u>\$63,377</u>	<u>\$58,096</u>