Referee Strategy

2015 - 2024
Vision for refereeing

To have a well-trained, highly-qualified body of referees that support and enhance the delivery of the sport.
Objectives

- Increase quality & quantity of active, appropriately qualified & skilled referees and referee observers & mentors
- Produce and promote the referee pathway to illustrate continuous development and opportunities - from local to international
- Increase the profile and perception of refereeing across the sport

FOR SKILLS, FITNESS, TACTICS AND GREAT SOCIAL BUZZ...

GET INTO VOLLEYBALL
The key components are:

- Clear referee pathway
- Continual Professional Development (CPD) / mentoring support for all referees
- Increase in the number of people to deliver; observers, mentors, regional teams, Commission support
- Support at local and regional level.
Refereeing is a critical enabler to the growth and success of the sport at all levels. Teams, coaches and players expect high-quality officiating and this can only be achieved with good training and development.
• Improved refereeing is also reliant on more support across the sport – Regional Committees, clubs, teams, players and coaches – to help to provide new referees and an environment of support for their long-term development.
This strategy examines the current issues and key areas for development. Information has been taken from the “Referee Commission Development Plan 2014 / 15 for Volleyball, beach and sitting volleyball” and the “Performance Gap analysis” which identifies the gaps in referee development to 2024. There has also been input from people across the sport.
## 1. Recruitment, retention and training

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FOR SKILLS, FITNESS, TACTICS AND GREAT SOCIAL BUZZ...

GET INTO VOLLEYBALL
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When broken down regionally, the figures look extremely low.

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*FOR SKILLS, FITNESS, TACTICS AND GREAT SOCIAL BUZZ...*
1a. Recruitment

The main issue is that the majority of new referees are not going straight into refereeing. There are many valid reasons for this:

- required to do the course by the club / university
- confidence to take to the stand falls away quickly after the course
- lack of opportunity / support to referee at the appropriate level.
Another area of recruitment is the National Technical Official (NTOs) – scorers and line judges. Since the drive to recruit NTOs for London 2012, very few courses have been run to build this workforce. Scoring and line judging are both an entry point into officiating and a CPD option – as shown on the Pathway. The scoresheet remains part of Grade 4 course, which is confirmed by a simulation test and represents 10% of the grade 4 pass mark.
• The chart opposite shows that there is a good age spread and many young referees.

• However the 25 and younger age group (165) contains almost all Grade 4s (151 of the 165) and only a handful of grade 3Rs (14).
• The next group up, the 26 - 35 is similar in the high number of grade 4s, although there are a few higher grades emerging. These two age groups represent 236 of the 376 grade 4s, with many still playing.

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1b. Retention

- Our renewal figures show that in the past two years, approximately 30% of referees are renewing at Grade 4 – or 60 referees. If we continue this pattern, then we will steadily grow our numbers.
## All Codes represented:

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<td>Grand Total</td>
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Areas to look at are:

- better process of engagement at the training course – i.e. clearer next steps
- an efficient communication process post-course at Volleyball England
- better engagement in the regions / regional referee administrators (RRAs) / mentoring responsibility taken by clubs - volleyball, beach and sitting
1c. Moving referees along the pathway

Promotion through the grades is done as a result of observation and recommendation. This procedure follows a set of Key Performance Objectives (KPOs) listed in “The Referee Development Pathway by Grade and Requirement.” Appendix 1.
Refereeing Pathway

GRADE 4 - INDOOR / BEACH / SITTING
Assessment: One day course with exam
Qualified to referee & score in Regional/local league games & tournaments,
for volleyball, beach & sitting

GRADE 3 NATIONAL
Assessment: Observation & recommendation
Qualified to referee & score in NVL Divisions 3 & 2.
for volleyball, beach & sitting

GRADE 2
Assessment: One-day exam & observation
Qualified to referee & score in NVL Divisions 3, 2 & 1.
for volleyball, beach & sitting
Qualified to mentor & observe junior referees.

GRADE 1
Assessment: Observation (no exam)
Qualified to referee & score in NVL up to 59s
for volleyball, beach & sitting
Qualified to mentor & observe junior referees.

NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL REFEREE

Accelerated Promotion Scheme

Options:
- Players or ex-players
- Club Volunteer
- Young Referee Award
- Parent
- Scorers
- Line Judges

Ways into Refereeing

CPD for Referees
- Scorers Award
- Line Judge Award
- Annual Conference
- Mentoring from a senior referee

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Please note: Each stage can take between two months and a year to complete
Three key issues here are:

- Process for moving Grade 4s along the pathway
- Time taken to upgrade
- Addressing the CPD needs of registered referees that lie outside observing / mentoring –
1d. Referee Insight

- Understanding our participants is key to developing more, better trained referees. Insight for this report has come from across all areas of refereeing and from referees themselves: training & development; support from clubs; how we communicate with them; support from a mentor; aspirations etc.
2. The volunteer workforce

- Recruiting, retaining, developing and celebrating volunteers to drive the refereeing strategy forwards is key. Volunteers are essential in organising training, planning and delivering courses, managing the NVL appointments, running the observation programme and much more.

- A large amount of this work is completed by a relatively small number of people. The same names crop up as senior referees, Commission members, tutors and observers, with many people holding at least two roles. This creates the issue of people being overburdened and a lack of successors. The main volunteer groups are observers, tutors, Regional Referee Administrators and the Referee Commission. When these are mapped, it is obvious that there are not enough people in the regions to drive change at any pace.
• In common with most sports, the refereeing role is often seen as something that must be done rather than a ‘next steps’ career choice, like coaching. This perception needs to be changed by valuing our referees and developing them as a critical part of the volleyball workforce.

• A communications plan would seek to address this by promoting a referee’s view of the game, the career choices it gives, the development opportunities and the personal rewards. There is little done to promote the role and its contribution other than articles in 3T from time to time, annual awards and the occasional press release. Celebrating success and value will be key in raising the profile.
Summary of Key issues

**Strengths**
- Centralised system for NVL appts - WTR
- Expert, active Commission
- Enough skilled refs at the top

**Weaknesses**
- No culture of investment in refereeing
- Lack of resource in place to promote referees through the ranks
- Top level referees are older
- No communication process to engage refs
- Lack of beach courses to increase numbers
- Not enough observers & mentors - existing ones travelling too far

**Opportunities**
- Start communicating - build a process
- 250+ new refs annually - good base to build from
- Appetite for learning from many refs
- Grow observer/mentor workforce in regions
- Competitions win-win
- New league registration process
- Club buy-in
- Women specific promotion

**Threats**
- Lack of investment to affect real change
- Overworked commission / succession
- Volunteer support needed to drive change is missing
- Criticism of refereeing leads to lack of role satisfaction / referees leaving
Key aims & objectives – where do we want to get to?

• Increase the quality & quantity of active, appropriately qualified and skilled referees and referee observers / mentors
• Produce and promote the referee pathway that provides continuous development and refereeing opportunities - from local to international.
• Increase the profile and perception of refereeing across the sport
How do we get there?

• There is a detailed tactical plan that sets out how the aims and objectives will be achieved over the next nine years. Appendix 5. This plan has been broken down into a simple milestones document to provide an overview of delivery objectives. Appendix 6.
Summary of key areas for delivery
• Increase the quality & quantity of active, appropriately qualified and skilled referees and referee observers / mentors

  a) Focus on developing referee at the lower end of the pathway through observing, mentoring and region courses
  b) Training the trainers: Development of the existing & new workforce of observers, Mentors and R.C.C’s in order to train and enhance the skill level on a local and regional basis
  c) Working with the regions to provide annual CPD event for referees
  d) Succession plan to make sure there is a Commission with skills and knowledge to drive the sport

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- Provide and promote the referee pathway that provides continuous development and refereeing opportunities - from local to international

a) Pathway that shows how a referee can progress and develop
b) Pathway & communications that set expectations of progress
c) Competitions to be used more strategically to develop junior referee
• Increase the profile and perception of refereeing across the sport

a) Communication plan that promotes refereeing as a vibrant part of the game with highly skilled referees
b) Clubs to own refereeing – they need to have registered, qualified referees when they registered teams
c) Refereeing seen as a career choice for players once they retire in the same way as coaching.
Over to Richard Morten to explain how our regions can assist.
Any Questions?