

REF-A-READ



Volume 1

Number 2

May 2002

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

Well here we are back again at last!

The delay in producing this Newsletter is regretted, however we have been experiencing (and hopefully we are now through) some difficult times.

During this time the Board has continued to work towards the completion of its major projects although severely hamstrung and exasperated at times by lack of funding.

Items of interest from recent Board Meetings are as follows:-

- **Welcome to new Board Member**

At this stage I would like to welcome Steve Brown to the Board. Steve was invited to join the Board for a twelve month period as the "Independent Director" for 2002.

Steve brings to the Board a wealth of experience in the area of electronic communication and has been given the portfolio of "Communications", which involves the onerous tasks of developing a communication network, production of Ref-A-Read and the update and maintenance of our Website.

- **Life Membership**

The Board recommended to the Annual General Meeting for acceptance as Life Members Mr. Ian McCall and Mr. Eric Cox. These nominations were endorsed by the Meeting.

Both these members have been stalwarts of the Association and it is particularly pleasing to see Ian being involved in these inaugural awards.

Congratulations to both these gentlemen, we certainly look forward to their continued involvement and friendship.

Associations are invited to submit nominations for this year and are directed to Rules 10, 11 and 12 of the 'Objects and Rules' which make provision for the award of Life Membership of the ARLRA.

Nominated persons must be a Life Member of the nominating Association and must have had a



minimum of twenty (20) years service to rugby League refereeing as a life member of that Association.

Life Members of the ARLRA are elected at the AGM following a recommendation from the Board

Nominations will close on the 31st of December each year.

Nominations should be forwarded to **Bob Styles** (CEO) by this date and be accompanied by a detailed history of the nominee.

For further information consult the Objects and Rules and/or the Life Membership Policy Document on the website.

- **National Conference**

Due to lack of funding being available at this time the next National Conference, which was proposed for 2002, will be adjourned at this stage to a later date when a healthier financial climate may exist.

- **Affiliation Fees**

State Secretaries please note!

Affiliation fees for 2002 are now due. If your Association is unfinancial please forward a cheque for \$10 to the CEO as soon as possible.

- **Merit Awards**

The Board has agreed to issue "Merit Awards" to the following nominees who it was agreed had provided a substantial contribution to the ARLRA.

Ian McCall

Chris Bowden – NSW Leagues Club

Ryan Mussio – Moosemedia

Steve Brown

Traveland Benowa Gardens

The CEO will arrange for presentation of certificates at a suitable time.

Many nominations were received from Associations which upon consideration by the Board, did not satisfy the criteria as outlined in the Policy Document 3.01.

The Objective of this Policy reads:-

"To provide policy and procedures associated with recognising individuals and organisations who make an exceptional contribution towards the Association achieving its stated objectives"

In this case The Association refers to the ARLRA. Further details of this policy can be obtained from the website.

◦ **Referees Uniform**

At this stage the Squeegie Clothing Co. has been selected as the "Preferred Supplier" of the newly designed National Referees Uniform.

Jim Rogers from this company has promised to contact all Associations individually to outline details of the available gear, pricing etc.

At this stage let me stress that no Association will be forced into adopting this uniform, it is the recommended option and hopefully with a national supply arrangement it will prove financially attractive.

I am sure Darren will outline all the details for you in his article in this newsletter, however if you need to contact the suppliers ring Jim Rogers on

(07)3807 8223 ♣

Honorary Auditor

The ARLA is seeking nominations for the position of Honorary Auditor.

The position is for a period of two (2) years.

Persons interested in nominating for this position or requiring further details should contact the CEO.

The Board wishes to thank outgoing auditor Corey Richardson for his efforts over the past years. ♣

A quote from the US Major Baseball News:

"Umpiring is the only profession in the world where you're supposed to begin perfect and then improve from there."

Something that can be applied to Rugby League referees!!! ♣

NOTE that the next Board of Directors meeting of the ARLRA will be held in mid June. Any issues that members wish to refer to that meeting should be addressed to the CEO on e-mail ceo@arlra.org.au or on fax number (02) 95486607 before 9 June 2002.

FUTURE ASSURED FOR ARLRA

BY NICK EUCLID (Chairman ARLRA)

After a rather disappointing 2001 where a lack of funding combined with a particularly long wait for affiliation with the Australian Rugby League saw many projects either put on hold or placed in the too hard basket, the year 2002 appears definitely brighter. The ARLRA is now affiliated with the ARL and has been guaranteed funding of \$20,000 for 2002. This is not enough for all projects but it will enable us to function. Thus we are pressing ahead with Referees' Coaching Seminars in Queensland and NSW and the ARLRA will be issuing accreditation certificates to candidates who successfully complete these courses which are being conducted by Michael Stone and Richard Johnston.

Darren Winningham and his "Uniform Committee" have now received Board approval for Associations to purchase and wear the new ARLRA uniforms as chosen by Associations throughout Australia. I would encourage all Associations to adopt this uniform as soon as possible.

The ARLRA AGM was held recently at NSW Leagues' Club. Each Director gave a brief overview of his portfolio and the Meeting endorsed the Board's recommendation that Eric Cox and Ian McCall be awarded Life Membership of the Australian Rugby League Referees' Association. I would like to congratulate both gentlemen on being the first recipients of this prestigious award. Both Eric and Ian have given sterling service to their District Associations as well as the NSWRL Referees' Association, whilst Ian's dedication, enterprise and enthusiasm as the inaugural Chairman of the ARLRA has been outstanding. Eric and Ian will be presented with their Life Memberships at a later date.

At the Board meeting after the AGM, the Board voted unanimously to elect Steve Brown from the Illawarra Association to the Board position vacated by Graham Annesley. Steve's new position will be Director, Communications, an appropriate role, as he has been responsible for setting up the ARLRA website.

If, as we envisage, the ARLRA is to grow and be the figurehead for all Australian refereeing, then it is up to all members to take responsibility for its future development.

May I wish you all a rewarding 2002 season. ♣

Please address all correspondence directed to the ARLRA to:

Mr Bob Styles
The Chief Executive Officer
Australian Rugby League Referees' Association Inc.
8 Copeland Road
ENGADINE NSW 2233

LAWS UPDATE

BY NICK BEST (Chairman Laws Committee)

I have received a letter from Geoff Carr, the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Rugby League. In the letter he stated that the ARL welcomed the formation of the ARLRA Laws Committee and that this committee would be included in any future laws discussions. I therefore propose to set up communication procedures as set out below. Unfortunately due to the lack of finance it will not be possible to fund meetings of "state" or national committees at this stage.

Suggested procedure for raising any matters relating to "Laws":-

Step 1. The issue should be raised at the local association level and discussed at an association meeting.

Step 2. If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved at this level then the matter should be referred in writing to the "State" body for consideration and possible resolution.

Step 3. If necessary the "State" body will forward the matter to the National Committee for further resolution.

Step 4. The national Committee will in consultation with the ARL have a formal resolution to the matter reached and the ARL approved answer will be forwarded to all associations by various means eg. circulars, web site, Ref-A-Read.

It is proposed that the same procedures will be used for any proposals for "alterations to the laws". However any proposals would need to be within the National Committee by **31st August** of each year so that ARL and International Board action can be determined.♣

2001 Experimental Laws

The ARL has advised that these laws have been included as laws for season 2002. Both International and Modified Law books have been reprinted and are now available.

Safe Play Code has also been reprinted and there are some significant alterations to the application of "advantage play" and the tackling of a player in a "burrowing" or "stooped" posture. Every referee should have a copy of the 2002 "Safe Play Code".♣

National Laws Committee Members

Nick Best	Chairman
Peter Corcoran OAM	Education Co-ordinator ARL Foundation
Richard Johnston	State Manager Referees - QRL
Barry Ruttle	NSWRLRA
Neville Norris	CRLRA
Peter Watkins	WARA (Representative for Developing States)
Adrian Steele	QRL Referees Board♣

NRL's Recruitment Drive

On Thursday 2 May ARLRA CEO Bob Styles accompanied by directors Kevin Riolo and Steve Brown attended a meeting at the Sydney headquarters of the NRL with Mick Stone and NRL Director of Commercial & Marketing, Mark Wallace. Also involved in the meeting via conference phone were the Chairman of the ARLRA, Nick Euclid, based in Brisbane and fellow director Martin Weekes from Perth.

The purpose of the meeting was an offer made by the NRL to assist us in recruiting people into the refereeing ranks through a series of television advertisements and internet initiatives, all to be funded by the NRL. Also in attendance were representatives of consultancy group Recruitment Solutions who the NRL will use for the development of the advertisements and websites.

Mark Wallace has advised that no time will be lost in this campaign and that Associations right through Australia should see positive results as soon as the ads go to air on the pay TV networks. High profile NRL referees will be used to portray the positive aspects of refereeing and the target audience will be people already having some interest in the game. A network of contact numbers is being gathered through Bob Styles and Mick Stone with the use of an 1800 number system as the first point of contact. A website will also give those interested in pursuing refereeing the capability of viewing what their local Association is all about, where it officiates and who to contact.

The ARLRA is extremely grateful to the NRL for this very valuable initiative. It will assist us greatly in supplying the resources required to accommodate the NRL's future development plans.♣

NATIONAL UNIFORMS

BY Darren Winningham.
(Chairman Uniform & Logos Committee)

At the last Board Meeting the ARLRA Board accepted "**Kombat**" as a "preferred supplier" of our new National uniform

They have designed the new uniforms, dress shirts and also shorts and socks for the ARLRA. As well as this merchandise they are offering other equipment such as touch judge flags, whistles and other equipment. Along with this they have an extensive range of off field apparel at reasonable prices.

Kombat has set minimum orders of 6 for all items of clothing. The person who should be contacted in regards to this information is **Jim Rogers** and his contact details are as follows:-

Phone: 07 55252 773
Mobile: 0416 050 537
Email: squeegee@powerup.com.au
Website: www.squeegee.com.au

If you would like a brochure on equipment and prices for your Association then you should contact Jim. However, he is attempting to post all Associations across Australia a detailed brochure on equipment specific to the ARLRA. This brochure is soon to be completed and released so if you want to be on his mailing list please contact him. Otherwise the designs will shortly be on the Association's website so duck in and have a look at www.arlra.org.au

Some Associations have already made enquiries and also placed orders for this equipment. ♣

The ARLRA is currently working on setting up a national database of affiliates, specifically for the purposes of improved communication. We anticipate that we will have at least one contact from each affiliated association through whom we can channel our communications regarding refereeing development and items of interest to the refereeing fraternity. Naturally, we wish to utilise electronic communication means where possible so if you would like to be contacted directly via e-mail then please forward your contact details to the ARLRA otherwise your communications will flow through your association. To receive future communications electronically then send an e-mail with your name, association and e-mail address to steveb@1earth.net ♣

Below are the uniforms as selected by the ARLRA affiliates in the recent survey. The top two uniforms as well as the bottom left are 'on-field' gear while the bottom right uniform is 'off-field' dress attire. The top left uniform comprises a green and black striped jersey with black shorts and socks and *was the most favoured of the selections*. The top right is the same jumper but without the stripes.



The bottom left uniform comprises a gold jersey with black collar and sleeve bands, black shorts and socks. The bottom right outfit is the 'off-field' dress shirt in striped gold with logo and monogrammed collar and sleeves with black shorts that have a green piping around the bottom of the leg. ♣

SURVEY RESULTS

BY MARTIN WEEKES (Chairman Marketing Committee)

The ARLRA Survey conducted since our last edition resulted in 203 referees responding which is a very good result and probably represents about 10% of our overall membership. Half of these were Level 2 referees and over half have been refereeing for over 5 years.

There appears to be no particular age group at which respondents commenced their refereeing careers although there were very few who took it on after 45 years of age. It also appears that if one doesn't start refereeing at the age of 15 or 16 then there is a lower probability that they will take it on during their latter teens until they get into their twenties.

All of the respondents expressed some degree of satisfaction with their refereeing involvement with the exception of one. Over 90% are very satisfied or quite satisfied which is very good to see when one considers their replies on what they thought was driving people away from officiating. Over 85% see crowd abuse as one of the major factors causing our reduction in numbers. There is little we as referees can do alone to resolve this and we need assistance from the various leagues and governing bodies to combat it. However we can dampen the effects somewhat by providing support and motivation to each other, especially to our younger referees when they first embark on the journey. Education and development also plays a major part in overcoming the root causes of crowd abuse. Improved refereeing and interpersonal skills not only remove some of the reasons behind crowd abuse by providing better referees but they also tends to give referees more confidence to cope with the inevitable abuse.

One area where we can play a part ourselves is in internal association politics. It's the second most favoured factor among the ones driving referees away. It probably means that people do not see themselves as getting a fair go. Objective assessment and honesty in those assessments would go a long way in eliminating this as a negative factor in referee retention. Positive feedback and personal development would also assist enormously.

It's interesting to note that three-quarters of the respondents took on refereeing as their own initiative and that 90% of the respondents had also played the game of rugby league at some time, mostly local juniors.

The ARLRA sincerely thanks all the people who took the time to complete the survey. It has proven invaluable in our discussions with the NRL on the campaign to attract more referees into our great game. ♣

