

REF-A-READ



Volume 1

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July 2003

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

BY STEVE BETTS (CEO - ARLRA)

Welcome to this, the mid-year edition of the ARLRA's official newsletter, Ref-A-Read, our second for 2003.

The Board of the Association met in Sydney in June to discuss a number of issues relevant to refereeing.

There are major changes taking place to the National Referees' Accreditation Scheme, particularly in Levels 1, 2 and 3. The changes will simplify the processes needed to gain certification to the various levels and to make them more relevant to the type of game at which officials are taking part. Trials of the new system are planned to commence in 2004 with full implementation in 2005.



Many of you are aware that there have been discussions taking place in regard to the role of the ARL Foundation in the administration of our highly successful *Coaching Match Officials* courses. I can advise that the courses will continue to be administered by this Association in the foreseeable future. We will, however, be working with the Foundation to seek accreditation of the courses with the Australian Sports Commission.

Level 2 Coaches from the Northern and Southern Regions of the NSWCRRL Referees Association have recently produced two coaching videos. We are currently in the process of distributing these to all coaches and affiliated Associations. The tapes, together with one produced last year, provide an excellent reference tool for use in the development of all referees.

At the June meeting, the Board agreed in principle to set aside funds for the specific purposes of **recruitment** and **development** of referees, as an initiative in the *Year of the Official*. Associations are invited to forward submissions, addressed to the CEO, seeking funds and outlining a business case for inclusion in this initiative. Submissions for the grants, which will nominally be for a maximum of \$500, must be in the hands of the CEO by 5 September 2003. All submissions will be considered on their merits.

We are pleased to give you the opportunity to read about the activities of the referees in the Mackay, Qld area in another part of this newsletter. Any Association wishing

to have items of general interest included in future issues can forward articles to me, preferably by email. All stories will be considered for publication.

With finals series in most competitions not that far away, I hope that your season is going the way you've wanted it to. On behalf of the Board of the ARLRA, I would like to extend best wishes to those referees who are appointed to finals games and thank all referees for your enormous contribution to the game in this, the *Year of the Official*.

Regards
Steve Betts
(Hon CEO)♣

Please address all correspondence directed to the ARLRA to:

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DOES YOUR ASSOCIATION NEED ASSISTANCE WITH DEVELOPMENT?

The Board of Directors of the ARLRA at its last Board meeting decided to make funds available for the expressed purpose of assisting its affiliated associations with refereeing development and/or recruitment.

We all know how time consuming development can be, both for the coach and the referee undergoing development. However, we also know that it is time well spent and that the proceeds from the investment far outweigh the cost of time and effort.

One of the scarcest resources in the area of development is money and it is in this area that the ARLRA may be able to help. Although the nominal amount will be in the vicinity of \$500 per submission, sometimes even this can assist in the purchase of training and development aids and equipment that can make a huge difference in the knowledge transfer between coach and student.

So if your association believes that it can utilise some funds to make your lot better in training, development and/or recruitment than send your submission for a grant to the CEO at the above address **BEFORE 5 September**. Submissions will be evaluated on their merits so we need to know what the funds will be used for and what benefits you are targeting through the expenditure. Successful submissions will have grants paid only to Associations, not to individuals. We also require subsequent feedback on the success or otherwise of the funded project(s).♣

NATIONAL REFEREEING ACCREDITATION SCHEME

BY KEVIN RIOLO (ARLRA Director)

Since the NRAS was first introduced in the early nineties, very little change to the scheme has occurred, although several reviews have taken place. However, this year the national Accreditation Committee, consisting of Chairman Peter Corcoran, OAM, Richard Johnston, Barry Ruttle, Nick Best and Kevin Riolo has met on several occasions to fine tune its components. The majority of changes have occurred in **Levels 1 and 2**, whilst **Level 3** has been revamped to make it simpler for more referees to achieve this status. Our last meeting was on Thursday, 24th July, when we finally agreed on the changes to be made to each Level. These changes will be circularised to all providers for comment.

It is intended that certain sections will be trialed in 2004 whilst the changes to level 3 will come into effect in 2003. The complete new scheme should be completely operational by 2005.

The NRAS is the code's vehicle for education and training. There are still three major levels and 2 additional "elite performance" levels

Level 1.

❖ Beginner referee awards

1. Modified games referee.
2. International Laws referee
3. Combination 1& 2.
4. School referee (Yrs 9 & 10 - modified games; Yrs 11 & 12 - modified or international.)
5. Touch judge qualification.

These will be awarded after:

1. Self-study of core topics.
2. Work book exercises.
3. Seminar presentations.
4. Practical experience
5. On-field assessments/mentoring/final evaluation.

Level 2.

The major education and training course within the NRAS.

Awarded after successful completion of:

- ❖ Course self-study with Course handbook
- ❖ Seminar of face-to-face presentations
- ❖ Mentoring and final evaluation

Level 3.

An extension of Level 2 - completing the "full picture".

Gained through obtaining a total of 150 points, using a minimum of 100 points through Advanced Standing and a maximum of 50 points through Prior Learning.

Level 4.

Award for senior and experienced referees. Gained by appointment to 1st Grade ARL or now NRL matches, NSW/Queensland City V Country, International matches between Queensland/NSW Divisions and visiting Test playing nations, appointed by ARL.

Level 5.

Award for the most "elite" referees.

Gained by appointment to International (Test matches) or State of Origin matches.

Both the **Level 1** and **Level 2** courses have been streamlined for greater flexibility.

Kevin Riolo,
ARLRA Director.

(For and on behalf of the National Accreditation Committee)♣

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

BY NICK EUCLID (Chairman ARLRA)

What a distance we've come since the initial discussions of only a few years ago about the creation of a national association for referees! We now have in place what I consider to be the finest development course for refereeing coaching that we have ever seen and as we know the future of the refereeing standards in Australia will be only as good as the standard of our referee coaching.

As you all probably know, the ARL Foundation has expressed an interest in being involved in the ARLRA Referees' Coaching courses and I welcome this involvement. As the overseer of rugby league development in Australia, the Foundation has a definite role in ensuring that all the accreditation parts fit together and refereeing is one of those vital parts. The benefit that our members will see, and particularly our coaches, will be formal accreditation after all of the hard work that they have put in to achieve the coaching registration in the first place.

An exciting part of the Referees' Coaching Course has been the creation of the training videos by the various groups of Level 2 coaches. All involved should be very proud of their efforts and all referees throughout Australia (and overseas as well) should be grateful for the training videos coming out of the process. I also congratulate the Board on its decision to provide every registered coach with their own copy as well as every affiliated association.

We are at that stage of the season when the rewards for the year's hard work are about to be presented in the form of finals appointments. To those who will achieve their goals, congratulations, and to those who fall short this year then make next year your year and seek out those who can help you achieve the results you desire. Regardless of the appointment you receive, just remember that you are a crucial part of the game and for this year in particular, the *Year of the Official*, let's lift the bar of performance and show all league followers how good we really are.♣

AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLBOYS' RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS.

BY KEVIN RIOLO (ARLRA Director)

The Deputy Chairman of the ARLRA, **Nick Best** and I attended the Australian Secondary Schoolboys' Under 15's Years' Championships played at Cabramatta from 29th June to 4th July, 2003.

The Championships were hosted by NSWCHS, whilst the NSWRLRA was responsible for inviting and appointing referees. Two members of the NSWRL Referees' Advisory Board, **Peter Bungate** and **Max Dunn**, once again did a superb job in selecting referees and advising them on ways to improve their refereeing. Max and Peter were available each day of the Championships and all the referees benefited from their expertise.

Besides NSWRLRA Development Squad Junior Representative referees, there were also two referees from the CRLRA Development Squads, two Queensland representatives and one referee from Northern Territory. The ARLRA thanks the NSWRA for generously providing accommodation for the visiting referees. The standard of all the referees involved was of a high standard, and complemented the excellent football provided by the participating teams.

The facilities at Cabramatta were quite impressive and the Cabramatta R.L. Football Club is to be congratulated on the considerable work involved in hosting such a quality event.

The Under 18 Championships were played two weeks later in Darwin, hosted by the Northern Territory Rugby League, whilst the referees were invited and organised by the Northern Territory Referees' Association, led by their Secretary, **Glen Creamer**. **Richard Johnston** appointed all referees and provided each referee with match reports and videos of games. The Northern Territory provided accommodation for two referees from the NSWRLRA, one from CRLRA and one from Queensland RA. One member of the Northern Territory Association also refereed whilst the Touch Judges were all Northern Territory members.

The ARLRA has continued to develop a harmonious relationship with the ASSRL, and it is our intention to continue to involve as many referees from various states. This can only be possible by Development Funding being made available to Associations. Referees from the emerging states are then able to participate in Schoolboy Rugby League at the highest level.

Kevin Riolo,
ARLRA Director

NOTE: The next Board Meeting of the ARLRA will be held in October. Any issues or correspondence in relation to that meeting should be in the hands of the CEO no later than 7/10/03.

Introducing the Mackay and District Association

The Mackay and District Rugby League Referee's Association officiate Rugby League matches in the Mackay District Rugby League competition which is in the Northern Division of the Queensland Rugby League. Membership of the Association currently stands at 26.

There are 30 teams in four grades (under 17, under 19, reserve grade and A grade) who compete in the Mackay District Rugby League competition.

There are usually around 15 games in the Mackay District Rugby League competition and 30 games in the Mackay Junior Rugby League competition (mini u/7 to under 16) to be refereed each weekend.

The Mackay and District Rugby League Referees' Association whilst small in numbers handle all these games each weekend.

The Mackay and District Rugby League Referees' Association is fortunate to have a Chairman (**John Whelan**) who is in his 35th year as a Member of this Association. John or "WHELO" as he is known to his fellow referees is the passionate about the game of Rugby League. With "WHELO'S" strong and forward thinking leadership the Mackay and District Rugby League Referee's Association are financially sound and enjoy an excellent working relationship with local league Chairman **Mr Greg Sutherland** and the Mackay District Rugby League Board.

Also working tirelessly behind the scenes are the Associations Supervisors **Lou Bartley** (Seniors) and **David Drew** (Juniors).

Nobody can remember how long Louie has been a Member of the Mackay and District Rugby League Referees' Association (25 years plus), but Lou in his first year as Supervisor is working hard to encourage more people to take up refereeing and David Drew attends Mackay Junior Rugby League each weekend ensuring all games are refereed. This is a thankless job and David often cops abuse from irate Coaches. Behind the scenes David's wife Glenda willingly washes the referees' jumpers each week and also deserves a pat on the back for her commitment to Rugby League.

Undoubtedly the people who I have mentioned in this article are only one part of a cohesive Referees' Association we have here in Mackay. The people in my opinion who deserve praise are all of the men and women in this Association who referee Rugby League each weekend and cop the abuse from spectators, players and coaches. They show the commitment to the game of rugby league a lot of people do not wish to.

Paul Oliver
MDRLRA

Are you interested in a fun packed **Kangaroo Supporters' Tour** in November 2003 hosted by **Greg McCallum** and **Johnny "Chook" Raper**? Then visit the Specialist Tours Australia website at www.specialistaustralia.com or give them a call on (02) 9548 6222 for all the details.

A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

A Report on the Level 1 Referees' Coaching Course By Frank Samyia of Manly-Warringah Referees

On the weekend of May 9/10/11 I attended a Level 1 Referees Coaching course at the Narrabeen Academy of Sport. I represented the **Manly Warringah Referees Association**. The course was conducted by former 1st Grade Referee **David Jay** and other members of the NSWRLRA and CRLRA.

27 participants representing associations from around Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle were in attendance. There was a mixture of youth and experience but above all there was one underlying and common thread –

we all love Rugby League and in particular blowing the whistle!

The course began on Friday evening with a video session on a refereeing performance by former 1st Grade referee **Rob Alexander** in a Queensland representative game. Now most of us are used to one or maybe two people assessing our performance on any given weekend. Rob however had the opinions of all of us to deal with and would have felt like a spit roast at a smorgasboard with everyone lining up to take a slice. He also had to contend with the fact that he was a Queenslander (so we naturally started him off on all F's) so he was never going to get a lot of glowing feedback. What was the point of this? Why was coach Dave standing out the back with a beer in hand watching us go all over this guy like a pit bull on a poodle with a wiry grin on his face? What was coach Dave up to?

Following this, Dave introduced us to the idea of and the importance of networking. There is a push now for all associations to share their ideas and uniformity to be brought to all reporting and coaching systems. We all settled back for the rest of the evening to watch the Friday night game between Canterbury and the Sydney Roosters, won in the last minute 32 – 26 by the dogs. Significantly the video referee was **Mick Stone** and we took particular interest (and so did **Robert Finch** for that matter) in his performance as he was due to join us the following morning.

A few of the young guns decided to hit the Northern Beaches night life whilst many of us who had just finished work for the week were more than happy to kick back with a few beers to get to know each other. We had Day 1 of the 4th Test against the West Indies to entertain us courtesy of Fox Sports.

Saturday morning arrived and with it the arrival of **Mick Stone**, fresh from his video referee duties at Telstra Stadium the night before. The fines system, introduced by Dave also swung into action with participants being fined for such things as lateness to sessions, no name tags or if

you were christened with the name of **Tony Kelly**. Following breakfast, Mick addressed us as a group on the structure of the game and we were also fortunate to have Robert Finch speak to us on the roles of Referees' coaches in the game. These sessions were invaluable as it gave an insight



Michael Stone

into exactly what goes on at all levels and in particular the elite NRL level and the expectations that are now being placed on referees.

Following lunch, **Barrie Keenahan** gave an outline of the model used by the Illawarra Referees Association. This was interesting as it gave people a chance to examine and critically analyse a model already in place. The opportunity for all to contribute was encouraged not only throughout this session but throughout all sessions on the



Barrie Keenahan

weekend. The idea being that we learn best from each other.

The late afternoon saw the group step outside for a practical session which involved designing drills for referees with particular problems in their games. These ranged from concentration drills to touch judge positioning and using dogs to assist in training (well, you just had to be there to get that one!). **Peter Filmer** probably gained the most from it as he was able to pack down in the front row and take credit for winning one against the feed!

After dinner (and a special mention the those who looked after the catering – sensational all weekend!) the networking continued with a video session where we got to play the video referee – was it a 'try', 'no try' or 'refs call' (which I personally think is the video referees way of telling the referee “&#*@ you – make up you own mind on the way to 1st Division next week!”) . There was plenty of Saturday night football – 3 games back to back and most importantly, alcohol to go with it. A few more of the young guns decided to again explore Northern Beaches nightlife with mixed success.

David began our first session on Sunday morning with a video which can only be classified as nothing short of purely inspirational. It was designed around goal setting and it was concerned with the cyclist **Lance Armstrong** and his will to beat cancer and go on to win the Tour de France. This was the emotional climax of the weekend. There were 30 odd guys in the room and you could have heard a pin drop throughout its screening. I personally found it quite remarkable and immediately requested a copy of it so as kids at the college I teach at could have a chance to see what this guy went through and what he managed to achieve against all the odds.

We finally returned to our mate Rob Alexander from Friday night to see him do the second half of his game. The objective of the exercise was now quite clear. We were now armed with the skills to counsel the referee on their performance – good or bad instead of simply ripping them to shreds which had been the standard practice in the past. The days of smashing your clipboard over a referee's head or simply giving them a report full of negatives only and no positive feedback are now (and thankfully so because a few more referees might now stay on and hell we need 'em!) a thing of the past.

The seminar concluded with everyone having the opportunity to critically evaluate the course. Some participants comments included:-

This course gave me the thirst to learn about and contribute more to refereeing! And I love the thought of continuing on with it all. Well Done.

- A thoroughly enjoyable weekend. Excellent instruction and speakers. Very professionally organised. Thank You!
- Held the interest of all throughout the weekend.
- The opportunity to mix with members of other Associations was excellent.
- The information we received over the weekend will prove invaluable, taken back and implemented. Many Thanks.
- Course has definitely changed the way I viewed the Assessment Process. I shall definitely incorporate coaching analysis and recommendations.
- I think the whole weekend was excellent, the presentations and content was informative and educating, thankyou.

However, there were however questions that were left unanswered:

- Does all Penne pasta served on the Northern Beaches include fish?
- Was it one dog , two dogs or an army of dogs?
- Is Tony Kelly now financially destitute?
- Is it possible to score a hole in one from the bunker? Apparently so!
- Will George get a start in the trombone section of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra with his snoring efforts?
- Has Tony Kelly been fined today? If not, why not?

Many thanks to the NSWRLRA and the ARLRA for making this weekend possible. It would not have been a success, however, if it were not for the tireless efforts of David Jay who insists that we all network. Apparently this key criteria he learnt from Mick Stone. He presents

his material in a professional manner and this, mixed in with a good sense of humour and fun, made the weekend a terrific experience for all involved.

FRANK SAMYIA

Manly – Warringah Referees' Association

HOLLYWOOD HERE WE COME Video Best Sellers

The ARLRA now has 154 registered Level 1 referees' coaches and 52 Level 2 coaches. These coaches come from all over Australia and have had the great experience of participating in the courses designed and presented by Mick Stone, Richard Johnston David Jay and Barrie Keenahan. David in particular has put several new slants on the course since the first time it was presented in Goulburn two years ago.

Having progressed from primary course presenter for the Level 1 Course, Mick Stone then set his sights on the development of the Level 2 Course which has a much more practical content than the introductory one. The use of video as a prime teaching aid has come to the fore with the Level 2 candidates. By setting them tasks to critically review the performances of NRL referees and at the same time capture incidents in NRL games that can be used to teach and develop referees in all areas, Mick put a challenge to the Level 2 candidates to put into practice what they have learned in the Level 1 course. At the same time they had to develop a training aid that could be used by all referees.

The result to date has been three training videos, one produced by the NSWRL Level 2 coaches, one by the NSWRLRA Northern coaches and one by the Southern coaches. The board has decided that every ARLRA registered coach (ie Level 1 and Level 2) will receive their own copy of the videos and each Association will receive one as well. Distribution is currently being done and most coaches and Associations should have at least one of the videos.

Copies of the videos to date have also been sent to our referee friends in New Zealand, France and Great Britain so the people who have been involved in their production can now claim fame to having "produced" an international film. Who knows, Cannes might just be on the cards!

As well as the video productions, the networking processes so eagerly pursued during the courses have continued among the Level 2 Coaches with several groups already set up and meeting regularly. Combine this with Mick Stone's pearls of wisdom cast to all coaches on a regular basis and we have a system in place that people only dreamed of a couple of years ago.

Congratulations one and all on a great result thus far but let's keep the momentum going.