



## Incentivisation of Officiating

### Why are we doing this?

We have previously undertaken an incentive scheme to try and increase the number of games officiated. We have a provision still in the accounts for the Covid curtailed 2019/20 season (which we should look to action and pay out on), but we did not reintroduce a scheme in 2021/22. Conversations have been had about the 2021/22 scheme, and a scheme for this season, but this has been deferred on a number of occasions and we are now 7 weeks into the season (without a scheme in place and publicised).

As announced at both the Conference, we have clearly reiterated intention to introduce such a policy for the coming season. It is vital that this policy is agreed and communicated to all our officials ASAP if it is to be effective in achieving its aims, which are:

- Increase the absolute number of games we officiate as a Society
- Look to incentivise a proportionate increase in games from those who currently do less than 10 games (so are involved in the Society, but have a lot of excess capacity) – which continues to be a crunch area
- Reward those loyal officials who fulfil the bulk of our appointments each season.

The above aims are included because:

- As a Society, our performance by the RFU is arguably judged in terms of appointments made. This is reflected in the fact that International Ticket allocations are to be made by reference to this going forwards by the RFU. At a broader level, there is a simplistic argument that the more games we are covering, the more players we are enabling to have a game of rugby with a fully qualified official, or with someone helping to develop that official.
- Recruitment in the current environment is proving challenging. Our experience and statistics show that if we can retain officials into their 2<sup>nd</sup> season, they will tend to continue to stay with us going forward. Equally, if we have people doing the odd game here and there, we should be looking to find ways to get them to do more.
- A Society is indebted to those who undertake more than their fair share of games. We need to work to recognise, thank and reward those officials who do the most games for the Society as a routine, and not a somewhat sporadic process that it currently is.

### Position in relation to 2021-22 season

It has been asked by a couple of individuals what the situation is for last season. The Society at no point announced an incentive scheme, and on this basis I propose that we do not apply one. An incentive scheme announced once the season has ended cannot, by definition, be an incentive. As such, creating one now would not be achieving what was intended, but instead would arguably be a poor use of our monies paid by member clubs. Instead, I would propose that (1) we provide a tankard to all officials who officiated 50 or more appointments last season in recognition of their achievement, to be presented at the dinner (or November Central Meeting), and (2) put all those officials who achieved 40 or more appointments last season into a draw for 2 pairs of tickets to one of the Internationals (so two separate winners). The draw shall be undertaken at the Annual Dinner.



All those who have achieved (1) and/or (2) should also be emailed by the President of the Society acknowledging their contribution, and the above recognition, to ensure that they are aware that the Society does note and acknowledge their significant contributions.

Game data shall be based on WTR – a manual adjustment for the RPNS7s days (and Bournemouth, if not on the system) may be required – with one tournament day being equivalent to an appointment.

### Proposed scheme for 2022-23 season

To achieve the above aims, I am proposing that as a Management Committee and Society we adopt the following:

From 1 August 2022 until 31 July 2023, the Society will incentivise officials by providing the following, in the form of a voucher for the LSRFUR Gilbert Shop, or money off against the Society Annual Dinner, or the Regional Dinners. For the purposes of this, officiating means being appointed to a game/tournament on WTR which then occurs with a tournament day being classed as an appointment.

- £10 for officiating 10-14 appointments
- £15 for officiating 15-19 appointments
- £20 for officiating 20-24 appointments
- An additional £5 for each 5 appointments more in line with the above pattern, with no upper limit/cap

**In addition, where an official who officiated less than 10 games last season referees 10 or more games this season, an additional £10 shall be payable.**

For those referees who officiate 50 or more games in a season, they shall be presented with a tankard during the following season in recognition of their achievement

Finally, the Society shall provide a pair of tickets to an Autumn International / 6 Nations game / Premiership Rugby Final:

- The two referees who referee the highest number of appointments
- The two match observers/coaches who watch the highest number of appointments
- Two pairs, drawn at random, for all officials who officiate 35 or more appointments
- One pair, drawn at random, for all officials who officiate 20 or more appointments (draw to include those who officiate 35+)



## Intended impact

The differential impact of the above scheme that is intended is as follows:

- Targeting the large number of officials we have who referee less than 10 games (and in many cases 5) to push them to get up to 10 games – this is a nationwide issue, and with a bit of a push getting these officials out will help us cover the large (15% at the time of writing) games that occur without a Society referee.
- Greater differential rewards compared to previous seasons to push people to officiate to the next milestone.
- Recognising our greatest contributors, and specifically recognising MOs/coaches who are vital to our Society.
- Giving those who are officiating a significant number of games the recognition deserved by entering into a prize draw.

## Costs

Previous incentive schemes have been costed at £6k, rising to £13k if successful. The above scheme's costs are hard to fully nail down, but on the basis of around 8,000 appointments last year, and noting that most people will not be at the bottom of the band they are getting incentivised at, the basic scheme likely should cost in the region of £6,000. The incentives for low number referees should cost no more than £1,000 (that would assume changing the behaviours of 100 officials, which is a grossly optimistic figure). The production of tankards should cost less than £1,000, and the 6 pairs of tickets should cost circa £1,500 (and it is noted that this should be a reallocation of tickets the Society currently uses for recognition anyway, meaning no overall cost).

Consequently, the scheme should cost us no more than £10,000 to operate.

## Conclusion

I hope that the Management Committee will support me in the implementation and publicising of this at the earliest possible opportunity.

Peter Coulthard, General Secretary  
24 October 2022

**Approved by Management Committee as amended on 24/10/2022**