



CRRS pre-season meeting



**26th July 2026
at Hayle RFC**



Meeting Agenda

12:30 to 15:00

1. Introduction

1. 2026/27 season & law changes

1. Key Referee Skills

a. Players and referees best friend – advantage

Will W

b. Speeding up the game – the breakdown

Simon T

c. Managing the match – communication

James M-W

2. Recruitment, retention Match officials “pathways”

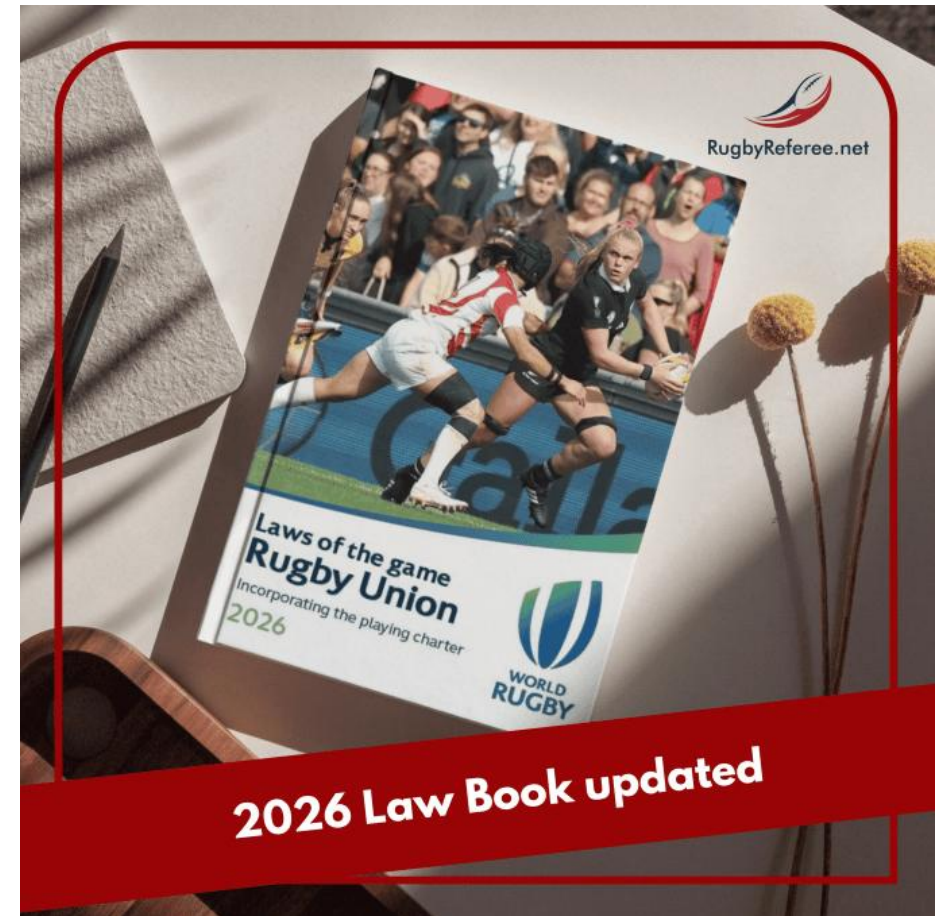
1. Q&A

CRRS Season 2026/27

- We deliver a service to rugby in Cornwall
- “the best available referee competent to handle the match”
- Trained, developed, and reviewed referees
- What do you want out of the season ?
- How can CRRS help you achieve that ?

Law Changes – an easier season than last few !

1. Brake foot at scrum becomes full law
2. Community tackle height limits added to law (RFU base of the sternum)
3. Some rare in-goal restarts changed from 22DOs to try-line drop outs for consistency
4. Newer GLTs (60 second conversions, protect the 9, non-contested not-straight lineouts) remain for another year before decisions are made
5. Plus 50+ minor wording amends to make it easier to read laws, tidy up errors/omissions, or remove inconsistencies
6. Elite only Global Law Trials to law
 - restrictions on water carriers
 - role of the TMO (law trial since 2000!)
 - 20min red card replacement.



Law changes : Consistency of in-goal restarts (TLDOs)

Goal/try line drop out (2021) specific scenarios when attack take the ball into in-goal but don't score :

1. ball held up,
2. knock forward in in-goal and
3. ball kicked into in-goal and grounded there.

A few rare scenarios were still 22DOs, NOW TLDOs :

1. ball carrier tackled into touch in goal before scoring
2. simultaneous grounding with the touch-in-goal or dead ball lines, that would have been a 22DO. That now becomes a TLDO.
3. A charge down from the field of play which goes dead through in-goal was never actually covered in the Laws of the game. It was treated the same as a tactical kick which went dead (ie a 22DO). Now it's a TLDO.

Summary

TLDO => attacker carries/plays/kicks the ball into in-goal, doesn't score, and it becomes dead in in-goal

22DO => kicks from field of play which go dead through in-goal (with scrum option from where kicked) or for failed PKs/DGs which go dead or are grounded (no change)

5m attacking scrum => Defenders take back into own in-goal and it doesn't come out (no change)

Key Referee Skills

- a. Players' and referees' best friend – Advantage Will W
- a. Speeding up the game – The Breakdown Simon T
- a. Managing the match – Effective Communication James M-W

Key Referee Skills

Players' and referees' best friend – Advantage

Will W



In groups, come up with your definition of advantage and how is advantage used?

Definition

“A **clear and real** tactical or territorial benefit arising after an infringement by the opposition”

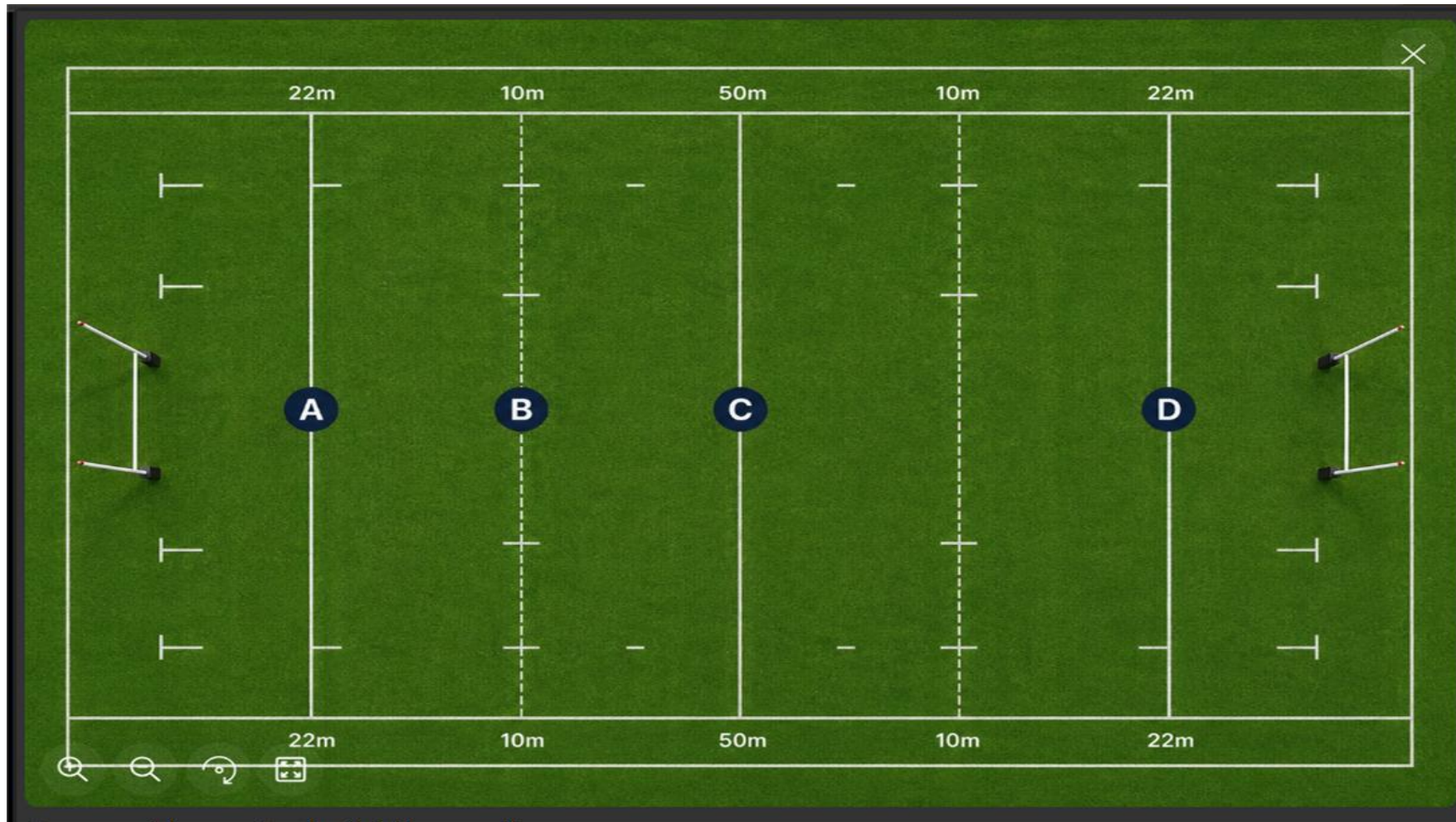
Principle

If a team gains an advantage following an infringement, the referee may allow play to continue in an effort to **keep the game flowing**.

Interpretation

To be used when there is a **clear and real** opportunity to score and **keep the game flowing**

Scenarios



Key Referee Skills

Speeding up the game – The Breakdown

Simon T



Key Referee Skills

Speeding up the game – The Breakdown

1 Tackle

Simon T

Breakdown Checklist Questions 1 (chronological)

Has a tackle been made – on ground & held

Has tackler (and/or tackle assist) released ?

Has tackler / assist rolled and in which direction ?

If back on feet, has tackler released (clear arms raise) and come through the “gate” ?

Who arrives next – attacking jackler or defending ‘sealer’ ?

Has the jackler won the ball (legally) before a ruck has formed ?

Has the tackled player released the ball ?

Key Referee Skills

Speeding up the game – The Breakdown

2 Ruck

Simon T

Breakdown Checklist Questions 2 (chronological)

Are the arriving players staying on their feet ?

Are they joining at back foot ?

Are they counter rucking ?

Has the contest been won / lost ?

Are defenders close in and in wider positions onside ?

Have you moved out wider if the contest is over ?

Key Referee Skills

Speeding up the game – The Breakdown 3 Play Away

Simon T

Breakdown Checklist Questions 3 (chronological)

Are non-ruck players still onside ?

Where are you now positioned and what can you see ?

Game Management Considerations

Have you established your standards and applied them consistently ?

Are you using colour / number and short preventative sentences ?

Could you offer advantage – when in match and where on pitch ?

Are any trends emerging ?

Key Referee Skills

Managing the match – Effective Communication James M-W



Scenario 1 – Managing Players During Escalating Physicality

Situation

It is the 25th minute of a closely contested match. The breakdown has become increasingly competitive, with players arriving aggressively. You've awarded three penalties in the last eight minutes—two against Blue and one against Red.

Following another penalty against Blue for not releasing, two Blue forwards complain loudly:

“They’re doing exactly the same thing, ref!”

The next breakdown looks as though it could easily boil over.

Discussion Points

What communication could you use immediately after the penalty?

Do you speak only to the offending player or to the whole team?

Is this a moment for preventative communication before play restarts?

Would you involve the captain?

How does your tone affect player buy-in?

Scenario 2 – Captain Challenges Your Consistency

Situation

With 15 minutes remaining, the Red captain approaches respectfully.

“Ref can I have a word? I think the offside line is being managed differently at each end.”

You believe you’ve been consistent, but you recognise the captain’s concern is genuine.

Discussion Points

Do you stop to explain or keep the conversation brief?

What language keeps the discussion constructive?

How much explanation is appropriate?

How can you acknowledge the captain without undermining your authority?

When does a respectful conversation become dissent?

Scenario 3 – Coach Behaviour Affecting the Match

Situation

The home coach has been questioning decisions throughout the first half. Comments include:

“That’s never a penalty.”

“You’ve missed another one.”

The comments are becoming louder, and players have started looking towards the technical area after decisions.

The behaviour hasn’t become abusive but is beginning to influence the atmosphere.

Discussion Points

Should you address the coach immediately?

Who should communicate with the coach?

What options are available within your competition regulations?

How do you remain calm without appearing weak?

At what point does behaviour require formal intervention?

Scenario 4 – A Message Sent to the Referee

Situation

At half-time, an appointed Match Day Manager approaches you. They say:

“The home club chairman has asked me to tell you that several supporters think you’re favouring the away side.”

The Match Day Manager adds:

“I thought you should know.”

You still have 40 minutes to referee.

Discussion Points

Should this message change anything about your approach?

How do you respond to the Match Day Manager?

Should you seek further information?

How do you avoid becoming distracted?

Would you mention this in your post-match report?

Scenario 5 – Captain and Coach Sending Mixed Messages

Situation

The away team is trailing by five points with ten minutes remaining. The captain asks:

“Can you keep an eye on their sealing off at the breakdown?”

At the next stoppage, the coach shouts:

“Ref! Listen to your captain—they’re cheating!”

Players begin echoing the coach’s comments.

The atmosphere is becoming tense.

Discussion Points

How do you separate legitimate captain communication from inappropriate coach behaviour?

What message do you give the captain?

How do you respond to the coach?

Is preventative communication enough, or does stronger action become necessary?

How can your communication calm the final stages of the game?

“Which communication skills have the greatest impact on match management?”

Thoughts...

Preventative communication

Active listening

Clear, concise language

Tone and respect

Body language

Timing

Empathy

Consistency

Confidence without arrogance

Using captains effectively

Knowing when communication becomes management

Food for thought...

“Good referees know the Laws. Great referees know how to communicate the Laws in a way that keeps 30 players playing rugby.”

Recruitment & Retention, Development Pathways

- We are Volunteers – priorities are family, self, work, and then rugby
- Recruit a friend / ex-team-mate
- Talent spot and feedback to Committee
- Ready2Ref courses with RFU and CRFU
- Training, Mentoring, & Development to meet your ambitions
- Dealing with Match Official Abuse - #1 reason refs stop

Close

- Monthly Training Meetings every 3rd Tuesday of the month
 - Attendance low
 - Different day ?
 - Venues ?
 - Online ?
- Safe journey home

