



Code of Conduct and Protocols for  
Clubs, Coaches, Players and Match Officials

Code of Conduct

## **Code of Conduct for Clubs, Coaches, Players and Match Officials**

All Persons:-

1. must ensure that the Game is played and conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour and must acknowledge that it is not sufficient to rely solely upon the match officials to maintain those principles;
2. shall co-operate in ensuring that the spirit of the Laws of the Game is upheld. Clubs shall refrain from selecting players guilty of foul play;
3. shall not repeatedly breach the Laws of the Game;
4. shall accept and observe the authority and decisions of referees, assistant referees, other match officials and all rugby disciplinary bodies, subject to the International Rugby Board's Regulation 17 (Illegal and/or Foul Play and Misconduct);
5. shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which a referee or assistant referee handled a match;
6. shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which Scottish Rugby handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the Bye-Laws, Rules and Regulations, or Laws of the Game;
7. shall not engage in any conduct or any activity on or off the field that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of a match, tour, tournament or series of matches (including, but not limited to, the supply of information in relation to the Game, directly or indirectly, to bookmakers) or in the integrity and good character of any person;
8. shall promote the reputation of the Game and take all possible steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute;
9. shall not commit a doping offence as defined in IRB Regulation 21 (Anti-Doping);
10. shall not abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee, assistant referee or other match official, whether on or off the field of play;
11. shall not use foul or abusive language or gestures towards referees, assistant referees or other match officials, players or team personnel or spectators;
12. shall not do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other person on the ground of religion, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex or sexual orientation.
13. shall not do anything which adversely affects the Game of Rugby Football, Scottish Rugby, any member club or Union or any commercial partner of the Game.

Every person is under an obligation to comply with this Code of Conduct.

Scottish Rugby is under an obligation to adopt procedures to monitor compliance with and impose sanctions for breaches of the Code of Conduct by persons under its jurisdiction.

For breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Discipline Panel of Scottish Rugby may impose such penalties as it deems appropriate, subject to the list of recommended sanctions published in the Rules of Disciplinary Procedures, copies of which are with the clubs.

## Protocol for Match Officials

The following protocols have been drawn up to ensure that rugby in Scotland receives the best service possible from match officials at all levels.

Each match official agrees that:-

1. he will contact the home club at least 48 hours before a match should the referees' secretary of that club fail to make contact.
2. he will make every effort to be fit to act as a match official. If there is any doubt, he should not undertake any match appointments until he is fully recovered.
3. If verbal abuse from a coach is such that the referee requires to take action, he should formally caution the coach and require him to leave the playing enclosure. This should be done without brandishing a card. The referee will then discuss the incident with his local RRDM as soon as possible and if required will send a report (appendix 1) to Murrayfield. If a coach is reported on three occasions in one season, he will appear before Scottish Rugby's Discipline Panel. However, if the abuse is such that the referee feels threatened, or in other serious cases, Scottish Rugby shall have the power to call the coach before the Discipline Panel at any time.
4. he will contact the Scottish Rugby results line straight after the match to confirm the score of Championship matches.
5. he will complete the official score card, yellow and red card forms (if appropriate) and hospitality card straight after the match and return the documentation to the Scottish Rugby to arrive at Murrayfield within 48 hours of completion of the match.
6. he conducts himself in an orderly and respectable manner, and he maintains a tidy appearance whilst representing Scottish Rugby and/or his society.
7. he makes every effort to attend after match functions.
8. he keeps Scottish Rugby refereeing department and his society regularly informed of any change to his contact details.
9. he does not engage in conduct, behaviour or practices which may bring the Scottish Rugby or the game of rugby football into disrepute.

## Protocols for Clubs, Coaches and Players

1. Home clubs are responsible for notifying match officials of the date, venue, kick-off time and team colours at least 72 hours before the game. Messages left on voicemail are not acceptable as confirmation - contact must be made with officials. **Failure to notify a match official of a postponement prior to his arrival at the ground may result in the home club having to reimburse the referee's travel costs.**
2. Home clubs are responsible for notifying visiting clubs of the date, venue, kick-off time and team colours at least 72 hours before the game. Visiting clubs also should be aware of the need to alert the opposition of any change in colours.
3. Clubs are responsible for the safety and well being of match officials during the time they are at the club in question. Where possible, a referee liaison officer should be appointed by the home club.
4. Clubs will submit their team sheet including replacements to the match officials at least 30 minutes before kick-off indicating the replacement front-row players. Changes may be made up to kick-off time if a player is injured during warm-up
5. Clubs will ensure that technical areas are in place and the pitch is roped off. Both technical areas must be on the same side of the pitch either side of the halfway line. (A sample layout is shown below). A maximum of 6 per team will be permitted within the technical area at any one time: 2 x coaching staff, 2 x medical staff and 2 x water carriers. Reserves and other team staff must remain in a designated area outside the playing enclosure.
6. Premier 1-3 clubs will appoint a fourth official to all home games to control the technical areas and rolling substitutions. A nominated home club official or the appointed home touch judge for all other games will be responsible for controlling the technical areas and rolling substitutions.
7. Players may not receive local anaesthetic on match day unless for suturing of bleeding wounds or for dental treatment administered by an appropriately qualified medical or dental practitioner.
8. Coaching staff must remain within the confines of the technical area at all times during play. Medical staff and water carriers must abide by the Protocols for Persons entering the Playing Area. (below).
9. Coaches are encouraged to comment on the performance of the match officials by completing the "Report on Referee" form (Appendix 2). Referees will hand out a form to each club's coach. Clubs can request a supply of report cards from Scottish Rugby's Referee Manager at Murrayfield.
10. If coaches, players or club personnel wish to complain about the behaviour of match officials, the Complaint on Behaviour of Match Officials form (Appendix 3) should be completed and returned to Murrayfield for the attention of the Referee Manager.
11. After the match, coaches and players must refrain from discussing contentious issues emanating from the game with match officials until at least 20 minutes after the final whistle. Thereafter all participants in the match are encouraged to discuss aspects of the game in particular the coach/captain/referee/assistant referees/referee coach.
12. Clubs are requested to provide the referee with a DVD of the game (if available). This will assist with match official development and help identify any concern a club coach may have regarding the referees performance on the day.

## Protocols for Persons entering the Playing Area

1. Up to two medical staff are permitted to enter the playing area at any time to attend to injured players. They must return to the technical area once they have completed the treatment of an injured player.
2. Up to two water carriers are permitted to enter the playing area to provide water.
3. Water will be permitted to be taken during breaks in play (not during penalty kicks) including when tries have been scored but not in view or distracting to the goal kicker. Water carriers must return to the technical area after players have taken water and before the referee restarts play.
4. At all other times, players must go to their designated technical zone to take water.
5. Bottles must not be thrown on and off the pitch.

## TECHNICAL ZONE SAMPLE LAYOUT



# Appendix 1

## REFEREE ABUSE INCIDENT REPORT

Referees Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Fixture: \_\_\_\_\_

v \_\_\_\_\_

Persons responsible for abuse: (Please tick)

Player

Coach

Club Official

Spectator

Name(s) (if known) and Club/Team of person(s) responsible for abuse:

---

---

List names and club/team of any witnesses to the incident:

---

---

Nature of Abuse e.g. (Please tick)

Physical

Verbal

Other

Describe details of the incident

---

---

---

---

Referees signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please ensure you contact your local RRDM as soon as possible after the incident)

Action:

1. Report sighted by RRDM: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (name – print)

2. Action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. Reported to Union: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

## Appendix 2



### REPORT ON REFEREE

Referees Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Society: \_\_\_\_\_

Game: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) v \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please put a X in one of the columns marked A, B, C, and D following the guide - A = Very Good B = Good C = Average D = Poor

	A	B	C	D	QUALIFYING COMMENTS
Management of pre / post match events					
Used all opportunities to play advantage					
Laws: Knowledge and application					
Management of foul and negative play					
Assertive but not aggressive or arrogant					
Balance—preventative/punitive for control of the game					
Kept up with play throughout the game					
Referee's mobility during the game					
Communications: voice, whistle and signals					
Engagement procedure at the scrum					
Players bound correctly and offside lines managed					
Ensured there was a fair contest for the ball at scrum					
Maintained gaps in lineout					
Ensured a fair contest for the ball at lineout					
The offside lines were controlled					
Ensured tackler and tackled player took the correct action					
Ensured players joined tackle correctly and stayed on their feet					
Players joined the maul / ruck correctly					

How would you rate the referees' performance today? Very Good  Good  Average  Poor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Club: \_\_\_\_\_ Position in Club: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Print**

## Appendix 3

### Complaint on Behaviour of Match Officials

Club/Coach/Player: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Fixture: \_\_\_\_\_ v \_\_\_\_\_

Persons being reported (please tick)

Referee  Assistant Referee  Referee Coach  Fourth Official

Name(s) (if known) and Society of person(s) responsible for complaint:

---

---

List names and club/team of any witnesses to the incident:

---

---

Nature of Complaint e.g. (Please tick)

Physical  Verbal  Other

Describe details of the incident

---

---

---

---

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please ensure you contact the Referees Manager at Murrayfield as soon as possible after the incident)

Action:

1. Report sighted by RM: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (name – print)

4. Action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. Reported to relevant Society/RRDM: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)