



NEW SOUTH WALES RUGBY LEAGUE REFEREES' ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2014 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Conference was opened by Paul Simpkins, Chairman of the Association stating that the changes in the game are affecting the direction the NSWRLRA should be taking. To this end, feedback from the District Associations is important. He said he has a concern for touching base with former Graded Members who could assist our new recruits. He has a concern for the drop in the level of resilience of people stating that we need to coach them, show concern for their welfare and look after the mental health of referees in terms of the game. He wished all present a very successful and fruitful two days.

David Trodden .. CEO , NSWRL.

Stated that the culture of the organisation needs the input from former members and there is a need to ensure the culture is perpetuated. He drew attention to changes at the NSWRL that included new appointments ... Mr Glen Jackson, Executive Journalist; B.J.Mather, Head of Football; David Nissen, Manager- Shared Services; Laurie Daley as Coach of the NSW Blues; There are changes to the State Cup... a Grand Final Day then a curtain raiser to the 1st Grade Grand Final playing the winner of the Qld State Cup. He said there had been a five-fold increase in funding for this competition and spoke of Club access to Statistical programmes .He drew attention to the new rules and said that everyone is bound by the changes.

Dirk Melton.. General Manager of Strategy and Community Affairs, NSWRL.

Spoke about the Strategic Plan developed during 2013. He said there is a need to recognise that Rugby League is a business and a sport that is a community sport. Rugby League has developed because of the essence of solidarity. He posed the question: What is the Role of the NSWRL? He said that entertainment and referees are a vital part of it. He asked, will referees evolve with the game over the next 5-10 years? In driving change, history and heritage are important and to be respected. It is important to address these issues. Referees play a huge role in the community development. Referees are respected and an integral part of the game in the same way as Junior League needs support and respect.

THE NSWRL STRATEGIC PLAN

Guiding Principles

Understand R.L Value Chain	Align to NRL Game Plan	Reduce Organisation Complexity
Determine the primary values Determine the secondary components within the chain.	Vision and Mission Values Objectives/Pillars K.P.I's	Clear strategic intent Clear organisational structure and roles. Real and pragmatic game Integration.

Association's Direction

NSWRLRA System

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Values Chain



QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

You must have a strategy and people with the right skills to implement it. The proof of the pudding in a Management Strategy is in its successful implementation.

For 2014 the major issues to be addressed are :-

- Merger negotiations to continue with the CRL
- Negotiations with NSW Leagues Club re the utilisation of the funds from its sale .
- Membership of the ARL Commission... Explore future merger/interaction with the NRL
- The Junior League Association now has a say in the administration of Rugby League via representation on the General Committee of the NSWRL.
- Focus on the High Performance Centre and Community Involvement.
- A five fold increase in Funding for the NSW Cup
- A NSWRL Grand Final Day on the Sunday prior to the NRL Grand Final with a Curtain Raiser to be played between the NSW Cup Premiers and the QLD State Cup Premiers.

A Question Time followed. Dirk said to presume that problems presented will be addressed. Within the Association identify the top five issues and present them

Dennis Spagarino “ Advantage Play and Off-Side Law”

Demonstration given and a folder issued to every Association including Trainer's Notes and a USB with the Power Point Presentation on it. Coaching Co-ordinator to make use of the resource

Frank Leonard. “ Retention of Referees... Some Strategies”

Power Point Presentation that addressed the reasons for referee exits and 25 possible strategies that can be considered to arrest the drift away from the game. Copy of the presentation was sent to all Association Secretaries.

Jimmy Oliveira .. Sponsorship, Grants, Affiliation and Fees, Other Finance Issue

“The Good Guys” Sponsorship is progressing well. Seven Associations sponsored by twelve stores for a total of \$88,000. The Sponsorship Agreement developed for St George and University Cup Associations covering 2014-16 totalling \$18,000 was distributed to all Treasurers present together with three gear suppliers friendly logos of THE GOOD GUYS to assist affiliates who are negotiating and in the process of ordering gear for season 2014.

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Administration and Coaching & Development Grants, increased by 3% in 2013, have been brought further forward and available from the 24th February., the day after the Conference at which attendance is a criteria in order to qualify for the Grants. The Administration Grant = \$1,545 + GST if the District Association is registered on the NRL Database. Contact Veronica Vella by e-mail on yvella@nrl.com.au ; Mobile 0429 087 669 or Cameron O'Riordan on coriordan@nrl.com.au; Mobile 0447 451 032 for assistance with on-line registration. Cameron has created a landing page on the NSWRLRA website www.nswrlra.leaguenet.com.au where all Associations can click on to the specific link for their Association in order to register their members.

The C&D Grant for season 2014 provided is as follows, provided Associations are registered-

Top Tier = \$3605 + GST

Middle Tier = \$2575 + GST

Dual Affiliates = \$1545 + GST

Since 2012 the NSWRLRA has made every effort to assist the Affiliated Associations cash flow situations by bringing Grant payments forward, securing a 3% increase in Grant funding and only invoicing Affiliates for Golf Day attendance for the previous year(s). Hence the 2012/13 Golf Day Invoices will be forwarded for payments in the near future.

Contact Details for all Treasurers was distributed. The Affiliated Associations' Fee for 2014 is \$20.

The NSWRLRA recently established a JAYCAR account where its products and services can be purchased at cost price by members and District Associations . For more details contact George Jankowski by e-mail at marketing@nswrlra.asn.au; Mobile 0401 672 259.

Brad Levy... NRL Education

Provided information on Officiating Staff, Laws and Codes. Doug Keen will have Law Books, Codes of Conduct, Safeplay Code, Code of Conduct Poster, NRL Referee Provider Guide, NRL Education Guide, 2014 Education Courses available.

2014 Referee Resources are available at www.nrl.com.

In 2014 a Provider Course will be conducted, Budgetary Items costing \$470,000 include Television Commercials on "Playng the Game" and "Refereeing". that will go to every Association and can be played on Association web-sites.

Steve Clark- Pathways

Has been in place for a long time. Exists from grass roots to the NRL. New recruits need to know how to get to different levels i.e District – Junior Reps- National 12,15,18 Championships- Graded Squad- NRL. Since 2006 all Referees who went through the NRL Academy became Full-time or Part-time NRL referees.

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Peter Filmer . Assessment of Referees

Referred to Assessment of referees in the past and compared it to the present where technology has opened up new possibilities if used positively. Currently, referees are better prepared to progress up the Pathways to NRL. He promoted the culture of positive coaching as opposed to a negative approach ---errors to be discussed with Coaches. The move has been from subjectivity to objectivity in assessing referee performance.

DISTRICT ASSOCIATION FEEDBACK AND BEST PRACTICE

Balmain.. Scott Todd . Trial of Under 13 referees because of female players who stopped playing at age 12. How do we keep them in the game? 15 recruited for the Trial. Mentors on every game. All performed very strongly. One refereed a Mod Grand Final. Recommended. Great source of recruitment.

Canterbury.. George Elias Younger referees were not turning up to grounds on time and slack in dress. Seminar conducted in 2013 where expectations were outlined. Those who didn't attend were denied appointments unless they attended. Every referee attended. Suspensions followed for three who were late to games or didn't honour the Dress Code. Referees are now more committed and display a better attitude to refereeing. The Exchange Program is now big and referees look forward to a trip to either N.Z or Tasmania.

South Sydney.. Brett Davies Set out to shield Junior Referees from the politics at Senior Meetings by conducting Junior Meeting prior to. Coaching Sessions conducted three times per year. Junior referees are much happier and expected to return in 2014. Generation Y seem to be phone shy so SMS used and it works well.

Newcastle.. Tom Aylett . Evaluated sponsorship. Survey conducted on the support of "The Good Guys" by Association members. 60 responses received. In 2011-12 members spent \$70,000 with the store. "The Good Guys" spend \$30,000 with the Association and this led to the store re signing the agreement. To maintain the State-wide sponsorship Associations should be aware of member support. Remember "Referees are Good Guys".

Parramatta .. Andrew Essey . Improved the flow of Communication through an update of the web-site making it interactive. There is a Members Section which allows for registration for Social Functions, Appointments are Up-loaded. This improves the flow of information. There is also a capability for members to make payments for functions , on-line.

30 referees recruited in 2013, 10 lost. 6 new recruits for 2014 thus far, hoping for another 15. Retention has improved due to the efforts of the Director responsible.

Our best practice is the strengthened relationship with the Junior League.

Canberra .. David Adams Recruitment in conjunction with Junior League.. Sent letters to every registered 15- 1st grade year old players asking them to consider maintaining their involvement in the game by refereeing.. Some 1,060 letters sent. These people are fit, know the game and the culture.

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Best Practice.. Our relationships with the Junior League .

Cronulla.. Bryan Gilchrist. Adapting to the On-Line System was challenging. Retention is not an issue. Reporting system changed from subjective to objective system and is outstanding. Mentor/mini System introduced where each Junior Representative Squad referee looked after three new recruits. Experienced Touch Judges were appointed to games where developing referees were officiating in the centre. Great assistance being received from Jared Maxwell. Exchange programme with Brisbane introduced where one developing and one champion referee travels to Brisbane. Facebook used for communication. Best Practice ??? Many areas...Initial Coaching, Leadership from the front table are the possible stand outs. .Succession Planning is in place.

Manly-Warringah..Shane Charman Retention is an issue. Strategies employed to arrest the exit included :- Bringing fun back into refereeing through Bowling Night, Pizza Night, Go-Karting, Laser Tag Night, all funded by the Association. The result is that 90% of the referees will return in 2014. Best practice ?.. Coaching and Assessment.

St George.. John Robinson. Signed with "The Good Guys" . Four new sponsors signed. Meeting attendances showed little improvement, Saturday Mentor Committee formed that coached and assessed Junior referees. Same Committee met on Sunday evenings and made recommendations re appointments to the Advisory Board. Best Practice ? Continued improvement of coaches, assessors and mentors.

Penrith ..Sarah Harpley Developed a Strategic Plan. Began at Board Meeting then included Life Members and Active Members. One member, John Nunatella had significant experience in developing such plans. Once developed it went to a "Plan On a Page" to be developed by every Director....makes succession much smoother . Quarterly reviews of the Strategic Management Plan to be undertaken in 2014 to assess Director performance. Best Practice ? Relationship with Junior League where we have a delegate on the Board.

University Cup.. Glen Reece Numbers are always an issue. The number of divisions increased to two for 2014 and former referees are returning to assist. Sponsorship has been shared with St George. The exposure is good for The Good Guys as we play a City v Country game. Best Practice? Our relationship with the NSWRL.

Central Coast.. Graeme Priest Recruitment and retention led by Shayne Hayne has been very successful. Use made of Rebel Sports, newspapers, Registration Days for recruitment. Retention of referees is strong but some losses occurred during 2013.

Western Suburbs.. Col White. New Communication Gear purchased. Formed a Junior Association. Took up "The Good Guys" sponsorship. Retention is quite good. 17 new recruits in 2013 with a loss of 3. Best Practice? Buddy System.

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North Sydney.. Michael Quaily. Employed the Yapalong Communication Gear. Developing the history of the Association on the Web-Site. Now back to 1964.

Best Practice? Video Review of games.

Illawarra .. Andrew Astill. Training programme changed to some fitness sessions then rotation through coaching and skills sessions. Mentors being paid in recognition of their services. Facebook Page set up and using it more.

Best Practice? Judiciary Reports to an Executive Member for monitoring and sent back if not satisfactory. Result is a reduction in the appearance of referees before the Judiciary.

Frank Leonard.... Leadership Issues

- Willingness of members to accept a nomination or a leadership position. Factors such as experience , credibility with the membership, personality, commitment and time available should all be considered. Fill ins don't always work. Succession Planning should be on-going.
- Entrenched Executive. . Can arise out of unwillingness of others to stand or reflects cliques, staleness, member satisfaction/ dissatisfaction or linked to dot point above.
- Aloofness, limited communication with membership nor interest shown in them. Can be addressed at Social Functions, through Social Media, Attendance at Games.
- Poorly organised, poor time management skills. A she'll be right attitude.
- Unwillingness to listen, collaborate and consult.
- Need for openness, honesty and transparency.
- Respect for the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and the Constitution.

VIDEO : TED TALKS .. Roselinde Torres "What It Takes To Be A Great Leader"

Research shows that too many leaders are relying on traditional practices and outdated performance criteria.

Questions Posed : i) Where are you looking to anticipate the next change? Who are you with? What are you reading?

ii) What is your capacity to develop relationships with people of diverse culture, background, sex, age, experience, education, achievements?

iii) Are you courageous enough to abandon practice that has been successful in the past? Dare to be different? Build emotional stamina to cope with criticism of new ideas, new approaches?

The Great Leaders of the 21st Century are people preparing themselves for the realities of today and the unknown possibilities of tomorrow.

A handout of quotes on Leadership was distributed.

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SUNDAY 23RD FEBRUARY.. PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES ONLY

Brett Duprez .. Gow Gates Insurance Company

Gow Gates is an Australian owned company and has been with Junior League since 1996. Brett gave an outline of the Cover available:- Structures of Benefits..(Most complaints are re medical Expenses since Government legislation prevents Insurance Companies providing cover for anything that is covered by Medicare.); Loss of Income; Public and Products Liability.

Professional Indemnity

Covers a breach of duty within Rugby League. Claims must be made during the period of Insurance. There is a 3 Years Statute of limitations. The expectation is that our Junior leagues would be made aware and notify the referees' Association involved. Maximum Claim is \$10 million.

Referee Exposure.

Among the four duties of referees the two most important are:-

- i) A duty to protect participants
- ii) A duty to anticipate reasonable foreseeable dangers.

Question :- Can a Minor be sued? Response:- The Association would be sued as a Minor has no money. N.B Ground inspections at the beginning of the day are a MUST. May have to change the decision during the day if the weather changes.

Tony Danks... Social Media Policy NSWRLRA Policy distributed, explained and consequences of breaches outlined. Reference to two cases of abuse made. District Associations urged to be vigilant and act on breaches.

Frank Leonard.. SWOT Analysis conducted in 2010 , Revisited. Introduced as a caution that the development of a Strategic Management Plan may become mandatory for all Clubs and Associations. Interaction occurred resulting in some modifications to the Weaknesses and Threats sections which were then forwarded to Associations. These will be utilised in the development of the SMP for the NSWRLRA Inc.

Frank Leonard, Tony Danks..Possible Additional Assistance That May be Provided to Associations.

- An APP with the Laws of the Game to be available.
- Law changes to be communicated from one source only.
- Recruitment of Referees Advertisement to be played on T.V during Pre Season.
- Conference Dates to be published by March 30th. 2014.

Brett Lynch (Penrith) Chris Nightingale (Canberra) , Andrew Essey (Parramatta). Relationships with Junior Leagues

All three traced the history of the relationship with their respective Junior Leagues that had moved from

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diffidence to strong working relationships over the past five years involving joint-dinners, possible strike action, provision for an Association delegate on the Junior League Board and more effective and open communication.

Conference closed at 12 noon with a presentation to Cathy Crowe, husband Gary and Luke Bugden for catering provided throughout the week-end and a Vote of Thanks to all the Presenters.

Frank Leonard
EXECUTIVE OFFICER