

**2018 Procedure
Manual for Clubs
Utilizing the
East Penn Rugby
Referee Society**

President's Edition



President

Purpose of the Manual

The Eastern Penn Rugby Referee Society (EPRRS) annually publishes and makes available the following manual to more effectively communicate all of our policies and procedures to the Clubs and Club Personnel that utilize our services.

We have done our best to communicate everything “rugby refereeing” to our Clubs each year at the Mandatory Meeting, but find ourselves running into the same questions each year. Our hope is that this manual will provide all of our Policies and Procedures in a form that can be digested by the individuals requiring the information especially as officers change within the Clubs. This also provides a vehicle to distribute the USA Rugby Refereeing Game Management Guidelines that have been introduced for the calendar year.

This manual is designed to get the information out to the persons associated with your Club that perform tasks relative to the Referee Society. This manual provides information to the officers that need it. We in the EPRRS are attempting to remove many of the awkward interactions that have transpired between us and the Clubs. It is the responsibility of the receiver of this manual to treat it as it is intended.

This manual continues to reduce the number of mishaps within the clubs and the intent of the EPRRS is to continue to publish some version of this annually to continue that momentum. If there are items that continue to puzzle you at the Club level, reach out and we will not only address, but integrate into next year’s version.

No More Excuses

The primary objective of placing all of this in writing is to remove the Club’s excuse that “We didn’t know!” Now you know. Now we know we have told you. These manuals have been referenced at the annual meeting, a version for each officer has been loaded to the EPRRS website, and a copy of all has been sent to the officers we have on file for you. In any case, the onus is now clearly on the Clubs – NOT the Referee Society.

EVERYTHING is Your Responsibility

Congratulations! You have been elected President. Now every hole that your Club digs will require your involvement to correct the matter. If your Treasurer has decided not to pay referee fees, you are going to be involved. If your Match Secretary decides not to call referees, you are going to be involved. If your Club culture involves consistently abusing and challenging referees, you are going to be in for a very bad year.

It is your responsibility to read this manual and understand the role you play. More importantly, we are assisting your officers in doing their jobs and we are assisting you in forgetting about those headaches. Your first job now is to make sure your Treasurer, Match Secretary, Coaches, and Captain have read their manuals. It may be a pain in the ass now, but it is much less painful that having the Referee Society at odds with your Club.

President

EPRRS Minimum Requirements

The EPRRS has one minimum requirement to remain in good standing with us. That is to have someone from your Club attend the Annual Mandatory Meeting each year. In order to make it easy for you, we hold the meeting each year in late January/early February. We have always held the clinic in a location to the East and a location to the West to make it convenient for all Clubs. In cases of poor weather, we communicate changes through our site and Facebook page and have always made allowances for Clubs if anything we have done has made attendance more challenging.

If this requirement is not met, you have already placed your Club at the low end of the priority list. This is a very low bar to hit, so hit it.

Everything that occurs in season could reflect poorly on your Club, but we will find a way to work through them. Attendance at this meeting will not be overlooked due to the simplicity and level application amongst all Clubs.

“In Bad Standing”

Unfortunately, this is why they pay you the big bucks. If your Club ends up in bad standing, you will be shamed on the EPRRS website and you may see adverse effects in terms of referee assignment. We use the word may as we may have weeks where we have more referees than games so there is no cause to punish a Club on our bad side unless we can build team of three or get referees coached. If you have been in the rugby game for any period of time, you can imagine how often we find ourselves with too many referees.

If your Club is in bad standing, your Club’s name will appear on the EPRRS website on the Teams Not in Good Standing page found in the Assignment Information menu. It is now your job to get your name off of that list. The EPRRS will not spend much time reaching out to restore the status of a Club. It is your job to resurrect your standing with us. Again, if we are in this situation, it is the President that is going to do much of the work to get the Club back in good standing along with the offending parties on the Club that caused the black mark.

If you see your name on the list, contact the EPRRS President straight away to identify how to get out of the doghouse.

Referee Abuse from the President’s Chair

Referee Abuse is one of the largest obstacles for the Society as we attempt to retain referees. Clubs must be mindful that newer referees may be assigned to their match and that abusing the referee is not a productive way to vent frustration. Tournament situations will almost always offer any number of inexperienced referees. Coaches and Club Administrators should be mindful not to create a culture that tolerates the abuse of referees or opponents by their Club, their staff, or their spectators.

It is the responsibility of every Club in the Union to curb referee abuse. This is a responsibility of players, coaches, and spectators. The individual Clubs are responsible for the actions of all persons associated with them. Referees are continually instructed to aggressively report all instances of referee abuse.

The EPRRS is happy to report that we have done an exceptional job as a rugby community in cleaning up referee abuse in our area. It becomes more evident as referees travel to other parts of the country or when Clubs from the outside come here to play. That said, the battle continues. We have, in the past, sent warnings to individuals, Clubs, and entire divisions explaining that if the abuse did not stop, referees would no longer be assigned to the Home or Away matches of the offending Club(s). This is a policy that will continue for any Clubs unable to police themselves.

President

As stated earlier in your material, the President of the Club is responsible for everything. You are the person the EPRRS is going to frown upon if we cannot get on the same page in this regard. The President is the individual most responsible for the “culture” of the rugby Club. An unruly Club gets its lead from you. Same is said for a Club that is congenial and respectful. It makes sense for you to set the appropriate tone proactively. Phone calls and emails to the Referee Society trying to understand why your Club no longer has referees assigned to it is a much less pleasant experience.

How Tournaments Work from an EPRRS Perspective

Tournaments fall below individual matches in the assignment priority unless it is a tournament leading to a National Championship (i.e., playoffs or qualifiers). For this reason, Clubs need to be sure to be in constant communication with the EPRRS about their needs for the tournament and should also be preparing members of their Club to possibly pick up the whistle to cover matches. The EPRRS Assignment Secretaries are well aware of how many referees will be needed for the number of matches and fields anticipated. It is the job of the Club to give us a reasonable estimate of what we will be experiencing. The earlier we can get this information, the better we can determine our resources for the day.

Clubs must also understand that tournaments are the ideal vehicle for the EPRRS to conduct referee training. Your attending Clubs must come in with an understanding that we are not going to be staffing a tournament with all high-level referees. We are going to maximize our ability to get the most out of the tournament setting. If you have individuals in your Club who have thought of refereeing, you want them to get matches! Our top priority is to work with each other at a tournament.

All tournaments are assigned by EPRRS. This is an insurance consideration for all participants. We will assign and bill for the referees assigned. If there is a shortage, it will be on the host club to determine how to fill and reimburse the bodies that referee. The EPRRS can only assign certified individuals. Referee payment for all tournaments will be based on the EPRRS payment procedures, however, adjustment to cash payouts may be made to accommodate tournaments for charity or other “in-kind” compensation. Please contact the EPRRS to make an adjustment to your billed rate.

If your club has identified referees that you would like assigned based on mutual agreement, please let the EPRRS Assignment Secretary know as soon as you can. Working outside of the process will not be looked on kindly and that will apply to the referee as well as the host club.

The EPRRS Executive Board continues to speak to our referees about the maximum number of matches that they can cover on a day. Referees will not be paid for going over that maximum due to the risk of injury and obvious loss of quality as the day progresses. We cap referees at four 15s matches and seven 7s matches. If we know we are going to be short, we ask the tournament organizers to identify matches early in the day that are less critical so the referees have not exceeded the maximums as the knockout rounds are played. It is much more desirable to have a 1v4 pool match without a referee than have the referees over capacity for the Final.

President

Referee Courses

The EPRRS will conduct Level 1 Referee Courses as demand dictates. We are extremely interested in creating new referees, but we do not bear the burden of recruiting bodies. We do our best, but Clubs need to help us identify potential referees and have them reach out to us to express their interest.

Believe this or not, but Clubs gain great benefit out of having referees in their fold. It becomes a very enlightening experience to have members of their Club with knowledge of the Laws and what referees are instructed to look for. At one point, the EPRU mandated that each Club have a certified referee. While that is no longer a requirement, it is still certainly a best practice. We continually strive to have more referees than matches, but we need your help to do so.

If any Clubs identify an individual who would be interested, please contact Tom Colucci (tomc@cncsolar.com). Tom has graciously agreed to consolidate indications of interest and act as the point on organizing Level 1 Officiating courses in the area.

For Clubs, Divisions, or Organizations that may be interested in hosting a Level 1 Referee Course, the USA Rugby Website contains a page with a great deal of information on what is needed to host a course and the benefits to the various pieces of the rugby community.

This information can be found at the following address:

<http://usarugby.org/host-a-ref-course>

EPRRS Officer List

Below is the list of current EPRRS Officers and their email addresses:

Title	Name	Email
President	Jim Rogers	presidenteprrs@gmail.com
Vice President	Chris Rubinate	CRubinate@gmail.com
Treasurer	Don McAlpine	treasurereprrs@gmail.com
Assignment Secretary – East	Matt Bluske	matt.bluske@gmail.com
Assignment Secretary – West	Sherri Magnuson	oschist@hotmail.com
Recording Secretary	Lance Orndorf	lJORndorf@verizon.net
Training Officer	Len Borcky	lennyb06@gmail.com

This information is updated as necessary and can be found on the EPRRS website (www.eastpennrugby.org) by selecting **Executive Committee** from the **Referee Information** menu.

Clubs can also contact the EPRRS at our generic email address (eastpennrefs@gmail.com).

EPRRS Outward Communication

The EPRRS Communicates to all of you throughout the year three separate ways. The more you take advantage of, the more you assure that you will not miss an important announcement.

1. EPRRS Website – All meeting notices and important information is posted on the Home Page of our website (www.eastpennrugby.org)
2. EPRRS Facebook – We have managed a Facebook account this year to blast out to all who Like and Follow us. Conveniently, many of the Facebook posts will direct you to the relevant article on our website. The EPRRS Facebook address is <https://www.facebook.com/EPRRS>
3. EPRRS Email Blasts – We have created an email list that sends information to whomever you wish. There is no limit to the names we can add for your Club. We have traditionally looked to capture the President, Coach, Treasurer, and Match Secretary. It is up to you to keep your information current.
 - The EPRRS suggests creating generic email addresses (eastpennrefs@gmail.com; presidenteprrs@gmail.com; treasurereprrs@gmail.com; etc.) for your Club and providing that email address to us for the sake of continuity.

Club Contact List

It is the responsibility of the club to supply the EPRRS with updated contact information for our email blast list. We have traditionally looked to capture the President, Coach, Treasurer, and Match Secretary, but will take as many email addresses as the Club is interested in providing. If your club is not receiving emails from the EPRRS (EPRRS Boss), we do not have correct contact information from your Club. We highly recommend creating generic email addresses (eastpennrefs@gmail.com; presidenteprrs@gmail.com; treasurereprrs@gmail.com; etc.) for your Club and providing that email address to us for the sake of continuity.

The EPRRS has only this method of communicating directly with the Clubs. We desperately need your help in keeping this information current. Please let us know if you elect new officers and provide us with the current information.

EPRRS Monthly Meetings

The EPRRS conducts meetings the first Wednesday of every month during the Fall and Spring seasons. Each meeting involves a training session that covers Laws, Law Interpretations, Refereeing Techniques, and/or Tricky Situations.

All of these meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and have food and drink available. We aim to meet in a centralized location and currently meet at Dave & Busters in the Plymouth Meeting Mall. Everyone is invited to attend the meeting and bring up questions about topics being presented and anything on your mind from a Rugby Refereeing perspective. Please refer to the EPRRS Website (www.eastpennrugby.org) for more information.

President

State of the EPRRS

Currently, the EPRRS has, at most, 40 full-time referees. We regularly have 20 referees available on any given day. On Saturdays, we typically cover 30-35 matches with referees doing multiple matches. Sundays, we have upward of 40 matches that we are sometimes able to cover with the additional help of referees who either play or coach on Saturday.

The lesson in the mathematics presented in the first paragraph is that we may very well be unable to cover all of the matches on a given day. As we mention every year, Clubs that do not play nice with the Referee Society will find themselves on the bottom of the Assignment priority. As President, you should be making sure that your Club's culture is not hostile to the assigned referees and that all players, coaches, and spectators are respectful of the referee.