

Pre-Match Day Preparation

What to expect and what to do:

Make sure you have clean kit

1. Neutral color shirts (preferably plain) – use a rugby shirt or suitable polo shirt. Look professional, no t-shirts, ankle socks, and remember to avoid alcoholic beverage logos for U19 assignments (e.g. no “Guinness”)
2. Clean shorts, socks & boots

Accessories

- Whistles x 2 (Acme Thunderer recommended)
- Golf pencils (short length)
- Watches (recommend 2 in case one fails)
- Score cards (see below) & plastic wallet for match score card
- Red & Yellow cards
- Set of touch judge flags
- Match Report forms if needed
- Law book
- Small notebook to write down notes after match
- A stud wrench and a ball pump/needle
- Spare boot laces
- Drinks and food for yourself

Be in contact with the home club several days prior to the game to confirm.

- Call the club contact phone number from the web site
- Contact the IRRS Scheduler & ask for help if needed

From the home club you need to find out -

- Where the game is being played
- What time is the kick-off
- Colors of both teams & if there is a clash, it is the HOME SIDE to change
- Is there anything unusual happening on game day, i.e. Senior Day
- Mobile contact phone numbers in case of any problems; because you might get lost, there could be traffic problems
- Any special driving directions and/or parking tips

Match Day

ARRIVAL ON THE DAY

You are representing your Rugby Referee Society so develop a persona for refereeing with a professional, confident, positive attitude.

Allow yourself plenty of time to get to the field, at least an hour before kick-off

Dress sharp and smile when you greet the players and captains. It will help you relax. **This is the clubs' first impression of you.**

When you arrive, find the responsible person from the home side (referred to as the Match Organizer in the rule book), it's usually the home team coach. Shake hands and introduce yourself & find out

- Are both teams there?
- Which pitch to be used?
- Kick-off time?
- Confirm length of the game?
- What time would they like the boot check & pre-match brief done?
- **First aid – identify qualified personnel or the person who will call EMT's**
- Identify the match ball (preferably also a spare or two) and check it out
- Initiate the match report with the home side and ask them to pass it to visitors

PRE-MATCH BRIEFING

This is an important part of the rugby game. Choose a suitable moment that does not interrupt the teams' physical and mental warm up but meets your needs to get it all done on time. The earlier the better.

There are many things to do or not do, say or not say in the pre-match briefing. If you do a boot check and address the entire team – keep it brief, be very professional, emphasize one or two things only, and reiterate that the captain is their voice on the field.

For the detailed pre-match briefing, bring over the captains, scrum halves and front rows, including front row subs. Don't forget the scrum engagement as this is a safety factor. Ask the props to help set the tunnel for the lineout. Remind the scrum-halves to put the ball in straight and remain on-side. Try to avoid long detailed discussion about law before the game. Dismiss everyone but the captains at this point.

Do the coin toss - remember that the winner of the toss chooses whether "to kick-off or what side to defend in first-half". Write down on your score card the choice and tell the captains exact time for the match start. Memorize the

captains' names and numbers, this meeting establishes your rapport with them. For captains' instructions, something such as:

"The three of us are a team. During the game you have the right to talk to me and ask for clarification (at the stoppages) but you may not debate or criticize. I will suspend this right and penalize (or card) a captain that argues! I am going to referee this game fairly and consistently, so let me do my job. I'll manage the game but you control your team. If I have to do both, then I'll go to the cards. I'm counting on you to be the leader out there, and out of respect for that, when I talk to a player about foul play I will do it through you, so come to me when I call for you. Ok, guys, are we in agreement? Any questions?"

Now, remind your team to tackle low, stay on their feet, play to the whistle, and keep their mouths shut, and we'll have a good game today. Remember it's about controlled aggression and fair play. Enjoy yourselves, good luck".

Then

- Survey the pitch, run around it, get a feel for it as a referee
- Check for
 - Pitch markings and dimensions
 - Sideline barriers (ropes)
 - Touch flag posts correctly placed (only the goal line corner flag posts should be directly on touch line/goal line)
 - Goal post protectors present and secure
 - Any hazards such as sprinklers or over-hanging trees
 - Dimensions of the in-goal areas
- Meet with touch judges and let them know your expectations
 - Usually TJ's are to judge touch and kicks-at-goal only, unless they are qualified referees and can be consulted on foul-play
 - Remind them to observe the rules around quick-throws at line out

Now take time to do your warm-up.

- Keep a warm-up set of clothes on (track suit)
- Get away from distractions
- Focus on your mental and physical preparations
- Get well stretched and really warmed-up (the players are going to be really warmed-up, super hyped-up, and ready to go at kick-off – will you?!)

GAME TIME

Take the field a few minutes before kick-off time and place the match ball in the center of the field. Stay active and warmed-up as the teams take positions.

Call the teams to attention. Bring the kicking-team kicker to the center spot, he/she may pick up the ball but remind them to wait for the whistle. Verbally acknowledge each touch-judge, verbally confirm readiness of the captain of the receiving team, start your watch timer AND THEN blow the whistle.....

Remember that during the game – be consistent as possible with your game management! Manage communications with the captains and manage the sidelines. If a coach or spectator is out of line; stop the match approach the side of the field at the halfway line and inform them that of “behavior in a manner inconsistent with the spirit of the game and jeopardizing the conduct of the match” and this is a “warning prior to dismissal”. If the offending person(s) are spectators, instruct the coach to deal with it. Only restart game when that is done, and use the expected restart (there is no penalty on the field for sideline misconduct). You are in charge and you can stop/cancel the game at any time.

AFTER THE GAME

Congratulate and thank the captains with handshakes and confirm the final score.

Leave the field immediately and go to your kit bag. If coaches want to talk to you; ask them to wait a few minutes while you warm-down and stretch, and so that you (and they!) can cool off and change, etc. Arrange to meet them in 10 – 20 minutes and pick a location. This greatly enhances a calmer more constructive discussion of the game! You are not obliged to discuss the game with coaches or players but, after the fact, it can be a good communication for you and them.

Date		Final score : Home _____ Visitor _____			
	Home Team [] KO		Visitor Team [] KO		
Name					
Color					
Captain, #					
Score	1st Half	2nd Half	1st Half	2nd Half	
Subs					
Cautioned					
Dismissed					

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