



*London Society Rugby Football Referees*  
*West Region*  
*1889 - 2014*



December 2014

Dear London Club Contacts (West Region),

Please cascade this to all your committee members.

As we approach the half-way point of my first season as the Regional Manager of West Region of The London Society of Rugby Football Referees it is with great regret and frustration that I need to bring the following to your attention.

- The last 2 weekends have seen 2 referees walk away from rugby as a result of what is becoming an increasing problem - Referee Abuse.
- This abuse has been in the form of verbal abuse by players, coaches, club officials and supporters.
- The individual clubs are currently being dealt with, so I would urge you all be to proactive so as to prevent any further incidents.

This referee abuse must stop and stop now; it is your club's responsibility to manage the conduct of all involved. This extends to your players, coaches and supporters – whether at the pitch or afterwards in the clubhouse.

The RFU are currently being very firm on this area of abuse and support County Discipline Panels who take a similar stance. In some recent cases of referee abuse the RFU have increased sanctions considerably – sometimes to bans running to two years.

I intend to deal with any further incidents in the West Region very firmly and as such the following will be implemented,

- London Referees will be instructed to report formally all incidents of referee abuse. These reports will make their way to the RFU via the various County Discipline Panels.
- In the event of a referee reporting abuse from an individual while at any game regardless of level or age group, the club will receive a warning. Should this not work, and there is a further incident, I will withdraw referees from any match involving the offending club, regardless of level and age group. Yes that may mean that your youth teams (where some of the major problems are occurring) may impact on a referee for your senior 1<sup>st</sup> XV. This removal of referees will be in addition to any sanction applied by the relevant County Discipline Panel. It will be for my regional committee to determine the length of any suspension.

I hope you understand how serious this problem is becoming and I'm determined that it must stop.

We are losing good referees and without these volunteers you have no game.

Kind regards and thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Stephen Biles

Regional Manager

LSRFUR West