

# RFU REGULATION 12 – MATCH OFFICIALS

## 12.1 Appointments

### 12.1.1 Referees and Assistant Referees

- (a) The RFU reserves the right to directly (or through the Committee, or the home Club's Referees Society as the RFU may in its absolute discretion decide) appoint Referees and/or Assistant Referees to any match played in England:
  - (i) in which an England representative XV is playing; or
  - (ii) in any competition which involves a Club in membership of the RFU and/or of a Constituent Body or a representative team of a Constituent Body; or
  - (iii) in which a representative team of a Constituent Body is participating; or
  - (iv) which involves a team from any other Union; or
  - (v) in any Play-Off Match between Clubs at Level 4; or
  - (vi) in all rounds of the Anglo-Welsh Cup and British & Irish Cup, and the quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals of all other Cup Competitions.
- (b) Where the RFU has exercised the right in paragraph (a) above, the match may only take place with Referees and/or Assistant Referees appointed by the RFU and subject to 12.1.1 (d) below, World Rugby Law 6 shall apply.
- (c) In any RFU Competition match (for avoidance of doubt including Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase & Junior Vase) at Level 5 and below the Committee or Organising Committee may request that suitably qualified Assistant Referees be appointed and direct which Club should pay the costs thereof. If the Organising Committee makes such a request, Assistant Referees shall be appointed by the RFU, or the home Club's Referees Society, provided that the relevant body agrees to such appointment and that suitably qualified Assistant Referees are available.
- (d) At level 5 and below (and for avoidance of doubt including Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase & Junior Vase) World Rugby Law 6 shall apply and Assistant Referees may report incidents of foul play and misconduct to the Referee only where:
  - (i) the RFU, or the home Club's Referees Society has appointed Assistant Referees (in accordance with 12.1.1(c) above); or

- (ii) the two Clubs have specifically agreed with the appointment and the application of World Rugby Law 6 prior to the match.
- (e) In a Play-Off Match:
  - (i) between Clubs at Level 5 and below, Match Officials will be appointed by the Referees Society to which the home Club pays a subscription (or that which is local to the home Club and which at the request of the home Club normally supplies referees) unless the appointments are made by the RFU. Match Officials cannot be appointed from the Constituent Body of which either Club is a member except at the discretion of the Divisional Organising Committee; and
  - (ii) having appointed suitably qualified Assistant Referees, World Rugby Law 6 shall apply.
- (f) A Referees' Society or the RFU cannot refuse to appoint Match Officials to any particular Club for disciplinary reasons unless the matter has completed the appropriate disciplinary process (to which the complainant Society or the RFU department as the case may be shall be invited and be able to make representations or have them made on their behalf) and during the course of that disciplinary process consent has been given to that course of action.
- (g) In the absence of appointment in accordance with paragraph (a) to (e) above, each Club shall provide a competent touch judge who should not be a replacement. In an emergency and with the consent of the Referee, a replacement may act as a touch judge.
- (h) Unless stated in 12.1.1. paragraph (a) to (g) above, the Referee Society which supplies referees to the home Club shall appoint the appropriate match official.

12.1.2 Fourth Officials (Levels 1-4, Anglo-Welsh Cup, British & Irish Cup and also Semi-Finals and Finals of Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase)

Save where one is appointed by the RFU, the home Club shall appoint a suitable person to act as the Fourth Official who will act under the authority of the Referee and in accordance with any authorised protocol.

12.1.3 Confirmation

- (a) Save where a Cup Match is held on a neutral ground (in which case the RFU has responsibility), it is the responsibility of the home Club to confirm at least 48 hours before the match with (as appropriate) the RFU or its Referee's Society, that a referee (and in National Leagues the Assistant Referees) has been appointed.

- (b) It is the home Club's responsibility to liaise with the appointed Match Officials directly to ensure that the Match Officials are aware of the arrangements and have the appropriate directions to the venue for the match (or any change of venue).

## **12.2 Incapacity/Non Attendance of Match Officials**

- 12.2.1 If the Referee appointed or provided under this Regulation has not arrived at the agreed kick-off time or if the Referee is unable to officiate for the whole of the match for any reason the Assistant Referee where appointed may referee the match.
- 12.2.2 In the event the Assistant Referee is unable to continue to officiate for the whole of the match in question then another suitable replacement referee who is agreed by both team captains (or such other official or manager of the Club nominated by the Club) will take charge. Any agreement reached between team captains in relation to replacement referees shall thereafter be binding upon the Clubs.
- 12.2.3 In any RFU Competition, if no other suitable replacement referee is available or if both team captains (or such other official or manager of the Club nominated by the Club) do not agree to him, the match shall be abandoned and the provisions of Regulation 13.6 will apply. If there is no agreement then that match is void and it must be replayed in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 13.6.
- 12.2.4 At Levels 5 and below the captains of the two Clubs concerned may agree that a suitable replacement referee can officiate and the result shall count in the Competition. Any agreement reached between team captains in relation to replacement referees shall thereafter be binding upon the Clubs.
- 12.2.5 In determining who shall be classified as a suitable replacement referee, reference should be made to RFU policy which includes not permitting any referee to officiate on a match more than two levels above the referee's grade and such other requirements as may be stipulated by the RFU from time to time.

## **12.3 Decisions of Match Officials**

In all matches, any decision taken by the appointed Match Officials or their replacements shall be final and binding insofar as the Laws of the Game are concerned.

## **12.4 Comments of Match Officials**

Any comment or opinion expressed regarding the Regulations, or the interpretation or the effect thereof by any Match Official on any circumstance that might occur before, during or after a match is not final or binding on the RFU, the Committee or an Appeal Panel. No Club or person can rely on any such comment or opinion.

## **12.5 Approaches to Match Officials**

No person shall approach the Match Officials at any time during the half-time interval to discuss any issue arising from the first half of the match nor shall enter the referee's changing room during the half time interval unless invited to do so by the referee.