

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Blowing the whistle, waving the flag

The difficulty in retaining rugby union referees
from season to season

Christopher Francis Baldwin

Comment [c1]: Organisationis spelt
with an s in ausralia

Blowing the whistle, waving the flag: The difficulty in retaining rugby union referees from season to season

Abstract

The retention of sports referees is a critical factor in the ability of local, state and national sporting organisations to deliver community sport to its clients on a weekly basis. Previous studies have been dedicated to investigating the retention rates of coaches and players however little work has focused upon the sports referee and why referees continue to officiate. Using data from interviews and material sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) this research looked at the factors which influenced community based rugby union referees from choosing to remain involved in officiating. Results revealed that decisions to join and decisions to leave differ greatly amongst the referees who participated in the research. Factors including camaraderie amongst referees, level of enjoyment and success experienced were all identified as key elements in helping referees decide to remain.

Introduction

Sports officials have and continue to play a major role in the organisation and arbitration of sport contests. The role that referees play in the adjudication and administration of sport ensures the continued success of sport for all of those involved. Clegg and Thompson (1989) identify the importance of the official, an importance that is lost on many modern day sports coaches, players and spectators; in that "...the official is the essential third dimension of an athletic contest. The game cannot commence without the unbiased jurisdiction of the official" (1989, p. 1). Furthermore, sport officials would have no game to referee without the presence of opponents. In essence then, the sporting contest, players and officials all interrelate in such a way as to allow sport to function cohesively.

While numerous courses exist to allow 'would be' sports enthusiasts to gain accreditation to become an official, Davis (1996) claims that sport officiating is learned experientially; adding that like teachers and nurses who complete internships and practicum's, sports referees first work through local and community based competitions learning the craft of officiating before advancing to more important and intense games. Refereeing is a unique vocation highly dependent at a grass roots level on attracting and recruiting volunteers to become accredited and qualified referees and to maintain this involvement in the game over many years. The retention of sports volunteers has been a topic of great interest over the last two to three decades. Research has commonly focused on the retention of coaches and players within sporting organisations.

Within Australia, sports such as cricket, football (Australian Rules Football [AFL], Rugby League and Rugby Union) netball, soccer, and swimming rely heavily on volunteers to sustain capacity, achieve growth, and importantly, maintain the quality of programs (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010a, 2010b). In the sport of rugby union, which is the focus of this study, the Australian Rugby Union (ARU) reports that without volunteers, the delivery of community rugby union would be severely compromised (Australian Rugby Union, 2010).

Rugby union referees are a significant category of sport volunteers who make substantial contributions to the development and progression of community rugby union (Jennings, 2001). Cuskelly, Smith and Hoye (2009) in their report on the recruitment and retention of rugby union referees acknowledged that the recruiting aspect of younger referees is not the issue, it is the retention of these referees as they grow older that becomes the problem.

Recent statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows a decline in the overall numbers of sports based referees since 1997 with the total number of sports officials declining from 456,900 in 1997 to 313,000 in 2010 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010b). Focusing on rugby union referees, the ARU confirms the retention of rugby union referees across Australia has also been quite difficult. Since 2004 numbers have been declining steadily from just under 5000 in 2004 to 3000 in 2010 (Australian Rugby Union, 2010).

Although a substantial body of research exists on the stresses faced by sports referees and the physical demands faced by officials during a game, less attention has been directed towards understanding why referees decide to cease officiating or join officiating. This paper examines these important research questions in the context of community (New South Wales Suburban) rugby union. This setting is appropriate because NSW suburban rugby union is the largest rugby union competition and provider of rugby union referees in Australia with over 450 accredited referees (Australian Rugby Union, 2010).

Literature review

The recruitment, management, and retention of sports referees are issues of concern for all sporting organisations (Rowe, 1999). In sports officials, retention is of particular interest given the inconsistencies that can exist with high turnover rates and consequent continual need for recruitment. Cuskelly, Smith and Hoye (2009) in a study of recruitment and retention of community based rugby union referees in Australia, found that volunteer retention was one of the key problems facing the ARU. These broader findings are reflected in more detailed data on referees which reveal that the number of sports officials in Australia is declining. Australia has recorded a 31% decline in its overall officials since 1997 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010b); rugby union has seen a drop of 40% in its overall community numbers (Australian Rugby Union, 2010). These large declines not only have impact on the ability of local competitions to provide for the coaches and players, but it also has consequences for the referees too. Anecdotal evidence at the local NSW suburban rugby union level shows how due to the limited number of referees, many officials are required to double up on games and officiate back to back matches on top of their assistant refereeing duties (Timms, 2011).

While some attention has been directed towards understanding the factors influencing the recruitment and retention rates of rugby union referees (Cuskelly, et al., 2009), a complete understanding of these occurrences is still elusive. Studies conducted to date have identified a wide range of factors that affect the role of sports officials. These include: bias (Boyko, Boyko, & Boyko, 2007; Dawson, Dobson, Goddard, & Wilson, 2007; Eubank, 2000; Plessner, 1999; Sutter & Kocher, 2004); concerns about physical abuse (Haynes & Panazzo, 2005; Kellett & Shilbury, 2007); concern about increasing stress levels (Anshel & Weinberg, 1996; Kaissidis & Anshel, 1993; Rainey & Hardy, 1999; Rodafinos, Anshel, & Porter, 1997; Stewart & Ellery, 1998). Retention of officials may also be influenced by the amount of time and energy that must be invested during the week and on weekends to fulfil officiating appointments. While Kellett and Shilbury (2007) identify this as an issue in their study of AFL umpires, in the current study it did not appear to be an issue for the participants.

One of the main underlying principles of previous research into why sports officials cease to officiate has been that by identifying the reasons for them leaving we can implement actions and procedures to minimise the exit. However what previous research has often neglected to address is that many of the reasons why referees leave officiating ranks are personal in nature. These personal reasons for leaving are often very difficult for officiating organisations to address (Koh-Tan, 2011; Soares, Correia, & Rosado, 2010). Moreover, Rundle-Thiele and Auld (2009) acknowledge that this type of approach does not address the positive reasons which keep referees coming back year after year as the focus tends to be on the negative as opposed to the positive. The study argues that by focusing on the positives, sport associations such as officiating associations “may be able to focus on those areas in which they have more potential to exert direct influence” (Rundle-Thiele & Auld, 2009, p. 4).

There has been some research that has focused on the reasons why referees decide to stay. Cuskelly, Smith and Hoye (2009) found that the most influential reasons for rugby union referees to continue officiating were related to personal attitudes and dispositions, such as enjoyment, constructive use of free time and the development of friendships through interactions with coaches, players and referees. The study also identified that external factors such as encouragement of friends and family members whilst important, had little impact on the decision to continue. Kellett and Shilbury (2007) focused on factors associated with the decision to stay on as a referee and in general their findings tended to centre on intrinsic factors related to the nature of the refereeing experience. Their

study which also addressed reasons for ceasing to officiate discussed that in terms of the AFL umpires who were the participants in the study, anxiety and stress as a result of abuse from coaches, players and spectators was not an issue in umpires ceasing to officiate.

As with the research on why referees leave, research relating to a referee's decision to stay has also been dominated by an emphasis on personal motivations and needs. Few studies have incorporated organisational context and management issues as a way of retaining referees. For example, Jennings (2001) discusses the experiences he faced during his time on the National panel of rugby union referees in Australia. He acknowledges the importance that administrators played and how through a democratic and understanding process newer referees to the panel felt welcomed and were more likely to persist with the hard training and long hours that were associated with being an elite referee. Other retention factors include: balancing the workload requirements of refereeing with one's personal and work life (Patching, 2003); and the teaching of effective communication skills (Gofton, 2004).

The literature on sports referees' retention, in particular rugby union referees has concentrated mainly on personal attitudes and dispositions. In terms of officiating research, these variables have often focused upon the reasoning for why referees leave. Rundle-Thiele and Auld (2009) addressed why sports coaches choose to stay instead of leaving in community based sport. Along the same lines of this study, this research looks to address through an empirical examination of how personal attributes, as well as organisational factors, may influence the decision of rugby union referees to stay. In order to address this gap, the present study as with the Rundle-Thiele and Auld (2009) will utilise Penner's sustained volunteerism model (Penner, 2002). Penner's model suggests two groups of factors which can influence the decisions of volunteers to continue or discontinue their involvement in an activity. Penner's model identifies three main attributes of individuals that can influence their volunteering behaviour:

1. Personal beliefs and values
2. Pro-social behaviour
3. Motivation to volunteer

This research along the lines of the research conducted by Rundle-Thiele and Auld (Rundle-Thiele & Auld, 2009) will extend Penner's (2002) approach by examining the broader sport system of rugby union. In addition, the study will address the personal factors, examine the nature and degree of

influence of rugby union referees association's organisational practices and systemic factors. Research has in the past argued that variables, such as organisational commitment and job satisfaction, are central to understanding why people remain engaged as a volunteer (Hoye, 2007; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2003). However to date, their roles are still largely unexplored in a refereeing context. The present study will also investigate the perceived quality of organisational practices including volunteer policies surrounding recruitment and retention, management styles and support received. The study will also address how these relate to the decision to continue to referee.

Penner's original (2002) model focused only on personal and organisational issues. This research addresses the experiences and thoughts of rugby union referees. Additionally, this research seeks to acknowledge the importance that individual goals, socialisation and rewards play on the retention of referees.

Methodology

Research design

As the research was dealing with the attitudes and experiences of rugby union referees it was viewed that the participants be given an opportunity to express their own feelings and reflect on their experiences as referees. In-depth qualitative research methods were chosen in order to allow detailed consideration of a referee's perspective on the officiating experience, organisational and sport system context, and the decision to either continue or discontinue refereeing. A combination of focus groups and data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) was chosen to facilitate the opportunity for the referees' experiences to be heard and to develop a deeper understanding of the factors that influence rugby union referees involvement in officiating. The data from the ABS allowed these perspectives to be contextualised within an organisational setting.

Focus groups were held in the respective NSW rugby union headquarters at Moore Park. The focus groups lasted on average between 60 and 75 minutes. A total of 30 referees involved in officiating within the NSW Suburban rugby union competition participated in the focus groups where discussions were recorded and transcribed allowing all data to be captured. A total of 78 pages of transcripts were analysed. The focus group discussions were designed to yield two complementary types of information: (1) a description of why people initially volunteered to referee and why people choose to

stay involved in officiating; and (2) contextual details influencing continued involvement in rugby union refereeing. Questions were located within Penner's (Penner, 2002) theory of sustained volunteerism and were designed to encourage consideration of a range of personal, organisational, and systemic factors that led to continued involvement with rugby union officiating. A semi-structured approach utilising open ended questions was employed for this research following Gratton and Jones' (Gratton & Jones, 2004) guidelines.

Analysis

The data analysis employed qualitative procedures such as the use of NVivo 9 to reduce data and allow theoretical themes relating to refereeing involvement emerge (Guillen & Feltz, 2011).

Statements were coded by the researcher and a research assistant using an initial meaning code and an axial coding scheme (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Wengraf, 2001). Transcripts were open coded to identify concepts relating to involvement in rugby union refereeing until saturation was reached; meaning until no new concepts and ideas could be analysed.

The open codes were compared and contrasted to eliminate repetition in concepts or ideas and ensure the data was reduced to a meaningful number of concepts. Once this was achieved, axial coding was used to identify the key factors contributing towards maintaining involvement in rugby union officiating. An audit trail containing the categories and memos utilised within this research and with the generation of categories reported upon in this research has been retained in the NVivo project file. ABS data were used to gain additional insight into the refereeing experience, thus increasing the internal validity and reliability of the evidence obtained. The ABS data consisted of databases sourced from government sports institutions both at a state and national level. The databases contained demographic details and the nature of the refereeing involvement (e.g. qualifications, weekly, monthly, yearly involvement, gender) for all junior referees in Australia for the years 1997 through to 2010.

Results

The experience of the rugby union referees was the main focus of this research. To best relay these experiences the majority of analysis comes from the focus group discussions. Data sourced from the ABS is used to support or discount findings stemming from the focus group discussions.

Referees were asked to consider the reasons for their continuing involvement in rugby union officiating. Three categories emerged from the analysis of the focus group data attributing their sustained involvement to:

- 1) Camaraderie and support from fellow referees and referee coaches
- 2) Individual goals
- 3) Rewards

While most of the identified factors were present in the referees it is important to acknowledge that not every referee experienced the same factors or at the same degree. Each referee identified between two and three of the factors illustrated in Figure 1. This suggests that interdependency between the factors that contributed towards a referee's decision to stay exists. Understanding the diversity of influences that impact upon a referee's decision to stay officiating is important as this allows for the development of a variety of strategies to cater to different refereeing types. Each of the three themes will now be discussed.



Figure 1: Emergent categories for continual involvement in rugby union officiating

Camaraderie and support from fellow referees and referee coaches

The support and feeling of belonging to part of a group are important aspects to the overall 'package' that team sport provides (Rowe, 1999). Referees and match officials often operate in a lonely

profession, especially at the community and grass roots level where they may be the only referees present at a particular oval. It is not surprising that participants of this study identified camaraderie and support from fellow referees and referee coaches as being instrumental in determining whether a referee would return each year to officiate again.

It's a big commitment that one makes to be a referee. Training during the week late at night, then committing a whole day on the weekend to referee, if you have a family it's an even bigger commitment. The referees are like another big family, they are there to support you during training and on game days, provide advice on how to approach a difficult game or improve your officiating skills.

The referee coaches who come out to games on a weekly basis are critical in assisting each referee develop as fully as they can. Each coach is a former referee often with many years experience. They are qualified coaches having completed a formal accreditation course and like the referees are required to maintain qualifications such as law and safety updates every two years. Factors such as feedback that referee coaches provide to the officiating referees was cited by many of the referees as being helpful in assisting them improve as an official.

Having a referee coach come out and watch your game and provide feedback to you on every facet of your game from the way you approach a ruck to the way you stand at a lineout is just awesome. It's often difficult to do a proper analysis of your game when you are out there refereeing so having an impartial person in the stands watching just your game and how you apply the rules and interact with the players is really helpful.

Referees emphasised that an improvement in the number of referee coaches was needed within the association that these officials were from. It was acknowledged by the participants that there was a drastic shortage of referee coaches within the association which often meant that those officials who were not recognised as being at the top of their grade or division did not see or receive feedback from a referee coach on a regular basis as a referee that was at the top of their grade or division. This was identified by the participants as being an area of concern.

It is worrying that not all referees get the attention from the coaches that they deserve and need; if anything I would have thought that it was the referees in the lower grades that should be seeing the coaches on a more frequent basis that way they can develop the skills that the referees in the higher grades have been perceived as having.

Data from the ABS and ARU indicates that in a referee coaching perspective there are less than 10% referee coaches nationally (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010b). More worrying, an internal audit of memberships by the NSW Rugby Union Referees Association (NSWRUA) indicated that of retiring active officiating members less than 5% return to become referee coaches. In a personal email communication exchange with the referees manager of the NSWRUA it was mentioned that this is an area of great concern for the association, and an area that over the next two years the

association is dedicating a substantial amount of time and resources to rectify. The manager added that: "We have identified this in our own internal audits of membership over the past five years and have established a steering committee to address the initial reasons why and this report is due at the beginning of 2012" (Timms, 2011).

Individual goals

Most of the referees involved in rugby union officiating had prior playing and or coaching experience.

This according to many of the participants was one of the main factors that led them to becoming referees.

I used to play rugby competitively for Eastwood, however as the body got a little older it could handle the bumps and knocks as well as it used to. When I decided to retire from playing I moved into coaching however after a full season of this I was still missing the excitement and action of being out on the field. During the off season I got my referees ticket and took up officiating and here I am now.

The individual goals of the referees for maintaining their involvement with rugby union officiating revolved around two main factors; Improving and bettering their own skill set and improving their overall fitness levels. The latter for those that were former players appeared to be a major reason behind their involvement as the fitness requirements of rugby union referees had some comparable attributes to that of actually playing rugby union.

You kind of take the fitness you have for granted when you're playing, it's not until you stop playing and subsequently stop training that you notice the difference in your fitness. When I began to put on weight I knew then I had to do something; so I took up refereeing as that seemed the most logical thing to do after having played the game for so many years.

The referee participants indicated that part of their individual goals was to feel a sense of improvement in their overall refereeing skill set. For some this sense of improvement also flowed into their everyday lives as indicated by some of the participant comments below.

Rugby gave me so much as a player, having the opportunity to represent my state and my country, travel the globe, being a referee has taught me so many new aspects of the game of rugby and being involved at the community level I have now had the opportunity to give something back to the sport which has given so much to me over the past decade.

The skills of rugby refereeing relate so well to the skills that I use as a teacher. Management and discipline enacted by the blowing of a whistle, it's just like PE class.

It is great to see improvement. At the start of the season I hadn't a clue what I was doing or what I was in for, but with practice my skills and knowledge of the game improved each week and eventually I knew and understood what I was supposed to be doing and what each signal and gesture meant.

Additional motivation to continue rugby union refereeing centred on the sense of assisting their local community and the sport of rugby union. A number of referees expressed an urge to give back to the sport as seen in some of the comments above. Occasionally this was manifested because the referees wanted to nurture and develop the sport of rugby union and ensure its survival in the face of competition from other foot-balling codes.

Rewards

The referee participants identified a number of what they called rewards which ensued their continual involvement in rugby officiating. These rewards included elements such as achievements including refereeing a semi-final or a grand-final; promotions which may include moving from a particular grade or division to a higher one; awards, these include end of year awards such as referee of the year or most improved referee of the year; representative games, this involves being appointed to special fixtures such as state, national and international games; and finally milestones, this included celebrating special events such as a referees first ever first grade game, or 100th game and so on. While the referees within this study were quick to assert that these awards were not a definitive reason for them choosing to stay or leave officiating, they acknowledged that sometimes the little things such as acknowledging a referees 100th game or celebrating the promotion of a referee to first grade were elements that made the referees feel appreciated and special.

It's always nice to come back to the club house at the end of a game and you [the referee] receive special acknowledgement or a round of applause; it makes a nice change from the usual reception that often awaits us back at the club house.

As evident in one referee's comment, the culture of the association, the organisation within the association, and the relationships developed between the referees, referee coaches, referee managers and support staff are factors that influence a referee's decision to stay because it is not only the individual referee that gets to celebrate but all of the referees colleagues share the celebration with him/her.

We try to keep the big celebrations [100th, 200th game etc] until the end of year presentation night, that way everyone has an opportunity to share the celebration with the individual referees including their partners which is always nice.

One of the integrating features of the refereeing experience appeared to be loyalty to the association that each referee expressed throughout the course of the focus groups. Most of the referees participating in this research demonstrated strong camaraderie with their fellow referees with some

referees actually completing sentences for others during the focus group discussions indicating a very strong bond and understanding of each other and the shared experiences that they have had.

It was evident that within the association, the referees had developed strong relationships with each other. This mateship provided referees with a colleague to call on in time of need or simply a person with whom to compare notes. These networks while not shielding referees from the identified stresses and abuses that exist within officiating circles did nevertheless give them an individual whom they could confide in should the need arise. This in itself was a reward in many of the official's eyes.

Discussion

This research has confirmed and extended previous findings regarding sports referees and in particular rugby union referees decisions to stay involved in officiating. The themes that have emerged from this research suggest that organisational, personal and broader external factors influence referee retention.

This research extends Penner's (2002) approach to sustained volunteerism by highlighting the role of systemic factors on a referee's decision to remain involved in officiating. Systemic factors include the availability of progression and promotion, training and education. The camaraderie that exists within the refereeing ranks and the interaction that occurs between referees and referee coaches was also seen as being a crucial factor in keeping referees involved in officiating. Although personal dispositions have a role, they appear to be secondary to the camaraderie and mateship in this specific context. Auld (2004) acknowledged through his research into student volunteers that the decision to stay involved in volunteering was more likely to occur when the opportunity to socialise was provided. The current research reinforces this view point by highlighting the referee participant's opportunities to build social and mentor relationships within the rugby union fraternity through regular opportunities to engage with other referees, referee coaches and other personnel associated with rugby union at this level.

The findings of this research are important because they focus on issues related to the retention of sports officials which organisations such as refereeing associations, sporting clubs, and leagues have some degree of influence. One barrier to improving retention among the rugby union referees has

often been the myth surrounding the abuse that referees are often subjected to by coaches, players and spectators (Haynes & Panazzo, 2005; Kellett & Shilbury, 2007).

The findings from the current research indicate that this is not the case, aligning with the results of the Kellett and Shilbury (2007) study. Referee abuse whilst still occurring is no longer a major contributing factor in determining whether or not referees cease officiating. Associations have focused large amounts of funds in teaching and training referees to deal with abuse and stress (Pearce, 2003) as well as educating coaches, players and spectators of their obligations to provide a safe environment for all athletes to play and perform in. The NSW Department of Sport and Recreation introduced a pilot program called sport rage in 2004 which has successfully reminded all individuals involved in community and grass roots sports about their obligations for attending and watching local community sport (Department of Sport and Recreation, 2004; NSW Sport and Recreation, 2004). This program which has also been adopted by the NSWRU has seen the number of officials citing abuse and stress as a reason for ceasing to officiate diminish (Australian Rugby Union, 2010).

Further study required

Many opportunities for future research have arisen from the insights gained in this study. Firstly, future research endeavours should consider both current and past referees. Consideration of both groups will enhance the ability to identify key recruitment and retention factors or referee organisations. While recruitment factors are largely beyond the organisations' control as it is really dependent on an individual's reasoning for wanting to be a referee, retention factors are more likely to be directly controllable. Investigating the way different associations across Australia carry out their recruitment and retention drives would be a valuable research topic to identify the various strategies utilised and also enables the possibility to cross reference and compare against competing sports and codes.

Areas touched on in the context of this research that lend themselves to further investigation include the emphasis on accreditation and education, the role of the referee coach in the overall development of the official, and the importance of maintaining a set of support networks and structures for referees. For example, some referees had not coached or played rugby union. The provision of additional

support structures such as specialist positional and rule coaches that could assist these referees to acclimatise more quickly to the intricacies of rugby union would be beneficial in their overall growth and development as a referee. Future research is encouraged to compare the level of support and communication received in associations with high memberships compared to those with low memberships to see whether successful communication is a factor in referee retention. Additionally, research considering the impact of team competition within the league officials are officiating within also poses some interest within this research to see whether or not referees lose interest and cease officiating if the level of competition amongst teams is poor. Baldwin (2010) investigates this by focusing on the actual league competition and the effects that limited competition can have on the overall worth of a competition.

Conclusions

The findings from this study indicate that the decision to continue refereeing is influenced by different factors from the decision to discontinue. While acknowledging that many of the factors associated with decisions of referees to continue or quit are related to personal issues (largely not under the direct control of clubs), many other critical factors can be influenced by sport and referee associations. The social context and camaraderie that refereeing associations promote, and the direct and indirect sources of support from them are key ingredients in creating an atmosphere in which referees report more positive experiences. By recognising the complexities of refereeing experiences and the role of the association, officiating organisations can take substantial actions that may influence both the general environment of referees as well as the immediate day-to-day refereeing experience.

References

- Anshel, M., & Weinberg, R. (1996). Coping with acute stress among American and Australian Basketball Referees. *Journal of Sport Behaviour*, 19(3), 180-203.
- Auld, Chris. (2004). Behavioural characteristics of student volunteers *Australian Journal on Volunteering*, 9(2), 8-18.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2010a). Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2010b). Involvement in Organised Sport and Physical Activity. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Australian Rugby Union. (2010). Australian Rugby Union Annual Report. Sydney: Australian Rugby Union.
- Baldwin, Christopher. (2010). Fairness and subjectivity: auto-ethnography of a first time rugby referee. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Sports Studies*, 4(1), 65-83.
- Boyko, R, Boyko, A, & Boyko, M. (2007). Referee bias contributes to home advantage in English Premiership football. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 25(11), 1185-1194.
- Clegg, R, & Thompson, W. (1989). *Modern sports officiating: A practical guide*. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown Publishers.
- Cuskelly, G, Smith, C, & Hoye, R. (2009). Retaining early career referees in Australian rugby: Griffith University, La Trobe University, Australian Rugby Union.
- Davis, K. (1996). *The art of sports officiating*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Dawson, P, Dobson, S, Goddard, J, & Wilson, J. (2007). Are football referees really biased and inconsistent? Evidence on the incidence of disciplinary sanction in the English Premier League. *Journal of Statistics and Sociology*, 170(1), 231-250.
- Department of Sport and Recreation. (2004). Case Studies: Sport rage prevention pilot Retrieved 21/08/2007, 2007, from www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportsrage/sr_casestudies_bt.htm
- Eubank, M, Collins, D. (2000). The Influence of Anxiety Direction on Processing Bias. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 22, 292-306.
- Gofton, P. (2004). Pilot Study and appraisal of current referee communication. *Australian Rugby Union Level 3 Papers*.
- Gratton, C, & Jones, I. (2004). *Research methods for sports studies*. London: Routledge.
- Guillen, Felix, & Feltz, Deborah. (2011). A conceptual model of referee efficacy. *Frontiers in Movement Science and Sports Psychology*, 2(25), 1-5.
- Haynes, M, & Panazzo, A. (2005). Strategies to deal with abuse of officials. *Officiating Australia*, 5(1), 4.
- Hoye, Russell. (2007). Commitment, Involvement and Performance of Voluntary Sport Organisation Board Members. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 7(1), 109-121. doi: 10.1080/16184740701270402
- Hoye, Russell, & Cuskelly, Graham. (2003). Board power and performance within voluntary sport organisations. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 3(2), 103-119. doi: 10.1080/16184740308721943
- Jennings, M. (2001). Professionalism and refereeing: Life on the Australian National Referees Squad. *Australian Rugby Union Level 3 Papers*, 1-11.
- Kaissidis, A.N, & Anshel, M.H. (1993). Sources and intensity of acute stress in adolescent and adult Australian basketball referees. *Australian Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, 25, 97-103.
- Kellett, P, & Shilbury, D. (2007). Umpire Participation: Is Abuse Really the Issue? *Sport Management Review*, 10, 209-229.
- Koh-Tan, Angela. (2011). The determinants of effectiveness of sporting associations in Singapore. *Managing Leisure*, 16(3), 216-230. doi: 10.1080/13606719.2011.583409
- Marshall, C, & Rossman, G. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.). USA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- NSW Sport and Recreation. (2004). Sport Rage: A prevention guide for referees. Sydney, NSW: NSW Sport and Recreation.
- Patching, G. (2003). What a new referee really needs to know. *Australian Rugby Union Level 3 Papers*, 1-7.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Pearce, N. (2003). The effect of physical stress on decision making accuracy. *Australian Rugby Union Level 3 Papers*.
- Penner, L. A. (2002). The causes of sustained volunteerism: An interactionist perspective. *Journal of Social Issues, 58*, 447-467.
- Plessner, H. (1999). Expectation Biases in Gymnastics Judging. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 21*, 131-144.
- Rainey, D., & Hardy, L. (1999). Sources of stress, burnout and intention to terminate among rugby union referees. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 17*, 797-806.
- Rodafinos, A., Anshel, M., & Porter, A. (1997). Personal and situational factors that predict coping strategies for acute stress among basketball referees. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 15*, 427-436.
- Rowe, D. (1999). *Sport, Culture and the Media*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Rundle-Thiele, Sharyn, & Auld, Chris. (2009). Should I stay or should I go? Retention of junior sport coaches. *Annals of Leisure Research, 12*(1), 1-21. doi: 10.1080/11745398.2009.9686806
- Soares, Jorge, Correia, Abel, & Rosado, António. (2010). Political Factors in the Decision-making Process in Voluntary Sports Associations. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 10*(1), 5-29. doi: 10.1080/16184740903554033
- Stewart, M.J., & Ellery, P.J. (1998). Amount of psychological stress reported by high school volleyball officials. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 83*, 337-338.
- Sutter, M., & Kocher, M. (2004). Favouritism of agents - The case of referees' home bias. *Journal of Economic Psychology, 25*, 461-469.
- Timms, Robin (2011, 06/06). [Double up of games and lack of referee coaches].
- Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: SAGE Publications.