Date: 11/07/26
Location: Mobile, Alabama

Deep South Rugby Referee Society
Annual General Meeting — Minutes

DRAFT — Subject to approval at the next general meeting. Prepared by the Secretary from the meeting recording.

Presiding: Alex Sharland, President (virtual), until he left at approx. 0:44 into the recording. Stephen Parrill and EJ Sarama presided for the rest of the meeting.

Secretary: Zach Carmello (meeting host; recording made on the Secretary's laptop)

Present in person: EJ Sarama, Thomas Brennan, Jon Sullivan (Bibs), Tristian Boudreau, Caleb Glover, Parker Callegari, Tumelo Thobosi, Hal Mayo, Craig Gothreaux, Zach Carmello

Present online: Alex Sharland, Stephen Parrill, Duane Schrader, Melissa Kelly (joined approx. 0:37)

Proxies: Abigail Tobias, Matt McClure. A third proxy for Craig Gothreaux was not needed because he attended in person.

Quorum: The Secretary declared a quorum present, counting the proxies, the members online and the members in the room.

Date / Time: Saturday, November 7, 2026, 6:03 PM – 7:21 PM, Mobile, Alabama (in person, with online attendees on Microsoft Teams)

Key: **Motion** · **Action item**

A. Meeting Opening and Financial Report

1. Motion to accept previous meeting minutes
   - **MOTION: Approve the minutes of the previous AGM (Nov 2025).** Moved by Zach Carmello (Secretary); seconded by Thomas Brennan. No opposition. **CARRIED.**
   - The previous minutes and their action items were shared on screen for online attendees.
2. Financial Report (Hal)
   - Hal Mayo (Treasurer) reported the balances from the spreadsheet he had recently sent to the board: PayPal $1,120.86; Venmo $3,583.32; Regions checking $2,420.38. Total: $7,124.56 (summarized at the meeting as "about $6,000 to $7,000").
   - The annual referee development fee went up from $200 to $250 per team. Almost all teams paid quickly once invoiced. Only one organization questioned the increase.
   - Outstanding fees: Gold Coast Land Sharks RFC, and Okaloosa RFC (now combined with Panama City under Okaloosa). Wiregrass has been waived. Four men's and two women's college teams have been invoiced and are waiting on their schools to pay; this can take 1–2 months (Louisiana-Lafayette possibly until spring). The Treasurer suggested the next step should be "no refs until you pay." This was discussed only; no motion was made.
   - Dispute with the Alabama Rugby Foundation: they say one fee covers both the Alabama men's and women's teams because they are the same school. The society's position is that they are two separate teams. **ACTION: Zach Carmello to call Robert and resolve the dispute this month.** **ACTION: EJ Sarama to follow up with Okaloosa/Panama City.**
   - New Orleans RFC pays one $250 fee for the three social teams it splits into during November–December (about 6 games in total). Consensus was not to press the issue, since the club pays its match fees reliably. Stephen Parrill suggested approaching the Robert Markel Cup organizers about one combined referee fee.

- **MOTION: When U19 schedules are set, invoice U19 teams $200 per match (referee plus two ARs), provided the society can supply ARs.** Thomas Brennan (Assignments Officer) spoke in support: teams now ask for ARs and see the value. Moved by Thomas Brennan; seconded by Zach Carmello. No debate. All in favor; none opposed; no abstentions. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- The Treasurer will keep operating funds in Venmo this year, rather than sweeping them to checking, so referee fees can be paid all season. **ACTION: Hal Mayo.**
- LA Tech and Loyola: Zach Carmello refereed both games and filled out tax forms for each school. For the LA Tech game, a local Texas referee who is not a DSRRS member (and so not covered by society insurance) also showed up. The group discussed handing LA Tech coverage to the Texas society (TRRA). Any DSRRS coverage of LA Tech must include mileage and a hotel. **ACTION: Thomas Brennan to speak with Ross (Texas) and report back.** The decision was parked until next year's AGM.
- **ACTION: Zach Carmello and Hal Mayo to set up society-level invoicing for Loyola before the next college season.**
- Tallahassee (Florida Union) is not formally served by DSRRS. Referees may still cover games there if the team pays the fee plus mileage.

B. Motion: Officer Role Definitions
- Zach Carmello presented the amendment circulated to members a few weeks before the meeting. It rewrites Article 7, Section 7.1, modeled on the Texas Referee Society bylaws. The constitution permits amendment by a two-thirds vote of full members at a general meeting with at least 21 days' written notice. The agenda and draft motion were sent on October 12, 2026 (26 days' notice, which meets the requirement).
- Summary of the amendment: the Executive Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, RDO and Assignments Officer (other appointed officers are non-voting). The amendment defines each officer's duties, including: all match appointment requests route through the Assignments Officer; the RDO is the society's final authority on interpreting the laws of the game, subject to World Rugby and USA Rugby, and is responsible for grading and promotion. It also lets the President appoint other officers. The resignation clause is unchanged. An officer may be removed by a two-thirds vote at an AGM or special general meeting; grounds include failure to perform duties and missing three consecutive regular ExCo meetings. Vacancies are filled at the next AGM or SGM, with the President appointing in the interim, except that a vacancy in the presidency is filled by the VP.
- **MOTION: Adopt the amended officer role definitions (Article 7, §7.1).** Moved by Alex Sharland; seconded by Hal Mayo. No debate. All in favor; none opposed; no abstentions. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** (more than the two-thirds required).
- **ACTION: Zach Carmello to update the online copy of the constitution.**

C. Determine which Officer Positions are up for election
- Stephen Parrill will stand down as Vice President and will not seek re-election. He will continue his True South work and as a course instructor. Duane Schrader will stand down as RDO.
- The constitution requires staggered elections (three of the six offices each year), so the Secretary volunteered to make his own office the third position up for election.
- **Up for election this year: Vice President, RDO and Secretary.** Up next year: President, Treasurer and Assignments Officer. This rotation will continue going forward.
- Thomas Brennan, speaking for Alex (who was having trouble speaking), proposed this slate: EJ Sarama for VP, and Alex Sharland as President and RDO for the next 12 months, with a new President and RDO elected in 12 months.
- The constitution does not require the RDO to hold CMO certification, but the expectation is that an RDO will obtain it. Stephen Parrill can teach the CMO 1 course (one day, 8 hours, in person).

D. Officer Elections
    1. President: **Alex Sharland** (continuing; not up for election this year)
    2. Vice President:**EJ Sarama — elected.** Nominated by Thomas Brennan; seconded by Hal Mayo. EJ accepted. Term: 2026–2028. No other nominations; elected without objection.
    3. Treasurer:**Hal Mayo** (continuing; not up for election this year)
    4. RDO (Referee Development Officer): **Alex Sharland — elected (interim)**, to serve until a better-suited person is found. Nominated by Thomas Brennan. Alex accepted. Term: 2026–2028. No other nominations.
    5. Secretary: **Zach Carmello — re-elected.** Nominated by Thomas Brennan; seconded by Hal Mayo. Zach accepted. Term: 2026–2028. No other nominations.
    6. Assignments Officer: **Thomas Brennan** (continuing; not up for election this year)

E. Outstanding Issues for Future Discussion - Last Year
    1. CMO (Coaching Match Official) payment structure - society vs team responsibility
        - Stephen Parrill: a proper CMO visit, covering travel, observation, pre- and post-match debrief and a written report, is about 5 hours of work, and people are less willing to do it at a personal loss. He said CMO costs should be a society expense, not charged to teams, and could be budgeted with a fixed amount per season.
        - Duane Schrader: there is a real difference between informal sideline coaching and a written evaluation. To earn a fee, a CMO should have to produce a written report.
        - The ideal is to observe every referee about once a year, with flexibility between a coaching session and a formal evaluation. Alex noted the society's geography makes this hard outside of 7s and the Battleship tournament. Most referees do not currently know their grade. Stephen Parrill shared the new competency-based grade chart (e.g., Level 8 = old C3 = 0–9 competencies; Level 1 Elite = 37+) and emailed the competency sheets to members.
        - **Goal:** have every society referee graded by May. **ACTION: RDO and ExCo.** Zach Carmello's membership roster spreadsheet (his own design, built in Excel) has a grade field and is available to ExCo. **ACTION: Zach Carmello to add "date last observed/coached" and "date grade assigned" fields, as Duane and Steve suggested.**
        - Current CMOs: Stephen Parrill, Alex Sharland, Duane Schrader, Matt McClure and Hal Mayo. Dane Stewart is inactive; Eric Fournier has moved to the Mid-America society.
        - **MOTION: Establish a $500 discretionary fund for the RDO to reimburse necessary expenses and travel.** Moved by Zach Carmello; seconded by Thomas Brennan. Alex Sharland voiced approval before leaving the meeting. All in favor (including online); none opposed; no abstentions. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** A per-report payment of $25–$50 was discussed but **not** approved; the fund covers necessary expenses only. The RDO submits receipts to the Treasurer. **ACTION: Hal Mayo to set up the budget line item.**
        - Anyone interested in standing for RDO next year is encouraged to take the CMO course in December or January. The RDO could be elected pro tem mid-year, and RDO work could be organized as a committee by region, for example Birmingham.
        - **ACTION: Stephen Parrill to lead scheduling of a CMO 1 course in New Orleans.** Candidate Sundays: Dec 20, 2026 and Jan 10, 2027; Steve later sent four dates. Minimum 4 participants, ideally 6–8; must be in person; no cost to USA Rugby. **ACTION: Zach Carmello to send a date survey to members and provide his office conference room (up to about 20 people).** This was recorded as an action item rather than a motion because it does not change society policy.
    2. NCR game assignments and insurance coverage

- The issue is considered moot: DSRRS does not assign officials to NCR games outside its own process, and LSU is now invoiced through DSRRS. Thomas Brennan spoke to David Haynes, who will not take NCR games in the region away from DSRRS and relies on DSRRS to cover them.
- DSRRS is neutral in disputes between college governing bodies; it simply supplies referees. Referees are encouraged to register with NCR as well. **ACTION: Hal Mayo to contact David Haynes and report back.**

3. Formal officer role definitions to be added to constitution next year
   - Completed. Adopted by motion under Item B.
4. Regional coverage strategy implementation
   - This overlaps with the RDO and CMO discussion. Referees are currently observed ad hoc; a regional schedule is needed (north, central, and Montgomery if a referee is added there), with reports entered in the roster spreadsheet. Hal Mayo described this approach for his area (north and central, plus Montgomery if a referee is added there) and will write up reports from the day's tournament. **ACTION: Hal Mayo to write up the tournament observation reports and enter them in the roster.**
   - Zach Carmello asked whether other societies' grading systems could serve as a model. Suggestions: the Texas society (Ross) and SERS (Nigel). Members advised against modeling on Mid-South. **ACTION: ExCo / RDO to contact Texas and SERS about their evaluation systems.**
   - Stephen Parrill noted that advancement is limited by how few high-level matches the region has. Opportunities ahead: Loyola is possibly moving to D1A next year; LSU is D1A; True South Championships; a possible True South super regional (two bids, assessed in January); and tournaments in March and April.

F. New Business

- **1. Society team store (Jon Sullivan "Bibs").** The last two rounds of referee kit were inconsistent. Proposal: set up a standing DSRRS team store with World Rugby Shop (Birmingham; contact Eric), so new referees can order kit (jerseys, black shorts, socks, pullovers, jackets, backpacks) individually and have it shipped direct. Zach noted the Steamroller kit was always meant as a stopgap and will provide the logo created this year. Members discussed less common referee colors (sky blue, pink, lime/yellow).
- **MOTION: Appoint Jon Sullivan (Bibs) as interim Apparel Officer.** Moved by Zach Carmello; seconded by Thomas Brennan, Stephen Parrill and Hal Mayo. Bibs accepted. All in favor; none opposed; no abstentions. **CARRIED.** This is a non-voting appointed officer under the amended §7.1. **ACTION: Bibs to set up the World Rugby Shop team store with Eric. ACTION: Zach to supply logo graphics.**
- **2. Course update (Stephen Parrill).** Level 2 course, Dec 12–13, New Orleans: six enrolled: Craig Gothreaux ("Squirrelly"), Michael Hyde, Thomas Brennan, Zach Carmello, Tristian Boudreau and Tumelo Thobosi. Instructors include Scott Green and Rosalind Anderson. Level 1 course, Dec 12, New Orleans: four signed up. Host Adam Massey may enroll 4–5 of his players, paid for by True South. Olivia (LSU women) is not yet registered. True South has funds to help members from outside New Orleans with travel and hotels.
- **ACTION: All members to promote the L1/L2/CMO courses on social media. ACTION: Caleb Glover to contact Laney and Steph Robinson (Birmingham). ACTION: Thomas Brennan to include a course announcement in the weekly assignment email. ACTION: Tristan to follow up on Mississippi State interest in L1.**
- **3. Requiring each club to send one L1 attendee per year (raised by Bibs).** Discussed only. Past attempts led to disputes with clubs, and college rosters turn over quickly. Consensus: encourage clubs, don't require it. A related idea was having club ARs complete the online AR course. A $50 fee discount for clubs that send someone to L1 was raised and rejected to protect the budget; it was noted the society finished August with its lowest-ever balance. No motion.

- **4. Referee dues paid to the society (in exchange for kit).** Raised for discussion. No appetite among members. No motion.
- **5. Referee retention.** Stephen Parrill: only about 1 in 10 course attendees becomes an active referee. A member noted a long-standing practice of refunding the L1 course fee to anyone who referees two matches in a year. A refund was offered to Caleb Glover. **ACTION: Hal Mayo to review the refund policy and process Caleb's refund.**
- **6. Assignment software (Thomas Brennan).** Assignments are currently done ad hoc with spreadsheets. Part of the $50 fee increase was intended to fund assignment software. Rough cost: $150–$300 per year. No vote was taken at the AGM. A budget and transition plan will go to the Executive Committee, which will approve it. **ACTION: Thomas Brennan and Zach Carmello to present a software proposal, including a phase-in plan for teams, at the next ExCo meeting.**
- **7. Succession / new ExCo members (Thomas Brennan).** ExCo needs new blood. Parker Callegari has expressed interest. ExCo is limited to six voting officers, so Parker will join as a non-voting member of the Secretary committee, shadow the Secretary and attend ExCo meetings. No motion needed. **ACTION: Zach Carmello to onboard Parker.** Tristian Boudreau (starting a master's program) will shadow the Treasurer. **ACTION: Hal Mayo to email Tristian.** Other interested members should speak up.

G. Action Items:

Owner	Task	Due
Hal Mayo	Follow up on outstanding fees (Gold Coast Land Sharks, Okaloosa/Panama City, college invoices)	Ongoing
Zach Carmello	Resolve the Alabama Rugby Foundation fee dispute (call Robert); follow up with Okaloosa/Panama City	Nov 2026
Hal Mayo	Invoice U19 teams $200/match per motion; keep operating funds in Venmo	When U19 schedule is set
Thomas Brennan	Speak with Ross (Texas) about LA Tech coverage; report back	Next AGM
Zach Carmello / Hal Mayo	Set up Loyola invoicing at the society level	Before next college season
Zach Carmello	Update online constitution: Article 7, §7.1	2026 EOY
Hal Mayo	Create $500 RDO discretionary budget line	
Zach Carmello	Add last-observed and grade-date fields to the roster	Complete
RDO / ExCo	Grade every society referee	May 2027
Stephen Parrill / Zach Carmello	Schedule CMO 1 course; send date survey; provide venue	Survey ASAP
Hal Mayo	Contact David Haynes about NCR; referees to register with NCR	
Hal Mayo	Write up Nov 7 tournament observation reports; enter them in the roster	
ExCo / RDO	Contact Texas (Ross) and SERS (Nigel) about evaluation models	
Jon Sullivan (Bibs)	Set up World Rugby Shop team store with Eric	
All; Caleb Glover; Thomas Brennan	Promote L1/L2 courses (social media, Birmingham contacts, assignment email)	Before Dec 5
Hal Mayo	Review the L1 refund policy; process Caleb Glover's refund	
Thomas Brennan / Zach Carmello	Present assignment software budget and transition plan for ExCo approval	Next ExCo meeting
Zach Carmello	Onboard Parker Callegari to the Secretary committee and ExCo emails	
Hal Mayo	Email Tristian Boudreau about shadowing the Treasurer	
Zach Carmello	Circulate draft minutes to the membership	11/11/2026

H. Motion to adjourn
    - **MOTION: Adjourn.** Moved by Zach Carmello; seconded by Hal Mayo. None opposed. **CARRIED.** The meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Zach Carmello, Secretary. DRAFT — not yet approved.

This content is maintained by the Deep South Rugby Referee Society. It does not represent the official positions of USA Rugby or True South Rugby Union. DSRRS does not act on behalf of either governing body and this information has not had governing body review.