

First International Conference on the Science and Practice of Sports Refereeing

22-24 September 2014 - Clermont-Ferrand (France)

Despite their importance in sports performance, referees received little scientific attention in the decades prior to the year 2000. Since then, research on sports officials has begun to proliferate, with investigations into stress, decision making and judgment, communication and physical performance. Sport refereeing is becoming a scientific field in its own right (Dosseville & Garnarczyk, 2007; Dosseville, Laborde, in press). However, a citation analysis reveals very little connectivity between the different studies into sports officials (Hancock, Rix-Lièvre, Côté, in press).

The aim of this conference is to provide researchers studying sport refereeing with a discussion space in order to increase and improve the scientific network in this area. This network is then expected to answer new queries and to meet the practical challenges of sport refereeing.

Referees are often subject to criticism from various sources: the media, the staff of sports clubs, coaches, and supporters -not sure whether criticisms are 'correct'/justified or not. Many rules of sport are complex and ambiguous, which leads to differences in interpretations. Furthermore, refereeing in naturalistic settings is not a robotic application of the letter of the law. The referee must take into account the entire game context, to "sell" decisions, and to balance flow and control issues (Mascarenhas, Collins, Mortimer, & Morris, 2005; Mascarenhas, O'Hare, & Plessner, 2006). As referees are often interactors -i.e., they are in interaction with the players on the pitch- (MacMahon & Plessner, 2008), they must balance the need to make decisions and enforce the rules, with the need to move about the performance space, and manage the athletes and ensure their safety. In such a complex task, it is challenging to determine the optimal methods to measure, teach, refine, and enhance performance.

Few researchers have studied the complexity of sport refereeing in naturalistic settings (c.f., Rix, 2005; Mascarenhas, Button, O'Hare, & Dicks 2009). More research is needed, therefore, to understand and to identify the barriers and facilitators to elite refereeing performance. Several studies have already proposed and evaluated the interest and the impact of referee training programs (e.g., Mascarenhas, et al., 2005; MacMahon, Starkes, & Deakin, 2007). In order to continue and grow this area of work and the application to on-field performance and demands, additional study is required.

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Given the state of the research on sports refereeing at present, **the scope of this conference includes a broad range of work which contributes to a greater understanding of refereeing performance and/or provides some directions for the development of this area.**

This conference also aims to bring together the research and the practitioner (e.g., referees, referee managers). Several recognized practitioners will be invited to provide an applied perspective on research, and account for the main practical challenges present in the current sport refereeing environment.

Plenary sessions:

Scientific keynotes

- Werner Helsen, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Department of Biomedical Kinesiology (Belgium)
- Henning Plessner, University of Heidelberg, Institute of Psychology (Germany)
- Michel Serres (*with reservations*), Académie Française (France)

Round tables involving key practitioners

- What should training priorities be by level of involvement?
- What is the future in elite refereeing?

Scientific committee:

- Géraldine Rix-Lièvre, Clermont University (France)
- Duarte Araujo, University of Lisbon (Portugal)
- Clare MacMahon, Swinburne University (Australia)
- Duncan Mascarenhas, Glyndwr University (UK)
- Henning Plessner, University of Heidelberg (Germany)



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Call for abstracts

The PERF Arbitrage, Clermont University, are pleased to announce the call for abstract submissions for the **First International Conference on the Science and Practice of Sports Refereeing**.

Abstracts are restricted to 6000 characters in total (including spaces).

Required format is MS Word Times New Roman 12, double spaced.

Please include:

- Title of Paper
- Name of Author(s),
- Institutional Affiliation,
- e-mail address of corresponding author
- 5 keywords that best describe the subject and the area of the submission
- Small Bibliography

Proposals for panel discussions, including a tentative list of participants, are also welcome and should follow the same format as paper abstracts.

Abstracts must be submitted electronically in a Microsoft Word file, attached to an e-mail sent to perf.arbitrage@univ-bpclermont.fr

Submission Deadline: 20 June 2014

Notification of acceptance: 15th July 2014

Contact :

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