

Rugby Referee Education in Tübingen

In the heart of Baden-Württemberg, eleven new referee candidates took their first steps with whistle in hand on Saturday 23 April. Hosted by Rugby Club Tübingen e.V. at the University of Tübingen, Institute for Sport Science, the course was an international happening with participants and educators from Germany, Argentina, Mexico, Romania, the USA and even Hessen! Four rugby passionaté from Rugby Union Marburg made the 7 hour round trip to join along with new colleagues from Stuttgart Rugby Club.



Caitlin, Flo & Felix made the long trip down from Marburg to work with Dana

Led by World Rugby Educators Dana Teagarden and Susanne Wiedemann, the Level 1 Introduction to Rugby Refereeing Course focused on practical experience through hands-on refereeing of live game situations, Role Playing of typical referee briefings and interaction scenarios, theoretical discussions about the role of the referee and characteristics of an effective referee, and Game Understanding.

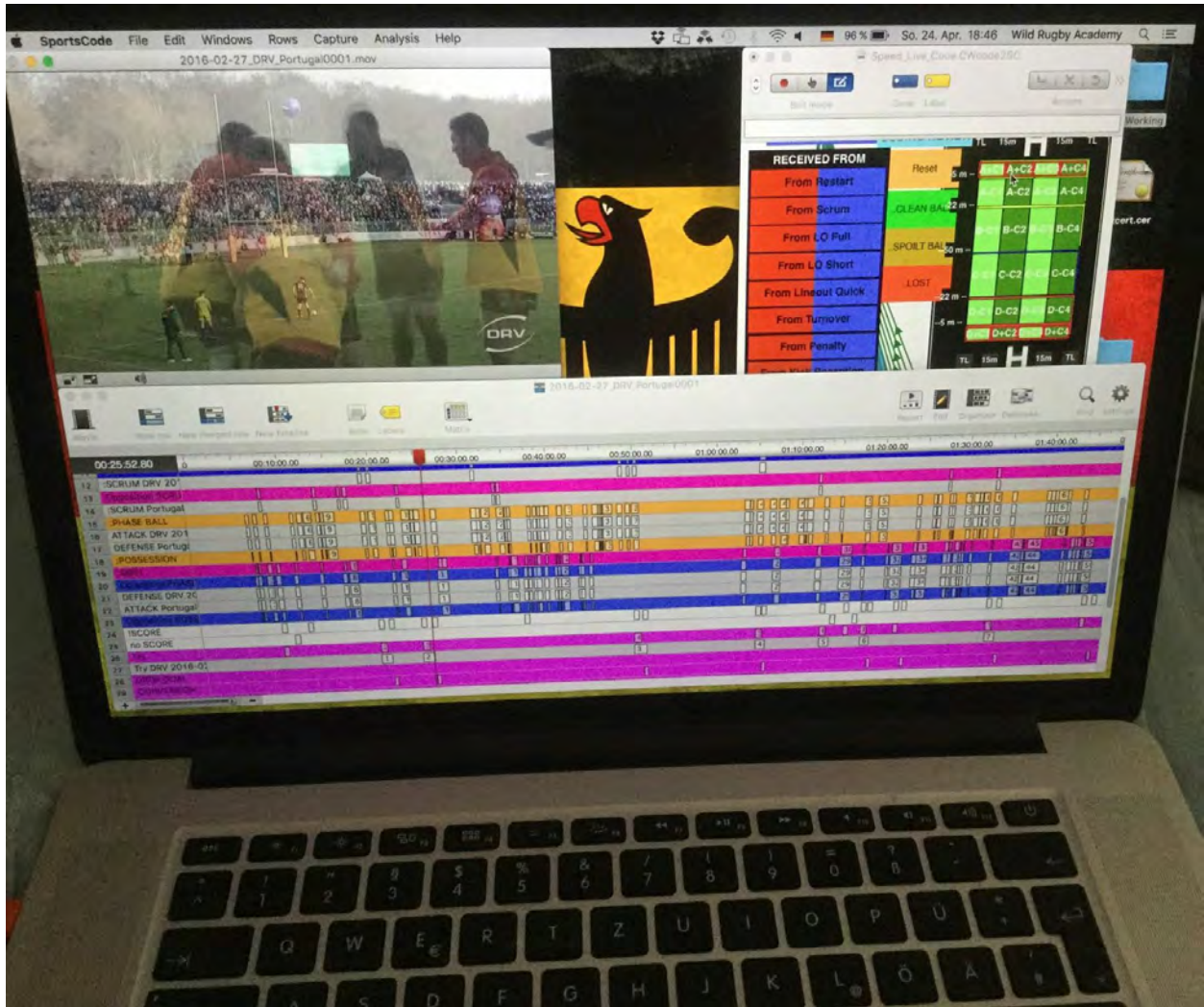


Delphine peer coaches Basti and Henrik on the Whistle-Signal-Talk sequence



(L to R) Flo, Delphine, Dana, Caitlin, Henrik, Basti, Felix, Stefan and Andreas - still smiling after several wet hours on the training pitch

Utilizing the video analysis tools provided by the Wild Rugby Academy which support Dana's work with the German Men's National team, participants learned techniques for self-driven analysis and learning.



Self-analysis doesn't require a big investment. With an iPhone and a friend, a referee can get video for self-analysis or email to a referee coach for discussion.

Susanne led a session on planning and fitness as well as a break-out rugby basics session for the three participants who are brand-new to rugby.



Susanne, Philip & Michael discussing Body Language & Sphere of Influence while Henrik works on making his Whistle-Talk effective and clear



Caitlin (Romania) & Felix (Argentina) give Philip (Mexico) a lesson in the Scrum Dark Arts

All in all, it was an amazing rugby day full of fun and growth. Educator Dana Teagarden, a former International Panel and 3-time World Cup Referee, said, "I've traveled the world with

rugby and one thing remains consistent - you meet passionate, kind, amazing people. I learn something at every course. Michael's explanation about his discomfort at having his back to a team helped me understand why the "side-on" position at the tackle/ruck is such a typical choice from new referees, even after they work through the exercise which shows how ineffective that position is, both for adjudicating the breakdown and influencing off-sides."

Susanne Wiedemann, who represented Germany at two World Cups and established the German Women's 7s program, brought her education as Diplom Trainer of the German Olympic Federation (Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund) to bear, "I am very much impressed by the participants. It is great to see how committed, motivated and curious everybody is. The positive learning environment had an immediate positive impact on all of us. It is mutually enriching because we not only get the opportunity to share our experience but also get valuable knowledge and input in return. And on top of it all, we had a lot of fun."

Henrik Rang, Stuttgarter Rugby Club e.V., took off like a cannon in the first practical exercise, basically clearing out the ruck with whistle in hand. He said, "I realized that my automatic running lines as a player got me to the breakdown quickly but then I had to consciously figure out how to "get out of the way!"

Catalin-Gabriel Veverita, who began playing aged 10 in his native Romania, is looking to begin his next "rugby life" as a referee and is a passionate club man for Rugby Union Marburg. "Perhaps now I will have a bit more patience and sympathy with the referee. It's not quite as easy as you think and I'm looking forward to doing my best."

"I love sport and just found rugby 6 months ago. I am consumed by wanting to understand it!! Right now I run doggedly all over the place and think if I understand the Laws a bit better perhaps I won't injure myself and will be more effective for my team. And I had such fun and learned so much that I want to referee!" reflected speedster Philip Castilleja Dittrich.

Philip and Michael Endres were "penalized" for being too fast and made to walk through the pitch exercises, "that made me realize that by slowing down I could actually more effectively evaluate the situation and have more positive impact on play," said Michael.

Basti Winkshca didn't come to the course actually planning to referee but wanted to support his club and learn how to be a better player. At the end of the course he asked, "I had so much fun today that I want to referee. But I also want to play as long as possible and my club needs me in the front row. How can I do both?" Dana suggested that Basti organize with his coach to referee parts of team training sessions, consider reffing at the VL tournaments in the matches his club doesn't play and make himself available for youth or women's tournaments.

Though sidelined by injury in the pitch exercise, Matthias Kiess and Delphine Ehmman, were tasked with observing and delivering peer coaching. "We set-up a rotation where Susanne tasked us with specific observation tasks and then we gave peer feedback to the referee from

the exercise. Dana kept the group active for the next referee which was important in the cold, wet conditions. I learned even more than I expected!" said Delphine.

The next currently planned referee education events in Hessen and Baden-Württemberg will be in September 2016. A Level 1 Referee course focused on young referees will be hosted by SC80 Frankfurt. In Heidelberg, the SRBW will host both a Level 1 and a Level 2 referee course. If you are interested in obtaining further info for these courses, or in hosting a course for your club or organization, please contact Dana at dtgarden@yahoo.com. Please indicate which course and which weekend(s) in September are your 1st, 2nd and 3rd preference or what course your organization has interest in hosting.

For more info about Rugby Club Tübingen e.V.
<https://www.facebook.com/rugbyclubtuebingen/>

Referees in Baden-Württemberg
<https://rbwref.wordpress.com>

Referees in Germany
<http://www.drereferees.de>

Rugby Union Marburg
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