

# CHAPTER 6

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to identify the competencies required by a referee to become successful at the highest level. In this chapter the relevant conclusions and recommendations are made, based on the results presented in Chapter 5.

### 6.2 REQUIRED COMPETENCIES OF RUGBY REFEREES

The ten most important competencies a rugby referee should possess are:

- **Objectivity / Impartiality** (*being able to treat both sides the same*)
- **Consistency** (*consistency in the way rules are applied during a match*)
- **Concentration / Focus** (*ability to stay focused during a match and not allow the mind to fluctuate*)
- **Honesty / Integrity** (*the ability to be honest with players, on and off the field*)
- **Commitment** (*dedication to do the best when preparing for games, know the rules, and always giving the best when refereeing a match*)
- **Judgment** (*ability to evaluate and judge situations during a match correctly*)
- **Fitness** (*fitness in terms of physical ability to keep up with play during a match*)
- **Trustworthiness** (*ability to make the players trust you and know that you will apply the laws consistently and fairly*)
- **Decisiveness** (*ability to reach quick and firm decisions*)

- **Composure** (*to be calm during difficult situations*)

Other important competencies are the following:

- Communication on the field – oral
- Self-confidence
- Problem analysis
- Conflict handling
- Resoluteness
- Respect
- Eyesight
- Player control
- Technical skills – law application
- Technical skills – general
- Flexibility
- Preparation
- Frustration tolerance
- Mental toughness
- Stress tolerance
- Ambition
- Influence on players
- Initiative
- Authority
- Leadership
- Athleticism
- Persuasiveness
- Competitiveness
- Creativity/Innovation
- Rapport with players
- Dynamism

### **6.3 COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS BETWEEN REFEREE AND PLAYER GROUPS**

After an analysis of variance (ANOVA) the following significant differences were observed within groups and/or between referee and players groups:

- Concentration / Focus
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Blue Bulls referees and the Western Province referees. The Western Province referees rated this competency higher (mean score of 4.74) compared to the Blue Bulls referees (mean score of 4.06).
- Honesty / Integrity
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Western Province referees and the Blue Bulls players, and also between the Gauteng Lions referees and the Blue Bulls players. In both cases the Gauteng Lions referees and the Western Province referees (both with mean scores of 4.68) rated “Honesty/Integrity” higher compared with the Blue Bulls players (mean score of 4.00).
- Decisiveness
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Western Province referees who rated “Decisiveness” higher (mean score of 4.56) compared to the Blue Bulls players (mean score of 4.00).
- Fitness
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Western Province referees and the Blue Bulls players, with the Western Province referees rating the competency higher (mean score of 4,64) compared to the Blue Bulls players (mean score of 4.11).

- Resoluteness
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Blue Bulls players (mean score of 3.94) and the Blue Bulls referees (mean score of 4.63). The Blue Bulls referees rated the competency higher compared to the players.
- Athleticism
  - The significant difference for this competency is between Blue Bulls referees (mean score of 3.53) and the Western Province referees (mean score of 4.28). The Western Province referees rated “Athleticism” higher compared to the Blue Bulls referees.
- Stress tolerance
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Blue Bulls referees and the Western Province referees, with the Western Province referees rating the competency higher (mean score of 4.46) compared to the Blue Bulls referees (mean score of 3.72).
- Preparation
  - The significant difference for this competency is between the Western Province referees (mean score of 4.44) and the Gauteng Lions referees (mean score of 4.03).

It is interesting to note that the significant differences of three competencies occur between the Blue Bulls referees and the Western Province referees, and on three occasions between the Blue Bulls players and the Western Province referees. The Western Province referees rated the competencies higher in all instances.

Although statistical significant, no special meaning should be attached to these differences. One group may take some of the competencies for granted and rate it lower, although they still consider the competencies to be important. Also, the environmental circumstances in which the questionnaires were completed may have differed and could have contributed to the different ratings.

## 6.4 CATEGORIES FROM COMPETENCIES

The factor analysis revealed that the 36 competencies can be classified in two clear categories or factors. Only three competencies did not fall clearly into a specific category and could, therefore, be included in either of the two categories.

The two categories were labeled as

- Very important competencies, and
- Important competencies

The “**Very important competencies**” included the following:

- Trustworthiness
- Concentration / Focus
- Objectivity / Impartiality
- Honesty / Integrity
- Self-confidence
- Commitment
- Composure
- Consistency
- Decisiveness
- Fitness
- Judgment
- Resoluteness
- Conflict handling
- Flexibility
- Problem analysis
- Eyesight

The “**Important competencies**” included the following:

- Player control
- Respect
- Athleticism
- Authority
- Communication on the field – oral
- Leadership
- Initiative
- Persuasiveness
- Frustration tolerance
- Rapport with players
- Dynamism
- Competitiveness
- Creativity / Innovation
- Mental toughness
- Influence on players

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations can be made with regards to improving the competence of referees:

- The ten most important competencies identified through this study should be incorporated into selection and training programmes for new referee recruits.
- A test battery should be developed to measure the ten most important competencies. This may be utilised as a screening (selection) battery to reduce the drop-out rate among the recruits.
- In the short-term the identified competencies may be incorporated in a rating scale and utilised by a knowledgeable panel to assess recruits as well as referees. Development areas (competencies not on the required level) can be identified in this way and individualised training and development

programmes can be introduced to develop high potential faster, and to improve the general standard of refereeing.

Recommendations with regards to the execution of the study are the following:

- The study can be expanded to include the opinions of more players. The number of players that were included in the sample was too low to apply more comprehensive statistical procedures. A large group of referees and players will allow the application of the *t*-test to determine possible differences in opinions between the groups.
- The study can be expanded internationally to compare the differences between the perceptions of South African referees with referees from other countries.

## **6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The following limitations and consequences were experienced during the completion of the study:

- The relative low response rate from some of the referee unions/societies and Currie Cup teams limited the statistical analysis to an extent.
- The physical distance between the researcher and most of the sample made it difficult to manage the logistics of the data gathering process.
- A very limited number of studies have been done in this field and this limited the availability of literature.