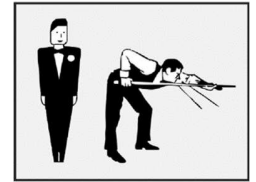


# *Snooker & Billiards New South Wales Inc.*

*Established 1917*



## **NSW Referees - Annual Report 2020-21**

Members, I'm pleased to present my second annual report as your State Director of Referees, which covers the financial year ending 30/06/21.

The Covid-19 restrictions imposed from March 2020 impacted upon the community in many ways, with Snooker and Billiards being no exception. It was not until 31/10/20 that SBNSW were able to hold the first event for the 2020-21 year which enabled a resumption of NSW refereeing activities. Over the next eight months 14 individual referees (28%) officiated at a total of 16 events (13 State, 2 National, 1 Club Open) and I once again thank each and every one of those referees for providing their time and highly valued assistance.

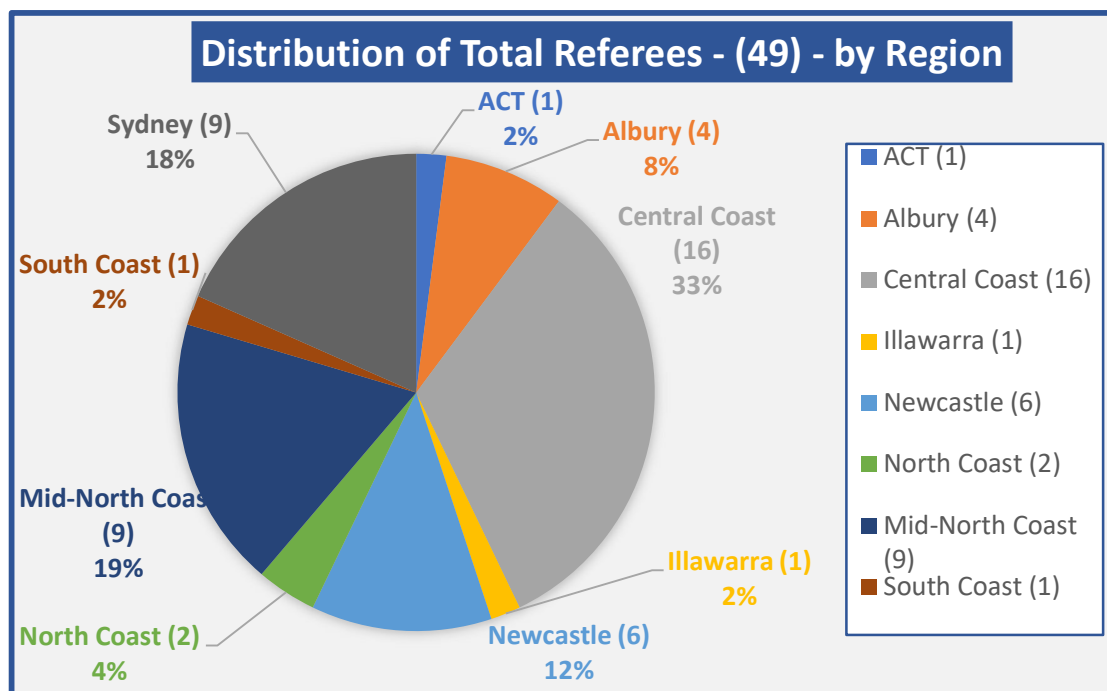
Whilst we did manage to successfully officiate for these events it was not without difficulties, primarily with the limited number of referees prepared to 'put their hand up'. With an average of 2-3 events per month, and only 28% of current NSW referees able to assist (for various reasons) it was an incredible effort by the 14 referees who regularly made themselves available to assist at these State and National events. This is an area we all need to work on improving once the current Covid-related restrictions are eased and our Sport's many levels of competition may be resumed with a measure of regularity.

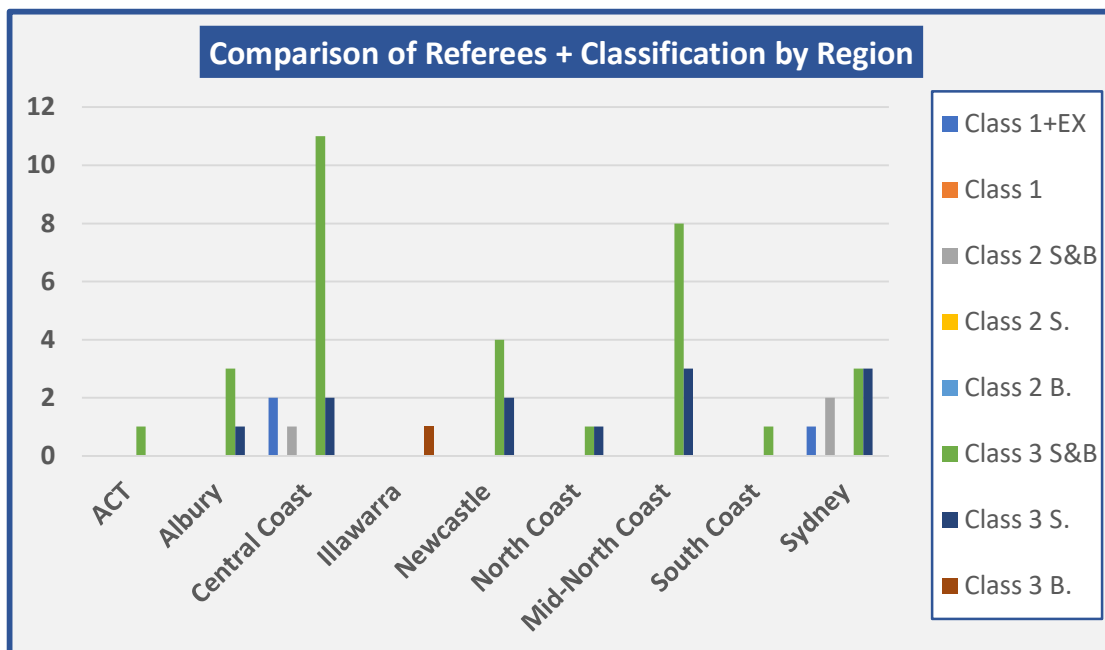
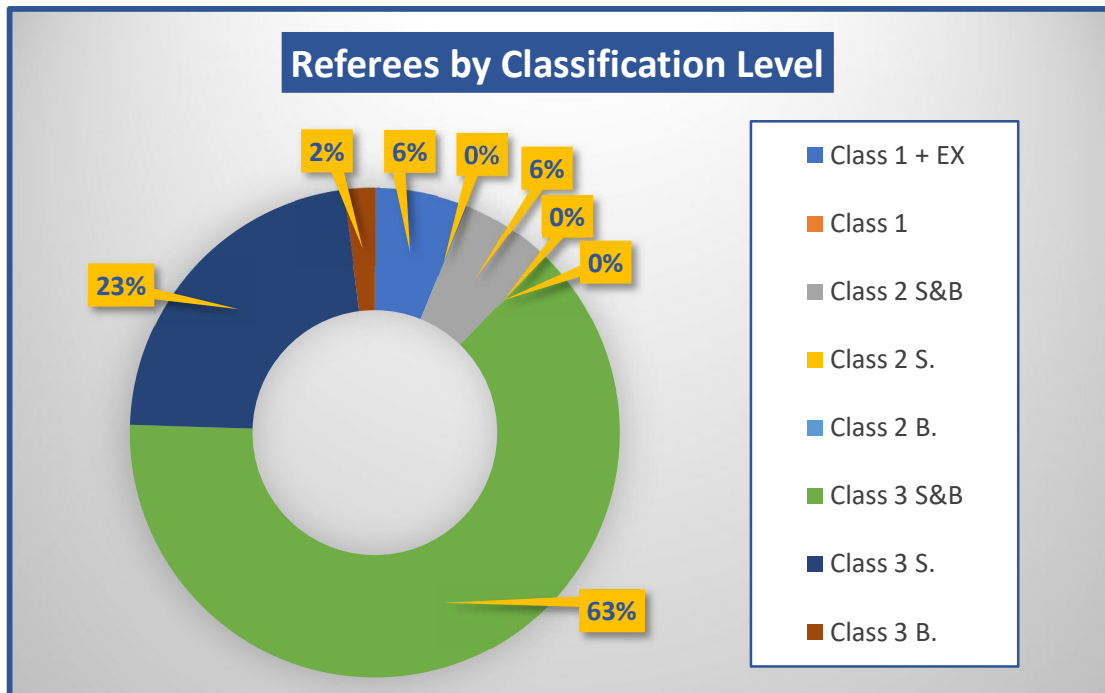
In a year restricted to just 8 months of activity, the following highlights are noted:

- A NSW Referees leadership group has been established comprising of senior referees Ross Wyard, Frank Galanos, Rhonda Knight, and the writer. One priority is looking at ways to increase the number of certified referees within the Sydney metropolitan area. But there are State-wide obligations and focus also needs to be on working closely with the SBNSW Board on refereeing initiatives, improving communication channels with existing referees, seeking new candidates, delivering effective training and development, etc.
- A total of four (4) face to face 'refresher' seminars were conducted between January – June for all existing referees based in Sydney plus the regional areas of Central Coast, Newcastle, and Mid-North Coast. The basis for the seminars was the updated Rulebook (November 2019) which incorporated Rule explanations and general revision. The goal was to ensure that as many NSW certified referees as possible were prepared to resume officiating following 2020's Covid-19 restrictions. The seminars were attended by 60% of eligible referees (excluding Far North Coast [2] and Albury [4]) and greatly assisted with their understanding and confidence after the lengthy break from duties.

- Rhonda Knight has held the split classification levels of Class 3 Billiards and Class 2 Snooker for many years and is to be acknowledged for now successfully obtaining an upgrade, which results in full Class 2 Snooker & Billiards status.
- Gareth King is another to be congratulated. He has shown a great deal of passion and commitment towards the role since obtaining his Class 3 Snooker and has now successfully added Billiards, which results in full Class 3 Snooker & Billiards status.
- The Referee Development page on the SBNSW website has been refreshed/updated, which includes an on-line Expression of Interest option for members and promotion of its availability, plus the SBNSW on-line membership portal being modified to include a Referee category. Concessional membership (\$0) continues to apply for referees who do not play in State and/or National events.
- A comprehensive training program has been devised and documented, with an initial training workshop utilising this program being successfully conducted. This was held at Blacktown Workers Club over three days on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021 with each of the six new candidates in attendance providing very positive feedback on their experience.
- There are currently a total of 11 new candidates that have now completed training and are waiting for examinations to be completed. These comprise of the six from Blacktown, together with a further four from Newcastle plus one from the Mid-North Coast. Covid restrictions have impacted significantly on this process which will be finalised once restrictions ease.

The total number of NSW certified referees as at 30/06/21 was 49 (including ACT). A breakdown of this number is provided below:





My report of last year commented on the dearth of certified referees in the Sydney metropolitan area. In a city which hosts virtually all our State Championships plus several other major ranking, National and Oceania events there continues to be currently just 9 referees as at 30/06/21.... that is just 9 people in a Sydney population of 5.3M (a population which represents 65% of the State's total).

Improving the number of certified referees within the Sydney metropolitan area remains a priority, but there is no “quick fix” solution. Covid-related restrictions have impacted on our efforts to finalise examinations following the Blacktown training workshop and have also temporarily stopped planning with confidence for future training opportunities. Hopefully the situation will soon ease sufficiently to enable the community, and our Sport, to return to “normal”. When that occurs, we will continue to work closely with the SBNSW Board on various initiatives for referee development over coming years.

**Vale: Geoff Williams (11/06/35 – 07/09/20)**

All associated with our Sport were saddened by the passing of Geoff Williams whose health had deteriorated in recent years. Geoff was a passionate, committed, and active supporter of our Sport over many, many years.



A Class 1 + Examiner and SBNSW Life Member, Geoff was recognized as one of the leading referees of his era. Additionally, his long and valued association with the Sport in various administrative capacities and particularly with contribution to Refereeing and Junior development cannot be understated. Widely known as a thorough gentleman and always held in high esteem his experience, knowledge and wise counsel were readily available to all who sought it. Geoff’s ability to relate an interesting story or two on any aspect of the Rules at any given time will no doubt be a feature that most referees will always fondly recall of their training with Geoff.

His overall knowledge, mentoring ability and friendship will undoubtedly be missed by many people.  
*Rest in peace Geoff.*

In closing, Referees will always be just as big a part of our Sport as the players. Therefore, enquiries from anyone wishing to know more about becoming a certified referee would always be warmly received and I can be contacted directly or via the referees’ section on the SBNSW website. I look forward to hearing from all members interested in supporting our great Sport.

Best wishes to everyone for a safe and happy 2021-22 financial year.

**Gary Knight**  
***State Director of Referees***  
***For Snooker & Billiards Association of NSW Inc.***



*Report prepared and submitted in conjunction with SBNSW’s 104<sup>th</sup> AGM.*