

A Guide to the Fourth Official:

A comprehensive guide on the Fourth Official's role, by Julian Carosi

(Note: Dark blue text indicates the latest additional changes to this document made on 22 June 04).

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FORWARD.

Much advice has been offered to Referees at various stages of development, from newly qualified officials through to the pinnacle, the International List recognised by FIFA.

The role of the Fourth Official in the past has tended to be a rarely acknowledged responsibility. Many people have simply seen it as a stage to be learned, in making progress as a Referee.

In 1991, FIFA introduced the Fourth Official into the Laws of the Game. The original role was basically to take over from any of the three match officials, should one of them become unable to continue due to an injury. The Fourth Official's role developed further over the ensuing years, giving them more responsibility and credibility. The Football Association recognises the importance of this increased role. It is appropriate to offer some useful advice specifically targeted at the Fourth Official.

This guide should be of considerable benefit as it sets out, in simple terms, the important aspects of the role in supporting the Referee in an increasingly difficult job.

Referees should endeavour to obtain a balance of appointments as a Referee, as an Assistant Referee and as a Fourth Official in their formative years in order to develop the necessary skills in all capacities. The information in this guide is provided as further advice for Referees to consider as they embark upon their career as a match official. Like Refereeing, being a Fourth Official can provide much enjoyment, satisfaction and healthy exercise. It also allows you to meet and make new friends among players, club officials and Referees. You will be in good company. Thoroughly ENJOY giving this extremely useful service to the game, for the benefit of the participants. Though it may not always appear to be the case, your contribution to the game WILL be appreciated.

References to the male gender in this guide in respect of Referees, Assistant Referees, Fourth Official, players and officials are for simplification only and apply to both males and females.

INTRODUCTION

This guide is for Referees in the early stages of their careers, who have gained the basic knowledge and skills to Referee. They may be called upon to act as a Fourth Official in County Cup Competitions, or local Cup Finals. They may in the future, be elevated to the role of Fourth Official on a more senior league.

The technical area is designed so that any single team official may offer advice to their own players, and for the seating of team substitutes. Once any advice or instruction has been given out during a game, the person should return to their place immediately afterwards. It is the duty of the Fourth Official to ensure that the technical area is used for its proper purpose, and not as an area for spectators or friends to sit in. As a Fourth Official, you should use your management skills to ensure that team officials and substitutes comply with the spirit of the law. In the early stages of your career there may be no defined Technical Area but it is still your responsibility to ensure that the club representatives conduct themselves in an acceptable manner at all times.

It must be emphasised that much of the information contained within this guide is applicable to Fourth Officials at all levels.

Referees are reminded that the Laws of Association Football give Fourth Officials specific responsibilities. Although any decision rests with the Referee, the obligations of Fourth Officials are mandatory. A Referee must control the match in co-operation with the Assistant Referees, and where applicable, with the Fourth or standby official. The Referee should also act on the advice of Assistant Referees or the Fourth Official in certain circumstances, regarding incidents that he has not seen.

Fourth Officials are reminded that their duties are specified in the Laws, and their responsibility includes absolute support for the Referee, to assist him in achieving successful match control. The Fourth Official should advise the Referee when a player has been cautioned or sent off based on an incorrect identification; has not been sent off despite having received a second caution: or has committed violent conduct out of the view of the Referee and Assistant Referees.

In every match there will be many occasions when the Fourth Official will be required to judge his level of involvement from the tolerance level set by the Referee. It is essential that the role of Fourth Official be approached with a positive frame of mind. Such an attitude, prior to the game, will give the match Referee confidence in your ability to assist him in successfully controlling the game.

Concentration throughout the game is essential. A Fourth Official must be aware of the control being exercised by the Referee and ensure that he offers support on match control either during or after the match. Opportunities should not be missed to evaluate performances on every occasion. Having received an appointment to officiate as a Fourth Official and acknowledged the appointment to both competition and club, time may elapse before the game. You may have another match before the appointment of Fourth Official is due. Concentration on the next match is very important. Do not allow yourself to become distracted by what may be an important future appointment as a Fourth Official.

Included in this guide is an extensive listing of what the responsibilities of a Fourth Official may be - but this depends on which duties the match Referee wishes to assign to the Fourth Official. Nevertheless, the listing demonstrates the important (often-underrated) role that the Fourth Official often takes. The higher the standard of football, the more responsibilities the Fourth Official will have. For example: - the extraneous duties expected at the top level (such as in an English Premiership League match) include involvement with crowd safety aspects in conjunction with the security staff, media relations, and administrative procedures such as the procedural paperwork involved with substitutions etc..... The Fourth Official comes under the authority of the Referee at all times, and it is the Referee's duty to clarify what he/she expects the Fourth Official to do. The Fourth Official must be made to feel part of the Referee's team, and is not just there as a person to make up the numbers to comply with the Competition Rules. Fourth Officials are expected to deal with anything unforeseen that occurs on match day. They have to be alert at all times, and in the right frame of mind to carry out their demanding duties.

In Refereeing circles one often hears the comment that acting as a Fourth Official can be a complex task to fulfil. By noting the content of this guide, not only will you gain enjoyment and satisfaction when fulfilling this important supportive role as a Fourth Official, but you will also develop the necessary skills to perform successfully at whatever level you achieve.

The Referee, along with the Assistant Referees and the Fourth Official are responsible for controlling the game as efficiently, effectively, and unobtrusively as possible. Each of the respective officials will have their own strengths and personality - and this plays an important part in the makeup of the team. It is the task of the Fourth Official to form an important part of the team-jigsaw in accordance with the Referee's instructions. It is the Referee's responsibility to lead this team, and to harness the qualities of all of the team-members within the common boundary of standard Refereeing practices.

It is the Fourth Official's task to assist the Referee at all times, and not to influence the Referee's control or the flow of the game. The final word on sanctioning all points connected with play, remains with the referee. It is therefore very important that the officiating team establish clear communication links between each other. They must also agree between themselves, how to deal properly with the players (and the team managers) without causing undue attention to be drawn towards themselves. The spectators want to see a game of football, and not to witness officials who are trying to attract attention to themselves for one thing or another. The Fourth Official is normally the first person in the 'firing line' for receiving abuse from managers and spectators. They must therefore have a skin the thickness of a rhinoceros, the patience of a Saint, the bravery of a lion, and the Wisdom of Solomon!

A common accolade made by players or managers after a good match, describing the match officials is:

" I didn't even notice you in the game".

But it must be appreciated - that there will always be occasions in most games when match officials will **need to be noticed** and to apply their authority in a strong way. The Fourth Official has a fine balancing act to perform within the small confines of the technical areas that they are responsible for monitoring. Keeping calm is the biggest asset when those around you are losing their tempers. And knowing when to act is the second. Once the game kicks off, the Fourth Official should take up a position midway between the technical areas, and place himself directly in the firing line!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Assistant Referee:

A qualified Referee who has been appointed by a league or competition to perform an active role as an Assistant to the Referee from the commencement of the game.

Assistant Referee attached to a Club:

Does not have to be a qualified Referee. However in some cases he may be. The Referee will base his response to such an official according to the level of credence he gives to the Assistant's indications.

Bench:

The 'Trainers Bench' relates to the seating area within the technical area also known as 'team bench', 'dugout' or other means of housing or protecting Managers, substitute players and coaching staff during a match. With the exception of the team manager, the team coach and any substitutes who are warming up or warming down, all other personnel are to remain seated on the trainers' bench.

Fourth Official:

A Referee appointed by a league or competition, normally of equal qualification to that of the match Referee, and who may take over either as the match Referee or as an Assistant Referee, depending on the rules of the competition.

Reserve Official:

A qualified Referee, appointed by a league or competition or who may be invited by the match Referee to officiate as an Assistant Referee in the event of any of the appointed match officials being unable to continue, but whose responsibilities only commence when taking part in the match.

Standby Official:

A qualified Referee appointed by a league or competition, whose responsibilities are subject to the decision of the match Referee. Unless called upon to take the place of any of the appointed match officials, he has no official role in match control. He may be asked to undertake supplementary duties such as keeping a note of match details etc.

Technical Area

The 'Technical Area' extends 1m (1 yd) on either side of the designated seated area and extends forward up to a distance of 1m (1 yd) from the touchline. Markings are to be used to define this area and it should be clearly and correctly marked.

HISTORY OF THE FOURTH OFFICIAL:

The Fourth Official is the newest breed of the Refereeing team. Their role has progressively expanded over recent years, gradually assuming more and more responsibility. They now fulfil an important part in the modern game at the top levels. The original function of the Fourth Official was to replace the Referee (or one of his Assistants) if they became unable to continue. The Fourth Official should put themselves in the Referee's (and the Assistant Referees') shoes and imagine that they are Refereeing the game. This enables them to know exactly what has been going on at any given time, in readiness to take over as Referee or Assistant Referee if required.

1991: The Fourth Official is introduced into the Laws of the Game. The original role was basically to take over from any of the three match officials, should one of them become unable to continue due to an injury. They were also given responsibility for the administrative duties, control of the replacement footballs, and checking of the substitutes' equipment. The Fourth Official's role developed further over the ensuing years, giving them more responsibility and credibility.

1995: The Fourth Official is now recognised as part of the Referee's team and given important, essential and individual responsibilities to perform.

1996: The Fourth Official is given the new responsibility for reporting any occurrences out of the vision of the Referee and the Assistant Referees.

FIFA Circular No. 585 April 1996 - Amendments to The Laws of the Game:

"The Role of The Fourth Official:

After the match the Fourth Official will submit a report to the appropriate authorities, on any misconduct or other incident which has occurred out of the vision of the Referee and the Assistant Referees. The Fourth Official must advise the Referee and his Assistants of any report being made. This enhances the role of the Fourth Official as one of the refereeing team and facilitates the use of written evidence from the Fourth Official by the appropriate authorities".

1999/2000: The Fourth Official is permitted to communicate directly to the Referee - and not necessarily via an Assistant Referee (as had been the case in the past). Informing the Referee directly of unruly behaviour from the Technical Area is also a newly introduced responsibility. A direct relationship between the Fourth Official and the Referee is created. This had been lacking in previous years, where the Fourth Official was expected to communicate to the Referee via an Assistant Referee. Fourth Officials are now an essential necessity in all top-level games.

2000/2001: The Fourth Official is given the new responsibility of informing the Referee if a player or substitute:

- has been cautioned or sent off based on an incorrect identification:
- has not been sent off despite having received a second caution: or
- has committed violent conduct out of the view of the Referee and Assistant Referees.

2001/2002: After the appropriate checks have been made, a Fourth Official is now empowered to approve a player's return onto the field of play on the Referee's signal:

- after a player has been treated for a bleeding wound or cleaning of blood from the uniform.
- when a player re-enters the field of play after rectifying defective equipment problems.

The evolutionary integration of the Fourth Official allows the Referee and his Assistant Referees to form an even stronger and more efficient team.

2002/2003: 'The International Football Association Board (IFAB) approved the incorporation of the chapter entitled "Additional Instructions for Referees, Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials" into the Laws of the Game.

2004/2005: The Fourth Official guidelines published in the Laws of the Game is formally recognised by the insertion of words into Law 5. Furthermore, Law 5 now dictates that if the rules of a competition endorse the use of a Fourth Official, their function and responsibilities shall correspond with those laid down by the IFAB.

WHAT THE LAWS SAY.

The Fourth Official:

- The Fourth Official may be appointed under the competition rules and officiates if any of the three match officials is unable to continue. He assists the Referee at all times
- Prior to the start of the competition, the organiser states clearly whether, if the Referee is unable to continue, the Fourth Official takes over as the match Referee or whether the senior Assistant Referee takes over as Referee with the Fourth Official becoming an Assistant Referee.
- The Fourth Official assists with any administrative duties before, during and after the match, as required by the Referee.
- He is responsible for assisting with substitution procedures during the match.
- He supervises the replacement footballs, where required. If the match ball has to be replaced during a match, he provides another ball, on the instruction of the Referee, thus keeping the delay to a minimum.
- He has the authority to check the equipment of substitutes before they enter the field of play. If their equipment does not comply with the Laws of the Game, he informs the Referee.
- He has the authority to inform the Referee of irresponsible behaviour by any occupant of the technical area.
- He must indicate to the Referee when the wrong player is cautioned because of mistaken identity or when a player is not sent off having been seen to be given a second caution or when violent conduct occurs out of the view of the Referee and Assistant Referees. The referee, however, retains the authority to decide on all points connected with play.
(Note - It is not expected or desired that the Fourth Official should be extending his role to include reporting cautionable offences.)
- After the match, the Fourth Official must submit a report to the appropriate authorities on any misconduct or other incidents that have occurred out of the view of the Referee and the Assistant Referees. The Fourth Official must advise the Referee and his Assistants of any report being made.
- He has the authority to inform the Referee of irresponsible behaviour by any occupant of the technical area.

ROUTINE AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

A Fourth Official will be appointed to certain rounds of FA Competitions and all matches in the FA Premier league, Football league and Conference and officiates if any of the three match officials are unable to continue

If the Fourth Official is a Referee he may replace any of the three match officials if they are unable to continue

Referee Seniority, regardless of position in the match will take precedence in the event of the appointed Referee being unable to continue when a Referee has not been appointed as Fourth Official

Arrival at the ground.

Close co-ordination by telephone with the Referee, in the days leading up to the match will allow the Officials to prepare to meet up together as a team in plenty of time before the game starts. Some competitions prescribe the minimum time that officials should report to the ground on match days, so it is essential that the Competition Rules are checked. If no prescribed time exists in the Competition Rules, the Fourth Official should arrive at least 45 minutes prior to the advertised kick-off time.

The further that a Fourth Official has to travel to the ground, the more likely they are to encounter weather or travel problems. There are numerous sources of information available via local press and traffic reports on the radio. Advance planning will help the Fourth Official to arrive in good time with his/her mind set on the game. Some competitions specify joint travel arrangements for match officials and, therefore, these arrangements must be agreed in good time and backup arrangements made in case one or more officials fail to meet at the rendezvous.

At games in the lower leagues, the Fourth Official can sometimes be an experienced local Referee, purposefully chosen to make the travelling Referee and his two Assistant Referees welcome to the area. Due to his local knowledge, a local Fourth Official will probably already be familiar with the ground layout, the ground staff and the home team officials. It is very important in such circumstances, that any locally appointed Fourth Official should arrive at the ground in readiness to welcome his colleagues, well before they arrive - the Referee and the Assistant Referees may have travelled some distance to get to the ground.

In order to make a good impression on arrival at the ground, it is important that suitable smart clothing is worn. Be professional in appearance, and welcome your colleagues to the ground. On arrival at the ground, contact should be made with a representative of the home club to announce arrival and to ascertain where the officials' changing rooms are. Being at the ground early, helps to make any travelling colleagues welcome, and at ease when they arrive. It also allows you to deal with any last minute telephone calls from your colleagues asking for directions to the ground, or informing you of any traffic delays such as an unexpected road accident etc.

The Referee, Assistant Referees, and the Fourth Official should arrive at the ground at the time prescribed by the rules of competition, and at the very least 45 minutes prior to kick-off. All officials are recommend to arrive in good time. This will ensure that there is enough time to check the facilities to allow for any adjustments to be made to the field of play, and gives plenty of time to prepare for the match in a relaxed fashion.

Referees usually like to follow a set routine before their games. This allows them to feel relaxed and comfortable, in the knowledge that when they enter the field of play, they are not flummoxed or panicking about something they may have forgotten, or may have failed to organise properly. It is very important that the Fourth Official arrives early to allow the Referee time to properly brief all of his team together. The Referee will not be very pleased with you, if you arrive unprepared 5 minutes before kick-off, after the pre-match brief to the Assistant Referees has ended, and just as the Referee is about to enter the field of play to start the game. The Fourth Official should participate fully in the Referee's pre-match brief. It is during this brief, that the Fourth Official will learn of his responsibilities - as issued out by the Referee.

To enable Referees to give full and comprehensive match instructions, they must be able to place themselves in the role of the Fourth Official. Instructions must be clearly understood by the Fourth Official. Referees should be aware that the duties of the Fourth Official change and that current Law, interpretation and operating techniques are continually developing.

Some Referees like to deliver their pre-match brief whilst 'inspecting the field of play'. The Fourth Official should take special note of the Technical Area locations during this pre-match walk-about, and discuss any concerns with the Referee. It is usual practice for the Referee, Assistant Referees, and the Fourth Official to participate together in carefully inspecting the field of play to discuss: the adequacy of the field markings; where the Fourth

Official is expected to stand; safety issues; general playing conditions, and to decide the best touchline position for the Assistant Referees to take. This walk-about ritual also allows the Referee to continue forming a bond with the officiating team, and gives the match officials time to discuss any particular game points.

The Fourth Official can be given the responsibility for obtaining and inspecting the match balls. But don't wait for the Referee to give you this responsibility - get to the ground early and complete this task before the other officials arrive!

The Fourth Official should be mentally and physically prepared at all times, to take over either as the Referee, or one of the Assistant Referees. The Fourth Official should also ensure that he/she arrives at the ground with spare equipment such as clean flags, clipboards, coins, whistles, Referee's notepad etc.

Pre-match instructions

At a suitable opportunity prior to the game the Referee will issue his pre-match instructions. This may take place either on the field of play or in the dressing room, depending on the Referee's preference. It is essential that the Fourth Official gives the Referee undivided attention and concentration during the briefing. Always seek clarification of the Referee's requirements if in doubt. Do not assume anything.

It is most likely that the flow of pre-match instructions will be broken by interruptions, so it is important that a train of thought is maintained.

The pre-match brief allows the Referee to instruct the officials on what their individual responsibilities will be. The Referee's pre-match team briefing also allows the other officials to ask any questions that they may have; thereby encouraging open discussion in helping the Referee formulate the match plan. Referees should be willing (and actively seek) input from all of their team. The Referee will explain what signals are expected from the Assistant Referees and the Fourth Official. The competition rules should also be discussed. This will ensure that all the officials are aware of: Duration of play? Whether extra time will be played if there is a draw? The number of substitutes permitted? Any particular competition variations to the normal rules? etc.....
The Fourth Official should ensure that they are on time to receive the Referee's pre-match team brief.

Regardless of seniority or experience, the Fourth Official must always accept the relative roles of their colleagues on the day. Each has a specific role to play.

Some typical questions that the Fourth Official may wish to ask the Referee (if not already covered in the Referee's pre-match team brief) could be:

- Where do you want me to stand?
- Where should the substitutes warm-up?
- Do you want me to indicate time-down?
- When we enter the field of play, do you want me to come out to the centre circle with you?
- When the half finishes, shall I wait on the touchline?
- Who takes over if you become injured.
- How should I attract your attention?
- If you come over to discuss something with me, where do you want me to move to?
- What records would you like me to keep?
- etc.....

Fifteen minutes before kick-off

Some competition rules require an inspection to be made of the players' equipment (look for earrings, finger rings, sharp or damaged boot studs etc.) The Senior Assistant Referee or Fourth Official may be delegated to do this task by the Referee. Besides this, the Fourth Official may also be asked to check and verify the 'Team-Sheets' in good time, and to ensure that any other pre-match paperwork has been dealt with correctly and on time.

Some further examples of the Fourth Official's pre-match responsibilities could be:

- Ensure that the substitutes are seated (or located) in the correct place before the game starts.
- Keep possession of the door key to the officials' changing room and lock the door.
- Organise when the floodlights need to go on, and find out beforehand who is responsible for doing this.
- Check that all of the footballs conform to Law 2.
- Agree with the Senior Assistant Referee how substitutions will be dealt with, and what signals are to be used to attract the Referee's attention during the game.
- Deal with any security issues.
- Clarify how to bring to the Referee's attention, any incidents occurring on the field of play (or off the field of play) which merit a sending off.
- Seeking the Referees attention can be managed through the Assistant Referee who is nearest to the Fourth Official.
- If the Fourth Official has seen a violent conduct incident on the field of play, which has been missed by the other officials, they can signal directly to the Referee, or they can approach the nearest Assistant Referee and ask them to signal the Referee.
- Ensure that the number boards used for the substitution of players and for indicating 'time-allowed' are in place.

Each Referee will have their own view on which tasks they wish to delegate to the Forth Official. A good Referee will ensure that the Fourth Official is made to feel an important part of the Team. The Referee should delegate important meaningful responsibilities to the Fourth Official.

Invariably, the Referee and the Assistant Referees may have travelled to the ground together; they may already know each other from officiating together in their local area leagues. The Fourth Official should not be made to feel unwanted or the "odd-man-out" in the officiating team. The Fourth Official is not 'additional baggage' that the Referee has been foisted with to accept into the team. The Referee must not limit his conversation and instructions to the Assistant Referees, but must integrate all of his officials during conversations; taking care especially with those members who may initially be shy or uncomfortable amongst the stronger personalities within the team.

A Fourth Official, who is looked upon by the Referee as an unwanted encumbrance, will quickly feel unwanted. They will feel as though their role is only ceremonial, and that they do not have any particular responsibility except to throw on the replacement balls. They may believe that their colleagues are not interested in them, or that they are inferior. They may feel like going home. These negative feelings will affect the Fourth Official's approach to the game. It will cause confusion as to what their responsibilities are (if any).

- Should they approach the groundsman to ask about the floodlights when it begins to get dark, or will the Referee ask the groundsman?
- Who looks after the substitutions?
- Who replaces the Referee, if the Referee becomes injured?
- etc. etc. etc.....

Questions, questions, questions. Uncertainty, uncertainty, uncertainty. Needless to say, a Fourth Official in such a situation would not enjoy the experience. It is therefore, very important that the Fourth Official is integrated into the team properly as a valued member. Particularly if the Fourth Official is newly qualified, or is a youth Referee feeling their way into the game, or is just plain shy or inexperienced.

Immediately prior to kick-off .

When the match officials enter the field of play for the first time, players will form an impression of how they intend to approach the game. It is important therefore, to ensure that the players are given a positive impression of the match officials' commitment. A clear indication of sound teamwork is shown when the match officials enter and leave the field of play together as a team at both half-time and the conclusion of the game. Entry on to the field of play should be in accordance with the Referee's instructions and always in a dignified manner.

The Referee and the Assistant Referees will usually enter the field of play together and move to the centre spot for the 'tossing of the coin' ceremony. The Referee normally carries the match ball, introduces the Assistant Referees to the team captains, and conducts the coin tossing. In some competitions (and depending on the Referees' pre-match briefing) the Fourth Official does not enter the field of play at the start of the game. Instead, they will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the technical area are complied with before the game commences, and that the replacement balls are readily available. It is also important for the occupants of the technical area to be seated properly as soon as the game commences.

The Fourth Official would not normally make a final inspection of the goal nets before kick-off - this task can be done by the Assistant Referees before they move to their respective touchlines in readiness for the start of the game.

During the game, the Fourth Official usually takes up a position midway between the teams' technical areas. This allows the Fourth Official to keep a balanced view. It also serves to put a physical barrier between the technical areas, thus preventing incidents spiralling out of control. If one technical area is causing all of the problems, the Fourth Official should place themselves nearer to monitor potential trouble.

A useful man-management trick, is for the Fourth Official to approach each technical area before the game starts, and say something like the following:

" Is everything OK? Let me know when you want to make a substitution, and enjoy the game."

This identifies the Fourth Official, and demonstrates that they are human, and approachable, and in-charge! It also lets the occupants know who they need to approach if a substitution is required. This will prevent the Assistant Referee being unnecessarily distracted.

The Fourth Official shall remind the coaches that they must remain within the confines of the technical area during the match, and instruct the physio/doctor that they must not enter the field of play without first receiving the permission of the Referee.

The Referee could introduce the Fourth Official to the technical area occupants if time allows before the commencement of the game.

As soon as the game kicks off, the Fourth Official should move into the position between the technical areas. During the game, they will very often have to deal with angry enquiries from both sets of technical area occupants. They will be the first official in the firing line for abuse and aggressive behaviour. A decision made by the Referee, or Assistant Referee on the field of play, can very often be vented against the Fourth Official, who because of his accessibility, is a prime target for any pent-up frustrations to be expressed. It is no use trying to explain any of the Referee's (or Assistant Referees') decisions to irate managers - because they only hear what they want to hear. The best method of approach for a Fourth Officials to take, is to try and pacify such shows of aggression, by allowing the perpetrator a few moments to vent their steam. It must be remembered that football is a very passionate and emotive game - without those two facets, it would not be the game that it is.

Dealing with bad language is a tricky one. If it is voiced in passion, then the Fourth Official can try and wait for the moment to pass and then give the offender a firm word of friendly advice. If it is bad language delivered with frustration, then once again, the Fourth Official should try and man-manage the situation. If the unwanted language is premeditated or is completely 'over the top', then it is the Fourth Official's responsibility to bring this to the Referee's attention. This may result in the immediate removal of the offender from the technical area.

When a Fourth Official is in position alongside the field of play, they become the ambassador of the Football Association, and represent the match officiating team. It is vitally important that they dress smartly and that their demeanour reflects the importance of their role. It is no good standing with socks rolled down, stomach poking through a scruffy T-shirt, and dishevelled hair. A smart tracksuit, polished boots, combed hair and tidy clothing are the expected garb, and will help create a good professional impression to those watching.

One minute before kick-off.

The position that the Fourth Official takes should be such, that it allows the Referee the best line of sight. It is no good standing amongst a group of players, or behind one of the dugout structures where the Referee will find it difficult to locate you. Eye contact should be established with the Referee as soon as possible. There may be a faint chance that the Referee may have left his coin or whistle in the dressing room - the Fourth Official should be instantly ready to help out with providing any missing articles. A coin, a whistle, a spare watch and a Referee's note pad should therefore always be available if requested.

Thirty seconds before kick-off.

The Referee is primarily responsible for clearing the field of play before the start of the game. The Fourth Official can also help in this duty by politely shepherding off any people that are delaying the kick off time. The Fourth Official should look at the Referee - as it is now, that the Referee will usually make final eye contact with his team to confirm that they are all prepared, and that watches are synchronised to begin the game. This ensures that everything is in readiness before the Referee signals for the game to commence.

Kick-off.

The Fourth Official should make a note of when the game commences (and which team takes the kick-off) in each half; and make a mental note the relative position of the two Assistant Referees.

From the moment that the Referee blows his whistle at the start of the match, it is essential that the Fourth Official maintains concentration throughout. The Fourth Official should always be aware of the position of the Referee on the field of play at all times so that they are able to quickly make eye contact when necessary.

The Fourth Official should start their stopwatch at the same time as the Referee starts the game. During the pre-match briefing, the Referee should have instructed the Fourth Official to keep their main watch running all the time, or to stop and start it in conjunction with the Referee. The Fourth Official may consider having two stopwatches running. One that runs continuously, and another that is stopped and started in conjunction with the actions of the Referee (thus keeping a more accurate time for the duration of the half being played). It can sometimes happen, that the Referee loses track of the time - the Fourth Official must always be alert to enquiries from the Referee for time requests. A spare stopwatch may also be requested from the Fourth Official at any time should the Referee's watch malfunction.

The Fourth Official is responsible for ensuring that the occupants of the technical area are settled down as soon as possible. And to identify exactly where the replacement balls are being stored. The Fourth Official should maintain a visible standing position between the technical areas, ensuring that both sets of managers and the Referee know of their position. They should not stand directly in front of the technical areas blocking the view of the occupants.

There are often a total of 22 people occupying the two technical areas. This is no mean feat for a single Fourth Official to control, compared to the 22 people on the field of play shared by the Referee and the two Assistants between them. Total commitment and concentration is therefore expected. The Fourth Official is as much a part of the "Refereeing " Team as if they were the Referee or one of the Assistant Referees themselves. Although to the untrained eye, the Fourth Official may look as if they are simply watching the game, their busy role and their presence is vital, and if done well, it contributes to the smooth running of the game.

General Positioning.

The Fourth Official should ascertain, prior to the match, the location to occupy near to the touchline, between the technical areas where possible, for the duration of the game

The Fourth Official's station throughout the match should be near the confines of the agreed Fourth Official's position, unless performing a specific duty elsewhere. The Fourth Official should not wander away too far from his position, as this will make it difficult for the Referee to locate him. Remaining in the same standing position will allow the Referee to locate the Fourth Official quickly if required. If a seat is available nearby, this could be used, but normally, a standing position gives greater visibility to the Referee, and creates a greater presence to those watching.

If the Referee has delegated the Fourth Official to take over officiating the game, should an injury be sustained, it is important for the Fourth Official to keep warm and move about. But this should not be at the expense of blocking the view of the technical area occupants, or wandering too far away.

The Fourth Official would not normally be expected to enter the field of play during the game (apart from exceptional circumstances - for example, to prevent a manager or substitute attacking another player).

Although the Fourth Official's position should generally be near the technical areas - they can (if circumstances warrant it) walk all the way around the field of play. For example, they may need to warn substitutes warming-up in a prohibited area near one of the corner flags. If the Fourth Official sees a violent conduct offence that has been missed by the other officials, they may need walk along the touchline to gain the Assistant Referee's attention - to enable that Assistant Referee to signal the Referee.

During the game.

The Fourth Official is responsible for the following:

Monitoring the further removal from the vicinity of the field of play (according to the rules of the competition) of any player sent off by the Referee. In this instance, the Fourth Official should not be over-officious, as this could exasperate an already tense situation. The Fourth Official's responsibility in this case, is to shepherd the player away, and monitor (and deal with) potentially aggressive approaches by other personnel. Any players leaving the field of play should not be touched - as this could lead to trouble. A player sent off, is not allowed to remain in the technical area.

Keep proper match records, such as noting which team kicked off first, the score and the time of kick-off.

Keep detailed notes of any cautions and sending-offs. Noting the time, number and the nature of the incident.

The Referee usually delegates the control of the technical areas to the Fourth Official. This may include management of any substitutions throughout the game, and controlling and bringing to the Referee's attention any misconduct emanating from the technical areas such as, dissent, or offensive, insulting or abusive language, actions or gestures. There will usually be many opportunities for a Fourth Official to deal with a challenge to their authority without reference to the Referee. Possible responses will range from totally ignoring a remark, through quiet but firm approaches, to a warning that the Fourth Official will be left with no alternative but to involve the Referee. The Fourth Official should never make a comment that may commit the Referee to a particular course of action because this may put him in an unpopular position and cause unnecessary embarrassment.

Keep both of the technical areas under close observation throughout the match. If a problem of a minor nature arises, the Fourth Official is expected to deal with it by using initiative, and without involving the Referee. If the Referee has been called over to deal with a more serious occurrence, then the Referee will discuss the extent of the problem with the Fourth Official (away from the prying ears of the technical area occupants) before taking the appropriate action. The objective for dealing swiftly with bad behaviour is to protect the spirit of the game, and to maintain the authority of all of the match officials. Even if the Referee does not agree with the Fourth Official's reading of a particular situation, or if the Fourth Official has been overruled, they must always support the Referee's decision. For instance, if the Fourth Official wants a member of the technical area (a substitute) to be sent-off, but the Referee decides to only caution the culprit, then the Fourth Official should 'bite his tongue' and not openly disagree with the Referee. Although it is the Fourth Official's task to bring incidents to the attention of the Referee - it is the Referee who is ultimately responsible for administering any disciplinary action in the match. The Fourth Official should therefore not exhibit any resentment towards the Referee if a decision is not mutually agreed upon. Any disagreements between the Referee and the Fourth Official should be discussed in the privacy of the changing rooms and not in public.

The Fourth Official should be constantly aware of the movement and whereabouts of the Club officials, substitutes and any another team personnel within (and without!) the technical area. A high level of concentration and commitment is required. Concentration can easily be eroded, if conversations are entered into that do not relate directly to the duties of the Fourth Official.

It is important to understand that a Fourth Official should reflect a profile similar to that of the Referee. Try to adopt a low-key approach initially, but never miss the opportunity to be assertive when necessary. It is possible to be assertive without being aggressive, confrontational or provocative towards a player or club official.

There may be times when spectators make unwelcome comments towards a Fourth Official. The Fourth Official should normally avoid even acknowledging that they have heard such comments, as this will probably provoke further abusive comments, perhaps breaking their concentration. Undivided attention on what is going on in the game is far more important than reacting to any unsolicited comments from spectators.

A Fourth Official would not normally get involved with match incidents; and they should never attempt to justify any of the Referee's decisions. They must therefore be alert to attempts by team officials to engage them in argumentative discussions concerning decisions made by the Referee (or Assistant Referee) against their team. The Referee (and not the Fourth Official) is the final decision-maker on all matters concerning play. There will also be occasions when the Fourth Official will need to calm down irate occupants who are directing provocative comments towards the nearest Assistant Referee from within the technical area. In such cases, the perpetrators must be warned in strong terms to behave themselves. The Fourth Official must bring situations where bad behaviour or abuse warrants action by the Referee, to the Referee's attention as quickly as possible.

Excited players who approached the technical area after scoring a goal should be gently persuaded to return to their proper starting places without unduly wasting time. Any occupants, who leave the marked area to give instructions to their players, should be politely asked to return within the confines of their technical area.

IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR by the technical area occupants may be defined as, but not exclusive to: any person who leaves the technical area to remonstrate with an Assistant Referee, any act of abusive, insulting, offensive or threatening language and/or gesture persistently failing to comply with the Laws of the Game, or League Regulations, Competition Rules or the request of the Fourth Official.

The Fourth Official should monitor the time carefully throughout the game, and let the Referee have confirmation (or time remaining) details, by use of discrete 'time-down' hand signals when required.

Taking decisive actions to deal with minor incidents early in the game will very often prevent more serious situations arising later in the technical area.

Water containers should not be thrown onto (or off) the field of play, but passed to players from the touchline (if the Referee allows this).

The Fourth Official is also responsible for indicating to the Referee when the wrong player has been cautioned because of mistaken identity or when a player has not been sent-off, having been seen to be given a second caution or when violent conduct occurs out of the view of the Referee and the Assistant Referees. The Referee, however, is ultimately responsible for deciding on all points connected with play.

If the Fourth Official unduly interferes with the Referee's control of the game, or behaves in an improper manner, the Referee can relieve the Fourth Official of his duties and make a report to the appropriate authorities.

The Fourth Official shall check the pressure of the replacement footballs, and provide a replacement football, on the instruction of the Referee except in matches where the multiple ball system is in use.

In the event of a mass confrontation between players on the field of play, the Fourth Official's first priority should be the conduct of the occupants of the technical area. At the conclusion of the incident, the Fourth Official should bring to the Referee's attention anything that requires reporting.

Treatment of Injured Players.

Although the safety of players must always be the main priority, concerns have been expressed about the loss of playing time caused by the assessment of injuries to players, and their removal for treatment from the field of play. Referees must add the full amount of time lost at the end of each period of play, for stoppages due to the treatment of injuries and for any other delays in play.

The Referee (in his pre-match instruction) may give the Fourth Official the responsibility of checking a player's re-entry back into the field of play. In this case, the Fourth Official can decide (on the Referee's behalf) when a player's defective equipment or bleeding (or blood stained uniform) has been properly dealt with. It is important to check that any blood is properly stanchied or cleared up, and that any bandages applied to injuries do not pose a danger to other players. Once a proper check has been completed, the Fourth Official can confirm to the Referee when the player is ready to re-enter. The Fourth Official thus plays an important part in speeding up this process. To gain the attention of the Referee, the Fourth Official can use the services of the Assistant Referee. The return of players into the field of play should be done as quickly as possible and only when the Referee has signalled a suitable moment for re-entry. Players should not be allowed back on the field of play until the Referee has beckoned them on by a clear signal. Players who have left the field of play to be treated for an injury, can re-enter on the Referee's signal during play, but the returning player must enter along one of the touchlines - they are not permitted to enter along the goal line (unless play is stopped). Players who have left the field of play to have their equipment adjusted, are only allowed to re-enter during a stoppage in play. (See Law 4)

When an injury occurs, the Fourth Official should prevent team officials (or other technical area occupants) from rushing onto the field of play without the Referee's permission. Gentle verbal persuasion can be used to achieve this. The trainer should only come onto the field of play after receiving a signal from the Referee. When small children are concerned, the Fourth Official should use their discretion if trainers or parents rush out to comfort a small child who is obviously injured or in discomfort.

Dealing with Substitutions.

In a game where a Fourth Official is not available, the Assistant Referee is normally responsible for dealing with (and indicating to the Referee) any substitution requests. Where a Fourth Official is available, it is the Fourth Official who normally manages substitution requests in conjunction with the Assistant Referee who can signal to the Referee when players are ready.

As part of the process of managing substitutions, and in addition to the 'Substitution Procedure' in Law 3 (The Number of Players) the Fourth Official should consider the following:

- Monitor substitutes when they are warming up - particularly if they are near (and interfering with) one of the Assistant Referees.
- To minimise confrontation prior to sorting out any problems emanating from the technical area, the Fourth Official can engage the help of the team manager or coach. For example - rather than directly approaching a group of substitutes who are warming-up in the wrong place, the Fourth Official could ask the manager to point his substitutes towards the correctly designated area.
- Prevent and deal with substitutes who interfere with the match officials.
- Make a note of all proceedings, names, numbers, times etc.
- Check that the substitutes have been named on the official listings before they are allowed onto the field of play.
- If both teams are making requests at the same time, keep the substitutes in their respective technical areas until they are ready.
- If display boards are available, use them to show the number of the player leaving the field of play, and the number of the substitute player entering.
- The Fourth Official can be delegated the task of checking the substitute's equipment before entry onto the field of play from the halfway line. If a player's equipment does not comply with the Laws of the Game, they should be asked to rectify any defects.
- Ascertain if any substitutions have been made prior to the commencement of the second half - and notify the Referee. Substitutes entering the field of play at the start of the second half should wait at the half-way line with the Fourth Official, before being ushered onto the field of play after receiving the Referee's signal.
- Do not allow the substitute to enter the field of play, until the exiting player has left it.

Half-time.

As half-time approaches, the Fourth Official should be alert to requests from the Referee to check/confirm the amount of time remaining to be played in the half. When the end of time approaches, the Fourth Official should pass clear 'time remaining' signals to the Referee. If display boards are available, the added time to be played at the end of each half (as indicated by the Referee) should be displayed just before the end of 45 minutes.

[At the end of each half, the Fourth Official should not go onto the field of play, but shall supervise the return of the players and officials through the tunnel area to the dressing rooms and act as witness if any incident occurs.](#)

The Fourth Official should therefore monitor the vacation of the technical area occupants to ensure that no confrontation takes place whilst players are making their way to the changing rooms. After gathering any equipment (records, display boards etc), and checking that the match ball is in the possession of the Referee, the Fourth Official should wait on the side of the field of play near the exit point to the changing rooms. The Fourth Official should await the arrival of the Referee and the two Assistant Referees prior to walking to the changing room together as a team. The Fourth Official should enter into the half-time discussions with the Referee and the Assistant Referees in the privacy of the changing room, where any problems or improvements to the management of the game can be discussed. Match records (such as caution details) can also be compared.

Before the commencement of the second half, the Fourth Official can position himself between the technical areas in good time to monitor the return of the occupants, and the players

Extra-time.

Prior to arriving at the game, the Fourth Official should be conversant with the competition rules regarding extra time. If extra time is required to achieve a result in a game, the Fourth Official should assist the Referee and the Assistant Referees in ensuring that any transition between full time to extra time is made in an organised way.

The Fourth Official should be ready to answer any questions concerning extra time, from the occupants of the Technical area.

If the result of the game is determined by kicks from the penalty mark, the Fourth Official should ensure that during the pre-match brief, that they clearly understand what the Referee requires them to do should the situation arise. Whilst kicks from the penalty mark are taking place, the Fourth Official can assist in ensuring that substitutes and team officials do not enter the field of play. The specific role of the Fourth Official will depend on what duties the Referee has allocated during the pre-match brief. Keeping an additional note of which players have taken kicks and the progressing result of the score is a good way of ensuring that mistakes are not made.

Full-time.

As full-time approaches, the Fourth Official should be alert to requests from the Referee to check/confirm the amount of time remaining to be played in the game. When the end of time approaches, the Fourth Official should pass clear 'time remaining' signals to the Referee. If display boards are available, the added time to be played at the end of the game (as indicated by the Referee) should be displayed just before the end of 90 minutes.

When the game has ended, the Fourth Official should monitor the vacation of both of the technical area occupants, and ensure that no confrontation takes place whilst players are making their way to the changing rooms.

After gathering any equipment (records, display boards etc), and checking that the match ball is in the possession of the Referee, the Fourth Official should wait on the side of the field of play near the exit point to the changing rooms. The Fourth Official should await the arrival of the Referee and the two Assistant Referees prior to walking to the changing room together as a team.

In some cases, the Fourth Official may be responsible for ensuring that the match balls have been recovered.

After the match has ended.

The end of a game can sometimes produce a period of heightened tension between opposing teams. The concentration of the Fourth Official should therefore be fully focused to minimise any trouble occurring. All of the equipment under the responsibility of the Fourth Official must be gathered in and returned to the correct place. The Fourth Official should join the Referee and the Assistant Referees as soon as possible, and not get involved with players or team officials who attempt to discuss contentious match incidents.

Once inside the sanctuary of the changing room, the Fourth Official should check and confirm match records with the Referee and the Assistant Referees to ensure that no details have been missed. If there are any incidents that the other officials have missed, these must be imparted to the Referee for inclusion in the match report. The Fourth Official should participate fully in any after-match discussions between colleagues and any Referees' Assessor. Review of post-match incidents is essential to team fulfilment and understanding.

Remember that the Referee of the day should be the only person to issue an invitation for anyone to enter the dressing room. Occasionally, club officials may enter the dressing room at the invitation of the Referee. The Referee should be allowed to deal with these visitors. The Fourth Official should only contribute to the discussion when invited to do so by the Referee. It is the usual practice for a home club official to pay the officials' fees and expenses in the dressing room. Again the Referee should handle this visitor. The Fourth Official will be given the opportunity to confirm that his payment is accurate.

The Fourth Official should be aware of any Competition Regulations regarding the acceptance of hospitality after a match. Should hospitality be extended to the match officials, they must be aware of the consequences of mixing with players and club officials after the game, as their presence may create a difficult situation to control. It may be more appropriate after certain games to leave the ground immediately after showering and dressing. All match officials should leave the vicinity of the ground simultaneously. There should be no delay in departure from the car park. This will lessen the chances of being singled out and abused or harangued by irate players and team officials.

SELF EVALUATION

An opportunity may have presented itself either at half time or after the game for you to discuss aspects of your Fourth Official's role with your colleagues. You should always view these opportunities as a positive contribution to your development as a Fourth Official.

It may transpire that the Referee may contact you at home when no suitable opportunity has presented itself on the day of the match. The Referee may choose to review match incidents on a personal level drawing your attention to various aspects of your performance as a Fourth Official that he considers may benefit future performances.

However, this will not always happen, so you will have to rely on your personal reflections of the game in order to evaluate your performance. You should reflect on each performance by referring to this checklist.

Self-Evaluation for the Fourth Official.

Did I.....?

- Thoroughly prepare for the role as a Fourth Official?
- Dress smartly and in a confident manner?
- Be fully conversant with the competition rules before each game?
- Deal with anything unforeseen that occurred prior to the game or on match day, so that the Referee and the Assistant Referees were in the right frame of mind to carry out their demanding duties?
- Introduce myself to the Referee as soon as possible?
- Arrive early, welcome my colleagues to the ground and find out where the officials' changing rooms were located beforehand?
- Arrive at the ground early to deal with any last minute telephone calls from my colleagues asking for directions to the ground, or informing me of any traffic delays such as an unexpected road accident etc?
- Take serviceable spare equipment such as clean flags, clipboards, coins, whistles, Referee's notepad etc?
- Arrive in the officials' changing room when expected?
- Adopt a friendly and fully co-operative attitude towards my colleagues?
- Start assisting the Referee early, thus creating a harmonious atmosphere that showed a positive attitude to my position as a Fourth Official?
- Assist the Referee to approach the game calmly and confidently?
- Give the Referee every possible support, before, during and after the match?
- Sort out the Referee's changing room supplies by interacting with the facility manager at the ground?
- Assist with any administrative duties before, during and after the match, as delegated by the Referee?
- Offer myself as the focal point for persons other than players, substitutes and team officials (e.g. stadium staff, security staff, ball-persons, medical staff, electricians etc.)?
- Collect any Team Sheets prior to the game, and pass them on to the Referee?
- Take proper notice of the Referee's pre-match briefing, and politely clarify any uncertainties that arose?
- Respond to the attitude and atmosphere set by the Referee in the dressing room?
- Participate fully in the Referee's pre-match and post match brief by listening carefully?
- Carry out the duties delegated by the Referee, properly, smartly, efficiently and pleasantly?
- Willingly take responsibility for anything delegated by the Referee?
- Have all the expected Referee equipment in my possession when I entered the field of play (for example - a spare whistle, notebook, tissues, coin, spare flags etc)?
- Accompany the Senior Assistant Referee whilst they inspected the players' equipment before the game started? (Checking players' equipment will depend on competition rules).
- Enter the field of play in a smart and confident manner?
- Take up the required position at the start of play and not after play had started?
- Identify the Team Managers and Coaches, and discussed with them the substitution procedure, warm-up areas and injury procedures?
- **Remind the coaches that they must remain within the confines of the technical area during the match.**
- **Instruct the physio/doctor that they must not enter the field of play without first receiving the permission of the Referee?**
- Clear up any ambiguities concerning the Competition Rules when the manager / coach asked me.
- Keep a copy of the Competition Rules nearby for easy reference?
- **Ensure that the number boards used for the substitution of players and for indicating 'time-allowed' were in place?**

- Check the pressure of the replacement footballs, and provide a replacement football, on the instruction of the Referee except in matches where the multiple ball system is in use?
- Quickly replace any missing or defective balls during the match on the instruction of the Referee, thus keeping any delays to a minimum?
- Speak to any 'ball-handlers' particularly about entering the field of play and retrieving extra balls on the field of play, and remind them of their neutrality?
- Make a note of the captains' numbers before the game commenced?
- Keep alert and keep angry emotions in check by preventing disparaging remarks being aimed at the Referee or the Assistant Referees, because the coaching staff, managers and the substitutes are prone to direct their grievances at the Fourth Official when decisions go against their team on the field of play?
- Be proactive rather than re-active?
- Be a restraining influence, and keep to a minimum any incidents on the touchline by taking the heat out of the moment by easing the tension?
- Make it my first priority in the event of a mass confrontation between players on the field of play, to control the conduct of the occupants of the technical area?
- Bring to the Referee's attention anything that required reporting at the conclusion of the mass confrontation?
- Never make any comments that may have committed the Referee to a particular course of action?
- Monitor everything that occurred in the technical areas and only took action when it was needed to be taken?
- Make eye contact with the Referee to instil confidence from time to time during the game to ensure him that everything was under control?
- Give positive discrete 'thumbs up' signals from time to time towards the Referee as another useful communication signal?
- Avoid giving any suggestion of resentment when the Referee acknowledged my advice but did not act upon it as I would have liked?
- Work together as a team member and always backed up the Referee's decisions?
- Never comment or talk to the crowd or to the managers in such a way that would have antagonised them?
- Take decisive smaller actions against the technical area occupants early in the game to prevent more serious situations arising later?
- Remain fully prepared at all times, to take over either as the Referee, or one of the Assistant Referees?
- Have a full set of Referee kit and equipment under my tracksuit in readiness to take over from the Referee at short notice?
- Conscientiously prepare myself for either the Assistant Referee's role, or the Referee's role, should any of them become injured?
- Take my Fourth Official role seriously as the ambassador of the Football Association when alongside the field of play, by dressing in a smart tracksuit, polished boots, combed hair and tidy clothing - thus helping to gain the respect of those watching?
- Maintain awareness of the position of the Referee on the field of play at all times so that eye contact could be made quickly when necessary?
- Allow proper instruction to take place within the confines of the designated areas, where coaches are free to give instructions as they please?
- Politely remind occupants of their responsibilities, by easing tensions when they were on their feet in the technical area criticising the Referee, thus alleviating raised tension among supporters and players?
- Retain a sense of humour?
- Remain polite at all times to all people?
- Keep out of the way of the spectators' viewpoint and take the proper action when they encroached?
- Seek help from the ground staff and security staff to deal with spectator problems?
- Remain awake and alert at all times?
- Recognise and immediately respond to any gestures from the Referee that conveyed a need for my assistance or advice? For example, when the Referee requested me to organise the turning on of the floodlights due to darkening skies.
- Keep a full record of the game, including details of any players cautioned or sent-off by recording the name and number of any player who had been disciplined by the Referee during the match?
- Inform the representatives of both clubs to ensure that an appropriate announcement is made over the public address system when the Referee sends off a player?
- Inform the non-playing member who had to be removed from the technical area that he is required to leave the Technical Area and the vicinity of the field of play? If a member of the non-playing staff has received a period of suspension from the Technical Area he is not permitted to enter the technical area or remain in the tunnel area whilst the match is in progress during the period of suspension.

- After the match, submit a report to the appropriate authorities on any misconduct or other incident that had occurred out of the view of the Referee and the Assistant Referees?
- Indicate to the Referee when the wrong player was cautioned because of mistaken identity or when a player was not sent off having been seen to be given a second caution?
- Bring to the attention of the Referee acts of violent conduct which occurred out of the view of the Referee or Assistant Referees?
- Advise the Referee and the Assistant Referees of any report being made?
- Check the return onto the field of play, those players who have been treated for bleeding wounds or blood on the uniform, or after a player's equipment has been rectified?
- During injuries - prevent team officials (or technical area occupants) from rushing onto the field of play before receiving the Referee's permission?
- Prevent players from re-entering the field of play until the Referee had beckoned them on by a clear signal.
- Use gentle persuasion when dealing with players and managers?
- Use discretion when small children were injured, by not being over-officious when trainers and parents rushed onto the field of play to comfort a young child in distress?
- Manage the Technical Areas, and keep both of them under close observation throughout the match?
- Inform the Referee of any unruly or irresponsible behaviour committed by the technical area occupants?
- Remain alert to quickly inform the Referee if a player or substitute (a) has been cautioned or sent off based on an incorrect identification: (b) has not been sent off despite having received a second caution: or (c) has committed violent conduct out of the view of the Referee and Assistant Referees?
- Always keep players, substitutes and team officials under observation?
- Advise the Referee of any breach of the Technical Area regulations?
- Be alert to the general movement and whereabouts of the Club officials and any another team personnel throughout the game?
- Only allow authorised personnel to enter inside the technical area?
- Remove any unauthorised personnel from the technical area?
- Read the competition rules before the game to identify who (and how many) legal occupants were permitted in the technical area?
- Ensure that only one person at a time in the technical area gave out instructions to their team during the game?
- Check that the rest of the substitutes and coaching staff confined themselves to their designated area?
- Speak directly to (and seek the assistance of) the coach by asking him to order his agitated substitutes to sit down and behave themselves?
- Politely ask the occupants who stepped outside of the technical area markings to give instructions to their players to return to their correct position inside the area?
- Always speak in a professional and calm manner?
- Prevent and deal with anyone else who interfered with a match official?
- Ask for water containers to be passed to players from the touchline (when the Referee allowed this), rather than having them thrown onto and off the field of play?
- Prevent time wasting by quickly replacing the match ball when necessary?
- Remain alert to requests from the Referee for another ball to be provided?
- Remain in the same position during the game (unless performing another duty), thus allowing the Referee to locate me quickly when required?
- Keep an eye on the behaviour of the 'ball-persons' by ensuring that they did not show favouritism towards one team, or that they did not enter the field of play unnecessarily?
- Refrain from becoming involved with match incident conversations that did not relate directly to the duties of the Fourth Official?
- Maintain a professional composure throughout?
- Prepare myself to be ready at 43 and 88 minutes when the Referee advised me verbally or by signal, of the number of additional minutes required?
- Confirm acknowledgement to the Referee of the amount of additional minutes, and advised him when there was a problem?
- At 45/90 minutes, hold up the appropriate number of minutes on the display board to all four corners of the ground - also allowing the Public Address (PA) man to announce that: "There will be a minimum of 'x' minutes added on"?
- When the end of time approached, pass clear 'time remaining' signals to the Referee?
- Indicate the last 5 minutes with the appropriate number of fingers pointing downward against the background of my shorts?
- Indicate a time expired signal to the Referee by closing my fist along my shorts, or by using a fist across the chest for easy visibility?

- Supervise and monitor the departure of the teams and the technical area personnel at the end of each half?
 - Wait on the side of the field of play at a suitably agreed location to meet the Referee and the Assistant Referees at the end of each half?
 - Leave the field of play with the other officials together as a team, and after the two opposing teams had ceased all competitive activities?
 - Proceed to the officials' changing room at half time and at full time to discuss match details in privacy?
 - Clarify any misunderstandings, confusion or breakdown of teamwork that occurred during the game, and agree what should be done about any misunderstandings?
 - At half time and at full-time, check that the match ball was in the possession of the Referee - and sought to retrieve it, if it was not?
 - List down the names of all the substitutes in my notebook in good time before the match commenced?
 - Deal with any relevant paperwork during substitutions and verified that the information was correct?
 - Check that the substitutes had been named on the official listings before I allowed them onto the field of play?
 - Note down the time that the substitutions were made, and their numbers?
 - Inform the nearest Assistant Referee when a substitution request was made, and sought his help in signalling to the Referee?
 - Make myself conversant in good time, with the workings of the electronic display boards (and the manual numbered cards) and use them to clearly show the number of the player leaving the field of play, and the number of the substitute player entering?
 - Stand at the halfway line, by the halfway line flag with the substitute until the Referee signalled for substitutions to take place?
 - Use common sense on local park grounds where there was no properly designated technical area, when substitutes can sometimes forget that they must enter on the halfway line?
 - Remain focused at all times, in readiness to deal with substitution requests during the game?
 - Allow the substitute to enter only when the outgoing player had left the field of play?
 - **Wait for the Referee to carry out any disciplinary action and not allow the substitute to enter the field of play until the disciplinary process had been carried out.**
 - Quickly take up my normal position midway between the technical areas after completing specific substitution duties?
 - Monitor substitutes when they are warming up - particularly when they were near (or distracting) one of the Assistant Referees?
 - Check the substitutes' equipment before allowing them to enter the field of play?
 - **Record the exact times that substitutions are made?**
 - Inform the Referee beforehand, if a substitute's equipment did not comply to the Laws of the Game?
 - Check the substitute's studs for any damage before they entered the field of play?
 - Engage the help of the team manager and coach, rather than directly approach the substitutes themselves, prior to sorting out problems (such as requesting substitutes to warm up in a different area)?
 - Understand what the Referee required me to do, should kicks from the penalty mark take place?
 - Participate fully in the post-match discussion between the match officials and the Referees' Assessor?
 - Give clear and concise replies when asked by the Referees' Assessor for information?
 - Keep as close together as possible to the Referee and the Assistant Referees when accepting hospitality after the game?
 - Remain together as a team when leaving the stadium to return home?
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CONCLUSION.

The Laws of the Game and the decisions of the International FA Board cannot of themselves bring about the exemplary code of behaviour, which is so often referred to as "The Spirit of the Game". If football is to continue to be one of the greatest and most popular games in the world, then those who take part in it must maintain its great tradition. Everyone wishes to win and there is often much temptation to win at all costs, but true sportsmen can find small satisfaction in victory won by unfair means. The Spirit of the Law must also be observed as well as the letter of the law.

At the end of a match, having acted as a Fourth Official, you can be drawn into unwise and unnecessarily prolonged discussion with club officials, managers, trainers, coaches and players, with regard to particular decisions or aspects of control. It is inappropriate for Referees to become involved in detailed discussions at this time. Any observations made should be designed merely to illustrate clearly how an aspect of Law was interpreted and applied correctly. Your attention is drawn to these observations, with particular regard to the press and television reporters.

The Football Association, however, is always anxious to encourage the closest possible co-operation between club officials, managers, trainers, coaches, players and match officials. Discussion between these various parties on aspects of the Laws of the Game and their interpretations can only be for the benefit of football, if they take place at more appropriate times.

Julian Carosi

Julian has a Referees' training web site called 'The Corsham Referee' that contains more interesting Refereeing material.

www.corshamref.org.uk

FOURTH OFFICIAL'S MATCH LOG

<p>Tick List: PREPERATION: Confirm your Appointment. Arrange Travel. Dress Smart. Check Kit&Rules. Arrive Early. Check Facilities. Seek Club Reps. Greet Officials. WITH REFEREE: Inspect Field. Get Team Sheets Note Substitutes. Who Manages the Substitutes? Note Tech Areas. Referee's Brief. Agree Seniority. Standing Position. Security. Questions? BEFORE GAME: Dress Readiness. Spare Coin etc.. Check Balls. Position Balls. Players Kit. Floodlight on/off? Enter as a Team. Stand visibly near Technical areas. Display Boards? Deal with Admin. Be READY !!</p>	Comp				<p>Responsible :</p> <p>DURING GAME: Report serious incidents to Ref. Support Ref & AR Start Watch. Note KO Times. Remain Visible. Approve Bleeding Players' Return. Monitor Players who are Sent-Off. Record Facts. Concentrate!! TECH. AREA: Self-Introduction. Explain Substitute Procedure. Seat Occupants. Control Tech Area Occupants. Control Water. Encroachment. Spare Balls. Be Professional. END OF HALF: Monitor Vacation. Meet Officials. Leave as a Team. Discuss Match. Enter as a Team. END OF GAME: Retrieve Balls. Discuss Match. Submit Reports.</p>
		REF		AR1	
		4TH		AR2	
	Subs. No's./Names/Times	Time	Subs. No's./Names/Times	Time	
1st Half		2nd Half Incidents			

<p>Tick List: PREPERATION: Confirm your Appointment. Arrange Travel. Dress Smart. Check Kit&Rules. Arrive Early. Check Facilities. Seek Club Reps. Greet Officials. WITH REFEREE: Inspect Field. Get Team Sheets Note Substitutes. Who Manages the Substitutes? Note Tech Areas. Referee's Brief. Agree Seniority. Standing Position. Security. Questions? BEFORE GAME: Dress Readiness. Spare Coin etc.. Check Balls. Position Balls. Players Kit. Floodlight on/off? Enter as a Team. Stand visibly near Technical areas. Display Boards? Deal with Admin. Be READY !!</p>	Comp				<p>Responsible :</p> <p>DURING GAME: Report serious incidents to Ref. Support Ref & AR Start Watch. Note KO Times. Remain Visible. Approve Bleeding Players' Return. Monitor Players who are Sent-Off. Record Facts. Concentrate!! TECH. AREA: Self-Introduction. Explain Substitute Procedure. Seat Occupants. Control Tech Area Occupants. Control Water. Encroachment. Spare Balls. Be Professional. END OF HALF: Monitor Vacation. Meet Officials. Leave as a Team. Discuss Match. Enter as a Team. END OF GAME: Retrieve Balls. Discuss Match. Submit Reports. Check Records.</p>
		REF		AR1	
		4TH		AR2	
	Substitutes	No.	Substitutes	No.	
1st Half		2nd Half Incidents			