

The Corsham Referee Newsletter No 27 (September 2005)

1st September 2005 International newsletter covering Football (Soccer) Refereeing matters.

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 27th edition of The Corsham Referee monthly International Referees' newsletter. Membership of this newsletter continues to grow each month. Please let me have any contributions for the newsletter, as readers are always interested in hearing about Refereeing from around the world. Please let me know if you have any difficulties in receiving or reading the newsletter; and let me have any suggestions on how it can be improved. It is issued free by email in both html (web page format), and plain text format. Previous issues (and printable pdf versions) can be seen by using the Newsletter link on the home page of my www.corshamref.org.uk web site. This newsletter is issued approximately on the 1st day of each calendar month.

I hope that the **10 Referee Tips** last month proved useful to you. This month, the newsletter returns to its normal format giving a combination of news and advice. At last, the International Football Association Board have provided clarification on the offside confusion that has been debated since the new Law 11 interpretations came into force on 1 July 2005. It's business as usual, thank goodness. Full details of the IFAB Circular No. 987 (which is available on my home page) is included immediately below in this newsletter.

What a great shame to here that Pierluigi Collina has now announced his retirement from refereeing.

Keep up the good Refereeing work wherever you are in the world; and welcome to our new readers..

IFAB CIRCULAR 987

TO THE MEMBERS OF FIFA

Circular no. 987

Zurich, 17 August 2005

DGS/jmg-cpi

IFAB advice on the application of Law 11, Decision 2

Dear Sir or Madam,

We write with reference to the Laws of the Game 2005, which came into force on 1 July 2005. As you are aware, two new decisions relating to Law 11 - Offside were taken by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) during its meeting in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales, on 26 February 2005.

These two decisions did not alter the text or wording of Law 11 - Offside, but rather clarified the text with the aim of benefiting the game and attacking play.

However, the first on-field experiences of the application of these decisions indicated a need for clarification of one particular situation. For that purpose, a working group meeting of the International Football Association Board, chaired by FIFA Vice-President and chairman of the Referees' Committee Angel Maria Villar Llona, took place in Zurich on 11 August 2005. The text and wording of Law 11 and its decisions 1 & 2 were not changed, nor was their spirit. However, the working group agreed on the following text as "advice on the application of Law 11, IFAB Decision 2":

"A player in an offside position may be penalised before playing or touching the ball if, in the opinion of the referee, no other team-mate in an onside position has the opportunity to play the ball.

If an opponent becomes involved in the play and if, in the opinion of the referee, there is potential for physical contact, the player in the offside position shall be penalised for interfering with an opponent."

In addition, the IFAB also agreed on the following clarification with regard to the position where the game restarts following an offside offence (Law 11 - Infractions/Sanctions):

"The restart of the game shall be with an indirect free kick taken from the initial place where the player was adjudged to be in an offside position."

We thank you for communicating these instructions to the referees and assistant referees in your Association. We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you of Art. 2 and 6 of the FIFA Statutes. Paragraph 1 of the latter clearly states: "Each member of FIFA shall play Association Football in compliance with the Laws of the Game issued by IFAB. Only IFAB may lay down and alter the Laws of the Game".

We hope that this clarification will put an end to any debates in this connection and that the decisions of the IFAB and the Statutes of FIFA will be respected in their entirety.

Yours faithfully,

FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Jérôme Champagne
Deputy General Secretary

cc: - FIFA Executive Committee
- FIFA Referees Committee

- Confederations

NEW HEADS OF REFEREEING IN ENGLAND

On 27 July 2005, The Football Association confirmed the appointments of Neale Barry as Head of Senior Referee Development and Ian Blanchard as Head of National Referee Development.

Barry will focus on the retention and development of referees between County level and the professional game (i.e. Level 4 Supply League referees and upwards). He brings to the post, 15 years' experience in referee training and education. Barry, who was promoted to The FA Premier League referees' list in 1997, and has officiated in 155 Premiership matches, will not continue in his career as a Premier League referee.

Ian Blanchard, previously Team Leader of the FA Regional Refereeing Managers will concentrate on the recruitment, retention and development of match officials at Level 5 (Senior County Referee) and below. Blanchard has a total of 18 years' refereeing experience with ten years at National List level, as well as eight years as a Premiership assistant referee. A Licenced Referee Instructor since 1995, he has delivered courses around the world, and he will also be responsible for Instructor training reflecting his vast experience in this field, both in the police, and as Head of education and training with The FA.

The new structure, with two distinct roles replacing what has previously been the single position of Head of Refereeing, will bring greater focus to the particular requirements of the different levels of the game. A major objective is to increase the number of registered referees and to move The FA towards its goal of having all matches officiated by a registered referee.

Reporting to the Head of Football Administration, key responsibilities include:

- The recruitment, training (initial and continuation), and examining of referee candidates, in consultation with the relevant agencies. This will involve liaising and advising with other bodies, such as County FAs.
- Leading the team to see tasks through and demonstrate efficiency, as well as supporting and developing their roles and skills.
- Providing effective support to and communication with The FA Referees' Committee.
- To represent The Football Association at appropriate international events relating to refereeing.
- To promote refereeing further through work with: other departments, other stakeholders, and affiliated associations both home and overseas.

Both Barry and Blanchard commence their new roles on 1 September 2005, and take over from John Baker Head of Refereeing at the FA who is retiring after five years as The FA's Head of Refereeing. In his role as Head of Refereeing, Baker who has overseen many new initiatives, has also been involved with a number of international projects to improve the structures, training and standards of refereeing in less developed countries.

Sincere thanks to John Baker for the tremendous work that he has done for all Referees here in England; and I wish him the happiest of retirements.
(Julian Carosi)

POSITIVE KICK-OFF

The England Professional Game Match Officials (PGMO) chief Keith Hackett, on behalf of the Football Association, Premier League and Football League has outlined match officials' approach to the new season. After a series of positive meetings between Hackett and the League Managers Association (LMA) and the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), the season kicks off this weekend with a consensus that players and managers are all aware of their vital roles in maintaining a positive image of football.

Referees have been instructed that a player who provokes a direct confrontation with a match official using offensive, insulting or abusive language will be sent off. They have also been instructed to take stronger action on mass confrontations between players by identifying and punishing the instigators and any player whose actions escalate or inflame the situation.

Keith Hackett said: "Over the past year we have forged a much closer working relationship with the LMA and PFA. This has helped to get to where we are – everyone across football agrees that we need to avoid the relatively few but high profile incidents that have detracted from the game in the past.

"Adherence to the laws this season will mean those who do transgress will be dealt with in a firm fashion. We do not want to see the competitive and passionate side taken out of our game. But there needs to be an understanding of the need to maintain that positive image.

"We have a shared responsibility to address this issue. We have done so, and I am delighted with the co-operation and common sense of purpose that exists between the various bodies involved in the discussions. The feedback I have had from players and managers alike has been uniformly positive."

Information to all levels of the game has been produced by the PFA – new posters reminding players of their position as role-models and warning them of the consequences of bad behaviour.

And pre-season LMA managers' meetings outlined the guidance given to referees and the need for managers to play their part in instructing their players.

Friday, 05 August 2005. www.TheFA.com

FOOTBALL SAFETY IS THE GOAL

Since 1991 nine young footballers have tragically been killed by unsafe goals. Many more have been seriously injured by posts and crossbars that fail to meet even basic safety standards. To put an end to these shocking accidents and the increase safety on the field of

play, the UK's largest sports charity the Football Foundation, has earmarked almost £4m to replace non-compliant and unsafe goals in England.

Amazingly, research by The FA has revealed that in recent tests, 41% of mini-soccer goals, 50% of 5-a-side goals and 22% of junior goals failed stability tests.

Play your part too:

To help you, inappropriate goals can often be categorised as follows:

Wooden goals that have weathered, rotted or been poorly maintained - these goals when tested have always failed strength tests to the crossbar.

Goals where metal cup hooks are still evident on the posts and/or crossbar.

Goals which are more than 9 years old (i.e. pre-1996 when the British Standard was introduced) and may be rusted or corroded.

Goals which are not socketed correctly and the ground conditions are such that the goal moves beyond an acceptable tolerance.

Free-standing goals (including mini-soccer) where weights and anchors are not used.

For advice or guidance on goalpost safety please visit [The FA website](#), or contact you local [County Football Association](#)

REFS BLOW WHISTLE ON DEATH-TRAP GOAL POSTS

WORRIED football referees have urged Kirklees Council in England to act over "death-trap" goalposts on local pitches. David Bolger, president of the Huddersfield and District Referees' Association, said there were serious concerns about the safety of posts on a number of pitches across the area. And the referees' plea for action comes only days before the local soccer season starts. Goalpost safety was highlighted in July, 2000, after a falling post killed a seven-year-old Dewsbury boy at a summer holiday football school. Jack Sheerin, of Sandiway Bank in Thornhill, died when a crossbar fell on him at Thornhill Cricket Club. At the inquest into Jack's death coroner Roger Whittaker said he would be asking for new regulations on children's football goalposts to stop another tragedy. But in the five years since Jack's death referees have continually complained about the neglect of posts.

Mr Bolger said other referees had appealed to him to look at the state of goalposts in Huddersfield. He had checked posts on recreation grounds in Lindley, Heather-leigh at Lindley Moor and Reinwood. He added: "The state of the posts at all three sites left a lot to be desired if safety is to be a serious factor. Most are covered in rust and some are heavily corroded. The posts of some goals can be moved by gently rocking them." Mr Bolger said some goalposts broke the Football Association's own safety guidelines. He added: "This issue is raised by fellow referees because the conditions of goalposts on local authority playing fields appear to be deteriorating year by year, without any evidence of a refurbishment programme by those who manage the scheme for the council. This should be a wake-up call to those who manage for the local authority. They should fix these issues while time is on our side."

An FA spokesman said: "Tragically, during the past few years, nine children, including Jack Sheerin, have been killed by falling goalposts. The association is working with manufacturers and the British Standards Institution to set new standards in goalpost safety."

A Kirklees Council spokesman said: "We have a programme to replace all old posts as a matter of routine and repaint those that are serviceable."

"The posts are regularly and thoroughly checked by grounds maintenance teams, with defects reported and put right as a matter of urgency."

(By The Huddersfield Daily Examiner 25 Aug 05 <http://ichuddersfield.icnetwork.co.uk/>)

EMAIL FROM CANADA

Dear Julian, just a brief word as we are in the thick of our season here in Canada.

Proudly, my daughter, Sharon, and I are now both Class 2 match officials. We survived our assessments and passed the fitness test this spring as well as our maintenance assessments during the season. Now we can coast through the late season point scramble and league cup play-offs (HAH!).

Our season will end in early October, just as yours gets into full gear, and I hope the television coverage in Canada is better this year as two games a week isn't near enough!

I have to comment on your tip #4. The duty to check the goals cannot be overlooked! Two years ago Sharon was assigned an Ontario Cup middle and I was sent as an assistant. We arrived at Sackville Park in Hamilton and watched as the previous match ended. The match was a senior cup game and was officiated by three experienced higher level officials.

Prior to our match, we made the obligatory inspection of the field. The goals at Sackville are a combination type that have a double cross bar and two uprights that can be used for soccer football or rugby. I was shocked to see that the weld at the left end of the cross bar was completely broken! A few hundred pounds of steel (rising 15 feet over the bar) was resting at one end on a rusty mitre joint and kept upright at the other end by a single 2 1/2 inch post!!!

We directed the players away from the goal and arranged for the match to move to another pitch nearby.

Thank goodness for the training I received that made me feel it necessary to check a goal that had already been inspected !!!

Father, son, goal post.....YOU BET!

From Richard Welsby

Thank you for your email Richard, and enjoy your well earned rest! Regards Julian Carosi.

STOP IT OR ELSE!

ENGLISH Football Association chairman Geoff Thompson has called on managers not to criticise referees in public after matches but to pursue their grievances through the official channels.

In recent years the post-match interview has resulted in many bosses venting their spleen at officials but Thompson said this undermined their authority and was bad for the game.

"All of us have a responsibility to promote everything that is good about the game," Thompson said.

"The referee is not always going to be right but every player and manager has a responsibility to respect them. They are a necessity.

"If a manager is not happy with a referee and they are asked the question after the game, we would like them not to make that comment in public and undermine the authority of the referee but to use the official channels instead."

Thompson said they were not trying to gag managers but that it was important to prevent criticism getting out of hand.

"Don't misunderstand me, you can get very emotional about football. It would be wrong to take the emotion out of it.

"It's part of the reason why it has so many followers and there is nothing wrong with that.

"But what there is something wrong with, and this is the fundamental issue, is undermining the authority of the referee.

"That is where you cross the line. Any comment that you make that undermines the authority of the referee, you cross that line and therefore should be dealt with.

"You cannot have the privilege of being a manager without the responsibility."

THE GREATEST EVER REF COLLINA RETIRES

Pierluigi Collina has retired

Collina blows final whistle on career

Pierluigi Collina has announced his retirement from refereeing at a press conference in his home town of Viareggio today.

Immediate effect

The Italian match official had been granted special dispensation from the Italian Football Federation to carry on refereeing this season, despite having reached the official retirement age of 45 last February. The FIGC introduced a rule allowing referees to continue for a year after their 45th birthdays. However, Collina – probably the world's best-known whistle-blower – has decided to leave the Association of Italian Referees with immediate effect.

'Unavoidable decision'

"After 28 years in the association, I cannot now avoid retiring. A referee needs the faith of others to be able to do his job properly," he said.

Collina has recently been at the centre of a controversy after signing a sponsorship deal with a company that also sponsors AC Milan.

Last match

His last match in charge was last Wednesday's UEFA Champions League third qualifying round second leg between Villarreal CF and Everton FC in Spain, where he disallowed a late goal from the English team that could have taken the tie into extra time.

(<http://www.uefa.com/> Monday, 29 August 2005)

MAMMA MIA

Italy has appointed its first professional woman soccer referee, according to Italian News Agency ANSA. Anna De Toni, a 28-year-old gynaecologist, was promoted from the amateur league to officiate at third division matches next year. So far there has only been an assistant referee in Italian professional soccer, Cristina Cini, who has even run the line at Serie A matches. De Toni said she was "delighted with the honour" and that she hoped she would be a pioneer. The head of the Italian referees association, Tullio Lanese, said "I hope we'll be seeing lots of women refs in the near future."

UEFA REFEREES

Leading UEFA European referees and assistant referees gather in Nyon, Switzerland this week for their annual seminar to prepare for the new club and national-team season ahead.

Two-day seminar

The third summer gathering for UEFA Elite and Premier referees, and the fifth seminar for assistant referees at the House of European Football takes place on Tuesday and Wednesday, with the accent on both practical discussions with fitness work.

Preparation and security

Among the topics to be covered during the referees' seminar are mental preparation for a match, and dealing with security issues. In addition, the referees – together with members of the UEFA Referees' Committee – will discuss their constant striving to achieve consistency in decision-making.

Football's image

The match officials will also examine what contributions they can make to caring for football's image, while Belgian referee fitness expert Werner Helsen, who has been working together with UEFA for several years, will guide the assistants through the FIFA fitness test

Portuguese Referee Vítor Manuel Melo Pereira enjoyed an outstanding career as a referee – and is delighted to be putting his experience back into the game as a senior European refereeing official. The Portuguese took charge of countless major European and world matches in a career which ended after the 2002 FIFA World Cup, and has now placed his services at UEFA's disposal as a member of the governing body's Referees' Committee. Respecting the referee and his decisions is crucial for football, and the professionals, as well as their coaches and officials, need to realise that they have an example to set in this regard.

Temmink makes his stand

Referee Rene Temmink has no regrets whatsoever at stopping a major top-flight match in his native Netherlands because of his deep concern over the evil of racism in football. The 45-year-old Dutchman, abandoned a game between ADO Den Haag and PSV Eindhoven in October 2004 with ten minutes to go, because of insulting chants, in particular anti-Semitic diatribes, from the grandstands.

Far from making himself a negative name, Temmink's committed stand against intolerance earned him the plaudits of not only football colleagues, but also senior Dutch politicians. The move also brought praise from UEFA, which has been at the vanguard of the European campaign to stamp racism out of the sport. "You have to do things sometimes that are unpopular," Temmink said. "I could not accept what was happening, it went beyond what you can do."

"It's important to enjoy every moment of your life – either in refereeing or with your family," said the referee who set a telling precedent in football's ongoing crusade to drive the racists from stadiums.

(<http://www.UEFA.com> August 2005

SCOTTISH WHISTLEBLOWERS

SCOTTISH referees are being given the chance to publicly explain their decisions for the first time. The Scottish Football Association (SFA) will now publish accounts of officials' actions on their website. The policy was promised for the start of the 2003-04 season but failed to materialise then.

A new feature on the Scottish Football Association website will give Scottish referees the opportunity to explain their decisions in high profile matches. The 'Whistleblower' will be published at the start of each week to look at and provide explanations for judgements made by referees over the course of the weekend.

Every week, referees in our top games will have the opportunity to provide explanations for judgements made by them in recent matches, and give an insight into how they do their job and the difficulties they encounter. The page will also give general information on the Laws governing football, dispel a few myths, and explain the application of some of the rules which can be so difficult to understand by those playing or watching the game."

A referee will consider the following criteria in deciding when a challenge is not only illegal but also worthy of more than just an award of a free kick.

Firstly the challenges must be committed in a manner considered careless, reckless or using excessive force but the following will decide if a caution is necessary.

The element of intent or malice on the part of the tackler
The speed of the tackler's action
The position of the tackler (on the ground or on his feet)
The chance of playing the ball

Here is a recent posting: In the Rangers v Livingston match, Richard Brittain of Livingston was sent off for such a challenge. Referee Craig Thomson "deemed the tackle sufficiently severe to merit it as serious foul play because it endangered the safety of his opponent." He went on to say, " he (Brittain) chased after Ian Murray, made absolutely no attempt to play the ball and lashed out, catching his opponent just above the knee."

Although the new system stops far short of referees going into post-match press conferences, it does allow them an opportunity to explain publicly why they took a course of action, and will defuse some of the controversy that can arise. To see this page, go to the Scottish Football Association website, and select the Referees, and then the Whistleblowers menu.

<http://www.scottishfa.co.uk/>

CUMBRIA IS LOSING REFS

AMATEUR footballers in Cumbria could face fixture chaos because referees are quitting the game rather than put up with foul and abusive language from players and spectators. The Cumberland FA, which is staging a road show in Carlisle in a bid to attract new match officials, currently has only 120 referees registered for the coming season – EIGHTY less than the number needed to officiate matches.

And CFA officials warn that the crisis could see local league fixtures disrupted by matches having to be switched to midweek when the remaining referees would again be available to take charge of more matches.

CFA referee instructor Scott Taylor believes the abuse being dished out by players and spectators is putting people off becoming match officials.

"Foul and abusive language is a national problem and it is putting people off," said Taylor.

"We are not getting enough people through to have three officials in a match. Club officials are having to step in to help out but we really need neutral officials.

"It is a big issue for the Cumberland FA but this year it has increased the level of suspensions for people abusing referees by an extra 14 days.

"We are a big county and we need to get extra officials in to cover all the games. We are not yet in a position of having to call off games, but we may have to play more games in midweek."

Taylor, a Level Four official, referees in the Northern Football Alliance and runs the line in Conference North, Unibond League and Northern League matches.

OFFSIDE POLL RESULTS

The Offside Poll has been running on the home page of www.CorshamRef.net for some months now. The results from 314 votes can be seen below. A new Voting Poll is now in place. So cast your votes me good friends! The new Poll covers the 2-metre distance at a throw-in.

Percentage/Votes/Question:

The question was: **Which single Bad Language change would you choose?**

| Votes | Percentage | Question |
|-----------|------------|---|
| 122 votes | 39% | All instances of Bad Language will be punished by a mandatory caution (yellow card). |
| 52 votes | 17% | All instances of Bad Language will be punished by a mandatory sending-off (red card). |
| 43 votes | 14% | Delete all reference to Bad Language from the Laws, and allow the Referee alone (and not the Laws) to decide when to penalise Bad Language. |
| 36 votes | 11% | Only penalise Bad Language directed at the Referee. |
| 18 votes | 6% | A Green Card will be issued as a warning when a player first uses Bad Language. |
| 18 votes | 6% | When a player uses Bad Language, the team must not speak for the next ten minutes (else they are punished with a penalty kick). |
| 12 votes | 4% | Add a list of punishable swear words into the Laws. |
| 10 votes | 3% | A player who uses Bad Language must leave the field of play for 10 minutes. |
| 2 votes | 1% | Allow all Bad Language to go unpunished. |
| 1 vote | 0% | Bad language can be allowed if there are no houses nearby, or when only a few spectators are watching. |

It looks as though the clear winner was "All instances of Bad Language will be punished by a mandatory caution (yellow card)." Many thanks to those of you who voted.

SHEFFIELD NOT THE OLDEST CLUB ANY MORE

The proud title of "the oldest football club in the world", held by the amateur Sheffield FC, has been put in doubt by a controversial decision by the Football Association to revise history.

Without any reference to Sheffield, whose claim is headlined on their website on the basis of their foundation on Oct 24, 1857, six years before the formation of the FA themselves, the FA have now acknowledged that the creation of Cambridge University Association Football Club was in 1856.

On account of this, CUAFC intend to stage their official 150th anniversary next year. This will include a lunch on April 8 at the new Wembley Stadium, attended by officials of the FA, UEFA and FIFA, and a match against an FA XI on May 1.

The revelation of this news has shocked the Sheffield club, whose members include FIFA president Sepp Blatter, England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson, who joined during a recent fundraising dinner in Sheffield, and England cricket captain Michael Vaughan. Stephen Hall, the club secretary, said: "This comes as an absolute stunner. We've heard nothing from the FA. We have already started working on plans for our own 150th anniversary in 2007, an application has been made for attendance by royalty. This news puts a whole new slant on the situation."

The controversy has arisen because the FA appear to have formally accepted that, because the existing Laws of the Game derive directly from those drawn up at Cambridge in 1856 (details were pinned to trees on the still existing public park called Parker's Piece, where many matches were then played), the date must signify the first presence of the University Football Club.

Confirmation is held in archives at Shrewsbury School, one of the founding public schools whose old boys sought to unify at Cambridge the various codes then in operation.

A circular from Dr John Little, president of CUAFC, to all old members, advising them of the proposed anniversary celebration dates, states: "Cambridge can truly claim to have given to the world the first widely accepted set of rules for the game of Association Football, and this has been accepted by FIFA."

However, only last year FIFA, as part of their own centenary celebrations, made a presentation to Sheffield FC in Paris in recognition of the club's then unchallenged position as the oldest club.

An FA spokesman said yesterday: "Sheffield have always been widely regarded as the oldest." However, the FA will now investigate the background.

One oddity of the controversy is that neither Geoff Thompson, the FA chairman and Sheffield-born, nor Doug Insole, FA life vice-president, former Cambridge player and member of an ad hoc anniversary committee, have advised Sheffield of this new development.

[\(Telegraph 9 Aug 05\)](#)

FA MUST RETHINK DISCIPLINE STANCE

The Football Association (England) are to review their disciplinary procedures after FIFA wrote to them in the wake of the decision by referee Steve Bennett to downgrade Newcastle midfielder Jermaine Jenas' red card at Arsenal on Sunday for a tackle on Gilberto.

As revealed exclusively in The Daily Telegraph yesterday, Fifa are unhappy that the FA do not adhere to the disciplinary code of world football's governing body which states that any player dismissed is automatically suspended from the next game.

There have been discussions between the FA and FIFA in recent years over Soho Square's policy of allowing referees to change their decision after reviewing the video. Players are also able to make a claim for wrongful dismissal for a straight red card offence even if the

referee stands by his initial decision. A further frustration for match officials is that cases are decided by a disciplinary commission whose members are rarely qualified in the laws of the game. FIFA's patience seems to have run out and a letter reminding the FA about disciplinary procedures was sent to Soho Square on Tuesday. While there is unlikely to be a turnaround in the Jenas situation, FIFA are awaiting the FA's response.

The FA are to look at their policy on referees' re-thinks and the appeals process after being contacted by FIFA. "We can confirm we have received communication from FIFA and we will be reviewing our position and responding to that," said an FA spokesman.

FIFA pointed out to the FA that their regulations allow for appeals against red cards only in the case of mistaken identity. They also reminded the FA that a referee may only change a decision on realising it is incorrect provided play has not restarted - not after reviewing video evidence.

The FA were further told that disciplinary bodies may not breach the binding instruction by passing exceptional rules, which appears to be a reference to three-man commissions ruling on claims of wrongful dismissal.

[\(Telegraph 18 Aug 05\)](#)

ARMY RISKS LOSING ITS REPUTATION WARNS GENERAL

Morally corrupt society and foul-mouthed footballers are producing poor recruits.

One of the Army's most senior officers in England has warned that it is in danger of losing its reputation as a "highly respected British institution" because it is being forced to recruit soldiers from a "morally corrupt and dysfunctional" society, where young men idolise foul-mouthed footballers.

Maj Gen Graeme Lamb branded many recruits as "cocky and arrogant and brought up on a diet of football brats and binge drinking. . . who are not educated in and able to recognise self-discipline".

"The argument over whether highly paid and very public football stars should be allowed to swear blind mouthed and in public at authority, in this case the referee, has a bearing on my point. These are the role models our recruits and soldiers are brought up on."

Gen Lamb is a highly respected officer and he didn't pull any punches. His reference to foul-mouthed footballers, which we all knew was a reference to Wayne Rooney and others like him, was absolutely accurate. It needed to be said.

[\(Telegraph 21 Aug 05\)](#)

PLAYERS BEWARE

With only one significant law change - the requirement of an opponent to stand at least two metres from the taking of a throw-in - one would expect a quiet start to the season. However, there has been a lot of coverage and emphasis on the issue of offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures. It is certainly true that we have rightly had our attention brought to some instances of clear, obviously disrespectful player behaviour at times last season. Referees have been reminded of their responsibility and it is in conjunction with the League Managers' Association and Professional Footballers' Association that we approach 2005-06 aware of our role in maintaining a positive image for the sport.

Referees should appreciate the difference between frustration and open dissent but we have been instructed that a player who provokes a direct confrontation with a match official using offensive, insulting or abusive language will be sent off.

(Graham Poll in the [Telegraph 20 Aug 05\)](#)

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

This month, we look at elbows:

USE OF THE ELBOW:

Whilst football will always remain a contact sport, Referees must punish the deliberate elbowing when it is used violently, particularly about the head of an opponent.

There are a number of factors that can be considered when deciding if an elbow has been used in anger or not. Although there is not enough time in a game for the Referee to consciously think of these factors every time that he makes a decision, the brain is capable of subconsciously analysing each situation in a matter of milli-seconds, and usually come up with the correct decision. This automatic analysis of a situation should be used to the full by the Referee. In other words, the Referee MUST trust his intuition and reading of each situation, and act positively on it without doubting his decision. Aggressive, reckless challenges and the use of the elbow on the opponent's head MUST be discouraged and severely penalized. It must be emphasised, that medical attention is always the first prerogative for a Referee to deal with, when head injuries and concussions occur as a result of reckless and aggressive challenges, and the use of the elbow striking an opponent on the head, under the pretence of challenging for the ball. The prime objective should always be the players' health.

To prevent or minimise uses of a violent elbow, the Referee must be aware of personal feuds in the game, and reacting to them by using preventative Refereeing techniques such as; readjusting positioning to be nearer to the feuding area until tempers die down; and by having quiet words with the perpetrators to let them know that they are being closely watched. Players are smart. If one of them is going to do anything nasty it will probably happen when he thinks the Referee is not watching. It is when the Referee turns to watch the ball behind him, that's when a player will look, see his chance, and then lash out at an opponent with his elbow. In fractious parts of a game, Referees can prevent (or minimise) violence by preventing frustration. Calling the simple holding fouls will reduce a player's tendency to lash out at opponents. Once game control has been achieved, then the Referee can allow the game to flow more freely.

The next stage in preventative-management in the use of a violent elbow is for the Referee to anticipate trouble, by moving into more advantageous viewing angles to be nearer potential trouble spots. The nearer the Referee is, and the better view he has, the more correct his decision will be, and the more chance the perpetrator will be aware of his presence; thus hopefully, making the perpetrators think twice before committing such violent conduct.

Blatant violent elbowing is easy enough to identify and deal with; it is the use of the elbow that borders between aggressive use and strong natural body movements when challenging for the ball, that are the most difficult to interpret correctly. In such cases, guilty perpetrators will

always plead innocence; the Referee must be aware of this ploy, as he is the one who is responsible for interpreting each situation as it occurs, and making a decision one way or the other. An 'angry' innocent plea from a perpetrator is a good indication of his guilt, whereas a sincere apology, and a genuine show of concern for the injured player, is an indication that the contact may have been accidental. The Referee should not dismiss these signals from the players, but use them (along with all the other decision-making factors) to make his decision accordingly.

Players naturally use their elbows when jumping for the ball, and when running. It is use of the elbows in these situations that are the most difficult decisions for a Referee to sell with conviction.

The greatest piece of advice here, is whatever decision the Referee makes, it MUST be made very strongly without any doubt showing. Any weakness at this point will undoubtedly encourage anger from players looking for justice or personal retribution.

It would be impossible to provide slide-rule guidance in textual format to describe which use of the elbow is violent and which is not. It is more of a case of the Referee being able to read the perpetrator's intent. Nevertheless, the bullet points below are worth bearing in mind, and will help to focus the Referee's mind on the decision that he has to make (or not make, if the elbowing is accidental and caused no harm).

What elevates the use of the elbow to misconduct?

POINT OF CONTACT

- head
- on the body

DIRECTION OF CONTACT

- from the side
- from the front
- from behind
- upwards
- downwards
- whilst running
- whilst jumping
- whilst holding off

TIME OF CONTACT

- before ball arrives
- as the ball arrives
- after ball is gone
- during a "break away"

SEVERITY OF CONTACT

- careless
- reckless
- excessive force
- momentum of perpetrator
- build up

INTENT OF CONTACT

- intimidate
- retaliate
- injure
- accidental
- anger shown
- history of trouble
- importance of the game

RESULT OF THE CONTACT

- triggers retaliation
- reaction and pain of the victim
- loss of referee control
- stopping a goal scoring opportunity
- type of restart (e.g. penalty)

POSITION OF THE CONTACT

- behind the Referee's back
- in view of Assistant Referee
- during a corner kick
- during a stoppage
- following a fracas
- after the game has finished
- whilst a player is making his way off the field
- after a goal has been scored

Let me have your thoughts on this month's topic. Regards Julian Carosi _____

This newsletter remains free to subscribers.



This newsletter will **always** remain free to **all** members.
Thanks to those of you who have already bought me a beer!



I hope that you have enjoyed this issue of the newsletter, and that you are all continuing to enjoy your refereeing roles. All the very warmest wishes to you all, wherever you are in the world.

Regards, Julian Carosi (Newsletter Editor):

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