

The Corsham Referee Newsletter No 36 (June 2006)

1st June 2006 International newsletter covering Football (Soccer) Refereeing matters.

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 36th edition of The Corsham Referee monthly International Football/Soccer Referees' newsletter.

This monthly newsletter is three years today, and may it continue to be enjoyed for another three years! I hope that all of you continue to enjoy your role in the world of refereeing. 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 'Previous Newsletters' 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.

Keep up the good Refereeing work wherever you are in the world; and my best wishes go to you all.

Editor Julian Carosi.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM POLL

By Julian Carosi (Copyright, not to be reproduced without permission, or elsewhere before 2006 June 10). Also appears in the May 2006 magazine Refereeing Today (in England).

Graham Poll, England's World Cup Referee tells us a little about his magical mystery tour in preparing for the World Cup.....

Graham, what were your first thoughts when you were told of your appointment to the World Cup?

This has been a unique way of selecting match officials for a major tournament - 46 referees being named 18 months before the tournament. Therefore I have known for a long time that I had a great chance of going to Germany. My selection for the shortlist of 46 referees was a mixture of relief that I was included after missing out on EURO 2004 and disappointment that no other British referee was included. Once it was clear that there would be no additions / replacements to this list, the pressure was on to qualify and stay fit, or face the prospect of no British match official being present at the World Cup finals for the first time ever. The final announcement of just 23 referees on 31 March was for me a very satisfying one, as reward for an incredible amount of hard work from me, and all of those who have supported me through the past couple of years.

When you first started refereeing, did you ever believe that you could reach such heights?

I started refereeing back in 1980 in the North Herts area, and my only objective when starting, was to enjoy myself on games - whilst hopefully applying the Laws of the Game correctly and consistently. It is my belief that you should take one step at a time, and back then, I had no idea of the promotion system in refereeing or the prospects and possibilities that lay ahead. When I reflect on a career, which includes two World Cups, a European Championships, the UEFA Cup Final, The FA Cup Final, FA Community Shield, Worthington Cup Final, and approaching 300 FA Premier League games, I am still amazed and surprised at the levels I have attained. If someone had suggested that I could have achieved just one of those honours back in 1980, I would have thought that they were mad!

How has the PGMO helped you in your career as a referee?

The advent of professional refereeing in England has enabled me to focus on all aspects of match officiating in a far more effective way. The obvious advantage is the amount of time I can dedicate to fitness; however, the ability to balance home life with football has assisted greatly. I could not imagine still trying to work full-time as a Sales Director and fulfil the 15 overseas matches I have done in the past 12 months, whilst still being recognised by my family. I have nothing but admiration for those colleagues from other countries around the world who are still working, although a referee's status in everyday life is recognised more in other countries, and so time away from employment is tolerated better than here in England.

Can you tell us a little about your preparation for the World Cup?

All 46 nominated referees have been preparing specifically for the past 18 months in a number of ways.

FIFA appointed us all to their tournaments in 2005, which helped the trios establish themselves, become accustomed to "tournament life" together, and form relationships with colleagues which will prove useful in Germany. In my case we went to Japan for the World Club Championships in December and officiated on the opening match - a real compliment to be given the responsibility of "setting the standard" for the tournament.

Regarding fitness preparation, Matt Weston (who will also be at the World Cup, as one of the fitness coaches) prepares all the Select Group referees here in England, in such a professional way, that I have not had to alter anything in the run up to the Finals.

We have all been tested on knowledge of The Laws of the Game, something our colleagues around the World have done every year when being re-licensed as referees - maybe food for thought here?

Finally, FIFA now has English as it's only recognised language for referees, and so many colleagues from outside Europe have been working hard on their language skills, some travelling to England for two or three week courses - another indication of the dedication of the top referees.

What aspects of the game are FIFA hoping to eradicate during the World Cup?

As always, player safety is paramount, and therefore, the detection and punishment of dangerous tackles from behind or straight leg challenges will be our priority.

Of course, simulation will be on the agenda, but this is not seen as such a problem elsewhere as the English media would have us believe.

How will the efficiency of the referees be measured in Germany? For example, will the organisers be using technology similar to PROZONE used increasingly here in England?

The review process has not been revealed to us, but in all of the tournaments last year, video was used, and I would expect that to be the same in June.

How will working in teams of three officials improve the performances of referees?

The level of understanding that has built up over not just the preparatory period, but for many years, will prove invaluable to us. Both Phil [Sharp] and Glenn [Turner] know my refereeing, my body language and moods so well, that pre-match instructions have become almost unnecessary. More often now, we are involved in formulating a game plan with several contingencies to ensure flexibility within the 90 minutes. We will have common goals and no hidden agendas - if one progresses we all progress and likewise if one fails.....

What aspect of your style of refereeing has improved the most because of the build up to Germany?

I think my understanding of the Worldwide game has improved in the past 18 months, with matches in Saudi Arabia, Jamaica, Bahrain and Japan amongst others I feel that whichever teams I referee in Germany I should now have the relevant experience to deal appropriately with them.

How do you cope with the different languages spoken by players?

There are no issues with language when refereeing either in England or elsewhere - football has a language of its own, and a referee should be able to get his/her message across with presence and body language. The tone of voice should always reveal how one is feeling, and players, like animals pick up on this very quickly.

Will you get any time to relax and take in the beauty of Germany when you are not refereeing?

I am sure that we will have plenty of time after the daily training regime; whether much of that time will be left to us or whether FIFA will organise trips remains to be seen. Certainly in Japan, a combination was true, when Phil [Sharp], Glenn [Turner] and I went out to explore Tokyo and got lost very successfully on their metro system!

What advice can you give for anyone wishing to make their dream come true, by officiating in the World Cup? Focus on now, and how you can maximise your potential at the level you are officiating at presently. As I mentioned earlier, I believe in a step-by-step approach, and I always advocate going to watch a successful colleague who is one step ahead of you in refereeing. They will demonstrate why they are successful at that level - which is the one that you must succeed at next.

Referees' Association (RA) meetings were an invaluable source of education for me; old colleagues like Terry Farmer, Ted Duxberry and Keith Drury in North Herts. RA certainly knocked me into shape in the early years, whilst Brian Carter, Keith Hill and Tony Conn were always around to keep my head from getting too big in more recent times. Whatever you require, is normally within your own local RA, and if it's not then someone there will know where to go, to answer whatever problem or issue you have.

Finally, how do you cope with the thought of thousands of your colleagues here in England, watching and analysing your every move, and wishing they were there instead?

I don't believe that many wish they were there instead, as most referees are realists, but I do believe they are all wishing us well. I am fully aware that I am representing all 30,000, and am convinced that I could not be better prepared for a successful tournament with my two assistants.

All we need now is a favourable run of the ball

GRAHAM POLL ENGLAND'S WORLD CUP REFEREE

Just as Ronaldinho was born into wretched poverty in Porto Alegre, so Graham Poll embarked upon his personal football odyssey from the most humble of beginnings. Should Poll be appointed the 'Man in Black' - as we quaintly still envisage referees even though they now sashay forth in every shade from pea-green to puce - at the World Cup final on July 9, he will appear before a projected TV audience of one billion, plus another 74,220 fortunate souls in the Olympic Stadium, Berlin. When he controlled his first game as a 17-year-old in 1980, the North Herts League fixture involving Woolmer Green Reserves and the Anchor Pub, Stevenage on 'The Steamer' public pitch in Old Welwyn, the 'crowd' numbered exactly two. "My mum and dad, bless them," he says of that inauspicious debut.

Like Ronaldinho, Poll has come a long way in his chosen career and is now respected -by his peers at any rate seeing as the average football fan traditionally regards the profession as being one rung below that of traffic warden - as one of the best in his peculiar business. The only Premiership referee selected for Germany 2006, Poll is no stranger to the big occasion having handled the Italy-Croatia opening phase game four years ago and the 2005 UEFA Cup final between CSKA Moscow and Sporting Lisbon.

But it was all so different in those early days when, as a fresh-faced teenager, he had to exert his authority on grizzled veterans old enough to have been his father. "My lasting memory of the North Herts League? I think it was my eighth game and one which I had been particularly looking forward to because the ground not only came equipped with a nice changing-room and shower but a clubhouse bar. On the way to the match, I told my mum in the car - I didn't have a driving licence at the time - that although I was too young to drink, I thought it would be a nice idea to drop into the bar at the final whistle for a chat with the lads.

"Anyway, the game finished in near anarchy and I took the decision to abandon it with four minutes to go due to bad light - it did not go unnoticed that all the games on the neighbouring pitches ran their full course - after which I jumped in the car fully kitted up and complete with muddy boots. 'I take it we're not going into the bar, then?' said mum stifling a smile before speeding off."

(www.telegraph.co.uk) 24 May 06

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL 2006.

When Referee Norwegian Terje Hauge decided not to apply an advantage in the 2006 Champions League Final, he had no choice but to restart play with a direct free kick just outside of the Arsenal penalty area. The Arsenal goalkeeper, Jens Lehmann had a sudden rush of blood to his head, and had purposefully brought down an attacking Barcelona player, thus denying Barcelona an obvious goal scoring opportunity. Had referee Hauge applied advantage, he would have been able to allow the goal that Barcelona player Ludovic Giuly subsequently scored, immediately after the whistle was blown to stop play.

The decision to apply advantage or not, is the referees decision to make, and Referee Terje Hauge received a lot of unjust criticism following his decision.

There has also been some debate, about whether or not the Arsenal goalkeeper would have been sent off, even if the goal had been allowed. Referee Terje Hauge has already publicly stated, that in hindsight, he should have applied the advantage and allowed the goal to stand; and awarded a yellow card to the Arsenal goalkeeper Jens Lehmann. There is a counter view that believes that even if the goal was allowed, the referee could still send-off the Arsenal goalkeeper. This cannot be justified in the Laws as they stand today, and has never been the case in previous incidents of a similar nature.

Similarly, had referee Hauge allowed the advantage, and the Barcelona striker Ludovic Giuly subsequently missed the goal, the Arsenal goalkeeper could still only receive a yellow card at the most.

The actual Law 5 stipulation is as follows:

"A Referee allows play to continue when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from such an advantage and penalises the original offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time."

Further to this, the following advice can be found on page 8 of The FA's [England] 'Advice on the Application of the latest Laws of the Game' booklet.

"When a referee allows play to continue when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from such an advantage, it is important that he should quickly indicate clearly by voice, and the approved signal, that he is taking this action. This clause is also designed to ensure that the team offended against does not suffer unfairly if a referee reasonably attempts to invoke advantage but then extraneous factors contrive to immediately nullify the anticipated benefit (e.g., the ball "bobbles" awkwardly; the fouled player trips over his own feet/immediately loses his balance, etc).

In the event, however, of the fouled player being allowed the advantage then wasting it as a result of a subsequent error (or a colleague who receives the ball immediately from the advantage loses it, or shoots wide of goal, etc) then play should not be halted to penalise the original offence."

In short, if a referee applies an advantage following a denial of an obvious goal scoring opportunity offence (commonly known as DOGSO), and allows the attacking team to take a shot on goal, the advantage has ensued, and an obvious goal scoring opportunity has been allowed. It makes no odds whether a goal is scored or not. Therefore, the original perpetrator cannot be sent off for DOGSO. A yellow card would normally suffice under such circumstances, and would have done so for Jens Lehmann, had referee Hauge allowed play to continue for the allowed 2-3 seconds. This is not a new understanding, but one that has been used for many years.

It must be appreciated, that the nearer an applied advantage is to goal, the more difficult it is for a referee to make the best decision as far as the attacking team are concerned - and this is even more so, when the incident is inside (or very close to) the penalty area. Had referee Hauge not blown his whistle to stop play, and allowed Giuly to take a shot on goal, imagine the pandemonium that would have resulted, had Giuly missed the goal. There is nothing in the current Laws that would have allowed referee Hauge to bring play back to the original offence, or to send off Jens Lehmann under such circumstances, because the 'applied advantage' actually allowed a goal scoring opportunity - it certainly would not have denied Barcelona an opportunity.

Had referee Hauge applied an advantage and the ball subsequently "bobbled" awkwardly; or Giuly tripped over his own feet or immediately lost his balance, then YES, the referee can stop play and penalise the original foul. In this latter scenario, Jens Lehmann could have been sent off in Law. It's not rocket-science to understand the difference. The question here is - had an obvious goal scoring opportunity been denied in the latter scenario - or not? In this case - YES!

But Referee Terje Hauge did nothing wrong as far as the Laws are concerned, and his honesty in publicly admitting that he could have applied advantage, must be commended, rather than pooh-poohed by incorrect facts in national newspapers of some repute.

Finally, the main culprit in this whole incident seems to have got away very lightly in comparison. Jens Lehmann is the only person in this whole incident that breached the Laws of the Game. Had I been the manager of Arsenal, it would not have been the referee that made the headlines in the newspapers, but my disappointment on how a seasoned professional had let down my team (and the whole country), by a sudden rush of blood to his head, in the most important game Arsenal have ever played.

(PS. I don't really support Arsenal)

Isn't it funny, how the referee (as always) is slated publicly, rather than the true facts being presented!

But such is life.

Julian Carosi

MARADONA INTERVIEW

'No, I don't think it's cheating, I believe it's a craftiness' Gary Lineker **(GL)** interviews Maradona **(DM)**

It was one of the most controversial goals ever scored - Maradona's 'Hand of God' strike in the 1986 World Cup quarter-finals in Mexico that set Argentina on the way to a victory over England and a step closer to winning the trophy. When I met him in Buenos Aires, he talked frankly and honestly about the goal that I saw from the other end of the pitch.

GL: So was it your hand - or the hand of God?

DM: It was my hand. With this I don't mean any disrespect to English fans but this is something that happens, we used to do this, I had scored goals before in Argentina with my hand. It was a goal but I couldn't reach it and Shilton was already there, so I couldn't head it, so I did like that [gesticulates by putting his fist upwards]. And I put my head back and I started running. When I started to run, at first Shilton didn't realise.

The one who told him was the sweeper [Gary interjects that it was Terry Butcher], he was the one who saw my hand. When I saw the linesman running, I was shouting "Goal" and then I looked behind me to see whether the referee took the bait and he had, so that was it.

GL: As you ran away and you were looking around for your team-mates, do you think they knew it was handball?

DM: My team-mates did notice and they didn't come over to celebrate with me. I was saying, "Come on, come on, hug me let's do it properly, let's go the whole way," hoping the goal would be allowed. Thank God it was.

GL: In England it would be regarded as cheating, saying you knew that it was not fair play, how do you see that?

DM: No, I don't think it's cheating, it's cunning. Is it cheating handling the ball? Oh no, no, no it's not cheating. I don't think it's cheating, I believe it's a craftiness, maybe we have a lot more of it in South America than in Europe but it's not cheating.

GL: Why did you say it was the hand of God?

DM: Because God gives us the hand. And because it is very difficult for it not to be seen by two people, the referee and the linesman, so that's why I said it was the hand of God.

GL: The second goal was probably the one and only time in my whole career that I felt like applauding the opposition scoring a goal. Is it your best goal?

DM: It's the dream goal, the dream goal. Us footballers always dream of scoring the best goal in history, we dream it and we have it in our heads. The truth is to score that goal, for me, was fantastic, and in the World Cup, incredible.

GL: And even better as it was against England?

DM: When you talk about playing against Italy or, for example, Uruguay or Brazil, it is much more complicated to do the move that I did while playing against England because the English player is a lot more noble and honest on the pitch.

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/> 1 May 06)

FA CUP FINAL REFEREE'S THOUGHTS ON HIS DAY

Alan Wiley is happy to be the forgotten man of the 125th FA Cup Final after refereeing a breathtaking match between Liverpool and West Ham. The Reds beat the east Londoners on penalties after the two sides played out a 3-3 thriller in what has been described as one of the all-time great FA Cup Finals. Indeed, it was one of the best games Wiley has ever had the pleasure of officiating, and it will be a day he will never forget.

He said: "As a referee, you only get to do the FA Cup Final once, so to get one that exciting was a dream. It must rank alongside the best games that I've been involved with, and hopefully one of the most memorable FA Cup Finals of all time. My aim was that people from Saturday evening onwards would talk about the Cup Final I refereed for football reasons. Luckily, when people talk about it, they won't mention that I refereed it. I'll take some quiet satisfaction in that."

The question on everybody's lips would be how a referee manages to concentrate on doing his job with so much mesmerising football going on around him? Wiley admits that he did notice some of the outstanding performances out on the pitch, including man-of-the-match Steven Gerrard, and that such skill still amazes him. Even he had to watch in awe as Liverpool's captain unleashed one of the greatest strikes in FA Cup history from 30 yards to equalise in the last minute of the regulation 90.

Wiley added: "I don't think you actually admire what's going on, but when Liverpool pulled it back to 2-1 and it was still well into the first-half, I was thinking this had the chance to be a little bit special. When you are on the field with the players and you see the speed they are playing at, you really do appreciate the skill levels of these players. It wasn't until I saw Steven's goal on TV the following day that I realised how far out he was. It was an excellent strike of the ball and I was right behind it and I saw it hit the net. It was definitely a special goal."

(www.thefa.com)

SHIRT TUGGING: Referees determined to get a grip on shirt-tugging.

Such is the widespread frustration within English football over the chronic grappling scarring corners and free-kicks, that referees will be instructed to clamp down with penalties and cautions next season. Teddy Sheringham once observed it was almost impossible to gain a "clean" strike on the ball against Italian teams at corners, but the dark art of holding and blocking has now spread to Premiership penalty areas. Ricardo Carvalho is adept at it, but the Chelsea centre-half is not alone and the authorities have decided to act.

"There is increased use of illegal hands and arms," explained Keith Hackett, the guiding force of the elite referees. "If you outlaw the tackle from behind, defenders say, 'what other piece of armament have I got' against the forward. So pulling and tugging goes on. The downside is the guy who wants to break away from the hold occasionally swings out an elbow and catches his opponent. We have to raise the skill sets of the referees so that when a player stops an attacking move, that is an act of unsporting behaviour and a yellow card. Impeding, or blocking in the box, is on the increase. Holding, pulling, blocking are tactics that go on around set-pieces. We are always trying to be one step ahead of what managers are doing. Corners are becoming like basketball matches. Unlike basketball, where it is body [checking] and leaning into each other, in football there is almost an openness that I am going to hold on to this shirt. Our referees have not given enough penalties and free-kicks. That will be an issue for next season, where we will highlight that aspect of holding and pulling."

Hackett and his merry band of Polls, Bennetts and Styles are working with the managers and players to improve the game. From the frothing figures of managers in technical areas, or players raging at a decision, there may not appear much constructive dialogue. Yet all parties, including representatives from the referees' fraternity, the Professional Footballers' Association and League Managers' Association, could be found in a hotel outside Daventry on Wednesday airing grievances, sharing thoughts and seeking to move forward in harmony.

"Now the managers have this committee which meets every six weeks, they have an opportunity to air bones of contention," Hackett said, before entering a meeting at which the LMA were keen to address the anomaly whereby a fouled and briefly injured player must wait to be summoned back into the fray while the perpetrator continues. Leading managers are keen for any player booked for an offence to leave the field temporarily, with the injured player, rejoining when the referee decrees. Wednesday was all about communication and consensus. "At Premiership level there are match delegates - former managers and players - who monitor referee's performances," Hackett continued. "Managers now must have a picture that our guys are accountable. If they cock up on a Saturday or Sunday, they probably don't get a fixture the following week. It has focused the referee's mind that we are about excellence."

The referees would appreciate some help from the players, one of the points of these multi-party gatherings. "There are a fair number of players who don't understand, or don't want to understand, the nuances of the laws of the game," Hackett said. "Sometimes that ignorance creates confusion. I am continually saying to managers, 'our referees and coaches will happily come in to your training grounds and talk to players'.

Diving is one of the topics discussed at meetings. "Players pushing the boundaries test us," Hackett added. "We've had a lot of debate in recent weeks about simulation. That is a difficult one. The boundaries are being pushed, where players are going down. We hope to enlist the PFA and LMA to assist us. They have been very positive so far, saying they recognise this is part of the game that shouldn't be there, and we can do something about it.

"I have heard of one group of players at a particular club hounding a player who had a reputation for diving and saying, 'look, stop doing it'." Hackett diplomatically refused to name the club, but the word within the game was that senior Chelsea players have talked to Didier Drogba. "Whether players like it or not, they are role models.

What happens on a TV on Saturday or Sunday nights [subsequently] takes place on local parks," Hackett stressed. "Our referees tell me that. Howard Webb will referee Chelsea on a Saturday, and a local pub team on the Sunday as part of his wind-down. He says they mimic [the pros]. I was in a local park in Sheffield recently, watching a pub team whose manager was looking like he was Neil Warnock, going outrageous."

Premiership referees may find Warnock a handful next season, but they feel they are getting the balance right with managers and players. "When I inherited the job, the average yellow card count was close to six per game," Hackett said. "Last season we went down to 1.9. At that particular point, some managers were saying we were being over tolerant. Managers ring me and I read what they say. We adjusted. We are about 3.2 this season. La Liga is between five and six. The Italians are about 4.5. Our game is more honest."

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/> 6 May 06)

ITALY SCANDAL

'Clean Hands' judge leads team investigating Italy's football scandal."

A crusading 76-year-old judge who put 3,200 Italian politicians and businessmen on trial in the 1990s for corruption, has been brought out of retirement to investigate the scandal that has engulfed Italian football.

Franco Borrelli, after four years of retirement, will oversee an investigation that began at Juventus football club but has spread to involve 71 of Italy's clubs, 41 players and a selection of judges and politicians, including Giuseppe Pisanu, the former home minister. The "Clean Feet" investigations started two weeks ago after transcripts of wire-tapped telephone calls suggested that Luciano Moggi, the managing director of Juventus, had been able to influence the selection of referees for the club's domestic and European matches. Mr Moggi has since been dismissed, together with the rest of the Juventus board.

(www.telegraph.co.uk)

BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM

How all the top footballers can bend it like Beckham

Football legend has it that some players can kick a ball in an S-shaped trajectory, so long as they line up the valve and seams. Now scientists using computers to simulate air flows have confirmed that a ball can snake its way into the goal in this method.

Some of the world's best goalkeepers have been beaten by balls that move to the left and the right, even though they have little or no spin applied to them.

Today, pioneering work at the University of Sheffield, in collaboration with Fluent Europe, has unravelled the mystery of such kicks. The research also suggests that the new Adidas Teamgeist 2006 Soccer Ball will move more predictably than ever. The shape and surface of the ball with its stitches and seam patterns, as well as its initial orientation, is critical for these strange trajectories, according to studies by Dr Matt Carré's team at the university's Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Fifa regulations allow a deviation from perfect roundness of up to 1.5 per cent and the Sheffield research shows that a combination of the ball not being perfectly round and its initial orientation significantly affects the flight. The work proves that a ball can suddenly swerve, dip or rise without any spin being applied, mostly due to the panel with the valve.

"A free kick by Ronaldo, of Manchester United, this season seems to show this phenomenon quite clearly much to the amazement of TV commentators," said Dr Keith Hanna, of Fluent.

Dr Carré said: "Any non-uniformity of design of soccer balls will have a dramatic effect on the side forces of the ball when there's little or no spin applied to it, and hence its swerve through the air. We believe that our findings go a long way to explain the phenomenon observed when some players kick the ball with little or no spin, yet get it to swerve in a seemingly erratic manner."

They studied and compared airflows around four balls, all with different panel designs, each having been used at different periods over 36 years, up to and including the new Adidas ball for the World Cup, the roundest ever. Sarah Barber, a PhD student and Sheffield FC (ladies) player, with Dave Mann, the principal engineer at Fluent, used a 3D laser scanner to digitise the dimensions of each ball, including stitches and seam patterns.

They demonstrated that the shape, surface and asymmetry of the ball, as well as its initial orientation, had a profound effect on how the ball moved after being kicked. Strangely, the effects are more difficult to anticipate the less the ball spins, said Dr Carré. The side force varies according to the orientation of the ball relative to its flight, meaning that for a kick where the ball is slowly rotating, the side force could fluctuate, causing it to swerve. This fluctuation repeats itself as the seam pattern on the ball rotates. In this way, it is possible for an S-bend to occur if the side force fluctuates from left to right during the trajectory.

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/> 27 May 06)

CHEATS SHOULD BE SENT OFF says Alex Ferguson:

Sir Alex Ferguson (the Manchester United Manager) argued that the surest way to stamp out the culture of diving that has infected English football was for referees to show offenders red cards. The biggest problem in stopping it is that you can't give a red card for diving," Ferguson said. "The referees are not allowed to do it. They can give a yellow, but that doesn't have the same impact. A guy could be honestly going to tackle a player and be given a red card, whereas a guy could be going to cheat to get someone sent off and can only get a yellow. That inconsistency in the laws of the game allows these things to happen."

Keith Hackett, head of the Premier League referees, said an official had to be absolutely certain before cautioning a player for diving "especially if the player is on a second yellow card". Hackett thought the best defence an official had was to be closer to the action. Ferguson, who has seldom seen eye-to-eye with referees, agreed with Hackett that one of the greatest problems football faced was shirt-pulling as players jostled for position at a corner or free-kick. "That has come from Italian football, and it has created a wrestling match," Ferguson said. "It began emerging in our game in the last four or five years, and it is getting worse all the time. You can't have a free-kick or a corner kick without an absolute melee. This is an impossible task for referees. Even if you had six referees on the pitch, you would find it difficult to sort it out."

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/> 29 March 06)

UEFA ADVICE

Incidents involving Players' reactions/confrontations

There was clearly a benefit in going quickly to the point of conflict and being seen to take immediate disciplinary action (yellow card, red card as appropriate). It was noted that when a referee did not go quickly to the location of the incident, reactions and retaliations often followed and the problem escalated.

If it was not possible to immediately prevent further increase in conflict between players, the referee should observe what happens in detail and avoid personal physical intervention in separating fighting players.

It was recognised that it was essential that referees should not only punish retaliators but also must identify and punish the initial offender(s) where the offence warranted it (recklessness: brutality).

As earlier agreed in pre-match discussions, one assistant should monitor and record events and the other assistant should remain close to the referee.

It was agreed that all players who became involved in such incidents should be punished appropriately. Cautions (yellow cards) were not considered sufficient punishment where fighting (excessive physical contact etc) was involved. Particular note should be taken of players who approached the initial incident from some distance to become involved.

Applying Advantage

The referees studied some examples of the non-appropriate use of Advantage. For incidents involving recklessness or serious foul play, it was agreed that only very rarely (e.g. a probable immediate goal scoring opportunity) was the use of advantage appropriate. The greater benefit to the game is achieved from an immediate halt in play and the punishment of the offender.

Dangerous play with contact

Referees were reminded that if a player plays in a dangerous manner but also makes contact with an opponent, the referee should punish the more serious offence, i.e. the contact is to be considered as one of the offences for which a direct free kick is awarded (a careless or reckless kick).

PLAYER SPITS AT REF IN THE USA

Guilford soccer player pleads not guilty to spitting at referee

<http://www.rrstar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051115/NEWS0107/111150016&SearchID=73244079239040>

By Corina Curry Rockford Register Star

ROCKFORD, IL

A high school soccer player pleaded not guilty in court Monday morning to allegations that he spat at a referee during a tournament game last month. Neven Kuljanin, 18, a senior forward for Guilford High School, has been charged with misdemeanor battery for allegedly spitting at referee Ben Bumm after Bumm kicked him out of the game. Kuljanin and his attorney, Albert Altamore, appeared briefly before Associate Judge Gary Pumilia to enter the not guilty plea and schedule another court date. Kuljanin did not address the court. He left with his parents. Altamore told Kuljanin and his family members not to speak to the media.

Altamore, who spoke on behalf of his client, said he has not received any police reports that detail the allegation and declined to comment on the charges. Kuljanin faces probation, court supervision, up to a year in jail and up to \$2,500 in fines if found guilty. Parties are due back in court at 10 a.m. Dec. 16, at which time Altamore said he expects to have police reports regarding the alleged incident.

"By that date, we should know what the possible dispositions are," Altamore said.

A 16-year-old also allegedly spat at Bumm when Kuljanin was kicked out of the Oct. 27 game. That teen, who is not being named because he's a juvenile, has not been charged. The Winnebago County state's attorney's office is reviewing that case. Both students have been suspended from school. In a report to the Illinois High School Association, which governs high school athletics in the state, Bumm wrote that both players yelled and spit at him after he made the call that removed Kuljanin from the game. The IHSA is investigating.

Final Legal Outcome May 9, 2006

Player sentenced in soccer incident

<http://www.rrstar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060509/NEWS0107/105090036&SearchID=73244079375867>

A referee said he was cursed at and spat on after ejecting the prep athlete. By Mike Wiser

ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR ROCKFORD, IL

The high school soccer player who spat on a referee and sparked a debate on poor sportsmanship was sentenced to one year of court supervision Monday. Neven Kuljanin, 18, also must complete 80 hours of community service, pay \$250 in court fees and write a letter of apology to the referee he spit on as part of a plea agreement approved by Judge Fernando Engelsma. At Monday's hearing, referee Ben Buum and Kuljanin shook hands, and Kuljanin gave Buum the letter of apology. "I'm satisfied," Buum said as he left the courthouse.

If Kuljanin keeps his nose clean, the Winnebago County state's attorney's office has agreed to drop the battery charge he got for spitting on Buum after the official ejected him from a playoff game between Guilford and Boylan high schools.

"We're happy with the disposition of the case," Albert Altamore, Kuljanin's attorney, said after the hearing. "We didn't want a criminal record to come out of this."

Kuljanin did not comment.

On Oct. 27, 2005, Buum was refereeing the Guilford-Boylan sectional match. During the last 10 minutes of the game which Boylan won Buum gave Kuljanin his second yellow card of the contest. A second card is an automatic ejection.

In his complaint to the Illinois High School Association, Buum said that Kuljanin swore at him and spit on his head after the call. On Oct. 31, Buum filed a complaint with police.

Aside from criminal charges against Kuljanin, the incident galvanized local high school referees. They promised to be more active in reporting incidents of bad behaviour by prep athletes.

CORSHAM REFEREE WEBSITE POLL ANSWERS

The results of the poll referee assessors can be seen below.

A total 377 votes were received for the assessors poll. Many thanks to all of you who voted.

Question Number:	Votes:	Percent
1. They always talk sense and provide useful development areas. 88 votes 23%		
2. They need to be more consistent.	97 votes	26%
8. They should become professional, and paid a salary.	29 votes	8%
10. I hate them with a vengeance!	19 votes	5%
7. They should only assess at no higher than the level they refereed at.	70 votes	19%
4. We need to get rid of the old stagers and bring in some younger ones.	48 votes	13%
9. Assessors in general need an injection of humour!	16 votes	4%
3. They are the best thing since sliced bread.	6 votes	2%
6. They should be retired forthwith!	3 votes	1%
5. They should be paid less money for their services.	1 vote	0%

A new poll on predicting the World Cup Winners is now on the home page of www.CorshamRef.net
Regards, Julian Carosi

THIS MONTH'S TOPICS:

This month, we look at players retreating at free kicks, players wearing plaster casts and dealing with ceremonial free kicks.

RETREATING PLAYERS

Question: I gave a free kick against the "Blue" team on the halfway line. A "Green" team player decided to take the free kick quickly and hits the ball straight into the back of a retreating "Blue" team player who had only managed to put about three yards between himself and the ball, but wasn't behaving unsportingly. I let play continue, as it was the "Green's" team fault for making a mess of the free kick. Uproar ensued on the touchline, and after the game the "Green" team trainer asked me why I had made the decision. Did I do the right thing?

Answer: If a team decides to take a quick free kick, the opposing team has to make an effort to retreat 10 yards (9.15m).

If a team takes a quick free kick without allowing the opposing team reasonable time to retreat the 10 yards, then the team taking the quick free kick, should not be allowed to retake the free kick, if the ball subsequently hits a retreating opponent (who is genuinely trying to move away).

The wording in the Law 12 chapter of the Laws states it is only an offence if the opponent " fails to respect the required distance". An opponent who is genuinely retreating, has not failed to respect the required distance. An opponent who moves away when a free kick has been awarded is respecting the required distance, and therefore, should be allowed a reasonable amount of time to travel the 10 yards. The Laws are meant to apply equally to both sides. A team taking a quick free kick with the sole purpose of hitting a retreating opponent, rather than playing the game in the Spirit in which it is meant to be played, have only one objective, and that is to use gamesmanship in the hope that it will benefit them by hoodwinking the referee into taking action against their opponents.

In other words, it is not the opposing team who are unsporting, it is the team taking the free kick!
You were perfectly correct in allowing play to continue in your scenario - well done.

WEARING A CAST

Question: Should players be allowed to play whilst wearing a plaster cast (for example, that protects a broken/injured arm or wrist)?

Answer: There seems to be a move towards allowing more leniency for unconventional items to be worn in games. Whilst this can be partly understood, where items such as spectacles and religious headgear are concerned, it is a worrying trend when more players than ever are seeking permission to play whilst wearing some sort of injury protection (such as a cast covering a broken arm or wrist).

Whilst local associations can offer advice to referees about allowing (or not allowing) certain injury protection padding to be worn, the ultimate responsibility rests with the referees in accordance with Law 5 (The Referee) and Law 4 (The Players' Equipment). "A player must not use any equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any of jewellery)."

Modern protective equipment such as headgear, facemasks, knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight, padded material are not considered to be dangerous and are therefore permitted (as mentioned in the Law chapter entitled, 'Additional Instructions for Referees, Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials'. Lightweight wrist supports made from a soft neoprene outer sleeve, which allow full dexterity of the fingers and thumb, whilst limiting wrist extension and flexation, thus providing freedom for total hand function, are normally safe enough to wear (and will provide comfort, compression and support).

A player, who wishes to take part in a soccer match with a plaster cast, must first seek the advice of the referee. It would be impossible for a Referee to diagnose the extent of any underlying injury, and as such, he is therefore not qualified to offer medical advice on whether that person should play or not. The Referees duty here is to decide whether or not the cast poses a danger to other players or not (or a danger to the player himself). There are many types of casts - some soft some hard. It is the Referees duty to decide the degree of danger each cast possesses. The Referee should always err on the side of caution when making such decisions.

Any type of plaster cast can be considered dangerous. A hard cast (even if it is well covered with a soft bandage) is likely to cause injury to another player; or further injury to the affected player should he allowed to play. Imagine the situation if the cast struck a player on the face and opened a wound that bled? If a manager starts to get stroppy about the referee not allowing one of his players to play because of a plaster cast, then the Referee could set up a practical test and ask the player to swing his arm gently at first, and then a little more forcefully, and as soon as the player is 'wind-milling' his arm around and around, the referee can say to him, "Now hit your manager around the head." That should produce some common sense!

In the 1978 World Cup, Holland refused to attend the post-match ceremonies after Argentina's alleged stalling tactics before a match, when they came out late and questioned the legality of a plaster cast on a Dutch player's wrist -- allowing tension to build for the visitors in front of a hostile Buenos Aires crowd.

CEREMONIAL FREE KICK PROCEDURE?

Question: Is there a standard procedure that I can use to help me organise a 'ceremonial' type free kick? I have had problems with the ball hitting defending players before they have retreated the required distance, and players have also been confused with the signals that I have been giving.

Note: Ceremonial free kicks are those free kicks occurring near the goal, where in the opinion of the referee (or when the 9.15 distance is requested by the offended team), require some order and fair play to be restored because the match **REQUIRES** it. The integrity of the game (commonly known as 'The Spirit of the Game') and acceptance by the players as to what constitutes fair play, should always be considered by the Referee when managing free kicks. In order to recognise the Spirit of the Law relating to free kicks, Referees and players are reminded that there must be no undue delay in allowing the non-offending side to take a free kick.

Note: The first thing the Referee **MUST** do if he is going to have a ceremonial free kick restart, is to **STOP** all notions of the free kick being taken without the Referee's whistle signal.

Note: Free kick situations often produce tactical manoeuvres between attackers and defenders. It is, therefore, considered that "feints" and similar tactics by the players of the team awarded the kick, designed to deceive opponents, are just as acceptable as they would be in the normal course of play.

Note: The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. It is, therefore, permissible for a player to 'flick' the ball with one or both feet into the air to restart the play. However, the player taking the kick may not touch or play the ball a second time until it has touched or been played by another player.

Note: A free kick is called a FREE kick, because the offended team should generally be allowed to take it whenever they want to, without any restrictions being placed on them. In fact, the principle of the following Cambridge University Rule in England of 1863 still applies. "A free kick may be taken in any manner the player may choose".

Answer: When a team is happy to take a quick free kick, rather than wait for the referee to move the wall back 10 yards (9.15m), then they cannot expect the defending team to retreat the required distance in zero time! In other words, it actually does take a few seconds for the defending players to physically move back out of the way, albeit that they might move back slowly. Therefore, if an attacking team takes a quick free kick, and the ball subsequently deflects off a defender, then play should generally be allowed to continue. The attacking team should certainly not be given another chance to retake the free kick, just because they preferred to take it quickly in the first place.

To tighten up and standardise the way that in which you deal with 'ceremonial free kicks', the following advice may help you in the future..

1. When a free kick is awarded to the attacking team, very near their opponent's penalty area, make eye contact with your active Assistant Referee to check for any signals and to confirm the offence.

2. Make your way quickly to the location of the free kick, and immediately begin telling opponents to retreat. Keep an eye out for opponents who make their way towards the ball, with intent to slow down the restart.

Note: Do not stand in front of the ball, but keep nearby, to one side, away from any areas that the ball is most likely to be played.

Note: Keep your whistle out of sight (this is important, because if you show it at this stage, it may impart the wrong message).

3. In general, a Referee should never prevent the kicking team from taking a quick kick, regardless of how close to the goal the ball is. But when possible, play should be stopped, if you have to deal with any disciplinary measures. The perpetrators should be dealt with, before organising the free kick.

Note: There may be occasions when the kick is taken very quickly, before the Referee has had chance to caution or send-off a player (for example, when the Referee is too far away to immediately deal with requirements). In such cases, Law 5 (The Referee) states that the Referee is not obliged to take disciplinary action immediately, but must do so when the ball next goes out of play. But as a general warning, play should always be stopped if there is a chance that violent conduct may occur, or when retribution may result if an advantage is played by the Referee.

Note: Some free kicks breed snowstorms of confrontation. Players falling down on the ground, pushing, shoving and dissent flying around like a horde of angry mosquitoes. There may indeed be a requirement to caution or even send off players. When this happens, the key is to arrive quickly with your whistle howling. Calm must be restored before the free kick is taken.

4. Ensure that the ball is positioned where the offence occurred.

5. Stand to the side of where the attacking players are gathering, and discreetly ask them if they want you to move the wall back.

6. If a quick free kick is requested, move swiftly away to a good viewing point, but do not move anywhere in front of the ball (or where the ball is most likely to be played). Play can then continue naturally, when the attacking team take the quick free kick.

Note: If it is an indirect free kick, raise your arm upright.

7. If a quick free kick is NOT requested, and the attacking team want you to move the wall back the required distance, hold your whistle up in the air, and clearly inform the attacking team, that they are not to commence the free kick until you have blown your whistle. Show the whistle clearly to the goalkeeper also. In other words, if the attacking team have decided not to immediately have a quick free kick, then clearly advise them that they must wait for a signal. Get a positive acknowledgment (nod of the head or verbal acknowledgement) from the (apparent) free kick taker, that he must not take the kick until you whistle.

Note: When raising the whistle, keep the arm bent a little. A straight raised arm can be confused with an indirect free kick signal.

Note: It is only the players on the field of play who can request for the 9.15m distance to be applied by the Referee. It very often happens, that managers and coaches scream for the 9.15m to be applied, whereas conversely, their team players wish to take the kick quickly. It is the players on the field who decide, and not the screaming manager! In other words, the Referee should only look at and listen to the participating players who are close enough to the ball to know if they want a quick kick or not.

Note: When an indirect free kick is awarded to the attacking team, in its opponent's goal area, the restart takes place on the edge of the goal area. The distance of the defending players (who are allowed to stand on their goal line between their goal posts) will therefore be less than 9.15m.

8. Recheck the position the ball correctly and tell the attacking team NOT to move it.

Note: If you have Assistant Referees, instruct them in your pre-match brief, to keep an eye on the position of the ball, to ensure that it is not moved. If it is moved, the Assistant Referee should inform you. This instruction can be communicated during the game to the Assistant simply, by making eye contact, pointing to the ball, and delivering a thumbs-up signal.

9. Manage any defending players who remain near, or approach the ball, cautioning (or strongly warning) those who do not withdraw quickly (particularly those delaying perpetrators who sneak up from behind!) At this point you should also make eye contact with your active Assistant again, to ensure that he is correctly positioned, and alert to any likelihood of hanky panky!

Note: Law 13 (Free Kicks) does not justify a Referee allowing the offending side an opportunity to consolidate its defence and it does not absolve the Referee from taking action against a player who intentionally prevents the free kick from being taken quickly, or who does not at once retire to the correct distance. Such a player commits an offence. If, when a free kick is being taken, any of the players dance about or gesticulate in a way calculated to distract their opponents, it shall be deemed unsporting behaviour for which the offender(s) shall be cautioned.

10. Measure the 9.15m distance (not through the wall but to the side, as this could invite trouble!) while simultaneously controlling the position of the ball.

Whether you pace out the 9.15m distance, or judge the distance, is a personal choice. But the overriding criterion is to ensure that the opposing team are the correct distance away (there are several methods that can be used to achieve this).

For example:

(a) Physically pace out the 9.15 distance.

(b) Use the field markings to approximate the distance by standing in front of the ball and instructing the wall to retreat until it is estimated to be far enough away.

(c) Walk casually to the wall, asking the players to move back until the correct distance from the ball is achieved.

Note: When the wall is in the correct position, remind those in that wall, especially the outside player that you hold him responsible if the wall breaks early. Tell them to wait and NOT move forward until the ball is KICKED, and not when the WHISTLE is heard.

Note: Although an Assistant Referee is empowered by Law 6 to enter the field of play to help control the 9.15m distance, the Referee should always measure out the initial distance, and should never rely on the Assistant Referee to set up a ceremonial type free kick near the goal. Instructions to this effect, should be imparted to the Assistant Referees during the Referee's pre-match brief.

Note: If during the setting up of the wall, your attention is taken away due to altercations, always recheck with your active Assistant to ensure nothing else has happened, or the ball has been moved or other misconduct occurred whilst you were being distracted.

Note: While the Law states that all opposing players should retire at a distance of at least 9.15 metres/10 yards from the ball, the Referee has discretion to disregard this requirement to enable a free kick to be taken quickly. A player who does not retire to the correct distance when a free kick is about to be taken, or who stands in front of the ball when a free kick has been given against his team, in order to delay the restart and to allow his team to organise the defensive wall, must be cautioned under the appropriate section of Law 12 as must a player who runs out of a defensive 'wall' before the ball is in play.

11. When you have all the players in their correct positions, raise your whistle high again, and verbally remind the players not to begin until you have blown your whistle. Make sure you get at least one of the nearby

attacking players to nod his understanding of your instruction. This is important, because if things go wrong (e.g. they take the kick before you have whistled), then you can 'single out' this specific player by reminding him, that you had clearly told his team to await your signal.

12. When everything is set, move to a good viewing angle, taking up a correct position, (controlling the ball, wall and being able to see the goal and your active Assistant Referee). Recheck the position of all the players, and readjust them accordingly by giving assertive instructions. Do not obscure the view of the defenders or get in the way of the free kick.

Note: If the wall stubbornly refuses to retreat the required distance, or creeps forwards, you can caution the nearest player to you who is on the end of the wall. In other words, there is no need to caution all of the players in the wall.

Note: If it is an indirect free kick, raise your arm upright.

13. When you are satisfied that all of the players are in their correct positions, double-check that the goalkeeper has not fallen asleep, make eye contact with your active Assistant and then the kicker to see if he is ready. And then give your whistle a loud blast to commence the free kick.

14. If the defenders advance from the wall after the whistle, but before the kick is taken, have the free kick retaken if a goal is not scored and caution the offending player(s). In other words, if encroachment occurs, and there is not enough time to stop play by whistling, wait a few seconds to see if a goal is immediately scored before considering a retake.

14. If the free kick is retaken, make sure that the ball is in the correct position again and follow the same procedure above.

These are just the basics of organising a 'ceremonials' type free kick, and if done consistently, should help to minimise awkward situations occurring in your futures games.

Summary: Action to be taken in preparation to organise a 'ceremonial free kick.

1. Make eye contact with your active Assistant Referee to confirm the offence.
2. Make your way quickly to the scene and encourage nearby opponents to move away.
3. Deal 'now' with any misconduct if you have to. Or make a note to deal with it later if the free kick is taken quickly.
4. Ensure that the ball is positioned correctly.
5. Ask if a quick free kick is required.
6. If YES - move away to monitor the game.
7. If NO - hold up whistle and instruct players to wait for your signal before taking the free kick.
8. Recheck the position of the ball and instruct players not to move it.
9. Instruct encroaching opponents to move away.
10. Measure out, or estimate the 9.15 distance to ensure that the wall is correctly placed.
11. Remind players by holding up your whistle again - not to start until you have signalled with your whistle.
12. Move to a good viewing angle.
13. Double-check the position of the goalkeeper and the readiness of the kicker. And then signal the restart with a loud blast of your whistle.

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

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This newsletter will **always** remain free to **all** members.



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):

Web site: www.corshamref.org.uk

(Also - Editor and Laws Editor of [Refereeing Today](http://www.refereeingtoday.com), <http://www.footballreferee.org/> Referee, FA Referee Instructor, and FA Referees' Assessor Wiltshire, England).

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