

The Corsham Referee Newsletter No 52 (November 2007)

1st November 2007 International newsletter covering Football (Soccer) Refereeing matters.

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 52nd issue of The Corsham Referee monthly International Football/Soccer Referees' newsletter.

Greetings to everyone.

Some important news:

I am still busy with my new house; hence my involvement with refereeing matters has taken a back seat during the past few months.

I have also recently changed my internet provider, which means that my www.CorshamRef.net web site content will have to be moved to a new host. The www.CorshamRef.net web site will therefore not be updated in future and now becomes defunct. I have asked my previous internet providers to delete the site. This is the end of an era for me, as the old site has been around for many years.

I have created a new web site at www.CorshamRef.org.uk which I will populate in slow time.

I will continue to publish the Newsletters monthly, and I hope that you find them interesting. There are over 1,000 referees from all over the world that subscribe to my newsletter, and I intend to keep it going for as long as I can.

It's time for me to make a fresh start, and that's what I've done!

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

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A FRIENDLY GAME.

A story was once told to me by a referee from our association where I am the appointments secretary after having appointed this referee to a game.

When the referee arrived at the ground there were no corner flags in position so he advised the home coach that he would need to put them in place before the game could be commenced.

The response from the home coach was words to the effect that, oh ref, the game is only a friendly game and surely we do not need corner flags?

The referee's response, which I thought was rather good, was that if it was only a friendly game then if a player from the opposition team should happen to hit one of the players from the coach's team that the referee then would not need to take any action as it was only a friendly game!!

The end result of that comment was that the corner flags were in place very quickly and the game kicked off on time and it would have appeared that the coach got the message.

I guess the thing to be learnt from such happenings is that there is no such thing as a friendly game but only a game played for no points.

Thanks to Merlin Amos for sending in this story. Cheers Merlin.

Merlin Amos, Appointments Secretary, Elizabeth & Districts Referees Association, (South Australia)

'SET PIECES' – C.O.R.N.E.R. KICKS. *More 'set-piece' advice by Julian Carosi.*

Communicate: Oversee proceedings: Repositioning: Never: Expect anything: Review: = C.O.R.N.E.R

In the previous CorshamRef newsletter (No. 51 October 2007), I reiterated how a game of football/soccer consists of many - what can best be described as 'set-pieces', or jigsaw puzzle pieces that add up to form the whole 90 minutes. Each 'set-piece', if successfully managed, will result in the referee maintaining control. One of the first aims of every referee should be to use 'best-practice' techniques when managing 'set-pieces'. Once the standard 'set-piece' techniques have been mastered, the players' confidence in the referee will rise, and they will more readily accept those awkward (non-set-piece) match-changing decisions, which seem to crop up in nearly every game. Subsequently, the referee will feel more confident, in the knowledge that at least he has a structured way to deal with the majority of situations in a game of football.

In this article, we add to the previous ideas on how to manage set-piece throw-ins, how to issue cards and managing goal kicks, by offering some additional considerations for monitoring corner kicks. These ideas are not prescriptive; rather, they will hopefully give you some new things to think about, and encourage you towards adopting a consistent approach by dovetailing them into your own style of refereeing.

Communicate: When a corner kick decision is disputed, the closer you are to the goal line, the greater credibility you will have, and the easier it will be for you to sell your decision to those who disagree. This is particularly important, when tempers are frayed or the game is highly competitive. Unless there is any doubt in the decision, there is no need to make an audible signal (i.e. using whistle or voice) when awarding a corner kick. But it is prudent to use an arm signal on most occasions, as this will convey your decision to those who may be watching the game from a distance. The arm should be raised at a high angle, pointing towards the corner flag position where the kick should be taken. Try and make the arm elevation, different to that used when indicating a throw-in, where the angle of the raised arm can be significantly less. The aim of any visual signalling is to convey the correct decision without putting doubt in the onlookers' minds. In short, the arm signals used to indicate a throw-in, goal kick, corner kick, free kick etc, should be significantly different to each other. This way, players soon recognise which decision has been made; and this in turn adds to the enjoyment, flow and control of the game. The sternness, with which you deliver your signal, will need to be increased if dissent is expected. In other words, it's no good using feeble communication when a decision is disputed; a much stronger confident stance is required in such cases!

In all cases, when a referee awards a corner kick, the Assistant Referee will play a significant part towards the final decision. It is important therefore, that prior to signalling for a corner kick, the Referee should always look over to his active Assistant Referee for confirmation. This will minimise those embarrassing occasions when the Referee awards a corner kick, but the Assistant Referee has flagged for an offside or a goal kick instead! When an Assistant Referee signals for a corner kick, the chances are, that he will already be looking at you (the Referee), so take this opportunity to offer a subtle 'thumbs up' signal to thank him for his involvement.

Oversee proceedings: A corner kick restart is the ideal place for opponents to have a niggle at each other. The closeness of opponents, the potential outcome, and the constricted space, all add up to creating a situation where trouble can quickly breed if it is not curbed immediately. One of the first considerations for a Referee is therefore to be proactive in quelling conflict. To do this, you must keep a wary eye on protagonists and react instantly. If you identify a potential trouble spot before the corner kick has taken place, blow your whistle hard and use strong vocal and arm signals to delay the kick. Move in quickly to sort out perpetrators by asking them to behave themselves, and then move back out swiftly to your monitoring position (which could now be adjusted accordingly to provide a better viewpoint of the new trouble area). Imagine yourself on the end of a bungee rope; the idea being to deal with the situation quickly and return to your starting point in a matter of seconds! Try and deal with problems before the kick takes place, rather than having to stop play after the ball has been kicked. Reacting swiftly to curb trouble, imparts a clear message to players that you expect them to contest future corner kicks without the need for rebellious conduct!

Repositioning: Corner kick positioning seems to be the most argued about restart in terms of where the Referee is best placed to monitor proceedings. To begin with, let's look at where NOT to stand! Consider the central space the width of the goal area, extending out to the breadth of the penalty arc. This area is where the ball is most likely to be delivered to (or travel across) when a corner kick is taken. There is a great danger for the Referee, if he stands in this area, because he is very likely to get in the way of players, and is in danger of having the ball deflect off him to the advantage of one team or another. For ease of reference, let's call this the 'no-go' area. Another contentious position, is to stand either on the goal line, or behind the goal net itself. Whilst there is some benefit in being able to monitor if a goal has been scored or not from these positions (particularly when Club Assistant Referees are being used), their extreme locations leave the Referee floundering should the ball break away quickly to the other end of the field. The crux of astute corner kick positioning should be based on a compromise, resulting in an optimum starting point that allows a Referee to adjust his position to give him the best chance of reaching and monitoring any

point on the field of play once the corner kick has been taken. In short, a Referee should take a conservative view of positioning, and not place himself on the extremes where he can soon become isolated away from the (second phase) play area.

There is no correct place to stand when a corner kick is taking place. There are so many possibilities that can happen when the ball is delivered, it would be impossible to have a single standard position. But there are some benefits to adhering to a consistent starting point as the corner kick is being prepared. The first consideration for a Referee is to have the drop-zone play area (the penalty area) between himself and his active Assistant Referee. Therefore, the modern Referee uses a starting point on the outside edge of the penalty arc furthest away from his active Assistant Referee. This starting position remains roughly the same whether the corner kick is taken on the right or the left corner flag. This allows the Referee to face his Assistant Referee and increases the chances of seeing any flag signals as play develops. It also allows the Referee the widest and clearest angle of view to monitor and deal with opponents who are niggling at each other. It is also the best position to allow the Referee to move into new locations without bumping into players or having to run through them! Finally, the position on the edge of the penalty arc is the optimum starting point to monitor the second phase of play as it develops (wherever it develops). The important part of Referee positioning at corner kicks is to be able to read the game and anticipate where the ball is likely to travel. As soon as the ball is delivered, the Referee should adjust his position to gain the best vantage point; but not by running through or into the 'no-go' area unless there is a desperate need to.

To summarise: There is no correct place to stand at corner kicks, but there is great benefit in adopting a consistent starting position on the edge of the penalty arc that allows you the best chance of adapting to all possible outcomes.

Never: There are several things that a Referee should never do whilst monitoring a corner kick: Turn his back on his active Assistant Referee; blow his whistle every time a corner kick is awarded; fail to take any notice of his Assistant Referee; give weak whistle or arm signals; stand where there is a danger of the ball (or players) colliding with him; ignore barging and shirt pulling between players as they jostle for position before the kick takes place; remain static whilst the ball is in the air; allow the ball to be placed outside of the corner arc; ignore encroachment towards the ball by opponents before the kick has taken place; ignore time wasting tactics; allow the corner flag to be removed or bent out of the way; allow dissent to fester when a decision is disputed etc.

Expect anything: Because there is a heightened potential of a goal immediately being scored, the monitoring of a corner kick is one of the tensest restarts that a Referee will have to deal with during a game. It is therefore important, that a Referee's involvement and concentration is at its highest level during these periods. Whilst a Referee can relax a little during the taking of a throw-in or a goal kick, he should increase his state of alertness during corner kicks. There are three stages to consider. Firstly, the Referee must deal swiftly with any infringements occurring whilst the kick is being set up. Secondly, the Referee must be alert to antics as the ball is making its way into the penalty area; and finally, the Referee must be prepared to react competently with the outcome of the corner kick. And this can range from dealing with irate defenders after a disputed goal is awarded, to being able to sprint to the other end of the field of play to award another corner kick! Astute Referees will raise their levels of concentration and involvement during a corner kick, They will be on their toes in readiness to react to all possibilities, and they will place themselves in advantageous positions that allow them the best possible chance of coping with all subsequent developments (and not just with the monitoring of the goal line!)

Review: As a game progresses, the Referee will subconsciously gather and review general information, such as which player is able to kick the ball furthest, which player is the most skilful, the tactics being used by each team, how proficient each goalkeeper is, whether a player is left or right footed, and the levels of sportsmanship of each team etc. All of this information, along with the pattern of previous corner kicks, will give the Referee useful information that he can use to his benefit. For example, if a player, who is able to kick the ball a long way, takes a corner kick, it is possible to anticipate with some degree of accuracy, where the ball is most likely to be delivered. This allows the Referee to adjust his position to give a better angle of view of the drop-zone (where the ball will land). If a left footed player takes a corner kick on the right hand corner flag, the trajectory of the ball will swing in a curve towards the goal. If a player with a weak kick takes a corner kick, the ball is likely only to reach the near goal post; in this case, the Referee can adjust his position to give a greater angle of view of this area (rather than stay on the far side of the penalty where his view will be obscured by many players). To aid a Referee's ability to make the most use of these types of information, he should try to consciously make a note as the game progresses, rather than rely on his unconscious mechanism. He can do this by simply saying to himself (for example), 'The red No. 6 has a long kick'. This increases the chance of this information becoming useful should the Red No. 6 take corner kick, or any other restart kick.

Ex-FIFA Referee Collina, took this concept to the extremes; prior to games, he walked the stadium just to get the smell of it! In short, if you can force yourself to consciously tune into the information that your radar will receive when you are officiating (rather than discounting it) the better Referee you will become.

Regards, Julian Carosi.

UEFA Referees Development Programme 2007 (*www.UEFA.com*)

Some good advice from the UEFA Referee Seminars held earlier this year.

Dissent:

Players must be cautioned if they:

- show dissent by running towards the referee or assistant in protest
- show dissent by action or gesture
- verbally or physically demand a yellow card for an opponent

In cases of players crowding around the referee (mass protests / mobbing) at least one player must be cautioned.

In cases of unsporting physical contact with the referee or assistant referee the player(s) must be sanctioned with a red card.

Protection of players:

Referees were reminded of their responsibility to protect players from unfair play.

Illegal challenges with elbows / arms

- Such challenges appear to be an on-going problem.
- Some improvement was noted following the August 2006 seminar and red cards have been shown in several matches. However, some of the actions/non-actions taken by referees for such challenges were considered to be inappropriate.
- Referees must identify and punish appropriately strong unfair challenges with hands and arms; they should be aware of the particular danger of the deliberate movement of arms and elbows in an unnatural manner.
- Any challenge involving excessive force and therefore endangering the safety of an opponent is serious foul play and must result in a red card.
- The role of assistant referees (and sometimes the 4th official) can be important in such situations.

Strong unfair tackles:

- Referees are strongly reminded of their duty to protect players from strong unfair physical contact / tackles.
- Whilst the action taken by many referees in UEFA matches was appropriate, there are still occasions when such challenges have not been dealt with in accordance with previous instructions.
- One aspect which was reiterated was that it makes no difference if the tackle is from behind, the front or the side.
- Where contact is made with the ball and the opponent at speed and without consideration for the potential danger to the opponent, this must be punished appropriately – normally with a caution, but in cases of serious foul play with a red card.
- Referees are reminded that any tackle involving excessive force and therefore endangering the safety of an opponent is serious foul play and must result in a red card.

Holding in the penalty area:

While holding outside the penalty area is being punished quite consistently, especially in cases where a promising attack is stopped, illegal use of hands/arms inside the penalty area has become increasingly apparent and is not being dealt with appropriately. This is particularly true prior to the taking of corner kicks and attacking free kicks near to goal.

Referees must:

- apply the instructions given in previous courses more stringently. They should be pro-active prior to the taking of corner kicks / attacking free kicks near goal and should be clearly seen to be taking preventative action.
- deal very firmly with any further illegal use of the arms / hands. If this happens before the ball is in play, disciplinary sanctions should be administered. However, in clear cases of holding / pushing after the ball is in play referees are expected to award a penalty kick (for an offence by a defender) or a free kick (for an offence by an attacker) in addition to possible further disciplinary sanctions.

Protecting the image of the game:

Referees were reminded of their responsibility to protect the image of the game.

Confrontation between players:

- Mass confrontation involving players from both teams still occurs; participants are not being consistently or firmly sanctioned.
- Players involved in such incidents must be punished accordingly. It is recommended that at least one player from each team is cautioned and in cases of excessive physical contact the player(s) must be sent off.
- Any player approaching or joining the incident from some distance must be identified and also sanctioned.
- It is recommended that the assistant referee closest to the incident should assist the referee whilst the other

assistant should monitor and record events.

The fourth official should maintain his position between the technical areas while also monitoring the situation.

• The referee and assistant referee(s), and 4th official if necessary, should communicate with each other before the match re-starts.

Simulation:

• Referees should be aware that simulation can occur anywhere on the field of play and they must punish players whose actions are clearly intended to deceive the referee.

• Players who initiate contact with an opponent or use slight contact to deceive the referee must be identified and consistently sanctioned.

• Referees should be aware that players are making the task of the referee extremely difficult and must ensure that when simulation occurs it is not acceptable for it to be recognised but then go unpunished.

Attacking free kicks:

• To ensure total control, it is important that once the free kick has been awarded the referee must ensure that the ball is placed in the correct position and the kicker clearly told to wait for a signal from the referee before proceeding (This should be a show of the whistle to the kicker).

• Before "walking" the defending players to the correct 9.15m distance it is essential that all defending players are removed from the area where the offence occurred.

• Any player who refuses to retreat the required minimum distance must be cautioned.

• The referee must ensure that once the ball is placed in the correct position it is not moved.

• Attention must be paid to defending players who encroach before the kick is taken, particularly players within the wall who shuffle forward.

• If encroachment occurs during the taking of the kick and a goal is not scored, the kick should be retaken and the offending player cautioned.

Managing the team:

Particular emphasis was given to eye contact being a two-way process and the need to give priority to the flag in case the electronic beep system fails. Referees should remind their assistants of the 'wait and see' technique and the importance of:

- Correct positioning and angle of view

- Cooperation

- Assistance with offences unseen by the referee

- Assistance with fouls near to or in the penalty area

In general, referees should build the confidence of their assistant referees and clearly and openly discuss all aspects of the expected performance to enhance motivation. Concerns were expressed that some assistant referees still do not consistently follow

the UEFA guidelines, agreed at previous assistant referee courses, regarding the use of the flag and discreet signals.

(Telegraph News)

Referee 'swore at Wise' By Richard Bright GMT 30/10/2007

Referee Danny McDermid has been charged by the Football Association after he was alleged to have sworn at Leeds manager Dennis Wise. Wise claimed McDermid used bad language after a stormy match between Leeds and Gillingham at Elland Road on Sept 29. Wise has been fined £5,000 and given a three-match touchline ban for using abusive and insulting words towards McDermid during half-time at the same game, the FA confirmed yesterday.

A statement released by the FA said: "At a regulatory commission hearing last week, Leeds United manager Dennis Wise was fined £5,000 and given a three-match touchline ban."

Wise was charged with using abusive and or insulting words towards referee McDermid at half-time of Leeds' match against Gillingham on Sept 29. The commission invoked a suspended one-match touchline ban and issued a two-match ban. In reaching their decision, the commission took into account Wise's poor recent disciplinary record.

Meanwhile, the FA have charged referee McDermid with using abusive and or insulting words towards Wise. The incident is alleged to have occurred following the match against Gillingham. McDermid has until Nov 13 to respond.

THE REFEREE'S SURVIVAL GUIDE

A fantastic referee book written by Jeffrey Caminsky from the USA was featured in the 2007 April edition of The Corsham Referee newsletter, where you can get details of how to buy Jeff's book entitled 'The Referee's Survival Guide'. *Can be bought from Amazon.com*. The book comes highly recommended by me (Julian Carosi) and provides answers to many of your problems on the field of play. Clearly written and easy to understand. The Referee's Survival Guide explains many of the "what's, how's, who's and why's" of life on the soccer field, as well as many of the things for a referee to avoid.

Below is a monthly excerpt to whet your appetite for Jeff's brilliant book.

Rule #6:

You cannot get out of a hole until you stop digging.

In times of stress it is easy to lose our focus and start reacting out of anger frustration, or instinct.

As referees, surrounded by twenty-two other people—not including what sometimes sounds like a clamorous mob along the sidelines—we will often feel the need simply to dig in our heels and continue whatever we are doing. We do not, after all, want to seem weak, or appear influenced by the complaints of others. Courage is a necessary trait of a referee; stubbornness, however, is not. And as the captain of the Titanic discovered, sometimes it is better to change course than to continue rushing headlong toward disaster.

You should never change a call merely because somebody complains. You should, however, be open to the possibility that you are the one who should adjust to the situation around you, rather than insisting that the rest of the world change because you, after all, have a whistle.

- If you make a mistake, you should have the integrity to correct it if you can. If unsure of yourself, your colleagues on the sidelines may help you decide if your actions are well-considered, or whether you would be wise to consider a mid-course correction.
- If a player or coach complains that you are calling the game too loosely or too tightly, you are under no obligation to change your rights to issue a caution for dissent. But if everyone around you seems angry and frustrated, you may want to consider the wisdom of a change in your approach to the particular game.
- Strength in the face of adversity can be a sign of courage and integrity. Persistence despite clear signs that you have made a mistake may be equally courageous, but is usually described as pig-headedness.

Many thanks to Jeffrey Caminsky for giving his permission for this article to appear.

SOCCERPEDIA

*(A monthly extract from the brilliant book 'Soccerpedia' by my friend Andrew Ward. Arranged in A to Z format, this entertaining and authoritative book offers the chance to get to know the Laws of the Game and its history in detail. Publisher Robson. Publication Date 28 September 2006: ISBN 1861059833
Size (h x w) 234x156mm Pages 368 Normal price £10.99 (approx. \$20.35) Can be bought from Amazon.com*

REFEREE'S REPORT

A referee's match report should include details of the score, teams, date, colours, substitutions, cautions, dismissals, misconduct, and any unusual matters — a delayed start, a team short-handed at the start of a match, a change of referee during the match, a team failing to provide a linesman, match officials' late arrivals, pitch inadequacies, substandard facilities, any colour change ordered, abandonment of the match, etc.

The report is submitted to the proper authority (e.g. national association, service association, local association, competition organiser) within a specific time period. Referees can be in trouble for not filing reports, not answering correspondence or missing disciplinary hearings. In 2002—03, Surrey FA received 10,220 misconduct reports on cautions and 2,476 on sendings-off. The average reporting time was 5.12 days. Certain associations have e-mail systems and pre-printed forms to make the task easier for referees. The system of reporting and the time limit for sending in reports is left to competition organisers (1993).

Referees document cautions and sendings-off as briefly as possible — the player's name and initials (as given by the player and as they are on the team-sheet), the offence, when the offence occurred, whether the ball was in play, the referee's position, whether a player received medical treatment, and any later consequences of the incident (e.g. reactions of other players).

Other misconduct includes incidents involving the players before or after the match, or incidents involving coaches, physiotherapists or spectators. The police may ask to see a copy if there has been a serious incident.

Referees are also entrusted with the key task of recording the official score. 'Referees have been known to keep a tally on their shirt cuffs, do queer things with coins, putting one after another in certain pockets to represent the scoring,' said William Pickford, about the game's early days.

When Bolton played Notts County, the referee sent the wrong score to the Football League (October 1889). It was later corrected from 0—3 to 0—4. There are also instances of referees putting a goal down to the wrong team (2—2 instead of 3—1) and calling for extra-time to be played. Arbroath's victory at Stranraer was reported in newspapers as 5—1 but it was corrected to 4—1 when the referee pointed out that he had disallowed a late goal (March 1986).

Players are not always aware of the actual score. When Sheffield Wednesday played Wolverhampton Wanderers in the 1896 FA Cup Final, goalkeeper Tennant (Wolves) came off the field thinking his team had drawn 1—1 rather than lost 2—1. Wednesday's winner had passed Tennant, hit the crossbar, and bounced over the line and out. Seeing the ball in front of him when he came round from his leap, Tennant booted it upfield, and somehow failed to spot the kick-off.

When Australia beat American Samoa 31—0, the scoreboard operator erroneously showed the score at 32—0 and that had to be corrected later by the referee (April 2001). At Stoke, Liverpool were leading 7—0 when they were awarded a penalty (November 2000). As Fowler (Liverpool) placed the ball on the spot, the scoreboard changed to 'STOKE 0 LIVERPOOL 8'. It proved a correct prediction.

Many thanks to Andrew Ward for giving his permission for this article to appear.

Two Cs the key for Steinhaus (FIFA.com)

When (female referee) Bibiana Steinhaus was at the recent G8 summit in her capacity as a policewoman, she took the opportunity to observe Angela Merkel at close quarters. Despite the fact that all seven of her counterparts were male, the German Chancellor was very much in charge of proceedings as host of the event in Heiligendamm. Bibiana will soon find herself in similar circumstances - only in her case, there will be 22 men and it will be on a football pitch. "Mrs Merkel showed that she can assert herself, so let's see if any of that has rubbed off on me," said Bibiana at a press conference at the German Football Association's (DFB) Frankfurt head office.

Next season, the 2007 Female Referee of the Year will become the first woman to be in charge of men's professional football matches in Germany, starting out in Bundesliga 2. "For me, the key is to be consistent with every team and ensure plenty of communication. I set myself very high standards, so let's see if that stands me in good stead," explained the tall, confident 28-year-old.

Steinhaus, born in the Harz mountains of northern Germany, knows that her life is about to change beyond recognition. "The media spotlight will definitely increase a lot, as we can already see here today," said the new 'First Lady' of German refereeing at her official introduction, bringing a smile to the face of DFB Communications Director Harald Stenger and Volker Roth, Chairman of the DFB Refereeing Committee. Flashlights, TV cameras and around 60 journalists were all present to hear the words of a woman held up as an example within her profession.

Clean slate

Steinhaus is already a familiar face on the German sporting scene. Since 1999, she has been refereeing top-level women's Bundesliga matches; in 2001, she began officiating at Regionalliga (third division) men's matches and since 2005, she has been on the FIFA women's referees list.

She also knows the Bundesliga 2 environment very well, as she has been working as a referee's assistant at this level since 2004. "The more fans there are in the stadium, the less you hear what they're saying," she says with typical wit, while relishing the chance to officiate matches involving big established clubs such as FC Koln, FC Kaiserslautern, 1860 Munich and Borussia Monchengladbach.

It does not take more than a few minutes in Steinhaus' presence to realise that she will doubtless be a success in her new career. She has an answer to every question, coming across as conscientious and disarmingly

convincing. She is a model of consistency, but still manages to appear relaxed rather than uptight.

"I apply the rules and make sure that everything is above board. I have executive responsibilities, as it were, in both of my jobs, which is a real advantage," she says, in reference to her 'day job' as a policewoman. Her new tasks hold no fears for her: "Everyone has a clean slate at the start of the season - coaches, players and refs too," she explains, also mentioning that she expects "no special privileges".

Easing the pressure

In other countries, women have been officiating in the men's top flight for some time now - Nicole Petignat, for example in Switzerland - and 65-year-old Roth is convinced that Steinhaus will be ready to cross that bridge when the time comes. "We've been watching Bibiana for some years now," he explains, "and she's got a good career ahead of her. The main thing for us is to help her develop without putting too much pressure on her." Roth, who is a former international referee, is proud of the fact that Steinhaus has already handled home games involving newly promoted FC St. Pauli and even, as a mere 23-year-old, the big East German derby between Chemnitz and Erzgebirge Aue.

"The confidence that people have in me gives me great satisfaction and I'll be working hard to repay their faith," promises Steinhaus in reply to Roth. She does admit that, compared with her male colleagues, she "may have to train harder than the rest sometimes. We shouldn't forget that referees are professional athletes." It is not yet known which two assistants will referee with her, but one thing is for sure - they will both be men.

Following in her father's footsteps.

So how on earth did Steinhaus become a referee? "I suppose you could say that I was born with a whistle in my mouth. My father was a referee and still officiates at local level and in veterans' matches," she smiles, before mentioning someone else who has been instrumental in her career. "Wolfgang Illhardt, the referees coordinator for my club, SV Bad Lautersberg, was my sponsor as well as my fiercest critic," she continues, before adding with a grin: "I used to play as well, as a left-back, but I wasn't very successful, so I soon turned my attentions to refereeing."

Back in 1995, Gertrud Gebhard was a referee's assistant in the men's Bundesliga for two matches, and it would appear that Steinhaus is well on the way to improving on those achievements in the not-too-distant future. She herself refuses to speculate, leaving Roth to explain that "it will all depend on performances". That being the case, Steinhaus has every chance.

YOU MUST BE JOKING REF?

After dying in a car crash, three Referees go to Heaven for orientation. They are all asked the same question, "When you're lying in your casket, and friends and family are mourning over you, what would you like to hear them say about you?" The first Assistant Referee immediately responds, "I would like to hear them say that I was one of the great Assistant Referees of my time, and a great family man."

The second Assistant Referee says, "I would like to hear that I was a wonderful husband and teacher of the Laws of the game who made a huge difference in the children of tomorrow."

The last guy (the Referee) thinks for a moment, and then replies, "I guess I'd like to hear them say, 'Look, he's moving!'"

A Referee buys a box of laundry detergent, and it says on the box, "20 uses". A day later, the Referee calls the laundry detergent company and says "I bought your product and the box says '20 uses', but all it does is my laundry!"

During a rock climbing expedition, an accident occurred, as some of the grappling hooks gave way. This left the eleven climbers clinging precariously to the wildly swinging rope suspended from a crumbling outcropping on the Mountain. Ten were Referees, one was a football player. As a group they decided that one of the party should let go.

If that didn't happen the weight on the rope would cause more of the hooks to give way and everyone would perish. For an agonising few moments no one volunteered. Finally the player gave a truly touching speech saying he would sacrifice himself to save the lives of the others. All ten Referees applauded.....

A lady was in her front yard mowing grass when her Referee neighbour came out of his house and went straight to his mailbox. He opened it, then slammed it shut, and stormed back in his house. A little later, he came out of his house again, went to the mailbox, opened it and slammed it shut again. Angered, he again stormed back in his house.

As the lady was getting ready to edge the lawn, the Referee neighbour came out yet again. He marched to the mailbox, opened it, and then slammed it shut harder than ever. Puzzled by his actions, the lady asked, "Is something wrong?"

"There certainly is! My stupid computer keeps giving me a message saying "You've Got Mail."

A young ventriloquist is touring the football clubs and stops to entertain at a local football club bar in a small town.

He's going through his usual run of stupid Referee jokes, when a large, Referee in the fourth row stands on his chair and says, "I've heard just about enough of your denigrating Referee jokes! What makes you think you can stereotype Referees that way? What does a person's physical attributes have to do with their worth as a competent Referee?" The ventriloquist looks on in amazement.

"It's guys like you who keep Referees like me from being respected at work and by the fans," he continued, "and of reaching my full potential as a person because you and your kind continue to perpetuate discrimination against not only Referees but Assistant Referees at large... all in the name of humour."

Flustered, the ventriloquist begins to apologize. The Referee interjects,

"You stay out of this, mister, I'm talking to that little 'blighter' on your knee!"

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION and ANSWER TOPICS:

Question: If an outfielder goes down injured during the game but you would not stop play until the ball went out of play as you didn't deem it serious or whatever, what would you do if a goalkeeper goes down injured during the game for the same type of reason? Do you have to stop play? Or can you continue? If you stop / have to stop, how do you restart, also?

Answer: It would go against the 'Spirit of the Game' to allow play to continue too long whilst a goalkeeper remains injured. There is an expectation (etiquette) that is applied by Referees when goalkeepers become injured. This is universally understood by players (who play their part in this – unwritten - understanding).

As a moot point, a team is expected to have a goalkeeper for it to be legal; hence, if a goalkeeper goes down injured, the team can be said to be incomplete. This is not so important for an injured outfield player, as there are 9 other outfield players who can cover the injured colleague. But when a goalkeeper goes down injured, nobody else is immediately allowed to temporarily take his place.

Thankfully, on most occasions when a goalkeeper becomes injured, there is little chance of a goal being instantaneously scored against him. In those cases, the Referee would be expected to stop play at a convenient point to allow the injury to be assessed and treated. Problems can arise when a goalkeeper becomes injured whilst his goal is under immediate attack; there are an endless number of scenarios that can develop. For example, as a nearby attacker is approaching the goal, the goalkeeper makes a legal challenge for the ball, and becomes slightly injured (no foul has been committed). The attacker continues on with the ball and scores a goal. There is nothing wrong in allowing the goal, as the Referee has the power to allow the game to continue if an injury is not serious.

Like most answers to do with Refereeing are concerned, there is very rarely a simple solution that covers all possibilities. Each case of 'injured goalkeepers' must be gauged carefully, before the Referee makes a decision.

The further the ball is away from the goal, the easier it will be for the Referee to stop play without repercussion. If a defending goalkeeper becomes injured and the Referee allows play to continue on for several moments, the Referee will be castigated by the defending team if a goal is subsequently scored whilst the goalkeeper is still prostrate on the ground with a minor injury.

As a 'rule of thumb', if a goal is unlikely to be scored instantaneously, the Referee should stop play to allow the injured goalkeeper to be treated. Play is restarted with a dropped ball at the place where the ball was when play

was stopped. Players readily accept this approach. There is no satisfaction (or sportsmanship) in scoring a goal under such circumstances.

Question: I'm not sure what I should do with a friend who plays football, she has a bellybutton piercing, is there any protective measures she could use to cover this?

Answer: Law 4 states: A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to him/herself or another player (including any kind of jewellery).

If you are aware that 'belly ring jewellery' is being worn, then it must be removed. Note: Referees are not expected to ask players to complete a full body-check to eliminate body-piercing jewellery.

Players must take some responsibility themselves in playing safely.

Question: If you blow the whistle to stop play and administer a caution for dissent/verbal abuse. Can you please tell me what is the correct restart???

Answer: If a player commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player, the restart is an indirect free kick to be taken where the offence occurred.

Question: I'm a goalkeeper for a football team, and in the match tonight there was a ball passed back to me. It was hit with a bit of pace along the ground so to be safe I put both arms together and in front of the ball, letting it bounce off my wrists/forearms. Then come the cries of handball from the other team, ref gives the 3 yard free kick and they score.

It was to my knowledge that the pass back rule can only be enforced when the keeper actually picks the ball up, no? I mean, for instance if it was a stray backpass and the keeper had to dive to make a save on the ground, he doesn't get penalised for that right?. Was it the correct decision to give the free or am I still allowed to handle the ball in the situation?

Answer: Law 12 states that it is an offence if the goalkeeper touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberate kicked to him by a team-mate.

The Referee made the correct decision.

Question: A player is in an offside position when his team-mate passes the ball to him. The pass had subsequently deflected off an opponent (which tries to intercept it) before it reached the offside player. Is this offside?

What does "rebounds" mean in the following context: "... playing a ball that rebounds to him off an opponent having been in an offside position...".
What is the FIFA idea about that?

Answer: Offside is judged **at the moment that the ball is played**, so it makes no difference if it is deflected on its way or not. In other words, the offside player should still be penalised if he becomes active.

The words "... playing a ball that rebounds to him off an opponent having been in an offside position...". refers to when an offside player receives the ball after it has rebounded from a crossbar or the goalkeeper etc. If you look at the offside explanatory diagrams in the back of the Law book, they explain these situations perfectly.

Question: If a handball occurs which grossly disadvantages the opposition, but the handball itself is not deliberate, should you apply "common sense" and still whistle?

For example, say a defender on the line had a shot cannoned into his arm, with the shot going in had it not been for the arm blocking the ball, would you whistle for the penalty even if the handball itself was not deliberate?

Another example is an unintentional handball in a scramble which eventually leads to a player finding space and bearing in on goal, in this case you could say the ball ricocheted off an arm and fell into the attackers path.

I am aware the law states it must be deliberate but was simply after some experienced guidance on this matter.

