

The www.CorshamRef.org.uk Newsletter No 57: April 2008)

1st April 2008 International newsletter covering Football (Soccer) Refereeing matters.

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 57th edition of The Corsham Referee monthly International Football/Soccer Referees' newsletter. Greetings to everyone. There are over 1,000 referees of all levels from all over the world that subscribe to this newsletter. Your comments and contributions are always welcome. Keep up the good Refereeing work wherever you are in the world; and my best wishes go to all of you.
Editor Julian Carosi.

2008/2009 Law Changes (Reference FIFA.com)

Goal-line technology put on ice (FIFA.com) Saturday 8 March 2008

At its Annual General Meeting today in Gleneagles, Scotland, the International Football Association Board (IFAB) has decided to put on ice goal-line technology and to stop tests in this area until further notice. Amongst others, the questions of the human aspect of the game, the universality of the Laws of the Game, as well as the simplicity and efficiency of the technology were taken into consideration.

However, the IFAB has approved a proposal from FIFA to conduct an experiment involving two additional assistant referees who will mainly focus on fouls and misconduct in the penalty area. The competition in which this test will be conducted will be decided at a later stage.

The Board also discussed a proposal from the Scottish FA regarding the use of video evidence to sanction simulation after the game. Although the suggestion was not approved, the IFAB members agreed that simulation is an act of cheating which must be intensively fought and sanctioned during the game and that all member associations would be encouraged to do so.

Furthermore, a proposal submitted by the FA and called Fair Play Convention, aimed at dealing with injured players while the game is in progress, was acknowledged but not approved, mainly on the grounds that fair-play is an instinct behaviour rather than an attitude to rule.

Regarding the Laws of the Game, the IFAB approved the following amendments:

Law 1 - The Field of Play

In order to standardize the size of the football pitch for A international matches, the IFAB has decided to set a fixed size of 105m long and 68m wide (instead of a minimum and maximum length - from 100m to 110m - and a minimum and a maximum width - from 64m to 75m - as mentioned in the present text).

Law 2 - The Ball

Within the FIFA Quality Concept for footballs, the IFAB has agreed that the new 'FIFA APPROVED', 'FIFA INSPECTED' and 'International Matchball Standard' logos, which were launched in May 2007, will replace the former logos displayed in the present text.

Revision of the Laws of the Game

The last major revision of the text of the Laws of the Game was one 11 years ago. Since then, many additions and amendments have been made to the Laws themselves and various publications as well as teaching materials have been produced. As a result, a further revision was overdue. The IFAB has approved the revision which contains no major change in content but simplifies the wording of the Laws.

On other business, it's been agreed that a discussion about the look and design of the ball will be submitted to the agenda of the next sub-committee meeting.

Also, as it already did last year, the Board stressed that people in the technical areas should have no access and view to pitch-side monitors.

Finally, the FIFA President made a strong appeal against violent tackles on the field of play, reiterating that "players committing such acts should be banned".

The 123rd Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board will take place next year in Northern Ireland.

The International F.A. Board, the custodian of the Laws of the Game, is composed of The Football Association (England), The Scottish Football Association, The Football Association of Wales, The Irish Football Association (Northern Ireland) and FIFA. Representing its 204 other members, FIFA has four votes on the body, while the four British associations have one vote apiece. A proposal requires a three-quarter majority (i.e. six of the eight votes) to be passed.

"SET PIECES' Penalty Kicks.

More 'set-piece' advice by Julian Carosi.

In the previous newsletters, 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 the article below, we add to the previous ideas on how to manage set-piece throw-ins, how to issue cards, how to manage goal kicks, how to build a positive image, how to establish a rapport with players by gaining their trust via the TRUST triangle, how to deal with simulation, how to manage a penalty kick, by offering you a process on how to approach the kick-off at the beginning of each game.

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.

The Kick-Off

Careful preparation, and finding a routine that works for you, is an important part of a Referee's approach to each game, as it allows you to focus on other matters, as the game gets underway. Below is a checklist that incorporates most of the things that a Referee will need to think about as he prepares to leave the changing room and whilst he completes the coin-tossing ceremony.

Itinerary: Leaving an important item of equipment in the changing rooms, will effect the concentration and state of readiness of a Referee. For example, leaving your coin or red and yellow cards behind will cause you embarrassment and distract you. Therefore, before you leave the changing rooms, check that you have all the items required, i.e. two whistles, pencils and notebook, cards, two watches, coin and handkerchief etc. Test out your whistles at home and in the changing room before you enter the field of play. As a last resort (e.g. if you have left your coin in the changing rooms) pick up a piece of grass and hide it behind you in a closed fist - then ask one of the Captains to chose which hand is holding the piece of grass, if he guesses correctly, then he wins and chooses which goal his team will attack in the first half of the match. Most Referees have used this method more than once during their careers.

Image projection: As soon as leave the changing room to begin the game, you must change into ultra-official mode. You should project yourself in a professional way. Conveying a positive attitude is beneficial. To emphasise the importance of image projection, an astute match assessor is able to predict with great accuracy, the level of match performance that a Referee will achieve, when the Referee steps out of his car on arrival. A smartly dressed, punctual and positive attitude, even at that early stage, is easy to perceive. This is why it is very important for the Referee and his team, to go into ultra 'work' (referee) mode when they leave the changing room. Because it is then, that the players will suss out the vulnerability of the Referee. For example, if a Referee looks shabby, is late, chewing gum, dribbling the ball at his feet and smoking a cigarette, the players will see this as a weakness to be exploited. Whereas a Referee who is very smartly dressed, ready on time, assertive and has a positive attitude, will make players think twice about questioning his ability.

If you are unable, or unwilling to achieve a professional entrance for EVERY game, then you should question why you are a Referee at all. The players really do want you to be professional - do you?

Entry onto the field of play: *Below are several ideas that may be of interest to you.*

- Always carry the ball, never dribble it, or try and show off your skills as a ball juggler. Carry the ball, and place it down on the centre spot when you reach it. Ask players not to practice with the match ball, once you have placed it on the centre spot. These ideas are not intended to spoil the enjoyment of the players, but to standardise your procedure, so that everything falls into place, without having you to think about it or do it again. For example, if you let players play with the match ball prior to kick off, you will have to organise its placement once again. Whereas if you place the ball and ask for it not to be touched, you have fully completed that part of your preparation. In short, take control of the start of the game yourself, and don't let the players dictate to you otherwise; if you do, this will impart a weakness of resolve on your part. You are now in command - not the players, so take this early opportunity to show the them that you are!

- Enter the field at the halfway line point if you can, and make your way directly to the centre circle. Keep your head held high, and your chest held out. This projects a much positive image. Don't amble along with head down and completely disinterested in what you are about to do. Take an interest and show that you are interested.
- If you have Assistant Referees available, ask them to flank you either side, with flags held furled in the outside hand. Instruct them to break away to check the goal nets prior to meeting back up with you when they have completed their early task. Ask them to look at each other before they return to the centre, so that they meet back up with you at the same time. The net check provides the first opportunity to display the effectiveness of the team-coordination that will be the linchpin to the Refereeing success. A clear indication of sound teamwork at this stage, will also form a first impression on the players' minds, how the Refereeing team intend to approach the game.

Checking on the condition of the nets, also stops the Assistant Referees from having to 'twiddle their thumbs' in the centre circle whilst the Referee prepares for the coin tossing ceremony. Whilst your Assistant Referees are completing this task, call the captains to the centre. This will be the first time that you will use your whistle, so make sure that you give it a huge blast. Conversely, give a feeble peep if you want the players to perceive you as being uninterested, incompetent and weedy"! Weakness with the whistle is one of the easiest ways to lose the confidence of the players.

- When your Assistants arrive, introduce them by their first names to both of the captains. There is no need to introduce Club Assistant Linesmen; but this can be done if required. The introduction of the Assistant Referees to the captains is an opportunity for the Referee to remind the captains, that there are three match officials in the officiating team.
- When the coin-tossing ceremony has been completed, the Assistant Referees should take up their respective positions. Instead of sauntering to the touchlines, Assistant Referees should sprint/jog into position in line with the second last defender. The flag should be furled. Once they are ready, they can unfurl their flags as a statement to the Referee that clearly says I am now prepared. Using high energy in these situations (rather than sauntering) sends out a very strong message of unity and purpose.

The Captains: Be pleasant in your manner to the Captains, wish them well and be sincere. The coin-tossing ceremony identifies both of the team captains and allows the opportunity to shake their hands. This is an important piece of man-management on behalf of the Referee. The Referee should offer the captains a strong, firm handshake, and not a hand that simulates a 'wet fish'. A strong handshake imparts a clear message to the captains that the Referee today means business!

Introduce yourself to the captains and attempt to break the ice by using a few suitable conversational words such as, "Good afternoon gentlemen, my name is John. Looks like it is going to be a nice afternoon, and I hope that you all enjoy your game." It doesn't matter what you talk about, and the more trivial it is, the easier it is for all of you to nod and agree. You need to show them, that despite rumours to the contrary, Referees are human. But you need to do it in such a way that also reminds the captains that you are here to manage the game, and not to make new social friends. Look the captains straight in the eye when you speak to them. Show them that you are not afraid of them. The captains will be looking for this early signal, to suss out just how strong you will be when it really matters. Confident eye contact at this early stage can project so much more than any amount of words can ever do. If you want the captains to see you as a weedy Referee, then all you need to do, is to look at the ground when you are speaking to them, and shy away from them when they attempt to suss you out in the centre circle. It is very much like what two lions might do when facing up to each other in competition for leadership of a pride.

There is a lot of unconscious, subtle postulating going on, most of it done harmlessly, naturally and spontaneously. This is what you need to do as a Referee before the game starts. You have been thrown into the lions' den, and you will be sussed out (whether you like it or not) before the confrontation begins. This is when you instantly become a Samuel by dynamic leadership or a *Kentucky fried chicken!* Which one are you going to be?

Instructions to Captains: Some Referees read the captains a 'bed time story' of what is expected of them and their teams. Other Referees say nothing more than 'Hello'. Some Referees give special instructions about the way the game will be officiated, allowing the captains the opportunity to pass this information onto their managers, coaches and teammates.

BUT.....

Less instruction - more match control flexibility.

Referees are often at a quandary as to what extent of instructions should they impart to the captains before the kick-off. There is a very easy concept to adopt here. The less instruction you impart, the more flexibility that you will have as a Referee as the game progresses. The more that you lay down the Law, the greater difficulty you will have in its flexibility. For example; if you say to the captains, "I will not tolerate bad language, and it will be punished with a red card." It leaves you with no alternative, than to send off a player, if after his accidental collision with a goal post, he shouts out a few strong words in pain. The more that a Referee puts his head above the parapet (in terms of laying down the Law) the easier it is for players to take a pop-shot at him. Keep the instructional conversation to the very barest minimum required. It could go something like this, "Try and keep the language down lads, and don't approach my Assistants, else I will not be too happy." You don't have to remind players of their responsibilities; so don't make a big deal of it. But you can tell the Captains that you expect the game to be played in a good sporting manner. If there are any local dictates, then keep these short and to the point. Remember.....

Less instruction - more match-control flexibility.

More instruction - World War 3.

A note of both of the captains' numbers should be made in your notebook. This can prove invaluable should you need to identify them during the game.

The following advice is taken from Jeffrey Caminsky's brilliant book, The Referee's Survival Guide.

Many referees find it useful to introduce themselves and their crew to the teams or their respective captains before the game. This helps establish a rapport with the players and may even permit a civil word or two before the match begins. It is often easier to keep a match under control if the participants see you as a human being, rather than just a uniform. It is also customary for some referees, particularly beginners, to give a thorough briefing to both teams detailing what will and will not be allowed on the pitch. Generally speaking, this is not a wise thing to do. Invariably, something unexpected will happen on the field, or you will miss something that everyone else has seen, and you are likely to find your words coming back to haunt you. It is, after all, well and good to make a point of protecting the keeper from foul play, but informing the teams that you will be doing so will not spare you grief if the keeper bobbles the ball and a goal scores from the ensuing scramble in the goal mouth. It only gives the unlucky keeper's team someone to blame for the goal, and that someone will be you. Beyond this, however, before the game the players will be concentrating on getting ready for the match and unlikely to listen to anything you have to say. Unless there is a particular reason to do so - a potentially confusing change in the rules, for example, that may have an effect on play - you are usually better off simply wishing them luck and calling for captains as soon as you are ready.

Tossing the coin: Make sure you allow plenty of time to complete the coin tossing ceremony prior to kick-off time. Whatever system you use, use it all of the time. Some Referees like to toss and catch the coin themselves (recommended). Some ask the away team captain to toss the coin. Some like the coin to be tossed and allow it to fall to the ground (not recommended), some like it caught. It really does not matter which system you use. If there are any local protocol instructions / conventions in place (such as "home" team tosses the coin and "away" team calls), then the Referee should follow the expected procedure.

Tip: Drill a small hole in your coin, and clip it to your whistle lanyard. You will never lose it. This also prevents that scourge of all Referees - having the jangling coin dancing about in one of your pockets and distracting you throughout the game. Make sure you have a coin available with you when you meet the Captains in the centre-circle. Making a note of which team kicked-off in the first half is another good idea. This may prevent embarrassment if you forget which team has to kick off in the second half.

Checking the players and Assistant Referees readiness:

Use this moment just prior to the start of the game, to acknowledge that the persons on the field of play are legal players and the persons wearing a goalkeepers' jerseys are the goalkeepers. Count the number of players in both teams before commencing play. If you want to, hold out an up-stretched arm towards your Assistant Referees and both goalkeepers, to check that they are ready to start. But over elaboration is not necessarily required - a Referee can usually see when everyone is ready. A Referee can gauge the readiness of these participants by just looking at each of them, to ensure they are ready before he blows his whistle to commence play. Your Assistants can communicate their readiness to you by simply unfurling their flags. Check that all of the players are in their half of the field and that the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the ball until it is in play. Check that the ball is stationary on the centre mark, and give a loud signal on your whistle for the game to commence.

Protocols for organising a minute's silence? There will be occasions when before a game (for example, after a recent death of a player or a league official) a minute's silence is required or requested. You will need to consider the following: When you get to the ground, tell the captains/managers as soon as you can, that you intend to have a '1 minute silence' before the kick off. When you get onto the field of play, do the preliminaries first - in other words toss the coin and meet the captains in the middle before the game starts. Aim to do this a little bit earlier than usual to allow for the minute's silence. In other words, still aim to kick off at the correct time. The players will probably already know the protocol, so all you need to do is stand on the centre circle line (not on the centre spot) and give your whistle a few sharp peeps. This will draw the players towards the centre circle. When the players are positioned around the centre circle, give one sharp (but not too loud) blow on your whistle to mark the commencement of the minute's silence. Keep an eye on your watch (but don't make it look too obvious, because don't forget, you too are observing the minutes silence). During the minute's silence, don't forget to also give a few thoughts to why you are doing it. When the minute is up, give a quiet respectful peep on your whistle, and then you are ready to kick off. If you ever have the unfortunate experience of players (or spectators) not observing the minute's silence, then all you can do is give them the respect they deserve and completely ignore them. Their actions will speak for themselves.

Summary: When a Referee progresses up the promotion ladder, he soon realises that the higher he goes, the less chance there is to get to the next level. Each Referee becomes as capable as the others. The higher you go, the smaller the differences are between promotion failure and promotion success. The main idea of this article, is to encourage you not to 'go through the motions' with any aspect of your Refereeing performances, but to consider each thing that you have to do in more detail. It is only then, that you can incorporate ideas into your processes that make you stand out from the other Referees at your level. Preparing for the kick-off is a process that most Referees go through without thinking about it. This article encourages you, not only to think about your kick-off procedure, but all aspects of your Refereeing. It is only then; that you will rise above the standards reached at each level, and be first in the forever narrowing bottleneck into the next level. The kick-off process ideas above, are just one set of ideas that you can use to gain promotion and to become noticed. The next time that you officiate a game, don't just walk out and do it as you did before, think about how you can make the kick-off procedure work better for both you and the players.

Happy reffing.

Regards, Julian Carosi.

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 recommend 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.

The Players

At all levels of play, the referee is responsible for making sure that the players are properly equipped and wearing nothing that might pose a danger to themselves or anyone else. Mandatory equipment includes an appropriate uniform, shin guards, and shoes; forbidden equipment will include jewellery, and anything that the referee determines to be potentially dangerous.

At some point before the game begins, the match referee will need to make sure that the players and their equipment comply with Law 4, and to see if there will be enough players under Law 3 to let the match begin. Many officials conduct a "lineup" style inspection, standing the players in a row where their equipment is visible, and checking off the players against the team roster. Some teams even come to expect this sort of check-in, and the coach may start lining up the players when the officials draw near. This is not mandatory, however, and a referee who conducts the pre-game inspection without interfering with the team's warm-ups - walking among the players, unobtrusively noting their numbers and observing whether their equipment is acceptable - may find that he has pleasantly surprised everyone with his thoughtfulness. Whether or not this leads to similar civility once play begins, it is unlikely to get things off on the wrong foot.

At some levels of play, check-ins are informal and relaxed. House teams, particularly involving very young players, may not even keep score. For these games the referee's job can be a simple one: make sure the players are properly equipped, and help them have fun. Here, uniforms may consist of nothing more than similar

T-shirts and the keeper's jersey may reach nearly to the ankles. Other, more competitive levels of play require greater levels of oversight and formality. Pass cards are often required, and the referee must document the players present or absent, in order to comply with league rules concerning eligibility and disciplinary sanctions for misconduct.

Whatever the level of play, you should adjust to the needs of the game and be as informal, or as meticulous, as circumstances require:

If the match is an in-house game that will not report a result, you should nevertheless make an official report of any noteworthy incident that may occur.

If the match is part of a competition requiring pass cards, you should check the cards against the roster. If the league wants you to turn in the pass card of any player who is sent off for a misconduct, you should retain the cards until the end of the match. If not, wise officials usually return the cards to the respective teams once they are checked-in. You do not, after all, want to force a coach to come looking for you the day after you have walked away with his team's pass cards.

Many referees find it useful to introduce themselves and their crew to the teams or their respective captains before the game. This helps establish a rapport with the players and may even permit a civil word or two before the match begins. It is often easier to keep a match under control if the participants see you as a human being, rather than just a uniform.

It is also customary for some referees, particularly beginners, to give a thorough briefing to both teams detailing what will and will not be allowed on the pitch. Generally speaking, this is not a wise thing to do. Invariably, something unexpected will happen on the field, or you will miss something that everyone else has seen, and you are likely to find your words coming back to haunt you. It is, after all, well and good to make a point of protecting the keeper from foul play, but informing the teams that you will be doing so will not spare you grief if the keeper bobbles the ball and a goal scores from the ensuing scramble in the goal mouth. It only gives the unlucky keeper's team someone to blame for the goal, and that someone will be you.

Beyond this, however, before the game the players will be concentrating on getting ready for the match and unlikely to listen to anything you have to say. Unless there is a particular reason to do so—a potentially confusing change in the rules, for example, that may have an effect on play - you are usually better off simply wishing them luck and calling for captains as soon as you are ready.

Unless you have already done so, the pre-game player inspection and check-in is the time for you to get the team rosters and game reports from the respective teams. You will also have to make sure that the team uniforms will not conflict, or cause confusion on the field.

This is also a good time to get the ball from the home team.

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*

CALLING A NAME

If there is any possibility of ambiguity, players should call a name when shouting for the ball.

'Mine, Razor' - 'Chopper's' - 'Goalkeeper'.

Although opponents regularly claim free-kicks ('No name, Ref), referees will generally only punish a nameless call (e.g. 'Leave it') if it tricks an opponent. There will also be a caution for unsporting behaviour.

The Portsmouth club programme once took up this issue (September 1949): 'In practice, clubs teach their players to shout to a colleague, and, also in practice, it is not for referees to make their own rules governing the game. Agreed, it is for the referee to decide in his own mind the possible effect upon an opponent and if in his opinion it was meant to deceive an opponent and not an instruction to a colleague, he is perfectly justified in awarding a free-kick against the offender.'

In a game shortly after World War II, a Sheffield Wednesday forward shouted 'Right' and a Fulham defender let the ball through to him. The Wednesday player put the ball in the net, but the referee awarded an indirect free-kick to Fulham. The Wednesday player was not called Wright.

CAPS

In the 1870s players were identified by their individual caps. George Ramsay (Aston Villa) wore 'a round polo cap of the type popular among schoolboys at the time when Osman Pasha's name was on everyone's tongue'. When players started heading the ball, caps were jettisoned by all except goalkeepers.

There is nothing specific in the laws about caps, but if a goalkeeper took off his cap and threw it at the ball to save a goal it would be a caution and an indirect free-kick. Referees are allowed to wear black caps in extreme heat, though they run the risk of being tagged 'executioners'.

CAPTAINS

Captains have no special rights, but their role involves taking some responsibility for team-mates' behaviour.

Captains may be asked for help identifying team-mates, or help in calming down particular players. On occasion referees have called together - and talked to - the two captains as a more preferable option to calling together all 22 players. Examples include the 1960 all-Sheffield FA Cup quarter-final, and an Oldham - Reading match (December 1966).

Modern captains identify themselves by armbands. The Russian captain wore a white armband in the 1952 Olympic Games, but a new era for armbands was heralded when Billy Bremner (Leeds United) wore one for the first time (December 1972).

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

NEW NEWSLETTER FEATURE:

These articles can also be found on the www.CorshamRef.org.uk web site along with the respective images.

A sexy Penalty Area? - Why not?

By Stanley Lover

The traditional penalty area is a mish-mash, tolerated for nearly 70 years. A simple modification could rectify an anomaly, aid attacking play, reduce penalty kick friction and, perhaps, add a sexual allure to all pitches!

The President's sumptuous office in the splendid new Home of FIFA, had to be cut in size - from a full football pitch down to a goal area - because the architects were not advised of a special problem; **where to store the tons of ideas to change the Laws of the Game.**

Stretching back over a century they've arrived daily at FIFA House by the sack full. Zurich postmen have not been amused.

Fertile soccer brains never stop hatching new, and not so new, suggestions to speed up play; punish the goalkeeper; dump offsides; make goals bigger, etc. Hardly any law escapes the attention of soccer's equivalent of barrack room lawyers.

We all have an opinion we think is valid and deserving serious thought by the International F.A. Board. But, the IFAB is a conservative body which, rightly, moves slowly and cautiously with the best interests of the game at heart.

To have a chance of success an idea has to attract the support of FIFA, whose four votes (out of eight) are crucial in IFAB decision making. A tiny few get to the IFAB annual review agenda. Some are adopted, some rejected, one or two deferred, or tried in controlled experiments.

What happens to this massive input? Many ideas - the vast majority - are just not practical, or involve spin-off complications. They are quietly consigned to bottomless archives, never to surface again
A pity. Those archives probably contain some brilliant thoughts which may not have been appropriate when first conceived but could be relevant today.
One, dormant for several years, proposes a simple redesign of the penalty area to redress an anomaly; be more ethically correct; and aid penalty kick discipline.

It proposes;

That the shape of the Penalty Area to be a semi-circle with a radius of 22yards (20m) from the centre of the goal line.

Let's take this one off the shelf, blow away the dust, and see how it might work.

The penalty box

In retrospect the current penalty area is a mish-mash, tolerated for nearly 70 years.

Why so?

In its original form the penalty area extended from the goal line to a 12 yards line marked across the whole width of the field. The Penalty Kick, proposed by the Irish FA and adopted 1891, was taken from any point on this line. At that time the minimum distance of retreat by opponents from the ball at free kicks was 6 yards. Extending this principle at penalty kicks players, other than the kicker and goalkeeper were required to observe an 18 yds no-go line behind the ball. (Fig.1)

After years of deliberation the IFAB decided in 1902 that the ball should be kicked from a single mark 12 yds from the centre of the goal in a new 'penalty area'- a rectangular box 18 by 44 yds.
A 1910 law change increased the distance of opponents at any form of free kick to 10 yards. This was the logical moment to add a reference line 10 yds from the penalty mark (22yds from the goal line) but it was not done. Consequently a measure of conflict grew between referees and players with different ideas about distance. Delays in completing penalty kicks became common but it was not until 1937 that the IFAB decided to tack 'D' arcs, of 10yds radius from the penalty mark, onto the 18yds line.

Just compensation

The proposal addresses a long standing anomaly of the rectangular area.

Since 1902 a direct free kick offence committed by a defender in a far corner, nearly 28 yds from the centre of goal, has been punished with a penalty kick award. However, the same offence committed just over 18 yds in front of goal requires the lesser award of a direct free kick.

Free kicks taken in and close to the 'D' offer good scoring chances but defensive set play tactics, e.g., forming a wall to block a direct shot, most often deny the attacking team just compensation.

The proposed semi-circular penalty area, would remove the relatively remote grey zones; absorb the 'D' and enlarge the area for penalty kick awards directly in front of the goal..

Contested advantage points

For a while the 'D' arcs made penalty kick supervision easier but players soon found that the most advantageous positions, i.e., nearest to the ball and goal, were at the junctions of the arcs with the 18yds line, and worth fighting for.

Practically every penalty kick taken from 1937 until today has provoked an element of friction between players jostling for position at these crowded zones.

Encroachment problems start here, needing extra surveillance by match officials. By law any player breaking the 10 yds limit should have been cautioned but, for many years, referees chose to ignore this duty. Understandable, for in an already highly charged situation very few officials wanted to spark more controversy by booking players and ordering penalty retakes.

Accepting the reality of the situation the IFAB dropped the caution clause in 1997. It made no change to the scramble towards the ball and goal - if anything it has become more blatant.

The modified penalty area is proposed to eliminate these contested advantage points, reduce friction and help supervision.

Viewpoints

Interestingly, when FIFA took a clean sheet and formulated universal rules for Five-a-Side Football (now FUTSAL) in 1986, a near semi-circle penalty area was preferred to a rectangle.

Why not for the outdoor game?

Could this be a worthwhile improvement in the outdoor game?

Here are some views expressed by interested parties:

Striker: With the chance of a quick shot at goal the curved line could help me better to locate the position of the target without taking my eye off the ball.

Goalkeeper: I'd lose the wide corners but would gain a few yards for clearances in front of goal.

Coach: I see more benefits for attacking play than defending.

Referee: It would certainly ease supervision and reduce tension at penalty kicks. It could also help me in judging 'goal scoring opportunity' criteria.

Assistant Referee: In place of the current 18yds line as a reference to judge offside I could use the peak of the arc, usually visible on crowned pitches.

Stadium director: It would simplify marking the penalty areas.

Administrator: Only Law 1 - The Field of Play - would need minor textual revision and amended diagrams.

Fan: Seems logical. Would look more modern, and more sexy!

Conclusion

Any proposal which promises to rectify a long standing anomaly; reduces friction among players; helps supervision of penalty kicks and favours attacking play, should have a chance to succeed.

If the fan's reaction is typical, the new field of play would also look more sexy - quite a bonus!

Published originally in the FIFA Magazine May 2005

Many thanks go to Stanley Lover for his regular contributions.

Match of the Day caught offside: By Keith Hackett, Sunday March 23, 2008 The Observer

Alan Shearer, Alan Hansen and TV pundits everywhere are queuing up to criticise the modern offside law - and the officials who enforce it. The Premier League's head of referees explains why they're wrong

Last weekend's Match of the Day criticised the offside law. Questioning Jérémy Aliadière's valid goal for Middlesbrough against Arsenal, they made a wider point, which I've heard before. Match officials can't work with or understand the modern offside law: if you had 10 referees in a room, they said, you would get 10 different decisions.

Let's be clear about this. Match officials do know the laws and apply them to the best of their ability - but time and again pundits criticise perfectly valid decisions. The Match of the Day analysis of the Aliadière decision was a case in point. They suggested the goal should not have been given, that the striker should have been flagged for 'gaining an advantage' after being in an offside position from the long ball. That is simply wrong.

It is immensely frustrating. The law, clarified by the International FA Board in 2005, is a good, effective one, but it seems to have totally eluded some in the media. Officials understand it perfectly, and so could the lads in the studio if they wanted to - it's set out in black and white for anyone who can find the time to read it. Many pundits do a great job, but I hope they respect my right to point out when they are misleading fans, and winding themselves up with old or wrong information.

The law really is simple and well defined. First and foremost, it is important to know the key principle: it is not an offence in itself to be in an offside position. Assistants will not flag the moment someone strays offside. A player is only penalised if he then becomes active.

The source of most confusion is clearly in the definition of 'active'. Pundits keep falling back on the dictionary definition of the word, or their own version of it, rather than the one set out in the laws. It's intensely frustrating to see them spreading misinformation - misinformation that leads to the sort of abuse that drives officials out of the game.

To be clear, the definition, in the laws, is this: in deciding whether to flag, assistants must watch out for three things, any one of which would make an offside player active.

First, is the offside player interfering with play? As advised by the IFAB since 2005, that means playing or touching the ball. Attempting to play the ball does not count - he must actually play or touch it.

Second, is the player interfering with an opponent's ability to play the ball, by clearly obstructing the opponent's line of vision or movements, or by making a gesture or movement which, in the opinion of the referee, deceives or distracts an opponent?

And third, is the player 'gaining an advantage'? This last point is specific, and is not what Match of the Day seem to think it is. It applies only to an offside player playing a ball that rebounds to him from an opponent, the post or the crossbar. If he does not play the ball from the rebound, then he is not penalised for being in that offside

position. Nothing else counts as 'gaining'.

And that's it. If a player ticks any one of those three boxes, he is offside. The three-part definition is remembered as 'PIG' - if a player doesn't Play, Interfere or Gain, he is fine.

The law is a real positive for the game - the pundits should love it. The active definition helps games flow - there are fewer stoppages for offside now - and it makes negative play far less profitable. No sensible team today uses the arms-aloft offside trap made famous by George Graham's Arsenal in the 80s and 90s. That trap was totally against the spirit of the offside law - it was never intended as a device for earning cheap free-kicks. The active system means that the offside trap is now a dangerous tactic to use and allows the benefit of the doubt to be always with the attacking team.

Of course, the fact that the law is unambiguous does not put an end to split-second mistakes, and we will always try to learn from them and improve. When officials do get it wrong, for example in the Manchester City v Tottenham game last Sunday, or in the same Arsenal v Middlesbrough match when Emmanuel Adebayor was wrongly given offside, we can expect criticism, and the officials concerned are given operational advice. My point is that pundits' criticism of officials should at least be fair and informed, based on a proper knowledge of the laws, not on some vague idea of what they might be. If I hear one more co-commentator criticise an assistant referee for a 'late flag' - when the assistant is clearly waiting to see if an offside player ticks any of the three PIG boxes - my TV will go out of the window.

I'm honestly very proud of the officials who put themselves forward for what is a thankless task. They are hard-working, dedicated and honest, and deserve so much more respect than they get. All I'm asking is that pundits and phone-in critics read the laws before complaining. Failing that, if they really do know better, they should step forward, sign up and have a go themselves.

Keith Hackett is general manager of Professional Game Match Officials Limited

The 'active' system: case studies

Blackburn v Liverpool

Easter Sunday 16 April 2006

Robbie Fowler chests the ball towards Fernando Morientes, who is onside. But Djibril Cissé, in an offside position nearby, with no defenders around him, sees the ball coming his way, and raises a leg to play it. However, he stops himself just in time, realising he would be flagged for being involved in active play if he made contact. The ball runs on to Morientes, who crosses back to Fowler, who scores. Defenders protest, but the decision is correct. Cissé did not play the ball. 'Attempting to play the ball' does not count. He did not interfere - there were no defenders near him - and he didn't gain an advantage (there was no rebound).

Manchester City v Blackburn

Thursday 27 December 2007

Blackburn cross from the right: the ball goes over the head of David Dunn, in an offside position, and reaches Roque Santa Cruz, running from an onside position, who scores. The assistant referee flags Dunn offside - but quickly realises Dunn wasn't active: he didn't play the ball, interfere with an opponent, or gain an advantage. The assistant calls the referee over, explains why the goal should stand, and the referee agrees. This example shows the importance of assistants not being too quick to flag.

FIFA research scholarship for CSU academic an Australian first:

Postgraduate Courses Coordinator Peter Simmons

How football referees communicate their decisions to players on the field, and how players react to the referees, are being investigated by a Charles Sturt University academic for FIFA.

Mr Peter Simmons, a lecturer at CSU's School of Communication, is the first Australian to be awarded the prestigious FIFA Joao Havelange international research scholarship. According to Mr Simmons, there has been little research into football refereeing, and his study, 'Justice, culture and football referee communication', will test player reactions to different football referee communication styles in Australia, Malaysia and Spain.

"Most football scholars look at player performance, coaching or hooliganism," Mr Simmons said. "My research aims to assist referee training by systematically examining referee behaviours that calm players or inflame them unnecessarily.

"The results will be applicable in other sports, and also to people working in areas like teaching, customer service or policing that require them to communicate decisions.

"I play and coach football, and I've always been fascinated by referees and the way people react to them. The best referees are acutely aware of the signals they send to players – with their voice, gestures, expression and attire.

"Leading Australian referees like Matthew Breeze and Mark Shield are master communicators – they're calm, but they're also extremely purposeful in everything they do.

"Referees debate the most effective way to signal for a foul or give a yellow card, but there is very little evidence," Mr Simmons said.

According to CSU's Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research), Professor Paul Burnett, the project embodies the University's mission to conduct applied research of national and international importance.

"Peter's research project has implications not just for the world's most popular mass sport, but also for other key areas of daily social communication around the world."

Mr Simmons' study of Australian players' reactions to different communication styles will continue until the end of March. He plans to complete his research in Malaysia and Spain later in the year.

Football players, coaches and referees can contribute to this research by completing the survey at

http://wsww01.csumain.csu.edu.au/psysurveys/ps_survey/default.html

Since 2000, FIFA has awarded the Joao Havelange scholarship to four or five scientific research projects around the world each year. Each is selected for its potential impact on football.

The scholarship is administered by the International Centre for Sport Studies at the Neuchatel University in Switzerland.

(Telegraph News)

Roy Keane attacks 'hypocrite managers'

29 March 08 The Telegraph newspaper

Roy Keane has accused managers - and by implication, his former manager at Manchester United, Sir Alex Ferguson - of hypocrisy over abuse meted out to referees.

A week ago, Ferguson insisted his players should show referees respect but, according to Keane, he does not always do so himself. 'There's a lot of hypocrites out there in football,' said Keane, who spent 12 years at Old Trafford. 'Managers saying we've got to respect officials and yet they're being sent off themselves.

Speaking his mind: Roy Keane says managers talk about respecting referees but behave otherwise. 'A manager talking last week about respecting referees, the same manager has been sent off himself this year for foul and abusive language.'

Ferguson was sent off at half-time at Bolton in November by referee Mark Clattenburg when United lost 1-0. Ferguson later admitted using abusive and/or insulting words towards the official and was banned from the touchline for two matches.

Ferguson also hit the roof following United's elimination from the FA Cup by Portsmouth this month.

'I think we're all bad losers,' Keane said, 'but if folk are going to be coming out saying, 'let's respect officials and other managers and make sure the players do', and you're not doing it [yourself], how can you expect the players to do it?'

Asked if Ferguson, through seniority and pedigree, had earned the right to speak out, the Irishman replied: 'No. I don't think any manager should have any more power than anybody else.'

Keane, despite his famous confrontation with referee Andy D'Urso in January 2000, has tried to instill discipline in his Sunderland players. He said: 'I spoke to my staff in my first week in the job about respecting referees. I still

say they superimposed that vein in my head in the photo with Andy D'Urso.

'If you rant and rave on the sideline it doesn't reflect well on the club or the team. That's my personal opinion. It doesn't mean to say I don't appeal decisions but I've not swore or abused any officials since I got the job. But then I've only had the job two minutes. People might say, give it another 10 years and maybe that will change, but that's something I don't want to do.

'There's a line of course. The problem for me when I comment is people say, how can you? I was a player then, I'm a manager now, it doesn't mean to say I can't learn from my mistakes.

'There's one or two clubs where their staff are a disgrace, an absolute disgrace. Their managers are worse because they stand by and let it happen. There's one club in particular.

'It's 10 times worse if a manager stands by and says it's nothing to do with him. He won't be the one in trouble, but if any of my staff did the same, they'd know about it.'

The Indochina Starfish Foundation - can you help?

The Indochina Starfish Foundation www.indochinastarfish.org supports 1,000's of street kids and kids living on garbage dumps in Cambodia's capital city, Phnom Penh.

In Australia the ESFA (www.esfa.com.au) is asking all Clubs to join in and collect old football boots and shin pads for the Cambodian children. These will be shipped and distributed by The Foundation. The Foundation operates a school, orphanage, football coaching, training as well as competition games and carnivals.

What we need? Used, but clean, boots and shin pads. U8-U16 sizes only.

Where is the equipment collected? We suggest each club has a designated collection point and then forward to:

ESFA at Suite 1, Level 1, 1371 Botany Road, Botany NSW 2019.

Want more details? Call David Lewis (Australia) 0412 117 322 or email david@scgroup.biz

YOU MUST BE JOKING REF?

One day, while the seven dwarfs were deep in the mine, there was a rock fall. When they didn't arrive home at the usual time, Snow White went to see what was wrong. She called anxiously down the mine and was greeted by a faint response. "I want to be a referee; I want to be a referee".

Snow White smiled in relief: "Well at least Dopey's still alive".

Special Refereeing Books. If you can find em!

By Julian Carosi.

<p>A Goal Scored by Shelly Brate ! Abandoning Games by Wayne Dwops Almost Missed the Kick Off by Justin Time Alone in the middle by Saul E. Terry Anticipation by Crystal Ball Appurtenances by Annett, Ann A. Powst Are You Blind Ref? by Miss Takes and Miss Haps Assistant Referee by Lynus Mann Awarding a Penalty by Omar Gosh Bad Game by Gladys O. Vernow Big Shorts by Lucy Lastic Black Eyed Players by Lee Dinglebow Bleeding Players by Ian Drury Bubbles in the Refs Bathtub by Ivor Windybottom Bursting Ball by Dee Flated Can't See by Dustin Mye Centre Circle Refereeing by Sir Cumference Cheating by Sir Cumvent Collina by Amanda B. Reckonwith Damaged Crossbar by Finbar Broke Dangerous Play! by Luke Out Dealing with dissent by E. Nuff Dealing With Injuries by R.U. O'Kaye Decision Making by Joyce U. Make Effect of Alcohol on the Referee by Eileen Dover Enterprising! Starting Point" by Senator Spock Fitness" by Nosmo King Friend or Foe? by Archie N.E. May Good Shooting by Eamon Target Half Time Practice by Mustafa Pee Handball by Hu Cares High Balls by Jock Strapp Hose Down by Paul Emup How not to Win by Lou Zerr How to pay the Referees fee by Robin Bank How to Refuse Matches by Colin Sick I'm Gods Gift to Refereeing by P. Rick Inside the Line? by Justin Keeping it Shut by Phil McAvity Keeping Up With Play by Miles Away Keeping Up With Play (Vol 2) by Sheik Aleg Law 1 by Phil de Plae Law book by Lauren Order Meet me in the Car Park by C.U. Layter Missing Markings by Adeline Quick No Goal by Delia Brate/Andy Ball !!! Nutter"by Ed Case Offside by Izzy Reilly? Over the Crossbar by Amy B. Lowett Overcoming Match Stress by R.E. Lachs</p>	<p>Penalty by Shirley Knott? Rattling Coins by Lucinda Pockett Referees Guide by Justin Casey Needzit Referees Wallet by Titus A. Drum Referees' Positioning by Di Agonal Simulating Field Poetry by Di Verse!!! Simulation by Gil Tee How to unblocking Refs loo by Willy Makeit and Betty Wont Unmarked Attacker by Hugo Mark Start of the Game by Chuck Penny Supporting the Referee by Jacques Strap Team Sheets by Alice Toffmen Tell um Off by Chas Tate The American Ring by Senator Sickle! The Red Mist by Sven Dingov The Smell of the Changing Room by Farrah Mones The Stretcher" by Carrie Mehoff Waiting in Line by Ivana Tinkle Was not me Ref by Ivan Alibi Who Thumped Who? by Howard I. Know Why two whistles? by Justin Case World Cup Final 1998 by Frances Day You must be Joe King</p>
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"Quotes From Sports Commentators"

Pat Glenn - Weightlifting Commentator, "This is Gregoriava from Bulgaria. I saw her snatch this morning and it was amazing."

Ted Walsh - Horse Racing Commentator: "This is really a lovely horse, I once rode her mother."

Murray Walker, "The lead car is absolutely unique, except for the one behind it which is identical."

Greg Norman, "I owe a lot to my parents, especially my mother and father."

Alan Minter, "Sure there have been injuries and deaths in boxing - but none of them serious."

Terry Venables, "If history repeats itself, I should think we can expect the same thing again."

Ron Atkinson, "He dribbles a lot and the opposition doesn't like it - you can see it all over their faces."

Harry Carpenter - BBC TV Boat Race 1977, "Ah, isn't that nice, the wife of the Cambridge president is kissing the cox of the Oxford crew."

Metro Radio, "Julian Dicks is everywhere. It's like they've got eleven Dicks on the field."

David Coleman at the Montreal Olympics: "There goes Juantorena down the back straight, opening his legs and showing his class."

US TV Commentator, "One of the reasons Arnie [Arnold Palmer] is playing so well is that, before each tee-shot, his wife takes out his balls and kisses them, oh my God! What have I just said?"

A Referee is sitting in the changing room one day after a game and is bored out of his mind. He decides to make a contest to kill his boredom. He tells his Assistant Referees to send the players out to find the biggest ping pong ball and the reward would be one £million.

So his Assistant Referees announce this to the players in the next door's changing rooms and everyone rushes out. The first player walks into the Referee's changing room and has a huge ball 2 feet long. The Referee is in shock and says, "That is a huge ping pong ball." He tells the player to step aside, and wait for the other players to return.

Another player brings a ping pong ball 4 feet long. The Referee is astonished, and says to the player, "Wow! That's a humungous ball. I think you'll probably be the winner, but lets wait to see the last player's ball!"

The next player starts pushing this HUGE, hairy, bloody, brown thing into the Referee's changing room. The Referee jumps up and screams, "Good god man! What kind of ping pong ball is that?"

The player replies:

"Ping pong ball? Ping pong ball?"

I thought you said KING KONG'S BALLS?!?"

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION and ANSWER TOPICS:

Question: A goalkeeper picks up the ball in his hands and then runs to the edge of his penalty area. As he does so, he bounces the ball on the ground, catches it again into his hands and then kicks it high up into the air towards the other end of the field. Has the goalkeeper committed an offence by releasing (bouncing) the ball and then touching it a second time with his hands before another player has touched it?

Answer: In the spirit of the Law, the goalkeeper would not be regarded as having released the ball from his possession. Therefore, no offence has occurred and play should be allowed to continue uninterrupted.

Question: Is playing in a dangerous manner still punished with the award of an indirect free kick, if a defender in his/her own penalty area committed the offence?

Answer: Playing in a dangerous manner is not a penal offence, it is known as a technical offence. Therefore, if a player plays in a dangerous manner, the restart is always an indirect free kick, to be taken at the place where the incident occurred - wherever that may be on the field of play.

Question: As a goalkeeper, I kicked the ball out of my hands from within in my penalty area at the end of the 90 minutes. The ball was in mid-air and being wind assisted towards the opposing team's goalkeeper. The ball went over the advancing goalkeeper, who could only watch as it went over him, and into the goal. The referee blew his whistle as the ball was in mid flight and disallowed the goal. Should the goal have been allowed?

Answer: So long as no other Laws infringement had occurred, or the 90 minutes had not yet been completed, there is nothing in the Laws to prevent a goalkeeper from scoring a goal as described.

If the 90 minutes ends as the ball is on its way towards the goal, then the game has finished. This is what probably happened in your game.

There is nothing in the Laws to permit a Referee to add on time to allow the ball to complete its journey, if the initial kick occurred just before the end of the game.

Question: If a player is continually offside therefore persistently infringing Laws of the Game, can you caution him?

Answer: There is a right way and a wrong way to play football, and if Referees fail to protect the required standards, the game will fall into disrepute

Being offside is no more of an offence than the ball being kicked out for a throw-in. Therefore, you would not necessarily be able to caution for 'persistent infringement' (because no offence had occurred).

Nevertheless, our old saviour 'unsporting conduct' will fit the bill perfectly!! Players that purposefully play in a way that is against 'the spirit of the game' can (and should) be cautioned under Law 12 'unsporting behaviour'.

If a team used this unsporting tactic, then the Referee should call the team Captain over to him, and tell him in no uncertain terms, that if their team's continuous offside tactics were being done purposefully to spoil the game, then each perpetrator could be cautioned for 'unsporting behaviour' (especially if the team were using this tactic to waste time).

The Captain should also be warned that this behaviour (if it continues) would be reported to the appropriate League or Football authorities.

If the coach or manger is encouraging his players to waste time towards the end of the game by intentionally getting penalised for being offside as many times as they can, the Referee should have a quiet word with the coach/manger and warn him that if this irresponsible enticement continues, he will be asked to leave the near vicinity of the field of play and reported to the appropriate authorities.

Question: I gave a dangerous play decision within the penalty area the other week, and restarted with an indirect free kick. Correct in Law now I know, but only if the offence was dangerous play.

A defender tried to clear a high bouncing ball within his penalty area with a high kicking foot, however an attacker beat him to the ball with his head and took the kick in the face. Should this have been a foul and thus a penalty kick?

I gave dangerous play. Was I right??

Answer: *The advice in the Law book is as follows.*

Playing in a dangerous manner is defined as any action that, while trying to play the ball, threatens injury to

someone (including the player himself). It is committed with an opponent nearby and prevents the opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury.

The action becomes an offence only when an opponent is adversely affected.

A scissors or bicycle kick is permissible provided that, in the opinion of the referee, it is not dangerous to an opponent.

Playing in a dangerous manner involves no physical contact between the players. If there is physical contact, the action becomes an offence punishable with a direct free kick or penalty kick. In case of physical contact, the referee should carefully consider the high probability that misconduct has also been committed.

Disciplinary sanctions:

If a player plays in a dangerous manner in a "normal" challenge, the referee should not take any disciplinary action.

If the action is made with obvious risk of injury, the referee should caution the player.

If a player denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity playing in a dangerous manner, the referee should send off the player.

Restart of play:

Indirect free kick from the position where the offence occurred

If there is contact, a different offence has been committed, punishable by a direct free kick or penalty kick.

Question: During the taking of a penalty 'shoot out' kick, the ball strikes the crossbar and then hits the goalkeeper on the back of the head and enters the net. The Referee allows the goal to stand. Is the Referee correct, and is this a valid goal?

Answer: Yes, it is a valid goal.

Before the re-write of the Laws in 1997/1998, the following advice was included in the Laws of Associated Football chapter 'Kicks from the penalty mark'.

If, at the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, or when extended time is being allowed for a penalty kick to be taken in normal playing time, the ball strikes the goal-post or cross-bar, strikes the goalkeeper and enters the goal, a goal shall be awarded.

In the current Law book, the following sentence is included in the 'Procedure to determine the winner of a match or home-and-away.'

Unless otherwise stated, the relevant Laws of the Game and International F.A. Board Decisions apply when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.

This includes the current Law 14 Penalty Kick sentence which used to appear in the 1996/1997 Law books, *a goal is awarded if the ball touches either or both of the goalposts and/or the crossbar, and/or the goalkeeper.*

When a penalty is taken, it very often happens that the ball does rebound slightly back into play and then back into the goal. There is nothing wrong with this, and never has been. It is the nature of the penalty kick and that these things do, and will happen.

Where no infringement has occurred, if a ball rebounds onto the goalkeeper, and then crosses completely over the goal line between the goalposts and under the crossbar, it is a legal goal.

The momentum of the kick is the crucial point here. No matter how many combinations of goalpost, crossbar, goalkeeper's body parts etc are involved, if the ball ends up in the goal because of the energy imparted onto it by the kicker's boot, a goal should be allowed.

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 (Editor)

(www.CorshamRef.org.uk Newsletter Editor, Referee, FA Licensed Referee Instructor, FA Referees' Assessor Wiltshire, England, and an Editorial member of the FA/RA Refereeing national magazine in England).

_____ The new web site address is www.CorshamRef.org.uk

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