

The www.CorshamRef.org.uk Newsletter No 65: December 2008)

International newsletter covering Football (Soccer) Refereeing matters.

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 65th 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. Have a nice Christmas: *Editor Julian Carosi.*

"SET PIECES"

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, how to approach the kick-off at the beginning of each game, how to manage the first 10 minutes of each game, self-evaluation, how best to apply advantage and Assistant Referee tips, using the Give and Go, Give and Sort technique that you can use during Free Kicks, by offering you some advice on Dealing with a Mass Confrontation Melee of players.

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.

Dealing with a Mass Confrontation melee:

Introduction:

Dealing with a Mass Confrontation is one of the most difficult and sometimes frightening duties that you will have to deal with in your Refereeing career. There are many questions to be asked. Who needs to get involved - the Referee only, the Referee and one Assistant Referee or both Assistant Referees? What role should the 4th Official take where applicable? What are the individual responsibilities? What action should the Referee take etc.? What system can be used to observe proceedings?

The following advice will answer these questions and also help you to deal with Mass Confrontations in a predetermined, controlled and structured way. The adoption of a standard approach when dealing with mass confrontation is recommended to promote consistency and to achieve greater success in issuing deserved punishments. Whilst this guidance focuses on a Referee who has two Assistant Referees available in his team, much of the advice is also applicable to a Referee working on his own, or with Club Assistant Referees. What is a mass confrontation melee of players?

For the purpose of this guidance, a 'mass confrontation melee of players' is defined as the converging together of several angry players from both teams. A mass confrontation also describes a situation following a disputed decision, where several players from the same team surround the Referee in an intimidating way; thereby hindering or forcing him to move. This guidance focuses primarily on the former situation.

What causes a mass confrontation?

A mass confrontation usually occurs following a flash point in the game, such as a tackle made with excess force where the safety of a player is endangered, e.g. where the studs of a deliberately outstretched boot cause a painful injury to an opponent. It is the angry reaction of the receiving player and/or colleagues that sparks off a convergence of outraged players. Incidents occurring immediately in front of the Technical Areas very often spark off a confrontation. Strong challenges against goalkeepers are another area to look out for. A player running into the goal to retrieve the ball after they have scored a goal can also ignite a confrontation. Deliberately kicking the ball into an opponent who is prostrate on the ground is another example. There are many others - you need to be ready for all of them.

How should you react?

You should always be ready to recognise a flash-point as you will be expected to react to it very quickly. A slow response by you will result in further escalation. Be aware that certain teams have certain players who are very often the instigators of mass confrontation. Identifying such players enables you to take proactive action to minimise confrontation occurring by offering warnings/advice and keeping a close eye on them whenever they are involved in robust challenges for the ball. Being proactive is a useful skill - use it whenever you can. When an incident occurs, you also will be the focus of attention, so it is important that you remain calm, alert and try not to panic. Players, managers and spectators will expect you to deal with the incident assertively and to send out a strong warning to prevent reoccurrence. You may also become the focus of dissent and verbal challenges from several players simultaneously whilst the fracas is developing. If you find yourself surrounded by a large group of players, you should try to diffuse the situation by quickly identifying the main protestor/aggressor and isolating them for appropriate disciplinary action (yellow or red card). If you are quick enough and near enough to react, peace can sometimes be achieved.

If you do not deal immediately with aggressive players, the situation will quickly intensify. Nipping the problem in the bud is a good way of stopping an angry situation from escalating into a mass confrontation. Hence you need to get there and deal with it as quickly as you can. To prevent escalation, a member of the Refereeing team must try to get there immediately. The longer it takes for a match official to arrive at the scene, the more time there is for other players to get involved and for flames to be fanned.

In certain cases, in addition to sprinting to the location, issuing an instant yellow card to the main protagonist will show other players that you are taking swift action - this will minimise retaliation.

As a rule of thumb, it is generally better to take your time when issuing a red card. The issuing of a quick red card should only be done in extreme cases, for example, when a single perpetrator can be quickly isolated and dealt with away from the immediate scene. An example of this would be in an extreme situation where a player has purposefully broken the leg of an opponent near the touchline. The quicker you can remove the perpetrator, the less opportunity there will be for violent retaliation. A quick red card in this case could be justified. But the safety of the injured player must always be your first responsibility. It's a fine balancing act for you to decide - each incident has to be managed carefully.

Note: The FA (England) preferred process for the use of yellow and red cards can be found in The FA booklet entitled Advice on the Application of the Laws of the Game which can be obtained free from your respective County FA for Referees in England.

What message should you (the Referee) impart?

Intimidating mass confrontation situations bring the game into disrepute, and are top of the league for their ability to project a strong cascading negative public image. You must therefore ensure that you send out an appropriate message that clearly communicates that such conduct will not be tolerated and will be strongly punished. Whilst understanding that the competitive, physical and passionate elements in a game are part of football, Referees need to protect the game's positive image. Therefore, you (along with all of the participants) have a duty to protect the Image of the Game in association with the theme of promoting Respect.

What involvement should you look out for?

There are lots of things that you should look out for, but firstly, it is paramount that you do not lose sight of the original perpetrator(s) and the actual offence that instigated the mass confrontation. It is easy to lose concentration when all Hell is burning around you. Players are very adept at trying to confuse Referees by crowding around.

Pay particular attention to the following:

- Talk over the original incident in your head using simple phrases, as you are observing developments, i.e. "Green 5 excessive tackle, Blue 7 thumped Green 5".
- Innocent players who are clearly trying to prevent escalation by physically or verbally trying to hold back colleagues or opponents.
- Players who are seen to be striking, kicking or acting aggressively must be identified and punished - as opposed to those who are clearly trying to be helpful by separating the offenders.
- Is the confrontation likely to expand or move to a more dangerous position (i.e. nearer to spectators or towards the Technical Areas?)
- Do not allow any time wasting. The time lost by the delay in dealing with the situation must be allowed for in the normal way.
- Ensure the match restarts as quickly as possible

Who should I punish?

You should punish as many perpetrators as you can. But because of the nature of mass confrontations, it is sometimes impossible to punish or witness all of the perpetrators. As a Referee, your priority should be to identify and punish the instigators, and thereafter, any other players whose action clearly escalates or inflames the situation.

- It is recommended that in general, at least one player from each team receives an appropriate disciplinary sanction.
- The main aggressors must be punished.
- Players who instigate the confrontation must be punished.
- Players from the immediate area who decide to join in must be punished.
- Players who by their involvement are inflaming the situation must be punished.
- Anybody who races halfway across the field of play to cause more trouble by joining in negatively should be issued with at least an mandatory yellow card. For example - players (such as goalkeepers) who run considerable distances in order to inflame the situation.
- Club Officials who become aggressively involved must be reported.
- It can sometimes be impossible to remember who did what when players angrily converge; so even where disciplinary action is not taken against individual players, reports of mass confrontation must still be made to The Football Association.

How should the officiating team observe a mass confrontation melee?

Dealing with mass confrontation calls for special assertive measures involving all members of the officiating team.

The Control Observation Triangle method described below is a good structured way to manage and observe a mass confrontation.

The Control Observation Triangle (COT):

As the Referee, you would normally be first on the scene.

As you approach, blast your whistle using short blasts as loud as you possibly can. Keep this up for as long as you can. This is a very good way to refocus the minds of angry players. The use of a very loud whistle continuously being blown to match the severity of the incident must not be underestimated. Although the whistle is a simple tool, it is very effective in quelling mass confrontation. The whistle can prevent dismissal.

The first official on the scene should work very carefully to separate the protagonists, but great care must be taken not to physically handle players by pulling them away. Using (non-touching) outstretched hands/arms from a short distance is a good way to separate players by forming a barrier between them. Of course, this should only be attempted when only a few players are involved. It would be no good trying to do this amongst a scrum of many players. Do not physically isolate angry players unless you want a broken nose!

If three or more players enter the scene and the mass confrontation escalates, you and your Assistant Referees should step back and observe the situation from a safe distance (10-15 metres away). Your job at this stage is to observe and to make mental notes, and not to attempt separating the players by entering the affray. If you do enter the affray, you will lose your wide angled observation advantage point and some of the perpetrators will be unseen. You will also place yourself in a vulnerable position where your effectiveness to control and observe the situation will be greatly limited.

On approaching the scene, you should firstly take up a monitoring position that allows you to observe proceedings from the best viewing angle. To reiterate - avoid jumping into the affray in an attempt to pull players away from each other. Instead, stand back and observe the incident from a safe distance and make mental notes of who is doing what.

Your two Assistant Referees should take up a position so as to form a control observation triangle (COT) around the mass confrontation location as shown below.

Referee

Mass Confrontation

Senior Assistant Referee

Junior Assistant Referee

When the disturbance calms down, you and your Assistant Referees should begin isolating opposing teams, and then individual perpetrators into safe areas away from the scene of the confrontation.

If the safety of an official is jeopardized, then the officiating team should back further away together as a group into a safe zone.

What are the separate roles of the officiating team?

Both of the Assistant Referees should initially move along the touchline to obtain a better angle of view of the incident. Depending on the severity and the number of players involved, the two Assistant Referees should prepare to enter the field of play to take up a monitoring position close to the incident. In some cases, you will be able to deal with the confrontation without summoning your Assistant Referees onto the field of play. If the situation deteriorates, or other players join the affray, then you should seek help from your Assistants. You can do this by summoning them onto the field of play with a previously agreed beckoning arm signal. Assistant Referees must be ready to react quickly if it is obvious that the initial effort by you is not effective in diffusing the conflict and it continues to escalate. On these occasions, the Assistant Referees should not await a signal from you to enter the field of play, as you will most likely be already concentrating on dealing directly with the incident.

Once the confrontation has subsided, the Assistant Referees should prepare themselves to provide you with information regarding the incident, including which players were involved, and what part they played in the confrontation. In some cases, there will be players who positively try to prevent escalation by segregating their angry colleagues. These players must be identified as playing a positive part in quelling the situation rather than inflaming it.

Referee's Role:

You should focus primarily on identifying the first wave main instigators of the conflict. This could be two players who are fighting each other following a robust challenge for the ball, or a player who is not involved in the original incident reacting violently. If three or more players enter the scene, you should step back and observe the situation. Keep blowing your whistle **LOUDLY**.

Once the situation has been dealt with, it would not be remiss of you to quietly thank anyone who played a positive part in quelling the situation.

Junior Assistant Referee's Role:

Whilst the Referee's main role is to identify the instigators, the Junior Assistant Referee's role is to identify other and second wave of players who subsequently inflame the situation by joining in the affray from the immediate area, often adding "fuel to the fire." This allows the Senior Assistant Referee to focus primarily on the managing the behaviour of the Technical Area occupants.

There may be occasions when immediate involvement by an Assistant Referee will prevent escalation. This may happen if you (the Referee) are too far away to prevent initial escalation. In such cases, the official who is nearest to the confrontation must establish his presence and try to diffuse the situation; this allows you more time to reach the location.

It is important to have as many pairs of eyes as possible to observe a mass confrontation. Therefore, whilst the confrontation continues, the three match officials should not write any details into their notebooks. Instead, they should make mental notes of who does what.

Senior Assistant Referee's Role:

The overall objective for a Senior Assistant Referee is to aid monitoring the confrontation itself. In addition to this, because the Senior Assistant Referee is likely to be patrolling the Technical Area side of the field of play, he is also responsible for preventing occupants from the Technical Areas joining in the affray. This becomes more of an issue, the nearer that an incident is to the Technical Area. As soon as any Technical Area problems have been sorted out, the Senior Assistant Referee should join his colleagues in monitoring the confrontation. In most cases, the Technical Area occupants will not present a problem, and the Senior Assistant Referee will be able to immediately join his colleagues on the field of play if necessary.

The Senior Assistant Referee's secondary role is to look out for, and try to prevent any third wave of players joining the confrontation from a distance. For example, a goalkeeper running 50 yards to join in.

Note: The roles of the two Assistant Referees can vary depending on the Referee's preferences. The roles described above are therefore a baseline that can be used to set up your own process as a Referee.

Fourth Official's Role:

If a Fourth Official is available, his primary role is to manage and observe the Technical Area occupants and record details as necessary. This allows the Senior Assistant Referee to directly assist the Referee with the confrontation. The Fourth Official's secondary role is to observe proceedings from a distance, in the following priority order.

- Identify the main culprits and the instigators.
- Identify others who escalate the problem.
- Look out for others negatively joining the affray from a distance, including substitutes and team officials.
- Observe and guide players who have been sent-off.

Once the fracas is over, the Fourth Official should prepare himself to provide the Referee with details regarding the behaviour of the people whom he has observed. This may include misbehaviour by team officials or other details that may have been missed by the Referee or his Assistants. The Referee will expect the Fourth Official to be able to confirm the identity and the actions of the main protagonists. The Fourth Official should therefore always have his notebook at the ready to observe and quickly record the details of the incident once it has subsided.

Note: The positioning advice above does not pertain to Club Assistant Referees, as they are not neutral, trained or expected to provide or offer advice to the Referee on disciplinary matters.

How should the Referee deal with misconduct?

You must accept the final responsibility for the decisions taken and for the punishments awarded. Dealing with violent conduct and then any other sending-off offences are the first priorities before moving on to other players who are to be disciplined. To prevent further misconduct, players who have been sent off, should be asked to leave the field of play separately. The Fourth Official should monitor this closely.

You are expected to be on the spot very quickly in an attempt to prevent mass confrontation; but if the situation escalates to acts of aggression, then this is violent conduct and must be punished with a sending-off. Players will also risk serious punishment for the angry 'mob scenes' that have caused increasing concern for the image of football in recent years.

You should always consult with your Assistant Referees (and the Fourth Official if available) before taking any disciplinary action.

You must remain calm, firm, maintain eye contact with the player concerned when you are disciplining him, and be in total command. Perpetrators should be moved into a position where you can still see all of (or most of) the other players whilst you are dealing with the misconduct. You should not isolate or issue punishments to players near the Technical Area, as this will inflame the situation even further.

After making sure that all of the appropriate cards have been shown and all the details have been recorded, play should be restarted as quickly as possible.

What instructions should the Referee include in his pre-match brief to his Assistant Referees in respect to dealing with mass confrontation?

Referees should prepare Assistant Referees to co-operate in dealing with a mass confrontation by giving specific pre-match instructions, even if the team of match officials has worked together on previous occasions.

The instructions should be clear and concise, as shown in the hypothetical example below of a Referee speaking to his two Assistant Referees as part of his pre-match brief to them:

"If a mass confrontation arises, come along the touchline to observe, and enter the field of play if I summon you or if it is obvious that I need help. Form a triangle around the scene. I will identify the first wave of instigators, the Junior Assistant Referee will look out for a second wave of players joining and inflaming the affray from the immediate area, and the Senior Assistant Referee will firstly manage the Technical Areas and then look out for any third wave of players coming in from a distance to inflame the situation. Make a mental note of who does what, and aim to identify at least one culprit from each team - any others will be a bonus. Do not write any notes during the confrontation, but observe. Before I take any action, I will call you over to consult you. "

Summary:

I hope that this guidance has given you some ideas that will prove useful when managing mass confrontation. If you have Assistant Referees in your team, don't try to deal with a mass confrontation on your own. Trust your Assistant Referees by delegating specific tasks for them to do if a confrontation erupts. This will empower them to help you maximize the potential to punish more perpetrators than you would be able to do if you were solely in charge. Three pairs of observing eyes can capture almost everything.

Stay safe.

Julian Carosi www.CorshamRef.org.uk

Happy reffing.

Next month, we will look at the standard pre-match brief.

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.

Blowing the Whistle

Although Assistant Referees are vital to any competitive match, the official who draws the most attention will be the one in the middle of the field. The centre referee is the official who bears the ultimate responsibility for controlling the match, and at all levels of play it is the referee who makes all final decisions about the manner and conduct of play. This responsibility starts upon arrival at the field and does not end until the match is over and the officials leave.

Before the Match Begins-Setting the Tone

There is much to do before a game can start. It is the referee's job to make sure that everything is done properly, promptly, and professionally, so that the match can begin on time. There will be paperwork to collect, players to check in, equipment and grounds to inspect, and the officiating crew to organize. It can be a time-consuming and frustrating job, especially if players or colleagues are late arriving, or if the field or nets are in need of repair.

When assigned as the centre referee for a match, you can help things go smoothly by setting the right tone for the day by arriving early at the field, and handling all pre-game activities in a thorough and professional manner.

Mental Preparation

A referee's game does not start at the field. It begins in the privacy of home, and in the mental and emotional attitudes the official brings to the game. Like any athlete, a referee who is psychologically unprepared cannot be in top form, particularly if distracted by problems at work or home.

As you prepare for the game, you should take a few moments to relax, focus your mind on the upcoming match, and get your mind and emotions ready for the exertions to follow. Your efforts will not only be more effective, but you will probably find that it makes the game more enjoyable, as well.

Setting the Tone

The heart of a referee's job is managing people-up to twenty-two of them on the field, two colleagues along the sidelines, and whoever else shows up for the game. For the match to go smoothly, you must be able to convince everyone at the field-the coaches, the players, the crowd, and the two assistant referees-to cooperate with you. To accomplish this, the game arms you with only a badge, a whistle, and a set of cards. Each of these is a tool for you to use: the badge representing your authority under the Laws of the Game, the whistle representing your power to stop the game in the name of fair play, and the cards granting the authority, to deal with any incidents that exceed the bounds of sportsmanship. None of these tools will be effective, however, without a fourth tool that you must supply for yourself: the force of your own personality.

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*

ALL LEVELS OF SKILL

The laws of the game must cater for all levels of skill. Players are amateur and professional, male and female, handicapped and capped, young and old, small and large. Matches are occasionally played in front of crowds of over fifty thousand but more likely they will have less than ten spectators.

The English FA started the new millennium with about 43,000 clubs, but only twenty of these were Premiership members. The laws apply to all matches from international level downwards, but a better sample of the world game would be, say, Coquitlam City Xtreme against Chilliwack Impact in a girls under-sixteen game. Only a very small proportion of players are professional, and yet the media is dominated by the professional game.

IFAB has the challenge of drafting laws that are universally applicable. Certain laws already discriminate. Fourth officials and neutral assistants are required at professional grounds but are not essential when Folkestone Snooker Club Reserves play The York Arms. Technology has been used to determine misconduct in professional matches, but Victoria Stores Margate are more likely to install cameras to detect shoplifters. The technical area has a more sophisticated design at the Britannia Stadium than it does on Hackney Marshes. The question for the legislators is how much discrimination can be permitted without top-level football and parks football becoming different games. In 2001, the FA of Wales warned IFAB that it was greatly concerned about the prospect of a two-tier football system.

AMPUTEES

Although Wrexham are said to have fielded two one-armed players against Chester (1890), the real pioneer was a one-legged goalkeeper called Gyngell (Maidenhead Norfolkians) in the 1900s. Berkshire & Buckinghamshire FA referred the matter to a higher authority, and it was decided there was no objection providing the player with a wooden leg did not play in a manner dangerous to his opponents (FA, 1907). The following season, Hart (Folkestone) played with a wooden leg.

Fifty years later the FIFA judgment was different. The All-India Football Federation asked for a ruling on a goalkeeper who had played for four years with an artificial leg. Although the keeper had not caused injury to any other player, it could be argued that opponents were staying clear of him. FIFA ruled that an artificial leg was not part of standard equipment, so the player was banned.

More recently a dedicated form of amputee soccer has evolved. One account suggests that the game began in the late 1970s in El Salvador, where war victims were unable to get artificial legs. Using lightweight crutches to cover the ground, these disabled players found they were able to kick a football with their one good leg. The professional eleven-a-side game has produced some excellent one-armed role models. Hector Castro (Uruguay) played in the 1930 FIFA World Cup Final, Tony Ward (Arlesey Town) appeared as a substitute in the 1995 FA Vase Final, and Chris Perrior played for Walsall and Kidderminster Harriers in the late 1990s.

There have been a number of one-armed referees, including Alf Bond (Middlesex), who took charge of the 1956 FA Cup Final. In a North Regional League match in the 1960s, a player was sent off for abusing a one-armed linesman. 'You're badly handicapped,' the player said. 'Only one arm and can't see either.'

Many thanks to Andrew Ward for giving permission for his material to appear in this newsletter.

New Officials Association launched.

(Source FA Website:

<http://www.thefa.com/GrassrootsNew/Referee/NewsAndFeatures/AssociationOfEliteSportsOfficials.htm>)

A new organisation bringing together the cream of refereeing and umpiring from football, rugby union, rugby league and cricket has been launched.

Dedicated to raising refereeing and umpiring standards, through the exchange of ideas and training methods, and promoting a more positive image of officials, the Association of Elite Sports Officials (AESO) is comprised of former and current elite referees and umpires.

The AESO's main aims are:

- Improving standards of officiating in sport through inter-sport exchange of ideas and practices
- Developing and supporting a positive image of sports officials
- Engendering a greater appreciation of the dedication of sports officials and their key role in sport
- Assisting sports governing bodies to recruit and retain sports officials, especially amongst females, young people and ethnic minorities

David Elleray, Chairman of AESO (former Premiership and international football referee) says there is mutual respect between the match officials of different sports. "The formation of AESO enables us to learn from each other in a more structured manner," he explained.

"I'm delighted that we have received the support of our respective governing bodies, who see the very tangible benefits involved in cross-sport projects of this kind.

"While each sport has its own specific challenges and demands, there are many aspects of refereeing that cut across sports and that is the platform we will build on.

"We have started with the full-time officials in football, cricket and both rugby codes, but anticipate the organisation growing to include senior part-time officials as well as representatives from other sports."

Lord David Triesman, Chairman of The Football Association, added: "I warmly welcome the formation of the AESO. Elite officials should have the support and resource across sports of those who face similar challenges.

"How officials come into sport, what they learn and how they stay involved is critical to all of us who love our particular game and sporting fairness in general."

Chris Kelly, Umpires' Manager at the England & Wales Cricket Board, said: "While the world of sport continues to evolve the officials' role needs to be given as much support as possible to allow the officials' development to keep pace with the evolution.

"The AESO is well suited to support this development by providing opportunities for officials to share best practice and to confront the challenges in their sports with new perspectives. The AESO has an opportunity to shape the public perception of officiating which is key to recruitment and retention in all sports."

Ed Morrison, Head of Elite Referee Development at the Rugby Football Union, added: "On behalf of all Elite Referees in Rugby Union we're delighted that this initiative has been introduced. All sports can learn from each other and I'm looking forward to working closely and exchanging ideas with football, cricket and rugby league."

Stuart Cummings, Match Officials Director at the Rugby Football League: "This is an extremely positive move as it is an initiative where by ideas and innovations can be shared to improve officiating standards and recruitment of match officials in all sports."

The AESO Executive Board

Chairman - David Elleray (Football Association), Vice Chairmen - Stuart Cummings (Rugby League), Ed Morrison (Rugby Football Union), Chief Executive Officer - Chris Kelly (England & Wales Cricket Board), Technical Director - Keith Hackett (PGMO, football)

The Active Members Group

Football – Mike Riley and Howard Webb, Cricket – Nigel Llong and Richard Kettleborough, Rugby League – Steve Ganson and Phil Bentham, Rugby Union – Chris White and Rob Debney

Welcome to Respect

(Source FA Web site <http://www.thefa.com/TheFA/Respect/>)

Respect is The FA's programme of activities to combat unacceptable behaviour in our game at every level - on the pitch and from the sidelines.

This was the No.1 priority emerging from the biggest opinion survey to date of grassroots football in England. It was carried out in late 2007 and directly informed The FA's National Game Strategy, published in March 2008.

We hope that Respect will ensure a safe, positive environment for every one to enjoy football. From the start it will have an impact on the following areas:

Referee recruitment and retention: By tackling abuse towards match officials, we hope to reduce the stream of referees understandably leaving the game.

Participation within youth football: Abuse and pressure from the sidelines needs to stop if we are to ensure young children enjoy, stay and progress in the game.

Coaching and player development: An encouraging and player-centred approach is vital if we are to improve coaching standards - particularly for the key 5-11 age-group. It's simple: better coaches produce better players.

Safeguarding children: Everyone in football has a duty of care towards children - ensuring they are able to play football in a safe, enjoyable environment free of abuse, bullying and discrimination.

Improving behaviour is a whole-game issue and the 2008-09 season will see the Respect programme introduced at professional and grassroots levels.

To do this, The FA is actively working with the following organisations:

- The Premier League
- The Football League
- The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)
- The League Managers' Association (LMA)
- Professional Game Match Officials (PGMO)
- All County FAs

And we're inviting all regional and local adult and youth leagues to play their part in our Respect programme. [Click here](#) if you would like to sign-up.

Minister for Sport Gerry Sutcliffe has lent his support to the Respect programme, saying: "Football is the most high profile sport in the world and with the new season about to start, the game is back in the spotlight. Footballers today are not just sportsmen, they are role models for young people around the world. Passion is at the heart of the game, but being passionate doesn't mean disrespecting people. It's absolutely crucial that players, coaches, officials and spectators sign up to Respect. We need to see a commitment to change at all levels of the sport, and I'm grateful to the FA for leading the way."

Sanctions - guidance 2008-09

So, what if Respect is not followed? The Football Association Rules and Regulations clearly outline the powers to take action where there is a prima facie case of misconduct.

But even before it reaches this level, action may be taken early in the process by Clubs and Leagues, dependent on the severity of the breach. The regulations outline who has what responsibilities clearly in order to prevent cases of double jeopardy (i.e. a participant being dealt with twice for one offence)

If the breach is considered by The Football Association (The FA) or County Football Association (CFA) to be one of "misconduct", the regulations give power for action to be taken by either The Football Association or parent County Football Association only. Such issues would cover all on-field misconduct (eg. violent conduct, abuse behaviour towards the match officials by players) or off-field offences by Clubs, their officers or spectators (eg. Crowd abuse, inappropriate comments about match officials in the media). Such sanctions could result in a fine, individual or club suspensions or other sanctions considered appropriate by the commission hearing the case.

Where a breach is at a level where it is contrary to the rules of a competition or League but not considered to be misconduct by The FA or CFA action may be taken by the relevant competition providing such breach occurred whilst participating in that competition, (e.g. failure to fulfil a fixture, playing ineligible players, failure to confirm appointments to match officials) Such sanctions may also include fines, reduction of points or ultimately expulsion from the competition or excluded from a competition by Members at an AGM/EGM.

It is vital that the football family works in partnership to ensure the integrity of Respect is maintained. Such an important project starts with the Club who also has a vital part to play. Clubs also have the ability to ensure their Club members adhere to the codes of conduct within the Club. For those in breach, the Club may also take appropriate action which may include omission from the team in respect to players, request for non-attendance at matches or again removal from the club membership in sever cases.

If any organisation is in doubt as to their powers to apply sanctions in individual cases then it would always be best practice to seek appropriate advice from their parent County Football Association.

Counties launch Respect

Thursday, 25 September 2008.

With the new season fully underway, three County FAs invited local footballers to help launch The FA's Respect programme throughout the Cheshire, Middlesex and Northamptonshire areas.

These County FAs were three of seven Counties selected to take part in The FA's ten week Respect pilot earlier this year, which aims to improve standards of behaviour across the Professional and grassroots game, reducing the drop-out of Referees, the number of abandoned matches and reintroducing the fun into children's football.

In total, 20 adult and youth leagues across the country were involved in the pilot, which proved an overwhelming success and The FA officially launched the Respect programme at The Community Shield on 10 August.

During the pilot, these Counties were invited to introduce some of the following measures in leagues in the area:

- Allowing only the captain to speak to the referee;
- Erecting barriers along the touchlines to keep spectators back, and;
- Codes of conduct with related sanctions for everyone involved in the participating clubs.
- The programme was rolled out in Chorlton (Cheshire), Harrow (Middlesex) and Peterborough (Northamptonshire) throughout September and Cheshire FA Chairman, Dave Edmunds is proud to have been involved:

"We were delighted to take part in the pilot for the Respect programme earlier this year and it's been really well received by clubs and leagues in the area," he said. "The challenge now is to get more leagues signed up and involved."

Northamptonshire FA Chairman, Bob Cotter reiterated the programme's importance:

"[The Respect programme] is critical in helping us all work together to change the negative attitudes and unacceptable behaviour which threaten the future of football in Northamptonshire. This is a long-term commitment but, if we all play our part, together we can really make a difference."

Every league in the country has received a personal letter from The FA inviting them to sign-up to Respect and pledge to tackle unacceptable behaviour in football. On signing up, each club in co-operative leagues will be provided with a Respect tool kit consisting of guidance notes, codes of conduct, a captain's armband containing the Respect logo and advice on obtaining spectator barriers at a special rate.

The Respect programme is a direct response to the key issues identified in the professional and grassroots game. The FA's 'Your Game, Your Say' survey highlighted the fact that abusive behaviour from players results in over 7,000 referees quitting football each year, alongside parental pressure being the main reasons that young players leave the game at an early age.

My role in Respect

Respect affects the entire game, and needs your help, regardless of how you are involved in football.

- Player
- Coach
- Referee
- Parents and Spectators
- Club and League Officials
- Club Welfare Officers
- Youth League Welfare Officers
- County FA Welfare Officers

PLAYERS

Whether you're in the starting eleven or on the bench, your role as a player is crucial to the success of Respect.

On a match day, you'll be expected to work with your coaches and your captain to allow the referee to manage the game without being subjected to abuse. With the game losing thousands of referees from the game every year, it's hugely important, because without the referees, the game isn't the same.

If the league you play in adopts the Respect programme, you will be asked to read, agree to, and sign, a Code of Conduct at your club. This will be your 'promise' to abide by a set of rules governing your behaviour as a player. Working together with your coach, your captain, and each referee that takes charge of your games during the season, you can play a major role in improving the game for everyone, through Respect.

COACHES

Coaches have a hugely important role to play in Respect, as they are not only responsible for their own behaviour, but they can also influence that of their players and spectators, too.

On a match day, you'll be expected to work with your players, parents and other spectators to allow the referee to manage the game without being subjected to abuse.

REFEREES

The Respect programme aims to allow Referees to officiate matches without being subjected to abuse by players, coaches or spectators - and the referees themselves have a key part to play in the process.

Working in partnership with the clubs they officiate, referees can provide post-match feedback regarding the behaviour of players, parents, coaches and other spectators, to help the clubs enforce their Codes of Conduct.

PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

Parents have a big responsibility as part of the Respect programme.

Respect is working to eradicate touchline abuse in football, and parents can play their part by agreeing to, and signing, their club's Code of Conduct and abiding by them throughout the season.

Parents also have a responsibility for their children's behaviour. The players will also be asked to sign a Code of Conduct, and parents can encourage their children to adhere to the players' code.

CLUB AND LEAGUE OFFICIALS

The Respect programme relies on clubs and leagues to take active steps to ensure high standards of conduct throughout their club or league.

Leagues can champion the Respect programme, and communicate the importance of Respect to their member clubs through meetings and bulletins. Click here to download the Respect Guide for Leagues.

Club officials can sign up to and enforce Codes of Conduct for their players, coaches, parents and spectators, which will set the standard for behaviour throughout their club.

Code of Conduct: Match Officials

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

The behaviour of the match officials has an impact, directly and indirectly, on the conduct of everyone involved in the game - both on the pitch and on the sidelines.

Play your part and observe The FA's Respect Code of Conduct for Match Officials at all time.

When officiating I will:

- Be honest and completely impartial at all times, irrespective of the teams, players or team officials involved in the match
- Apply the Laws of the Game and competition rules fairly and consistently
- Manage the game in a positive, calm and confident manner
- Deal with all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behaviour, foul play and other misconduct
- Not tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour from players and officials
- Support my match official colleagues at all times
- Set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the game
- Communicate with the players and encourage fair play
- Respond in a clear, calm and confident manner to any appropriate request for clarification by the team captains
- Prepare physically and mentally for every match
- Complete and submit, accurate and concise reports within the time limit required for games which I officiate
- I understand that breaches of the code may result in action being taken by my County FA and /or The FA.

Football Association and managers undermining Respect campaign:

Patrick Barclay Sunday Telegraph 16 Nov 08

Dissent this season:

Official figures obtained by Telegraph Sport (*by Alan Biggs*) reveal that punishments for dissent are on the increase in the professional game this season. But the FA appear to be winning the fight for Respect at grassroots level.

Professional

This season: 188

This time last season: 133

(Biggest rise is in The Championship – up from 39 to 61. Premier League is up two to 34.)

Grassroots

This season: 33,629

Last season: 36,506

It was during a so-called 'clampdown' by referees in 1971 that Bill Shankly uttered one of his immortal quotes. "The trouble with referees," he said, "is that they know the rules but don't know the game." And the trouble with this? Shankly said it.

Because of the force of his personality, his utterances are apt to become embedded in the professional psyche, even the half-truths that have failed the test of time. Today's referee, whether you like him or not, knows the game better than any predecessor I can recall. It is the manager I worry about.

Take the cases of Mark Hughes and Joe Kinnear. Hughes first, because, unlike Kinnear, he has no reputation for mischief. Last Sunday, while his Manchester City lost at home to Tottenham, he was a picture of frustration in the technical area, notably when Gelson Fernandes was sent off after a second yellow-card offence.

I assumed his ire would be vented on the player. Instead he moaned about the referee, Mike Dean, whom he patronisingly accused of neglecting to take account of the slippery conditions, even though we could all see that neither of Gelson's foolish, ungainly and unprofessional offences involved a sliding tackle.

Then there was Kinnear calling Martin Atkinson a "Mickey Mouse referee" on the grounds that he had missed a foul on the Newcastle defender Cacapa in the build-up to Andrew Johnson's second goal for Fulham. Again, he insulted our intelligence by implying it was a big mistake. There have been other occasions when we have wondered if managers know the game well enough to do their jobs, let alone justify their lavish salaries.

Although the truth is that they are often speaking while the balance of their minds is temporarily disturbed by paranoia – you don't have to be a football manager to suffer from that – or lying in order to deflect attention from their team's shortcomings, it is annoying that they should even imagine our swallowing such guff.

Only if we took them more seriously, though, would it affect the Football Association's 'Respect' campaign. I thought some newspapers were wrong to imply a connection, for the value of the campaign always lay in the intention to improve relations between players and officials, at all levels, during a match; as far as I am concerned, any attempt to make managers talk blandly afterwards was misconceived, like so much of this pathetic exercise in appeasement.

According to the FA, they consulted 37,000 people in designing it and that is the problem. There is simply no nice way forward. You just have to impose zero tolerance of blatant dissent and be brave enough to take the inevitable flak from the media, who will open fire whatever you do.

"There has been real progress at grassroots level," insist the FA - as if there could ever be a trickle-up effect. The truth, as established by Alan Biggs elsewhere in these pages, is that their crucial failure has been not to make an example of those most visible, the elite. Nor can the referees, under Keith Hackett, avoid a substantial share of the blame, for it was they who opposed zero tolerance in favour of continuing to 'communicate' with players.

No wonder managers have been encouraged to share the illusion that refereeing is their business. It is, of course, to the extent that they are entitled to a constructive opinion, which the League Managers' Association have expressed in calling for action on nine aspects of the game's control, including video assistance for referees; the authorities, from Fifa, have been woefully lazy in this respect, as this column has been saying for years.

Managers should, however, keep their noses out of the affairs of Professional Game Match Officials Limited, the Hackett-led body that runs top-level refereeing. Their demand to have a representative of the body's committee is impertinent and unrealistic. It reminds us, indeed, of one of those daft post-match comments. Even worse, it is accompanied by a dark threat – attributed to no one but coming to us through reliable channels – that industrial action, in the form of a synchronised delay to kick-offs, may accompany the next demand for a greater say.

Even now, the FA should be increasing the maximum penalty for this from a £5,000 fine to unlimited suspension without pay. But I fear the FA are still too soft for that. Listen to their director of governance, Jonathan Hall, as he attempts to rally managers round the 'Respect' flag: "It is easy to support officials when a decision goes your way. The real test is to show understanding when a call goes against you." I haven't heard motivation like that since I was in the Boy Scouts.

Concussions: Tips for Sideline Management By Dev K. Mishra, M.D.

Concussion is a controversial and tricky medical topic, but any coach or parent who works with soccer players needs to know what to do if you are faced with a situation in which you suspect a player has had a concussion.

Let me first define what a concussion is: it's an alteration in brain function that occurs from a direct blow to the head. If a player takes direct contact to the head, the most common complaint after a concussion is confusion, and other very common problems include a short-term inability to recall events just prior and just after the moment of contact, headache, or light-headedness.

In more severe incidents there may be loss of consciousness (the player is "knocked out").

There seems to be a tendency to minimize the potential severity of a concussion -- we've all heard an announcer make an off-handed comment along the lines of "wow, he got his bell rung and I bet he's really going to have a headache tomorrow." Well, there is a growing base of very solid scientific evidence that even so-called "mild" concussions can be serious injuries.

Some New Research on Concussions

A two-year study done in the men's and women's soccer programs from the Atlantic Coast Conference showed concussions happening the following ways: contact with an opponent's head (28%), elbow (14%), knee (3%), or foot (3%); the ball (24%); the ground (10%); concrete sidelines (3%); goalpost (3%); or a combination of objects (10%). Sixty-nine percent occurred in games; none resulted from intentional heading of the ball. In fact, there is no evidence at all that intentional heading of the ball results in any alterations in brain function.

Concussions are probably under-reported, in that many athletes will get a very mild concussion and not report it to the coach or trainer.

One Canadian study of youth soccer players ages 12-17 reported an amazing 48% of their athletes with symptoms of concussion at least one time during only one season. The ACC study reported about one concussion per team per season. The "real" number of concussions is still subject to debate.

Whether headgear reduces the number of concussions is also controversial. The Canadian study showed that the number of concussions was much less in the players wearing headgear, but there are not many other studies showing a reduction with headgear. We don't have consensus on headgear.

The most interesting new facts about concussion involve gender differences. It appears that female athletes do "worse" than males with concussions. An excellent study from the University of Pittsburgh showed that females reported more symptoms from concussions, they did worse on tests of reaction times, and there was a trend toward females doing worse on tests of memory and visual motor skills. These trends are supported by other scientific studies.

Findings reported at the 2nd International Symposium on Concussion in Sport are changing the way we treat concussions. Among their findings are that with even simple concussions, the player should not return to play the same day, the player should be evaluated by a physician, and that return to play follows a stepwise process over 7 to 10 days.

What Team Physicians Do

For trained team physicians, we look for responsiveness if the athlete is "down," then we assess their airway (whether there is any obstruction to breathing), whether they are able to breathe, and their circulation or heartbeat (these fundamentals are known as the "ABCs").

I then assess for any potential spine injury, and if it is suspected, we properly immobilize the athlete's spine to protect them from injury during movement. If there is no suspicion of a spine injury and the athlete is responsive enough to walk, we will go to the sideline where a thorough assessment is performed.

For me, the most critical part is being able to tell whether this is the same athlete I've known in practice -- are they at the baseline I've come to know. There are also several tests for orientation, memory, and concentration that we will typically perform.

What You Should Do on Your Field

I believe that the new evidence we have points to even "mild" concussions as potentially serious injuries that demand great care. With that in mind, and also given that most coaches or parents are not medically trained, I recommend the following:

*Look at the "ABCs" first -- if you have any question, call 911 immediately.

*If you are concerned for a spine injury, do not move the athlete, call 911.

*If the athlete is responsive but appears to be confused, you should suspect a concussion, remove the player from the game or practice and DO NOT let him or her return to the game or practice that day.

*Someone should observe the player on the sideline for symptoms of confusion, headache, or light-headedness.

*If those symptoms do not return to normal in 15 minutes, the player should be transported to the nearest Emergency Room.

*For players whose symptoms return to normal in less than 15 minutes, I believe they should still be evaluated by a physician in the next day or two.

(Dev K. Mishra is an orthopedic surgeon in private practice, Burlingame, Calif. He is a Team Physician at the University of California, Berkeley, Medical Director of the International Children's Games, and member of the team physician pool with the U.S. Soccer Federation. Mishra's Web site is: www.thesoccerdoc.com)

NEWSLETTER FEATURE:

Regular articles by Stanley Lover can be found on the www.CorshamRef.org.uk web site along with any respective images.

*A short chapter from my memoirs *Chronicles of a Timid Lover* by Stanley Lover*

Grenada bacon

November 1984. Harrods Store, South Kensington, London.

In the Bacon Department I said to the dark man behind the counter, 'Please give me ten rashers of smoked bacon.'

His response surprised me. A brown hand snaked forward over the glass fronted display counter. 'Hello, Mister Lover, how are you?' Something familiar about his wide smile challenged my brains for recognition, but I was stumped. We shook hands but before I could mumble, 'I'm sorry, but ...' he continued;

'Don't you remember me? We met in Grenada when you came on a FIFA football programme. My name is Roy St. John - I was the Minister for Sport and President of the Grenada Football Association.'

My mind flashed back six years to August 1978, to our first meeting on the tarmac of the small Pearl's Airport, Grenada. I was one of a team of four specialists representing FIFA in a World Development Programme. Our role was to provide advice to strengthen four major elements of football in each member country - Administration, Coaching, Sports Medicine, and Refereeing.

My FIFA colleagues were: Vojislav Bizic, 26 from Rijeka Yugoslavia, an adviser on Administration, with a background of managing the international affairs of a First Division Club; Heinz Morotzke, 43 from Bruweiler West Germany, had coached Schalke 84 and the national teams of Iceland and Ghana; and Professor David Muckle, 37 an eminent surgeon, authority on sports injuries, and consultant to the Oxford United Football League Club. We soon became friends and made a good team.

Grenada was our second stop on a three-week tour of Trinidad, Grenada and Antigua. We had to charter a Cessna plane in Trinidad because an inter-island air company had a strike problem and all available seats on other planes were double and even treble-booked - a common occurrence we were told. We arrived late but I recalled that Roy St. John, about 40, a man of charm, quietly spoken, with a pleasant full-round face, small black moustache and kind eyes, was the first to greet us on a rain swept runway.

During our five-day courses he appeared a couple of times to check that we were satisfied with facilities and interest of our audiences.

Now he stood behind the bacon counter in Harrods, one of the world's most famous department stores, wearing a hard straw boater with a flat top and round brim, and beaming a sunny Caribbean smile.

Astonished, I asked, 'But, what are you doing here?' A silly question but he knew I meant, 'Why are you here?'

'Oh it's a long story,' he said, frowning, 'but, briefly, in Grenada we had a revolution and many people were put in prison or killed. I was on a Government visit to Malaysia with my family and was warned that if we returned to Grenada we could be arrested. I came here and had to take whatever work I could find to support my family.' That was all he could say because three or four people stopped to gaze at the large sides of pigs hocks laid in rows behind the vertical glass partition, and might need to be served.

'Did you say ten rashers, Mister Lover?' I nodded, pondering his story and the coincidence of meeting in such an unlikely place.

Our paths had crossed again because of a remarkable old French lady, Nanny, my wife Gilberte's godmother. A few days earlier we had arranged a family party to celebrate her 100th birthday. Nicholas Sarkozy - the French President, who was then the mayor of our town Neuilly, a Paris suburb - joined us for the occasion and proposed a champagne toast to the bright old girl.

Nanny had been very happy when Gilberte and I decided to marry, because she had a soft spot for England and a glad eye for English men. As a couturier Nanny had worked for Dickens & Jones in Regents Street in the early 1920s and loved to chat in English about her thirteen years in the capital.

When I told her we would be in London for a weekend I asked if there was anything special we could buy for her. 'I would love some smoked bacon, Stanley,' she replied. 'I'm not supposed to have it but the taste would bring back so many lovely moments.'

I explained to Roy St John the reason for my visit to the Bacon Department. He took special pleasure in presenting cured hams from Italy, Denmark, Scotland -and other countries. The meat colour varied from cream, through blood red to dark brown; the flesh looked tender and all promised juicy, mouth-watering gourmet pleasure. Finally, we agreed with his suggestion of lean rashers cut from a Scottish ham (which we imagined would release the whiff of fresh winds across the lochs and smoking fires of logs chopped from majestic pine forests).

We were able to chat for a few minutes longer about the cause of his family's exile. Although Grenada is smaller than the Isle of Wight it is one of a chain of strategic islands in the Caribbean Sea, dotted like stepping stones stretching north between the continent of South America and the USA, with Cuba as the largest off the coast of Florida. After Grenada obtained independence from the UK in 1974 power struggles developed into an armed revolution. Roy St John was on the wrong side at that time and felt lucky to avoid the fate of his government colleagues who were imprisoned.

On a later visit to Harrods we enquired after him and were told he had returned home. On the internet I found a 2003 photograph of the former Minister for Sport receiving an award from Lady Gloria Williams, The First Lady of Grenada. He looked well and had settled into a valued role serving sport.

When Nanny saw the rashers her eyes sparkled and a radiant smile anticipated the feast to come. The story of Roy St John, of the Isle of Spice in the Caribbean, added a special flavour.

Yours in sport,

© Stanley Lover 2008

YOU MUST BE JOKING REF?

An old Assistant Referee walked up to the Referee Kit/Equipment stall at his Football Association's annual convention and asked to buy one flag.

The young Referee working on that stall told him that they only sold pairs of flags.

The old Assistant Referee was insistent that the young Referee ask the Head of FA Sales Manager about the matter.

Walking into the back room, the young Referee said to the manager, "Some old b****rd wants to buy one flag."

As he finished his sentence, he turned to find the old Assistant Referee standing right behind him, so he quickly added, "and this gentleman kindly offered to buy the other one."

The manager approved the deal, and the old Assistant Referee went on his way.

Later the manager said to the young Referee, "I was impressed with the way you got yourself out of that situation earlier. We like people who think on their feet here. Where are you from son?"

"New Zealand, sir," the boy replied.

"Well, why did you leave New Zealand?" the manager asked.

The boy said, "Sir, there's nothing but whores and rugby players there."

"Really," replied the manager? "My wife is from New Zealand!"

"Really??" replied the boy. "Which team did she play for?"

Referee: I'd like a packet of helicopter flavour crisps please.

Shopkeeper: Sorry, I've only got plain.

A Referee walks into a bar and says to the bartender, "I bet you fifty dollars that I can bite my right eye." The bartender says, "Yeah, right! I've never seen anyone do that!" So the Referee takes out his glass eye and bites it.

The angry bartender pays the Referee his fifty dollars and the Ref. walks away. He comes back half an hour later and says, "I bet you fifty dollars I can bite my left eye." Now the bartender becomes really skeptical. She says, "I just saw you walk in here -- you can't be blind even if you are a Referee!" So he takes out his fake teeth and bites his left eye. The bartender pays him his money and the Referee walks away.

A Referee bought a new Mercedes to celebrate his wife leaving him and was out on the interstate for a nice evening drive.

The top was down, the breeze was blowing through what was left of his hair and he decided to open her up. As the needle jumped up to 80 mph, he suddenly saw flashing red and blue lights behind him.

"There's no way they can catch a Mercedes," he thought to himself and opened her up further. The needle hit 90, 100.....Then the reality of the situation hit him. "What am I doing?" he thought and pulled over.

The cop came up to him, took his license without a word and examined it and the car.

"It's been a long hard day, this is the end of my shift and it's Friday the 13th. I don't feel like more paperwork, I don't need the frustration or the overtime, so if you can give me a really good excuse for your driving that I haven't heard before, you can go."

The Referee thinks about it for a second and says, "Last week my nagging wife ran off with a cop. I was afraid you were trying to give her back!"

"Have a nice weekend," said the officer.

A Really Bad Day

There was this Referee at the Club bar after ten game, just looking at his drink. He stays like that for half of an hour.

Then, this big trouble-making player steps next to him, takes the drink from the Referee, and just drinks it all down. The poor Referee starts crying. The player says, "Come on Ref., I was just joking. Here, I'll buy you another drink. I just can't stand to see a Ref. cry."

"No, it's not that. This day is the worst of my life. First, I forget my kit, and then sent off the wrong player. I miss nearly every offside in the game. When I go to leave the ground in my car, I found out it was stolen. The police said that they can do nothing. I get a cab to return home, and when I leave it, I remember I left my wallet and credit cards there. The cab driver just drives away."

"I go home, and when I get there, I find my wife in bed with the away team's manager. I leave home, and come back to the Club bar. And just when I was thinking about putting an end to my life, you show up and drink my poison."

LETTERS

F.I.F.A

Are standards flagging at F.I.F.A, or to put it another way does F.I.F.A have any flagging standards? Speaking to people in the know I am told that they do not care how their assistants flag so long as they get the decision right. Well that can go straight in the bin after the Liverpool v Atletico Madrid game the other night, penalty what penalty, well done Stevie. What on earth are the criteria used to assess the performance of these top class European assistants? I know better than anyone as an assistant with minimal technique that we should not criticise our overseas colleagues but "At this level", I hate that phrase! The refereeing fraternity should be seen to be exceptional. I have had some club assistants that have performed to a better standard than that, but I hasten to add, not many.

I am sure that the majority of people that watch these games on TV are not even aware that there is a problem. Even the commentator on the above game stated that you cannot score from the kick off as it was indirect. Somebody needs to be educated. My question is, is F.I.F.A aware, and if so why not adopt the criteria used by the FA? Someone asked me what I thought of European assistants, and for those of you that have had the misfortune of working with me, I was still giving my opinion some thirty minutes later. For the odder ones amongst you, I am lining what Cyril Smith was to Hang Gliding. Now if a poor lacklustre assistant like me can see the shortcomings, then there really is a problem.

WHAT RESPECT.

Here we are some three months into a four year FA Respect Campaign and we have the Barnsley manager Simon Davey berating Andy D'Urso for issuing a yellow card instead of a red in their game with Sheffield Utd. at the weekend. Obviously Andy did not see the deliberate use of the elbow, and to be honest we as referees have all been in a situation where we honestly did not see what exactly transpired in front of us. The game needs referees but we are not supermen we will eventually make mistakes but from a base of integrity, no amount of training or years of experience can prepare you for a fellow professional deliberately seriously injuring another fellow professional. There is no greater illustration of the need for referees at all levels than this incident.

Sir Alex Ferguson was charged for remonstrating with Mike Dean and Newcastle manager Joe Kinnear called Martin Atkinson "A Mickey Mouse referee. All this in one weekend of football, And if you look on your computers at the FA disciplinary website you could spend more than a few minutes looking at other charges of misconduct towards match officials. We are told that at the start of the season that the FA together with the PGMOL had spoken with all the clubs in regard to the Respect Campaign, well it appears that it has simply not sunk in.

Welcome to the beautiful game no wonder it's a four year campaign it should have been forty years because that is how long it will take, if it works at all, or am I being too cynical. Football managers at all levels are like Mother Hens protecting their broods and possess the Wisdom of Solomon when it comes to seeing or not seeing penalties as the case may be. There are also camp followers in the guise of assistant manager, physio etc etc , who when the manager has run out of steam take over the task of shouting obscenities. Why do we have dugouts in spitting distance from the pitch? And why as you proceed higher up the leagues are they crammed with club personnel. It would seem that when you as an assistant referee need to speak to someone within these dugouts that you are outnumbered 50-1. It is a crèche full of people who are unable to use the Queens English without a flurry of four letter words, or personal remarks like, " Who's sh^g**ing your missus while you're here".

Gentlemen I would like to suggest a different type of Respect Campaign, from Premiership right down to Sunday mornings, throw back all your fixtures for a month and let's see what happens. A friend of mine Bill Webb said to me, that he did not start refereeing to gain respect; he expected respect as a referee. There is no greater example of a referee who actually receives respect from all quarters than Bill's son Howard, maybe Howard should be our ambassador to promote the Respect Campaign and explain our issues to clubs. I applaud the FA for attempting to deal with this issue but I am told that each league that signs up to it will be charged £35 per team, I will stand corrected if I am wrong. A roll of tape and a captain's armband will not change attitudes of players, club officials and spectators; the sad thing is that these attitudes towards match officials exist in the whole spectrum of the football family, from 80 year olds to teenagers. Respect yeah right.

Keith L.Goulding.

Thanks to Keith for sending in his comments.

Stop attacks on referees, Pearce tells managers

By Ian Herbert Tuesday, 18 November 2008

Stuart Pearce says referees, just like managers, cannot be expected to get every decision right.

A self-styled dog of war is an unlikely ally for our beleaguered referees but Stuart Pearce declared yesterday that managers' post-match tirades against officials were not helping the Football Association's Respect campaign and that they should stop.

Pearce, the England Under-21 manager, was speaking with the words of his third club manager, Brian Clough, ringing in his ears. Clough forbade his players from remonstrating with referees and Pearce showed in his two years at Manchester City's helm that the message stood for managers, too, as far as he was concerned. Did Pearce find it difficult to "take a deep breath" as he believes other managers should do? "Not really," he said. "I've been brought up under Brian Clough to keep my mouth shut. All decisions are going to be balanced over a season. If you don't think refs are going to make any mistakes just look at your own performance as a player or manager and know you can't get decisions right all the time. The same things applies to them – it's physically impossible with the pace of the games nowadays."

But the most powerful case for managers to keep post-match criticisms between themselves and officials was provided by statistics provided during the FA Respect campaign event in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, at which Pearce was speaking. The Association reveals that 8,000 referees are currently quitting the game each year, many of them because they are not prepared to live and work with the abuse, and that 846 grassroots games were abandoned last year due to unacceptable behaviour from either players or fans. A third of games at all levels are subsequently currently taking place with no referee at all.

Such is the inclination of parents to criticise referees and hurl orders at their children that the FA yesterday announced it is providing 50 per cent grants to youth football clubs to erect physical barriers to create a greater distance between players and fans and make the game less pressurised. The FA's Respect manager Dermot Collins said the behaviour of professional managers was influencing the conduct of those, at grassroots level, who consider it acceptable to pressurise and abuse referees when decisions go against them.

Referee Howard Webb believes players' behaviour towards referees had improved and says he now holds great store by the brief conversations he has with captains before games. Diplomatic on the issue of managers' outbursts, he said: "There has to be a little switch in people's heads when they say 'OK, that's enough, I have to think about the image of the game'."

But for all Webb's efforts to appreciate the pressures of those inside the game, he clearly believes the step-change must come from those competing within it. "If something happens in the first minute which is clearly over and above management and can only be deemed worthy of a card, it is my job to deal with it that way, and I'm not going to lower my standards."

Results of the last poll on the home page of www.CorshamRef.org.uk web site

Total votes 320.

Who is or was the best Referee?

Answers / Votes / Percent

1. Pierluigi Collina / 193 / 60%
2. Another Referee not listed here / 36 / 11%
3. Howard Webb / 24 / 8%
4. Graham Poll / 18 / 6%
4. You! (Seriously) / 18 / 6% *Yeah! - nice to see that some of you have faith in yourself!*
5. Ken Aston / 15 / 5%
6. Jack Taylor / 14 / 4%
7. Stanley Rous / 1 / 0%

7. Arthur Ellis / 1 / 0%
4. Charles Alcock / 0 / 0%

The next poll question is: Which famous player would you most have liked to send off in your career?

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION and ANSWER TOPICS:

Question 1: Why are National List Premiership Referees allowed to issue swift cards, rather than follow the accepted FA issuing card procedure?

Answer 1: The general procedure for cautioning players is to state to the player he is being cautioned; enquire his name; warn him about his future conduct; finally show the yellow card. The Football Association agreed that, exceptionally, National List Referees may display a card immediately where such action would serve to reduce or prevent acts of retaliation. Referees are reminded that this instant use of a card should continue to be used sparingly and only on those occasions when it could diffuse a possible flashpoint. This procedure remains the exception and the normal cautioning procedure (which provides an inbuilt calming down period), finalised by a showing of a yellow card, remains the standard practice.

<http://www.refworld.com/information/5/article/28/0>

Question 2:

An attacking player accidentally leaves the field behind the goal line. The goalkeeper drops the ball on the ground and the attacking player re-enters the field and puts the ball in the back of the net. In my opinion the attacking player has gained an unfair advantage and the goal should be disallowed and the player should be cautioned. Am I correct?

Answer 2: If a player accidentally crosses the boundary lines of the field of play, he is not deemed to have committed an infringement. Going off the field of play may be considered to be part of a playing movement.

Therefore, as no infringement has occurred in your scenario, the goal is legal.

Question 3: How many free kicks are there normally in a game?

Answer 3: Over the last four seasons the number of free kicks awarded in both Premier League and the Football League has remained constant at an average of twenty six free kicks per game.

Question 4: A manager who is also named on the team sheet as a player has been removed from the technical area for irresponsible behaviour, however as he is named as he is named as a player, can he then take up his position as a named substitute to then take part in the game if needed?

Answer 4: If the manager is a named on the team sheet as a substitute and commits a cautionable or sending off offence whilst in the technical area he should, like any substitute or substituted player be cautioned or sent off and shown the appropriate card. If he is shown the red card he cannot take any part in the game or take up a position in the technical area.

Question 5: What action, if any you would take against a goalkeeper who deliberately and knowingly and cynically handles a deliberate backpass, that he could have cleared with his feet, in order to deny an obvious goal scoring opportunity?" We've had answers from Indirect Free Kick only to Indirect Free Kick and a dismissal for DOGSO. This can't be right?

Answer 5: It's very clear the Law states that the goalkeeper inside his own penalty area cannot be guilty of a handling offence incurring a direct free kick or any misconduct related to the handling the ball. This type of offence would be punishable with an indirect free kick from the place where he handled the ball.

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)

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If you want to contact me, go to my website and select the *Contact the Webmaster* link under the cartoon on the home page or on the top left of the page.

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