

The www.CorshamRef.org.uk Newsletter No 54 (January 2008)

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

***Welcome, with an International perspective.***

Welcome to the 54th edition of The Corsham Referee monthly International Football/Soccer Referees' newsletter.

Greetings to everyone. And a very happy and prosperous New Year to you all.

There are over 1,000 referees of all levels from all over the world that subscribe to this newsletter.

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

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**""SET PIECES' – The TRUST Triangle.**

*More 'set-piece' advice by Julian Carosi.*

In the previous newsletter (No. 53 December 2007), I reiterated how a game of football/soccer consists of many - what can best be described as 'set-pieces', or jigsaw puzzle pieces that add up to form the whole 90 minutes. Each 'set-piece', if successfully managed, will result in the Referee maintaining control. One of the first aims of every Referee should be to use 'best-practice' techniques when managing 'set-pieces'. Once the standard 'set-piece' techniques have been mastered, the players' confidence in the Referee will rise, and they will more readily accept those awkward (non-set-piece) match-changing decisions, which seem to crop up in nearly every game. Subsequently, the Referee will feel more confident, in the knowledge that at least he has a structured way to deal with the majority of situations in a game of football.

In 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, and how to build a positive image, by offering some additional considerations on how to establish a rapport with players by gaining their trust via the TRUST triangle.

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 TRUST Triangle**

**Building a Rapport by contemplating the TRUST triangle.**

The ability to establish a rapport with players, and to gain their trust, is one of the most important assets of an astute Referee. It enables him to unconsciously interact with the participants of a game. To enable a Referee to function efficiently requires him to gradually build a rapport with the players. Some Referees believe that all you have to do to build up a rapport is to flash a few smiles at players, be their friend and let them have what they want from time to time.

If only it was that easy! Rapport and gaining trust, is the ability to be on the same wavelength as the players around you - in other words, being *in sync*.

In technical terms, this is sometimes known as neuro-linguistic programming, originally used in psychotherapy, but now widely used in business communication, management training, teaching, executive coaching and motivational seminars etc. Amongst other things, it is the ability to clarify (and make positive use of) what has been left out or distorted in everyday communication/life. For example, the ability for the listener to fill in the gaps by making their own meaning from what is being said, and being able to find your own solutions by using your inner resources and experience. It is also the ability to challenge and reframe irrational behaviour, so that incidents can be dealt with in a controlled and acceptable fashion that brings order and trust back onto the field of play.

By changing the way an incident is perceived, (*reframed*) responses and behaviours will also change. For example, if a player commits a robust (*bordering on a reckless*) challenge, the Referee could have a stern word with the perpetrator, and point out to him that whilst a game of football does involve a reasonable amount of bodily contact, challenges such as the one made by the perpetrator, are more akin to the desire to inflict injury, rather than a tactic to win a game of football. The Referee's approach here, is to try and get the perpetrator to reframe the outcome of his irrational behaviour so that he sees it as a bad thing, rather than a manly thing.

And from a Referee's perspective, when a player deliberately leaves the field of play for treatment without having received the Referee's permission (whilst this is a cautionable offence in terms of the Laws), the (*reframed*) response from the Referee could be one of understanding, rather than seeming to be a Law abiding dictator by issuing a yellow card.

To gain the trust of players requires you to be capable of using the best parts of your ability and experience to manage expected and unexpected situations.

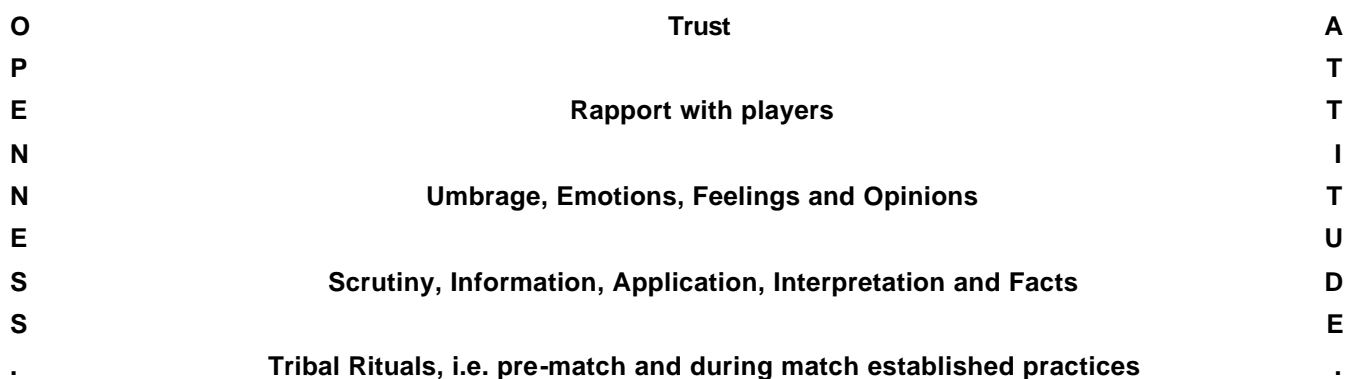
Are you capable of *anchoring* each situation by using your positive states such as calmness, assertiveness, attitude, openness and confidence to help you deal with incidents? It's no good trying to manage a melee of players if you are nervous; you will need to use other traits that have served you well in the past - maybe your ability to use your whistle to focus the minds of the perpetrators.

For a Referee, building rapport requires many techniques, such as being able to match your body language to the game's tempo (i.e., posture, gesture, and so forth); being able (and brave enough) to maintain eye contact; and having an empathy with the type of game being played. Once a rapport with players has been established, it becomes much easier to take extremely effective intervention when dealing with a difficult situation. Before you can do that, you have to establish a feeling of harmonious connection between yourself and the teams that you are officiating.

[Grinder and Bandler]: "You need only three things to be an absolutely exquisite communicator. The first one is to know what outcome you want. The second is that you need flexibility in your behaviour. You need to be able to generate lots and lots of different behaviours to find out what responses you get. The third is you need to have enough sensory experience to notice when you get the responses that you want..."

It is the ability to be proactive (rather than reactive), and the ability not to get *bogged down* with formalized fixed beliefs and behaviours that can sometimes produce well-formed outcomes.

So how can all of this help you to become a better Referee? Let's look at the simple [TRUST] triangle model below. This explains the build up of layers that make up a Referee's path towards rapport and trust. The idea of this article is not so much about explaining how trust is established, but more on looking at it as a series of building blocks; all of which need to be in place to establish a successful rapport. When control is lost in a game, it is usually because the Referee has been unable to fully implement one of the lower layers. If the particular reason for players losing trust is identified, a Referee can refocus his attention on rebuilding that particular aspect of rapport that is wanting, thereby regaining respect from the players. In other words, rapport is not just something that will come automatically; it is a series of interlinked abilities and events that conjoin to produce the end product TRUST. If you can understand the totality of this concept, then it becomes much easier for you to use it to its maximum effect, and to rebuild a damaged layer if it goes awry.



Before we look at the specific layers of the TRUST triangle in more detail, it is important to note that gaining the TRUST of the players and building (and maintaining) a rapport with them is supported by the ability to approach and officiate each game with the right ATTITUDE.

OPPENNESS is also required to achieve maximum performance.

ATTITUDE represents a Referee's like or dislike for the role that he has in a particular game. He can approach the game in a positive, negative or neutral way. Or he can be ambivalent (just going through the motions) by simultaneously possessing a positive and a negative attitude towards the game. It is the latter attitude that can very often be seen! And the most difficult to snap out of!

Most attitudes seen in Referees are simply a result of how they feel on the day, their commitment, their interest, their well-being and their sense of duty. Nobody feels in perfect condition every single day of their life, so it's no

small wonder that Referees (like everyone else) have bad days at the office from time to time. When a Referee has a bad game, his poor rapport with the teams will also have been in evidence. Attitude is a very easy state to discern. It is therefore very important that Referees do as much as they can to project a positive attitude in all aspects of their game. Even when you are feeling down, it is still possible to project an outward attitude of positiveness. It is the ability to maintain a stable positive attitude that makes a good Referee stand out.

A Referee, who is aware, alive and reactive moment by moment, with what is going on around him, is able to respond to situations instantly rather than by analysing every minute detail.

OPENNESS is about how well (and how wisely) you use your experience to manage the game. Do you have a tendency toward a vivid imagination? Do you appreciate the skill of the players? Are you receptive to the emotional state of the players and do you value (and use) your own emotional experiences? Are you prepared to improve by trying new techniques and methods of Refereeing? Are you intellectually curious and open to new ideas? Or are you the type who sticks with what they know?

And finally, are you ready to re-examine traditional methods and values of Refereeing by self-assessing each game after it has been completed? A progressive Referee sees difficult situations as a chance to learn something new, rather than seeing them as an intractable future problem. Competent Referees seem to be wired-in to each game, and work with great precision, purpose, and skill. The ability to keep trying different solutions until a suitable method is found to change an approach to a particular situation is an important part of self-assessment. Can you do it?

Let's now look at the TRUST triangle in detail, starting at the foundation.

### **Tribal Rituals, i.e. pre-match and during match established practices.**

The first level in the TRUST triangle includes the ability to know what you are supposed to be doing. This embraces your knowledge of the Laws.

Ask yourself, "When was the last time that you actually sat down and read the 17 Laws?"

It only takes an error of Law application, for your credibility to tumble down in a heap during a game. If you don't have a grasp of the very basic knowledge required, then how can you expect to gain any rapport with players? Find a copy of the Law book, and read it from time to time. You'll be surprised at what you have forgotten!

There are many other pre-match rituals, which if done professionally and promptly, will add stability to your frame of mind, and thereby increases your ability to form a good relationship with players. For example, dealing with correspondence promptly; communicating with Club Officials in a friendly and natural fashion; arriving early, completing a thorough field of play inspection, checking the balls and the team sheets etc etc... If you arrive late, are surly towards the Club Officials, do not complete a field of play inspection, and show no interest in anything apart from collecting your fee, how can you expect to gain the trust of the players? You can't.

Players are used to being dealt with in certain ways. If during the game you resort to (completely) non-standard Refereeing techniques, it will be very difficult for you to gain the trust of players. Look at how your peers deal with difficult situations. There are certain tried and tested methods of isolating players; disciplining techniques and positioning advice to be had. Attend Referee training sessions, and read as much as you can about the art of Refereeing. There are many books to be had; biographies and technical manuals. And in each one, you will find at least one thing that will make you a better Referee. All of the top Referees did not get there just by turning up each week with a whistle; they achieved their success by commitment and effort. If you want promotion, then you need to be sincere about wanting it.

To summarise; the base (first level) of the TRUST triangle is the foundation for everything that you achieve in a game. Before you can deal with the emotions and the unexpected, you need a very strong foundation of (what can be best described as) the basics; a thorough understanding of the Laws and a professional approach to every game. For without these two facets, there can be no rapport with players. If you can get the (Law) facts right in a game, then the players will more readily accept those difficult decisions that you will need to make.

### **Scrutiny, Information, Application and Interpretation:**

The second level of the TRUST triangle includes the ability to understand and react to situations. The ability to be efficient comes with experience and wisdom. A Referee must be able to be in "sync" with the game. This enables him to react (or be proactive) when the temperature of a game heats up. There are many techniques that can be used such as temporarily applying zero advantage when tempers are frayed. This enables the Referee to regain control of a feisty game.

As soon as a Referee steps onto the field of play, he will come under intense scrutiny from the players, Club Officials and the spectators. One team or the other will dispute many of the decisions that he makes. Spectators will harangue the Referee if he does not favour their team. Managers will hurl abuse from time to time. If a Referee focuses too much on the criticism that he is receiving, he can lose his focus. Sometimes, a Referee's intense focus can obliterate outside interference if it does not relate to the actual moment in the game itself. It is important therefore, that from time to time, the Referee should make himself aware of what is going on around the surrounds of the field of play, and not ignore the types of bad behaviour emanating from the Technical Areas that we see and hear in nearly every single game.

Information received from the players themselves is also an important part of the game's overall communication. Very often, when a player shouts in agony, it is often the result of a bad challenge. When a Referee is unsure if a tackle is a foul or not, he must not dismiss from his decision-making radar, any reactions from the players. In other words, use all the communication available to make a decision. In general, players are not cheats, and will respond the same as anyone else if transgressed upon. A Referee who ignores all (or never takes into account) pleas by the players, will never gain their trust or achieve a rapport with them in a game.

There is also them-and-us attitude that prevails between players and Referees. It is as if Referees are the enemy, when in effect, they are as much lovers of the game as the players are; sometimes more so. This is why it is very important that Referees take their responsibilities seriously as guardians of the game. But it is no fun being under intense scrutiny, when everything you do is magnified (and comes under the microscope).

Interpretation of the Laws is also a major factor in building up a rapport with players. The Laws are written in such a way that the Referee is able to interpret them for the benefit of the game. A Referee who officiates solely by the book will not be very popular with the teams, and will find it hard to achieve a rapport with the players. Conversely, a Referee who uses common sense to officiate in such a way, that he manages the game within the Spirit of the Laws (rather than the Letter of the Laws), will quickly gain the trust of the player and establish a good rapport with them.

### **Umbrage, Emotions, Feelings and Opinions:**

The next level towards gaining the trust of the players, is the ability for a Referee to manage and control anger, hatred, and attitudes etc.

The most important aspect of this level is to appreciate that if a Referee does not establish a capability in the lower levels of the TRUST triangle, then he cannot expect to be successful in managing irate players and Club Officials.

In other words, if a Referee has prepared for the game in a professional and capable manner, and has shown the players that he is capable of applying and interpreting the Laws in a flexible way that is *in sync* with the way that the game is being played, then the players will more readily accept his advice when tempers become frayed. This is a very important concept for a Referee to consider. For a Referee to be credible, he has to work *bloody* hard to gain respect. And the hard work, is not so much how good he is in sorting out a melee of players, but how good he is in the basic art of Refereeing i.e. doing all the right basic things at basically the right time. The credibility bit comes later!

Let us now look at two examples:

#### **Example 1:**

Referee No. 1 arrives late for a Cup Final. His preparations are rushed and his enthusiasm for the game is wanting. The game begins, and after 5 minutes have elapsed, he awards a penalty kick from some 50 yards away. He completely ignores his Assistant Referee's attempts to communicate something to him, and issues two instant yellow cards to defending players who run up to him in protest. The Assistant Referee was trying to communicate to the Referee, that the incident occurred outside of the penalty area, and therefore should have been a direct free kick and not a penalty kick. The Referee is also totally oblivious to the fact that, because of his lack of fortitude, poor man-management capability and negative attitude, he is now looked down upon and ridiculed by all of the players.

The penalty is scored and the game remains at 1-0 until the final minute when the Referee awards a penalty to the losing team. All hell lets loose. The winning team, havening realised from the first penalty kick, that the Referee is incompetent (i.e. cannot to be trusted and has no credibility), angrily crowd round him in an attempt nullify the decision. The Referee makes no effort to deal with (and punish where necessary) the emotions and bad behaviour of the players. The game eventually has to be abandoned because of the anger shown, and because of the potential of physical danger.

### **Example 2.**

Referee No. 2 arrives early for his Cup Final game. He greets the Club Officials with a smile and prepares himself in a professional manner. His enthusiasm for the game shines out from his body language and from his positive *attitude*. As the game begins, he works very hard to make sure that all of his early decisions are correct. He has also instilled this ethos into his Assistant Referees during his pre-match brief to them. In the 5th minute he sprints to keep up with an attacking move, and is only a matter of 10 yards away when he awards a direct free kick the edge of the penalty area. He looks over to his active Assistant Referee who nods in agreement with the decision; this is notice by several players. The Referee's strong whistle, the closeness to play and his confident stance, minimises the trouble that could have ensued had he been much further away when making his decision. The decision is accepted and a goal is scored from the free kick.

The game remains at 1-0 until the final minute when (from 15 yards away and a good angle of view) the Referee awards a penalty to the losing team. Whilst there is some dispute (as there is with all penalty kick decisions) there is hardly any misbehaviour of serious concern for the Referee to deal with. A goal is scored from the penalty kick and the game goes into extra time with no trouble.

The two examples above are probably similar contrasting incidents experience by most Referees at one time or another in their careers. In fact, it could be said that Referee No. 1 and Referee No. 2 are the same Referee. But the Referee has learnt from his mistake in his first game! He has realised that to enable him to have any chance of dealing effectively with Umbrage, Emotions, Feelings and Opinions emanating from the players, he needs to inject some enthusiasm into his performance and he needs to have the right attitude. For it is only when this has been achieved, that the Referee will be able to move up to the next layer of the TRUST triangle, to establish a Rapport with players.

### **Rapport with players.**

The penultimate layer of the TRUST triangle involves maintaining a rapport by consistency of performance and maintaining maximum concentration. By this stage of the game, the Referee will have adjusted to the tempo, and flexed his style of officiating to be *in sync* with the game. He can now relax a bit, and start enjoying the game.

The penultimate rapport level can be achieved much quicker

- If the early decisions in a game are creditable.
- If the players can see, that although the Referee is not perfect (who is?) he is (at least) trying very hard to do things right, and quickly learning from his mistakes.
- If the Referee is prepared to understand, that whilst he may wish to be friends with all of the players, his role is the guardian of the Spirit of the Laws. And as such, his focus should be in guiding the players towards enjoying their game, by using tried and tested Refereeing techniques, rather than trying to please everyone.

### **Trust.**

It's hard work getting to the top of the Trust triangle. You need to get to the top in every game that you officiate. There will be times that the game will start to slip away from your control. When this happens, you need to go down the Trust triangle layers and re-establish your credibility once again. You may need to do this several times in a feisty game. Whilst there will always be differences of opinion, if you keep doing the basics right (i.e. Law application/interpretation, using standard Referee techniques, having a positive attitude etc.) trust and rapport will eventually be achieved (or re-achieved).

If you have managed to reach this part of the article, well done! It might have taken you quite a while to grasp the concept of the Trust triangle, but it happens in every game and is really quite easy to understand.

**Do the easy things well,  
And the hard things will be accepted.  
Do the easy things badly,  
And the hard things will be rejected.**

The aim of this article was to try and make you think about where your priorities lie as a Referee. Should you spend hours and hours of your time trying to perfect man-management techniques that are reactive, or will your time be better spent improving your proactive approach to the game and your knowledge on how to better apply and interpret the Laws?

If you can focus on the latter path from time to time in your career, you might find that the difficult things seem to get much easier, and players will accept your decisions more than they perhaps did in the past.

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 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.*

### Your First Games

Having purchased your equipment, and having your assignment in hand, you are now ready to go to the field to begin your career as a soccer referee. If you are like most people, at this moment you will start struggling with two questions that, surprisingly enough, you have never considered before:

What in God's name was I thinking when I got myself into this?

What in the world am I supposed to do when I get to the field?

### Nerves

Nervousness is a common and expected human reaction to the unknown. Since you are new to officiating and don't know what to expect when you step on the field, you should not be surprised if you have a case of jitters or an attack of self-doubt. After all, even if you have played the game yourself, officiating is quite different than playing. You will be watching unfamiliar things and making split-second decisions under a new kind of pressure, which means that your finely honed competitive instincts will need some adjustment. And you may very well have heard stories about the lunatics at the field and be wondering if they are true. However uncomfortable you feel walking onto the field for the first time as an official, you will find that most of what you fear is not worth the worry

- You will, most likely, be doing a lower-level, non-competitive match for which your training, however incomplete it might be, is probably sufficient.
- You may feel awkward and uncomfortable moving about the field, but this is perfectly natural.
- You may have a tendency to freeze, trying to recall the rule that applies or wondering if you saw the play correctly. This, too, is common.
- You may find yourself questioning your judgment and your senses. This, is also very common.

Remember that this is all new to you, and there is no reason why you should not feel uncomfortable. Experience does not, unfortunately, come without the bother of actually living through it, and every referee must start somewhere. If you are fortunate, everything will go 'well': you and the rest of your crew will have performed admirably (or, at least, nobody else will have noticed your blunders), and you will emerge from the game with increased confidence. If you are less fortunate, you will make some obvious mistakes, which some of the less civilized people along the sidelines may choose not to let pass without comment.

In either case, the sun will still rise the next day; your family will still love you; and there will be another game and another chance to learn. You will live through the experience. And, if you keep at it, this will be only the first of many similar experiences to come.

Oddly enough, as you gain experience and continue to grow as an official, you may come to find that you still become slightly anxious before a challenging match. By then, you will identify this as anticipation, rather than nerves, and it will not keep you from looking forward to the game. And you may be surprised to discover that you still kick yourself for making mistakes. If you learn your lessons, they will be different mistakes, but the real difference between a beginning referee and a skilled and experienced one is not that the veteran makes no mistakes. Rather, the veteran's mistakes simply pass unnoticed by most, since he makes the kinds of mistakes that only other veterans can detect.

*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*

## **FAIR PLAY**

Certain acts of sportsmanship are common - kicking the ball out of play for the sake of an injured player - but others can take the football world by surprise. Steve Kember (Crystal Palace) told a referee that his shot had sent the ball through the side-netting and therefore it shouldn't be a goal (1971), Frank Ordenewitz (Werder Bremen) owned up to handling the ball in his own penalty area during a crucial league defeat (1988-89), and Paolo Di Canio (West Ham) caught the ball rather than try to head a stoppage-time winner because Everton goalkeeper Paul Gerrard was incapacitated with a bad knee injury (December 2000).

In a Carlsberg Cup match, Denmark were awarded a penalty-kick when an Iran defender handled the ball thinking the whistle had gone (February 2003). On instructions from his coach, Morten Wieghorst (Denmark) deliberately shot wide from the penalty mark.

Yeovil Town manager Gary Johnson told his side to concede a goal to Plymouth after a Yeovil player (ironically, Johnson's son) had accidentally scored when trying to return the ball to the Plymouth goalkeeper (August 2004). Crawford (Plymouth Argyle) was permitted to walk the ball through straight from the kick-off.

An American coach once offered to replay a match between two college teams when he realised that the opposition should have had a late equaliser because the ball had gone between the goalposts and through a hole in the goal-net. The opposition accepted the offer, and that 'probably did more to cement good relations between the schools than any other event in our history'.

The game of football continues because of a shared ethic. The ideal of fair play is to respect the laws, respect opponents, and respect officials and their decisions. By all means play to win, but play fair, learn and observe the laws, accept defeat with dignity, never argue with the referee or assistants, retire ten yards when a free-kick is given against you, keep your self-control at all times, do not retaliate, put the sport of football before yourself (or your team), reject drugs and other addictions, fight racism, and honour good sportspeople. As it said in the English Schools code of the 1970s, 'Accept victory modestly and defeat cheerfully.'

Sportsmanship was common in the game's early days. Indeed, it was even present in wars. I F C Fuller described the Boer War (1899-1902) as 'the last of the gentleman's wars', regretting the disappearance of the time when sportsmanship was the essence of soldiering. This attitude was known as the Corinthian spirit. In the 1950s, it was common for players to carry the ball back when they were caught offside, and this would generate a round of applause from the crowd. It saved the goalkeeper fetching the ball, but it also gave the attacker and his colleagues time to regroup. Gradually the professional world began to frown on sportsmanship. Winning was what really mattered. John Cues was a professional for twenty years (1957 to 1977): 'When you're playing for your living the sportsmanship goes out of it very, very quickly, and you do what you can to win. And in the 1960s there was a shift towards that.'

Nobby Stiles, a World Cup winner, later looked back on a key incident in England's 4-3 win over Scotland (April 1966): 'There was a foul on the halfway-line and the ball had gone on to the track at Hampden Park. And Alf Ramsey, in a team-talk, said, "Can you remember what happened?" Well, from the free-kick Scotland scored. He said, "I'll tell you what happened. John Connelly went on to the track to pick the ball up and bring it back and give it to the Scotsman. Let them go and get it. You go and get organised."

Since 1987, FIFA have presented Fair Play awards for services to football on and off the field. Gary Lineker (England), winner in 1990, was a model of integrity on the field. George Weah (Liberia), honoured in 1996, had helped former child soldiers and worked on AIDS and HIV awareness schemes. Julie Foudy, a Fair Play award winner in 1997, not only won 271 international caps for the USA women's team but she fought child-labour abuses and promoted causes for disabled children and female athletes.

Certain competitions are designed to reward fair play. The Neidersachsen Fair Play Cup is an annual children's tournament where points for fair play are awarded to players, coaches and opponents. Some major tournaments use fair play as a criterion if two teams finish level on points and are equal in other respects (e.g. goal difference and goals scored). Since 1999 UEFA Cup places have been made available for countries whose teams have good fair play records. Teams were marked according to the number of cards received, positive play, behaviour towards officials and opponents, and behaviour of team officials.

In England, in 1970-71, the Ford Sporting League gave two points for an away goal, one point for a home goal, and deducted five points for each caution and ten points for each sending-off. The winners, Oldham Athletic, received substantial prize money (for a new grandstand).

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

*(Telegraph News )*

### **Coppell: Managers unaware of referee's orders (28 Dec 07)**

The reaction to the rash of dismissals for two-footed challenges that have blighted the Premier League took a surprising twist last night when Steve Coppell claimed managers had been kept in the dark by football authorities over a crackdown on dangerous tackles.

The Reading manager spoke out after seeing his Icelandic midfielder, Bryn Gunnarsson, shown a red card for a two-footed tackle during Boxing Day's 1-1 draw at West Ham. Gunnarsson joined Peter Crouch, Robbie Keane, Didier Zokora and Stephen Ireland on a roll of dishonour that was soon to include Ricardo Carvalho.

"Referees were given written guidance to alert them to the two-footed jump-tackle and managers weren't," Coppell said.

"Another manager who had also had a player sent off that day told me that the referee had told him afterwards there was an initiative instructing him to keep an eye on these challenges and that they must be punished.

"Bryn was stretching to win the ball and a month ago he would have got away with it, definitely. Now because people are more sensitive about it he has got done for it.

"I remember seeing a two-footed jump-challenge not so long ago that should have been a red card but wasn't. Now it would be. I don't want to see those sort of challenges and just because no-one was hurt doesn't mean it shouldn't be eliminated, but can there be any kind of consistency now?"

"Communication certainly could be better. At any stage of the season, if they have an internal alert the managers should know about it as well and it is up to them to communicate with us. We shouldn't be phoning up all the time asking if they have a new initiative this week."

Despite Coppell's protestations, the Professional Game Match Officials Board denied any secretive conduct or that referees had been ordered to get tough, but said they were merely enforcing existing policies.

"There has been no 'clampdown' on the tackle or new directive issued - referees are simply applying the law as it has always stood," a PGMO spokesman said. "The issue of the two-footed challenges was discussed at the regular pre-season meetings the PGMO hold with managers and players. They were reminded of the key point surrounding the excessive use of force.

"A player who jumps into a tackle two-footed is not in control of himself. Therefore if he makes contact with the player, ball and player, or if the referee determines there to be excessive malice in the challenge, he will be dismissed."

Professional Footballers' Association chief executive Gordon Taylor expressed "health and safety" concerns.

"The only way the game is going to survive is not through a 'rollerball' or ice hockey type of 'crash, bang, wallop'," Taylor said. "It's an entertainment because of its skill and you have to protect skilful players first and foremost.

"There needs to be a respect between fellow professionals. We know the game has got faster and it's even faster in this country. But we have to show a concern for the health and safety of players. I'm worried about it because if you get that tackle on the standing leg then it is a danger. We lose 50 players a year with permanent injury.

"They say that where you are at the turn of the year is where you'll end up - and there are players and coaches looking to protect their position. It's that win-at-all-costs attitude that you want to remove."

Martin Keown, the former Arsenal and England defender, described two-footed tackles as "cowardly".

"It is creeping in more and more. I saw a couple yesterday and the players made them look premeditated," he said. "They really need to stamp it out, outlaw it in the game. Yesterday everyone was punished in the right way and it was good to see Carvalho come out and apologise.

"I wonder if players are thinking 'I don't want to break my foot'? But to go in with two feet you know you are going to cause some damage. It is cowardly when you go into a challenge when you know you are not going to get hurt. The authorities are trying to deal with it in the right way but it comes down to the players. It will disappear. When players see it on television they will regret it. But you do get a reputation - I think it happened to Michael Essien a couple of times - and it's not what you want to get a reputation for."

(The Times news 17 Sept 07)

### **Why the sexiest referee on Earth had to blow the whistle on himself:**

*Conspiracy theorists finally force the bald facts about Lazio from the most famous official in football.*

Pierluigi Collina wants to get something off his chest. Since the Italian referee blew the final whistle on his career two years ago, rumours have circulated in his homeland that he is a Lazio supporter. Nothing wrong with that, especially in a country that is obsessed with football, but Collina was the most famous and well-respected referee in the world and the conspiracy theorists are having a field day.

"This is something that has to be clarified and I am very happy to answer the question," Collina said. "If you ask anyone who they supported when they were young – if they are honest, they will say a particular team. When I was 10, I didn't know my future. When I'm asked who I used to support, what am I supposed to say? That I didn't support anyone? What would people's reaction be? That I am crazy? That I come from Mars? I only said that I supported Lazio when I was a boy. Remember, when I was a boy. But journalists forget this and say I am a Lazio supporter."

Being a referee means being above suspicion – especially if you are Italian. Integrity and impartiality are two of the qualities that transformed Collina from a 17-year-old who thought that it would be fun to go on a refereeing course into the man who officiated at so many important matches that he finds it hard to pick his favourite.

"There was the World Cup final in 2002," he said. "To be one of the actors in something that special was unbelievable. There was the Champions League final in 1999 between Bayern Munich and Manchester United. England v Scotland at Wembley in the same year. Germany 1 England 5 in Munich – I have been very lucky because I refereed so many important games."

Collina's good fortune did not end when he blew the final whistle on his refereeing career. Thanks to his standing in the game and his striking, bald image – he was once voted the sexiest man in Italy – the offers came rolling in. He has a lucrative sponsorship deal with Opel, the car manufacturer, and is a brand ambassador for Castrol, the oil company, which is one of the sponsors of Euro 2008, and he also finds time in his schedule to serve on the Uefa Referees' Committee and to appoint and train referees in Italy.

"When I started refereeing, games were covered by six TV cameras; now there are 20 at every match," he said. "It is very difficult to say if the standard of refereeing has improved when you have changed the system of assessment. Referees are definitely better trained and better prepared and I believe the standard of refereeing is very good."

Ask Collina about anything to do with football – except the Italian match-fixing scandal exposed last year - and he is happy to shoot the breeze. Diving? Players need to get together and stamp it out. Video technology? Bring it in immediately to help referees to decide whether the ball has crossed the goal-line. Foreign referees in the Barclays Premier League?

"I don't see anything wrong with it, if it's on a reciprocal basis," he said. "At UEFA we have already started talks about the exchanges of referees between the top European leagues."

Talking about the game he loves is still a big part of Collina's life and he is recognised wherever he goes, especially in Manchester, where United supporters remember his role in the 1999 Champions League final against Bayern in the Nou Camp in Barcelona, where Sir Alex Ferguson's team scored twice in the dying minutes to overturn a 1-0 deficit and lift the European Cup for the second time.

"It was unbelievable," Collina said. "It was the most dramatic three minutes of my career – I still watch the DVD. The atmosphere was fantastic. If you looked at the stands, it was just one black wave of 90,000 people moving on three floors. The game itself was important, but nothing special."

"Bayern deserved to win – the Manchester United goalkeeper, Peter Schmeichel, was the man of the match. No one thought that United could score a second goal. I remember the United bench telling their players that the game was over because they were happy to go to extra time."

And then he is on his feet, right hand outstretched and ready to shoot off to his next engagement. "Please make sure you write what I said about Lazio," he said. "I want people to know the truth."

This is something that I would like to sort out."

*(The Times 22 Dec 07 article)*

**Scary Italian who earned respect of every player:**

*Pierluigi Collina is so popular, astonishingly for a referee, that London taxi drivers have given him free lifts.*

Who is the scariest man in football? Sir Alex Ferguson? Dennis Wise? Cyril the Swan, mascot of Swansea City? Well, according to David Beckham there is only one candidate: Pierluigi Collina.

The former England captain said as much when he met the follically-challenged referee at a charity game two years ago. Collina tells the story: "He came up to me and mentioned an incident that had occurred two years previously when England played Turkey in a European Championship qualifier in Istanbul. Beckham took a penalty in the first half but slipped as he was about to kick the ball and it flew over the bar. Just afterwards he was confronted by Alpay [Özalan] and they exchanged words.

"At half-time I noticed everyone sprinting into the tunnel, so I ran to see what was happening and a huge brawl was going on. I split everyone up but found myself in a dilemma: do I send everyone off or continue with the game? If the latter, how do I keep everything under control?

I went to my dressing-room and decided to invite the two captains in to see me. When I am angry I can be pretty scary but Beckham told me that on this occasion I looked really frightening. It was cold outside and warm in my dressing-room, so there was steam coming off the top of my head. He said it looked like something out of a movie. The talk seemed to work, though: the second half was without incident."

Collina is not quite as scary when we meet at a hotel in Zurich. His face is so instantly recognisable that heads turn and people point as he walks across the lobby, even with no steam billowing from his cranium. "I get recognised all the time," he says. "I have been offered free lifts from London taxi drivers, just so they can shake my hand." I tell him that this is nothing short of a miracle.

With most referees remembered for their mistakes, it is remarkable that Collina is held in such universally high regard. Even José Mourinho, whose serial ability to find fault with officials grew increasingly bizarre during his tenure at Chelsea, has said, with uncharacteristic succinctness: "He is the best."

Collina grins and nods when I tell him, his piercing blue eyes registering understandable pride. But how did he get so good? "The goal of the referee is to reduce the gap between the action and your reaction and this comes with intense preparation," he says. "Things are easier during big tournaments. For example, during the 2002 World Cup, the organisers made sure we had access to videos of all the games so that if you found yourself refereeing a team's second match, you could study the tape and gain useful information.

"Before the final I watched many hours of tapes. I took a blackboard, divided it into two sections and noted down the features of the teams that made the biggest impression on me. What was most obvious about Brazil was the way the players exchanged roles and had no fixed positions. As for the Germans, I noticed Bernd Schneider's role behind the forwards and heading down long balls. With this kind of information you are better able to read the game and to anticipate what is about to happen."

How important is man-management? "Managing players is about making sure your decisions are accepted," he says. "This can only happen if you have a high standard of refereeing so that players trust you even when they know you are wrong.

"It also helps if you can talk the same language as the players, which is why FIFA's insistence on referees being able to speak the most widely used language of English was a step in the right direction. I speak English, Spanish and a bit of French [in addition to Italian], which is an enormous help in international matches. A word or two, or a joke at the right time, can relieve the tension.

"But on some occasions the players are impossible to talk to. They are almost in a trance on the pitch. For instance, they go in with their studs and the opposition player is bleeding, and they tell you: 'I didn't touch him!' There is nothing you can say, because they are not going to listen to reason."

Like many referees, Collina is not keen on video technology, but accepts the need for experimentation. "Either we accept that referees make mistakes or we need to do a little more to help them," he says. "But one thing to consider is whether it is fair to create two levels of football. At the moment football is played with the same rules from the top to the bottom."

Now retired from refereeing, Collina is focused on his roles as a consultant both to MasterCard and the Italian Referees' Association. "You miss the buzz of a big match," he says. "But I have many great memories and have had the special honour of refereeing a World Cup final. Sometimes you just have to accept that life moves on."

The scariest man in football sounds almost philosophical.

### **You are the ref – or how to head off trouble the Collina way:**

1 A goal is scored. The assistant does not raise the flag to indicate offside, so the referee gestures that the goal will stand. The players on the defending team run to the linesman to protest; he explains that, although the scorer was in an offside position, the ball had been played to him by a defender. But the referee, who overhears this exchange, is sure that the ball was actually played forward by an attacking player. By now the attacking players and their fans have celebrated the goal and the ball is on the centre circle ready for the restart. Should the referee retrospectively disallow the goal, given what he now knows?

— Collina faced this situation in a Serie A match between Inter Milan and Juventus in 1997. Acting on Rule 5, which states that a referee can change his decision so long as the game has not restarted, he decided to disallow the goal. Given the sensitivity of the circumstances, Collina took the time to explain the decision to the Inter captain and his players before doing the same with the Inter bench. Roy Hodgson, the manager, shook Collina's hand and said: "That's all right." The match continued without incident.

2. It is a derby match. The first half passes off without incident. At the beginning of the second half, the goalkeepers have their backs to the terraces of opposition fans. Missiles are thrown on to the pitch by the fans and there is no indication that things will calm down. Should the referee abandon the match (given that it is his absolute responsibility to guarantee the physical safety of the players) or is there another possible solution?

— Collina took the highly unusual decision to bend the rules of football at the fraught Serie B match between Foggia and Bari in 1999. In order to complete the match, he asked both teams if they would be happy to continue the match from the end from which they had played in the first half. With the goalkeepers distanced from opposition fans, the match was completed without incident. Not everybody approved of the remedy but FIFA validated the result, saying that Collina's interpretation was ultra legis but non contra legis.

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### **Approval for Refereeing Assistance Programme and upper altitude limit for FIFA competitions:**

Meeting under the chairmanship of FIFA President Joseph Blatter in Tokyo today (15 December 2007), the FIFA Executive Committee passed a series of decisions, including, most notably, the introduction of a Refereeing Assistance Programme (RAP) and the principle, whereby no matches in FIFA competitions may be played at an altitude in excess of 2,750 metres above sea level without acclimatisation.

During the meeting, Blatter reiterated the importance of the Laws of the Game and refereeing for football as a whole: "The future of our game is intrinsically linked with the quality of refereeing. Therefore, the new Refereeing Assistance Programme is crucial for football. Today's decision to launch this programme is a milestone in the history of the game."

The basic objective of the RAP is to professionalise the environment in which referees develop and work - at both national and international level. It comprises two distinct but related parts:

(a) the preparation of potential match officials for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ and the professionalisation of refereeing at the top level

(b) the development of refereeing at member association level.

In order to achieve this, refereeing development officers will work hand in hand with instructors around the world to ensure a uniform approach. These efforts will be accompanied by close cooperation with the confederations, member associations and existing FIFA development offices. An extensive range of courses and workshops, supported by technological aids including internet resources, will also be organised. In total, FIFA plans to invest some USD 40 million into the programme.

With regard to the trial of goal-line technology at this year's FIFA Club World Cup in Japan, the FIFA Executive Committee noted that the findings would be presented and subsequently discussed at the next Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board in Gleneagles (Scotland) on 8 March 2008. In line with the recommendation tabled by leading international medical specialists on high altitude at a seminar in Zurich at the end of October 2007, the FIFA Executive Committee agreed that, unless those involved were allowed to acclimatise, no matches in FIFA competitions would be permitted at an altitude in excess of 2,750 metres above sea level. Furthermore, this decision will be integrated into the regulations of all FIFA competitions with immediate effect and it was recommended that the same limit be enforced in all other international competitions.

(Source www.FIFA.com)

## YOU MUST BE JOKING REF?

A Referee had a near death experience the other day when he went cycling, in an effort to get fit. Everything was going fine until the cycle started running away down hill and bouncing out of control. He tried with all his might to hang on, but was thrown off. With his foot caught in a pedal, he fell headfirst to the ground. His head continued to bounce on the ground as he and the bicycle did not stop or even slow down. Just as he was giving up hope and losing consciousness, the Sports Centre manager came out and unplugged it. Thank goodness for heroes.

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Two Assistant Referees were in a parking lot trying to unlock the door of their Mercedes with a coat hanger. They tried and tried to get the door open, but they couldn't. The Assistant Referee with the coat hanger stopped for a moment to catch his breath, and his friend said anxiously, "Hurry up! It's starting to rain and the top is down."

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A Referee told his doctor that he wasn't able to do run around the field, or tidy the house like he used to do. When the examination was complete, he said, "Now, Doc, I can take it. Tell me in plain English what is wrong with me."

"Well, in plain English," the doctor replied, "you're just lazy."

"Okay," said the Referee. "Now give me the medical term so I can tell my Assistant Referees and my wife."

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A Referee was asked to officiate a game in Spain. When he arrived, he stopped for lunch at a local restaurant. While dining, he saw a scrumptious looking dish pass by. It looked and smelled wonderful! He inquired to the waiter what it was.

The waiter replied: "Ah, Senior, you have excellent taste! Those are bull balls (*testicles*) from the bullfight this morning. A local exquisite delicacy!"

The Referee, though momentarily daunted when he learned of the origin of the dish, thought: "What the hell, I'm in Spain, do as the Spanish do," and then requested an order. The waiter regretfully informed the Referee, that there was only one order per day as there was only one bullfight each morning. The waiter related further, that if the Referee returned and placed his order early the next day, he would be sure to have an opportunity to try the rare dish.

The next morning after the game, the Referee returned, and much to his delight, was served the special meal. Upon inspection and after a few bites, he noted to the waiter that they were much smaller than the ones on the plate the previous day. At this, the waiter shrugged and replied, " Si, Senior. Sometimes the Bull wins."

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### ***The Plane Crash***

A Boeing jet, carrying a contingent of Referees returning from an overseas Football tournament, flying at 35,000 feet over the Atlantic, runs into a terrible storm. Thunder, lightning, and high winds toss the big plane around the sky.

The passengers are scared. One woman Referee in particular is about to lose it. Screaming, she stands up in the front of the plane shouting,

"I'm too young to die." Then she yells, "Well, if I'm going to die, I want my last minutes on earth to be memorable.

In my entire life, no one has ever made me really feel like a woman.

Well, I've had it! Is there ANYONE on this plane who can make me feel like a WOMAN????!!!"

For a moment there is silence. Everyone has forgotten their own peril and they all stare, riveted, at the desperate woman in the front of the plane.

Then a male Referee stands up in the rear of the plane. "I can make you feel like a woman," he says. He's gorgeous. Tall, well-built, with jet-black hair and the bluest eyes, he slowly starts to walk up the aisle, unbuttoning his Referee shirt one button at a time. No one moves. The woman is breathing heavily in anticipation as the stranger approaches.

He removes his Referee shirt, muscles ripple across his chest, and he extends the shirt to the trembling woman. "Here," he whispers. "Iron this." (*no offence meant ladies*)

## THIS MONTH'S QUESTION and ANSWER TOPICS:

### Question:

I keep hearing senior officials in my RA mentioning that certain assistants are holding the flag in the wrong hand. Can you please explain what they mean by this?

**Answer:** In terms of holding the flag in the "correct hand," below are a few ideas for you to consider.

- When you are standing at the halfway flag, hold the flag in the hand that is nearest the halfway flag. So that when you turn to run back down the touchline, your flag is already in the correct hand.
- When you signal for offside, use the hand that is nearest to the corner flag. This prevents obscuring the Referee, should your flag impede your line of eye contact with him. (Same principle applies for a goal kick flag signal - use the hand that is nearest to the corner flag to prevent obscuring the Referee).
- When indicating a throw-in, move the flag into the correct hand BEFORE you raise it to indicate the direction.
- When running along the touchline, always hold the flag in the hand that is facing towards the field of play. This way, the Referee can always see your flag.
- When 'crabbing' along the touchline, hold the flag in the hand that you expect to use when the attacking/defending move breaks away; i.e. try and anticipate the second phase of play, so that you are already holding the flag in the correct hand when you turn to run along the touchline.
- When you go out onto the field of play flanking the Referee at the start and at half time, hold the flag in the outside hand.
- When you flag for a free kick, firstly move the flag into the hand that indicates the direction of the kick, before you raise it vertical. This way, the Referee can see what decision you have made, before you even raise the flag!

The gist of these ideas is so that the flag is always visible to the Referee, without the Assistant's line of view being impaired.

There are many more, but I hope that these few ideas will improve your understanding of this concept.

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**Question:** In a recent u16 game the following occurred. Please can you advise on the right course of action regarding the incident?

The ball was deliberately played back by a defender to his GK in his own area, the ball bounced up and would in all likelihood have gone into the net but for the intervention of the GK who jumped up and parried the ball with his hands thereby denying a goal or at the very least an OGSO.

What was the right course of action in this instance? I know that an IFK under law 12 as the GK touched the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked back to him by a team - mate but what else? I realise that at the very least it was also cautionable as it was an act of unsporting behaviour my predicament is this, should the goalkeeper have been sent off?

Law 12 states that it is a sending off offence to deny the opposing team a goal or an OGSO by deliberately handling the ball but then states THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO A GOALKEEPER WITHIN HIS OWN PENALTY AREA.

At the point the GK handled the ball he had no more entitlement to handle it than any other of his team mates so why is a GK exempt from being dismissed from the FOP for denying the opposing team a goal or OGSO by handling in his own area when under law he has no entitlement to handle the ball as in this instance.

Please can you tell me what was the correct procedure with regard to this? Caution or sending off as surely the spirit of the law at least would demand that the GK be dismissed from the FOP for his actions that day.

**Answer:** As a general rule (except deliberately handling the ball) denying a goal scoring opportunity involves fouling an opponent.

In other words, a team cannot deny a goal scoring all by themselves (without involving the opposition in some way or another!)

The correct restart is an indirect free kick and a possible caution.

**Question:** Ok, I've read that if a goal keeper takes a goal kick and somehow manages to score an own goal that a corner kick is issued. However I have also read that the keeper is made to take the kick again as the ball has not entered active play. Can anyone clear this up for me please as its causing a rather nasty argument.

**Answer:** The ball comes into play from a goal kick when it leaves the penalty area.  
If a goal kick takes place, and the ball is kicked straight into the goal kicker's goal, at no time does the ball ever come into play. The ball has not left the penalty area.  
The correct restart is therefore, a retake of the goal kick.  
The ball can only ever be in play when it is inside the boundaries of the touchline and the goal line.  
The only time that a goal kicker can create a corner against himself, is if following a goal kick, the ball leaves the penalty area, and then travels directly over his goal line.

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**Question:** We all accept that the minimum number of players for a match to start/continue is 7 and if one of those subsequently gets sent off or injured, the match has to be abandoned.  
My question is, can a league impose its own minimum number of players above that, i.e. 9, for a match to start and should that side be reduced to less than 7, the game should then be abandoned.  
I pose this question after recently `wasting` my time in a 11 v 7 game which finished 15-0.

**Answer:** Law 3 (The Number of players) states:

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than eleven players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than seven players.

This is not something that the Leagues can generally change.

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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](http://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](http://www.CorshamRef.org.uk)

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