

The www.CorshamRef.org.uk Newsletter No 56: March 2008)

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

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 56th edition of The Corsham Referee monthly International Football/Soccer Referees' newsletter.

Greetings to everyone.

There are over 1,000 referees of all levels from all over the world that subscribe to this newsletter. Your comments and contributions are always welcome.

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

"SET PIECES' Penalty Kicks.

More 'set-piece' advice by Julian Carosi.

In the previous newsletters, I reiterated how a game of football/soccer consists of many - what can best be described as 'set-pieces', or jigsaw puzzle pieces that add up to form the whole 90 minutes. Each 'set-piece', if successfully managed, will result in the Referee maintaining control. One of the first aims of every Referee should be to use 'best-practice' techniques when managing 'set-pieces'. Once the standard 'set-piece' techniques have been mastered, the players' confidence in the Referee will rise, and they will more readily accept those awkward (non-set-piece) match-changing decisions, which seem to crop up in nearly every game. Subsequently, the Referee will feel more confident, in the knowledge that at least he has a structured way to deal with the majority of situations in a game of football.

In the article below, I 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, by offering you a process on how to manage a penalty kick in a structured way.

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.

Preparation.

There are three important aspects to consider when deciding penalty kick offences; anticipation; proximity and angle of view.

ANTICIPATION:

A penalty kick is a potential match-changing incident. An astute Referee will reserve his energy levels for dealing with match-changing incidents. It follows, that whilst it is pointless for a Referee to ALWAYS hasten towards the scene when the ball enters one of the penalty areas, he should ALWAYS sprint there if he anticipates a challenge that could result in a potential penalty kick being awarded. The more skilful that a Referee is, in terms of being able to accurately anticipate incidents, the better he is at reserving his energy for when it is really needed. The anticipation skills of a new Referee are not so finely tuned as that of an experienced Referee. Therefore, he needs to work much harder to get close, on nearly every occasion that a contested ball goes into the penalty area. The advice for a new Referee is to continue his efforts and rest during those less important moments in the match. For example, it is far more important for a new Referee to be nearby when awarding a penalty kick, than it is for him to be close when stopping play for a throw-in. Dealing with arguments at a throw-in, is much easier for a Referee to revolve than dealing with players who harangue you for not keeping up with play after awarding a penalty kick. In other words, one of the principles of good Refereeing is to make life as easy as you can for yourself, by prioritising what really is important, and what isn't quite so important. If we had a motorbike to ride around on whilst Refereeing a game of football, and we could fill it up with fuel at half-time, then it would be easy to be on the spot for every incident that happens in a game of football. But as we are not allowed that luxury, we must make do with building up our anticipation skills and reserving our muscle fuel levels for when it does matter.

PROXIMITY:

There is a maxim in the Refereeing world, that says: "The nearer you are when making a decision, the more credibility you will have in the players eyes."

This does not mean that you have to be in the player's back pocket every time that an infringement occurs. At the top levels of football, Referees' positioning is analysed in fine detail, using technical aids; the aim being to lessen the average distance that a Referee is to the ball during a game. This has proved to be very successful at the top echelons. For example, you don't see top Referees slavishly adhering to the diagonal patrol system, which has served Referees so well over years. Very rarely do you see the best Referees get in the players way, particularly in the narrow central band that traverses the area between the two penalty arcs. Instead they sprint through this area, and position themselves on its edge, rather than spending any time inside it. Top Referees are also much better at compressing play by coming way off their diagonal to encompass and squeeze the play area between themselves and the touchline. These are just a few modern techniques that have resulted from the detailed analysis of Referees.

So how can all of this help the thousands of Referees who are not lucky enough to benefit directly from modern day Referee coaching? As far as the penalty kick is involved, the concept remains the same for top Referees as it does for those at lower levels.

"The nearer you are when making a decision, the more credibility you will have in the players eyes."

The trick is to hone your anticipation skills so that when you really do need to be in the players' back pocket, you are!

ANGLE OF VIEW:

Whilst earning credibility by being as close as you can, is commended, it can (and very often does) place the Referee in the wrong position. Very often, it is much better for a Referee to run off at a slight angle, instead of making his way in a straight line towards the scene. This is a difficult habit to break for some of those who have been Refereeing for a few years or so. The impetus has always been to get as close as you can. Whilst the principle of closeness is still very important, it is just as important to have a good angle of view of any potential incident. Therefore, the proximity-urge must be tempered with the need to increase your angle of view as you approach the penalty area. This method becomes more important, the further you are away from an incident. In other words, there is no point in trying to sprint in a direct line whilst you are in the centre circle monitoring a challenge in the penalty area, as it stifles good viewing. It's much better to slightly angle your approach, so that you improve the view of any potential physical contact points as opponents jostle for the ball. It is a balancing act. You need to be near, but you also need to have a good view - and this cannot be achieved by simply sprinting in a straight line towards the incident.

Whilst this concept is also useful when monitoring action on any part of the field of play; it is highly effective when monitoring play in the penalty areas.

Once you have awarded a penalty kick, you need to have a process for dealing with the situation. The following are some ideas that you could consider factoring into your own process, so that when a penalty kick occurs, you know exactly what to do, your confidence is increased, and you take proactive steps to minimise any of the Laws being broken.

The Penalty Kick Process for Referees:

Be ready and be prepared. This is a critical moment where you need to be assertive!

The following advice is intended to give you some ideas about what you should consider, and encourages you to have a standard process for dealing with the actual penalty kick itself.

When you award a penalty kick, blow your whistle so that it emphasises the importance of the occasion. Make it loud and strong and confident. If you are some distance away, keep running towards the scene whilst you are blowing your whistle. By the time that the players have looked around to see where you are, you will have already gained 10 or more metres, and in doing so, will have correspondingly increased your credibility.

Identify and store (in your mind) the details of any player who you have to discipline. Make a decision on the type of punishment needed. These are important considerations, as it is very easy to focus on what you need to do to set up the penalty kick, and whilst doing so, lose track of the perpetrator (or what happened). One tip, is to speak to yourself as you make your way to the scene, for example, say in your mind, "Red No. 9 elbowed the attacker in face. Send him off" This puts a marker in your memory about who the instigator was. The types of discipline that you need to consider are: do nothing; have a quiet word with the perpetrator, a semi-public or a public warning (where you isolate the perpetrator and give him a stern warning); a caution, or a sending-off if the incident denied an obvious goal scoring opportunity etc.

Be ready to deal with confrontation, or to fend it off with very assertive vocal and body-language signals - such as shooing away players with dismissive hand signals.

The perpetrator of the foul will very often confront the Referee; he does this, because he either wants to persuade you to change your mind, or because he is feeling guilty about letting his team down; and by protesting, he believes that it may make his teammates think that it was NOT a penalty offence. Either way, you (the Referee) need to believe in your decision (and to show that you believe it with every drop of your blood), and not be persuaded otherwise. Have a few words ready to explain the Laws of the Game. For example, if a perpetrator asks you why, tell him that the Laws state that if a defender touches an opponent before touching the ball whilst making a tackle (in the penalty area), then it is a penalty kick. But remember, you do not have to give an opinion, or justify your decision; and sometimes it is better not to - as it can lead to more confrontation.

Get to the scene as fast as you can. Move towards the penalty spot, point towards the penalty spot, look at it, and use strong upright body-language to depict a confident decision. The stronger you make your decision look, the less dissent you will receive. This is a very important factor to consider. A penalty kick is very often a match-changing moment. It is always a critical decision-making moment. Therefore, the Referee has to sell his decision in such a way that it looks like he has no doubt whatsoever about the decision, and that there is no point in the defending team trying to make the Referee change his mind.

There are several tips to aid this salesmanship! Stand by the penalty spot - this instantly communicates what the decision is, and shows the Referee in a strong confident light. The further away that you stand from the penalty spot, the less credibility you will have in the players' eyes. If there is any physical danger to yourself, then you can back-off towards the goal line, but there comes a point where you must stand firm and deal with any bad behaviour. As a thought stimulant, the more you back-off, the more players will be attracted towards you - it actually encourages player to have a go at you. By standing near the penalty spot, it unconsciously tells the players that there is no chance of you changing your decision.

Once you have sold your decision and the storm has calmed down, take any disciplinary action that you need to. For example, isolate and deal with any Law breaches. Make sure, that whilst you are dealing with any perpetrators, that you can still keep an eye on the other players. The confrontation sakes will remain high until the penalty kick has been completed, so you need to keep a watchful overall eye to prevent further trouble spilling over. Tempers will remain high so you will need to remain alert.

To set up the penalty kick requires several factors to be in place. Try using the following circular method to set up the kick, and to minimise potential breaches of the Penalty Kick Law 14.

1. Start at the penalty spot: Identify the penalty kick taker and make him known to the goalkeeper. Remind the kicker and the goalkeeper, that the penalty only commences on your whistle signal. Always use your whistle to signal the start of a penalty kick. Deal with any encroaching players, and ensure the ball is placed on the penalty spot. Check to see if your Assistant Referee is where you want him. Beware of the goalkeeper coming out to attempt some gamesmanship by distracting the kicker. If this happens, deal with it strongly and quickly. And issue a caution if you need to. In other words, do not let the goalkeeper control the situation.
2. Check to see that all off the players are on the field of play, and in the correct position. Draw an imaginary penalty area arc shape with your finger towards the players who should by now be waiting outside of the penalty area on the edge of the penalty arc. This tells them to remain outside of the penalty area and its arc.
3. Move towards the left hand side of the goalkeeper and remind him that he must remain in the goal line until the kick is taken. Warn him, that if he moves off the line before the kick has been taken, and a goal is not scored, you will ask for the kick to be retaken. Inform him also, that you will use your whistle to signal the start of the penalty kick.
4. Continue your circle by moving to the right of the goalkeeper, and select one defending player on the far side of the penalty area arc. Instruct this player to remain outside of the penalty area and the arc until the kick has commenced. Be assertive and use strong body-language and eye-contact to make your message clear.
5. Make your way along the edge of the penalty arc, and select one attacking player. Instruct this player to remain outside of the penalty area and the arc until the kick has commenced.

Note: The idea in selecting one player from each team, is to create maximum impact with the least amount of effort. In other words, both teams will be left in no doubt that you (the Referee) will be watching for, and will punish encroaching.

6. Make your way to your monitoring point, roughly alongside and about 10 metres or so away from the penalty spot. The exact location depends very much on whether you have an Assistant Referee to help you out or not. As a rule of thumb, the more that you need to rely on your own judgement, the nearer you have to be to the goal line. The most important monitoring aspect when a penalty kick takes place, is to decide whether a goal has

been scored or not; i.e., did the ball enter the goal or not? When you have an Assistant Referee to help you, he can help you to decide if the ball crosses over the goal line or not. You (the Referee), can then use a greater portion of your concentration to look out for encroachment. When no Assistant Referee is in attendance, then encroachment becomes less important, and the goal scoring becomes more important. It's a balancing act that relies on deciding which is the most important aspect to monitor.

7. Do a final re-check to see that all the players are on the field of play, and in the correct position. And once again, draw an imaginary penalty area arc shape with your finger towards the players who should still be waiting outside of the penalty area on the edge of the penalty arc.

8. Give a loud blast on your whistle to denote that the penalty kick can commence. Do not start a penalty kick by using vocal instructions. Always use a whistle to signal the start of a penalty kick; as it is a clear signal that is instantly recognised by everyone.

9. It is impossible for a Referee working on his own to monitor all possible breaches of the Penalty Kick Law 14. Therefore, your greater focus must always be on whether a goal is scored or not, rather than being distracted by worrying about whether a player has his foot just inside the penalty area (or not) when the kick is taken. In short, do not be picky about trying to resolve every minute infringement; else your concentration will be diverted from the main issue. If there is an obvious infringement, then punish it.

Summary: The advice above encourages you to have your own process for dealing with penalty kicks. Once you have established a process that works for you, use it regularly and automatically. You will find that you will be more confident when dealing with penalty kicks. It also allows you to focus your attention towards dealing with any other issues that often arise when a penalty kick is awarded.

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.

A Word on Playability:

Weather conditions often affect field conditions, both before and during the game.

Until game time, conditions relating to field playability are the prerogative of the local authorities. The local recreation department may close the field due to flooding, for instance, or in less-competitive leagues, the local clubs may decide to reschedule a match that is scheduled for a soggy field. When that happens, they are supposed to notify the officials, who are freed from further responsibilities for the match.

Once game time arrives, and you are at the field, the playability of the field becomes *your* responsibility as the match official. While nobody wants to cancel a game when both teams are ready and willing to play, you must assess the condition of the field to determine whether it poses a safety risk or hazard to the players. If it does, then you must decline to officiate the match.

While there are no firm rules to guide you, many factors can help you make your decision:

- How much standing water is there, and in which parts of the field?
Is any standing water deep enough to stop the ball, possibly turning the match from a game of skill into a farce?
Will the ball bounce, if dropped from shoulder-height?
Are there muddy areas on the field which are too slick to run through safely?
Are either or both of the penalty areas - and in particular, the goal mouths - too muddy to permit safe play?
Is it likely that the field can be made playable by available means, such as adding some sand or trying to drain the water?

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

SOCCKERPEDIA

*(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*

ORIGINS OF THE LAWS:

Football in the Middle Ages was an unruly festival of the kind preserved today with annual games in the Orkneys and Ashbourne. Wherever the ball went, the mob followed.

The written laws have their roots in the English public schools of the early 1800s. Boarding schools needed a sport like soccer to fill the boys' time, keep them active and maintain the school's values. This was the era of muscular Christianity, when a healthy body meant a healthy mind, and a healthy mind meant good discipline, self-control, perseverance, courage, manliness and teamwork.

Association football brought an esprit de corps that was well suited to the spirit of war. In terms of the value system, it was not far from Charterhouse to the Crimea, or from Uppingham to Afghanistan. Until the Boer War, wars were fought around gentlemanly principles and a certain morality. You learned to take knocks like a man and you didn't cheat. An army team, the Royal Engineers, were FA Cup finalists in four of the first seven seasons (1872 to 1878).

The rules of soccer differed from school to school. Sometimes the rules were designed to fit the particular environment - at Winchester, for example, six-a-side was very convenient for an enclosure 80yd by 25yd - but when boys arrived at university, equipped with different sets of rules, there was a need for standardisation. Embryonic clubs grew up at Cambridge in 1846 and 1848, but they did not survive for long (and neither have copies of the rules). There were further attempts to reduce the various school rules to one workable code, but it was not until 1863 that some consensus was achieved. John D Cartwright pleaded for uniformity, and Rev R Burn chaired a committee at Cambridge. The outcome was the Cambridge rules.

When the Football Association was formed in 1863, they had to resolve a number of rule issues. For instance, there were at least four ways of starting a game - a place-kick from halfway, a place-kick from quarter-distance, a throw-up in the centre, and rolling the ball down the centre between two lines. Other issues that needed resolving were the length and breadth of the ground, the width and height of posts, crossbar or tape, offside, what to do when the ball went over the boundary lines, hand-play, hacking, tripping, mauling, packs, rouges, running with the ball, the fair catch, how to settle disputes, boots, throwing the ball, knocking-on, etc. When the FA laws were finalised, without hand-play and hacking, on 8 December 1863, Blackheath left the association and took up rugby. Two games - soccer and rucker - were then spread around the world. In Canada, in the 1870s, it was a matter of chance whether rugby union or association football rules were used. It depended on ground conditions and the desires of the players at the time.

In Britain, rules were taken around the country by the clergy, schoolteachers, and factory executives, all of whom looked for safe ways to promote Christianity and controlled aggression. Some places, like London and Sheffield, had a head start. A club had been formed in Sheffield by ex-Harrovians (1857), and like most landmark clubs it was hosting games between its members - Smokers versus Non-smokers, Bachelors versus Married Men, A-L versus M-Z. In 1876 about 700 individuals were playing football in the Sheffield environment every Saturday, and copies of the rules had been sent to many countries, including China, India, New Zealand and Fiji.

There were also rule developments in Scotland. In 1867 the only club in Scotland was Queen's Park, but a handful of others formed in the next five years. Even in 1884 and 1885, however, when Queen's Park reached the FA Cup Final, there were still differing rules. In fact, that probably contributed to Queen's Park's defeat in 1884.

The London and Sheffield associations resolved their differences in April 1877. Sheffield-area members conceded to throw-ins, the three-player offside rule, the 8ft-high goal (rather than 9ft) and only eleven players in a team, while London accepted the crossbar (rather than tape), the corner-kick, and an indirect free-kick for handling the ball.

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

NEW NEWSLETTER FEATURE:

By Stanley Lover (the full article can be found on the www.CorshamRef.org.uk web site.)

Football referees tell their tales by Stanley Lover

A privileged insider's viewpoint

My football library includes several books written by referees who became famous in their time. Mostly autobiographical they span nearly a century of football history and provide fascinating commentary on the game from a privileged insider's viewpoint.

A special favourite is a coverless, ink stained paperback of 128 yellowing and dog-eared pages *Play to the Whistle!*, authored by Jim Wiltshire, who sneaked into refereeing as an underage rookie in Cornwall. Special because Wiltshire was in charge of the first FA Cup Final I attended, in 1947, when my beloved Charlton Athletic beat Burnley 1-0 during extra time. I remember looking anxiously at the referee, seconds after the ball crashed into the net from a superb volley by the diminutive left-winger Chris Duffy; praying that he would not disallow the goal. At his signal of confirmation I and thousands of "Red Robins" fans leapt out of our shoes in ecstasy.

Wiltshire's modest publication is squeezed between high gloss paper covered hardback memoirs by Mervin Griffith *The Man in the Middle*, Arthur Ellis *Refereeing round the world*, Norman Burtenshaw *Whose side are you on, Ref?*, Jack Taylor *World Soccer Referee*, Pat Partridge *Oh, Ref!*, Sir Stanley Rous *Football Worlds*, Denis Howell *Soccer Refereeing*, and others including recently retired David Elleray *Referee!* and Pierluigi Collina *The Rules of the Game*. I have been privileged to have met all and count several as close friends.

They tell similar tales. As for every referee, early days in junior leagues tested resolve and patience but persistence was rewarded at higher levels in the domestic professional game and in international assignments. They recount the author's journey to the top with plenty of anecdotes, some amusing, some dismal, a few tragic. They recall many incidents in particular matches; parade the names of famous clubs, stadiums, players, managers and reveal secrets which only a referee could know. They also include valuable advice for officials wanting to achieve higher grades of classification.

Shining like a beacon through all of these books is an intense passion for the game of football. They recount how many referees are driven by their fervour to juggle with home affairs and careers in order to maximise availability for matches. Family holidays are sacrificed; jobs changed; finances strained; health problems neglected; marriages broken.

Top officials who have a full-time occupation rely on sympathetic employers to allow time off for regular consultations and training sessions with league staff; long distance travel to matches at weekends, and sometimes foreign engagements in midweek. They are, effectively, subsidised by their employers and risk missing out on promotions.

Another facet of a match official's dedication to football receives scant attention. It is true that many thousands devote as much time, if not more, off the field serving as administrators for referees' societies; clubs and leagues; regional, national and international associations. Collectively they form a solid framework in the structure of world football.

How they started

It is rare to meet a referee who set his heart on taking to the whistle as a career. The majority arrived by accident; by a strange combination of circumstances, were enticed, even pushed. Some accepted the role with reluctance and trepidation.

Playing days ended by injury is often cited as a reason. Sir Stanley Rous, a tall goalkeeper in a Suffolk village team he founded as a fifteen year old student, broke a wrist and added refereeing to his club and league organizing activities.

Jack Taylor dreamed of a horse-trading business at seventeen but became a butcher in his father's shop. He often chatted about football with a customer who suffered from a war inflicted illness and who needed to sit for a moments rest whilst Jack chopped and wrapped rations of meat. Jack listened to interesting accounts of pre-war referees' society meetings and was encouraged to try his hand. The secretary of a local works league, desperately short of referees, gave him his first match. It was a disaster. Jack decided to abandon the idea but his friend persuaded him to try again. After a turbulent beginning Jack Taylor became a forceful and widely respected official, rising rapidly to The Football League panel and achieving world renown as the referee of the 1974 World Cup Final, Germany v Holland.

Collina as a youth enjoyed playing the game but was not interested in refereeing until a fellow secondary school student suggested it might be fun to attend a short course for potential referees. This casual invitation was the catalyst which launched Collina on a remarkable career in Italian and global football. Recognized for a natural ability to control matches and admired for his courage in adjusting to the illness alopecia, which left him hairless at twenty-four, Collina emerged as an exceptional personality on the world football stage. He became an idol of millions of fans, players and officials, and provided a welcome boost to the image of the man in the middle.

Many thanks go to Stanley Lover for his regular contributions.

WHICH REFEREE ARE YOU?

The Average Soccer Tribesman's Guide to Referees

(Page 224 of The Soccer Tribe by Desmond Morris first published 1981)

- 1. The Blind Ref:** Sees himself as the friend of the fast-flowing game. Appears to have lost his whistle and lets anything pass. Beloved by the hard men of the game.
 - 2. The Whistling Ref:** The chronic whistleblower wears his Acme Thunderer as if it were a permanent brace on his teeth. Much hated by supporters, he blows up for every minor misdeed, fragmenting the game with a thousand irritating stoppages. Beloved by the soft men of the game.
 - 3. The Homer Ref:** Believes that every savage foul by the home team is nothing more than an enthusiastic tackle. Knows that the visiting team are a bunch of animals and acts accordingly. Is usually nervous, timid, inconsistent and agitated. Suffers from the worst disease that can afflict a referee: the desire to be loved. For some mysterious reason, usually has lily-white legs.
 - 4. The Headmaster Ref:** Treats all players as naughty little schoolboys. Gives them patronizingly sarcastic glances at every opportunity. When warning them, insists that they 'Come here!', beckoning derisively. Given to much finger-wagging and stern lecturing. Particularly hated by all players.
 - 5. The Flashy Ref:** Immaculate costume. Always knows where the TV cameras are positioned. Uses flamboyant gestures and often acts out fouls in mime. Appears to have had ballet training and is said to wear hairspray.
 - 6. The Smiley Ref:** Has seen it all before and believes that humour is the best way to defuse potentially explosive situations. Is usually one of the older men and is given to much athletic sprinting to prove that he is not. Nearly always smiles when he gives a severe warning - even when swearing at hotheads in their own language. The players' favourite.
 - 7. The Perfect Ref:** Firm but fair. Restrained but decisive. Unmoved by emotional outbursts and the baying of the crowd. Unimpressed by special pleading, and can tell a trip from a dive at fifty yards. A rare species, but not yet extinct.
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(Telegraph News)

Trevor Brooking: Concentrate on grassroots. (By Jim White)

Take a stroll down to your local park today, and you will immediately see what is wrong with English football. In the games being played there, you will see why an Italian is managing the England national team, why fewer than 30 per cent of the players starting in Premier League games this weekend are English, why Goal of the Month is dominated by Portuguese, Spaniards and Brazilians.

What you will see is lots of adults standing on the touchline of a small football pitch shouting at their eight-year-old children. One of the adults may be dressed in a tracksuit, with initials embroidered on his chest. He will be shouting the loudest, most often the instruction "get stuck in" occasionally varied with "just clear it".

At some point there may be a confrontation between several of the parents, following a disputed goal. If, for instance, you are watching a game in Devon things might conclude, as they recently did, with one of the watching fathers becoming so irate that he marched off, only to return at the wheel of his 4x4 - which he proceeded to park in the middle of the pitch, refusing to move until the referee changed his decision. What you are unlikely to see is any of the small children concerned having much in the way of fun.

You may wonder why a bunch of youngsters being shouted at as they kick a ball around has anything to do with, for instance, England's failure to qualify for Euro 2008. Sir Trevor Brooking, the Football Association's technical

director, is convinced the two are inextricably linked. "There is no question if the grassroots are not generating the enthusiasts, the fans, the referees, the administrators and above all the players, then the top end is going to suffer," he says. "And for me, it all begins in that crucial five-to-11 age band."

Brooking believes the country's skills deficit is largely a function of how we coach small children. The prevailing conditions are amateurish, haphazard and ill-qualified, and everything is conducted in an atmosphere that is over-wrought and suffocating. That, he says, must change. "From our research, it is clear that the pressure from the sideline is the number one problem, followed by the lack of respect for referees, it was taking the fun out of it."

"Just saying: 'look you've got to behave better on the touchline' isn't going to work. We have to find a way to embarrass the individuals who are jeopardising our game."

We have to invest some money into pushing the message out there. We have to give the right-minded people in kids' football the back-up that when there is a loud-mouth, they have our support to challenge them." To that end, a pilot scheme is being rolled out this weekend in five regions which will involve the roping off of playing pitches (to keep parents at least two yards back from the touchline) and a system borrowed from rugby, whereby only the captain is allowed to talk to a referee. If the scheme works, these two initiatives will be enforced from next season.

No10 says football captains should get tough

(By Patrick Hennessy 10 Feb 08)

Gordon Brown (England's Prime Minister) called yesterday for captains of football teams to show more responsibility in the wake of a spate of indiscipline among leading players.

In a radio interview, the Prime Minister said captains such as John Terry of Chelsea and Steven Gerrard of Liverpool should "get their players into line".

His comments come after several leading clubs were criticised for groups of players surrounding referees aggressively after decisions had gone against them.

Mr Brown told Eamonn Holmes on BBC Radio 5 Live: "On the field we tend to blame only the player who is responsible for the incident, and of course they have got to be disciplined, but perhaps we should hold the captain more responsible for making sure that discipline in the team is good."

Taken from an article called Mum, the football hooligan: (3 December 07)

The FA is concerned that parents' touchline threats and violence are driving young referees to quit. Last year, 7,000 referees threw away their whistles and the FA admits that there is a serious shortage. The result is that unqualified parents referee matches - and become easy targets for abuse from parents of the opposing team.

Young referees, some just 15 or 16 - and a growing number of them teenage girls - are particularly vulnerable to bullying parents and many last no longer than their first game.

"Quite apart from the threat of physical violence, they have to put up with shocking language and abuse," says Mr Tuppin. "I've seen a lot of young refs walk off the pitch in tears. Finding young referees and training them is not a problem; keeping them is."

"They think that refereeing games of seven- to 10-year-olds will be a fun thing to do on a Sunday morning. And it should be. But then they find themselves being screamed at by some loudmouthed parent on the touchline. It's no wonder they ask themselves, 'Is it worth the hassle?'"

Referees' assistants are often the bullies' first targets because they run along the line close to where parents stand. "Sometimes, the abuse goes on all game long," says one London referee's assistant, who gave up last year after he was punched by a spectator following a controversial offside decision.

In Surrey, Mr Ward says that he has recently received yet another report of an attack by a parent on a referee's assistant during an under-15s match. A similar case last season led to a parent being fined £1,000 for assault, with £150 costs, and ordered to pay £300 to the official.

So what can be done to stop parental abuse and thuggery? Some local leagues have introduced plastic "fencing" to keep parents away from the players, coaches and officials.

In Stourbridge and in Wigan, Greater Manchester, parents have to stand behind a plastic mesh or rope barrier along one side of the pitch, four or five feet behind the touchline, throughout the game. The coaches are on the

opposite side of the pitch and some leagues insist that opposing parents stand on different sides. No one is allowed near the goals.

The fences are working, says Keith Harris, the chairman of the Wigan Youth League, which has seen the number of games abandoned fall from up to 15 a season to just one so far this season, and that was because of bad behaviour by the players rather than the supporters.

The FA has taken note - and its own research shows that touchline violence and intimidation are clubs' biggest concerns. Next month, it will introduce barriers at games in eight counties as part of a large-scale pilot project.

The new "Respect" campaign will also include a code of conduct for spectators, with punishments for breaches, and it will follow the example of rugby and allow only the team captain to talk to the referee.

Some in the game would like to see more radical measures, including the scrapping of league tables, points, trophies - and even referees - for football involving children under the age of 11.

"Children don't need all that," says Paul Cooper, a football coach and the founder of Give Us Back Our Game, who has organised successful tournaments stripped of the "adult" elements. "We have to end the adult-driven 'win at all costs' philosophy. Children just want to play, and they can organise themselves and enjoy themselves."

Dr Misia Gervis, a senior lecturer at Brunel University and sports psychology consultant to the FA, says: "Top of the list for children is having a good time but many parents miss that point. Before they even think about winning, they have to love what they are doing."

At junior and youth matches in Wigan and Stourbridge yesterday, the perimeter "fences" seemed to be helping to keep the parents' emotions under control, but some are not convinced they will provide a permanent solution to the problem of thuggish parents.

advertisement

"There is a long way to go," says Mr Cooper. "We need a change of culture. Adults have taken over the children's game and use it for their own purposes. We have to give it back to the children."

The Dirty Play debate has raged since the seventies: (1 March 08)

West Ham United 2 (Best 2) Chelsea 1 (Hollins) Sept 11, 1971

The legitimacy, or otherwise, of the recent tackle that has put Arsenal's Eduardo out of the game for nine months has reawakened the debate about how far skilful players can, and should, be protected. It is a topic which never lies dormant for long.

Seven games into the 1971-72 season, for example, and a concerted clean-up campaign initiated by the Football League, and carried out with some vigour by referees, was causing controversy and comment.

West Ham devoted a large chunk of their programme for the match against Chelsea in the second week of September to the debate.

In a double-page spread, under the heading The Big Clean-Up: A Review, they printed a circular which had been sent to all clubs by the League to provide background to the issue.

There had been nationwide meetings of referees to discuss the recommendations of a working party in which, "the emphasis was put upon the necessity for controlling violent and dirty play, and the correct interpretation of the Laws of the Game in an effort to minimise the possibility of differing interpretations.

"These meetings do not mean that Football League games are going to be refereed in a similar manner to those in the [1970] World Cup in Mexico; nor does it mean that the tackle from behind is to be outlawed, as it has been previously reported; it simply means that the League is asking referees to be firm in their control and operate in accordance with the Laws of the Game."

Amid the welter of differing reactions and opinions printed alongside was one from The Sunday Times, that thundered: "It was not the referees who made the game bad but the managers and players. Henceforth, skilled players who suffered as a result of weak refereeing can expect protection.

"Referees are clearly determined to make the foul so difficult to get away with, it won't be worth the risk of committing even a borderline one."

Hugh McIlvanney, then writing in *The Observer*, took a slightly different view.

"In the end," he said, "a referee must control a game by the strength of his personality, his good sense and humanity.

"Flourishing the Laws like a bludgeon is no answer."

Harry Catterick, manager of Everton, was quoted as saying: "I am all for the League's new get-tough refereeing policy. It penalises the tackle from behind and gives the skilful players more chance. Perhaps they are being a bit hard at the moment, but it will iron out in the end."

Matthew Upson rewarded for toil and tenacity

In conclusion, the *Hammers* Editorial said: "We are hoping that the 'new' legislation will have the desired effect of letting teams 'play football'.

"We believe it could be to our advantage!"

Thai referee gets a beating by entire soccer team

A Thai soccer referee was beaten up by an entire team after sending off three of their players during a match to decide promotion to country's second division, local media reported on Friday.

Referee Prakong Sukguamala needed 50 stitches and also broke a finger after being attacked by the Kuiburi FC squad, furious at being shown three red cards during a 4-1 loss to Kasem Bundit on Thursday, the Thai-language *Thai Rath* newspaper said.

The angry players charged into Prakong's dressing room at the stadium in Ayutthaya, north of Bangkok, and started to kick and punch him. They dispersed after police fired gunshots into the air. The players then chased Prakong into the stadium's office, where the hapless official ran into a mirror, leaving him with cuts all over his body.

Prakong told Channel 3 television he was forced to lock himself in the room to escape his attackers. In the same interview, Kuiburi's coach accused Prakong of biased refereeing but said he had urged his players to show restraint when tempers flared.

Prakong, covered in bruises, insisted he had refereed the game fairly and had been told by Thailand's soccer federation to press charges against the Kuiburi team.

(Source 8 Feb 08 BANGKOK (Reuters) - <http://uk.reuters.com>)

Send raging parents back to school:

As part of the punishment dished out by the Eastern Suburbs Football Association Inc. (ESFA) in Australia, parents who have been found guilty of rage and abandonment of a game, via a Judiciary Committee Hearing, are (in addition to other fines) asked to attend a Rage Control course as part of their punishment. The parent has to pay the cost of the course out of his own pocket (\$155). Failure to comply, results in further fines being imposed on the parent and the football Club that they are associated with.

This seems like a good way to re-educate the parent and to pass a message to others that if they misbehave, they can expect the same treatment. In addition to this, perpetrators are told to write letters of apology to the Referee and to the opponents' team and its team members. It is hoped that the embarrassment, cost and the inconvenience of having to attend such a course, and write letters of apology, will prove to be a strong incentive for others to adhere to the ESFA Code of Conduct, which stipulates that *abuse of match officials or verbal dissent regarding their decisions is in breach of the rules of the game and will not be tolerated.*

Many thanks to David Lewis for this contribution to the newsletter.

The Rage Control course description is shown below:

The University of Sydney

Centre for Continuing Education

The art of rage control

Course description

As humans we are emotional beings and generally when confronted with rage we react emotionally and instinctively, not theoretically. The Art of Rage Control is a unique formulation of video, audio and interactive theatre training which immerses people in the experience of confrontation and coaches them on how to develop their emotional memory skills to diffuse potential rage situations.

The training program tackles "old" training methods. It's not about overheads. It's not about note taking. It's about experiencing rage and learning to control one's reaction to it. Therefore, creating emotional memory skills.

Course Outline

Part 1: Introduction

What's rage? Understanding rage and where it comes from; contributing factors. Rage is all around us - in the air, on the road, even in the carpark. It seems rage was once the domain of personal relationships, however, today it has ventured from the private domain to the public. Why? Developing internal and external awareness. Individual and group discussion. Understanding emotions and their effect on human beings.

Tea/coffee break

Part 2: Rage Play

In order to develop an intelligent emotional memory, where one is capable of dealing with stressful situations, we expose participants to exercises of self analysis, environmental and personal awareness and assertiveness. We term these exercises: EMOTIONAL SPARRING.

Lunch break

Part 3: Revision of morning activities

Tea/coffee break

Part 4: Interactive Theatre Training

We don't ask participants to memorise vast amounts of theory or to become mechanical in their responses to rage management. We do, however, involve them in dramas representing everyday situations where "emotional sparring" is called for.

University of Sydney 1

Centre for Continuing Education

Part 5: Evaluation, Presenter, Erwin Diaz

Erwin has management experience in a variety of leading organisations including Pepsico Food Service International, and Qantas Airways Limited. His aim is to share his ideology in relation to the resolution of rage and empower all those who participate. Erwin's attitude to both life and business is best summed up by one of his favourite phrases: "All it takes is a new way of looking."

The Indochina Starfish Foundation - can you help?

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

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

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

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

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

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

YOU MUST BE JOKING REF?

An Assistant Referee turns up for a game with both his ears bandaged up. "What happened to your ears?" asks the Referee. The Assistant Referee replies: "Yesterday I was ironing my Referee's top when the phone rang. I accidentally answered the iron."

"That explains one ear, but what happened to the other one?" continues the Referee.

"Well, I had to call the doctor!" says the Assistant Referee.

A young Referee had just started his own firm to provide Referee kit. He'd rented a beautiful office and had it furnished with the most expensive office equipment that money could buy. Sitting there, he saw a man come into the outer office. Wishing to appear busy, the Referee picked up the phone and started to pretend he had a big order for Referee kit to process. He threw huge figures around and made giant commitments. Finally he hung up and asked the visitor, "Can I help you?" The man said, "Sure. I've come to install the phone!"

A Referee arrives at his game and sees one of his Assistant Referees sitting in the changing room, totally depressed and stressed out. He gives him the advice: "I went straight home after every game for two months and had myself pampered by my wife. It was fantastic and it really helped to relieve the stress of Refereeing. You should try it too!". Four months later when they meet up again at another match, the Referee sees the same Assistant Referee in the changing room, happy and full of energy, and raring to go. "I see you followed my advice?" says the Referee to the Assistant Referee.

"I did", answers the Assistant Referee, "It was great! By the way, I didn't know you had such a nice house!".

A football player dies and reports to the pearly gates. St. Peter checks his dossier and says, "Ah, you're a football player -- you're in the wrong place."

So, the football player reports to the gates of hell and is let in. Pretty soon, the football player gets dissatisfied with the lack of football fields in hell, and starts building and marking out numerous fields of play. After a while, they've got Cup competitions, FIFA standard grounds and flush toilets and free admission, and the football player is a pretty popular guy.

One day, God calls Satan up on the telephone and says with a sneer, "So, how's it going down there in hell?"

Satan replies, "Hey, things are going great. We've got Cup Competitions, FIFA standard football grounds and flush toilets and free admission, and there's no telling what this football player is going to come up with next."

God replies, "What??? You've got a football player? That's a mistake -- he should never have gotten down there; send him up here."

Satan says, "No way. I like having a football player on the staff, and I'm keeping him."

God says, "Send him back up here or I'll Red Card you."

Satan laughs uproariously and answers, "Yeah, right. And just where are YOU going to get a Referee?"

Refereeing or Wife?

The Referee's wife was in full flight. "If you ever spent a Saturday afternoon with me instead of Refereeing I swear I would drop dead," she screamed.

"There's no point in trying to bribe me," replied the husband.

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION and ANSWER TOPICS:

Law 3 states that each team consists of eleven players, one of whom is the goalkeeper.

Scenario: (From David Lewis)

The ball goes out of play for a goal kick and travels about 15 yards away from the goal line.

The goalkeeper goes to retrieve the ball from behind the goal, and when he reaches it, he kicks it back to a colleague who quickly takes a goal kick before the goalkeeper is back in position on the field of play.

The ball goes directly to an attacking player who instantly proceeds to score a goal before the defending team's goalkeeper has had a chance to get back onto the field of play.

Question: What action should the Referee take?

Answer: The most important learning point in this scenario is to appreciate that an astute Referee would have been aware of the situation, and would have taken proactive stalling measures to await the return of the goalkeeper prior to allowing the goal kick to take place.

There is no specific ruling in the Laws that state that a goalkeeper MUST be on the field of play before a goal kick takes place. And no offence is committed if a player leaves the field of play to retrieve the ball. If the defending team create a situation and then it backfires on them, they must take full responsibility for their actions, and thereby accept any consequences. The attacking team should certainly not be penalised for the actions of their opponents, as this goes against the Spirit of the Laws.

This precedent is confirmed via the following 2006/2007 FIFA Questions and Answers. Law 3, Question No. 20. There is nothing new to suggest that this viewpoint has changed.

20. During a match, the goalkeeper sprints from the goal to stop an opponent. He kicks the ball out of the field of play and a throw-in is awarded to the opposing team. The momentum of the goalkeeper takes him off the field of play and before he can return, the throw-in is taken and a goal is scored. What action, if any, should the referee take?

A goal is awarded since no offence has been committed.

If you take the above two scenarios to the other extreme, and as a result of the goal kick or the throw-in, the defending team immediately score a goal for themselves at the other end of the field of play, should this goal be disallowed also because the defending team's goalkeeper was not on the field of play when the restart was taken? Most definitely no! The goal would be legal. In other words, the principle (to allow a goal or not) must be applied to both teams.

Thank you David for the scenario. From Julian Carosi.

Question: Two attackers clearly in an offside position started to give chase to a through ball. I made a quick glance at the goalkeeper to determine whether she could clearly collect the ball first and decided that maybe not. I was about to flag the offside, when the two attackers stopped cold (One of the defenders was yelling "Offside Ref".) I held my flag, as two defenders went roaring past the attackers. When they were 5-10 yards ahead, the attackers resumed pursuit. One of the defenders then established control of the ball, but the pressure of the attackers caused her to kick the ball into touch.

I've been going over this in my mind and am not sure I made the right call. The control by the defender resets the OS position, but perhaps I should have flagged it, when they reinitiated pursuit, and let the centre referee decide.

I personally like my Assistant Referees to flag offside immediately, unless there is an onside positioned attacker that might play the ball. Whether the ball is going to the keeper or not should not be a consideration.

Any suggestions on how to improve?

Answer: Whether to signal offside or not, is a matter of opinion, based on the probability of the defending team gaining an advantage or not. This depends on many factors, i.e. the skill levels of the teams, conditions, tempo of the game etc.). If the advantage does not ensue (i.e. the ball bobbles and the goalkeeper is unable to catch it) then the offside can still be given. It makes no odds whether the flag is initially raised or not - the decision is still the same. The important thing is, is that the right decision is made, whether via an early flag or via a late flag.

In most cases, the ball travels safely to the goalkeeper, and the game can continue uninterrupted. This is what players want, and this is what Referees should be encouraged to do.

On 17 August 2005, a working group meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) issued the following guidance via FIFA:

"A player in an offside position may be penalised before playing or touching the ball if, in the opinion of the referee, no other team-mate in an onside position has the opportunity to play the ball."

The lower down that you officiate in, the more important it is to apply this advice to its fullest meaning. In other words, a quick flag is probably the best option in most cases. The higher you go in terms of refereeing a game, the more the defending team will be able to make good use of an advantage, if the Referee/Assistant Referee allows play to continue.

Making confident decisions of this nature, comes with experience and the ability to predict what will happen next.

But if (as in your question) you allow the game to continue and the defending team establish control of the ball, the attacking team should not then be penalised if the defending team are not skilful enough to make good use of the ball.

The nub of a solution is to minimise such contentious incidents from happening in the first place. In other words, if you are not confident enough to be able to predict what comes next with any accuracy, then a quick flag is the best option. If you are confident enough to allow play to continue, then a late flag is still possible (there is nothing wrong with this). But not too late. Because if you allow the defending team to establish control, the offside/onside clock is reset, and normal rules apply.

Assistant Referees here in England, are expected to make the above judgements themselves, If the ball looks like travelling on to the goalkeeper, we generally like to keep play going rather than stop it.

The solution to your problem, is to wait just a few seconds before raising your flag. This allows you to see how play develops.

Say to yourself:

"WAIT and WAIT and FLAG".

Or count:

"ONE and TWO and FLAG".

This is one method we use here. A late flag is totally acceptable, so long as the outcome is right.

If you wait any longer to raise a flag, the chances are that play will move into a second phase, as per your scenario; and it is then, that most problems will arise.

Question: Before a throw-in is taken, the referee asks a defender to go at 2 meters away from the thrower. After he goes away, this defender runs suddenly at a distance less than 2 meters from the thrower. Now the thrower throws the ball forcefully at the defender's head. How shall the referee decide?

Answer: If the Referee in your question believes that the thrower used excessive force when throwing the ball at the defender, he should send the thrower off for violent conduct, and caution the defender for failing to retire the correct distance at a throw-in. As these two offences occur at the same time, the restart should be for the more serious violent conduct offence, and should therefore be a direct free kick to the defending team taken from the place where the ball hit the defender.

Last month, the following question and answer appeared in this newsletter. Phil Crossland emailed me to ask if it would be more credible to caution the perpetrator for Delaying the Restart, rather than for Unsporting behaviour as suggested? Phil makes a moot point. In other words, you could proactively use this incident to send a message to the rest of the players, that you will not tolerate future delays to any restarts.

Therefore, and depending on nature of the game, it may be prudent to punish the delay in the restart, and make it obvious to onlookers that this is what you are doing. *Many thanks Phil, from Julian.*

The original QandA appears below:

Question: Over the weekend a very interesting situation occurred.

An opponent had broken clear near the touchline. The goalkeeper ran out of his penalty area and tackled the opponent right on the touchline and in doing so, the goalkeeper kicked the ball out of play for a throw-in. The opponent, quickly picked up the ball and realised that a colleague was waiting for the throw to come to him so that he could quite easily knock the ball into the net. The goalkeeper realising this, uses his hands to knock the ball out of the thrower's hands. Is it?

(1) DOGSO ?

(2) USB ?

(3) Encroaching within the two meters?

Answer: Was the ball in play?

No.

Therefore it cannot be a DOGSO.

Did the goalkeeper fail to respect the correct distance at the throw-in?

Yes.

Therefore a caution is warranted in accordance with the Law 12 Caution offences.

But is it also unsporting behaviour?

Yes.

Therefore a caution is warranted in accordance with the Law 12 Caution offences.

But that does not mean that the goalkeeper gets a second yellow card.

The two Law breaches (failing to respect the correct distance and unsporting behaviour) occurred at the same time.

Law 5 tells us that the Referee should punish the more serious offence when a player commits more than one offence at the same time.

The penalty points for all caution offences when applied by County FA's (as shown in The FA Handbook) is 1 point each.

Therefore, the two Law breaches (failing to respect the correct distance and unsporting behaviour) are deemed to be at the same level of seriousness.

It therefore makes no odds which offence is listed down in the Referee's report.

But as far as the Spirit of the Laws is concerned, Unsporting behaviour might rate higher (more serious) than failing to respect the correct distance at a restart.

Question: A reoccurring issue I seem to have, is players complaining when an opposition player calls "leave it or mine" or other such comment to his team mate, when he should be calling his name and expect his team mate to leave the ball. I see it as communication and not wrong in law (maybe spirit), and as such take no action. I fully understand if they are trying to deceive the opposition, appropriate action should be taken. What is the official line please?

Answer: There has never been any mention in the Laws of prohibiting players from shouting out orders and advice to colleagues. I just wish the players knew this! Then Referees would not have to put up with the usual quip, "What about a name Ref.?"

Shouts between colleagues of the same team of "My ball" and "Leave it" and "Pass it here" and "Pass it right" are all 'part and parcel' of the game and should not be penalised. Referees should ignore most calls - and just tell players to "Get on with it".

If a game becomes inundated with constant queries of this nature (e.g. "What about a name Ref. blah blah blah?") the Referee should (during a stoppage in play) advise both captains to inform their players not to continue. A quick explanation that 'calling' is only an offence if it is done to deceive an opponent will go a long way towards minimising further problems in the game.

It 'appears' that only English bred players seem to have a fascination with constantly questioning this rule, because it does not feature much elsewhere. In countries outside of the United Kingdom, it is always the native English speakers who give the Referee a hard time. This problem can also be further exasperated in multi-lingual teams where the Referee will need to differentiate between anglophones (English speaking people) persistently calling "my ball" or "I've got it", and the other team calling "Je l'ai" etc..... This seems to matter less in continental Europe, Latin America, Africa or Asia.

The only time that the Referee should penalise a player for calling, is when the call is purposefully done to 'cheat' or deceive an opponent.

Question: What do you do in the case that a goalkeeper is using a golf type tee for taking goal kicks? In my opinion, the answer is within the 'Additional Instructions' under Law 4, the Player's Equipment: A player may use equipment other than the basic equipment provided that its sole purpose is to protect him physically and it poses no danger to him or any other player.

I therefore would deem the use of a tee to be unsporting behaviour? I would probably warn the player first though & if he continued to use the tee, to book him then. I'm really interested to hear your views on this?

Answer: This normally occurs at the youth level of football, and is very rarely seen at the higher levels.

Law 1 (The Field of Play) and Law 4 (The Players' Equipment) are the Law sources of what is allowed and what is not allowed (on the field of play). Sand, cones and tees etc. do not form part of the Laws in terms of permitted field equipment (e.g. devices allowed for the taking goal kicks), and should therefore be discouraged.

I would strongly advise Referees against sanctioning anything that is peculiar to the game (and this includes cones, tees and sand used for taking goal kicks). If there are any complaints from players or team officials when a Referee prohibits the use of cones and sand, then all the Referee needs to do, is to clearly remind the players, parents and coaches, that these items have never been sanctioned in the laws since they came into being in 1863.

Dealing with uses of (or attempts to use) such devices, should be dealt with by man-management, rather than issuing cautions.

Question: Two Footed Challenges.

I seem to remember that in previous editions of the LOAF, it said that two footed challenges cushioned by the ball were permitted. In the 2007/08 LOAF there is no longer any mention of this. It now says "Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, from the side or from behind, using one or both legs, with excessive force and endangering the safety of an opponent is guilty of serious foul play"

Does that mean that any two footed challenge is a foul, and if it uses excessive force a red card?

Answer: There are two ends of any spectrum. The extreme ends of the two-footed tackle spectrum are shown below.

(a) It is possible to make a two-footed lunge at the ball (when no other player is in the vicinity) without it being deemed to be a foul. When this happens, the Referee does not necessarily have to take any action, apart from maybe a quiet word with the player if it is really needed.

(b) A two-footed tackle using excessive force against an opponent is a (serious foul play) sending-off offence. It would be impossible within the Laws, to include a simple paragraph that covered all the levels of seriousness and the appropriate punishments that a two-footed lunge can generate. In other words, it is not just the two-footed tackle in itself that is a foul; it is everything else that is associated with it, (i.e. whether an opponent is affected, the intention, the level of force used, or even the conditions etc.)

It is normally very easy for a Referee to identify when a two-footed tackle is a sending off offence or not; and like any other tackle, the use of excessive force is the measure that is used by the Referee to decide what level of discipline is needed.

The current advice followed by Premiership Referees in England is as follows:

Match Officials at all levels of the game must be able to distinguish between;

- Careless challenge for which a free kick/penalty kick is awarded.
- Reckless Challenge for which a Caution and a free kick/Penalty kick is the appropriate course of action
- Reckless with excessive force endangering the safety of an opponent must be a RED Card and appropriate free kick or penalty kick.

Single foot challenges and aerial challenges where players lead with the arm/elbow

- It does not matter which direction these were made. If the challenge is reckless with excessive force and endangers the safety of an opponent a **RED CARD MUST BE APPLIED.**
-

I hope that you have enjoyed this issue of the newsletter, and that you are all continuing to enjoy your refereeing roles.

All the very warmest wishes to you all, wherever you are in the world.

Regards, Julian Carosi (Editor)

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

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

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