

The www.CorshamRef.org.uk Newsletter No 67: February 2009

International newsletter covering Football (Soccer) Refereeing matters.

Welcome, with an International perspective.

Welcome to the 67th edition of The Corsham Referee monthly International Football/Soccer Referees' newsletter.

Greetings to everyone. Sorry that the newsletter is a few days late.

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.*

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS SOUGHT:

Ref Jokes: My store of Ref jokes has finally run out - let me have your Ref joke for publication (*one joke each please*). Can you make me laugh?

Dealing with angry players: What is your **single sentence** of advice when dealing with angry players (let me have your thoughts)

Contact me via my Feedback page below:

<http://corshamref.org.uk/webmaster.htm>

This newsletter is distributed to well over 1,000 referees at all levels around the world, so it will be interesting to see how any responses I get!

"SET PIECES'

More 'set-piece' advice by Julian Carosi.

In my 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 increase, 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 (1) how to manage set-piece throw-ins, (2) how to issue cards, (3) how to manage goal kicks, (4) how to build a positive image, (5) how to establish a rapport with players by gaining their trust via the TRUST triangle, (6) how to deal with simulation, (7) how to manage a penalty kick, (8) how to approach the kick-off at the beginning of each game, (9) how to manage the first 10 minutes of each game, (10) self-evaluation, (11) how best to apply advantage and (12) Assistant Referee tips, (13) using the Give and Go, Give and Sort technique that you can use during Free Kicks, (14) advice on Dealing with a Mass Confrontation Melee of players, (15) using a standard Pre-Match briefing to your Assistant Referees by (16) offering you some ideas on what to do at the Final Whistle.

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 Final Whistle:

Introduction:

Firstly, let's look back a few years to two interesting incidents that occurred as the final whistle was blown.

Incident 1:

Benfica v Celtic - European Cup, 1969 (This was in the era when a drawn Cup game could be decided by the toss of a coin).

(Source 'He Always Puts It To The Right' by Clarke Miller. A history of the penalty kick.)

In November 1969, in the away leg of their European Cup quarterfinal against Benfica, in the Stadium of Light in Lisbon, Celtic conceded two goals. Three minutes into injury-time, Benfica's substitute, Diamentino, scored the equalizer with a header. Instead of putting the ball back on the centre spot and then blowing for full-time, as he could have done, the Referee, M. Van Ravens of Holland, picked up the ball and dashed off the field. No one knew whether the score was 3-3 or 3-2 to Celtic, and the confusion resulted in some ugly scenes in the players' tunnel.

It appears the Referee had locked himself in his dressing room and had it guarded by two Portuguese policemen. Then the great Eusebio, who had scored one of Benfica's goals but had gone off at half-time, burst into the corridor and had a heated exchange with several of the Celtic players. The upshot of all this confusion was that the Referee ordered thirty minutes of extra-time to be played. This ended goalless, and so the tie had to be decided by the toss of a coin.

Instead of calling the two captains to the centre spot after the goal was scored, the Referee made for the sanctuary of his dressing room, leaving 80,000 fans with an agonizing wait for the result. What happened next, and why not one but two further tosses of the coin were required, was later explained by Celtic's captain, Billy McNeill: 'I was there, Coluna [Benfica's captain] was there, the Referee was there, and there were a few neutral observers.

The Dutch Referee announced that it was Celtic's captain, Billy McNeill's turn to guess heads or tails to see whether Celtic or Benfica would go into the quarter-finals. The Referee pointed out the two sides of his silver coin, flipped it into the air and after McNeill had said "Heads", down it came, and heads it was.

But the Referee had failed to catch it. The coin hit him on the foot, and bounced against the grey concrete wall of his little dressing room. It bounced from one wall to the other, rolled around the floor on its milled edge for what seemed an eternity, and then went twisting down.

Before it had come to a complete stop McNeill could see it was heads, and then the bedlam was let loose. The Celtic players knew by the shouts that they were through.

Incident 2:

At the European Championship of 1978 World Cup, Clive Thomas from Wales was the referee in the match between Brazil and Sweden. Whilst the ball was on its way into Sweden's penalty area from a Brazilian corner kick in the last minute of the game, Thomas blew the final whistle seconds before Zico of Brazil scored what might have been the winning goal in a 1-1 draw.

For those of you who prefer to end a half on the exact moment the second-hand reaches 45 minutes, as shown in the later example above, or those of you who have to adhere to other timed methods (such as the College clock), then there is no point in you reading any further as this advice will not be of any use to you. For the rest of us who prefer to stay clear of controversy, the following will hopefully give you a few ideas that can be considered.

Allowance for time lost:

The Law book asks us to add to the end of each half, any time that has been lost due to substitutions, assessment of injury to players, removal of injured players from the field of play, wasting time and any other periods when time has been lost. There is no guidance as to how much actual time we can add on for individual occurrences, as each one differs. As a rule of thumb, if you add on 30 seconds for each substantial occurrence, the players will readily accept it as a reasonable calculation.

Example 1: If in the first half, three substitutions were made, and there were two injuries that required assessment, add a minimum of 2 minutes to the end of the first half. Those of you who are mathematicians, will have already noted that it should be 2 and a half minutes, and not 2 minutes, i.e. 90 seconds for the 3 substitutions (3x30 seconds each) plus 60 seconds for the 2 injuries (2x30 seconds each). Of course, you will be correct; but the learning point here, is to recommend that you deal in whole minutes whenever you communicate

the amount of time allowance you intend to play. In short, although at the end of the first half, you will play 2 minutes and 30 seconds of allowed time, the time will be communicated as 'a **minimum** of 2 minutes'. This is an important concept to understand, as it allows you a much greater flexibility to end the game at any point after 2 minutes, rather than on an exact second.

Example 2: If in the second half, there were 2 substitutions, and a 3-minute delay for crowd encroachment, then add a minimum of 5 minutes of time allowance to the end of the game.

The calculation of time allowance is not so much a '*rocket science*' technique to be learnt, but more of a feel about what reasonable amount of cumulative time *should* be added. There are many acceptable stoppages in a game of football, for example, during the setting up of free kicks, goal kicks and throw-ins. It is not time lost in these types of stoppages that are added onto the end of a half, but rather the time lost due to factors that have no normal part in a game of football. The list is endless, but can also include the time taken to retrieve the ball when it passes over the goal line and rolls many metres down the hill at one end of the field, to an allowance of time lost because players have stopped to take a drink of water during very hot games.

It is not recommended that you stop and start your watch for every occasion whenever you want to add a lost time allowance period. If you watch the top Referees, they never stop and start their watches, yet they seem to be able to calculate a correct allowance. As a general rule, do not stop/start your watch, unless the stoppage time is expected to be of a long duration, such as when a player has a serious injury that requires several minutes of time to deal with.

If you are questioned about the amount of time allowance that you have used, try to have some idea as to how you calculated it. For example, if an irate winning team's manager approaches you at the end of a game asking why you added 5 minutes to the end of a Cup Final game, if you can remind him that in the second half there were 6 substitutions plus 4 injuries that required assessment, he will more readily accept your time calculation. This does not mean that you have to keep a meticulous record of time lost, but rather you should be prepared for such approaches from Managers of players whenever the time allowance is long or short, or when the importance of the result is crucial.

Finally, if you indicate a minimum of 3 minutes will be played, do not end the game before the 3 minutes have completely lapsed.

Blowing your whistle to end each half:

When you blow your whistle to end the game, use the signature tune of three separate blasts that has been used for many years - beep - beep - beeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep, and then point towards the centre circle or towards the changing rooms. To differentiate the end of the second half from the first half, only use two beeps, i.e. beep, beeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep to end the first half. Make sure that you blow your whistle loudly so that all of the players can hear it.

Where to stand when you end each half:

Be aware of where your exit point is whenever you officiate. If the game has gone OK, when you blow your final whistle, stand nearer to the exit point. This means that players will have to pass you as they exit, thereby increasing the number of handshakes that you could receive.

If the game has not gone so well for you, or you anticipate being approached by angry players or Club Officials, stand right on the other side of the field of play when you blow your whistle to end a half. This has several advantages. It allows you to retain a wide-angle view of players as they exit. It discourages approaches from angry players and officials, as they will have to cross the whole field width to challenge you, and it discourages negative remarks from the players as they exit. The fact that a player at half time crosses the whole width of the field of play to berate you is ammunition enough for a caution, even before the player has said any words to you.

If one team is unlikely to give you any trouble, and the other team is ready to lynch you, go and stand with the happy team when you blow your whistle to end a half.

If there is likely to be trouble between the Home team Technical Area and the Away Team Technical Area, place yourself nearby when you end the half. The same principle applies when an angry player has a grudge against an opponent; place yourself near the angry player. The principle behind all of these suggestions is that your close presence alone can prevent problems, and conversely your presence can invite problems. You therefore need to decide the best position for you to be (depending on circumstances), when you end each half. Every game will be different. The worse place you can be, is to be in a place that you have given no consideration to. In other words, be proactive, and think forward as each half approaches its end. Ask yourself - where is the best place for me to be when I end a half?

Wear two watches:

To ensure that you time each half correctly, most Referees wear two watches; one main watch, which they can stop and start to measure any time lost, such as lengthy injuries, substitutions, outside interference etc., and a second watch that they keep running all the time. The reason for this is so that if a Referee forgets to restart his main watch, he has a backup watch to refer to.

A further insurance is to note down the time of kick-off into your notebook at the beginning of each half. This is a useful tip, because if you get into a mess with both of your watches, at least you know roughly when the half should end. In other words, if the half starts at 3:10pm, you know that it should end at 3:55pm (plus maybe a couple of extra minutes for any time lost).

It is also useful if one of your watches runs time upwards, i.e. begins at 1 minute and ends at 45, and the other watch runs time down, i.e. begins at 45 minutes and finishes at 1. Using a watch that runs time down, is also useful for when players ask you how much time remains!

It is recommended that if you have a watch that beeps at 45 minutes, that you turn the beep facility off. This prevents those awkward moments that can occur at the end of a half, when a shot on goal enters the goal precisely at the same moment as your watch starts beeping. If players hear this (which they will) it can generate all sorts of problems for you. Is it a goal or is it not a goal? For the same reason, beware of players being able to see the time remaining on your watch face. Some watches have large numerals that can easily be seen by players. In short, don't put yourself in a position where you have to justify; (a) awarding a goal or (b) not awarding a goal, or (c) not adding a reasonable amount of time lost onto the end of a half.

If you really can't live without a beeping watch, try setting the beep at 50 minutes, at least then if you really do mess up with your timing and are unable to end the half (without reaching the beep) at the right time, you have a third insurance policy. But as a general rule, it is best not to have any beeps on your watch.

Decisions of the Referee.

Once you have terminated the match, the Laws do not allow a Referee to change a decision.

For example: The Referee blows his whistle to end the game. As he does so, he notices one of his Assistant Referees has his flag raised. On consultation, the Assistant Referee explains his raised flag to the Referee. A few seconds before the Referee had blown his whistle to end the game, the Assistant Referee had spotted a penalty kick offence! But the Referee is powerless.

*Law 5: "The referee may only change a decision, on the advice of an assistant referee or the fourth official, provided that he has not restarted play **or terminated the match.**"*

If you take the wording exactly as it is written, if the same incident occurred at the end of the first half, and let us say that the Referee was notified of this sometime during the half-time period, would the Referee be able to change his mind and award the penalty kick at the beginning of the second half, because he had neither terminated the match nor restarted play? And further to this, would extended time be allowed for the taking of the penalty kick at the beginning of the second half, or does the penalty kick form part of the 45 minutes allocated to the second half? As you can see, the scenario gets more complicated!

Methinks that the wording should read: 'provided that he has not restarted play **or terminated a half.**'

The most important lesson here - is to increase your focus and awareness to maximum before you end each half.

Can you still show a red or yellow card after the game has finished?

The current Laws contain conflicting words on this subject. Law 12 states:

'The referee has the authority to take disciplinary sanctions from the moment he enters the field of play until he leaves the field of play after the final whistle'

The chapter at the end of the current Law book entitled 'Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees' states:

'The Referee has the power to show yellow or red cards during the half-time interval and after the match has finished as well as during extra time and kicks from the penalty mark, since the match remains under his jurisdiction at these times.'

If the Referee has the power to show yellow or red cards after the match has finished, one can envisage a scenario of a red card being issued to a player who accidentally spills his drink over the Referee in the bar 30 minutes after the game has ended!

In reality, you can show a card from the moment that you step onto the field of play, to the moment you step off it after the game. And this is why it is important for the Referee to be the last one off the field of play at the end of the game. Any misdemeanours that occur outside of this must be reported as misconduct.

Assistant Referee considerations:

As part of your pre-match brief with your Assistant Referees, you should instruct them to meet up with you as quickly as they can once you have blown your whistle to end each half. There is a tendency for Assistant Referees at the lower levels of football to walk slowly towards the Referee, and to milk as many handshakes as they can on the way. Having your Assistant Referees swiftly alongside you has many benefits. It makes players and Managers think twice about offering you some inappropriate verbal comments, it provides you with two witnesses should anything go wrong, your two flanking Assistants will form a physical barrier either side of you which you will welcome if angry players are around, it looks professional, it sends out a message that the three match officials are one team and not three individuals, and it allows you to make quick verbal contact with your Assistants during what can sometimes be a fraught period, the list goes on.....

Dealing with Club Officials:

One of the greatest joys of Refereeing, is to award the away team a penalty kick that wins them the match at the very end of the game, and ten seconds later gingerly look to see where the Home Team Manager is standing waiting for you after you blow your whistle to end the game. You know that you have to pass him to make your way towards the changing rooms. You can guarantee, that an angry manager will always place himself in the only single exit point that you **must** pass through! He becomes the magnet that draws you in, and he has an uncanny ability to close off any other exit points that you would rather use to get into your changing rooms!

It is always best for Managers to give themselves a bit of time to cool down at the end of the game before they approach Referees. Time is certainly the best-known soother of tempers in situations where words will probably only add to the flames of passion. In circumstances where it is clear that an angry Manager is awaiting your exit, even the slightest delay by you, will calm him down a tad. As a Referee, your duty in these types of situations is to balance out the negative reactions of a quick exit, against the positive effects of giving the angry Manager a few moments to calm down. It is not a case of being brave and facing up to the Manager to prove how assertive and strong you are, it is about understanding the passions of the game and managing the situation so that the Manager is given as little chance as possible, to get himself into trouble, for he will surely do that. There are many things that you can do to delay your exit; you can retie your boot laces, tidy up the notes in your notebook, discuss matters with your Assistant Referees etc., all which can be made to look natural.

If you have no alternative but to approach where the Manager is waiting for you, be ready to have a few assertive phrases to use. If the Manager turns out to be pleasant and behaves well, then respond accordingly. If it is clear that The Manager is going to cause you nothing but grief, as you approach him, as he starts his tirade towards you, simply say something along the lines of;

"I'm sorry, but I'm not prepared to discuss matters with you at this very moment. If you still wish to have a word with me, I will speak with you after I have changed."

Do not let an angry Manager force you into dealing with **his** priority first, when **your** first priority is to reach your changing rooms in peace. In other words, you dictate what you want to do, and not the angry Manager.

At the end of the day, if an angry Manager insists on abusing you, then simply note down the details and politely and calmly inform the Manager that his actions will be reported.

Fetching the ball:

In some areas, and within some Competition Rules, the Referee is made responsible for collecting the match ball at the end of each half. Whilst this may be admirable in normal passive circumstances, it is perhaps not quite so admirable if the ball has rolled half a mile down the hill behind the goal, or if the ball is amongst a group of angry players from the team that you had just awarded a penalty against! In these types of situations, the ball is your last concern, and you will need to manage the situation, by either asking one of the home team contingent to retrieve the ball, or leave it where it is. There is nothing in the Law book that says that you are responsible for collecting the ball. Your responsibility in Law as far as the ball is concerned, is to ensure it meets the requirements of Law 2(The Ball) and to control the entry any replacement balls that may be used during the match. The Law does not expect you to traipse half a mile down the hill.

Penalty at the end of a half:

If you award a penalty kick at the very end of a half and the duration has to be extended, then let all of the players who are not involved, know that the half ceases as soon as the penalty has taken place. This prevents players from encroaching into the penalty area.

I hope that the above ideas have given you something to think about. None of them are necessarily mandatory, but some of them could save you a heap of grief!

Stay safe. Julian Carosi www.CorshamRef.org.uk Happy reffing.

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.

The Moment of Truth

While many games pass uneventfully, sometimes the success or failure of a referee crew to control events on the field can be traced to a single incident:

2nd minute: Red defender slides in hard with cleats exposed well after the ball is away, barely missing Blue's star player near midfield.

25th Minute: Coach loudly complains about a no-call in the opponent's penalty-area, and his continuing complaints are heard around field. Five minutes earlier, the referee had admonished the coach to keep his voice down.

53rd Minute: Blue having scored in Minute 50 to extend their lead to 3-1, the referee calls a foul against Red in 53rd Minute for a routine trip. This leads a Red player to kick the ball twenty yards downfield, well after the whistle.

79th Minute: With the score tied, 2-2, Black #10, while racing down the midfield sideline past the entire Yellow defence, is held back from the ball by Yellow #2, who was cautioned for dissent in Minute 40.

89th Minute: With the score still tied, Black #6 goes down inside the Yellow penalty area after what looks to be superficial contact.

What all these events have in common is that each one can determine whether the officials will succeed in keeping the match under control. If handled wisely, timely action can assert firm control over the rest of the game and keep other problems from arising. If handled poorly, these incidents can lead to an escalation of misbehaviour on and around the pitch, and to ugliness later in the match.

Every game carries a potential 'moment of truth,' one that will challenge your courage and judgment. Often, these moments beg for misconduct cards. Other times a stern, public word will suffice. These critical moments can occur at any time in the match - from Minute 1 through the end of stoppage time - but observers can usually detect them when they happen. They are a time of tension on the field, when everyone is looking to you for firmness and decisiveness. If you meet the challenge, tensions ease and the game settles down. If you do not, the tension just keeps mounting.

Expect a 'moment of truth' at each of your games, and do your best to rise to the occasion.

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

FULL-TIME WHISTLE

Sheffield Wednesday played Huddersfield Town in a 1930 FA Cup semi-final, and a crowd of nearly 70,000 watched the game. Huddersfield led 2-1, with time running out, when Wednesday's Jack Allen shot towards the Huddersfield goal. The referee blew his whistle for full-time while Allen was in the act of shooting. The ball found the net but no goal was allowed. The crowd and players were confused. Spectators had to buy a newspaper on the way home to check the score: Huddersfield Town 2 Sheffield Wednesday 1. Imagine leaving a semi-final and not knowing the result. Sheffield Wednesday officials complained that the 1930 semi-final referee had played short time and one supporter with a stopwatch claimed that the second half had lasted only 43 minutes. But such arguments are irrelevant because the referee is the sole judge of time. The 1930 semi-final incident raised a debate that has often been resurrected: should referees stay clear of controversy when blowing the full-time whistle, or should they blow the moment the second-half reaches 45 minutes?

After 86 minutes of a France-Argentina match, the referee blew his whistle for an infringement, but the crowd thought it was the final whistle (June 1930). Mounted police had to clear the field so that the outstanding four minutes could be played. Incidents such as this eventually led to referees developing a special signal to denote full-time (three separate blasts on the whistle and pointing to the dressing-rooms).

There is one other good reason for timing the final whistle well. Lovick understates it beautifully in his early advice-book for referees: 'When blowing for full-time in a game when you have sensed there may be some hostility towards you (and this will happen occasionally to every referee) position yourself so that when you do blow for time you have the shortest possible route to the dressing-room.'

A referee at Maltby, Yorkshire, incurred the wrath of the fans (1952-53). Making sure he ended the game when he was next to the dressing-rooms, he made a swift escape. The linesman on the far side of the pitch was not so amused. Not only did he have trouble getting across the pitch, but the referee had locked the dressing-room to keep out irate fans.

Top-class referees prefer the ritual of blowing while in the centre-circle, waiting for assistants to sprint to them, getting support from security officers, and having close witnesses in case of attack! Occasionally assistants have sprinted towards the referee on the sound of 'the full-time whistle' only to discover that it is a free-kick.

A different kind of finale came when Liverpool entertained Manchester City in an FA Cup replay (February 1956). Manchester City were leading 2-1 when the ball reached John Evans (Liverpool), just inside his own half. The referee blew for full-time as Evans swept a long pass forward to his team-mate Billy Liddell. The players involved had not heard the whistle. The referee stood watching near the halfway line as Liddell shot for goal. The ball went into the net and Liddell turned to celebrate, only to find that other players were leaving the field. The game had ended before his goal. Even though the referee had blown the whistle at the halfway-line it had not staved off controversy.

In a 1978 World Cup match against Sweden, Brazil were awarded a stoppage-time corner-kick, which was delayed while the Polish linesman ensured the ball was inside the corner arc. Only seconds now remained. The referee, Clive Thomas, blew the final whistle when the ball had travelled about ten yards from the corner-kick. He turned and pointed to the tunnel. A roar from the crowd greeted a header from Zico (Brazil) going into the net. The referee did not allow a goal and the result was 1-1.

Other examples include disallowed 'goals' by Gordon (Hull City in 1905), Tueart (Manchester City in 1977), Roberts (Crystal Palace in 1996), Gayle (Wimbledon in 1998), and Cahill (Australia in 2006), all of which affected the match result. Most referees would opt to blow up before a corner-kick was taken if there are only a few seconds remaining. Or they would wait until there was a definite outcome from the corner.

Denis Howell has written about a game early in his refereeing career, when the ball hit his watch and caused it to stop. He solved the problem by timing his game approximately by the one on the next pitch. But the referee of a Crystal Palace-Fulham match didn't have that option when his watch failed to restart after an injury break (October 1978). He guessed full-time from the stadium clock, but the two linesmen later agreed that there were still four minutes to play. The referee stopped the players from changing, and went back out to complete the match.

Referees usually carry two watches. They have strong views on what is the best watch on the market. One local referee always took his wife to matches because he got so involved that he lost track of time. She kept the watch.

In two situations, referees have little chance to sound the final whistle - after a golden goal and after the winning penalty in a shoot-out. Ten Newcastle Ladies players rushed from the centre-circle when their goalkeeper's save seemed to ensure a 5-4 shoot-out success against Liverpool Ladies, but the referee ordered a retake (February 2006). After much confusion, the shoot-out resumed, and Newcastle eventually lost 9-8.

The referee's jurisdiction continues after the final whistle - until he leaves the pitch. A referee was charged with failing to apply the laws properly when he neglected to red-card Gillespie (Sheffield United) at Reading (October 2005). The player had committed a sending-off offence after the full-time whistle and was still on the pitch.

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

NEWSLETTER FEATURE:

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

'Imbecile!' or 'Good decision, referee'?

Running towards goal with the ball, an attacker is clearly tripped by a defender. All eyes turn to the referee. Team-mates and their fans scream,

"FOUL, REF!"

But, what is the referee doing? He's waving play on! His mouth is moving like a fish out of water. Verbal abuse follows.

"IMBECILE, REFEREE! DIDN'T YOU SEE THAT?"

You, the referee, did see the foul but the attacker stumbled through the trip and seemed likely to regain control of the ball. A goal chance is on, so you decide to apply the advantage rule.

"PLAY ON! ADVANTAGE." you shout, but your words are blown away on the wind - heard by only a few players nearby.

You sweep your arms forward - the traditional advantage signal - but the abuse continues, even when a goal is scored.

"YOU WERE LUCKY HE SCORED, REFEREE," cries one critic, *"OTHERWISE, WE'D HAVE HAD YOUR SKIN - YOU BLIND ****!"*

You are angry because you know you made an excellent decision but it was not understood. It has happened before, to you and to colleagues you see suffer similar abuse in their games. So, where is the problem?

The problem lies with the advantage signal. You know, and other referees know, that it is supposed to mean, "Yes, there is a foul, but play on - advantage - for the moment." You also know that, if the advantage does not materialise after a reasonable delay, you can go back to the origin of the offence and award a free kick - plus, if appropriate, a yellow or red card.

The advantage signal tells only the second half of the story. Too often it is confused as meaning, "Play on - there's no problem." The first part - you saw and registered a foul - is the most vital but is not conveyed in the standard advantage signal.

How can we avoid the abusive reactions of players and fans? The advice is - add one gesture to the advantage signal to show clearly that you have registered an offence.

I suggest an initial gesture of pointing to the place of the offence (1) for a few seconds, followed immediately by the usual sweep forward movement of both arms (2). To be certain your message is clear, repeat the combined signal quickly. This simple action does not replace the official advantage signal; it helps clarify and strengthen your decision.

Try it. If it works for you, fine; if it doesn't, you lose nothing, but at least you've tried to show how one of the best rules in the game is interpreted.

Seen in action, it is effective; abuse is stifled and occasionally you will hear a favourable comment, *"GOOD DECISION, REFEREE!"*

Yours in sport,
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THIS MONTH'S QUESTION and ANSWER TOPICS:

Question 1: A player, other than the nominated penalty kick taker, runs forward and takes a penalty kick in normal play. In 2006 the offence was punished with an IDFK to the opponents no matter what the outcome of the kick and a caution as per the Q&A. While Law 14 has not changed there is a view that if a goal is scored in this scenario now in 2008 it's a retake and if no goal is scored then it's an indirect free kick.

Your advice would be appreciated

Answer 1: As this scenario is not covered in the modern Law book rewrite, you should follow the Spirit of the 2006/2007 FIFA Question and Answers, and cautioned the perpetrator for unsporting behaviour, and award an indirect free kick irrespective of whether a goal has been scored or not.

Question 2: A remarkable moment in the Dutch Eredivisie, a couple of weeks ago. Referee Eric Braamhaar gave Heerenveen player Mika Väyrynen a yellow card because he threw the ball at an opponent with the intention to get the ball back. He didn't use "excessive force" or whatever.

It was Väyrynen's second card, so Referee Braamhaar sent him off.

I thought Braamhaar was right, because here in The Netherlands we've always learned this action is not permitted: caution the player and the play is restarted with an indirect free-kick.

But it seems the football association here, the KNVB, missed a change in the FIFA rules that says: "If a player, while correctly taking a throw-in, intentionally throws the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball a second time but neither in a careless nor a reckless manner nor using excessive force, the referee shall allow play to continue." (<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/developing/refereeing/teachingmaterial.html>)

Now they say this FIFA rule has been changed recently (new text above). Can you confirm that? When did they change this? I can't find the date.

Answer 2: This was introduced in the 2006/2007 Law book.

I personally don't agree with it, and would do the same as Referee Eric Braamhaar, as it is against the Spirit of the Game.

But the official line is that it is no longer an infringement. (*Julian Carosi*)

Question 3: When watching the Birmingham v Reading game on Saturday you could clearly see, using the TV clock, that the Birmingham goalkeeper held the ball for 12 seconds. My understanding of the law is that the 6 second rule has never been rescinded but it seems that it is never enforced. My point is why maintain a law which appears never to be enforced?

Answer 3: The Law 12 rule that says "an Indirect Free Kick should be awarded if the goalkeeper controls the ball for more than six seconds before releasing it from his possession", was not introduced as a Draconian measure to minutely time (and punish) goalkeepers every time that they hold the ball. The rule was introduced to cut out the time wasting that was prevalent. To that effect, it has been a huge success.

It is unfair to say that the rule appears never to be enforced.

Goalkeepers are now much better at releasing the ball quicker, and are prompted by Referees when they stray near the deadline.

OK, so you might see the odd occurrence when the ball is held far too long, but as a rule this is rare.

If Referees started meticulously timing each occasion, I suppose that would be wrong as well.

This is a case of Referees working with payers to help them enjoy the game. If we started enforcing the Laws as they are written, the game would greatly suffer as a consequence.

Question 4: In cases of offside, is a player standing directly on top of the halfway line deemed to be standing inside his half of the field of play?

Answer 4: Because the halfway line belongs to both parts of the field of play, it is only when the player's head, body or feet project over the halfway line into his opponents' half (and he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last defender), that he is in an offside position.

Question 5: Is a player allowed to take a throw-in acrobatically, by somersaulting with the ball?

Answer 5: Yes, provided that the correct procedures in the Laws of the Game are followed.

Question 6: When does the goalkeeper have control of the ball when it is not being held. I had a situation recently where the ball was fizzing about the area a bit. The goal keeper dived at the ball and got a couple of fingertips to it. At the same time the striker got to the ball and scored. The keeper claimed that he had "control of the ball". I disagreed and awarded the goal.

Answer 6: In view of the following advice, you may wish to rethink your approach towards goalkeepers. The query of when does a goalkeeper have possession/control of the ball is a long-standing question.

A goalkeeper can be considered to have possession/control of the ball if he has the ball trapped on the ground with as little as one finger (pinkie) on the ball. One way of understanding this is to imagine the goalkeeper standing upright, with the ball at his feet, and one of his fingers pressing down on the top of the ball. This is possession, the same as it would be if he were stretched out along the ground with one finger on the top of the ball. In both cases, the goalkeeper is in control of the ball.

Possession of the ball means having control of the ball. The Referee decides whether a goalkeeper has possession of the ball or not. The easiest way to define this is to understand that possession is not determined by the amount of body mass that the goalkeeper has to use on the ball, in order for it to be in his possession/control. He can use one finger, two fingers, one hand, two hands or his whole body to gain possession of the ball.

Law 12 Decision No. 2 used to state that: *'The goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball by touching it with any part of his hand or arms.'*

The Law book now states that, *'When a goalkeeper has gained possession of the ball with his hands he cannot be challenged by an opponent.'*

There is an overriding safety factor to consider when goalkeepers are involved with possessing and controlling the ball. They are in the most vulnerable position and prone to serious injury if the Referee allows too much physical contact to be made against them. This has got nothing to do with football supposedly being a mans' game (in fact, it is also played by women), but everything to do with the Referee's duty of care as a match official and a human being. The Referee's main responsibility is the safety of the players - and to especially protect the vulnerable goalkeepers.

A goalkeeper can be said to have possession of the ball (and should therefore not be challenged) anytime that he has a part of his body (hand, fingertip, chest, nose, etc.) in contact with the ball (this does not include when the goalkeeper has the ball at his feet when he is considered to be 'fair-game' to a fair challenge by an attacking player). Possession of the ball by the goalkeeper includes, when he has it under control when bouncing it to the ground or when releasing the ball into play. So if whilst bouncing the ball to the ground an attacking player challenges the goalkeeper for the ball - this is illegal because the ball is still deemed to be in the possession/control of the goalkeeper.

It must also be noted, that even when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, any significant contact by an attacker on the goalkeeper may be deemed to be a foul. Any attempt by an attacker to kick the ball whilst it is in possession of the goalkeeper would be a foul. There should be no 'roughing-up' of a goalkeeper once he gains possession of the ball.

An attacking player is allowed to challenge fairly for the ball and may attempt to play the ball as long as it is not in possession/control of the goalkeeper - providing that (in the opinion of the Referee) the challenge on the goalkeeper is not dangerous (reckless, careless or using excessive force).

The difficulty that the Referee has, is in deciding the exact moment when a diving goalkeeper actually has possession of the ball. This can be very difficult to define, when both an attacking player and the goalkeeper are stretching out for the ball and make contact at virtually the same time. Considering the vulnerability of goalkeepers, Referees should err on the side of the goalkeeper when making these decisions.

When a goalkeeper makes a save with his hands (or finger), and he does not catch, or gain the ball cleanly, he is not deemed to be in possession/control of the ball and an attacking player is entitled to make a play for the ball (so long as it is not done dangerously). The goalkeeper is also not in possession/control of the ball, when he fumbles the ball or drops the ball or has it knocked away by an attacking opponent before the goalkeeper has it properly under his control.

On a personal note, and having played the game myself for more years that I care to recall, I have witnessed several serious injuries to colleague goalkeepers during my footballing career that at the time, made me physically sick at what I saw. Thankfully, the recent Law changes and protection by Referees has drastically decreased serious injuries. Long may it continue. (Julian Carosi)

Question 7: I was refereeing a match that was in no way aggressive - i.e.: no bad tackles had been made and play was flowing smoothly. But then a tackle was made by team Red. I gave the free kick and was calling over the offender for a chat when the victim threw the ball and hit the offender in the head.

I then called over both players and spoke to them.
I didn't use any more disciplinary measures due to the general good atmosphere of the game.
But I revoked the free kick, and instead awarded a drop ball.
Is this allowed by the laws of the game..... or am I confusing it with Gaelic (an Irish sport)???

Answer 7: If you stop play for a free kick, then play must be restarted with the free kick. If a separate incident occurs before the free kick takes place, then after you have dealt with the separate incident, play is restarted with the original free kick. If a player throws the ball at another players head, at the very least he should be cautioned, as this has no part in a game of football. If you fail to discipline a player when he does this, then you are communicating to the other players that you will accept such actions, when in fact you should be immediately punishing them. It makes no odds if previous to the offence, the match was 'in no way aggressive' or the general atmosphere of the game was good.

Question 8: If I stop play to caution a player for dissent, where should the free kick take place; where the ball was when play was stopped, or where the player was when the dissent was committed?

Answer 8: Law 12 tells us that if a player commits an offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player, the indirect free kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred.

Therefore, in cases off dissent, the indirect free kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred.

Question 9: I asked an Away team player who was taking a free kick, to move it back to where the offence took place, approximately 5 metres back. But he took it quickly from were he was and played it to a team mate. I stopped play and cautioned him, then made him retake the free kick again from the correct place. After the game, the Home team manager asked should have I awarded his team the kick, because I stopped the game for an Away team player taking a free kick in the wrong place. Can you help?

Answer 9: Had the ball actually been in play, and you then stopped play to issue a caution, then the manager would have been correct. But the manager probably did not realise that the game had actually not restarted, because you deemed that the free kick was taken from the wrong place. Next time this happens, a short explanation to the Manager is recommended.

Imagine this scenario.

A direct free kick is given to the attacking team 1 yard outside of the defending team's penalty area.
The attacking team move the ball inside the penalty and take the direct free kick!
Of course, a direct free kick inside of the penalty area would be a penalty kick, therefore, the free kick has to be retaken from the correct place.
The same principle applies to your scenario.

Question 10: During a junior (U15) match today the coach of reds threw a drinks bottle on the pitch for one of his players. I halted play, told the player to leave the FOP to continue the drink and not to re-enter the FOP until I gave him permission. I also informed the coach that he must refrain from continuing this form of refreshment taking. Was I correct.

Answer 10: A quiet word would have probably sufficed in your scenario. Players are entitled to take liquid refreshments during a stoppage in the match but only on the touch line. It is not permitted to throw plastic water bags or any other water containers onto the field.

(FIFA Circular 619) 1997

Because the balance of water in the body is essential for the health, drinking liquids during a game is not only permitted by FIFA but actively encouraged. The following rules must however be observed so as to avoid disorderliness on the field and prevent injury from missiles being thrown through the air.

- (a) Liquids may only be drunk during stoppages in play.
 - (b) Drinks must be contained in plastic bottles and handed to the players on the sidelines.
 - (c) It is forbidden to throw bottles or other receptacles onto the field of play.
 - (d) The goalkeeper may keep a plastic bottle in the corner of his goal.
 - (e) Plastic bottles may be placed around the field of play approximately 1 metre away from the sidelines and goal-lines but only as long as they do not obstruct the Assistant Referees in the course of their duty.
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Question 11: I know in Law 4 it is stated that the undershorts must be the same colour as the main colour of the shorts, however, the undershorts were white and the shorts were blue. I allowed him to play as I felt that the shirts were white and it wouldn't cause any confusing issues. I did point out to the coach that he needs to ensure in future undershorts match the colour of the shorts. Was I being too pedantic, or too soft...or hopefully about right?

Answer 11: Law 4 (The Players' Equipment' states that undershorts must be the same main colour as the shorts. This stipulation is there to help you (the Referee) in identifying players, and to stop the recent proliferation of weird forms of players' kit encroaching into the game.

If you spot a defect and then sanction it, the players will manipulate that chink in your armour, and try and use gamesmanship to bend a few more Laws with you as the game progresses. Also, if you spot a defect and then sanction it, it is you who has breached the Laws and not the player!

If this happens in the future, ask the player to remove the undershorts or replace them with a blue pair.

Question 12: If a goalkeeper standing in his own penalty area, leans out, but his feet stay inside the penalty area and he picks up the ball with his hands from outside of the penalty area, has an infringement taken place?

Answer 12: If a goalkeeper deliberately handles the ball outside of his own penalty area, it is a direct free kick offence. The free kick is taken from the place where the ball was handled. It makes no odds where the goalkeeper's feet are placed.

Question 13: I have a question on the laws regarding kicks from the penalty mark to determine the winner of a match.

I know there was some debate around this issue around a year or so ago regarding when to reduce and to equate.

Is it at the end of the match or is it before the kicks start. There is a time lag here. In the US they have decided it is when the match has finished. Here in Australia my affiliated body is telling me it is before the kicks start both sides must have an equal number of players. This is of course very different and potentially game changing. How do you interpret this in the UK?

Answer: 13: if you look at page 128 on the current Law book, in the chapter entitled, 'Interpretations of the Laws of the Game and guidelines for Referees' you will see the following paragraph.

"An equal number of players from each team is required only at the start of taking of kicks from the penalty mark."

Therefore, it is before the kicks start that both sides must have an equal number of players.

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

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

Regards, Julian Carosi (Editor)

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