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### EDITORIAL

1992 and a Happy New Year to all our readers. I hope the festive season went well and that the effects have worn off by now!

Sometimes I risk a forecast or two about the year to come but maybe it's wiser to stick to good resolutions. I suppose the basic one for a referee is to try to be a better referee than last year. A referee who has the ambition to be better and the practice of honest self-evaluation is going to improve.

This is the time to ask yourself whether you have become complacent. When did you last look seriously at the Chart? It's nice to be comfortable in your knowledge of the Laws and confident in your reactions, but are you really as sharp (and correct) as you used to be? Applying the Laws as energetically? Have you got the same physical edge? Why not take a newly trained referee out with you? Let him/her run one of your lines. Be forced to explain and justify your decisions and actions. It can be more salutary than trying to convince a more experienced colleague.

Time also to ask yourself about your contribution to refereeing more generally. Could you do more to help your colleagues, especially the less experienced? Your local society?

Whatever you do, have a good year.

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**PRESIDENT'S PIECE**

**Could happiness be the key to better refereeing?**

During the gloom and doom that seemed to prevail during 1991, I received some research information that could make the world a happier place for us all. This information, I might add, has nothing to do with football, but is very relevant to some of the work I do. However, it does contain, I feel, messages of importance to us as referees.

What is this research and what is the good news it brings? Well, it was simply into the question of being happy. The researchers claim to have proved that, if you look happy and tell yourself that you are happy, you will be just that. Facial expressions command the body and the emotions, the researchers say, so if you have decided how you want to feel, change your expression accordingly and your body will follow.

In fact the effects of smiling have long been known. Even a fake smile will affect how you feel and how you act. Telephone sales people are taught to 'smile when you phone'. The person at the other end can't see you, but you sound much better.

These recent tests, carried out by the Institute of Psychology at the National Research Institute in Rome, suggest that the key to a contented life is to stand in front of a mirror every morning wearing a broad smile and say out loud 'I'm happy, happy, happy.'

Dr Christiano Castelfranchi of the Institute said: 'Looking at yourself positively gives you positive emotions for the rest of the day. We have even found in examinations and other tests that if a person makes a happy face on a subject he hates, then his marks will be higher than if he pulls a terrible face and is miserable throughout the exam.'

Why not try it on a Saturday or Sunday morning, particularly if you have a difficult game ahead about which you may be feeling apprehensive? Isn't it better anyway to arrive at a ground with a smile instead of a frown? If it can improve examination results, what could it do to your refereeing assessments?

Can I wish you all a positively happy 1992? And keep smiling!

Dick Sawdon-Smith

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

### November

The meeting opened with the sad news that the intended Guest Speaker, Dave Dickinson, Training Officer for the Middlesex area, could not be with us in spite of his best intentions. He has had cancer diagnosed and was just starting a course of chemotherapy. Our best wishes would be sent.

Among the business items, two were discussed at some length:

- member John Machin had been assaulted. The assault was not considered serious enough for the police to prosecute and John had declined to go for a private prosecution. He had written to us to complain about Oxfordshire's treatment of the case: 84 days suspension and a £50 fine i.e. less than the penalty for even a technical assault. (Actual bodily harm merits a sine die suspension and a £200 fine). It was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Berks & Bucks County RA (copied to the Oxfordshire RA) asking them to take the matter up with the FA.

- the report in the Reading Chronicle of a match between Dee Road and Theale had been largely a criticism of the referee, and hardly mentioned the game. Members present at the match challenged both the accuracy of the 'facts' and the unfavourable judgments on the referee. The Chairman would take the matter up with the Sports' Editor of the Chronicle.

Other points:

- the possibility of a First Aid course in collaboration with the Reading Football League was being explored.

-there is a still a problem about the maintenance of local park pitches although some improvements have been reported.

- a member asked whether official linesmen could be appointed to local cup games before the semi-final stage. The leagues would be approached (yet again).

- physical training would re-start in the New Year.

- membership stood at 144.

Among the 90 or so in attendance were many of those newly qualified from the last course, and presentations were made by the Senior Training Officer, Stephen Green and President, Dick Sawdon-Smith, who welcomed our new colleagues, both to refereeing and to the Reading RA.

In the absence of a Guest Speaker, the second half was taken over by the Training Team who set members a basic question: 'What qualities do you need to have, develop and maintain as a referee?'

Members were divided into half a dozen groups, each with a cross-section of experienced and less experienced (even brand-new) members. To make it really difficult we had to try to rank-order the qualities 1 to 10. (Unfair, Graham).

What was interesting was not so much the product, the final suggestions, but the process. Spirited discussions/exchanges of views took place in all the groups: members were discussing refereeing issues with each other in an organised way - something we do all too rarely.

No prizes for the 'right' answers. Most groups came up with Knowledge and Application of the Laws; Man-Management; Honesty; Personality as the front-runners. The Training Team seemed well satisfied as were the participants. (Did George Mills' group really get something else as their first choice?. Maybe it was just a malicious rumour).

## **December**

The setting was festive and the Christmas Draw prizes beautifully displayed, thanks to the efforts of John Moore and his assistants. The Chairman observed the first tradition of our end-of-the-year meeting - an early start and the shortest business session possible.

- Greetings were received from our friends, the High Wycombe Society, together with an invitation to join them at their meeting on 24 January, when the Guest Speaker will be the FA Chief Executive, Graham Taylor.

- The question of pitch inspections and referees' liability is still under discussion at County RA level as well as in our committee. Meantime, continue to do your job properly.

- It was reported that the Southern Division will be recommending that the national RA insurance should stay as it is - there was no enthusiasm in the societies for any change (increase).

- There was no reply yet to our letter to the Berks & Bucks RA re the assault on member John Machin. The Oxford FA has heard an appeal - to which John was not invited. Watch this space.

- The Membership Officer, Peter Hitt, reported a new total of 167 members.

- Stephen Green, Senior Training Officer, gave details of the next training course. There would be a new venue because the Tilehurst location had not been entirely satisfactory. The course will start on **January 6** (details on page 15).

George Mills reported continuing good feedback about our training and mentorship schemes from the national RA Conference and more requests for copies of the video.

The second half, of course, was devoted to the Christmas Draw. After the disappointment of not having a larger than life Santa (Graham Stockton in disguise), members had to cope with the Chairman hosting the event in mufti. He made up for it in his usual style and got through a long list of prizes with the help of John's excellent organisation and the efforts of some of our longest-serving members (who looked a bit shattered by the end!) All good fun and some very lucky people. A camcorder for 20 pence can't be bad.

As if that wasn't enough pleasure for one evening, there was a very nice buffet supper to follow. A good and seasonal time was had by all - and there was enough profit from the Draw to pay, as planned, for the Children's visit to the Panto, with some left over. Thanks again to John Moore for all his efforts.

#### **NOTHING TO DO WITH CHAIRMAN GRAHAM**

Whitby Town have just completed an unusual transfer. The Northern League club have exchanged their midfielder Stephen Parks for one of Stockton's turnstiles.

'Turnstiles are very hard to come by, so it seemed like a good idea.,' Bob Scaife, the Whitby chairman, explained. I just hope it turns faster than Stephen did.'

Robert Pryce, The Guardian, 16/11/91

#### **FAIR PLAY AND LINESMAN'S AWARDS**

Every year the RA makes these awards on the basis of referees' marks, and so they are highly valued by the recipients. Obviously we need the marks.

**Alan Turner** issues the forms and collates the results. Please see him, get your forms, fill them in diligently and return them.

**SOME OF THE QUOTES OF 1991 (The Guardian, 24/12/91)**







**GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE**

As I have complained in the past, if ever I miss a Committee meeting they seem to come up with a good idea or two (there must be a moral there somewhere). Here's another of their initiatives.

For many of our newer members especially, 'the Committee' remains a bit of a mystery. They hear about, even recognise the odd member (I use the word advisedly) and that's about it. So why not tell you a bit more, especially about the more recent members?

Stewart Mills and Gary Webster are very recent: they only joined the Committee this season.

Stewart is very recent to refereeing too: he qualified in 1990 and was promoted to Class 2 at the end of the season. He has taken on the management of the RA 5-a-side football team, which does make you wonder. He referees on the Chiltonian, Reading Football and Sunday Leagues and the South Chiltern Minor League. He runs lines on the South East Counties.

**Stewart, why did you become a referee?**

After retiring as a player, it was a good way of retaining an interest in local football. Also my two sons play in local football and I started to referee their games. I soon realized that to do it properly I needed to become a referee.

**The biggest influence during your refereeing career, referee or other, and why?**

As I have only been refereeing for just under two years, the biggest influence to date has been the training team when I did the course: Stephen Green, Graham Stockton. John Moore, George Mills and John Lambden.

**Your most memorable game or honour as a referee, and why?**

My most memorable honour so far was being the no.1 Class 3 referee in my first year on the Sunday League, for which I was given a line on one of the League Cup finals.

**Your worst or most embarrassing moment in refereeing?**

My first assessment game (2 to 1) was at Berinsfield, Oxon. Badger holes in pitch, broken nets; two sent off, three cautioned; dog on the field tripped up a player causing an injury; mountain bikes put into field of play. Linesman threatened to punch a player's f...ing head in. Lots of lager-drinking spectators foul-mouthing players (Sunday morning, 10.30 a.m.!) The assessor went and hid on the far side

of the field away from all the flak. A fluke goal where a goalkick rebounded from an opponent's back straight into the top corner of the net. Full-time: 2-1 to Berinsfield.

Everyone seemed to enjoy it except the assessor - the manager had told him to p... o..!

**What, if anything, would you like to change in football?**

Verbal dissent: to be punished by advancing play 10 yards as in Rugby. Same solution for players not retiring 10 yards after being penalized.

**Other interests outside football?**

Tennis; house renovating. Running my own hairdressing and fashion accessories business.

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**Gary Webster** qualified in 1988 and went straight through to Class 1. He referees on the Basingstoke Saturday, North Hants and South East Counties Leagues, and runs lines on the Hampshire and Allied Counties. He's also served on the Chiltonian, Suburban, and Reading leagues.

**Gary, why did you become a referee?**

During the 15 years I played local football, I broke my right ankle on a couple of occasions which, towards the end of my playing career, caused numerous bruises and swellings. I therefore decided to take up refereeing so that I could put something back into the game I enjoy - as well as being able to watch fouls and late tackles from a safe distance instead of being on the other end of them!

**The biggest influence during your refereeing career, referee or other, and why?**

From the moment I took up refereeing, the biggest influences on my career have been the dedicated members of my particular course training team in 1989, namely George Mills, Stephen Green and Graham Stockton. Whenever I came across a particular incident or problem during a game, a

quick phone call to one of them, or a discussion at the RA meeting, and an answer or a solution would soon become apparent.

**Your most memorable game or honour as a referee, and why?**

The two most memorable games have so far been the 1989/90 Junior Cup Final, with my two colleagues Neil Isham and Ken Arlett, where I was fortunate to be approached to run the line. The second was a middle on the South East Counties League between Reading and Bristol City played at the end of last season and which finished up as a 4-4 draw. I thought I was physically fit until I refereed this particular fixture. It was a real eye-opener.

**Your worst or most embarrassing moment in refereeing?**

No contest! This was a Sunday League fixture played between Purley Jubilee and Turners' Arms during the 1989/90 season. The clocks went forward one hour, and guess who turned up to referee the game dead on 10-30? Purley Jubilee's manager refereed the game for the first 15 minutes, with supersub taking over for the rest of the game. Needless to say we all had a good laugh about it afterwards in the bar over a couple of beers.

**What, if anything, would you like to change in football?**

To overcome dissent by players, I would like to see the Laws amended to coincide with Rugby, where a referee is able to move the ball forward a further 10 yards. This would certainly make refereeing easier as the player's teammates would soon tell him to 'get on with the game'.

I would also like to see the offside law amended to provide the average football supporter with plenty of goalmouth incident and excitement. How about if the ball is played forward from within the team's own half of the field, that their colleague is not deemed to be in an offside position?

**Other interests outside football?**

Keeping fit, clay pigeon shooting, eating and drinking, and DIY with instruction and guidance provided by Rick (Reg Prescott) Auger.

Thanks Stewart and Gary. Don't forget to make yourselves known to as many members as possible at our meetings.

#### **BUT WHAT IS THE MORAL?**

And the refereeing at the Manchester derby is unlikely to be too fussy. Keith Hackett, in charge today, is the least officious official on the League list. In eight League games this season he has cautioned only two players and sent none off. Neil Midgeley, who will be at the Middlesbrough v Charlton game, has also produced only two yellow cards, in seven League games.

Contrast the performance of these veteran referees with the record of young Jimmy Parker, who will be officiating at the Darlington v Chesterfield FA Cup tie today. In nine League games this season he has handed out 36 yellow cards and three reds.

Robert Pryce, *The Guardian*, 16/11/91

#### **TRAINING COURSE**

The new course has just started - **on January 6th** - but it is not too late if someone keen wants to join. **Mondays** at the **Berkshire County Sports Club, Sonning Lane**. See **Stephen Green** for details.

#### **CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME**

Another really enjoyable visit to the Hexagon for children and adults involved. The only blemish was that more than one member who asked for seats gave backward at the last minute. Fortunately, thanks to the Chairman's energy, substitutes were found. No further comment.

#### **COUNTY RA MEETING**

Please note that the date of the next meeting has been **changed** from Monday 24 February **to 17 February**.

#### **WHY DO THESE THINGS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME?**

As usual I was the first to arrive at the ground. I had the choice of all the parking spaces and was able to park well away from the 'danger area' behind the goal.

Needless to say, early in the game a fierce shot was wildly deflected and the ball crashed straight into a car - my car. No, it didn't break the windscreen, but it did have enough force to set off the alarm.

The cheer from the players doubled in volume when I had to shout: 'Hang on a minute lads - that's my car!'

Gordon Crutchfield