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**EDITORIAL**

During my years as editor I have written a number of tributes about members who have died. When we lose an older colleague, there is always sadness but often the sense of 'a good and long innings'. But when we heard about Graham Stockton's tragic collapse, it wasn't like that at all. There was a deep sense of shock as well as the other emotions. The feeling was of a 'good innings' cut short with so much left to come. And it wasn't just Graham's family and RA members who felt the loss, all those who went to the funeral (and I guessed it was nearly 300) could see for themselves just how much so many people valued him and what he had done - in his work, his football, his refereeing and his life.

Not a good way to end our season. I was fortunate to have had a long conversation with Graham the previous evening - all about the future of refereeing and Reading RA. Ironically we had a special committee meeting planned for the Thursday, and after ringing round, the rest of the committee decided to hold it, particularly because it was to discuss an idea of Graham's and we were convinced that that was what he would have wanted. Up to us now to continue all he was hoping to achieve.

Have a good end of season refereeing-wise and a good summer. See you either at a six-a-side or two, or at the August meeting.

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### **PRESIDENT'S PIECE**

It seems to me that, as you get older, years seem to go so fast and almost run into one another without any dividing break, but I feel that this past season will be one that we will all remember, and in years to come will say "That was 1992/93".

It has been the season of course that saw one of the most revolutionary changes to our game: the banning of the goalkeeper handling the ball after a pass from a colleague. There is no doubt that clubs themselves forced this change but, despite some early horror stories, it hasn't turned out to be the disaster that was so readily forecast.

It has also been the season which saw the introduction of the FA Premier League, which didn't really seem much different to the old First Division, except that games were played on a variety of days and times to suit the satellite station to whom the FA had sold out. Perhaps the most noticeable difference has been the uniform of the referees. I suppose it's a sign of my advancing years that I find our traditional black more natural, more authoritative, more neutral. But, as one of the few who still wear scrubbed white laces, I'm sure that the swing to coloured uniforms will be unstoppable.

For us as a society, we will be long stunned by the tragic, untimely death of Graham, our Chairman. Graham's exuberance makes his passing all the more unbelievable and, as President, I knew from our meetings that this sometimes masked his sensitivity of purpose. He will be missed.

From a personal point of view, this is my last season as your President, for my permitted 5-year term comes to an end. It also marks the 40th anniversary of my membership of the Association. In that time I have seen many members contribute so much to make Reading a name that is recognised throughout the Referees' Association for innovative and radical ideas. I'm sure that, although 1993 may be some sort of watershed, we will continue to produce members who will take us further forward.

Dick Sawdon Smith

[Although this is Dick's last contribution to the magazine as President, he has promised, with only gentle arm-twisting, to continue to inform and entertain us with regular articles. Under a new title of course. Thanks, Dick, for all your wise words. Ed]

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#### **GRAHAM STOCKTON, CHAIRMAN, READING RA**

Wednesday 21 April. It began as an ordinary evening and then my telephone never stopped. Shock, disbelief and shared sadness. Graham had collapsed and died at the age of 43 refereeing a senior division match. If it had to be, I guess that is what he would have wanted.

Graham had been our Chairman for only two years but, in the best sense, it seemed longer. It was not so much that he had breathed some new life into the society, it was more like a gale-force wind. He never did anything by halves and frequently went over the top. That was Graham - a big man in every respect.

When Graham was elected - a bit to everyone's surprise including his - he galvanised us all by producing a detailed scheme of things to be done. It was all about making things happen to improve the standards of refereeing and to support rank and file referees on the local parks. He risked unpopularity by stressing our obligation to the players and admitting that we were not all doing the job well enough. The players deserved the best and it was up to us to be professional and deliver it. There wasn't anything really new on the list - what was new was that it was all together and urgent.

Of course, as he readily admitted and as older members will remember. he was a bit of a poacher turned gamekeeper. As a well-known local player, he took no prisoners, and as player and later as manager, he often had what could best be described as an uneasy relationship with the officials. But he would argue that he always respected those officials who were worthy of respect. That was what led him to work tirelessly for high quality and dedicated referees, and he saw the RA as the only means of achieving that ideal.

Graham's contribution was not only as Chairman. He was a very active and committed member of the training team, because he

knew that's where it all starts. He was greatly stimulated by the course leading to his qualification as a Referee Instructor which not only helped him in his training role, it also increased his understanding of the bigger world of refereeing and the national RA, and introduced him to colleagues from other parts as well as to senior members of the FA.

In particular, Graham was keen to get some things made compulsory, like tougher training and re-training, and re-classification (down as well as up), and he hoped the RA, in partnership with the County FA, would take increasing responsibility for assessment.

Last year was his first visit to the National RA Conference and he loved it. He met a few people he knew but was delighted to make many new friends. He was really looking forward to going to Liverpool next month.

As a man, Graham could never pass unnoticed even in a large crowd, and his natural loudness was dismissed by some as mere bombast or arrogance. But that was Graham. Underneath, surprisingly, there was a shy, sensitive, thoughtful and self-critical man who was desperately frustrated by what he saw as inadequacy, bureaucracy and tired-thinking. Like all those who try to get things done, he didn't always get it right, and he was only beginning to understand the wider issues, but his commitment was unswerving - to make things better for the sake of the sport and people he loved: football, footballers and referees.

He will be greatly missed and we send our deepest sympathy to Maureen and their sons, Barry and Michael.

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## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

### **March**

A disappointing 45 or so in attendance. As the Chairman commented, members do seem to miss a Guest Speaker however much they enjoy training sessions.

Among news reported, members heard that Ted Cambridge and Mick Costello were recovering from illness and surgery

respectively; Cliff Watkins had been appointed to the middle of the Norfolkian Cup final. Less happy was the news about a Class 1 whose reports had been returned by the FA as unsatisfactory and another referee suspended for not attending to correspondence. Members supported the action taken and hoped the society would help in appropriate ways. The most recent Berks & Bucks disciplinary figures were given:

754 dismissals (949 last year)  
3397 cautions (3008)

As part of the preparation for the AGM, the Treasurer produced a revealing breakdown of how we spend our money by showing the income/expenditure for an individual member.

Among league business, some confusion was reported among Reading FL referees in relation to confirmation of appointments. Simple advice: if you don't hear, take the initiative and get in touch. Discussion then moved to cases of serious injury and whether to abandon the game. As always, down to the referee and the particular circumstances. Talk to people but the referee has to make the judgement.

The Whistlers (11-a-side) had lost 2-4 to Dawson's Dozen at Palmer Park on 3 March but enjoyed themselves. The successful run of the 5-a-side team in the County/National competition had come to an end (but they play again in the County RA competition we are hosting on 16 May).

The Chairman was delighted to report that no fewer than 46 of our members would be involved this year (against the tiny handful last year) as officials for the Reading Royals Cup Competition.

At the last County RA meeting it was noted that 3 assault cases had been dealt with by heavy fines and suspensions. Members agreed that the Reading RA should propose Malcolm Hutt of Bracknell RA at the AGM for the Chairmanship.

There was a plea for more to join in the (physical) training sessions at Arborfield because numbers had dropped off somewhat and it was a marvellous facility we couldn't afford to lose (see Pat Monaghan or Graeme McLay).

The Training Session after half-time was conducted by Senior Training Officer, Stephen Green. He posed a number of problem

situations and members took a lively part in the discussion. As always no simple, single answers. Pat Monaghan quoted a problem he had recently had concerning instructions to linesmen. He described very honestly how he had got himself into a situation where he had to caution against his better judgment to keep faith with his pre-match briefing and his linesman.

## **April**

A disappointing attendance again (though some, like the editor, did have the excuse of being away).

The business part, I am told, was pretty well all routine and Chairman Graham had to work hard to keep up the enthusiasm. After half-time he encouraged feedback particularly on the season's monthly meetings. The committee was concerned that members should say what their preferences were, especially as the last three meetings had been less well attended than usual.

As suspected, members present at least would have preferred more guest speakers because they bring a change of perspective, quite apart from being interesting speakers - well, most of those we have had in the past have been. Although training evenings are always enjoyed by the participants at the time, they don't seem to encourage people to turn out of a warm home on a winter evening.

The committee members got the message and will welcome suggestions for good speakers who are involved in some way with football and/or refereeing. Tell us now, if not sooner - the programme is already being prepared.

## **PROMOTIONS**

Congratulations to the following members who have achieved their promotion this season - good to see so many after the small number last year - and special congratulations to Dave Newman, Graham Wallace and Ken Wiltshire who've come from Class 3 in two seasons. Commiserations to those who tried but didn't make it this time. There's always next season.

**Class 2 to 1:** D. Crossland, T.A. Fallon, K. Hodgson,  
R.W. Maybanks, D.W. Newman, G. Wallace,  
K.J. Wiltshire

**Class 3 to 2:** K. Davies, A.J. Fostekew, G. McLay,  
M. A. Makepiece, J.B. Peacock,  
J.G.F. Ralston, I.R. Sharp, P. Strudley,  
I.F. Tillson, I.G. Williamson, C. Winter

### **UNKIND**

One of his fellow referees visited Mick Costello in hospital after his recent knee operation. 'Will you be able to referee when you get out of hospital Mick?' 'Oh yes they say so,' said Mick confidently. 'I'm really pleased about that' said his colleague, 'cos you couldn't bloody referee when you came in!'

[All in jest Mick. Glad to hear you're making a good recovery. See you back on the parks next season if not before. Ed]

### **INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEETING 1993**

[My friend and fellow-editor Gordon Isaacs of the Harrow Society seems just a wee bit cynical about the activities of our law-making/changing body. And the home countries have four of the eight members!]

The International Board - the law changing authority in world football - met last month in St Albans and, as usual it seems, tinkered about with the Laws for no good reason.

Let us look at their pronouncements.

1. They gave approval for an experiment on kick-ins to replace throw-ins and this will be tried out in youth competitions firstly in Turkey and then in Japan.

#### Comment

What happens if the defending side 'kick-in' back to the goalkeeper? Is this construed as a back pass and as such penalised? Attackers cannot be offside for a throw-in at present. Will this apply to kick-ins too? It is much easier to send a good centre via the foot than it is from hand. Will the defenders have to retire ten yards? I'm sure it will all be

of revealed in due course but it seems like a can worms to me.

2. Sudden death play-offs will be tried out at the World Youth Cup in Australia.

Comment

It is not clear whether this is to apply after extra time or instead of extra time. I would find this a better alternative than penalty shoot-outs even if it takes longer! Let us await clarification.

3. Players sent off for a second caution will be shown the yellow card followed by the red card and no longer simultaneously.

Comment

This must have stretched their brain cells.

4. Players circumventing the back-pass law by a trick (e.g. heading the ball while on the ground) will be cautioned.

Comment

It is a very common matter for players to head the ball back to their goalkeepers whilst lying on the ground (I don't think)! The whole charade is getting out of hand with riders being added on every season to clarify an unclear and involved decree in the first place.

5. Goalkeepers will be urged to implement the four step rule.

Comment

By whom? The referee? Their managers and coaches? What a load of cobblers! The Law is there for referees to apply and all that is necessary is that they do. Unfortunately the Italian



referees I have seen in action on Channel 4 seem totally unable to count to 'quattro' which makes a farce of the whole intention. 'Goalkeepers will be urged' indeed.

Caution them, that's all that's needed to raise their mathematical levels to 'A'.

6. Discussions will continue as to whether it should be permissible to substitute the goalkeeper with another for tactical reasons rather than just injury.

Comment

Now that substitute goalkeepers are allowed in the Premier League it is perhaps a little strange that their use is currently limited. Bearing in mind the freedom of substitutes for out-field players, I cannot see why goalkeepers should not similarly be treated.

7. The Board agreed to allow coaching 'from a designated technical area' by a nominated person.

Comment

How will the coach be identified and where will the area be? Interesting to apply this at park level I should think! Not a lot of designated areas at Clitterhouse.

Gordon Isaacs

**HOW SERIOUS DOES FOUL PLAY HAVE TO BE?**

Regular readers will know that I have little sympathy for Gazza's extreme antics and I certainly think he brought his knee problem upon himself. However, the recent damage to his cheekbone is very different.

Of course we don't know what was behind it - whether Gazza was being paid back for some of his own nastiness - but we do know that that would be no explanation or excuse for what millions saw on TV.

The elbow, as recognised many moons ago in our sister sport, rugby football, is a pretty fearsome weapon when used with callous intent, and it certainly seemed to be on Gazza. Some

critics, including referees, lay the blame neatly at Peter Mikklesen's door - too young and inexperienced (at 32 probably the youngest on the FIFA list). Was that really the problem?

We have to assume he saw something unfair because he penalised the challenge. More than that is unclear (unless he has said something I haven't seen). Either he didn't get a proper view of what we saw and assumed the contact was accidental, or, and much more worrying, he considered a deliberate elbow not to be 'serious foul play'. I can't believe it was the second.

What is clear is that the use of the elbow/stiff forearm is increasing in the professional game at least, and professional players will presumably get better at making it look accidental. The complication is that it is perfectly natural/inevitable to have arms bent and away from the body for balance when you are jumping high to win possession. The referee, even when normally well positioned can't always get those clues from the eyes that signal intent.

What's to be done? Dean Saunders was punished last season on video evidence - one of its few legitimate uses I would have thought, because it assisted the referee rather than undermined his authority (but FIFA don't seem to be going to do that to Wouters in spite of their apparent keenness on fair play). Some players in the Football League have been caught during this season and sent off, so that may be a growing deterrent in the domestic game. But, as always, the solution really lies with the players themselves. If they are determined to cheat, we will not catch them every time whatever we do.

## **AWARDS**

The Reading RA makes two awards annually in recognition of what local clubs do for us - making our task easier either by fair play or by the quality of their linesman.

Congratulations to this year's winners and to all who did their best on both counts but didn't manage to get in the top three.

### **The Bert Newman Fair Play Award**

1. Forest Old Boys (last year's runners-up)

2= Goring )  
 Old Presentonians )

**Linesman's Award**

1. T. McDougall (Checkendon) (3rd last year)
2. M. Pinfold (Compton) (a previous winner)
3. P. Goswell (Cholsey)

Alan Turner, who looks after the marks and does the sums thanks all the referees who fill in their forms and make it all possible. And we in turn thank Alan for all his efforts.

**THE DINNER AND DANCE IS THIS SATURDAY.  
 HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE.  
 HAVE A GREAT EVENING!**

**THE PLUM TREE**

Cup final time again and I have the enjoyable task of recording our congratulations to those of our members - by definition a minority - who have received appointments.

At the risk of being accused of being sexist, I think we should send special congratulations to Alison Chapman who has a line on the Reading Senior Cup Final. That is no mean achievement for any colleague of her age and stage. We wish her a really good game.

Commiserations to the majority of our members who have not (quite) made it this year.

[And apologies in advance, as always, to anyone whose appointment I have missed because I haven't been notified of it. Do tell me, even after the event, so that you can eventually get a mention]

**Berks & Bucks FA**

Senior Cup:	R.S. Over (line)
Senior Trophy:	J.W. Moore (middle)
Sunday Intermediate Cup:	A.P. Wellsted (line)
Sunday Minor Cup:	C. Watkins (line)

**Oxfordshire FA**

Senior Cup: S.A. Mills (line)

**Norfolkian Cup**

C. Watkins (middle)

**Hellenic Football League**

Premier Division Challenge Cup: A.P. Wellsted (line)

Reserve Division Cup: P.R. Hitt (line)

**Reading Challenge Cup**

(referee named first)

Senior Cup: C. Watkins; J.A. Billins, A.K. Chapman  
(reserve official: G. Way)

Junior Cup: C.K. Pike; G. Crutchfield, I.R. Tilbrook  
(reserve official: M.S. Baker)

Jubilee Cup: R.P. Auger, I.F. Tillson (lines)

**Reading Football League**

Berkshire Centre Trophy

Senior Cup: J.E. Flurry; I.R. McNelly  
(reserve official: D. Crossland)

Intermediate Cup: K. Hodgson; D.W. Newman, K.J. Wiltshire

Junior Cup: M.A. Makepiece; P. Strudley, I.F. Tillson

**Reading & District Sunday League**

Tilehurst Charity Cup: W.G. Penny (middle)

Industrial Cup: A.D. Awbery; T. Walton

E. Cambridge Cup: S.A. Mills; R. Burch, G.W. McLay

Ronald Nash Cup: A.P. Wellsted; J.B. Peacock

Harold Lusted Shield: P.R. Hitt; M.A. Makepiece

John Lusted Trophy: A. Brown (line)

Treasurer's Cup: D. Crossland (middle)

Subsidiary Cup: R.W. Maybanks; I. Hatt

**Reading & District Sunday Youth League**

Vic Beasley Cup: T. Walton; M. Bellman

U/18 Subsidiary Cup: T. Walton (line)

Town Crier Shield: T. Walton (line)

Nick Sutton Memorial Trophy: M. Bellman; T. Walton (line)

**AN APOLOGY FROM THE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE**

At the April meeting, a number of members were embarrassed and justifiably annoyed when the Chairman was given the wrong list and inadvertently confused candidates for promotion with those actually promoted. The officers and committee apologise again and asked to have their apologies recorded in this issue of the magazine.

#### **ANON**

I have received a contribution for the magazine which I can't consider using because it is anonymous. As regular readers know, I prefer things to be published over a name for a variety of reasons but I sometimes agree to publish without attribution as long as I know who wrote the piece. If my anonymous contributor would like to ring me we can take it from there . . .

#### **SOME MORE THINGS UNLIKELY TO BE SAID**

[A number of members told me how much they enjoyed last time's, so here are three more. All I have room for. Ed]

I've not had a badly filled-in report all season - Ted Cambridge

I'm sorry, we've sold out of RA ties - Kevin Parsons

Wear all the jewellery you like and I'm not doing studs this week either - Martin Shearn

#### **THE GRAHAM STOCKTON INVITATION SHIELD**

Thanks to the generosity of Gowrings of Wokingham, this new award has been established for an annual 11-a-side match between Reading RA and Bracknell RA. The first game has already been played and, fittingly, Reading won 3-2.

#### **TAILPIECE**

Among the new Football League referees for 1993/94 is John Holbrook who started his refereeing in High Wycombe in 1979. Well done John and Wycombe. What is intriguing, however, is that (according to The Midland Referee - a usually totally reliable source), he is now a member of three RAs, Kidderminster, Shrewsbury and South Shropshire, and he is

secretary of the last-named as well. This must be some sort of record.

How ever does he find the time or the money for the subs (although I hear he does work in a bank . . .)?