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**EDITORIAL**

"Not a vintage England performance", said Trevor Brooking towards the end of the European Championship qualifier against Poland. You can say that again.

I thought that particular game ought to have carried a health warning. How thoroughly depressing, especially after recent experience of seeing the class of club sides like Benfica. Just that one moment of brilliance from Linekar that got everybody off the hook. Particularly sad to see the new caps, with the exception perhaps of Daley, not justifying their selection. Especially as I am one of those who think England managers tend to be too conservative. Of course we could just blame the referee as the commentators did. What did you think?

In contrast I have done a couple of youth games in the last two weeks, both of which were full of skill and honest endeavour (and without problem parents). I also found a local ground I happened not to have been to before - Laurel Park. That wasn't the best bit. It was a real pleasure to be welcomed by an actual groundsman who had tied the nets and marked the pitch properly and who responded to my genuine thanks. It beats corporate leisure management and roving teams of groundstaff any day.

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### **PRESIDENT'S PIECE**

#### **Why Don't You Do Something About It?**

During the 20 odd years that I edited the Reading Referee, I had a policy of not printing jokes. Not that I am averse to a good laugh, but I didn't really see the need for them and I felt that many of my fellow referee society editors merely used them to fill up the spaces.

However, at the September meeting I was reminded of a joke which, with Brian's permission, I would like to repeat.

[Feel free Dick, I've never taken quite the same view. Ed]

This was the meeting, of course, when the Chairmen and Secretaries of the Reading Saturday and Sunday Leagues came along for a discussion with members to sort out any problems that we might have.

I can't recall all of the joke, but it appears that there was a very religious man who was involved in a shipwreck of some sort. As he clung to a piece of wreckage, a boat came along offering to rescue him. "Don't worry about me" the man in the water said, "the Lord will take care of me". A little later a helicopter flew overhead with an offer to hook him out of the water, but he told them not to bother either, as "the Lord will look after me". Eventually he drowned and went to heaven. "Lord", he said, "why did you let me drown. I had faith that you would take care of me". To which the Lord replied "Well I did send you a boat and a helicopter".

Not very funny perhaps, but I was reminded of it because so many members came up with the cry to our guests "Why don't you do something about . . . ?", only for the league representatives to point out that the problem was already covered in their league rules. Their problem is that they can't do anything about infringements of their rules unless they are told about them. In other words, unless referees report them.

Two points stood out in my mind. Firstly, we should learn the rules of any competition on which we officiate, and know what that competition expects of us. Secondly, we should accept the

responsibility that this imposes on us. Like the man in the water, we shouldn't leave it for those on high to sort things out in some miraculous way. We should do our bit to help ourselves.

Dick Sawdon Smith

## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

### **September**

The first meeting of the season with guest speakers and some 70 members in attendance, including John Cooke of the AFA who was warmly welcomed. (He said later he had come along because of the Reading RA's reputation as a forward-looking society etc. We hope he wasn't disappointed).

A number of business items to report:

- national RA is canvassing opinion about an increase in the benefits of our insurance policy which covers us for loss of belongings and against injury, including £50 per week for total loss of earnings. By raising our individual annual premium from £2 to £3, the weekly figure could be increased to £100. Members had a lot of questions and it became clear we had too little information about existing benefits to make an informed decision. The committee would look further into the matter.

- the VAT man cometh. The Treasurer told members of the National RA's problem. It is now being said that our subscriptions have been liable for VAT since 1989. The sum already alleged to be outstanding amounts to over £1 per member. So societies are asked to remit £1 per member to help the NRA put up the money, while hoping to get it back on appeal! It was agreed that the Reading RA would comply and send the £1 per member, but voluntary contributions of £1 were asked for to help defray the cost for our society. (Those not present can send their £1 to the Treasurer or pay next month if they wish).

- membership stood at 111 mid-September, an increase over recent years.

- a full new team strip has been bought for the 'Whistlers' but it will be available on loan to members for the nominal charge of £5 (plus making good any loss, damage etc.)

- the fitness programme was held successfully in August/September and will continue at Arborfield given support. Bracknell RA had already offered 12 participants which we need to match. Tuesdays until Christmas; organized by Pat Monaghan.

- information was available about a physio clinic (from Dave Jeanes)

- the Supplies Officer announced the arrival of the 1991/2 Charts and new RA boots

- Derek Mackenzie raised the question of members' legal liability (for injury to players). It was agreed the committee should explore the possibility of insurance.

- Richard Highfield commented on the poor press coverage of the law changes. Stephen Green, who had sent the press release as Training Officer, would try to encourage our press colleagues to do more.

The second half saw local league representatives at the front and on the spot: John Dell and Dave Jeanes of the Reading Football League; Ted Cambridge and Norrie Hart of the Reading Sunday League.

The Chairman fired the opening question: What would you like referees to do to help the local leagues?

Ted had two precise wishes: to have referees who were able to take responsibility, and enough to cover every match

John, who quickly (too quickly perhaps) protested he was 'not anti-referee' as reputed, thought the real question was 'What can we do for each other, for football.' The league is ready to help referees but we must apply their rules, so they can act. If we don't tell them of clubs' misdemeanours, how do they know? The point was accepted, but it was suggested that the leagues could also help. For example, by telling clubs that under the latest International Board decisions cycling shorts of a different colour from the shorts must not be worn and referees will not allow them. The referees job is easier then. Warnings about jewellery would help too.

Could the rules of the two leagues - already similar - not be identical? Ted seemed willing, John less so.

One member pointed out the determination of the RA to improve the standard of refereeing but could only help, or at worst discipline, its own members. Why didn't the leagues appoint only RA members? Because, said John Dell, that would lose them some referees and they would rather have any referee than a game without. I guess we all disagreed, except Ted Cambridge that is.

John announced that the Reading FL is going to be a feeder to the Hellenic; Ted reminded members of his ambition to have an active 'Reading Football Alliance' of all the interested parties in local football, meeting at regular intervals for this sort of interchange. He also referred to the Loyalty Bonus for Sunday League referees.

All present agreed the session had been valuable. The leagues would certainly take our comments on board and the Reading Football League will consider devoting one of its newsletters to the topics raised. The RA on its side would continue to strive for closer understanding and co-operation.

## **October**

The meeting opened with news that Joe Shackleford had died (see page 9) but Don Sergeant was improving and home from hospital.

The main items of a short business section were:

- a report from the Secretary that one of our members had been assaulted the previous weekend. He had correctly informed the police but they would not take action (presumably because they did not consider the injuries sufficiently serious. The member had declined the possibility of civil action, so the matter of punishment rested with the Oxford FA. The Secretary reminded members that the Society and the national RA fully support any assaulted member, and if players committing assaults are inadequately punished, it increases the risks for other referees.

- an outline of his plans from Peter Pittaway, in charge of the Mentorship scheme this season. Peter repeated the call for

assistance. (In fact 46 members have already volunteered so we should have no shortage of help).

The Guest Speaker was Jack Pearce and most of the 60+ members stayed to hear his highly entertaining and informative talk.

Jack started by warning us that he holds strong opinions. He is at present both Manager and Chairman of Bognor Regis FC - a rather unusual combination. As a boy he played in his home area of Portsmouth and had a trial with Brighton. He admitted freely he wasn't good enough. He played in a good standard of football with Farnham and Gosport and then joined Bognor in 1970 when they were bankrupt. He was "a pain for referees". The club had problems but the team did well, getting into the Southern League. Jack was banned as a player in 1975, went back later as captain and was sent off in his first game for kicking an opponent! And he accepted that the referee was right (again).

So, in 1976 he was asked to be manager of a club that was broke. He made up a side with 16 year olds and avoided relegation. All the Directors resigned except one and he was given power to make all the major decisions.

In Bognor the club means something to the town. He has always aimed at a family club and sees it as a vital part of the community. He lets the facilities free to schools for prestige games. The club has nine teams at youth level and is a Centre of Excellence. Under 16s are allowed free into the ground to encourage commitment to the club. The club has to find all the money they spend, so they have an innovative commercial side: 2200 outlets for their lottery; door-to-door bingo; guests for games; sponsorship. They have recently asked 100 people to pledge £100 each and they have done so. The club needs to find £75,000 a year to continue - with a wage bill of £1,500-£2,000 a week - but Jack always tries to do things well: their hospitality is second to none, he says, even for referees.

On youth football Jack commented that youngsters are given the wrong priorities - the youth game has become too competitive. He would prefer no 11-a-side under 14 so that all the players could be involved and concentrate on skills. The professional game is the worst possible model - Alan Robinson was right to call some players cheats.

In response to a question about sending players back 10 yards for dissent, Jack's reply was "you'd need a long pitch"! He believes

the Laws don't need tampering with. It's the players who misbehave who spoil the game. (He did say later he liked this season's change of Law about goalkeepers).

Referees?

- Consistency. Jack expects it within a game but does not expect it from game to game because every game is different. "We are not yet into computerized refereeing". Referees are all different in stature, temperament and so on. He expects us to use our skills as managers of people. "Use your personality". The referee should aim to enjoy the game and make it enjoyable for 22 players. We could be consistent about goalkeepers' moving at penalties, about banning jewellery etc.

- fitness. Jack expects referees to be fit, full stop. The game is a lot quicker and if the players are fit the referee should be willing to put in as much time to be just as fit. "Decisions don't matter in the middle 3rd of the park, but they do in the last 3rd - so the referee has to be there".

- the professional foul? No problem if managers, referees, the FA did their job, managers in particular. Having said that, Jack would like an intermediate punishment - just a free kick where intention was unclear but the foul did happen.

- lining. Jack believes many linesmen flag too soon for the ball out of play - they don't seem to him to know the ball has to be completely over the line. (He did get the distance/size of the ball quite wrong however). His problem with off-side is the player running back. Why should he be penalized?

Jack was a brilliant speaker. His language was colourful - he never used a five letter word where a four letter word would do - and he combined repartee and good sense from beginning to end. His audience was captivated and it has to be admitted he talked a lot more refereeing sense than many referees. (Maybe it was all those sendings-off in his youth. . . ) Chairman Graham Stockton thanked him on behalf of the members and presented him with an inscribed tankard.

#### **ARE WE ALL UNDER PRESSURE?**

I took the match ball into the dressing room having asked the home manager to pump his soggy pudding up to a decent pressure (a little

to his surprise). A fellow referee sitting in the changing room (owner of a pressure gauge, as indeed I am, asked whether I would like him to test it. "No", says I, pride slightly wounded, "I'm sure it's legal". Unwilling to be put off, he asks me to estimate the pressure. Too clever to be caught giving an actual figure, I say "Towards the top end of the range". He tested it and, with a smile, declared it to be just over 10 p.s.i. Legal, so I was right. But only just.

Apparently he has tried this ploy out on other referees before and we all tend to underestimate, some accepting a pressure well below the legal limit.

The moral? Either improve your technique or buy a pressure gauge (or use the one you've got every time and not just for cup finals).

[I decided afterwards your gauge must have been reading low, Terry, but I forgot to re-test the ball with mine! Ed]

### **LOSS OF A FRIEND**

Older referees will certainly remember Joe Shackelford who has died at the age of 67. He was an unmistakable figure, active on the local parks until the late 70s. He wasn't small, he was minute, but with such a big personality he was respected by the players and everyone else connected with local football. Our condolences to his family.

### **ACCELERATED PROMOTION**

Much has been the agony in the past about the slowness of getting to Class 1 and through the pyramid to the highest refereeing echelons. I regularly congratulate those of our colleagues who go from 3 to 1 in the minimum three years. It appears to be different elsewhere.

The cutting is from a Turkish newspaper Alan Wellsted just happened to be reading recently ('reading' may be going a bit far - its name 'Fotospor' is the giveaway)



What it says amongst other things, he tells us (thanks to his friendly waiter who acted as translator), is that Erman Toroglu, the top Turkish referee, qualified in 1984 and refereed his first international in 1989. He has had 20 international appointments to date. That could be considered a bit quick, but someone is obviously appointing him. Is our system possibly a bit too slow?

[On the same page were photos of a female Turkish League referee. Not only has she achieved league status, she was disciplining a player and concluded by showing the red card.]

**DID YOU SEE THIS?**

On BBC South Today (6/11/91) the report of a 9 (nine) year old sent off for deliberate hand-ball. Apparently he handled the ball on the goal-line and the 14 year old referee sent him off. The County FA hearing was brought forward in the evening on account of his bed-time! The result of the hearing, reported later, was that he was suspended for a week and his parents said they would complain to FIFA.

The incident does raise a few questions. Some would argue it is improper for a 9 year old to be subjected to sending off and a

hearing and subsequent suspension (though the hearing could obviously have been avoided). Others would insist that the Laws are the Laws and they apply irrespective of age etc.

Of course both are right. The question for me is, as always, one of intent. While a mature professional player who handles on the goal-line would be expected to have intended it - he would certainly be castigated by his manager for doing it accidentally - a 9 year old might arguably be different. Perhaps he did what came instinctively and naturally. Maybe he saw a ball flying towards him and the goal and, lacking the maturity of experience, simply put his hands to it. Would you really call that serious foul play?

Whatever actually happened, how many of us, if we did think the hand-ball was intentional, would have sent a 9 year old off? Do you have to be 14 years old to be that correct?

. . . . **OR THIS?**

The Football Supporters' Association says that 62 per cent of paying spectators want penalty shoot-outs scrapped. According to a survey published yesterday by the FSA, 74 per cent of fans favour a natural finish with replays if necessary - and the most popular way of forcing a result is to carry on playing until a goal is scored.

The FSA is submitting the survey to FIFA, UEFA and the FA - whose own cup-ties will this season be settled on penalties -after the first replay.

Professional referees are favoured by 73 per cent, but that suggestion has already been vetoed by clubs who will be involved in next season's Premier League launch.

There is overwhelming support, however, for the tougher stance against the professional foul. Eighty per cent back the extension to include deliberate handball, and 91 per cent demand the yellow card for players who dive or feign injury.

The Guardian, 7/11/91

[I guess we welcome some of the comments, especially the last paragraph. At the risk of boring those who've heard it before, much as I dislike penalty shoot outs, playing to the next goal is not the solution. It has been tried. I was at the historic Division 3 North Cup match in 1946 (in my youth!) at Stockport County (v. Doncaster Rovers) which led to its discontinuation.

The deciding goal came at about 10 to 7 pm (3 o'clock kick-off) after 3 hours 25 minutes of play! Some spectators had been home for tea and come back again. The players could hardly stand, let alone play football. I can't remember the state of the officials - I didn't think about them at that time I suppose. The whole thing was a farce, best never repeated. Ed]

#### **HOW GOOD IS YOUR MEMORY?**

On April 25th 1991, I had the pleasure of refereeing a Youth Cup Final. During the game I had to send a player off for persisting in misconduct after having received a caution. There were also a couple of other cautions which were all reported to the relevant County FA. When asked after the match, both linesman agreed with the sending-off.

About 6 weeks later I had a letter informing me that the player had appealed against the sending-off, and I was asked to give my open dates for the hearing. This I did, and requested that my neutral linesmen also be requested to attend. The hearing was to be held in Northfleet, Kent.

The hearing was duly arranged for June. A couple of days before it was due to take place, I had a phone call saying the player had decided to tour Europe for three months, therefore the hearing was postponed. I had almost forgotten about the appeal when I received a phone call late in September asking if I would be available for a hearing on Thursday 10th October - nearly six months after the match! I said I was, and the hearing was set for that date at Northfleet in Kent at 7-30 pm.

Everybody arrived on time and the hearing started. I was told that the appeal was on the first caution and not the second. The main question I was asked was what happened just before the caution incident. I said I could not remember. The player's representative then played a video-recording of that part of the match, which they said they had watched many times. There was a slight incident between two players and a sound of a whistle. I was asked if it was mine. I said I could not be sure as I was not seen in the picture, but it sounded like mine. I could say no more. Presumably all this was to show I couldn't remember exactly what had happened.

The other point raised was that I said the tackle was from behind. When questioned, I gave my opinion that anywhere other than level or in front of the player is from behind.

The demonstration of the tackle by the player's representative was in my opinion from behind.

The details of the incident before the caution were highlighted and played in slow motion a few times. At no time was the fact that the video was taken from the opposite side to my position mentioned and, as the referee, you are only allowed to answer the question and not put forward questions of your own. You must rely on the Commission to do this for you, which I felt was not the case at this hearing.

The view shown was totally different to mine. It reminded me of the Gascoigne incident. When I first saw it I thought it was not bad, but when shown from the other angle it definitely was a very dangerous challenge.

The decision of the Commission at the hearing was not communicated to us (and we still don't know the outcome).

The reason for this article is to question how well you record your cautions and how much you rely on your memory. I always prided myself on making extensive notes on the cautions I have administered immediately after the match, as I had in this case. But it would appear that a previous incident a few seconds before, involving two other players should also have been noted. Even after seeing the video at the hearing, I still did not recall it. Did it happen? The edited version of the video said it did. How good do you think your memory would have been??

David Keen

#### **REMINDER**

Members are reminded to make it clear on disciplinary report forms, if a sending off for 'serious foul play' was as a result of the FIFA Mandatory Instruction ie for preventing an 'obvious goal-scoring opportunity'. The reason is that the sanctions are different. Serious foul play (traditional version) - 21 days plus £10 fine. New version - **7 days** plus £10 fine. You may of course wonder whether FIFA has got it right.

[Thanks to David Pointer for pointing this out in the Chronicle and Echo, quoted by Dick Skellington, editor of the Milton Keynes Society magazine 'Whistle Stop'. Ed]

**SCOTTISH FA DOES GET IT RIGHT**

Did you see that report about Celtic trying to influence the choice of referee for their games? This is how Patrick Glenn described it in the Guardian:

"Celtic have been taken to task by the Scottish FA for an extraordinary attempt to prevent the future appointment of the referee Jim McCluskey to officiate at their matches.

The club sent a letter to the SFA stating their unhappiness with McCluskey's performance in the Old Firm match at Parkhead on August 31, when Rangers won 2-0. The complaint was rejected within minutes by the disciplinary committee.

The committee then issued a statement advising Celtic 'in unambiguous terms, that it is not a matter for a club to seek to influence refereeing gradings or appointments'".

What will the clubs think of next?

**MAYBE THEY CAN LEARN FROM US**

Not infrequently over the years I have written about what the rules of other sports might offer us. Obvious examples are the 10 yard rule in rugby and the 'sin-bin'. However, all this World Cup exposure has pointed up the difficulties of refereeing the 15-a-side game in spite of the continual changing of their rules.

The thing that baffles me is the failure to use the touch judge as an assistant referee as we do in soccer. The man on the line is qualified and experienced and yet until last season couldn't even help the referee with foul play. Given the amount of (permitted) physical turmoil, it seems a natural game to be watched by three pairs of eyes from different angles. Judgment of offside, the throw at a line-out, forward passes, for example, could also be shared.

Whatever happens about the touch-judges, I will still find it difficult to see someone who has clearly landed a punch or trodden on an opponent remaining on the pitch. We have to remember, I suppose, that rugby is a game played by gentlemen. That must be the difference.

**BERKS AND BUCKS FA CENTENARY 1992**

Among the events planned to celebrate the centenary is a Dinner and Dance, not too close to our own. Saturday 28 March, 8 pm - 1 am, High Wycombe. Live band. Price expected to be around £18 - £20 per ticket. It's hoped that all referees' societies will have at least a few members there.

### **A TRANSATLANTIC VIEW**

[The following appeared in REFEREE, an American magazine devoted to officiating in many sports. Unfortunately 'soccer' gets a rather minor place. Leaving aside the differences in terminology, I think pieces such as the following make interesting reading. Perhaps because they are a young soccer nation, they seem particularly good on the basics. Ed]

### **Fair and Unfair Charging**

Illegal/legal charging can be among the most difficult judgement calls required. First, it is important to examine the purpose of charging rules. Many rules address unfair or unsafe contact between players. Charging rules, on the other hand, spell out when it is legal to intentionally contact an opponent.

A 'charge' is body to body contact. According to FIFA law XII, a fair charge includes several features:

- 1 It must be neither violent nor dangerous;
- 2 It must be made with the shoulder;
- 3 It must be made on a player who is within playing distance of the ball;
- 4 It cannot be made from behind unless the player is being obstructed;
- 5 If made against the goalkeeper, the keeper must be either obstructing, holding the ball, or positioned outside of the goal-area.

Further, a fair charge may be a strong, hard play (a weaker, smaller, or off-balanced player might actually end up on the ground) but may not be violent or dangerous.

With that in mind, what are the critical judgement issues to determine if a charge was fair or unfair? They are:

- \* What is playing distance?

For the ball to be in 'playing distance', the player must be able to touch it if he chooses. Result: the actual distance will vary according to the sizes and abilities of players. (incidentally, neither the word nor even the concept of 'possession' appears directly in law XII).

\* When does a 'hard' charge become 'violent' or 'dangerous'?

Various authors and instructors have listed considerations to assist referees in judging fairness and safety. Included are:

- Did the players have their feet on the ground or were their feet in the air?
- Were the charging player's hands and arms close to his body or were they extended?
- Did the charge land on the shoulder, chest, spine or back of shoulder or did it land elsewhere?
- Was the player focusing on the ball or on the opponent?
- What are the level and intensity of the game, the players' abilities and the field conditions?
- Was it a trifling offense or was it worthy of stopping the game?
- Is it an advantage situation?

All of those elements must be rapidly assessed before making a decision. If a foul is whistled, the penalties are for:

- 1 Violent or dangerous charging, or charging from behind unless the opponent is obstructing: direct free kick; caution or ejection possible.
- 2 Fair charge with ball not within playing distance: indirect free kick.
- 3 Illegally charging the goalkeeper: indirect free kick.

Dan Haldman, REFEREE September 1991

## **TRAINING**

The first course of the season has just ended very successfully. George Mills reports 23 passes out of 24 candidates with some very high marks indeed. The successful include one female and six who will be registering with the Oxfordshire FA.

We welcome you all as our new colleagues and hope you will enjoy your refereeing and (active) membership of this (your) referees'

society. And congratulations to Stephen Green and the training team.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

At the last count we had 146 members so far registered this season. The recent surge is due mainly to the arrival of those from the training course, mentioned above.

#### **W H I S T L E S T O P**

I am asked to remind members that the national RA information line is available on **0898 800 636**. Should be quite funny - one of the operators is Dudley Moore! (Maybe not the Dudley Moore). Has anybody tried it? Tell me what you thought. Remember it costs: 36p per minute, cheap rate, 48p otherwise.