

Reading Referees' Association

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| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
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| Reading Sunday League | Peter Pittaway |

AFS ADVERT 1

KNOWL HILL?

READING REFEREE

Editor - Brian Palmer

October/November 1997

Assistant Editor - John Moore

Volume XLI No 2

Editorial

Surprise, surprise! This is the first time we have attempted to distribute the magazine just before the monthly meeting and I hope you appreciate the change. It has been our tradition to give the magazines out at the meeting itself - five issues a year - and then to send a copy out to those not in attendance. Thanks to new sponsorship and a cheaper method of distribution, it has been possible to change our practice. The main advantage of the new timing, as I see it, is that the magazine can act as a reminder of the forthcoming meeting. In other words, no excuse now for forgetting to come!

The big news for all of us interested in football is England's progress to the finals of the World Cup. Although I try hard never to agree with David Mellor, I thought his assessment of the ugly events in Italy was spot on. Unfortunately, the trouble diverted attention from what I thought was a piece of thoroughly good, unflamboyant refereeing which included that excellent and courageous caution for the failed attempt to get a penalty awarded. It led me to wonder who *our* referee representatives will be. How will it feel for them if England get to the semis? Do you still hope for an England win, even if it means you lose your chance of a final? A nice dilemma, as Gilbert would have said.

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Last issue before Christmas. Do have a peaceful and enjoyable time.

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

September

A meeting affected by holidays and some evening games and fewer than 40 in attendance. It made for a quicker business half, helped on by Cliff Watkins, in the chair for the first time since his election as Vice-Chairman. (Derek on holiday in Florida - again).

Under correspondence, the Secretary reported that we would be moving to the new Reading FC ground when the Rendezvous Club was closed. Further details when they became available.

Membership has reached 108, including two associate members. 12 new members, one returning to the fold. Efforts would be made to encourage the missing ones to sign up and Brian Wratten hoped we would pass last year's total of 132.

Peter Pittaway, the Training Officer, reported an overwhelming response to the new course, started the previous evening, with 46 candidates and a few more in the pipeline. It so happened that the date of the first meeting had had to be changed and so the course was advertised twice. A sign for the future?

Less good was the news that the promotion evenings had mustered only one candidate each. Peter was going to have discussions with the Berks & Bucks FA to try to make this part of our training more effective.

As Captain of the Quiz team, Peter reminded members that we defend our title on Monday 24 November at home. He is always keen to have new blood in the team.

From the League meetings:

Cliff Watkins reported from the Reading Football League, that

referees must report pitches not roped off.
substitutes must be named, and players *not* named must *not* be allowed to play. (This is in Law 3 and should not need re-stating. Ed)
the blue result cards must be filled in and sent in
the Emmbrook and Coley Rec changing rooms had been improved (though the latter had just been vandalised - again)

From the Sunday League meeting, Peter Pittaway reported that, in spite of the excellent support the league gives its referees, it is still struggling for officials . Any colleagues with even the occasional free Sunday are asked to help.

Other matters: it was confirmed that 31 July is the absolute deadline in the Berks & Bucks for application for promotion. A case of a late application had been taken up, but no change was possible and he will have to wait a year. It is hoped that the County will re-examine its procedures.

The acting chairman thanked David Jeanes for all his help in relation to the assault Cliff had suffered in July. He also announced that Kevin Parsons was having to step down from the committee for the rest of this season for work reasons, and that the committee would be using its power to co-opt.

Problem Spot

As the expected presenter of the problem had a problem and was missing, Martin Shearn had agreed to share another of *his* problems!

He had taken the names of his teams' substitutes. Four names from one, one from the other. No problem. The reserve teams were playing on the adjacent pitch. The problem occurred when one of the teams attempted to use a player from the other match as substitute. His name was there as substitute. What would you have done? Some would have refused to allow him to play until the other match was over. A few seemed unwilling to allow him to play at all. A large number were uncertain.

Martin, in fact, followed the first course and the sub played for the last 10 minutes. Martin now knows (or thinks he knows) he was wrong. Whereas it *used* to say in the Laws what he remembered and did correctly, that bit has disappeared. The question remains: are we right in assuming that the old section no longer applies because it has gone? Presumably so. It was suggested in view of the unclarity that we should send the problem to the national RA and also take the issue up with the leagues.

[Fortunately, Immediate past President, Dick Sawdon-Smith has a longer memory than most of us and explains all in a footnote on page XX. Ed]

Our Guest Speaker was Graham Butland, President of the Association of Premier and Football League Match Officials. Graham had refereed from 1963-94 at all levels up to the Premiership line. His active involvement with refereeing now is as an Assessor. Instead of standing and talking, he would get us to participate. Divided into five groups and confronted by the Southern Football League Assessment Form, our task was to suggest key areas under each heading. Each group had a particular heading as its starting point to ensure that all were evenly covered. Graham gathered it all together on his flip chart and discussed our findings, encouraging further contributions as he went.

1 Application of the Laws, Control and Authority

Correct application of Laws. Essential. Has everyone got this year's re-write?

Smart appearance and demeanour: important to set the tone.

Be on time.

Good teamwork with colleagues (including pre-match briefing though the assessor may not see it)

Consistency - at least during that game.

Positive attitude; confidence (but not over-confidence or arrogance)

Graham stressed the need to balance control and the application of the Laws

e.g. How and when are you going to deal with thermal shorts?

See that all the players are in their own half at kick-off.

All about the relationship of the referee and players - firm but not officious.

3 levels of control - the quiet word, the public admonishment, the caution/sending off. Be dignified, stand facing the player and he you.

2 Positioning and fitness.

Be able to keep up with play. Graham insists that fitness is the key to refereeing success in the future.

Use a wide diagonal (but be prepared to leave it); monitor the 'dropping zone'.

Vary position for corners.

Read the game (but how do you deal with the early incident? Deal with it properly - you will be judged by how you do it).

Run backwards, keeping an eye on play. (Graham not convinced that running backwards is the only way. He also stressed making good use of dead ball time to help positioning).

3 Advantage

Important to read situation correctly. Possession isn't necessarily an advantage - it all depends . . Use correct signal. Graham warned against use of signal to mean 'I didn't see anything wrong'. Also do not allow an advantage to make you forget to penalise the offender correctly, however long afterwards, if play goes on.

4 Signals and Stoppages

Clarity of visual signals and voice.

Avoid being showy and don't mime offences.

Avoid delays.

Remember to indicate indirect free kicks.

Keep an eye on and manage players at free kicks, injuries - at all stoppages.

Use your whistle as if you mean it, from when you call the teams together.

Vary it according to the seriousness of the occasion.

5 Co-operation with Assistant Referees

Clear pre-match instructions. Think about it and keep it simple.

Remember visual contact.

Do acknowledge each other but don't overdo it.

Support of Assistant Referee vital - don't put the blame on him.

6 Summary . . . General remarks and Constructive Advice

A satisfactory performance is given 6; good is 7; 9 brilliant and 10 'you walk on water'.

Take note of your assessor's views, but remember that he is one person.

Look at several reports - if something keeps on happening, then it should be acted upon.

Graham was warmly applauded for his presentation/workshop, in which we could all participate and learn from his experience.. More for the less experienced perhaps, but that's how it should be.

Problem Spot - Footnote

It's confusion by Memorandum says Dick Sawdon Smith

At the September meeting when Martin Shearn related his problem to do with a substitute, various bits of advice were given on the night which may have confused members. So it might be worth looking at what I believe to be the correct answer to Martin's dilemma.

The original 'instruction' which someone referred to was the Football Association Memorandum of 1978 which was reprinted in 1985. It appeared for the first time in the Referees' Chart in July 1980 - not in the Laws of the Game but under 'Advice to Players'. This is where Martin says he remembers reading the ruling. However, the sections entitled 'Advice to Players' were left out of the July 1982 edition of the Referees' Chart, and have not been included since.

Then in 1993, another Memorandum was issued because the International Football Association Board (who have sole responsibility for interpretation of the Laws) were concerned that some national associations had been developing their own interpretations. In this Memorandum the instruction was reversed and now read as follows: 'A player who leaves the field of play for any reason, is permitted to take part in another game which is taking place at the same time, unless the competition rules state otherwise'.

This shows once again the danger I have highlighted before of instructions in Memorandums from the F.A. which are not repeated in the Laws of the Game. How was anyone who started refereeing after 1985 expected to know about the instruction?

This is of course a very rare incident, but it also shows that referees should check the rules of any competition on which they officiate, for any extra instructions they may contain.

October Meeting

[Unusually, our Guest Speaker was on first. I am grateful to Brian Wratten for writing the following report on Graham Poll's contribution. Ed]

It is always good to welcome back an old friend and at the October meeting it was our own one-time member Graham Poll, one of the country's top-flight referees. Graham was clearly happy to be back and made a point of greeting individually his former colleagues. He intended to enjoy his visit to Reading and meant to make sure that we enjoyed it as well.

After enquiring about what happened to the Berks & Bucks Cup appointments he didn't get, Graham held our attention for more than an hour with a string of anecdotes - or perhaps parables would be a better description - as he reviewed some of his experiences over the past year. As he did so, with his own style of self-effacing humour, it became abundantly clear to the listener that here was a referee who is constantly looking at his own performance - both on and off the field - with a view to

improvement and to learning something new. His philosophy is one of ongoing self-evaluation which he performs following every match, thinking it all through again, watching video recordings where possible and searching for opportunities to improve. He told us he was usually able to find at least one thing not to do again. (Could we all profit by exhibiting such honesty?)

Among the experiences he related from last season were the following:

- How he avoided confrontation with a top manager. The score was 4-3. By the 94th minute the manager of the team that was winning was having to be restrained. When Graham blew the final whistle in the 97th minute, he knew a serious confrontation was looming. He made sure he had his back to the now apoplectic manager, reasoning that what he couldn't see, he couldn't report. He then walked across the field away from the bench reasoning that the manager wouldn't risk chasing after him in the full glare of the TV cameras. He was right - and a potentially explosive situation was diffused.
- The need to give each match 100% concentration. Having already accepted a Premier League appointment in London, Graham was subsequently told that on the same afternoon he would have to fly out to Switzerland for a UEFA appointment. He knew how little time he would have to get to Heathrow and clearly this was on his mind during the Premier League game - the only time in the entire season that he got a below average mark for his performance. Beware of overcommitment for it can easily lead to unnecessary pressure and lack of concentration which adversely impact your performance.
- Communications between officials is always stressed as a key to good match control - but consider this. Officiating in a UEFA-organised mini tournament in Switzerland, he found his assistant referees were a Turk and an Azerbaijani, neither of whom spoke English. To make matters worse the FIFA observer was Spanish and - surprise! - didn't speak English either.

- Following a well publicised incident in which racial insults were alleged to have been made by a player, the police asked Graham to comment on a video recording of the incident. He declined to do so pointing out to the police that he was not a lip reader and that as the match referee he could only comment on what he had actually seen and heard. If he had heard racial remarks he would have acted at the time. He hadn't - and he wasn't going to second-guess what might have been said from a video recording.
- There's no hiding place for the top referees. On arrival in Azerbaijan for a World Cup qualifying match he was greeted heartily by an official from Moscow who said that they were pleased to have a strong referee. How did he know? He'd seen Graham's last Premier League game on Russian TV a few days earlier. ("Just as well I had a good one")
- On his one (so far) appearance at Wembley he'd had to caution a player early in the game. Just before half-time the player said he wanted a word. To Graham's relief and pleasure he simply commented, "Ain't it great being here, ref!" - a sentiment with which Graham heartily agreed.

Among Graham's other remarks we heard about:

- * How the Premier League referees try to get together some 5 times a year in their search for ways of becoming even more 'professional'. Part of the time is spent discussing videos of match situations. Seminars are held with specialists, including a psychologist: 17 out of 19 of the referees said their main fear was being late or not arriving for a match! They also discuss dealing with the media. (The only way is not to talk to them)
- Graham demonstrated the new flags which allow the assistant referee to activate a bleeper carried by the referee - a different tone from each activator. The value of these devices remains to be seen.

- The query from Southampton following his appointment for the Reading v Southampton game. Hadn't he had previously lived in Reading? 'No', replied the FA. 'He lived in Tilehurst.'
- The travel demands placed on the top level referee. Graham had been abroad 4 times since August.
- The 3 levels of bonus that were available to Premier League officials at the end of the season and which were largely based on assessments.

In answer to questions Graham:

- Agreed that the mandatory instructions had resulted in less use of the legs to commit fouls, but had increased the use of hands, arms and elbows.
- Indicated that he had no problem whatsoever in accepting female officials. His only criterion was one of ability.
- Said he never sought to justify the Laws - but no-one had the right to hang him for applying them!

Among his words of advice:

- The importance of fitness - both physical and mental!
- Make sensible use of 'dead ball' time. Watch. Think what might happen. Position yourself accordingly.
- Take each match as it comes and not allowing previous experiences to influence you..
- Remember, it's easy to criticise a colleague's performance, but there's far more mileage to be gained in criticising your own!

All too soon Graham had to be on his way. We thanked him for taking time out from his busy schedule to provide us with such an "L" of an evening - one in which we **L**istened, we **L**aughed and we **L**earned. We wish Graham well, and hope that one day he may return - not only to entertain us again, but also to pick up those elusive Berks & Bucks Cup appointments he missed the first time around!

.Disappointing, too that only about 40 members were there to enjoy Graham's excellent 'presentation'.

Among the items of business:

Brian Wratten reported the gift of tickets for Reading games donated by Avon Food Services. The tickets would feature as prizes in the monthly raffles.

We had been narrowly defeated by the Reading Football League in the recent skittles match.

A request had been sent to the Berks & Bucks FA for a ruling on the substitute problem discussed at the September meeting.

Membership stood at 115. Follow-up letters had been sent to those who had not so far re-joined.

B. Ford, S. Gentle and E. Wiggins had all received accreditation as FA Assessors. More assessors are needed (expenses are paid).

From the leagues:

The RFL blue match cards are being revamped. In future they will be sent direct to John Dell.

Substitutes names must be entered on the Sunday League's match cards.

The Hellenic League is looking for more officials.

Ted Cambridge reported that the Berks & Bucks FA had lost 281 registered referees this season. Referees going for promotion would only be assessed if they had attended one of the mandatory promotion seminars. Cliff Watkins still had a few tickets for the Bracknell RA Dinner Dance to be held at Wokingham Town FC on Friday 16 January.

The first tickets for Reading FC matches were won by Darren Naish and Peter Pittaway.

NO WONDER HE LOOKED UNCOMFORTABLE

I was more than a bit miffed that the Italy v. England World Cup qualifier was only *repeated* on ITV, because I don't have SKY. However, there was a tiny compensation (apart from the satisfactory result - which was the same on both channels). Another Brian Moore classic.

When the first Italian substitute, Benarrivo, was preparing to come on, the commentator helpfully informed us that he had '21 caps under his belt'. Now you mention it, I did think he was running a bit funny . . .

SOME MORE FROM WAY BACK

Did You Know That

1940-50

- Scotland shot themselves in the foot and missed the 1970 World Cup. FIFA had offered two places to the UK - to the winners and runners-up in the Home Internationals. The Scots said they would only go as champions, but England beat them at Hampden to deny them the top spot.

- Portsmouth won the League Championship for the second time running, but only on goal average (as it was in those days).

- the Republic of Ireland beat England 1-0 at Goodison Park - the first ever defeat of the national side at home by non-British opposition.
- Rangers won the Scottish FA Cup for the third year running and the League for the second.

- In the World Cup England were beaten by the United States for the first time ever - 1-0. The final between Uruguay and Brazil was held in the unfinished Maracana stadium, and attended by 199,854 spectators. Favourites Brazil lost 2-1.

1950-51

- In financial difficulties, Brentford were forced to sell two of their star players to Chelsea Ron Greenwood and Jimmy Hill [that Jimmy Hill. Ed]

- Still reeling from their World Cup defeat by the United States, England could only draw with Yugoslavia - their first against a foreign team in England - and then lost 3-2 to Scotland.

- The FA sanctioned the use of the white ball

- Nottingham Forest scored 110 goals in winning the Third Division (South) Championship.

- Alec Herd and his 19-year old son David both played for Stockport County in their last game of the season.

- A prize of £1100,000 was won on the football pools for the first time.

1951-52

- Jack Rowley of Manchester United scored three hat-tricks before the end of September. United went on to win the championship narrowly from Arsenal. Rowley scored a hat-trick in the 6-1 victory against Arsenal to

clinch the title. Arsenal also lost the FA Cup Final - beaten 1-0 by Newcastle United.

- Clubs continued to support a £20 maximum wage; players wanted a guaranteed minimum with no maximum.

- The Football League dropped its opposition to live commentaries on radio.

- The FA still refused to sanction the use of floodlights. Nevertheless Arsenal and Southampton both experimented and considered their trials a success.

- Billy Wright made his 42nd appearance for England and beat the record held by Bob Crompton.

1952-53

Derek Dooley, who had scored 46 goals for Sheffield Wednesday the previous season, after being promoted to centre forward when they were languishing at the foot of the division, was tragically invalided out of the game at the age of 23. His leg was broken in a 50/50 tackle, and when gangrene set in, most of it had to be amputated. He was later to become a successful businessman.

- Owing to an increase in Entertainment Tax, the admission charge was raised to 1s 9d (9p).

- Nat Lofthouse scored six goals in a row for a Football League XI against the Irish League.

- Brian Close, the Yorkshire and England cricketer, scored three goals in two Cup matches for Bradford before he was injured.

- The 1953 Cup Final was christened 'the Matthews Final'. At the age of 38, Matthews had twice been a defeated finalist. After an hour, Blackpool were 3-1 down to their opponents Bolton Wanderers. A cross from

Matthews was headed in by Stan Mortenson for 3-2. Three minutes from full-time Mortensen completed his hat-trick with a fiercely driven free-kick from outside the penalty area. From the kick-off the ball went out to Matthews on the right wing. He jinked round several players and delivered a perfect cross for Perry to head home. A fairy tale ending in the year of the Coronation and the conquering of Everest.

HAS THE WORLD GONE HYPOCRITICALLY MAD? Or is it me, asks Dick Sawdon Smith

There is a well known tale in the annals of market research, about a group of managers who were asked at a conference about the effectiveness of car stickers. 75% said that they would never put a sticker in the rear window of their car, and yet when a check was carried out on their cars in the car park, 50% had a least two stickers displayed.

This difference in what people say and what they do was very evident in our national newspapers one morning last July. The editors concentrated on the fact that on the same day the government announced they were to recruit a 'Drug Czar' to oversee the fight against drugs, the Prime Minister feted at Number 10, a pop star who was reported to have said 'taking drugs is as normal as drinking tea'.

For my money, however, hypocrisy gone mad was best illustrated on the sports pages that day. It was announced that Ian Wright, who has a list of disciplinary convictions as long as your arm, was to be the frontman in a campaign to endorse the Football Association and its competitions. An admittedly brilliant footballer but who can't keep his temper or his opinions to himself, he once called referees 'incompetent little Hitlers'. However it is because of, and not in spite of his indiscipline, that he was thought to be perfect for the job.

According to the F.A., Alan Shearer or David Seaman would have been seen as their mouthpieces, but because Ian Wright has suffered grief from Lancaster Gate, people were likely to believe it when he said something

good about the F.A. Now I know all about the parable of the prodigal son, but the obvious message from the F.A. is 'keep your nose clean and you can forget about being used as an advert for football', but create mayhem, make a few derogatory remarks about referees and you are on to a nice little earner.

Incidentally, it was reported the same day that Ian Wright was to host his own hour-long show on LWT. This, it was said, followed on from 'a competent debut on Match of the Day'. Anyone who saw Wright's performance that night when he struggled to string two sentences together, will wonder if they have changed the meaning of the word 'competent'.

No doubt Ian Wright was one of the players that Tony Banks, the Sports Minister, was thinking about on the same day when he launched the government's new Football Task Force. He called on players to set a better example. 'Some players are appalling role models. They want the adulation and hefty salaries, but they have to remember their responsibilities. We want to make football Britain's family game'.

I'm sure we'd all go along with that, but this is from the man who refused to take his place in the Royal Box at the Cup Final, as it would inhibit him from singing 'The referee's a bastard'. That's a really good example for the family. As referees we have always suffered from remarks from our critics in the stands when a decision has gone against their team, but now it has become premeditated. Tony Banks planned to sing his abusive refrain come what may, as part of his 'enjoyment' of the game.

As a referee I naturally object to the Sports Minister not only condoning, but actively supporting this orchestrated abuse of match officials. Doesn't he understand that this type of behaviour breeds the very supporters who have turned families away from football grounds?

Is it naiveté that makes people act in opposing ways to their words, or is it plainly hypocritical? Or is it me getting old and cynical?

WANTED - NEW EDITOR and PRESS OFFICER

No, I haven't been sacked - in spite of everything.

When I took over the job from Dick Sawdon Smith in 1983, I planned to be in office, if you wanted me, for a maximum of 5 years (though Dick had served for 22!). The reasoning was not to do with lack of commitment, but to do with giving readers variety and freshness, which rested to a large extent on my being active as a referee, week in, week out. Although I am not yet willing to consider myself *inactive*, I have rarely blown my whistle in the last four years since I moved outside Reading.

I have no doubt we have a number of potential editors in our midst, some who know it, some who don't. The job does need some time and dedication but is no more onerous than you make it. Give me a ring and I'll tell you all about it. I will also continue to contribute and assist if asked.

POSITIONING

Positioning has always been one of the major issues in refereeing and never more than at present with continual discussion of incidents on TV when the cameras have had different angles of view from the referee. What did the referee see *from his position*? And, more crucially, the follow-up question: *Was he in the right/best position?*

Although most of us are not going to be seen on the box, positioning is still the key to good refereeing. At our September meeting, as at many others, it was under discussion and quite a few minutes were spent on 'the diagonal'. Thinking about it later as I wrote the report of the meeting, I remembered a piece in Stanley Lover's book, *Association Football Match Control* which I first read many years ago and can thoroughly recommend.

(I believe there is a new edition now). In a chapter entitled 'Reading the Game', Stan discusses positioning. I thought the following extract and illustrations worth repeating:

'The following comments are not exhaustive but they should serve to provide a basis on which each official can enlarge from his own experiences.

- a) *Method of control*
- b) *Ability of linesmen*

Two important factors in controlling dynamic play are the diagonal system of control and the ability of linesmen. The latter can greatly affect the reading of a game for the reason that poor co-operation from linesmen (or the absence of qualified linesmen) throws more responsibility on to the man in the middle. More ground has to be covered to reach the desired positions to observe incidents. Instructions to inexperienced linesmen may need more detailed attention than when experienced assistants are available. It is worth recalling that the diagonal system is intended to aid control by keeping the area of play between two pairs of eyes - the referee's and one linesman's. This does mean that with efficient linesmen the referee need only travel a straight line invisibly marked on the playing surface. A popular expression among senior officials is 'presence lends authority'. The closer to the incident, the better the control. There are exceptions to this, but it is a good tip to follow.

Recent research in Japan produced interesting diagrams of the movements of different referees during a series of matches. Two contrasting diagrams (figures 67 and 68) underline the point of using the diagonal system intelligently.

Figure 67

Figure 67 shows the path taken by a relatively inexperienced official who was also not very mobile. Note the narrow 'corridor' of his patrol and the density of movement in the centre of the field. Result - poor control.

Figure 68

Figure 68 shows clearly a much more active official, an international referee renowned for his dedication to personal fitness and mobility. Note the area covered - in some cases close to his supporting linesman. Result - superb control.

The need, pointed out earlier, to avoid becoming stereotyped in positioning at dead-ball situations applies also when using the diagonal system in dynamic play. Player coaching at higher levels includes making use of the predictable referee to screen the ball from opponents. The diagonal system is intended as an aid to match control, not a rigid system to be followed regardless of other factors which may point to positions off the invisible diagonal line.' (pp.126-128)

HOW OTHERS SEE US

Sports Letter to the *Times*, 13/10/97

Sir, I must agree with Keith Atkinson's letter (Sports letters, October 6) concerning the behaviour of footballers towards referees. Two weeks ago I played hockey on a recreation ground in a Kent village. On the two adjacent pitches games of football and rugby were being played. I and many of our players were stunned at the behaviour of the footballers towards their officials compared with that of the rugby and hockey players towards theirs.

Combined with this was the incessant shouting and swearing at the referee, the opponents and each other, all within 60 yards of a children's playground.

Is there any connection between the fact that the two codes, rugby and hockey, have sin-bins and ten-yard penalties for abuse towards the referee or umpire? Surely the FA has a duty to improve the standard of behaviour of players.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Ralph
Gravesend.

[I can't begin to count the number of times we, as referees, have asked the powers-that-be to introduce the 10-yard sanction, and recently I was again advocating at least a serious trial of the sin-bin, which Peter Pittaway has experienced working successfully in Germany. Maybe others will be more successful in bringing about change than we have been ourselves - but I doubt it. Ed]

[Since I wrote this piece I have received my copy of the October issue of the *Football Referee*, which contains an article by David Elleray, no less, advocating the sin-bin. Maybe with his support something might happen at last. Ed]

Solution to the Word Puzzle Competition

(August/September issue)

This time I received *no entries at all!* Was it really that difficult? In case you have forgotten, you had to find 24 words contained in the new version of the Laws.

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Abusive | Goalpost | Opinion |
| Ample | Impartial | Penalty |
| Breadth | Indirect | Signal |
| Caution | Infringement | Spherical |
| Deliberate | Kicker | Substitute |
| Diagonal | Laws | Thrower |
| Elliptical | Offence | Trifling |
| Equidistant | Offside | Upright |

Grand Christmas Draw

Excellent prizes again this year -
Colour TV, Stereo CD and Christmas Hamper top the list.
But the success of the Draw depends on us. We have to sell the tickets.

You should have received 20 books through the post. Please sell them if you can and return the money and counterfoils to Brian
Written by **Thursday 11 December**

Also, please return any unsold tickets **no later than the 11th.**

What's On This Season

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| December 18 | The traditional Christmas Draw and a chance for a more relaxed drink and chat and eats. Remember, <i>it could be you</i> |
| January 15 | Training event |
| February 19 | Guest Speaker: Ray Payne, FA Area Training Co-ordinator (to be confirmed) |
| March 19 | Guest Speaker: Mick Pierce, Football League referee |
| April 16 | Guest Speaker: Ted Smeaton, Chairman, Leicester City FC (to be confirmed) |
| May 21 | Annual General Meeting |