

VOLUME XXXVI No 1

August/September 1992

EDITORIAL

The closed season often produces surprises - ludicrous transfer fees, sacked managers, players arguing over contracts and so on, but this year has been a bit special, especially for referees.

For a number of years FIFA has seemed to be playing with the Laws and not always very effectively, but this season promises to be different. The sharp limitation on passes to the goalkeeper and the introduction of red and yellow cards at all levels, together with the FIFA instructions about the wall and taking of free kicks, are going to affect us all considerably.

Then there's the new Premier League. What is going to be the effect of that on refereeing? And I don't just mean a different colour of top. There is, of course, something else affecting us, this time as spectators: the TV shake-up starting with the Premier League/Internationals deal with Sky. I, and I guess a few others, don't want to buy a dish but would like to watch some of the games live.

So far I have managed with Match of the Day, but wonder whether we will all succumb eventually. Yet with all the other football on ITV and Channel 4 we could end up suffering from general over-exposure. My only consolation so far is that one of our members, who has watched nearly all of the live transmissions, assures me there hasn't been a decent match since the Charity Shield! That gave me a certain amount of pleasure at least.

Welcome back and have a good season.

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PRESIDENT'S PIECE

Legislation for Entertainment - Will it Work?

Those people who claim that behaviour on the television does not affect behaviour in real life should referee schoolboy football. Any new tactic or conduct seen on televised games will be copied within days. This goes from new celebrations for goalscoring to more worrying aspects such as attempted circumvention of the laws.

One of the tactics slavishly copied in recent years was from the kick-off when the ball would be quickly knocked back to the goalkeeper. In the professional game where goalkeepers have developed such tremendous kicking power, at least the ball would then end up in the opponents' half. In schoolboy football the goalkeeper seldom has the strength to reach the half-way line, so his team actually finish up worse off than when they started. This is something we should see no more, of course, because of this year's amendments to the laws of the game.

In theory, coaches and managers should be the people who would want football to be more exciting, to have more entertainment value. In practice, of course, spectators only want to see their team win or at least not lose; it is not important how they succeed. Managers and coaches know that only winning keeps them in a job, no matter how attractive a style of play they achieve. So yet again, it is the game's law-makers who have felt it necessary to legislate against tactics which are designed to reduce the excitement of football, and which make the game less attractive to watch.

Will the new law alterations be successful? Already we have learnt from FIFA that there has been experience of players hooking the ball up into the air and heading it back to the goalkeeper in an attempt to get around the law, and surely coaches will tell goalkeepers when they want to waste time to always go to the furthest side of the goal for goalkicks.

It seems that it is down to you and me, so perhaps the next alteration should be to Law 5: "A referee shall be appointed to enforce the laws, and improve the entertainment value."

Dick Sawdon Smith

[Having a spare line or two gives me the chance to thank Dick for this and all his regular contributions as President. Always interesting and thought-provoking they are often used by other editors too. Thanks Dick]

MONTHLY MEETING

August

Some turn-out. More than 80 present - must be a record for the first meeting of the season given that so many members are away on holiday.

Chairman Graham Stockton opened with a review of last year pointing out how we had met many of our objectives but now need to consolidate our progress.

New secretary Pat Monaghan reported the Chairman's recently gained qualification as an FA Referee Instructor, only the second ever in the society. (David Keen was the first). Among the correspondence was a letter of thanks for the officials at the Woodley Saints 2-day 6-a-side tournament which attracted almost 200 teams. 14 year old member Richie Conlan was singled out for special praise and congratulation.

Neil Isham, the new treasurer, reported a cash flow problem in May/June before subscriptions started to come in, and observed that the Dinner and Dance had lost money.

New Membership Officer Andy Awbery was delighted to report membership of over 90 already.

Meetings were to be held by the training team for members willing to act as mentors/coaches, and for candidates seeking promotion.

Ted Cambridge, wearing his Berks and Bucks FA hat, reminded members that referees are not being judged at disciplinary hearings - they are witnesses. As the commission has to take all the evidence into account, it may be that the referee will

not agree with the final judgement, but that doesn't reflect on the referee.

On behalf of the Sunday League, Gerry Chapman reported revisions to improve the instructions to referees in the league handbook. Match cards now have to be presented before the match. 5 subs may be nominated, but referees are to record only the ones who actually play (up to 2). There are to be U/17 and U/18 divisions in the Sunday Youth League this season and more referees will (inevitably) be required. (Sunday afternoons).

Supplies Officer Kevin Parsons has superior and less superior (cheaper) red and yellow cards for sale, though it was rumoured, to the disbelief of many, that we would be issued with some by the County FA. [And we were. Ed] He also has Reading RA ties at the knock-down price of £2-50 - don't all rush - and will order copies of the new charts for anyone (should be everyone) interested. Cash with order (£2).

Stewart Mills continues to manage the successful 5-a-side team and will welcome new players (matches held on Wednesday evenings (full details from Stewart)).

Physical training sessions will continue this season at Arborfield Barracks in conjunction with Bracknell RA. £1.50 per evening. Tuesdays, 8-00pm - 9-00pm. Contact Graeme McLay.

Jim Glenfield reported that the South Chiltern Minor League is hoping to start appointing referees on a regular basis. Contact name and number in our handbook.

The second half of the meeting was devoted to the law changes of which we had all received good notice this year, thanks (at last) to the Berks and Bucks FA.

The most important and most controversial is the back pass to the goalkeeper. As always, intent, is what matters. The ball may not be passed intentionally to the goalkeeper with the feet (shins, knees, chest, head etc are OK). The offence occurs only when the goalkeeper takes the ball to hand (even if he uses his feet first). Indirect free kick from where he touches it, unless it is the goal area when you do what you usually do . . .

It follows that (a) a throw-in to the keeper is OK.

(b) a short goal kick by a defender to the

keeper outside the box who then comes inside and handles the ball is NOT.

FIFA's ruling (of which we should all have received a copy), outlaws 'tricks'. like flicking the ball up so it can be headed back to the keeper. Indirect free kick from where the trick started, and caution.

Under Law 5, red and yellow cards must now be shown at all levels of football. Remember - don't use them to threaten the player - they are for the crowd (!).

Free kicks to the defence inside the goal area may be taken from anywhere in the area. To avoid timewasting. Watch for it.

For problems with player's equipment, wait for a stoppage. Allow back only at a stoppage.

FIFA also reminds referees to do their job properly. Be tough (apply the Laws properly):

- with kicking/carrying the ball away at a free kick; standing on the ball. Caution.
- with encroachment by defenders in the wall. Caution.
- with the goalkeeper taking too many steps.
- about cycling-type shorts. They must be the same as the predominant colour of the other shorts.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Reading RA AGM 21 May 1992

Another big turn-out of over 80 members - maybe it was the prospect of all those rule changes being proposed!

President Dick Sawdon-Smith was in the chair and business was brisk. Reports were received from our Secretary, Derek Reigate and Treasurer, Geoff Way, both not seeking re-election. They were thanked warmly both for their reports and, with Stuart Gentle, Assistant Secretary, also thanked for their years of excellent service.

The financial situation was less favourable this year and later in the meeting the subscription was raised to £15-00 with little dissent.

Long-standing member and assessor, Peter Stream, was made a Vice-President before the officer shuffle began. Derek Reigate was voted in as Vice-Chairman; Pat Monaghan, Secretary; Stewart Mills, Assistant Secretary; Neil Isham, Treasurer; Andy Awbery, Membership Officer. Former officers Stuart Gentle, Peter Hitt and Dick Wilkins were elected to the Committee and other vacancies filled by Graeme McLay, Roy Maybanks and John Moore. Ken Arlett and Gary Webster were thanked by the President for their contribution to the committee.

The major amendments to rule being proposed had different fates. Members agreed a new procedure for nomination of officers which requires 28 days formal notice before the AGM. It was also agreed that members over 60 should pay half subscription, but that successful trainees should cease to get their first year's membership free. A proposal to take away the right to a free copy of the Football Referee was defeated. (Paul Gresty, the editor, will be delighted!) The most controversial proposal - for a code of conduct for members - was withdrawn on behalf of the committee when it became clear that it was unacceptable in its present form. As the idea found favour, the committee promised to bring a revised version to a Special Meeting prior to the August monthly meeting.

County RA AGM

The meeting held at High Wycombe produced no surprises except that Ken Walker took the chair for George Mills who was away on holiday. The officers were re-elected en bloc and the capitation fee stayed at 70p.

John Chalmers, Kent Divisional Representative, gave a talk about representation of the RA on the FA.

REFEREE COACHING

Under new management. This season Dick Wilkins and Ivan McNelly are running the coaching scheme in conjunction with the training team. A briefing meeting was held in August but anyone else interested will be welcome to volunteer.

Dick and Ivan stress that the scheme is not only for new referees. It is a help/support system for any member who needs constructive criticism during a bad (or good) patch. All friendly and confidential. Just contact Dick on Reading 479116.

THE DINNER AND DANCE

Guest of Honour last May was National RA President Peter Willis. Peter was welcomed by Graham Stockton, our Chairman and organizer of the event. Also present were some 140 members, partners and friends, including refereeing colleagues from other societies.

In addition to saying his few words as Guest of Honour, Peter made a number of presentations:

- to Stephen Green, the **Major Sainsbury Award** for his contribution to refereeing during the season, especially as an active referee and as Senior Training Officer.
- to Graham Wallace, the **Fred Porton Award** for the most promising Class 3 referee in his/her first two seasons.
- to Ivan McNelly, the top-marked Sunday League official and referee of the Tilehurst Charity Shield final.

Framed certificates were also presented to a number of members in recognition of 10, 20 and 30 years membership respectively.

In proposing his vote of thanks, your editor pointed out the Society's special gratitude to Peter - he was the first national RA President to visit the Reading RA for nearly 60 years - since 1934!

RA President Peter Willis at the Dinner and Dance with Chairman Graham Stockton and his wife Maureen.

With our Immediate Past President George Mills (nearer camera) and Vice-Chairman Derek Reigate.

With our President Dick Sawdon Smith and Vice-President David Keen (nearer camera)

Senior Training Officer Stephen Green receives the 'Major Sainsbury Award' for 1991/92

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE

This series continues with a profile of Graham Stockton, our Chairman, who doesn't really need much introduction.

Formerly a well-known local footballer, Graham is a Class 1 who qualified in 1981 and who referees on the local leagues. He has also officiated on the Spartan, South East Counties and Reading Indoor Leagues.

Graham has served on the committee for four years and was Vice Chairman for one year before being voted into the chair in 1991.

Graham, why did you become a referee?

To prove to a lot of referees and other players that, although I used to give them a hard time when I played, I would be able to do the job when I retired. I think I have proved my point.

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

Myself - to fulfil my driving ambition to succeed.

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

Reading Mercury Cup Final, 1982/83. Apollo v. Unity in the Palmer Park Stadium. The first final between two all-black teams. 500+ spectators. Apollo won 2-1 a.e.t.

Your worst or most embarrassing moment in refereeing?

I have not really had one.

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

I would like to improve the attitude of players towards the game and its officials.

Other interests outside football?

Socialising with friends; eating out in Indian restaurants; golf; raising money for the British Heart Foundation.

THE FA CUP FINAL - LIVE

Every year we receive two tickets for the Cup Final to sell to current members of the society. This year the tickets will be balloted for at the December meeting, alongside the Grand Christmas Draw.

NATIONAL RA CONFERENCE 27 June 1992

This year it was abroad - Cardiff. Four regulars - George Mills, John Lambden, Derek Reigate and Brian Palmer with, for his first RA Conference, Chairman Graham Stockton.

Although the Conference itself is on the Saturday, most delegates arrive on the Friday, and there is an evening reception. We visited a very nice Portuguese restaurant instead, where the editor insisted on using his (alleged) linguistic talents. The result was excellent if somewhat amused (bemused?) service and a most enjoyable meal. It was not his fault (he claimed) if the waitress came from a remote region (if indeed she really was Portuguese).

The weather continued superb on the Saturday and the stroll to the City Hall from our hotel was most enjoyable. The first sight was the new Peugeot car to be given away later that evening in the Draw, standing resplendent in front of the building. As usual I imagined myself driving it off the following day. I'd had the same dream for many years - was this to be the lucky one?

Conference was held in the magnificent hall of the City Hall. Unfortunately the fine architecture and ornate ceiling did nothing for the acoustics. In spite of the PA system, a day of auditory strain was to follow.

The Lord Mayor got us under way and our President, Peter Willis, dealt with the routine of standing orders, previous minutes and Annual Report. Delegates stood in silence to honour the memory

of the members who had died during the year. As always the Annual Accounts stimulated some interest, with questions this year about the VAT payment and all that. The bottom line is that we are not well off, although solvent thanks to the annual lottery.

Partners of the members to receive Long and Meritorious Service Awards were now ushered in and nearly 20 recipients were summoned to the front by the President and received a standing ovation. A particular pleasure was to see amongst them old friends Gerry Taylor and Neville Harris of the Berks and Bucks RA. Always impressive as a massive demonstration of years of 'Service Before Self', (though we don't hear the citations as we do with Life Members).

The proposed changes of rule this year proved, surprisingly uncontroversial. The subscription to national RA was raised by £1.00 to £4.00 after some debate but not much opposition, no doubt because members had seen and understood the balance sheet. The Overseas Members' subscription was also raised. Then the extraordinary happened. On the order paper were two significant and controversial proposals relating to membership - in effect making only active referees eligible to be members of the National RA. The first was correctly proposed but had no seconder; the second was not proposed as the proposer was not in the hall! The President coped extremely well with the bizarre turn of events.

After an eloquent presentation by Ken Aston, the former World Cup referee, Conference overwhelmingly accepted a motion requiring the RA to use its influence to remove those aspects of today's football which are contrary to the Laws and spirit of the game.

In and between items, especially when votes were being counted, various guests addressed the audience. Colin Downey, Appointments' Secretary of the FA, briefly explained the law changes, including the use of red and yellow cards at all levels. Colin also told us that there will be a panel of 'National League Referees' for the new Premier League, appointed by the FA, and the other leagues will get 'what's left', appointed by the Football League.

The after-lunch non-business session was provided by Ron Roberts and his brother, as a duo. I thought the style and content of their presentation excellent. If only we could have

seen and heard it all more easily. Not their fault. As I said earlier, the acoustics were problematical and the blackout was also distinctly poor (the seats were pretty hard too).

Their theme was 'Training Referees for Today'. They caricatured old forms of training like explaining pitch dimensions in the classroom - that can be done at home. Make training practical. They talked critically about assessors and the need to train them, and showed through practical demonstrations how improvements can be made. They went on to talk about in-service training and higher forms of training, with emphasis all the time on continuous development, which they saw as essential for today's referees. The speakers deserved better conditions for a very well conceived presentation.

And so the business of Conference concluded with an invitation to Liverpool next year.

Saturday evening and the customary Dinner and Dance and Drink and Draw. A nice meal in the same hall (acoustics didn't matter), plenty of liquid refreshment and, as usual, no luck at all in the Draw. The car went to some lucky person in Tidworth and the nearest prize to us was a watch to someone in Maidenhead. Derek did win a couple of prizes on the tombola.

Back to the International Hotel for a few late nightcaps and Sunday morning arrived rather quickly. Breakfast and away.

Impressions were much as usual. Great to meet old colleagues and new, and to find that our problems are shared. Even the business proved quite interesting, thanks in considerable measure to the sure but user-friendly touch of the President, Peter Willis. Graham enjoyed himself and expects quite a few Reading members to be there, in Liverpool, next year.

LAW AMENDMENTS

All members registered with the Berks & Bucks FA have been sent copies of the amendments and the supplementary sheet from FIFA - so I'm not reprinting them. If you haven't had copies, please contact our secretary, Pat Monaghan, and he will send you both. Dodgy, especially this season, to be refereeing without them.

OUR MAN IN TURKEY

[In his job as a Sales Representative Reading RA member Steve Goulding met and married a Turkish girl completing a Master's degree in Chemistry at Sheffield Polytechnic. She had a chance to study for a Doctorate in her home city of Izmir. So, through contacts, he got a job in the Purchasing Department of a large electronics company and took the plunge. He is now ready to share his rather different experiences with us. Ed]

The Problem

The problem was, what was I to do about refereeing? I wrote to the Berks and Bucks FA, who passed the matter on to Lancaster Gate, who wrote to the Turkish FA in Ankara. Then I waited. Six months passed from the time of my letter to England to when my acceptance came through. I contacted the Izmir Federation and they said to come and see them on Thursday evening at 6.00 pm.

With my wife as interpreter, I arrived at Alsancak Stadium (home of two Turkish league teams). I was confronted by scores of fit young men in tracksuits. On finding the committee, they explained that Thursday is referees' training night - "where is your tracksuit?" I explained that in England amateur league referees met once a month to drink beer and talk. They explained that in Turkey you have to train to get a game.

What is it like?

The first week's training was pure hell. Anyone in Reading who saw me referee will know I did a fair job, due to anticipation and a sense of humour - not due to fitness. At 16 1/2 stone, was there any other way? Now, my 6 months in Turkey had seen me trim down to 14 1/2 stone, due to several factors, e.g. 1. No Courage Best 2. No Curry Houses 3. No car, so I walked everywhere 4. My wife persuaded (nagged?) me to lose weight. Even so, ten laps at a brisk pace was too much. By week three they decided I was fit enough to run a line.

In the meantime, I'd signed up for a lunch-time inter-factory league in Manisa where I work. It's seven-a-side, with crowds averaging 100+, no offsides, no linesmen and "you're on your own, boy!" Before my first game I was terrified. In England I used to talk a lot when in the middle, but what now? My Turkish is basic, so I hurriedly learnt some football

vocabulary and practised hard on signals. The match went like a dream. By the end the crowd loved me, applauding my decisions.

When my first line came I was confident. I went to Ataturk Stadium, a 50,000 capacity bowl where England played Turkey last year (a game I saw), which is surrounded by a clutch of smaller stadia. I was in the smallest, with a sand pitch that was rolled after each day's matches. The referee was a local teacher of English, which was vital as there were some signaling differences to be explained. Once we got underway, it was easy. The main talking-point was the presence of the press corps who wrote up the story of the "Ingilise Haken" in earnest. That's the great thing about football. The passion is the same everywhere, whatever the nation, on sand or grass, at home or two thousand miles away.

Steve Goulding

[To be continued in our next issue]

THOSE RED AND YELLOW CARDS

Life really is stranger than fiction. Many, many years ago, when I bought a holder for my match card, I got, to my surprise, two totally irrelevant cards - red and yellow. I have carried them around diligently ever since, never thinking they would come in useful one day at my level of refereeing. But it's happened. And now, remarkably, the Berks and Bucks FA has just sent me another pair. Totally unexpected generosity. (I don't actually referee Under 10s, but I keep having this image of a tiny child staring heavenwards from the region of my left kneecap at the colourful display at the end of my extended arm)

Where are you going to keep your cards? I'm starting with the yellow card in my left breast pocket - so I can peep at it just before I take it out. The red one will be safely in the back pocket of my shorts so I really have to think before that one appears. Anyone found a better solution?

PS I recently saw quoted the FA Council approved sequence of actions for cautioning a player:

- 1 State that the player is being cautioned
- 2 Enquire his name
- 3 Warn him about his future conduct

- 4 Show him the yellow card in a manner which does not inflame the situation.

I would add three comments:

- a) Get his full name
- b) Remember cards were introduced for the spectators. A step back before showing one may be wise in some circumstances.
- c) When you are sending off, change the sequence: Get the name first! Good psychology.

IT'S ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME

Title of an article I wrote for the Football Referee many years ago about referees and time-keeping. (Copies no doubt still available at an exorbitant price).

I was reminded of it be an interesting piece in Sunday Express Sport on 23 August. A team of reporters had put the stop-watch on a number of early season games to check how long they actually lasted (as opposed to 90 minutes) and claimed that referees had consistently been wrong in their time-keeping. They noted that the banning of the conventional back-pass to the keeper had speeded up the game but that the extra throw-ins etc had more than compensated. The average total time they clocked was **less than 60 minutes of play**.

Norman Giller then did a detailed analysis of the Manchester City v. QPR game and showed how **41 minutes 41 seconds** were lost with the ball out of play e.g for goal-kicks, corners, free-kicks, throw-ins, injuries. 'Referee Martin Bodenham, who had an excellent game blew his whistle 74 times'.

The upshot? The authors mentioned the likelihood that off-the-pitch timing might have to be introduced. As I was saying, in an article I wrote many years ago I suggested ..

HAVE YOU HEARD ALL OF THESE?

These quotes attributed to 'the Doc' (Tommy Docherty) appeared in Michael Herd's column in the Evening Standard, and I got them from the Basingstoke Bleep (thanks to editor Tony Murphy)

On Laurie McMenemy: When he left Sunderland he cashed his cheque and Sunderland bounced.

On Graeme Souness: They serve a drink in Liverpool and Glasgow now called a Souness. One half and you're off.

On Leighton James: You're very deceptive, son. You're even slower than you look.

On Derek Dougan: Dougan is to football what King Herod was to baby-sitting.

On Dougan again: A legend in his own mind.

On Wolves: When I was at Wolverhampton, I tried to sign one of the Vietnamese boat people. He said he's love to join Wolves but he'd just left one sinking ship.

On Wolves again: I was asked why I took over at Wolves. I said I hadn't been feeling very well and my doctor told me to keep as far away from football as possible.

On Wimbledon: Football wasn't meant to be run by two linesmen and air traffic control.

On Wimbledon again: They have as much charm as a broken beer bottle.

A MISSING PLUM (as usual)

In the May issue I managed to miss out one of our colleagues who was promoted from 2 to 1 - Geoff Donnelly. Congratulations Geoff and sorry!

THE LAST WORD

Inspired by the controversy over footballers diving in the penalty area, reader G. Kestenus, of Walsall, sends this excerpt from a referee's report submitted to the Football Association: "I ordered the player off for descent."

Sunday Express, 17/5/92