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Reading Sunday League	Stuart Gentle
Sunday Youth League	Graeme McLay
Challenge Cup	Roy Maybanks
READING REFEREE	
Editor Brian Palmer	

EDITORIAL

A belated welcome to the new season which seems to have been going for ages already. Still a bit early to say whether the Law changes, such as they are, are having any impact. Has the directive about foul and abusive language affected your approach, or were you already getting it right? Some of us mustn't have been, to judge by the complaints from all around. Yet we, as referees, have to keep a sense of perspective, while not being seen as permissive. The player's expletive as he misses an obvious goal is pretty normal, but still wrong in Law. I've always found a bellowed "Language" if his curse was loud enough to be heard, followed by an obvious and fierce rebuke, together make the point for players and onlookers. But **you** have to decide. 'It is in the opinion of the referee' . .

A belated welcome too to our new Chairman who would have wished to take office in different circumstances. With his own style and ideas, Stephen Green is determined to continue our developments and, thanks to Membership Officer Andy Awbery, we already have well over a hundred members to make it all happen.

And what do you think of the new-look magazine? Over the ten years of my editorship, the magazine has changed from a 4-pager with really tiny print to last season's model. And a change of cover in 198 ????

The technology has come on a bit too. From typewritten sections physically pasted up, and hand stapling, to word-processing with electronic cut and paste and semi-automatic folding and stapling (and adverts), to today's Desk Top Publishing and 'real' printing, thanks to John Moore and his brother ????????

We even hope to improve the contents, but that may take a bit longer and depends very much on YOU. Do read the bit about the magazine in the Handbook - items really are welcome and you don't even need to write it all out yourself.

Have a good season. And if things dip a bit, remember what your RA colleagues are for.

Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Reading RA

Unsigned items have been written by the editor

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CONFESSIONS OF AN EX-PRESIDENT

The Truth about the Reading Whistlers

When I retired after my permitted period as President, I was surprised but honoured to be elected as a Life Member of the Society. Many kind words were said about my endeavours over the years so I thought that now I am a member for life (and they can't take that away from me), I ought to set some of the records straight.

One of the things that was said was that I had been the founder of the Reading Whistlers, our Society football team. Is it true? The answer is yes and no. What I did when I took it over the organising of our end of season matches was to register our team with the berks and Bucks FA, which had not previously been done, and christen it 'Reading Whistlers FC'. This was done partly because we were having a long-running dispute with the County FA, and felt they weren't listening to us. Being a registered club meant we could vote at AGMs, and gave us the opportunity to put forward propositions if we felt it would help our case. It also meant incidentally that we got an extra allocation of cup final and England and Scotland tickets.

However, we did have a football team prior to all this, and this is where I have to confess that I took over the running of the team for personal gain. the truth is that matches were being arranged but no-one ever asked me to play. We are talking about 25 years ago when I was still young(ish) and fit(ish), and longing for the occasional game of football.

By running the team I could make sure that I got picked, but I wondered if there were other players who felt like me. So I put an insert in the 'Reading Referee', with a tear-off slip, so that all members had a chance to put their names forward to play. I guaranteed that everyone who completed a slip would get at least one game. I always stuck to this, although sometimes we were lumbered with people who couldn't really play.

I was also unhappy that it had been the habit to play against regular clubs who were much too good for us. To give us a chance of a better game, I embarked on a strategy that was also a public relations exercise. As well as other Referees' Societies, we played teams of people who, I felt, we wanted to know referees better. One team was made up of schoolteachers, another of members of the local sporting press, and the other of club secretaries, many of whom were ex-players who jumped at the chance of an end-of-season kick-about.

The latter fixtures became a real institution. It was always our final fixture and played at Highmoor, where the club secretary, Andy Brian, was also the local publican and laid on food in the pub for the after-match chinwag. The Sunday League wanted to put up a challenge cup for this match, but I refused

as it would have meant that winning would have become the important thing, which to me it never was. That doesn't mean that we didn't try to win, and I suppose our greatest achievement was to reach the national finals of the RA 5-a-side competition with the only six members who put their names down to play.

Having agreed to run the team just so I could get a game, I got my come-uppance in 1974. I suffered a spinal disease which not only put me out of all sporting activity for a year, including refereeing, but I was always advised not to play football or surprisingly my beloved cricket again. So that my original motives wouldn't be so obvious, I carried on running the team for another nine years.

Now the truth has been told, but in my defence I don't suppose that my subterfuge hurt anyone, and over the years we certainly have had great evenings.

Dick Sawdon Smith

AUGUST MONTHLY MEETING

First of the new season and a lot of members on holiday it seemed - not quite 60 in attendance.

Chairman Stephen Green started his first meeting with only a minute or two's grace and spoke of his ambition to continue the developments already started, with an emphasis on camaraderie. In welcoming all members, he made special mention of Graham Poll, the Football League referee, who has joined us after moving into the area.

Among the business items:

- the Chairman reported further discussion with Reading Football Club about our possible deal. We were exploring increased benefits for our investment. It was expected there would be more definite news by the September meeting.
- The Chairman also reported an assault on member Stewart Mills at the Reading Fives which led to considerable physical damage including a broken fibula. It transpired that the competition had not been sanctioned, but subsequent discussion threw into question, amongst other things, the protection referees have even if the competition has been sanctioned. We were advised to be cautious about officiating in any such competition for the time being, while the FA and County FA try to sort things out (at our prompting).
- The Chiltonian League is looking for assessors (Class 1 active or non-active).
- We are all reminded of the FA directive to clamp down on foul and abusive language. It was suggested that the Press Officer should write to the local press, as the memorandum would never be seen by the majority of players.

- Membership already stood at 110 - a new record for August on which Andy Awbery was congratulated.
- The Senior Training Officer announced a meeting for promotion candidates on 6 September and the next training course for new referees starting on 13 September. [Still time to encourage more to go along]
- Graeme McLay trailed the pre-Christmas Disco - details later.
- Stewart Mills asked for those interested (and committed and with some talent) to see him about our 5-a-side team which plays in the Reading League.
- Jim Glenfield invited members to do games for the South Chiltern Minor League, particularly 15 and 16 year olds. Flat fee of £10. [Contact number in the Handbook]
- The Parasol (ex-Dan Air) League is looking for linesmen.
- Pat Hanlon reminds us that the Reading Cup competitions will not have replays this season: extra time and penalties. Replay only if it gets too dark!
- In his role as Senior Training Officer, Stephen Green commented briefly on the Law changes for 1993/94. There are now 4 sending off offences - Serious Foul Play has been separated from Violent Conduct. A simple working distinction is that serious foul play involves the ball (other than as a weapon) and usually the feet. For the present we shall have to use the existing B & B disciplinary forms but alter the letter code to the new one. At last goalkeepers' steps are to be tightened up on (but remember to start counting **after** he gets control). At a second cautionable offence, show the yellow card first then the red (for the sake of clarity). Last but by no means least - foul or abusive language. No way it can be defined. We must judge, especially the manner, **and take action when it is justified.**

Fir the second half we welcomed back first aid expert, Roger Beavis, a British Telecom colleague and friend of Derek reigate's, and friend of the Reading RA. Last time he came he had to do some real first aid on a member who ended up in hospital (as a precaution, not because of Roger's ministrations).

He would talk about life saving - emergency aid, the full course takes weeks, not an hour.

Think first of no. 1 - and avoid any danger to yourself. Then, no. 2, avoid further danger to the casualty.

Remember your ABC

- Airways
- Breathing
- Circulation

An unconscious person will usually be on the floor/ground. The muscles relax, the tongue falls back into the breathing tubes. Simple put two fingers under the point of the jaw, hand on forehead, push the head back and hold the position. Almost always works. If not, use mouth to mouth. Fully enclose the victim's mouth and pinch their nose. For two seconds blow in (see their chest rise); then four seconds rest. (For hygiene: pierce a hole in a piece of plastic large enough to cover lower face; put a clean cloth/handkerchief over it. Then blow).

Chewing gum is a danger, if partially swallowed. Turn patient upside down or tilt well forward. Strike five firm slaps between the shoulder blades. If all that fails AND ONLY WITH ADULTS, stand behind the patient, put clasped hands below the sternum and pull firmly upwards under the ribs a maximum of five times. You can then repeat the back-slapping if necessary (unlikely).

A casualty on the back may vomit and choke, so they are put into the recovery position. A revised technique now. Take the patient's nearer arm and place it up beside the head. Take the patient's far hand and place it beside the near side of his face. Reach over and lift up far rear, then roll his body over on to its side. Place the upper knee at 90 degrees.

Bleeding. Two things help: blood tends to clot; blood pressure tends to fall. Apply pressure to the wound. If something in it, don't try to remove it - pinch the flesh round. Elevate the limb. Sit the patient down.

Head Injuries. If the patient is unconscious or dazed for any length of time, he should go to hospital. Look at the eyes. Signs are bloodshot or black eyes. Look for depression of the skull. Bloodstained fluid from the ear or nose is serious. Place a handkerchief to the ear and that side of the head to the ground.

Head and back injuries. Difficult to diagnose fractures. DO NOTHING to the patient except to protect him from further danger/injury. A conscious person may complain of 'pins and needles'. or being 'cut in half'.

After his excellent presentation, with Derek Reigate acting as patient along with the female doll, Roger answered a number of questions. He was warmly thanked by the Chairman on behalf of those present. {Details of full first aid courses can be made available to anyone interested}

ERRATA AND APOLOGIES - THE HANDBOOK THIS TIME

Roy Maybanks was quite calm considering This year's Handbook contains his old address I'm afraid. And when I say old, I mean old. It should read: **143 Westwood Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG3 6LH. Tel: 412750.** (Actually, he's a bit of a perfectionist Roy - I only got the road and the postcode wrong.

There is one other error I know about - a page reference, so not desperate. If you spot any more or have comments or suggestions about the Handbook, do tell me.

KNICKERBOCKER GLORY?

[Recently there has been growing interest in the possibility of linesmen especially having a more appropriate winter uniform. This article first appeared in 'The South Hart', the magazine of the South Herts Society, but I saw it in the Oxted and District magazine 'Bleep'. Thanks to the author and both editors]

Tracksuit bottoms, and why not? I have always been interested in clothing as worn by players and officials. As far as referees have been concerned, there is not much tradition about the way they used to dress.

In pre-1920 times ordinary clothing seems to have been worn. Various types of tweed cloth wear seemed the norm. Sporting countrywear such as knicker-bockers and flat caps can be seen in sporting prints. The early 'twenties seemed to have popularised the white shirt, blue blazer and navy-blue shorts, probably through that famous man (Sir) Stanley Rous. But I have a treasured picture of the toss-up between Arsenal and Cardiff in the 1927 Cup-Final. The Referee was attired in what looked to be an ordinary suit and shod in what I can only describe as gentlemen's dress boots, topped off with white shirt and, wait for it - a black bow-tie! {I have published that picture in the Reading Referee, as older members may remember. Ed]

The blazer-type uniform ran on well into the 1950s when another change came into being. Referees at local level were purchasing war surplus navy blue battledress as issued in the Royal Navy. It was not long after this a specialist firm was circularising officials with a catalogue showing designer uniforms. These were made in a material branded 'Italian Cloth'. White collars and cuffs were 'button-on' to allow separate laundering and, remember, this was well before the days of 'drip-dry' materials or universal washing-machines/tumble driers. Another snag was that the Italian cloth had a strange quality in that it took on a new hue the more it was washed - the black leached out into a patchy purple!

Around this time, general suppliers of football shirts and shorts put out their own versions of referee kits. There was little variation until the advent of floodlit grounds and visits from Continental teams with the lighter strips, shorter shorts and lightweight boots - almost shoes, but it was quite a few years later that referees' outfits 'lightened up' and shorts became briefer.

Some years ago I advocated that those of us who are normal, feel the cold, and not being 'macho' might benefit from a

thermal shirt and fitted knickerbocker-type trews. These latter could fit below the knee to allow socks to be pulled up over them. I think something like these would be neater and not as floppy as track-suit bottoms. Another possibility is fitted cycling-type shorts which might satisfy those who have manly thighs to display.

In reply to the query 'Who says we can't wear track-suit bottoms?' the answer is 'No one'. However, I do remember a colleague from Middlesex who allowed his linesmen to wear track-suit bottoms being rebuked by that County FA. It was a bitter January day and he theorised, quite rightly, that a warm and comfortable pair of linesmen were of more use to him than two who were shivering with cold.

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that some enterprising group, perhaps the RA itself, could set a trend by marketing a Winter strip that could be worn by all three match officials during extra cold spells. After all, it isn't too long ago that short-sleeved tunics for referees came into fashion for warm weather and less than warm weather! Comfort seems to take a back seat in football, whilst fashion, if that is what you can call the latest garish outfit, careers gaily along. If ever they designed a flowered shirt, I think I might pull out!

Over the years I can think of times during the Winter when I would have been a more competent official had my knees and thighs not been aching with exposure to the elements.

As a last word, I have heard of referees who insisted on their linesmen wearing short-sleeved shirts because they liked them, and in the name of uniformity. Thank heavens I have never met a colleague who was that bombastic and thoughtless.

Cecil Mead

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS Reading RA AGM, 20 May 1993

Cup final replay night and we still attracted nearly 80 members, (though maybe the previous Saturday's display had something to do with it).

A sad start as we had a minute's silence for Graham Stockton, our Chairman, who had died since our last meeting. President Dick Sawden-Smith was in the chair, determined to get through a lengthy agenda democratically but as expeditiously as possible.

Sybil Newman made the presentations of the Fair Play Award which bears the name of her late husband and RA member Bert Newman, and the Linesman's awards, and thanked the members for inviting her back again for that pleasant duty.

After the secretary's report on the year, the proposal to use half the Major Sainsbury bequest (£10,000) was introduced on

behalf of the committee and the many issues were discussed in some detail. The basic proposal was to invest the money in the Royals' Rendezvous Club to ensure a central venue providing for monthly and committee meetings, training classes and four social events per annum for a period of 10 years. Questions centered on the financial justification, the security of the arrangement i.e. whether it could be made legally watertight, and the middle-term future of Reading FC. The proposal to allow the committee to take the discussion further and to seek legal advice was carried, but the meeting was also promised careful consideration of all the points raised.

Although the Society had had a good outturn - a modest excess in place of last year's serious deficit, the Treasurer proposed an increase in subscription to £17-50 in anticipation of the worst-case scenario. He more or less accepted that this might even lead to a reduction next season if things went well. Anyway the increase was approved.

The 5 year period of office of the President ended this year and Dick Sawdon Smith was thanked warmly for his service. One proposal had been made for his successor, your Press Officer and Magazine Editor - by Chairman Graham Stockton before he died. I was honoured to accept.

In recognition of his 40 year's membership, 22 years as Editor, periods of service as Chairman and President, and all his other contributions to the Society, Dick was proposed by the committee for Life Membership and accepted with acclaim.

For the unexpected vacancy of Chairman there were two candidates: Stephen Green and Derek Reigate. On the result of a ballot Stephen was elected, and Derek was proposed and accepted as Vice-Chairman. The other officers were re-elected, as were the committee members available for re-election: Stuart Gentle, Peter Hitt, Roy Maybanks, Graeme McLay, Kevin Parsons. New committee members to fill the vacancies are Steven Long, Ian Sharpe and Phil Taylor. Welcome to them. They bring different experience and can look forward to an interesting and busy period of service.

Berks and Bucks RA AGM, 7 June 1993

Not the shortest meeting on record this year and not the easiest for George Mills, the President, to handle. Quite a good attendance, with all societies but N. Berks represented.

The Chairman had resigned and the result of the ballot was that Vice Chairman John Oxley was elected. (It was not possible to elect a replacement Vice Chairman at the meeting, but our nominee for Chairman, Malcolm Hutt of the Bracknell Society is standing for the Vice-Chairmanship). The other officers were re-elected en bloc.

A proposal by the Treasurer to raise the County RA subscription from 70p to 80p was defeated.

After the business the meeting was addressed by John Christopher, Chairman of the County FA.

NATIONAL RA 75th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Liverpool, 19th June 1993

Four of our society attended this year - George Mills, Derek Reigate, Brian Palmer and Secretary Pat Monaghan attending his first. We missed John Lambden who has been a regular for many years and Graham Stockton who was really looking forward to attending again. As we remind everyone, Conference is open to all 19,000+ members of the RA, (though I don't know how the organisers would cope if more than the usual 200 to 300 decided to go!).

This year we had no trouble finding the hotel but, unfortunately, although it was plain to see, it was in the middle of a one-way system our navigator (not me this year) couldn't quite crack until about the third time round. Our second wrong decision was to miss the Friday evening civic welcome, usually tedious with uncertain refreshment. We had a good meal and evening in our own hotel but apparently the food and entertainment this year were well above average.

The Conference day is the Saturday and, apart from a proposed change of rule to make membership of the insurance scheme optional, the agenda looked fairly innocuous. All was to change with item 2 on the agenda - the adoption of standing orders, normally a formal matter. It was a question of seconding of motions and whether democracy was at stake. Heavy stuff for 9.30 a.m. with a long day ahead. The challenge petered out but the warning shot had been fired.

In reading the obituary list, President Peter Willis said a few special words about Graham whom he had met at our Dinner Dance and Conference last year.

The second shot was a most dignified expression of concern from Ken Aston, the former FIFA and World Cup referee now in his late 70's. This concerned a proposal carried by a huge majority last year that the RA should 'assume as a primary objective the taking of such steps as may be necessary to improve the discipline of the game'. What had the RA Council actually done? The President had been forewarned by Ken and produced what evidence of action he could, but it wasn't very convincing.

The most impressive part of Conference every year is the conferring of Life Membership and presentation of Meritorious Service Awards. This year Peter Molyneux of Southern Division and well known to Reading received the former and Bill Cleere of High Wycombe was among the latter. Special congratulations to them both. The records of service of all the recipients are outstanding. The President took his time rather over this part of the agenda with wives present and, from this point, the impetus of the meeting seem to have got a bit lost and we were running against the clock.

Amazingly, Harry Dempsey on behalf of the auditors got away with presenting the balance sheet without a single question - we are financially sound but have no room for complacency.

Guest John Goggins of the Football League referred to the National Review Body (for League referees) and said they were working for accelerated promotion for the most promising referees coming up.

The three proposed rule changes were then debated at length with the President more than usually indulgent with the time spent on presentation. The first and important proposal was from our Northern Ireland colleagues who are at present in the North-West Division but wished to have a full Northern Ireland Division. The case was excellently presented and supported by us, but was lost probably because of the financial argument of increased costs to the RA.

A proposal to change the membership year to January to December was very heavily defeated, and one to make membership of the National RA optional for non-active referees and the insurance scheme totally optional was even more heavily defeated for fairly obvious reasons.

Things now became more contentious. The motion from the Harrow Society was to make Council sub-committee minutes available to Executive Members who, it was alleged, feel underinformed. The old and frequent charge of secrecy, lack of democracy etc was repeated and, in spite of Council's opposition and efforts at self-defence, was carried by nearly 2 to 1. A significant statement against the establishment.

A well-meaning motion about the Benevolent Fund - trying to abolish the means test and spare bereaved relatives - was shown to be impractical and heavily defeated. However, concern about the way the RA operates was to loom large again and Reading members sat up when the Southport delegate started his speech by quoting from your editor's article in last October's Football Referee about the future of the RA. Council was being asked in effect to look at its own composition (my proposed 'think tank' got a mention) and report back in time for rule changes if necessary at next Conference. Council was not exactly wildly supportive of the proposal which was carried by such a majority as to underline the depth of discontent with the status quo - 10,892 to 3,342.

The final proposal - to give potential referees the right to join the RA while trainees - was narrowly defeated, again, one suspected because of a few practical difficulties which we thought were less important than getting trainees insured and involved in the RA as soon as possible.

By this time it was coming up to 5 o'clock and the end of the working day and Arthur Jones, the invited afternoon speaker, offered to postpone his talk - to next year's Conference! Ken Ridden, the FA National Referees' Training Officer, was allowed a few words however. He commented on the earlier schedule for

Law changes (to our benefit) and commended the new FA Emergency Aid Scheme.

In his closing remarks the President made his own uncertainties clear. He recognised the lack of confidence in the Council embodied in the votes on two of the motions and referred to a consideration of his own position. This was to misinterpret, in my view, what the issue was. It was a question of structure and practice of the Council. Certainly discussion after the meeting made it clear that there was no lack of confidence in the President. By the time this magazine is published much more may have transpired and been revealed.

ANOTHER PLUM (from last season)

In 10 years of editing the magazine I don't think I've ever managed not to miss somebody off the list of honours. Never my fault you understand - I can only print the information I'm given. To Martin Albury, belated congratulations and my abject apologies for missing your line on the Berks and Bucks Saturday Intermediate Cup final.

FAIR PLAY AND LINESMAN'S AWARDS

My usual reminder for the beginning of the season. The Reading RA asks its members to mark teams and linesmen throughout the season for these awards. They refer to both Saturday and Sunday Leagues, although the Sunday League has its own separate award. It all depends on your co-operation and diligence. Alan Turner is the man in charge and he will be happy to give you the form and tell you more about it.