

# Reading Referees' Association

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<b>Committee</b>	Andy Awbery, Alison Chapman, Malcolm Garstang, Peter Hitt, Darren Naish, Kevin Parsons.

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<b>Reading Football League</b>	Derek Reigate
<b>Reading Sunday League</b>	Stuart Gentle



## READING REFEREE

Editor - Brian Palmer

August/September 1996  
Volume XL No 1

### *Editorial*

Welcome back!

Anything much happened since our last issue? Well, there was Euro96, but many words have been spoken and written about all that and I won't add any here. Richard Highfield makes a few nice points in his article and you can read others in the *Football Referee*.

Inevitably, there have been Law amendments too. Some of the customary 'clarifications' i.e. trying to get the wording right the second (or third) time round. Helpful. The surprise to me has been the relative lack of interest in what could lead to a major change in refereeing practice - the power to rescind 'advantage'. Some would argue that the 2/3 second gap is already applied; others that it is not enough. And both are right. However, the 2/ second gap is *advice* and does not have the force of Law. In practice, it will be another area of discretion for the referee and could lead to better decisions. The downside will be more accusations of inconsistency as we apply our discretion differently . . . . Any chance now of that other bit of Rugby Law - the 10-ard retirement for dissent?

The good news for the Reading RA is that we start with a full complement of officers and committee members and the season promises well. Don't forget it's our 75th Anniversary Year to be celebrated by a special Dinner and Dinner. Hope to see you there and at the monthly meetings. A varied and attractive programme is already in place, so you have no excuse!

Have a good season!

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## MONTHLY MEETING

## August

The first of the new season and, in spite of the holidays and one league's referees' meeting, some 50 members attended.

The Chairman started by congratulating Alison Chapman - our first female Class 1 - on her appointment as Assistant Referee on the Isis league. Declan Ford was congratulated on his FA 1st Preliminary Round appointment - Selsey Town v Thamesmead United.

Among the business items:

- reference was made to the notes prepared by Harry Dempsey, the National RA auditor, about Income Tax and Self-Assessment. (Full text on pages xx - yy)

- the Membership Officer reported 102 paid-up members - the highest ever at this stage - thanks particularly to the early start made by the Treasurer.

- an appeal was made for a volunteer to be Social Secretary (details from the Secretary if you are interested).

- Dick Sawdon Smith reported on the planning of the 75th Anniversary Dinner and Dance (details on page zz, and application form enclosed)

- Brian Wratten reported on the RA National Conference (page bb)

- Martin Shearn suggested that the County FA should be asked to confirm that unregistered persons who refereed a game with the agreement of the teams in the absence of an official referee, would also be covered by the FA's Insurance. He also recommended that a letter should be sent to the FA protesting at the apparent lack of action taken over the wearing of jewellery in Euro96, especially in view of Graham Kelly's specific reference in the Introduction to this year's Law Amendments to dangerous articles worn by players.

- Congratulations were due to the Reading Whistlers who had had a resounding 4-0 victory over Bracknell RA to retain the Graham Stockton Memorial trophy. Special thanks to Richard Highfield who so successfully acted as player/manager at short notice and to Reading Town FC who provided the facilities.

- Copies of the Laws can be obtained through Kevin Parsons (£2-50, post free, cash with order) [How old is *your* most recent copy? Ed]

- Ted Cambridge reminded candidates for promotion from 2 to 1 that the attendance at a training seminar is now compulsory. If they miss the 2 September date in Reading,

they must attend one of those held later elsewhere. A 3 to 2 meeting is to be arranged and will be attended by the assessors too.

- Assistant Referees are being sought by the Allied Counties' Youth League. See Tom Walton.

## PROBLEM SPOT

Cliff Watkins described an incident in a recent friendly which involved one of the new changes to Law. The ball was played forward from near the halfway line and the Assistant Referee (neutral linesman) signalled offside. Cliff played advantage as the ball went through to a defender. A forward tackled him, took the ball fairly and scored the winning goal. The 'victims' were not pleased.

Cliff invited discussion which focused understandably on the time gap in view of the new advice to referees. Cliff had seen the defender's possession and the subsequent tackle as separate events (and further apart than to the suggested 2 to 3 seconds).

After the break, in the absence of all the members of the training team (with good reason) and with very little notice, Martin Albury had the task of talking about the Law changes.

Most changes are technical and don't really affect our job: the Ball 's dimensions are now metric and slightly different; 7 substitutes can be nominated, with only three played as now, but do read the competition rules; 'linesmen' are now Assistant Referees when neutral; 'persisting in misconduct' has become 'commits a second cautionable offence'. The change to Law 5 about 'advantage' is likely to prove the most important: The referee now has a few moments of discretion ('2-3 seconds'). Judgment will still be required, especially in deciding (as Cliff had to do in the 'Problem Spot'), whether it is still the same incident. The general feeling was that the change would prove helpful. Dick Sawdon Smith reminded us of the ambiguity we have in Law 12 with 'careless', 'reckless' and 'dangerous' since the notion of intent has disappeared.

On behalf of the Reading Football League, David Jeanes informed members that all senior games would be roped off. He agreed to get the distance from the boundaries changed from 1 metre to 2. Separate changing facilities and refreshment for referees must be provided. Fees have been increased. Please notify David if no confirmation from the club has been received by Friday.

Gerry Chapman reported that the Sunday League is still very short of referees. There will be no replays in the Cup competitions this season after the success of last season's arrangements.

Alan Turner reminded members about the Fair Play and Linesman's Awards.

Kevin Parsons gave details of schools' football and National Association of Boys' Club appointments - get in touch with him if you can help.

## **GOOD NEWS FOR REFEREES?**

In more ways than one.

It has often been said that the referee (and assistants!) influence the way the game is played. It would be surprising if they didn't. So it should follow from these UEFA news items that we English officials at least have something to be pleased about.

### **"OVER 1000 MATCHES COME UNDER THE FAIR PLAY SPOTLIGHT**

**For three seasons UEFA has been compiling a Fair Play ranking table covering all its competitions. However, the significance of this tables goes beyond moral values.**

This ranking table in fact allows the top three national associations to enter an additional club for the UEFA Cup. . . . .

For the 1995/96 season, more than 1,000 matches were assessed for Fair play, in accordance with the following criteria: red and yellow cards, positive play, respect of the referee, conduct of the team officials and crowd conduct. Yet again, England proved to be the best performers in terms of Fair Play, finishing

ahead of two Scandinavian countries, Norway and Sweden:

- 1 England
- 2 Norway
- 3 Sweden
- 4 Faroe Islands
- 5 Wales
- 6 Estonia
- 7 Rep. of Ireland
- 8 Belarus
- 9 Iceland

## **ENGLISH WIN AT FAIR PLAY**

It is a good thing to imitate one's elders when they set a good example . . . , which is exactly what England's Under-18 players have done. Following in the footsteps of their senior counterparts at EURO 96, England's Under-18 team

won the fair Play prize awarded in the European Under-18 Championship, finishing ahead of Ireland and Iceland in the Fair Play assessment."

**EUROflash** August 1996

## **ALISON'S ROLE MODEL?**

### **A first for the woman in black**

ANDY WARHOL predicted that everyone would be famous

for 15 minutes. Yesterday, having trotted on to the pitch at 2-55 pm, Wendy Toms did

better than that. She lasted two hours.

The 33-year old Parcel Force manager from Pole, Dorset,

became the first woman to referee a national league football match in England when she blew the whistle as Woking drew 0-0 with Telford United in the Conference.

Mrs Toms had felt the pressure, fleeing her home on Thursday to avoid the media pack. But everybody at Woking's ground in Surrey did their best to ease her in. The Woking manager, Geoff Chappell, had told his players to "help her through it", and his chairman Phil Ledger had been careful to ensure all mod cons were ready. "There is a curtain in the officials' dressing room. You can't see through it.

She is quite happy," he said.

Twelve cameramen, including three television crews, recorded Mrs Toms' entrance, which is twelve more than Deryk Brown, The Sunday Times, 1 September 1996

Woking usually attract. She immediately fulfilled the first essential of any referee in that she was unobtrusive, a trim figure with medium-cropped dark hair.

Mrs Toms could not be blamed for the fact that Woking were goalless in the first half. They struggled for their best touch while she, impartially, cautioned the no.8 on each side for dissent. That was slightly worrying because, generally, the better the referee, the fewer cautions he, or even she, gives for back-chat. But, undoubtedly, Mrs Toms was making a good fist of things as, indeed, you would expect.

She took up refereeing in Cyprus 11 years ago when her then husband was

serving in the Forces, and progressed to become the first

woman to run the line in the Football League two years ago. Football even contributed to her a marriage break-up. A rare case, she observed, of a husband complaining that his wife spent too much time on football.

.....

Mrs Toms gave her third caution, for a late tackle. It looked harsh, but by now everybody seemed to have forgotten that the referee was a woman, which was a substantial compliment to her.

Woking brought on another striker who has played on a bigger stage, Simon Garner, but he could not lift them. They stay unbeaten this season, the gate of 2,744 was healthy, but no-body could upstage Mrs Toms.

She handed out her fourth and last caution to a Telford substitute for time-wasting, blew the final whistle and shook hands all round.

## ***"MINIMISE THE RISK OF BEING ASSAULTED"***

Not the most gripping title ever for your bedtime reading, but that's what Ted Ring's latest offering is called. Don't be put off. It's well worth the time and the £1-50 (copies available through Kevin). Ted always writes clearly and has produced a document of real value, particularly for the less experienced of our colleagues. Better to get the tips in advance than to discover the hard way what can lead to physical attack.

# **Berks & Bucks Referees' Association**

## **REFEREES AND COUNTY CUP APPOINTMENTS**

The County Referees' Association wish to remind all referees of their responsibilities when appointed to County Cup games at whatever level and at whatever stage of the competitions.

Referees **MUST** acknowledge the appointment and indicate whether or not they can carry it out. Of the appointments made in the early stages of these competitions approximately one third (that is about 310 games) have to be re-appointed because referees are unavailable for genuine and acceptable reasons (holidays, injury etc.). As long as the referee informs the County FA Referees' Secretary, and in good time, then there is no problem - a re-appointment will be made.

However, the County Football Association has noted that there are some referees who just fail to acknowledge the appointment, particularly in the early rounds. The Referees' Secretary then has to telephone them to ascertain whether or not they will be there. Worse still, there is a small, but significant, number of referees who not only fail to acknowledge their appointment, but also fail to turn up on the day, leaving the game uncovered.

Such incidents can easily be avoided by making a single telephone call or returning the reply card. If you are on holiday at the beginning of the season (i.e. during the early rounds), then close the dates with the County FA. Please also remember that an appointment to a County FA cup game carries prestige and status, and takes precedence over local league games.

## REFEREES AND PERSONAL HEARINGS

The Country Referees' Association wish to remind all referees of their responsibilities regarding attendance at Disciplinary Hearings. The County Football Association has noted that there is a small, but significant, number of referees who do not turn up to such hearings when requested to do so. Some of these defaulters are members of the Referees' Association.

There are some compelling reasons why referees must attend such hearings if they are required to do so by the relevant County Football Association:

Firstly, and probably most importantly, in many cases the absence of the referee (i.e. the Commission's witness) means that the Commission is unable to evaluate the situation fully, and hence any appeal by the player is much more likely to be upheld. Referees who do not attend these hearings can have no complaint if the player then appears "to get off" Indeed, all referees owe it to their colleagues to do everything possible to help the Commission come to a correct decision, and to administer the appropriate punishment.

Secondly, attendance at hearings is a requirement of your registration as a referee.

Finally, such hearings take precedence over any refereeing/linesman appointments.

Yours sincerely,

**Brian Richards**

Brian Richards  
Hon Secretary

### **DON'T SEND US A MEMO**

#### **Put interpretations in the Chart says Dick Sawdon Smith**

Love them or hate them, you have to admit that penalty-kick deciders are dramatic. Few English supporters are likely to forget in a hurry the two shoot-outs that England were involved in at Euro96.

After the first nerve-tingler with Spain, which put England in the semi-finals, I watched the television interview with David Seaman, the England goalkeeper. He described one kick he had to face, when the Spaniard ran up as if to take the kick, stopped and then sidefooted the ball wide of Seaman into the net.

"I thought that was illegal" said Seaman. "I thought so too" I muttered to myself, and levered myself off the sofa, to look for the latest edition of the Laws of the Game. To my surprise, Law 14 Penalty Kicks, didn't make mention of this action anywhere.

Clause 4 (a) of Law 14 simply says "If the player taking the kick is guilty of ungentlemanly conduct, the kick if already taken, shall be retaken if a goal is scored. The player concerned shall be cautioned".

I was still certain that I had seen this type of incident in writing, so I dug out all the old law amendments and memorandums that I have received over the past many years. And there it was, in the 1978 Memorandum from the Football Association. "A player taking a penalty kick may try to deceive the goalkeeper as to his intentions



and such action is allowed. This is quite different from 'trickery', when a player stops his kicking action in order to make the goalkeeper move in one direction, and then kicks in the other. This is quite contrary to the spirit of the game, and the player at fault should be cautioned and the kick retaken if a goal has resulted".

So why did the referee allow the Spaniards trickery. Two possible reasons. First he probably wasn't refereeing in 1978, and therefore had never seen the memorandum. Secondly, it was published by the Football Association and not FIFA, so it is possible that no referee in his country had *ever* seen it anyway

My point simply is that putting such interpretations into memorandums, which get forgotten, is not the right way of getting uniformity in refereeing. If they are included in the International Board Decisions which accompany the Laws of the Game, then we all get the same message whether we started refereeing in 1952 or 1996.

I can see a similar confusion arising in a few years time about this year's amendments to the advantage clause. As a reminder, what the amendment says is this; "If the Referee applies the advantage clause and the advantage which was anticipated does not develop at that time, the referee shall penalise the original offence".

This of course gives the referee the possibility of waiting to see how an advantage situation develops, before taking action. But how long does the referee wait?. The notes which accompany the amendments say, ". . . if it does not develop after a short while, eg 2 or 3 seconds . . .". Those notes, however, will not appear in the Laws of the Game, or what we still call the Referees' Chart, and anyone starting refereeing after this year will never see them.

So, if in 10 years time referees are allowing, say, a minute or more, before stopping play after allowing an advantage (as they do in Rugby), who will be able to say they are wrong? No doubt when questions are raised, the F.A. will see fit to issue another memo on the subject, but wouldn't it be better if the International Football Association Board included such interpretations in the Referees' Chart to start with?

Dick Sawdon Smith

## **REFEREES AND THE TAXMAN**

As self-assessment is upon us, the following advice comes from the National RA:

### TAX ON REFEREEING INCOME: INTRODUCTION OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

#### INTRODUCTION

Keith Robertson, E.C. member for West Riding, has raised the subject of income tax on referee's fees in the context of the new Self-Assessment system which commenced on 6th April 1996. Keith has asked about de minimis reporting requirements and his informal discussions with the Inland Revenue staff have gleaned the information that there will be no lower limits. In short, if you make money out of refereeing, you should own up and cough up! It is not for the R.A. and its advisers to encourage members who do make a profit to hide the fact from the Inland Revenue but Keith is perfectly in order to raise the issue because it may indeed be appropriate to remind members of their obligations and to advise them how to avoid paying tax by following simple rules, the most basic of which is 'KEEP PROPER RECORDS'

#### HISTORY

Some years ago, referees were under attack by the Inland Revenue. Advice was given to members how to go about calculating profits - or more likely, losses. The rules were, and still are, summed up as follows:

1. Note all fees and expenses received.
2. Note all mileage and expenditure incurred.
3. If you spend it, claim it.

The conclusion reached by the Inland Revenue, after considerable prompting and prodding from me, was that they were wasting their time and resources chasing after parks referees. That never absolved the individual referee from keeping records, however, and the requirements of self-assessment make record-keeping all the more important now.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

Starting from 1996/97, the taxpayer will file his tax return to 5th April and calculate his own tax liability for payment on 31st January each year. Alternatively, he will file his tax return by 30th September and the Inland Revenue will work out the tax for him. Either way the return must be correct otherwise interest and penalties will be imposed. If you tell the tax man that you owe £100 and you end of owing £500, you will be penalised.

For most people who are taxed under PAYE the self-assessment scheme will have little impact but the scheme will affect all who are self-employed. Refereeing is by definition a source of self-employment and if you make profits from refereeing, they should be declared on your tax return.

If you hide a source of income or profits and the tax man gets wind of it, you will get a red card in the form of interest and penalties. Records must be kept by self-employed people for five years in case the tax man asks to see them. Failure to do so gives rise to a fine up to £3000.

Taxpayers with 'dodgy' reputations will trigger off 'risk points' on the Inland Revenue computer when their figures look out of kilter with reality and such people are more likely to be investigated than honest taxpayers. There will, however, be an element of random selection for close examination by the Revenue and if your number comes up and you have not kept proper records - look out for trouble ahead.

The remedy is simple: KEEP PROPER RECORDS.

## WHAT TO CLAIM FOR

If you are preparing a return of your income and expenditure from refereeing, you must obviously declare all the fees and expenses received. In turn, you are entitled to claim all your expenses incurred. The following is a typical case for 1996/97 (the year ending 5th April 1997):

Referee Joe Blewitt: Referees 42 matches at local level; average fee £8; average mileage 20 miles at 15p. Receives £15 for attending three disciplinary hearings. Total received £477. Mileage incurred on football business:

Matches 42 at 20	840	
Attending society 8 at 10	80	
Attending seminars 2 at 30	60	
Disciplinary hearings	<u>100</u>	
	<u>1080</u>	
Mileage rate (see note) 43 pence	=	£ 464.40

Kit purchases:

1 long sleeved shirt at £17.50	17.50	
1 short sleeved shirt at £17.50		17.50
2 pairs shorts at £12.25 ea.		24.50
2 pairs boots at £35 each		70.00
1 pair new flagsticks at £11.50		11.50
1 pair new flags at £11.50		11.50
6 pairs white laces at 0.70 ea		4.20
4 pairs black laces at 0.70 ea.	2.80	
Tracksuit		45.00
4 pairs hose at £3.50		14.00
2 Classic Fox 40 whistles at £4.95		9.90
Lanyard		1.50
2 Match Record Pads at 0.60		1.20
Red and Yellow Cards		60
		£ 231.70

Subscriptions:

R .A. /Society	10.00
Local F.A.	5.00
	15.00

Laundry	42 matches at 75p	31.50
Telephone	Say for season 40 weeks at 50p	20.00

## Note on Mileage Rate

For up to 4000 business miles, the 1996/97 going rate for claims (to include depreciation and all running costs) is::

Cars up to 1000 c.c.	27p	per mile
1001 - 1500 c.c.	34p	per mile

1501	- 2000 c.c.	43p	per mile
over	2000 c.c.	61p	per mile

The rates are lower for business miles over 4000 but it is not envisaged that a parks referee will do more than 4000 miles on refereeing business.

The Appendix sets out how this referee's accounts will look. The list of deductions is not exhaustive and the exercise is simply a guide. Our friend Blewitt incurs a loss of £336 - should he claim this against his other income and get a refund of tax paid?. Should he carry it forward against future profits?

Claiming losses against other income would involve satisfying the Revenue that a true business loss had been incurred. It is possible, but it could involve fuss and bother. The Revenue could argue that it was a loss from a hobby and therefore not allowable. Most referees would not mention refereeing income at all because no profit had been made. Some might carry the loss forward and some might claim the losses against other income.

Whatever you do: PLEASE KEEP PROPER RECORDS

### CONCLUSION

I hope this update will be helpful. It is a guide, not a statement of absolute certainty and it should be treated as such. It is geared to parks referees and not to those earning higher fees and expenses. It also proves, I believe, that any attack by Revenue Offices on local referees would yield no tax because taking one year with another, it is difficult for a parks referee to make a profit. He would need to do 80/100 games a season and even then, his mileage claim would be commensurately greater.

**Harry Dempsey**

HARRY DEMPSEY June 1996

JOSEPH BLEWITT

SOCCER REFEREE

### PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5TH APRIL 1997

Fees and expenses received	477
<u>Less:</u> Expenditure incurred:	
Mileage 1080 at 43p	464
Kit renewals	232
Subscriptions	15
Laundry	32
Telephone	20
Postage and stationery	50
	813
<u>LOSS FOR THE YEAR</u>	(336)

### **TO ALL CHILTONIAN LEAGUE OFFICIALS**

We have been asked by the Chiltonian FL Referees' Association to publish the following information about their meetings:

Monday 7 October 1996 (Guest: David Elleray)

Monday 3 February 1997

Monday 12 May 1997

All meetings will be held at the Wooburn Green Working Men's Club, The Green, Wooburn Green, Bucks. Tel: 01628 520772.

All meetings will start at 8 pm.

All Referees and Assistant Referees officiating on the Chiltonian Football League are invited to attend.

Please bring along your colleagues from your local Referees' Association.

For further information, please contact the Chiltonian Referees' Association Secretary: Sean Dipple, tel: 01734 699574.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 16 May 1996**

The Chairman and President always look nervous before the meeting starts because they are wondering whether there will be a good turnout for what is hardly a turn-on. Enough loyal members arrived to promise a good meeting.

The President, Brian Palmer, took the Chair and welcomed Stan Gigg and Ted Cambridge of the Berks and Bucks FA, Sybil Newman in her customary and welcome role to present the Bert Newman Fair Play and Linesman's awards, representatives of the winning clubs, and all members.

The meeting opened with the presentations by Mrs Newman, and Stan Gigg responded on behalf of the recipients.

Brian Wratten's significant contribution to the RA this season became apparent - in case members had not noticed previously - when he presented the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports and proposed some rule changes on behalf of the Committee. He was able to reassure the meeting that, spite of the traumas of the season, especially the unexpected departure of Stephen Green, our Chairman and Senior Training Officer, the RRA is in good heart and shape for the future. Members had rallied round and we would face the new season with a full complement of officers and committee. We remain financially sound and even anticipate a subsidy for the 75th Anniversary Dinner and Dance. The minor changes to rule were agreed. and the subscription remained unchanged. The President thanked Brian warmly on behalf of the members.

As a result of resignations and elections there were changes in both officers and committee. Derek Reigate was formally elected Chairman and Peter Pittaway is our new Vice-Chairman. Martin Albury was elected Secretary and complimented on the way he had filled the role of Acting Assistant Secretary during the past months. Colin Pike will be his Assistant. Brian Wratten was re-elected Treasurer with acclaim (he hopes to keep the number of hats he wears down to one this season!) Cliff Watkins takes over as Membership Officer. Darren Naish was elected to the Committee. Vice-Presidents and others were all re-elected.

The business of the meeting concluded with the presentation of RRA awards by new Chairman Derek Reigate. Stuart Gentle was the delighted and somewhat bemused recipient of the Major Sainsbury Award for his 20 years of contribution to local refereeing and the RA. The Fred Porton Award for the most promising Class 3 went to Gary Douglas.

The President was thanked for his conduct of the meeting and the evening was nicely rounded off with refreshments and chat.

### **National RA CONFERENCE 15 June 1996 at Stoke-on-Trent**

[Summary of Brian Wratten's report to the August meeting. Ed]

The Conference was hosted by the North Staffs' Referees' Club which this year celebrates its centenary. 194 delegates and guests - fewer than usual, including the 4 from Reading. The timing was questionable as it clashed with the Euro96 England v Scotland match. [Brian didn't confess that we finished in time to watch it on TV in the hotel foyer! Ed]

Is it a Conference? More like an AGM combined with an Old Boys' Reunion. Among the Awards was the Long and Meritorious Service Award (MSA) to John Oxley of the Chiltern Society, Chairman of the County RA.

### **Highlights:**

#### ***Ken Ridden, FA Director of Refereeing***

The FA is insisting that any official on a Contributory League line should also referee on a Supply League. The Contributory Leagues were being monitored to ensure that the right people were getting through to the higher levels of the game.

A recruitment drive for referees was to be launched at the end of Euro96. Magazines, TV and Radio would be targeted with a focus on the 18-25 year-old age group and with the emphasis on ethnic minorities and females. The FA recognises that the drop-out rate for referees is high. Attempts would be made

to improve the image and status of referees - to be seen as those who encourage fair play and act as guardians of the law.

The FA has decreed that as from 1 July 1996 all referees will be covered for £2,000,000 Public Liability Insurance (with higher amounts for Premier and Football League officials). It was emphasised that referees still have a duty to officiate in accordance with the Laws of Association Football.

### ***Harry Dempsey, National RA Auditor***

Harry addressed the issue of Tax Self-Assessment. The essential message was for referees to keep full records of income and expenses for a period of 5 years. In general referees should have little trouble in showing that they do not make any money from their refereeing activities.

### ***Change of RA Rules***

New members joining between 1st January and 31st March will in future only be required to pay half the RA affiliation fee.

### ***Future of Conference***

The Council of the RA has raised concerns about the future of the Conference, viz:

- the ever-increasing cost of holding Conference (£15,000 for 1995).
- the ever-increasing cost to Societies in sending delegates
- only a minority of Societies are represented
- the lack of real issues on the agenda
- the lack of younger members in attendance

Societies were asked to submit recommendations for the future of the Conference (by 31 October).

Conference *will* be held next year on the 20th/21st June in Plymouth.

## **75th Anniversary Dinner and Dance**

This very special event to mark our 75th Anniversary year will be held in the Blue Room at the University of Reading, on Saturday 9 November. A three-course meal with wine, cabaret and live band - all for the (subsidised) price of £17-50 per head. Invited guests include the Mayor of Reading, Colin Downey, Referees' Secretary of the FA) and Alan Robinson (Overseas Secretary of the RA) - but no long speeches, by

order! Please complete and return your application form as soon as possible. We hope to see a great turnout of members and former members, colleagues from other societies, partners and friends, especially from football.

### **What the "Assistant Referee" may be reduced to**

#### *A Short Lament*

For years I've just been a "Linesman",  
Or "Lino" to players for short,  
But now it's "Assistant Referee"  
Whatever can be my retort  
When their tongues won't easily go round it  
(And they certainly won't try very hard)  
And they simply reduce it to "Ass . . .".  
Yet another new case for a card?

*Anon*

### **ASSISTING THE REFEREE - lessons from Euro96?**

One of the drawbacks of being a local football referee throughout Euro96 was trying to answer football followers' questions about various decisions made on the field of play. An impossible task as many of the decisions defied logic. I was only able to side-step the issue of so many yellow cards in the early games by suggesting that the European football bureaucrats insisted that this was the way that the selected referees must perform.

So they did, spoiling the tournament.

Fortunately, once the appointments were made for the semi-finals and finals, we did see referees operate with calm control and authority. But as we enter the new era of Assistant Referees, we should look back at the two crucial decisions in the Germany v. Czech Republic final. Both involved routine, though important, line decisions, yet we have to ask whether each linesman assisted the referee properly. Did the referee respond to his linesmen?

Of course we all know that it is the same bureaucrats that have determined that we should have 'Assistant Referees'. People who have probably never played the game and certainly never officiated in one! Linesmen have been assisting referees in all the years that I have been watching football, though it is only the competent, and sometimes brave ones, that ensure that ultimately the correct decision is made.

Better basic referee-linesman co-operation would have greatly helped the biggest Wembley occasion in 30 years.

Take the penalty incident. Rightly the referee determines whether it is a foul or not. It is his decision even if he is detached from play but, knowing that the location of the

players was near the penalty area, and assuming that the linesman was level with the incident, which in this case he was, the referee is seeking to know whether the foul was committed in the area or not.

Clearly the linesman did not put his flag across his chest in the age-old method, or run to the goal-line to bodily indicate his proposed next position. He remained still, comfortable that the kick was to be taken outside the area.

So why did the Referee give the penalty? Was there a hidden communication?

At the other end, the winning goal was controversial in that the linesman did raise his flag to indicate an offside player when the goal-bound shot left the foot of the scorer.

Only the linesman can determine whether the player is in an offside position interfering with the goalkeeper. Replays show that the flag was raised, then lowered. Should it have gone up at all? Was the goal valid? Did the position of the player cause the goalkeeper to fumble the ball? Or did the linesman decide that European TV schedules had been inconvenienced enough that night?

Running the line, as Euro96 confirmed, is just not seeing whether the ball goes out of play adjacent to the line where you are positioned and indicating whose throw-in it is, but looking through each corner-flag and between the goal-posts to establish if a goal has been scored. It is also looking across an imaginary line created by the last defender to determine offside. (Yes. Spain did score against England.) It is also looking across the line of the penalty-area to determine ball/foul is in/out of the area. There have been notable examples of goalkeepers sent off for hand-ball by well positioned linesmen.

So when you are 'assisting your referee' in the coming weeks, do not forget you also need to be a good linesman, to make those four in-line decisions and communicate them to your referee.

Richard Highfield



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- AUGUST 15*      New season issues; training team reviews changes to the  
Laws
- SEPTEMBER 19*    Guest Speaker: Gary Willard.
- OCTOBER 17*      County Training Team presentation on:  
'Confrontation'
- NOVEMBER 21*    Guest Speaker: Alan Smith, manager of Wycombe  
Wanderers
- DECEMBER 19*    Christmas Draw
- JANUARY 16*      Reading RA Training Team
- FEBRUARY 20*    County Training Team presentation on: 'Lining'
- MARCH 20*        Guest Speaker: Ray Payne, FA Area Training Co-ordinator
- APRIL 17*         Guest Speaker: Roger Milford
- MAY 15*            Annual General Meeting

### **PHYSIOTHERAPY - Everybody's Health Service**

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Jill Wigmore-Welsh is a chartered Physiotherapist and practising Acupuncturist based at Tilehurst Physiotherapy, a clinic opposite Prospect Park. Her experience with athletes is extensive, having spent 12 years with the British Judo Association at international level and 2 years with the International rowing team.

The clinic offers a complete and comprehensive treatment for the injured athlete and has a link with Bradfield College which can assist in full rehabilitation using their gym and pool facilities.

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Alternatively contact **John Moore** for further information.

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