

The Reading Referee





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READING
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The Reading Referee

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EDITORIAL

Refereeing videos from around the world

When I first edited that modest magazine back in the 1960s, I was in regular correspondence with Mal Davis the editor of The Midland Referee. When I gave up after 22 years he wrote that he didn't believe I could do it but the time came when he gave up the Midland Referee as well.

These days he collates a wonderful collection of videos and articles on refereeing from around the world, which I have had the pleasure of receiving for some considerable time. If you would like to look and listen at the refereeing world then you'll find an easy way on page 7.

Incidentally, at the AGM of the Referees' Association prior to the National conference, Mal received the award of life membership of the Referees Association. Our congratulations to him.

Have you acknowledged your County Cup Appointment?

When you get an e-mail from FA Full-time, addressed personally to you asking for all referees appointed to Berks & Bucks County Cup matches for the following week, to confirm their game as soon as possible, do you like me get a little sudden panic?

Have I missed acknowledging a County appointment? Have I been appointed to a game but somehow haven't read the relevant internet message so if I don't do anything I will get a black mark against my name? Then it says, 'THIS IS ONLY FOR REFEREES WHO HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO B&B GAMES

What does that mean? Only referees who have been given cup appointments are sent this e-mail or every referee has been sent this e-mail but it is only those who have an appointment need take any action?

If it's the former I messed up, if it's the latter, couldn't there be a better way, perhaps only sending it to those referees who have an appointment or better still, only those who haven't acknowledged it.

Dick Sawdon Smith

SHOULD REFEREES LEARN FIRST AID?

Would you risk being sued if you had the opportunity of saving someone's life? A personal tale on Page 2

MONTHLY MEETINGS

What does your body language say to players? Review of what our speakers have said can be found on Pages 3 and 4

BRILLIANT ARRAY OF SPEAKERS YET TO COME

On Page 5 we give details of speakers booked for our monthly meetings. From Reading FC Manager to the top referee manager.

25 CHANGES TO MINI-SOCCER RULES

Outline on Page 6 and what colour socks can you wear to referee?

READING RA WEBSITE

You'll be surprised what you can find there. Page 7 gives a clue.

FIRST AID FOR REFEREES

How what goes around comes around by Dick Sawdon Smith

In the days when I refereed regularly in local Reading League football, I always had a concern that when it came to accidents and injuries at games, most clubs were totally unprepared. A few would have a first aid kit, the contents of which were often inadequate but many would have nothing more than a bucket and sponge, the 'magic' sponge as it was known because it was used to cure all injuries on the football field. The 'sponge man' was almost certainly untrained

I then met Terry Gibbs who most footballers in town remember as a large, six-foot-something referee with a very loud voice. But his entry into football was brought about by my brother, who when he finished playing in senior football, formed a football team at the printing firm where he worked. Terry was a first aider at the same firm, so was roped in as the team's first aid man. As was often the case, he also had to double as the club's linesman. After winning our club linesman award regularly, he thought he would go one stage further and become a referee.

Terry shared my view of the average club's sponge man's ability, so we put together a book aimed at local clubs with guidance to be able to give first response action for the type of injuries that happened on a football field, from heart attacks to swallowing chewing gum and everything in between. It covered what the first aid box should contain and the book was the size that it could be kept in there was well. I secured the help of a graphic artist that I had worked with, to provide easy and clear illustrations of the actions needed. We called it '*So you carry the Sponge*'.

It sold reasonably well all over the country mainly to clubs. However, a mention in the Football Referee magazine meant that it was also bought by some referees. At my first instructors course at Lincoln one fellow candidate from the north-east told me he had a copy. Another referee was so impressed with it that he wrote to the Football Referee saying every referee should have a copy. Prompted by this I wrote to the RA suggesting that they stocked the book in their Supplies Department. They turned down my suggestion on the grounds that if a referee treated an injured player using the information in the book and it went wrong, they could be sued for selling him the book. I was annoyed for two reasons. I had negotiated a knock down price for a reprint that meant I might actually make some money out of it but more importantly, I felt I would rather try and save someone's life than worry about being sued.

This month, Brian Wratten and I as FA Referee Tutors, had to attend an Emergency First Aid course. It is felt that as more of our training courses are practical and based outdoors, which could lead to injuries, (like real football) Tutors should, as part of their licence, undertake some formal first aid training. But what about if we treat someone and it all goes wrong, are we likely to be sued? Well it seems a statement was issued in 2010 by a reputable body saying that no case against a 'rescuer' is likely to succeed. Two people have apparently tried with their case being thrown out.

Perhaps I ought to send a copy of that statement to the RA Supplies Department and order that print repeat after all.

Dick Sawdon Smith

MONTHLY MEETINGS

What our speakers have said.

SEPTEMBER – George McCaffery – Communicating through body language

In September we were fortunate to have as our guest speaker, George McCaffery. George is a highly experienced FA Tutor (and it showed) and a Level 4 referee coach as well as a Contributory League assessor. He has been heavily involved in tutoring and assessing for many years, working on the National course for tutors as well as being an FA Support Officer for the Assessing Schemes at Contributory and Supply League levels. He also co-ordinates referee for Premier League Youth Tournaments, co-ordinates the FA Dallas Cup Development Group. Member may remember that our speaker in August, Will Finnie was part of that group. He is a coach for the South West Development Group as well as being Vice-Chairman of Melksham RA and a committee member of the West League Referees Association.

“It’s not what you do but the way that you do it.”

George’s subject for the evening was communication and in particular body language and he started by getting us in large half circle so all could contribute.

It’s all a matter of perception George said, your body language can;

Aid control - Aid pacifying players - Aid clarification

BUT

Needs to be assertive - Needs to show authority and control

But what is body language? Of course you will shout at players, you should shout at players but it is the way that you do it and it should not be an explanation of your decisions. There is always the question of personal space, when talking to players you don’t want to be too close, as it can be seen to be intimidating or provocative.

This is just part of non-verbal-communication which George says is the unconscious part of our behaviour, in fact, the most basic part of our personality. This includes your appearance and George picked out one member with his shirt over his trousers and then asked him to go behind the screen and tuck his shirt in, asking members for their observations. Then there is posture. If you are tall you already have something going for you but we can all stand tall with our shoulders back Eye contact is another essential part of non-verbal communication. Then of course there are our facial expressions. It would be wrong to smile when you are cautioning or sending a player off but there are times in a game when a smile enhances our standing with players.

George then showed a series of slides of referees giving hand signals and asked what members thought they signified. The illustrations he said, does show that the way signals are done can give different meanings, perhaps different to what you intended. Then there is the act of showing cards. George asked a member to illustrate. Don’t get too close apart from the fact that you could be hit, remember not to intrude peoples’ personal space. Show the card calmly above your head so all can see it. Your body language can help you handling crucial decisions and the aftermath. Non-verbal communication he concluded is a tool to help you control the match, to show authority and self-control, it isn’t an explanation of your decisions.

Thank you George for a well-illustrated presentation of a subject of great importance to all referee at whatever level.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

What our speakers have said.

OCTOBER - Stephen Green – Good Cop –Bad Cop

Stephen who is of course our own Senior Training Officer, is an experienced Level 4 referee Tutor who works on the National referee tutors course and has been Chairman and leading light in our Society for many years. The session for the evening was one that he put together for the Berks & Bucks FA Road Show last season and which he originally prepared for presentation to High Wycombe RA.

The session was called Good Cop – Bad Cop. Stephen said that when studying the top referees it was obvious that they are made up of many different types of people. The same sort of thing could be said about policemen and we've all heard, the phrase Good cop – Bad Cop, so let start by listing the many attributes that go to make up a good cop and then look at those that are more likely to be accredited to a bad cop.

The list of attributes that members came up with for a good cop were;
Commutative, Calm attitude, Knowledgeable, Practical, Approachable, Firm but fair, Smart, had Integrity.

And for a bad cop they thought he would be;

Arrogant, Aggressive, Complacent, Ignorant, Officious and Dishonest.

If we turn this to refereeing, Stephen said, we can see there are many parallels, for example we should stand firm when we mean business and although we have to boss the situation, are we sometimes too officious?

When we are faced with a foul that involves physical contact, who do we concentrate on, the perpetrator or the victim? Although we need to take action against the perpetrator should we perhaps concentrate on the victim? He might want retaliation, perhaps not immediately but later, something we have all seen, also it may be his team mates that will take retribution. So it's not only seeing that justice is done, justice has to be seen to be done.

Like policemen, referees are different; some can smooth things over with a joke, whilst others are sterner and attempts at a joke would go down flat. It is important that we develop our own style. Stephen then showed videos of two referees in action and asked members to comment on their different styles.

The meeting was then spilt into groups and each group was given a different scenario. Some of these were a similar episode but a different time in the game. Should there be a different reaction to a foul committed in the first minute of the game to the same foul committed late in a game and what if the game had been up to that time good natured throughout?

What happens if you give a card very early in the game? It spells out you are going to be tough but you are going to have to be consistent. Any other foul at that level will need a similar colour card. Take into consideration the expectations of the clubs. What about a marked player who has his opponent's queuing up to foul him?

Our thanks to Stephen showing that to get the top speakers we don't always have to go outside our own Society.

MONTHLY MEETINGS - Speakers and events yet to come

Thursday 21st November

Lucy May – Referee Development Officer Northumberland FA

Lucy started refereeing in Portsmouth in 2004 and is now a Level 3 referee. She was made one of the 12 FA Women Ambassadors in 2010, the year she ran the line at the women's FA Cup Final. International refereeing appointments has taken her to South America, America and Japan. She moved to the North East in January where she is now RDO for Northumberland FA.

Thursday 19th December

Christmas raffle, Quiz and Buffet.

Come along and have a relaxed, enjoyable evening in company with fellow referees.

Thursday 16th January

Ian Blanchard – Senior National Game Referee Manager

The Football Association Referees' Department has two main responsibilities;

The National Game, which covers what is often called grass roots football.

The Professional Game from the Football Conference to Supply Leagues. The Premier League and Football League are managed by PGMOL, It can be seen that Ian is the top man in the country as far as most of us are concerned. He is also a highly experienced tutor and referee having been on the Premier League prior to taking over his present position, so this is a must evening if you are serious about your refereeing.

Tuesday 18th February

Nigel Adkins – Manager Reading FC

Nigel Adkins is an experienced and successful Football League manager having taken Scunthorpe to the Championship before moving to Southampton where he gained two promotions in successive seasons. He is also someone who is keen to foster relationships with local referees. .Stephen Green who has heard Nigel when he was at Southampton will confirm he provides a very entertaining evening.

Note: Because of Nigel's commitments there will be a switch of day of this meeting only to Tuesday subject to confirmation.

Thursday 20th March

Roger Vaughan – FA Referee Manager, Referee Development

Roger has worked for the Football Association for over 12 years. 7 years as a Regional Manager for Referees for the South West and is now the National Referee Manager for Referee Development. He was previously involved in Training and Development with Axa and Nat West Bank as well as being an FA Coach, Licensed Referee Tutor and Chairman of Weston Super Mare Referees Society.

Roger has been refereeing for over 20 years He was a Level 2 Panel League Referee for four years and seven as a National List Assistant Referee. Previously he was a referee on the Contributory System for 8 years, starting on the Western League.

Roger is in his fourth full season as an assessor, first on the Contributory Leagues and now three as a National List assessor.

All our meetings are held at our new comfortable venue, Earley Home Guard Social Club, Pitts Lane, Earley, RG6 1BT and commence at 7.45 pm See you there.

TWENTY FIVE CHANGES TO MINI-SOCCER AND YOUTH FOOTBALL

Including the half way retreat line

Those members who officiate in mini-soccer or youth matches should make sure they are conversant with the latest rules as there have been no fewer than 25 changes. Many of these are more for the clubs to apply rather than for the referee on the field of play. Take for instance that each player must have the same amount of play where possible, which is recommended to be 50%. Then there is the number of players allowed in each age group. For example, under 7s and under 8s have a maximum of 5-a-side but can be 4-a-side. However, it is worth taking a copy of the rules to games as some club officials do not always keep up-to-date so it could save arguments.

Perhaps the most revolutionary is where the half way line as a retreat as it is called for goal kicks. In other words, opposing players must retreat to the half way line at goal kicks. The idea of course is to allow goalkeepers to learn to play from the back, it's all part of the FA plan to improve the standard of football in this country.. However, if the goalkeeper chooses to take the goal kick quickly without waiting for the opponents to retreat, then that is perfectly in order. This rule is mandatory so must be observed for under 7s, under 8s, under 9s and under 10s.

There is also another change for under 7s and under 8s and that is at throw-ins. It may be a roll-in or the normal throw-in and the choice is up to each individual child. Offside is made mandatory for under 11s and under 12s where presumably some competitions have chosen to play without it.

The FA has produced a course for referees on the full mini-soccer and youth football rules and FA Tutors are being trained to instruct referees on them. In the meantime, if any members who are not aware of them can obtain copies from our website. (See page 7)

INTERESTING QUESTION ON SOCKS (if socks can ever be interesting)

And the answer is in black and white

Everyone will know that unless you referee in the Premier League, Football League or competitions of Panel or Contributory status, you must wear black referee uniform or as the FA rules describe it 'plain black shirt with a white or black collar and black shorts'. So for the majority of us none of these colourful shirts that we see on television. Someone should tell those local clubs who decide it would be good to play in black, that it isn't permissible as players must be distinguishable from the referee.

However a question has arisen with the new all black shirts including the NIKE kit (available for the RA). If you buy one of these shirts with a black collar, can you still wear your old socks with a white top? The suggestion was that the sock top should always match the collar of the shirt but is that so? There are FA regulations on this and this is what they say, 'Socks will be black, the sock top will be black, white or the colour of the shirt or its collar'. So as the shirt can only be black and the collar black or white, the answer would appear to be that the choice is up to you, as long as it is black or white.

MASS OF GOODIES ON OUR WEBSITE

As you will be aware we have a new webmaster this season, Rob Maidment taking over from Simon Dow. All webmasters have their own style so it's worth having a look at what there is on offer.

You will of course find copies of this magazine and if you are feeling nostalgic you can go back to 1985. You'll also find the unexpurgated articles from Dick Sawdon Smith's columns 'From the Middle' in the Reading Post. Due to pressure on space the articles are sometimes edited (reduced), here they are reproduced in full. These columns also appear on the *getreading* website and one of them about Women UEFA Cup referees was picked up by Videos and Articles collated and distributed by Mal Davis, giving it several more thousand readers around the world.

You will also find links to the Videos and Articles, which are gathered from all corners of the earth. Particularly good are Play of the Week by Paul Reger, who was Manager for assistant referees on the PGMCO and who as our guest speaker, gave us a fascinating evening back in November 2007. Paul has joined Peter Walton as the Training and Development Manager of the PRO, Professional Referees Organisation, in America. Although mainly aimed at educating American fans on the Laws of the Game with live incidents, there is plenty of learning for everyone.

Click on Links and you will find a great deal of diverse information. There are the local leagues. You can download Misconduct and Caution forms and you will also find three kit suppliers, including a link to The RA Shop.

Something always worth a look at is the Discussion Forums. Here we have two. One is the 'The Renegade Ref', which is basically the outpourings of the owner of A&H International, Jeff Pettit, who members will remember was our guest speaker last February. The other, the RA forum, is truly what it says where referees share views. It is sometimes like our Talking Point with referees telling of incidents that they have faced and asking for comments. You can always join in.

You can also download the Laws of the Game and that includes Futsal and mini-soccer.

It is well worth a visit.

FAREWELL TO RICHARD HIGHFIELD

We say good bye to one of our long time members, Richard Highfield who has relocated to Bristol. But of course Richard already spends a lot of time in Hong Kong and this he says will increase. Members will remember that in this magazine in 2008, Richard gave us a fascinating insight into refereeing in the slightly frantic and uncontrolled football leagues in Hong Kong. We have talked about body language elsewhere in the issue but Richard says that as he does not speak the language, when he referees Chinese teams it is all whistle and hand signals. The pleasure is that dissent is very rare, he can't tell what they are saying but they don't kick the ball away or fail to retreat the ten yards. We wish Richard all the best not only in Hong Kong but also in Bristol.