



**NEXT SOCIETY MEETING**

**Thursday 12 March 2009**

**Civil Service Recreation Centre,  
Chadwick Street, London, SW1P 2EP**

**Our guest speaker will be**

**Keith Hackett**

**speaking on**

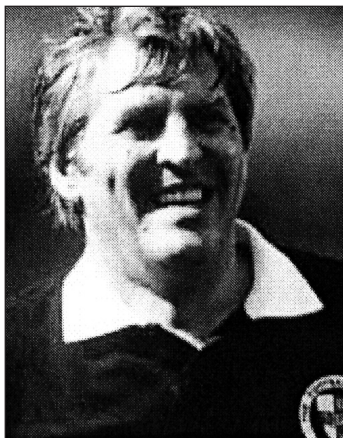
**“Refereeing At The Top Level”**

General Manager of the Professional Game Match Officials Limited [PGMOL] and former Football League and FIFA referee. He was one of the first Premier League referees for its inaugural 1992-93 campaign. He was last with us in March 2004 when he attracted a full house. I am again inviting non-society members so please arrive early to secure your seat.

***The running order for the evening will be:***

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1800: Bar and restaurant open;  | Referees' Development Officer:                   |
| 1900: Take seats;   | Training session;                                |
| 1915: Chairman opens meeting, routine<br>Society business, Officers' reports,<br>announcements etc; | 2000: Keith Hackett.                             |
| 1930: John Cooke, Society Training officer<br>and Vice-Chairman, and AFA                            | 2100: Q and A session plus vote of thanks        |
|   | 2120: 100 Club, raffle draw and<br>presentations |
|   | 2130: Meeting ends.                              |





## ***Guest Speaker***

# **Keith Hackett**

***General Manager - PGMOL***

Keith Hackett, born on 22nd June 1944, enjoyed a distinguished refereeing career, which saw him officiate at the highest level in both domestic and international competitions. He first began refereeing in 1960 at a local level in Sheffield and became a Football League referee in 1975. He took charge of the 1981 FA Cup Final, the 1984 Charity Shield and the 1985 League Cup Final. He was appointed to the FIFA list from 1981-1991 and officiated at the 1988 European Championships and the Olympic Games in Seoul. He served on the FA Premier League for its first season in 1992-3 and retired from active refereeing in 1994 just before reaching his 50th birthday.

Keith has held various positions at Board level with several UK companies and is a qualified Member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Since retiring as a referee, Keith has remained actively involved in ensuring English referees remain the some of the best in the world. He initially served as Development Manager for PGMOL, developing performance and management systems for referees, addressing issues of succession planning for referees and developing communication channels with leading figures across the game such as the LMA and the PFA. He was appointed as General Manager of PGMOL on 1st March 2004.

## **New Executive Committee Members**

**Any member interested in volunteering to join the Society Executive Committee is invited to let the Chairman Secretary Gordon Kirby know in good time for the AGM in May. There is always a need for new members and new ideas, and membership of the Committee need not impose an overwhelming burden of duty: you can tailor your commitments to the amount of time available.**



**Please note:**

## **Next Meeting on Thursday 16 April 2009**

The date of our April meeting at the Civil Service Recreation Centre has been changed from 9 to 16 April to facilitate the possible closure of the Civil Service Club on Maundy Thursday.

Our guest speaker will be Alan Robinson, a former FA Cup-Final Referee and former RA Council Member

Alan will speak on refereeing at the top level.

Come and relive the 1986 Everton v Liverpool cup final when Alan was in the middle (extracts from the game will be shown.)

Alan will also present Tony Gilbey, Society Life Vice President with his LMS award.

***Gordon Kirby, JP, Chairman,  
AFA & London Society of Association Referees***

## **REFEREEING ACADEMY AT SOCIETY MEETINGS**

Training Officer and AFA Referee Development Officer John Cooke will be pleased to receive any problems of members at monthly meetings, and also to analyse and debate recent incidents recorded from the professional game on video. Members with video recorded incidents are always welcome to bring them to meetings and they will be examined, time permitting. If possible, please telephone John in advance.

## **100 CLUB WINNERS**

**February winners were drawn at Norseman FC**

<b>£25</b>	<b>No. 70</b>	<b>Andrew MacRae</b>
<b>£15</b>	<b>No. 15</b>	<b>Phil Cook</b>
<b>£10</b>	<b>No. 101</b>	<b>Mick Ward</b>

**Gentleman, you should have received your cheques. If not contact Gordon Kirby.**

### **CORRECTION**

**Last month we published one of the 100 Club winners as Grant Mathias. In fact the winner was Olivia Mathias. Our apologies and by the time you read this a new cheque should have been received. - Editor**



## Dates For Your Diary

### 12 March

7.15 p.m. Society meeting – Westminster

Guest Speaker: Keith Hackett, PGMO General Manager

### 16 April

7.15 p.m. Society meeting - Westminster

Guest Speaker: Alan Robinson - former FA Cup Final

Referee

### 14 May

7.15 p.m. Annual General Meeting – Westminster

### 22 May

Annual Dinner and Presentation at

Ball Brothers, Minster Pavement, Mincing Lane

London EC3R 7PP

### 29 May

6.45 p.m. Eve-of-the-Final Rally, Hotel Russell, Russell

Square, London

### 10-11 July Weekend

RAE Centenary Conference - Solihull - with David

Elleray,

Premiership Referees, Workshops etc

## OUR WEBSITE

Just a reminder to members  
that our new website address  
is **[www.afalonsar.co.uk](http://www.afalonsar.co.uk)**

Michael Hayden is doing a  
grand job keeping it up to  
date. Please visit it!

## NEWS OF MEMBERS

Do you have news of members - including  
yourself?

Would it interest other members?

If so, please let the Editor know by post,  
phone call or e-mail and it

will be published in the next Argus.

Anything in good taste is acceptable - e.g.  
news of awards, promotion, appointments,  
injuries or return after injury.

**COPY FOR APRIL ARGUS  
MUST  
BE WITH THE EDITOR BY FRIDAY  
27th MARCH 2009  
OR SOONER IF POSSIBLE.**

**With this issue will be registration forms for membership renewal,  
dinner reservations and raffle books**



# Chairman's Comment

## End in sight?

As I write February is closing and hopefully winter too, the first signs of spring are evident. No cuckoos yet (although the gardens and parks are a little brighter with daffodils and snowdrops) but in our football later kick-off times, appointments for the final rounds of cup competitions just published and the promotion window shutting on the last day of the month. Warmer weather, longer hours of daylight and better playing surfaces will see the season draw to an exciting close in the next couple of months. I offer congratulations to those who have been lucky enough [and good enough] to be appointed to the final rounds of the cup competitions. And for those who are about to be promoted, congratulations. To those who might not make it please keep trying and take heart, with each game you are getting better. The onset of spring on 20 March will see players and clubs become increasingly concerned about cup finals, promotions and relegations which may reflect in their on-field behaviour. With numerous weekends blighted by bad weather when no play was possible we are likely to see more double-headed games, mid-week evening fixtures all played on drier and harder surfaces. All of this puts an additional strain on the bodies of players and referees. It is no time therefore for us to relax.

## Pastoral visits

My faith in the wisdom of holding Society meetings in the suburbs was further reinforced in February with two meetings. On 12 February we were at Norsemen FC when our speaker was John Norbury, Premier League Referee Assessor who delivered an excellent account of assessing at the highest level. He showed a video of a post-match debrief of Howard Webb and three colleagues which was particularly topical. I am grateful to Bill Taylor who having seen John at a Society meeting in Essex suggested we invite him to one of our evenings: thanks, Bill. We shall certainly invite John back again next season to speak at Chadwick Street. We were well looked after at Edmonton thanks to David Simpson who liased with the home club. The evening was very well attended. A week later we were in leafy Isleworth when our host was Old Isleworthians FC and speaker was Jim de Rennes. Again there was an excellent turnout to hear Jim ask, "With respect to RESPECT what do you expect?" Full details of our speakers in March (and April) are elsewhere in this issue but we expect a full house to hear Keith Hackett, General Manager of the Professional Game Match Officials Limited [PGMOL] and former Football League and FIFA referee on 12 March. He was one of the first Premier League referees for its inaugural 1992-93 campaign. He was last with us in March 2004 when he attracted a full house. I am again inviting non-society membrs so please arrive early to secure your seat.



### **“Choppers to transfer AFA referees. . .”**

Pat Morrissey’s article in the last ARGUS under the heading “Whistleblower’s Opinion” ruffled some feathers and resulted in two letters to the editor, which I am delighted to see, reproduced elsewhere in this issue, and a couple of telephone calls. If only there were more responses to articles published in the “yellow organ.” It seems that short of advocating regicide, paedophilia or votes for women we cannot get readers to put pen to paper (or finger to the keyboard) on any matter. But by poking some good-natured fun at the AFA, and in particular at Trevor Syms, AFA Referees Officer (a shy and gentle character unused to criticism) we appear to have caused one reader at least to leap to Trevor’s defence. But this kind of dialogue is just what we need in a referee’s magazine and I hope we can have more of it. However, let’s keep it gentlemanly and good-natured. Michael Hayden, Society Webmaster and all-round IT genius promises to set up soon a blog facility on our website open to members to enable them to get things off their chests. So how about it, let’s hear what you have to say about issues raised in the ARGUS, your funny stories and experiences and queries directed at John Cooke, the Refereeing Oracle?

Getting back to the serious point of Pat’s article: Trevor Syms has an impossible job and in my view does it very, very well. One thinks here of hundreds of square pegs in round holes in trying to cover “X” number of games with only “Y” amount of referees. His appointments of referees to FA Academy or FA Women’s Premier League games (usually on excellent playing surfaces, often with spectators and sometimes under floodlights) bring a whole new dimension to our refereeing. His solution is perhaps radical in asking referees to cover two games back to back: but at least he “asks” rather than “directs.” I am sure Trevor could solve this problem easily by refusing to put AFA referees and assistants on these games. Would we be poorer for this, I think so?

But Pat makes a good point in that there is a serious risk in this to a referee’s performance particularly if he is going for promotion. Earlier this season I assessed a young referee who turned up at the venue for an AFA cup-match 7 minutes before the kick-off. Rushing from his car he looked flustered and uncomfortable and his kit and boots were in a mess. With daylight in short supply and conscious of the possibility of extra time and penalties he got the game underway just 15 minutes late. Inevitably, he missed several key points in his pre-match preparation and his initial performance seemed to indicate distraction, which I noted in my assessment to his detriment. It was in the post-match debrief that it emerged he had done a morning FA Academy game the kick-off of which had been delayed and this plus heavy traffic en route had caused his late arrival at the cup game. Duly noted he received a good assessment.

The real root of the problem is of course the chronic shortage of referees, and the situation is worsening. As Phil Newman recognized in his article last month “What’s new, old un?” the majority of AFA referees are “of a certain age” (indeed from statistics provided by the AFA I calculate that of the 268 referees usually active,



58% are over the age of 50 years. And our average age is 48 if you include 24 referees under the age of 19 years). Last Saturday while doing an Arthurian League Cup game on the day of a significant birthday I noted from my strategic point of rest in the centre circle that the oldest player on the FOP was 30 years younger than me and the youngest 45 years younger!

Each year the stock of referees gets older, succumbs to injuries or simply gets fed up with abuse and resigns therefore exacerbating the problem. (And more lately is insulted by the need to undergo CRB and Child Protection procedures.) Efforts by county FAs to recruit new referees are to be applauded. But given the AFA's peculiar profile and ethos a general recruitment drive which results in signing up children for AFA referee courses is perhaps unrealistic. We rarely see any of these young graduates refereeing AFA games in any significant numbers.

I am delighted therefore to hear that our hard-working RDO is thinking along the lines I have been suggesting for some time in that we approach our clubs and ask that they broadcast the need for referees among the ranks of their elder players. I propose here targeting players who are say over 35 years of age who have become too old to play, have persistent injuries and have become the eternal substitutes. The clubs after all have a vested interest in ensuring that every game has a qualified referee.

For example, where I live in west London we have within a 3 miles of Kew Bridge the following multi-sided clubs: Polytechnic, Kew Association, Old Actonians, Old Meadonians, Civil Service plus elements of the Arthurian League. These clubs will shed I guess 30 players a season between them. Additionally, they have a number of unbadged club referees who do a good job but would do better if properly trained and qualified. This cluster of clubs in west London (which is by no means unique) can therefore provide a fecund group of potential referees who are reasonably fit and most importantly are imbued with the AFA's ethos. The Society stands ready to help with any initiative of recruiting these players for referees' basic training courses.

### **And finally**

Until the shortage of referees is resolved, I look forward to radioing Wing-Commander Brown on a Saturday lunchtime to order my chopper (with shower, laundry facilities of course) to whisk me to my next game: Roger Mike?

### **Notes for your diary**

Friday 22 May 2009: Society Annual Dinner and Award Ceremony.

*(Look out for details of how to reserve your places at this glittering evening: further details elsewhere in the ARGUS.)*

10-11 July 2009: RA Annual Conference, St John's Hotel, Solihull, Birmingham.

(If there is enough interest from among members the Society will be providing free travel by coach/mini-bus to and from the Conference on Saturday 11 July including lunch. Watch out for further details next month.)

Have a good one.

**Gordon Kirby**



# President's Viewpoint

## Offensive, Abusive or Insulting Words

After being assessed by the Hellenic League's most senior assessor and observed by some ten other assessors on a training exercise when recently issuing a red card to a player for using offensive, abusive and insulting words at a match official (myself), I was discreetly advised on methods of managing volatile players. This offered further insight into how referees may endeavour to manage players committing or likely to commit language offences, with a view to avoiding the ultimate sanction, which in this important Premier League fixture between the first and fifth placed teams, proved to be crucial. There is no simple, single solution, but here are some thoughts:

- 1 Anticipate the player(s) likely to lose self control as early in the game as possible. If penal offences have been committed against them by opponents, consider offering them reassurance that you have seen and are dealing with the offences. This pre-emptive action is recommended practice for all players, but the need for it is most apparent for the most volatile players.
- 2 Remain composed and be a calming influence on the player and his team mates. Speak calmly, encouraging players to calm down in their own interests and their team's.
- 3 Speak to players generally during play and stoppages to reassure them you are aware of what is happening, for example when applying the advantage or when warning players not to engage in challenges which are likely to result in them being penalised.
- 4 Say "please" and "thank you" frequently, use discretion; use humour if it comes naturally and the player is likely to respond well.
- 5 Turn a deaf ear to some indiscreet words a player may use which do not offend, abuse or insult. Understand where this is mere frustration. Show you understand his concerns whilst using your powers of management to calm him down.
- 6 When speaking to a player look at him in the eye at some point, but without glaring at him. Ensure he feels your calm presence and authority as much as you feel his volatility. Do not let him take command for example by tying his boot laces whilst you are speaking to him or walking away before you have finished speaking. Find some way on managing a player who will not stop shouting when you are waiting to speak to him – perhaps by calmly waiting until



he has finished or by choosing the right moment to intervene with words to exert your calm authority. "Boss that situation" is the advice now frequently used.

- 7 When a player loses control and says something requiring more than a quiet word of advice, resort to the FA Respect programme - call the captain across to ask him to help you to control the player in his own interests perhaps saying "We all want to avoid the use of cards if it can be avoided, but if this behaviour continues, I'll be left with little choice."
- 8 If a player uses foul language, ask whether you are in fact offended, insulted or abused. Swearing per se is not necessarily offensive abusive or insulting, but when accompanied by other words which are offensive, abusive or insulting they add weight. If you are not in fact offended offer firm but friendly advice. If you are genuinely offended at a player's language, and you have exercised all the best methods of man management, then the use of a red card at that point can hardly be faulted.
- 9 If a player has been injured do not necessarily speak to him immediately. Allow a short recovery moment for him to recover and compose himself. Then after ensuring he receives any necessary treatment find the right time to offer reassuring advice. Show empathy and understanding, whatever words you chose. If cautioning or admonishing an opponent responsible for the injury, let the player know that you've done so.
- 10 If the player is required to leave the field of play because he has either received treatment or suffered an injury from which blood is flowing, explain firmly but politely that he will first have to leave the field of play but can return (a) after the game restarts upon receiving your signal if he received treatment on the field of play; (b) after you have inspected his injury if there was any loss of blood. Make it clear that he must not re-enter before you have been able to inspect the injury after the game has stopped.

***Bart O'Toole***

## **Plum Appointments**

**Women's Premier League Reserves Cup Final  
Sunday 8th March KO 2.00pm Staines Town FC.  
Chelsea Reserves v Leeds Carnidge Reserves  
Assistant referee David Simpson  
Assistant referee Michael O'Shea**





*The Referees' Association of England  
is very proud to present:*



## **EVE-OF-FINAL RALLY**

**Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009, 6.15pm for 6.45pm.**

**The Hotel Russell, Russell Square, London, WC1B 5BE**

Following the return of the FA Cup Final to its spiritual home of Wembley Stadium, the RAE is once again proud to be hosting the 2009 Eve-of-Final Rally.

For the first time in many years the Rally is to return to the Hotel Russell, where it was successfully staged by LONSAR.

The Rally is held to honour the FA Cup Final Referee and his team and gives their fellow referees and peers the opportunity to pay tribute to them on being appointed to the "match of their lives". Those attending will be able to mingle with the FA Cup final officials less than 24 hours before the final itself, as well as having the opportunity to meet other top referees and former FA Cup final officials. The highlight of the evening is when the Cup Final referee, after he and his team have received tributes and mementoes from the Chairman of the FA Referees' Committee and our President David Ellary, addresses all those attending.

Tickets for the Rally are now available, priced at £10.00 each for adult members and £5.00 for members 18 and under, and you will receive a souvenir programme autographed by the officials. We ask all ABSs to bring the Rally to the attention of their Membership, and applications can either be made individually or on behalf of your ABS – just complete and return the slip below with a cheque payable to "The RA" for the appropriate amount or a debit authorisation. Demand is expected to be high, so we recommend early application, which will be on a "first come first served" basis, to avoid disappointment.

David Ellary and RAE Board members would particularly like to thank the PGMO Ltd for their most generous contribution towards the staging of this event.

Tea off and submit as your postal application

*I/We..... (Association/Branch/Society) apply for ..... tickets for the Eve-Of-Final Rally on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009. Enclosed is my/our cheque for £..... made payable to The Referees' Association or please charge my credit/debit card as below:*

Please circle your choice		MasterCard / Visa / Maestro / Solo		£	
For credit and debit card payments				Please debit my account as below	
Card number				For all cards Entry-fee	For Maestro and Solo cards only Y&H Fee bourse fee

*Please send my/our ticket/s to:*

.....

..... Post code .....

*Telephone or email address for any queries: .....*

Please Return To:  
**The Referees' Association, 1 Westhill Road, Coundon, Coventry, CV6 2AD**



# Whistleblower's Opinion

## Who can you trust in today's society?

A recent report by the Media Standards Trust summarised the declining trust we have as a nation in all sectors of our community. Even those professions with high absolute levels of trust, such as Family Doctors, Schoolteachers, the Police, the Judiciary, are showing progressive declines in us trusting them to tell the truth. And those professions with already low trust ratings, such as politicians, senior civil servants in national and local government, journalists, and estate agents continue to dive in trust ratings. [I suspect 'Bankers' would not poll too well at the moment either!] According to many social commentators this decline in trust is caused by a collapse in the provision of moral training across society by the traditional sources of "Church, School and Army".

The Table below shows the detailed Trust Ratings.

**TABLE 2: Declining trust 2003-08**  
**Q. How much do you trust the following to tell the truth?**  
 (Figures show percentages saying trust a "great deal" or a "fair amount")

	Feb-Mar 2003	Apr-May 2006	Apr 2007	Mar 2008	Change 2003-08
	%	%	%	%	%
Family doctors	93	89	89	87	-6
Schoolteachers	88	81	77	76	-12
Local police officers on the beat in my area	82	72	66	71	-11
Headteachers in State schools	79	-	-	71	-8
BBC news journalists	81	71	62	61	-20
Judges	68	77	70	61	-7
Senior police officers	72	52	52	57	-15
ITV news journalists	82	67	54	51	-31
Channel 4 news journalists	80	-	-	51	-29
Journalists on up-market papers	65	62	43	43	-22
Journalists on local papers	60	-	-	40	-20
My local MP	44	36	29	39	-5
Trade union leaders	32	30	24	31	-1
Leading Lib Dem politicians	36	25	19	29	-7
Leading Conservative politicians	20	19	17	27	7
Managers of NHS hospitals	36	24	17	24	-12
People who run large companies	20	23	17	24	4
Senior officials in my local council	29	22	18	20	-9
Ministers in the current Labour Government	25	20	14	20	-5
Senior Whitehall civil servants	26	19	14	19	-7
Journalists on mid-market papers	36	36	20	18	-18
Journalists on red-top papers	14	12	7	15	1
Estate agents	16	11	10	10	-6

## What has this to do with Refereeing?

Although referees were not specifically surveyed in this Report, it is likely that they will share the same pattern of declining trust as the other professions. But in addition, the print and internet media are full of headlines such as - "Confidence in the men in black has plunged to an



*all time low*". Our top referees, Howard Webb, Mike Riley, Rob Styles, Steve Bennett are pilloried each week for their errors. Some of the criticism is fair, much of it is unfair. but undoubtedly some of the mud sticks.

### **Measures to improve Referees Trust Rating**

Top referees have told our Society that they feel, because they are employed by the Premier League (PGMOL) and not an independent authority such as the Football Association, they are to some degree compromised in their actions on the field. For instance, they are reluctant to take disciplinary action against Premiership managers, and some of their complaints on misconduct are ignored. This leaves them open to allegations that refereeing decisions in their games might be affected by these same pressures.

I am always impressed by the quality of the refereeing in UEFA Champions League games. And the players and managers seem to give referees a great deal more respect than in our Premier League. It is therefore significant that the Football Association is about the only major European football nation that has not been able to sign up to the UEFA Convention on Referee Education and Organisation. The Preamble to the Convention states :- *Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the national associations to appoint reliable and well-educated referees for their professional competitions.* One of the key requirements of the Convention is as follows :- "(to) establish a refereeing organisation within each national football association which shall not be controlled or influenced by other bodies such as the government, leagues or clubs." It is clearly in the interest of refereeing credibility and trust that our top referees should be employed by the National Association and not by the Premier League through Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL).

The perception of our top referees is not helped by persistent allegations on the internet that some of our top referees have too close an association with betting companies and certain football managers. For example, one internet web site shows a sequence of matches over the last 16 months where one of our top referees (who has already served a short suspension for links to a betting company) has officiated in 10 games involving one particular manager, where penalties and sendings-off against opposition players are alleged to have produced what they describe as "overperformances" and unexpected results.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with recreational betting, the vast sums now being placed on both results and in-match events in Premiership games by Asian punters puts refereeing decisions under intense scrutiny. The credibility of the Premier League is also not helped by 3 Clubs now being sponsored by Betting companies - Tottenham by Mansion.com (Casino/Poker and Sports Betting), Sunderland by Boylesports (one of Ireland's biggest bookies) and West Ham by SBOBET. And some of the Premiership club owners and major shareholders do not inspire confidence.

Even the major media sponsor of professional football in this country - Sky Sports, has "SKYBET" as a subsidiary. As an example of the implications this might have - Sky constantly lobby the football authorities to use their video replay evidence to help improve referee decision-making during the game. There have been instances in other sports where the relevant camera shot has not been made available to the referral referee or umpire at the time it is needed. In my opinion, any company with betting associations should not be allowed to provide



video evidence in such circumstances. A neutral provider of cameras will be required if we ever move to this kind of referral system in football.

### **Conclusion. Improve the regulations before a disaster happens - not wait for it to happen**

While Refereeing may have declined in trust in line with other professions in our modern society, there are some obvious measures that should be taken to protect and improve its image and perception.

1. Anyone selected for our elite group of referees should be checked out not just on refereeing skills (physical fitness, positioning, match control and communication etc.) but also on their moral and ethical values.
2. Top referees should be employed by an independent National Football Association, and not the League in which they officiate. (I will save for another day the discussion on whether our FA is sufficiently independent of the Premier League.)
3. Top referees should have no current - or past - association with betting companies.
4. Appointments of referees to televised games (where most betting occurs) should be more evenly spread across the whole elite referee group to avoid any perception of inappropriate relationships between referees and particular clubs or managers.
5. The FA should sign up to the UEFA Convention on Referee Education and Organisation as an indication of its determination to preserve the development and integrity of its referees.

The PGMOL General Manager Keith Hackett's visit to the Society as Guest Speaker on 12th March might be a good opportunity to discuss these issues.

*Patrick Morrissey*

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### **Dear Mr Whistleblower**

After reading your article in last month's ARGUS some referee's - with a very sick sense of humour - may have found your column amusing; others may have found themselves bemused. I personally found it an unwarranted attack towards a person who has given long and loyal service to hundreds of AFA referee's throughout many years.

The AFA Referees Secretary is requested to cover over 13 AFA cup competitions throughout each season - and I'm sure it runs into hundreds of appointments - additionally he also provides officials for AFA rep games, FA Senior Women's matches and professional club Academy fixtures.

I would now ask fellow readers to try and contemplate the amount of time and hard work such a duties entail.

Here are a few -

1. Allocating the right level of referee to those 13 plus competitions (not forgetting the assistant referees for the latter stages of the Senior Cup).
2. The geography of the fixture to that of the referee.
3. The numerous replacements for those referees who 'cry off'.

These are only a few of the tasks and are all achieved at a time when sadly this season



he has not been at the best of health. I can only sit back and admire such devotion to duty and all to the benefit of both AFA football and AFA referees.

Whenever the Referee's Secretary rings to try and fill an additional fixture on a weekend, he generally begins the phone call with a question. . . "Can you do a game? . . ."

That question invites the referee to offer his services and can be simply answered YES or NO. We should all be reminded of the same question when - even as a 'trainee' referee - a referee has the choice to commit his time to either hopefully enjoy officiating a game or spending that time with family or perhaps fulfilling work commitments or recuperating from illness. The referee then has to consider two other factors before fulfilling that commitment -

- Is there enough time to get from one game to the next fixture?
- Will he or she be fit enough to officiate the latter appointment?

This is very easy and simple decision to make. Can I or can't I?

Then Mr Whistleblower you spent many mundane column inches in which you over elaborate and mock the mindset of any AFA referee by expanding on fairy-tale like journeys akin to that portrayed by an alternative stand-up comedian flogging his 'off the wall jokes' at The Apollo and making incredulous reading.

After trying to digest such mocking drivel towards a honest and tirelessly working and fellow referee I became irritated but quickly put myself in a scenario whereby as a referee I spot an impudent player beginning to 'throw his toys out of his pram' I would then calmly approach the player and offer a piece of worthwhile advice. In this instance Mr Whistleblower, I would ask you to buy a new whistle because - like your comments - it is cheap.

*Steve Tate*

### ***Editors comments***

Further to the above letter, I can report that I have had two other people phone me complaining about the content of Pat's letter. Both of these people do not wish to have their names published, so be it. Their comments were very much in line with Steve's letter. I would also add that I also personally feel that Pat's comments are in my opinion not the way to approach this subject. I did elect to get clearance before I published this letter. Whilst I agree with what Pat is saying about referees trying to help out by electing to officiate at morning matches and then having no time to relax before an afternoon game, surely we as a Society could have approached the AFA and asked for a meeting to try to solve the problem. Perhaps getting the morning games to kick-offs at 10.15am instead of 11.00 may be an answer. But to ridicule Trevor and the AFA does seem to me unnecessary. A couple of years ago the Society put itself in a very awkward position by publishing (against my personal advice) articles that caused untold problems between the Society and the AFA. We certainly do not want to go down that road again. I would suggest that all parties get together and try to hammer out an agreement in a civil manner that is suitable to all concerned and is implemented at the start of next season.



Dear Editor

Catching up on old Argus. I noted your piece about referee appearance and preparation, and whilst I agree with it in an ideal world, as a club I'd rather have a last minute/muddy/unprepared referee than none at all, which is often the reason for last minute issues on a Saturday afternoon. It's particularly common for us, as we often have officials at the Arsenal Academy over the hedge in the morning, and at our place in the afternoon.

Not ideal I know, but I suspect a symptom of the referee shortage.

There are limits though - last season we had an 18 year old referee appointed after he'd done an Arsenal Academy game on the line. When Mark arrived the lad was in the bar, having stood in sleet and hail for two hours, shivering and trying to shake off the cold (with no visible sign of success). Mark sent him home, and we coped without!!! He'd done his bit for the day.

**Danny McConnell**

## CUP FINAL APPOINTMENTS 2009

<i>Competition</i>	<i>Referee</i>	<i>Assistant Referee</i>	<i>Assistant Referee</i>	<i>Fourth Official</i>
Senior	S Bodell	D Coe	B Broadbridge	B West
Senior Semi Final	C Allen	C Beament	K Lowe	M Barron
Senior Semi Final	C O'Connor	P Morrissey	G Mathias	D Chapman
Middlesex/Essex Senior	I Andrews	R Baxter	P Mearns	I Stemp
Surrey/Kent Senior	T Rowley	D Simpson	D Littler	G Parris
Intermediate	G Dineen	D Horner	E Dempsey	
Middlesex/Essex Intermediate	G Blackmore	S Drinkwater	D Cunningham	
Surrey/Kent Intermediate	J Hayes	P Constantine	T Weaver	
Junior	SChaudhuri	D Olugunna	M Jeyes	
Minor	S Last	T Davis	M McBride	
Senior Novets	J Doe	J Goldstein	L Kill	
Intermediate Novets	A Macrae	B Page	G Thompson	
Junior Novets	D Gilchrist	R Wilson	M Sainsbury	
Closed Veterans	S O'Sullivan	M Hayden	R Melvin	P Ryan
Open Veterans	L Wilcock	A Braithwaite	M O'Shea	D Williams

### ***Exercise for people over 50. (most AFA Referees)***

Begin by standing on a flat comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side.

With a 5-lb potato sack in each hand, extend your arms out from your sides and hold them as long as you can . . . Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato sacks.

Then try 50-lb potato sacks and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato sack in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level).

After you feel confident at this level, put a potato in each of the sacks.

See you about

**Trevor Weaver**



## **AFA and London Society of Association Referees**

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**19.00 for 19.30**

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Guest Speaker : TBA

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---ooo---

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Wild Mushroom & Spring Vegetable Risotto

Dauphinoise Potatoes, Hand Cut Chips & Seasonal Vegetables

---ooo---

Sticky Toffee Pudding  
Dark Chocolate Fondant Pudding Chocolate Sauce  
Lemon & Ginger Crème Brûlée

---ooo---

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I am pleased to announce that whilst we have needed to change venue, we have once again chosen the excellent Balls Brothers team to host our annual event; and we have ensured no price rise.

For those of you who may not have been to the Annual Dinner and Presentation evening in recent years it is an evening not to be missed. Ask those who have been or take my word for it and sign-up for a most enjoyable evening. An excellent way to round off the season with good company and excellent food, you can even bring your wife, girlfriend or guest (many do). Training for next season can wait!



## THE PROBLEM OF THE 'F' WORD ON THE LOCAL PARK

We all know the Law: offensive language must be punished with a red card.

We also know that what offends one person may not offend another. Many players are in the habit of using the F word in their daily working and social lives, often perhaps without even realising that they are doing so. To expect such people to play an emotionally charged physical contact sport for 90 minutes without at least occasionally using the word is almost certainly expecting too much.

However, we also know that when we referee on a local park it is almost certain that there will be people within earshot who will take offence at hearing the F word shouted across the field of play.

We therefore know that we cannot allow its use to pass unnoticed, but we also know that enforcing the letter of the Law by producing a red card every time we hear the word would show a failure to work within the prevailing and accepted culture of the UK in the 21st century.

Attitudes to the use of the F word have changed as evidenced by the fact that The Guardian newspaper printed the F word 33 times in 1985, but 843 times in 2007.

Interviewed by a daily newspaper in 2008 Keira Knightley apparently used the F word 6 times and the C word once.

According to a May 2008 Radio Times survey, 93 percent of people over 70 think that there is too much swearing on television, but only 39 percent of those under 30 think that there is too much. There is clearly a very large generational as well as a social difference in attitudes to swearing. In local parks and youth football referees may well be several decades older than many of the players.

Much also depends, of course, on HOW the potentially offensive words are spoken. As long ago as 1975 a character in Harold Pinter's play No Man's Land used the C word as a term of affection.

It is clear, then, that there is a wide range of attitudes to the use of the F word in society as a whole, and this is reflected in the use of the word and reactions to that use on and around the field of play.

Referees must remain aware of their responsibility to protect the image of the game we love by endeavouring to ensure that no one is offended by hearing language they disapprove of, while at the same time we remain sensitive to the realities of the linguistic world we inhabit in the 21st century.

***Jim de Rennes***



## Talk by Guest Speaker and PGMOL Match Assessor John Norbury at the meeting held at Norsesmen FC on Thursday 5th February 2009.

John Norbury said one of the key things to prepare for at top levels is the interruptions before the biggest games in the dressing room. The usual routine can be thrown into chaos. John was once at a European Cup game when their room was invaded by officials from Sepp Blatter downwards. Eventually match referee Neil Midgeley told the visitors even from the highest places in the most colourful language to leave the room!

John is currently assessing referees from the Premiership downwards. In the Premiership he is accompanied by a match observer as well, who also assesses the referee and listens to any complaints by the clubs. John only offers referees technical points on match officials' performance. Assessors are called the 'Guardian of Standards', making sure they are applying the law properly and sensibly. He was showing a DVD of the post match briefing after a Championship game Millwall -v- Portsmouth in 2003, refereed by Howard Webb who at the end of that year was to move up the Premier League and was obviously selected as an up and coming referee. It would take 15 minutes, starting with the dressing room scene. 20 minutes after the game he entered the room with a debrief on what had gone well and what had not.

Working from a file of notes written during the game (John did not use a Dictaphone) John complimented Howard on most aspects of his performance including handling major incidents, teamwork, handling discipline, fitness, positioning etc., and there was advice on awareness in relation to one flare up involving the players. The Assistant Referees were also complimented on their fitness and signals but there was one question mark on one offside decision and the handling of a substitution where the substitute entered the FOP by several yards before being checked. Match control was very good. Overall it had been a really good performance and there were a few learning points. Howard commented on how the game became more physical as it progressed. John commented on how Howard was seen talking to players at several stages. There had been only 15 free kicks. There was friendly interaction between the referee and the players.

John passed out copied of the assessment sheets. He records every foul, match incidents and the position on the field of play giving him quite a pictorial view of the game. Before he leaves the ground he'll be given a DVD of the game to review when he returns home.

### Questions

Steve Tate asked whether he was employed fully by the PGMOL. John said he had a full time job elsewhere but received appointments part time for the PGMOL. Ian



Kerr asked about the physical intervention by the referee and the assistant. He felt they handled it quite well but was surprised by the refereeing handling players and physically dragging them around. What advice would John give to referees intervening? John said most referees officiate to their strengths. Small referees never get physically involved but this is possible for a big guy like Howard. Roy Keane once chased Andy Durso after he awarded a penalty kick. Formerly referees were trained to run away.

Since Jack Taylor, England has got nowhere near to having a referee awarded the World Cup Final. Therefore techniques have changed. A film of Pierluigi Collina showed him awarding a penalty kick and pointing to the spot. He was challenged by a well know loud and noisy player in protest but Collina nudged him firmly in the stomach with bent fingers. This was quite different from giving the penalty kick and walking to the goal line.

Baresh Kebar asked whether Euro 2008 was a good example of cautioning technique? John referred to Graham Poll's 3 cards, saying sometimes you have to remind referees of basics. Baresh suggested it can be a sign of weakness but it can work in England. John said England has the lowest caution and send off rate in Europe, yet the strongest players in the world in the Premiership. It appears we are offering more management to avoid those cautions. Keith Hackett always encourages referees to manage players where they can.

Steve Tate asked how they are marked. John said out of 100. If they make a key error they get a maximum of 59 and if two key errors, a maximum of 49. A good performance will be in the 60s and the 70s only if they are very fit and put in a very good performance. The low 80s are awarded only for exceptional performances.

Len Wilcock asked about the player being in the centre circle when the ball was kicked off. As an assessor Len would not pull up a referee over a development point given that no-one else had seen the incident. John said you have to judge them sensibly, like refereeing, pick up on the right things. One of the key things referees have is to look confident. We are looking to develop common sense.

Bart O'Toole asked when referees can be allowed to discard the normal rules and apply their personalities with confidence. For example it would be unthinkable that referees would be trained to nudge or punch a player in the stomach when he complained at a decision to award a penalty kick. John said it is difficult to know - the exceptional referees are extremely rare.

Grant Mathias asked John to confirm what happens when he referees at Conference level. What was needed? John said he arrives at a ground at about 12.30 and starts to assess the match officials from then, watching the way he handles the teams sheets, safety officer, how he instructed his assistants and how he commands and generates team work. Can he think on his feet? During the game he looks out for common sense, fitness, match control, dealing with major incidents and the same skills as at Premiership.

Chris Beament asked how John got on with the match officials. John said he is often introduced as the fifth member of the team. As they came off they were



complemented on managing quite a tough game. He was there primarily as their friend. If referees had had a bad game and not done things well then he has to be told. He had been at the Chelsea game where Cole refused to show his number to the referee. He was at the game this season at Watford when a goal was awarded although the ball had not crossed the line. There John said to the Assistant Referee that he would have expected him to have a better recollection of the build up in the play, which he could then have described what had happened. He had dealt with the rest of the game magnificently.

Duncan Elder asked if when speaking to match officials did John sometimes gain the impression that they thought he was talking a load of rubbish? John said Yes – and some referees would be tipped off by mobile phone before the assessor came in. Generally he found the officials would listen and show interest, maybe saying “yeah you’re right.” Making a mistake was a great opportunity to gain wisdom.

John was asked his views on goal line technology. Most match officials were in support, but FIFA wanted to retain the fact that football is broadly the same on the parks as in the stadia. Mistakes that go uncorrected can cost clubs millions of pounds.

Steve Tate said there was frustration with the Respect Programme. There did not seem to be enough adherences to the principles in the professional game. John said at one game the first player to be cautioned was the captain. Last Saturday referee Steve Tanner had used the captains to help manage a player who was getting overheated and it worked really well. Every team briefing John heard included the role of the captain to help manage the players. John Cooke explained that last night in the Liverpool –v Everton game Alan Wiley had specifically used the captains to control his players. For the first time in a long time the Respect Programme seemed to be used well and as intended. John Norbury referred to watching David Pleat scanning his team sheet and not listening to what the referee was telling him.

Gordon Kirby said he was assessing last September and was verbally abused by the manager and trainer of one team, saying the referee was behaving unnaturally because of the assessor on the touch-line. John agreed these can be difficult situations.

Referees must think about the key things they should be looking for – which had become more apparent once they became assessors. This will include positioning, management of players, etc.

### **Vote of Thanks**

Chris Beament proposed a vote of thanks, saying John had given a fascinating insight into assessing at the highest level and the hard work he must engage in during games – all done to raise standards. He had given us something to take home and think about and hopefully our games would improve. We thanked him most sincerely.

*Bart O'Toole*



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## REFEREES' TALKBACK

Ever wanted to talk through an incident with another referee after a game but found no other colleagues available? A number of highly-experienced referees within the Society invariably return to their club houses on Saturday evenings and will be pleased to meet and greet you. If you're in their area, just call in after about 6.00 p.m. This scheme provides a network of AFA club locations around London where referees can expect a warm reception and a friendly chat after receiving club hospitality. The following clubs are currently available:

### **NORTH**

Latymer Old Boys  
 Botany Bay Cricket Club  
 East Lodge Lane  
 Enfield  
 Middlesex

Tel: 020 8363 4482

#### *Referees:*

Trevor Syms, Steve Bodell  
 Tony Hemmings, Mike Evans  
 John Cooke, John Faithfull,  
 John Crook, Ian Kerr,

### **NORTH**

Old Finchleians  
 Southover  
 Woodside Park  
 Finchley  
 London N12

Tel: 020 8445 7406

#### *Referees:*

Robert Hanison  
 Society Friend:  
 Danny McConnell

### **SOUTH**

Old Salesians FC  
 Salesian College Playing Fields  
 Old School Lane  
 Ewell West  
 Surrey

Tel: 020 8393 9820

#### *Referees:*

Pat Morrissey, Peter Kosciolk  
 Peter Georgiou, Brian Mallins  
 Phil Cook, Treavor Weaver  
 Stephen O'Sullivan, Chris Phillips  
 Bart O'Toole

### **NORTH EAST**

Old Parkonians, Oakfield Playing Fields, Forest Road, Fairlop, Ilford, Essex IG6 3HD  
*Referees:* Bill Taylor, Peter Robbins, John Dixon

### **West**

Polytechnic FC, Chiswick Sports Centre, Cavendish Road, Chiswick, London W4 3UJ  
*Referees:* John Keane, Terry Hillier, Gordon Kirby

Can you add your club's name to the list? If so call Gordon Kirby 020 8995 7529.

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## Minutes of the Society Meeting on Thursday 12th February 2009 at Old Isleworthians FC

In the absence of Society Chairman and Vice-Chairman Society President Bart O'Toole welcomed members to the Society's final regional meeting of the season and congratulated those appointed to semi-finals and finals of the various AFA cups due to be played in the next few weeks.

A discussion was held on the article in this month's Argus written by Society Life Vice-President Stan Lover who advised an initial gesture of pointing to the place of the offence for a few seconds followed immediately by the usual sweep forward movement of both arms. There were mixed views, with some members feeling that this was yet more to think about in what can be a complicated decision-making process and signalling process. Others felt it might be worth a try with an open mind as Stan had suggested.

### Talk by Guest Speaker Jim de Rennes at the Old Isleworthians Meeting

President Bart O'Toole introduced Guest Speaker Jim de Rennes who would be speaking on 'With respect the Respect what do YOU expect? Jim who had refereed on the Old Boys Football League and the Arthurian League was proud to attend. The AFA was established in 1905 in response to the growth of professionalism in football. In 1897 the headmaster of Harrow School said professionalism was invading football as in our games. When he played, professionalism was hardly known. Professionalism he had said was the bane of athletic games and brought at least three evils:

- "(1) Brutality - men play for victory at all costs' but football is a game of skill not violence;*
- (2) Sharp practice - which may be consistent with the rules of the game but the game demands gentlemanly, chivalrous sport and forbids sharp practice;*
- (3) Betting - sport is not sport when tainted for the love of money for the spirit of football is to seek victory for the sport itself and not for reward."*

C B Fry and others put their weight behind the Amateur Football Association in 1905. The FA did not entirely approve and laid down a condition that the AFA should change its name, so the Amateur Football Association was renamed the Amateur Football Alliance. Nowadays the AFA means something quite different. A recent article in *The Guardian* said it is now *The Association of Football Agents* – an article written by David Conn who spends his life exposing the horrors of professional football. He wrote two books – *The Football Business Fair Game in the Nineties* and *The Beautiful Game - Searching the Souls of Football*.

Jim asked what we felt about the FA's Respect Programme so far. Michael Hayden said on the Suburban League the players think the pre-match ritual is a bit of a joke. Half the away team do not want to shake hands. Middlesex County League is applying the respect programme. The Middlesex County FA will not register any league which has not signed up to the programme. The AFC have signed up to it. The SAL has been nominated as the test league for the AFA and there is discussion on how to implement the programme. Patrick Morrissey initially thought the scheme would not work but Jim was now not sure that is so. Now the element of respect has been introduced his view had changed and he felt there was a flicker of



recognition. A number of people have said "Glad you talked to us about that ref." Jim said he felt the FA programme is beginning to get through to the grass roots level. It is extremely important for the referees to complete the circle before the game by reminding players what the programme is about just before the game to introduce the benefits.

### **Before the Game**

Jim asked what we say to players in addressing the programme. He says in a standard pre-match chat to each team that it is not just about referees, but everybody on the park and those watching enjoying the game and the experience of being there for the day. Then he explains how he'd like the game to be played, used the programme to get messages across on how he'd like the game to be played. It takes about 1½ minutes.

Level 4 referee John Costello said the pre-match ritual on the Contributory Leagues is the emphasis of doing it in front of the crowd but the difficulty in cherry picking the big games for the ritual is that players will have no idea for each game whether it is going to take place. It might vary from cup matches to league matches. It's not a campaign because it does not always apply. Jim said the same problem can occur with jewellery checks. Charles Lifford said each club and each player of that club must sign up for the programme and every player should shake the referees' hand when the game is over. At the end of the game the referee could count how many people shake his hand and enter it on his report card.

Jim produced copies of the various documents and paperwork given to clubs and armbands worn by the captains. Patrick Morrissey asked what training referees were being given on the programme. Mike Naylor said there are programmes available in Middlesex CFA. He felt it would help to have shared workshops with players and referees.

Charles Lifford said the programme places a heavy onus on the referee. Mike had yesterday disallowed a player from playing where a metal stud was sharp. Michael Hayden said a player with a stud missing can be disallowed from playing. Mike Naylor felt the programme was fragmented. As a referee he was unaware of what the clubs and players had been told of the programme. Bart O'Toole felt the programme was a subtle way in which referees can be aware of their power to manage clubs, players and teams. Patrick would call captains alone for two minutes and say "We've been asked to talk to you. The campaign is about everyone enjoying their football, I'll say you are responsible for your players and I if call you over I want you to help your player not get a yellow card." Captains had appreciated this when it is said.

Jim asked what was said at the toss of the coin. Michael Hayden said when he spoke to captains he would say we're all here to enjoy ourselves, Lets go along and have a good game, If you can chat to the captains before the game don't start on negative points. We need to be open with the skippers. Jim felt much of this is building on good practice and not simply because of the respect campaign. If he needed to take a matter further he could ask the captains to help manage this player in front of him. He also will warn captains if a player on one yellow is getting close to getting a second yellow. He also suggested a referee turning up late shows no respect for the club. Michael Hayden added we must not turn up with torn jeans and a T shirt. Jim agreed we must be smart, punctual and confident.

### **During the Game**

It had been said we can work with the captain and this was one of the most popular features of



the programme. Jim had written an article in Argus *A Tale of Two Captains* a few months ago. Patrick Morrissey said what happened now is that there are people who are said to be the team captain for the day but they are not the person running the team. There will be someone who does not necessarily come up to you before the game we need to find out who has the most influence. Patrick Morrissey referred to being introduced to three different captains before the game started!

John Costello said we can try to follow the prescribed guidelines talking to the players and captains, but there is too much emphasis on avoiding disciplinary action. Jim asked 'Should we explain our decisions?' Louis Pinto-Nunes said sometimes we should; But not on every occasion. Referees are there to ensure the game is being refereed. We should not explain every single decision. But now and again. Jim would explain the decision and call for example "Holding" – but not inviting a conversation. Colin Busby felt we should explain shirt pulling. Jim did not normally offer any explanation; we should explain the more controversial ones, but not the obvious ones.

Bart O'Toole suggested it depends whether the decision is clear - a brief explanation may be helpful if the players may not know what the decision was for. Jim said we should call "Play on" but not "Play on, no foul" or simply "Advantage." He added that the most-used words on the field of play for the referee should be please and thank you. A lot of what gaining respect is about is doing things we are good at anyway. It is important to be confident – it's not what we do, it's the way we do it. We also need to be fit enough to referee at whatever level we are refereeing at.

## After the Game

Michael Hayden said we should accept hospitality, and tell teams beforehand if we are unable to accept it. We should be honest and apologise for errors made. Jim said you have to be confident and have self-belief but you have to be humble as well. There is a balance between humility and arrogance. Jim will say to players "I'll give you honest decision from the angle I've got. In other word I might be wrong but that is what I saw from my angle." Patrick has said immediately after the decision you don't say that may have been wrong. Charles Lifford emphasized that we should also be polite. We need to be sensitive before during and after the game to others. John Costello expressed concern about making too many admissions or errors as it can cause strained relations. Michael would still go the bar then weigh up how far he could discuss his decisions.

Jim said the programme did not get off to a very good start when launched and it had been suggested that referees have no god-given right to respect and we have to earn it by being good at our jobs. A few weeks later Paul Ince said if referees make the right decisions we will start to respect them. David Mellor said 'it is simply impossible to give our woeful referees any respect'. A day or two later he said the lack of respect is hurting our game. He then wrote "Riley is pathetic - almost devoid of authority and of they think they can get respect for him they're nuts. Referees will never get respect because they've never played the game".

Jim felt it is important that respect does not mean equality. There is a danger in this business that captains and people on the touchline will ask how can we respect you when you make mistakes? Jim had asked why not give respect armbands to the referees. It was refused but



iron-on badges would be offered. Surrey County FA has acquired these and now hand them to referees attending the respect workshops.

Jim suggested the game is unmanageable if referees are not respected. We must not allow it to take away from us the fact that we are in charge. Jim Hale said we have to remember the game is all about players. He had dreamt since starting refereeing that they want the spirit of the game. If we went out and had a referees' day and applied the laws strictly every time there was an infringement, how many games would finish? They might then realise they have to respect the referees. Jim had written an article *The Problem of the F word in Local Football*, printed elsewhere, which had been approved by FA head of refereeing development Ian Blanchard. Jim's article has been published in the Refereeing magazine. Jim Hale said we can show we have a job to do and they have too. It is not satisfactory for them to play without a referee, but we cannot referee without them.

Jim's parting shot was: "They must respect our mistakes". Paul Ince couldn't cope with referees making mistakes - but he has since been sacked!

### Vote of Thanks

John Costello thanked Jim for the research and time he had put into his talk. It is a very difficult topic which generates very strong views from anybody and to involve a whole audience and bring the topic round to a cohesive evening was quite an achievement.

Donning his AFA RDO hat Vice-Chairman John Cooke said all referees will be given the opportunity to attend a Respect Roll out Seminar, lasting 2 hours. The AFA Respect programme will start to roll out, including a very good DVD. John finally displayed the list of AFA Cup Finals appointments and asked what members felt would be useful training for the event. Pat said a task on working with a team of three. John Costello suggested a standard set of instructions.

**Bart O'Toole**

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## CLASSIC INSULTS. . .

When Insults Had Class (no 4-letter words!!) These glorious insults are from an era when cleverness with words was still valued, before a great portion of the English language got boiled down to 4-letter words, not to mention waving middle fingers.

The exchange between Churchill & Lady Astor: She said, "If you were my husband I'd give you poison," and he said, "If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease." "That depends, Sir," said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He had delusions of adequacy." - Walter Kerr

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." - Winston Churchill



## I'm Back Again, Sorry Lads

Last year I wrote a small article on the subject of footballers wearing jewellery, or should I say not wearing it. Watching CSKA Moscow v Aston Villa on TV on the 18th February this year I noticed that Love, I can't remember his first name, had his hair in braids with beads at the end of them. These braids were way past his shoulders, stretching to a length of about 18 inches. This all looked very elegant, but surely against the law of the game, which clearly states that no jewellery should be worn that could be deemed as dangerous to another player. If a ring or ear-ring couldn't be removed it would be taped over. How then could the referee allow a player to have beads swinging all over the place every time he went to head the ball. It was obviously dangerous, as the beads could easily have gone into an opponents eye.

Later in the month when Athletic Bilbao v Sevilla was televised a player was substituted and I noticed that he had a very heavy gold necklace on. Again this was at least half-way down his chest. Surely the officials in both cases would be more usefully employed in checking potentially dangerous items of apparel than practically handcuffing the oncoming substitute so as not to allow him to get his big toe on the park before the substituted player has left! David, my husband, saw both instances and agreed that neither should have been allowed to enter the field of play.

On another point, which is strictly not a refereeing point: Why does FIFA, the so called world governing body of football still allow the use of flares on the terraces of Italian Stadiums. FIFA's so-called ambassadors do not seem to address what I would call in these troubled times a serious security risk. Apart from the obvious smoke the drifts across the park, the fire risk must be substantial as well as actual bodily harm. If spectators are allowed to bring flares into a stadium, goodness knows what else they may bring!

Unlike a lot of women, I actually love watching football, and have been doing just that for many years, so I do understand the basic laws. So are we just being overseen by FIFA officials who really don't know what they are doing, perhaps like the senior bankers in this country at the present time – if bankers is the right word?

***Lyn Littler***



## **Minutes of the Society Meeting**

### **Thursday 5th February held at Norsemen FC**

Chairman Gordon Kirby welcomed 17 members, 2 non-members and the Guest Speaker, thanked David Simpson for arranging the use of the venue and food provided free to members. Apologies had been received from Bill Evans who was just entering hospital for an operation for a new knee and Bill's wife Rose who was also having a heart pacemaker fitted.

Inveterate member and AFA assessor Bill Taylor had recommended tonight's Guest Speaker David Norbury who had recently assessed Howard Webb. John had been a Premiership referee for 8 years and refereed on the Conference before retiring in 1997.

Our friends North Middlesex Referees' Society had invited President Bart O'Toole and Gordon to their 60th anniversary dinner. He thanked them for a wonderful evening. Argus had arrived by this last weekend. Pat Morrissey had written an interesting article on the difficulties in officiating in two games in one day when appointed to a QPR academy game at 11.00, then an AFA game at 1.30 p.m. Articles were also included from Steve Redfern, Stan Lover, Phil Newman and minutes on Howard Webb's visit by Bart O'Toole. Gordon invited all members to contribute to the magazine. The website is always available for comments and photographs.

The annual dinner will be on Friday 22nd May at Balls Brothers, Minster Court London EC3.

Grant Mathias said the AFA link to the Society website gave the old Society website address. Gordon would refer this to the Webmaster for correction.

On 12 February Jim de Rennes will be guest speaker at Old Isleworthians speaking on With respect to Respect what do YOU expect? At the March meeting PGMO boss Keith Hackett would be speaking. On Thursday 16th April 1986 FA Cup Final referee Alan Robinson will speak and extracts of his FA Cup Final will be shown.

#### **Match Incidents – John Cooke**

Grant Matthias asked how much we enforce of the rule on not wearing different coloured shirts under team shirts. Bart O'Toole confirmed that at Contributory League level referees must check the colour of the undershorts of players as well as sleeves, safety of studs and the absence of jewellery. Geoff Blackmore was assessed by the AFA RDO who asked whether a kit inspection was considered. Geoff was struggling to do that at that level. Guest Len Wilcock said he would not enforce this requirement at local games. As an Assistant Referee he had received a complaint by an assessor after a player unrolled different coloured sleeves which he found surprising. Geoff Blackmore asked whether we must required players to wear the same colour socks or disallows players from playing at all. John Cooke acknowledged that the requirements of the Laws are more strictly applied at higher levels. David Simpson said in an FA Women's Premier League on a recent cold day the referee allowed players to wear slightly different coloured undershirts. Gordon referred to an incident where a defender kicked the ball back to his goalkeeper (within the penalty area) who having first controlled it then saw an attacker bearing down on him. To prevent the attacker from executing a near "obvious goalscoring opportunity" the goalkeeper had collected the ball with his hand. It was agreed that



this would result in an indirect free kick but not a red card for denying an obvious goalscoring opportunity.

Guest speaker David Norbury said part of a referee's armoury is the use of common sense and there is a difference between local football and the bigger games. The late Ken Aston once said he had just been to the USA and seen the fittest referee ever in his life. He was so fit and saw everything from just a few yards away that he had ruined the game.

Gordon invited members to the RAE Eve-of-the-Final Rally at the Hotel Russell, Russell Square on Friday 29th May at a price of £10 (£5 for under 18s)

John Cooke projected the AFA Cup Final appointments onto a screen and congratulated members honoured with appointments (for fuller details see elsewhere in this issue.) One member suggested that one of the fourth official appointees was rather advanced in years to take over from the referee were he injured. John said this was mentioned at the AFA Referees' Committee meeting. A meeting of all appointees would take place on Thursday 5th March at Chadwick Street, with food, drink and a training session.

Members felt it was a good idea to hold such a meeting. John asked why. Duncan Elder felt there was much repetition at the meetings. John asked whether there should be separate meetings for new Cup Final officials. Ian Kerr said it would help to know what was going to happen at the meeting – such as dress protocols etc. John said it was useful to understand what was expected of us and what we could expect of such a meeting, such as larger numbers of spectators, roping off at grounds, different approaches by teams. Steve Tate mentioned the role of the fourth official – it was important that they do not become a spare part on the day. John agreed this was helpful. Bart O'Toole suggested that most of us would admit, especially in the case of match officials not normally running lines during the season, that however well we may be performing, there is always more to learn and more which can be improved. However, granted that referees were selected on the basis of good performances during the year, could any additional practical training can really be offered at the meeting of Cup Final officials to enhance performance skills? John said the meeting probably would deal with some points on the day such as working with assistant referees and there might be a lining seminar next year. Chris Beament said more important than instructions was practice of the match officials together as a team.

Gordon then introduced Guest Speaker John Norbury (see separate report). At the end of the talk Gordon presented him with a Society Mug and a Norsemen FC club tie. John's final duties were to draw to raffle tickets with winners Ian Kerr, Chris Beament and Robert Hanison, and the 100 club (details elsewhere in this issue.)

*Bart O'Toole*

## **VIDEO TRAINING AT SOCIETY MEETINGS**

Training Officer and AFA Referee Development Officer John Cooke will be pleased to receive any problems of members at monthly meetings, and also to analyse and debate recent incidents recorded from the professional game on video. Members with video recorded incidents are always welcome to bring them to meetings and they will be examined, time permitting. If possible, please telephone John in advance.



# Latest Law Revisions

The International FA Board (IFAB) convened in Newcastle, County Down, Northern Ireland on 28th February 2009 for its 123rd Annual General Meeting (AGM).

After having received a report on the experiment involving additional assistant referees conducted during UEFA U-19 European Championship qualifying tournaments in October and November 2008, the members of the Board gave permission for the continuation of FIFA's experiment with additional assistant referees, this time in a professional league.

Regarding Law 11 (Offside), the wording of the Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines has been amended to clarify the situation where a defending player leaves the field of play placing an attacking player in an offside position. The new wording reads as follows: "Any defending player leaving the field of play for any reason without the referee's permission shall be considered to be on his goal line or touchline for the purposes of offside until the next stoppage of play."

In order to avoid unnecessary conflicts between fourth officials and coaches or other occupants in the technical area, the Board agreed that, provided they behave in a responsible manner, one person be permitted to remain in the technical area and no longer be required to return to their position on the bench after conveying tactical instructions.

Another item discussed at today's meeting relates to kicks from the penalty mark. The procedure has been clarified regarding the players participating in kicks from the penalty mark if one team has a greater number of players than their opponents at the end of the match. In such a situation, the Laws of the Game now state that this team must reduce their numbers to equate with that of their opponents. In order to clarify further the process, the following wording has been added: "Any player so excluded may not participate in kicks from the penalty mark."

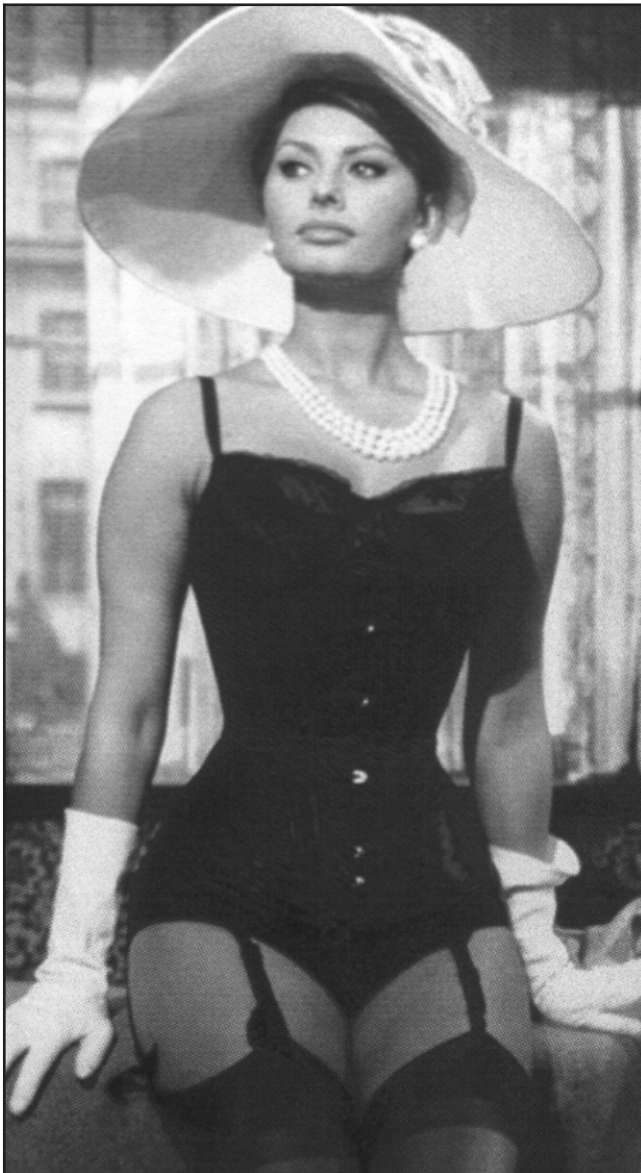
## Other items

- FIFA withdrew its proposal to extend the maximum duration of the half-time interval
- the Board agreed that the proposal to increase the maximum number of substitutions in the event of extra time should be discussed by the relevant FIFA committees
- the IFAB agreed that its technical sub-committee will discuss the procedure that applies when players leave the field of play after treatment
- it was agreed that the concept of "Sin Bins" would not be pursued further
- Law 1 has been updated to reflected the change of designation to the FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf

Next year's IFAB Annual General Meeting will take place from 5 to 7 March in Zurich (Switzerland).



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REFEREES: EAT MORE SPAGHETTI -  
YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE**



**“Everything you see I owe to spaghetti”**



## MORE CLASSIC INSULTS . . .

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."  
Clarence Darrow

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary." - William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway).

"Poor Faulkner. Does he really think big emotions come from big words?" - Ernest Hemingway (about William Faulkner)

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it." - Moses Hadas

