



OUR NEXT MEETING IS
Thursday
8 October 2009

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

Our guest speaker will be:

John Cooke

Society Vice-Chairman and Training Officer and
AFA Referee Development Officer

John will speak on the topic vital to us all

“The State of AFA Refereeing”

So come along and hear him speak and
ask your questions



The running order for the evening will be:

- 1800 Bar and restaurant open;
- 1905 Take your seats;
- 1915 Chairman opens with routine Society business, announcements and Officers' reports;
- 1930 EGM to consider the Society's audited accounts for FY 2008/09;
- 1950 Peter Georgiou, Society Assistant Referee Training Officer and Level 3 referee: Law queries, match incidents;
- 2020 John Cooke
- 2110 Q&A and Vote of Thanks
- 2120 100 Club Draws for September and October and the raffle plus presentations etc.
- 2130 The meeting ends.

AFA AND LONSAR SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION

Schedule of dates and speakers for Society Meetings for season 2009/10

DATE AND VENUE

[2] October 8: CSRC:

SPEAKER

John Cooke, AFA

Former Level 4 referee, AFA RDO and Society Vice-Chairman and Referee Training Officer.

[3] November 5: Old Salesians FC: tba

[4] November 12: Alexandra Park FC: Peter Kirkup

2006 FIFA Assistant Referee, 2007 Assistant Referee to FA Challenge Cup Final, 2005 appointed to Football League Championship Play-Off Final and the FA Community Shield.

[5] December 3: CSRC:

Gary Lewin

Ex-first-team physiotherapist at Arsenal for 22 years and a former Gunners youth goalkeeper, took on dual role with England in 1996 before moving to The FA full time in 2008.

[6] January 14: CSRC:

Janie Frampton

FA National Referee Manager, Education & Training: one



of 3 national managers, is responsible for 21 RDOs. Active referee for 21 years, National List of Contributory League and Women's National Premier League, qualified UEFA coach, involved in Active Sports and Women's Centre of Excellence coaching and development, Licensed Instructor, Tutor Mentor for Safeguarding Children and Equality, operates on a range of National and International Instructors Courses, One of only 7 female FIFA Instructors in the world,

[7] February 4: Norsemen FC: tba

[8] February 11: Old Isleworthians FC: Dave Commander

RAF for 29 years, 1987 qualified as a referee in Hong Kong, 1991-93 served in Gulf War, 1993, refereed in Yorkshire and promoted to Class 1 in 1994; Refereed on the Hellenic league and lined on the Southern League, active on the Hellenic league. Licensed Instructor since 1996 and an FA registered assessor, assessor trainer and instructor trainer. Refereeing highlights: an end of an era game at Wembley in October 2000; games in South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Cyprus and recently in Trinidad and Tobago in 2007.

[9] March 11: CSRC:

Mike Tingey

A Commercial Director, married with 2 boys, born 1967, 1983 commenced refereeing on High Wycombe Leagues, 1991 Hellenic League to Isthmian League, appointed to Football League as Linesman in 1993 and 1994 to Premier League, served on FIFA List of Assistant Referees January 2004 to December 2007, retired from active list of Match Officials in September 2008 and joined National List of Assessors at start of 2009/10 Season. Major appointments: FA Cup Final 2001, Division One Play-Off Final 2002, Community Shield 2004 and UEFA Cup Final 2005.

[10] April 8: CSRC: [Easter Holiday 2-5]: John Busby

Age: 23 Years Old, 2000 began refereeing
2002/04 promoted L7-6, L6-5 2004/05, Hellenic League (Supply League), 2005/06 promoted L5-L4, and promoted to L4-L3. refereed Hellenic League Supplementary Cup



Final, finished 3rd in merit table out of 84 and became FA registered assessor. 2006/07: First Year Contributory League Referee, 1st Year Panel Line Assistant, Assistant referee on FA Vase semi final 2nd leg. Assistant Referee on international friendly between England & Scotland Ladies. Referee of OFA senior cup final, received OFA young referee of the year award, Assistant Referee on Oxford Utd vs. Man Utd pre-season friendly, selected for Contributory League.

Season 2007/08: Promoted to Football League Line, Assistant Referee on Quarter Final of FA Vase, Trophy, Youth Cup & FA Cup 1st Round proper and Assistant Referee on 3 live Setanta games on panel. Season 2008/09: 3rd Year Contributory League Referee, 1st Year National List Assistant, officiated FA Cup 1st round proper.

Season 2009/10: 4th Year Contributory League, Referee, 2nd Year National List Assistant, Selected for contributory league development group, officiated on U17 International.

[11] May 13 (AGM): CSRC: **John Norbury**
Premier League Referee Assessor

[12] May 21 [Annual Dinner **Keith Hackett**
[PGMOL General Manager]

Addresses of venues:

CSRC: Civil Service Recreational Centre, 1 Chadwick Street, London, SW1 P 2EP

Old Salesians Football Club, Salesian College Playing Fields, Old School Lane, Ewell West, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 1TJ

Alexandra Park Football Club, The Racecourse Ground, Wood green, London, N22 7ST]

Norsemen Football Club, Edmonton Sports & Social Club, Church Lane, Edmonton, London N9 9HL]

Old Isleworthians Football Club, The memorial Ground, 22a, Wood Lane, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 5EP]

Please note that meetings held at venue 1 begin at 1915 and the others at 1930.



Dates For Your Diary 2009/10

I should be grateful if you would take note these dates and venues for the forthcoming season. The recruitment of speakers is currently ongoing but we have at least 6 “in the bag” at present with several others pending.

2. October 8: CSRC
3. November 5: Old Salesians FC
4. November 12: Alexandra Park FC
5. December 3: CSRC
6. January 14: CSRC [This will be held in an alternative room perhaps the Belgravia.]
7. February 4: Norsemen FC
8. February 11: Old Isleworthians FC
9. March 11: CSRC
10. April 8: CSRC: [Easter Holiday 2-5]
11. May 13 (AGM): CSRC
12. May 21 [Annual Dinner at the same venue as 2009]

CSRC = The Westminster Room, Civil Service Recreational Centre, 1 Chadwick Street, London, SW1P 2EP

OUR WEBSITE

Just a reminder to members that our new website address is 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 OCTOBER

ARGUS

MUST

BE WITH THE EDITOR BY

FRIDAY

23rs OCTOBER 2009

OR SOONER IF POSSIBLE.



Chairman's Comment

"It's a funny old game." One thing about the game we love is that although fairly simple it never ceases to spring surprises and raise contentious talking points. Without this ready supply sports journalists, TV and radio pundits, ex-players [and more recently ex-referees] and the general public would have little to talk about.

"Something new under the sun?" In recent weeks there have been at least two instances of things not seen for a while. The referees' actions or inactions are of concern to me. Although spectators have traditionally enjoyed knocking seven bells out of each other during and after games we have had two examples lately where players became involved in this.

During the England V Croatia game on 9 September at Wembley a disappointed Croat entered the hallowed arena and got among the players no doubt wishing to congratulate John Terry and our boys on a fine victory. He danced around for a several seconds before a squad of security stewards arrived and wrestled him to the ground. In the ensuing struggle the trespasser perhaps surprised at this treatment resisted and blows were struck by both sides. The Croatian players became concerned [this was no way to treat a guest] and got involved and slaps and blows were exchanged between players and security men. During this the referee Alberto Undiano Mallenco (Spain) having correctly stopped the game stood and watched. The question is should he have dismissed one or more of the Croatian players for violent conduct?

LOAF [or whatever we call it now] advocates that any player guilty of violent conduct etc "against a team-mate, spectator, match official or any other person should be dismissed." The law is clear but nothing appears to have happened during the game or afterwards. Further, the spectator was not ejected from the ground or taken into custody but was put back among his mates and is no doubt a hero in Zagreb. I thought I had read somewhere that entering a FOP is an offence punishable by arrest.

More recently during the Manchester derby Craig Bellamy punched a pitch invading spectator only when he was being held by the stewards. Seemingly the referee Martin Atkinson didn't see the incident and is reported to have said he would not have dismissed Bellamy even if he had. Although Bellamy has been warned by The FA as to his future conduct he claims, and his manger backs him, that he was acting merely in self-defence [by attacking an already restrained individual.]

I mention the above merely to highlight my surprise that referees in both cases seem to have diplomatically turned a blind eye to the events and as a result a game-changing decision was avoided. I mean no criticism of the referees who were doing a great jobs but is this plague of the 70's and 80's making a comeback and should the authorities be taking a tougher line with spectators and referees with players who insist on becoming involved?

"What would you do?" What is seen in a live game on TV one weekend is



invariably copied at grass roots level a few weeks later. Are we now likely to encounter more pitch-invaders, it is a regular feature in youth games I am told in the shape of enthusiastic mothers and fathers? So what would you do, what can you do with members of the public in a public park? Is senior football setting a sufficiently enough robust example for us to follow?

"It's crowded in here." In the not too distant future senior colleagues may be forced to leave their dressing room merely to change their minds if the recent trend of 5 on-field officials catches on. Is this the shape of things to come and will it benefit the game and the quality of our decision-making? Initial reports, well from one of the team's managers involved, indicate that 5 pairs of eyes still managed to miss key decisions. While we are discussing innovations some managers recently expressed an interest in the introduction of off-the-field time keepers as happens in rugby league. Would the time-keeper be the fourth official or should we have another referee to handle this? Managers are also calling for instant video replays to be introduced at games. So let's have another official sitting in the grandstand equipped with video screen[s] and a VHF radio-link to his on-field colleagues. These are innovations which may be in the pipeline but their introduction would I fear exacerbate the serious shortage of referees. But never mind lads [and lasses] these changes will be a long-time coming to our level and perhaps the snug changing-rooms will still be big enough for us to swing that Trevor's cat.

"What goes around comes around." Schadenfreude is a good word to have up one's sleeve for gaps in conversation although I don't necessarily agree with its meaning: "to gloat over someone else's misfortune." But on learning this week that mighty Argentina may fail to qualify for the World Cup Finals 2010 in RSA for the first time in over 40 years the feeling crept over me. Argentina's impending failure is hardly surprising when one learns that their fate is in the hands of a manager who although once a great player [while being a self-confessed cheat] has become a grossly overweight, income-tax dodging, former drug-taker.

Diego Maradona is presently steering the Argentinean national side to a string of ignominious defeats against such football super powers as Chile, Paraguay and Ecuador. The warm feeling of schadenfreude [if that isn't too oxymoronic] increased for me on learning that - The Hand Of God - felt the need recently to perk up his personal performance and his team's prospects [some crucial matches are just weeks away] by heading off to a clinic to be dried out, flushed out or whatever is necessary. Unfortunately, he chose of all places a clinic in Italy, not exactly handy for consultations with colleagues. The Italian equivalent of the income tax inspector has a long memory and wishes Maradona to consider paying around £30 million in alleged unpaid taxes from a time when he played for FC Napoli. Of course he didn't have enough readies on him to meet this sum and surprisingly was permitted to leave Italy and return to Argentina. However, he did so without several sets of diamond earrings seized as part-settlement.

The memory of that game in June 1986 at the Aztec Stadium, Mexico City when



Maradona a wonderfully gifted and talented player cheated on a grand scale will live forever in my mind.

The serious side of the forgoing is how a man with such talent in his head and feet sadly could not match this with dignity and integrity. The “win at all costs” feeling was with us 20 years ago and I fear is ever-present today. Maradona cheated England in the World Cup but he also sullied the sporting reputation of a great footballing nation. Argentina deserves better.

“And finally. . .” I am grateful to those who have offered best wishes to me about my dodgy knee injured in February during a game. A summer of cycling and swimming has helped mend the damage and I managed to run a line recently without too much negative reaction. So if this continues I should be ready to make a comeback in time for my 67th birthday.

Gordon Kirby

STOP PRESS. . .

TOP SPEAKERS AT SOCIETY MEETINGS

Following a recent FA Referees' Committee meeting it was agreed that Societies wishing to invite a Select Group or National List official to speak at one of their meetings must contact Mike Riley (PGMO General Manager designate) via his PA, Kelly Wright at the PGMOL Offices. The reasons for this change (which also affects FAMOA events) are:

- To ensure that senior officials are not overloaded with requests;
- To ensure a fair distribution of speaking engagements amongst senior officials and across Societies.

A major concern is that, on some occasions, senior officials travel long distances to speak to only a handful of people. Mike Riley, with the full support of the RAE Board and The FA, will be encouraging Societies to invite other Societies to join them when they have a top speaker. This obviously means that more people benefit from such speakers and the speaker's journey and time (always willingly given) is even more productive.

COMMENT: This makes sense and also serves to underline the Society's recent policy of extending invitations to non-members to attend some Society evenings to enhance numbers and to attract members.

Gordon Kirby, Chairman

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.



Whistleblower's Opinion

The Death of Common Sense

When some of us first attended a referee training course and were instructed in the 17 Laws of the Game, we were taught about the unwritten 'Law 18'. This was called 'Common Sense', a function of intelligent learning from experience. And it was to be used in the interpretation and application of all the preceding 17 Laws.

Here follows an **Obituary to Common Sense in Refereeing -**

"Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense (otherwise known as CS), who has been with us since the founding of the game.

He was brought up in an era when English referees were considered the best in the world, even when English football had lost its world dominance.

He will be remembered as knowing the difference between the letter and the spirit of the Law, and that the Spirit is more important than the Letter. He had learnt to accept that life isn't always fair, and to admit that sometimes he made mistakes. He did not confuse celebrity and fame with significance.

He believed the game of football was for active participation, not spectating, and a national heritage that should be protected from the corruption of big money, and the 'win at any cost' mentality that goes with it.

C S lived by simple values - honour and reputation were more important than money and status, and giving 100% commitment and concentration to whatever he was doing. He served the game, accepting the isolation and frustrations that his role in the game often required. And he regarded with healthy scepticism the comments by players, assessors, coaches, football administrators, and the media, on refereeing performances. He instinctively knew whose opinion he could trust.

First Symptoms of Decline

C S first experienced palpitations when the lawmakers kept changing and expanding the Laws every year. He would give as an example that the Laws (with Notes) were 12 pages long in 1937/38 and in 2009/10 they are 129 pages - with no visible improvement in control or skills - just pace.

And he was sickened by the sale of School Playing Fields for building. Where would our young people learn to play and enjoy the game?



His first serious heart seizure came when the FA surrendered the running of football and refereeing to tarnished big money, Sky TV, and 'the professionals' of the Premiership in 1992.

His waning strength was further tested when the 'Cult of the Manager' was allowed to develop, and the 'Technical Areas' gave rights and legitimacy to an often abusive mob. Then those same people gave a referee marks that determined his future career!

Common Sense took a beating when players and managers faced a maximum of a 3 game suspension for violent offences, which if committed in the street would result in an extended stay in prison.

And each time a Disciplinary Commission failed to support the referee as the FA's trained representative on the field against those offenders, Common Sense felt a stab to the heart.

Rushed to Intensive Care

C S was already deteriorating when the Offside Law and its Interpretations were made so complex that even top referees and assistants could not implement it successfully (never mind grassroots referees operating without assistants).

And C S was rushed into Intensive Care when the FA - which admits to being short of 8000 referees - announced compulsory 3 yearly Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks and Child Protection courses for all referees, most of whom only did adult football.

FA 'Referee Rejection and Resentment' (sic) Policy

As the end neared and drifting in and out of consciousness, Common Sense could only groan when told that under its new Referee Rejection (sic) policy the FA had increased the charge for new referee training to £85, and made the new qualifying process more difficult. And as part of its Referee Resentment (sic) policy, the FA had increased the referee annual re-registration fee by 50%.

The Final Moments

Common Sense finally gave up the ghost when the FA announced it was seeking a Betting Company sponsor, just weeks after setting up a special unit to investigate betting scams within the game.

The news that the Government are moving in to reform the English game and



the self serving organisation at the FA came too late. But it could only have accelerated his death. The Government could not hope to understand the tradition, the values, and the spirit of the volunteer communities that run the grassroots game, and their need for proper representation and facilities from the FA.

C S would have known what to do.

Funeral Arrangements

The Funeral at the English Grassroots Game Cemetery, (currently the subject of a Building Planning Application), the graveyard of so many unsung heroes, was a quiet affair, but just the way he would have liked it.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents - Truth and Trust, his wife - Discretion, his daughter - Responsibility, and his son - Reason.

Donations to the 'Law 18 Memorial Fund'.

Farewell Common Sense - may you rest in peace."

Patrick Morrissey

The 100 Club . . . Three winners each month.

Find out if you could be one of them. As a member of the 100 club you could be in line to win one of the three monthly prizes.

Thank you to those members who have bought shares in the 100 club. Membership fees do not fully cover the cost of running the society. The 100 club is a means by which we raise vital funds; it also gives members a chance to win back their membership fees.

Each month we have a draw with three cash prizes. Half of the income from the 100 club fund is returned in prize money to 100 club members.

The names of 100 club members are listed below. If you have bought shares in the 100 club please check that your name is there. If you have bought shares and it is not printed, please get in touch with Errol Walker.

If you would like to join the 100 club, with a chance to win a cash prize each month, then please get in touch with Errol Walker, or send a cheque made out to the society. Shares are just £10 each.



**100 CLUB LIST SHOWING
NAMES OF SHAREHOLDERS.
MANY NAMES HOLD MORE
THAN ONE SHARE.**

Baxter Robert
Berriman Ian
Blackmore Geoffrey
Brathwaite Andrew
Carney David
Costelloe John
Cunningham David
Doe John
Edwards Malcolm
Emery Terry
Ferris Colin
Green Rodney
Hayes John
Hiller Roger
Kerr Ian
King Peter
Lence Geoff
MacGowan Patrick
Mariani Francis
Maskel John
Morris Douglas
Morrissey Patrick
Naylor Michael
O'Sullivan Stephen
Phillips Chris
Radford Graham
Sainsbury Mike
Saunders Del
Stemp Ian
Thompson Girvan

Tyler Stephen
Woolman Robin
Worth Rob
Beament Christopher
Campbell Ian
Cook Phil
Earls Derek
Evans William
Evans Christopher
Foulston Michael
Hagger Neil
Hale James
Hayden Michael
Hemmings Tony
Kennedy Lawrence
Kosciolek Peter
Lazarus David
Littler David
Monk John
O'Toole Bartholomew
Skelton Ken
Sturges John
Walker Errol
Weaver Trevor
Wilson Richard
Courtenay Julian
Kirby Gordon
Mathias Grant
Georgiou PeterJ
MacRae Andrew



Talking point

Where is gamesmanship taking us?

Ok so we referees can get things wrong. But for the most part the things we get wrong are through honest endeavours – we don't set out to deliberately deceive or to gain some advantage.

However, in the last few weeks we have had controversy where a lack of honesty among players has brought not criticism of player action but criticism of referees. It is a bit like: "Let's blame the police for crime!"

Let's deal with the goal that wasn't. When the ball hit the back stanchion in the Crystal Palace vs. Bristol City game, unfortunately it was the two match officials who didn't see the ball bounce out of the back of the goal. To tell the truth, it wasn't until the replay was shown for the third time on the TV, and the presenter explained the controversy, that I realised what happened. The incident was that quick and the ball just flew back into play – the first couple of times it looked like it had come off the post. The question I asked as the controversy developed, was at what point did any of the defending team, or the manager, approach the referee and say: "Ref, you might not believe this but the ball went into the net and bounced out. It is a goal." It didn't happen at any point as far as I know.

Did the defending manager at any point tell his team to allow the opposition to score because we 'know' it's a goal even if the referee made a mistake? I don't think that happened. Where is the honesty? Where is the sportsmanship in sport? Actually, beyond a certain level football is no longer a sport – it is a business.

Talk of sportsmanship, in the Arsenal vs. Celtic Champions League game Eduardo, applied 'gamesmanship' to win a penalty. Well, that is how his 'dive' was described. Now here we have a player deliberately aiming to deceive in order to gain an advantage; well, no, he did more than that he gained a penalty by deceiving the referee to give his team an unassailable lead, possibly determining the outcome of the match. At another time Eduardo's act would have been describe differently; now it is 'gamesmanship'.

As a referee we try to be honest brokers in our attempts to interpret the laws of the game and enforce fair play among the players. But the thing that we seem or are unable to do is to trust players. Ronaldo – once a diver always a diver?

How can we in that instant decide whether a foul has actually been committed or whether that lunge at the ball was an honest endeavour or a cynical act? The law was changed to remove that necessity for the referee to assess intent in deciding whether that contact was a foul.



In how many games have we clearly spotted the hand ball; in giving the freekick the player will deny, until he's blue in the face, that the ball even came near his arm or hand – slapping his stomach or chest. The ensuing melee will often lead to a number of cautions. In several instances I have had the player come up after the game and 'admit' that he handled the ball. Questioned as to why he didn't just admit it during the game the oft quoted responses is: "Well, you can't, can you ref?" Duh – yes you can. And, you'd save those two yellow cards that your team mates received.

May be once players themselves start removing some aspects of 'gamesmanship' from their play, we as referees can start to referee in a way that allows us to correct our decisions based on the appeal of players. How often has the player made a tackle, clearly played the ball out, and then turns around arm in the air appealing for the decision in his favour? This makes your life difficult because those unable to see the challenge will follow the appealer's lead. Is this dishonest or is it just gamesmanship?

As referees we go out with a certain certainty – those looking to act with the greatest degree of honesty and integrity will be the officiating team. At the highest level of the game, and it percolates down, the stakes now seem so high that winning is the goal and this needs to be achieved at any cost.

Which player, manager, coach or team is willing to sacrifice the opportunity to gain an advantage and possible lose the game by being honest?

Where will this 'part of the game' take us in this the beautiful game?

Arbitro

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Peter Tadman

We have heard from Peter that he has been suffering from a "dickie ticker". He is now on the mend and hopes to attend future meetings and also visit some SAL clubs on a Saturday afternoon. I know you will all join me in wishing Peter a speedy and complete recovery.

David Stacey

I received notice that David Stacey died in April this year. David was an old member of the Society and he also ran many referees' courses (editor: I was one of his pupils). The Society would like to convey sincere condolences to all of his family.



REFLECTIONS

How interesting to read Robert Hanison's article concerning the formation of the AFA Referees' Society. For me, the name most remembered is that of Ron Hounsell who was my instructor on the course at Arnos School all those years ago. I became a member of North Middlesex whose secretary at the time was Ron Tossell. It was this Ron [who died far too early] who advised not to get involved with AFA football if I had any ambition to reach the highest level of the game. Since at the time my ambition was to referee the World Cup final [still yet unfulfilled] I decided to take his advice. His reasoning was that the football was so 'gentlemanly' that it was not considered a suitable test for a referee seeking promotion and this, of course, was the considered view at the time. I do remember him saying that he allowed himself one Saturday a month with AFA football so that he could enjoy his refereeing. It was to be some years later, when my club joined the AFA [via the Nemean League] that I was able to share that experience.

Peter Lancaster comes to mind as a referee on the Delphian League on which I first started lining. The Delphian was then merged with the Athenian League which itself was absorbed into the Isthmian {Ryman}.

I recall meeting John Meade as a member of LONSAR who used to hold their monthly meetings at The Feathers by St. James' Park underground station on Friday evenings. This guaranteed a fine selection of speakers from among Football League referees who would be staying in London prior to their game the following day. John reached the Football League and was one of a panel of English referees sent by the F.A. to Brazil, at the request of the Brazilian F.A., in the early 1950's to handle games in their top level. Englishmen refereed both the 1950 World Cup decider between Brazil and Uruguay [no actual final as the final stage was a group] and the 1954 final so we must have been considered the best in the world.

There must have many more active referees at the time the Society was formed as I remember using the Appointments Bureau on a Friday evening to get a game. It was as much for the benefit of referees as clubs. Happy days.

* * *

My efforts to follow the latest guidance on off-side [September Argus] have not fared so well with club linesmen. In my part of the country the use of such



'assistants' is compulsory as clubs are fined if they are not provided. Of course, how much use is made of them is the referee's decision but the norm is to allow them to indicate off-side [running with the opposition's forwards] with the proviso that their flag might not be accepted. This, of course, has an unsettling effect on defenders and often leads to dissent. There was one referee from my 'other' society who, starting as a Probationer Class 3, merely requested that all they did was to indicate ball out of play. He did go on to referee the F.A. Cup final and reach the FIFA list so it didn't exactly hold him back – [there are some who claim his use of assistants didn't change when they were qualified officials!].

Another problem has started to arise following excessive media attention on the issue of diving [provided the diver isn't English]. The attacking player goes to ground in the penalty area. The referee decides it is not a penalty. The defending team then demand a yellow card.

Players do just fall over but I suppose it will join the litany of 'foul throw', 'in the back' and the ever increasing 'handball'.

Old Highburian



Farce, Fiasco and Furore

The past few weeks have not been a good time for genuine sports lovers ie those people who have no allegiance or attachment to any particular team, or indeed to a particular sport, but who are nevertheless drawn to watch or to attend a well publicised sporting event because of the possibility of seeing something out of the ordinary, possibly even unique, that will stay in the memory for all the right reasons, such as seeing Usain Bolt absolutely demolish a world record whilst beating a top class field of athletes.

And how one hopes, desperately, that his performances were and continue to be genuine, based purely on his natural ability, without the slightest hint that they may be drug or in any other way unnaturally assisted.

Because when one looks at the sporting headlines of the past few months it is enough to make one weep for what 'sport' has become.

RUGBY UNION, once on a pedestal for its Corinthian approach of how to play a tough physical contact sport (hard, but fair) brought low by head punching, eye gouging brutality, and, almost unbelievably, by a win at all costs approach which included biting on a 'fake blood' capsule so that an otherwise ineligible player could be brought back into the game in order to score with a potentially winning kick at goal (which he actually missed).

The thing that disturbs me most about this gruesome and pathetic behaviour is not that a young man, desperate to retain his place as a professional player in a high profile team, should (allegedly m'lud) feel obliged to follow the deranged request/demand of his coach to act in such a manner; nor is it that, allegedly and apparently under duress immediately after the game, a professional medical person could be persuaded to slice open the player's undamaged lip in order to deflect suspicion from the opposing team.

No, as abhorrent as their behaviour was, they were almost certainly presented with a situation on either the field of play or in the dressing room which was both stressful and time critical, with all the ramifications to their teammates, to the club and, not least, to their own career to be decided in a matter of seconds, depending on whether they said Yes or No.

On the other hand, whoever originally decided that a fake blood capsule would be a useful thing to have around for a situation where it could be usefully employed must have a) thought of the idea and considered it a good one, and then b) consciously decided to look around for such an item, or even if c) they had just come across the capsule by chance, they must still have considered it a good idea to acquire such an item for possible future use.

In any event the timescale involved would have given them lots of time to review



their decision to purchase the capsule, and even more time before actually employing it, which however it was done necessarily involved instructing or coercing others into being complicit to the act of cheating.

And make no mistake, this was cheating of a major order, not something that was done as a knee jerk reaction to a opportunity that suddenly presented itself, but a deceit that was planned and executed over a lengthy timescale, with absolutely no regard to the opposing team who were being cheated, nor to the game itself, nor to the fans who had paid their hard earned cash without realising they were being made fools of nor, obviously, with any concern for the colleagues who were inadvertently or otherwise caught in the web.

Think 'Bloodgate' was bad? - no worries, FORMULA 1 can beat that.

According to a Renault F1 driver, he was instructed by his management team to deliberately crash his racing car during last year's floodlit Singapore Grand Prix, in order to provoke a safety car intervention that helped Renault's other driver make up ground and, ultimately, to win the race from fifteenth place on the grid.

Again, this is not one man taking advantage of an opportunity that occurred naturally during the course of the race, but a meticulously pre planned event with the driver allegedly being given explicit instructions as to which lap and at which precise point to crash (where there were no cranes to lift the wreckage, making a safety car intervention inevitable).

The second driver (the one who gained from the crash) has apparently said that he was not party to any scheme to cheat, the team principal flatly denied the crash driver's version of events and the director of engineering simply refused to comment.

The FIA, the sport's ruling body, faced with a conspiracy of this nature which not only amounted to cheating (the opposing teams, the fans, sports bettors etc) but which, if proven, also involved a reckless act that could easily have resulted in serious injury or loss of life, offered the director of engineering immunity from prosecution in return for full disclosure about the alleged scheme, before Renault (the company) announced that it would not dispute the charges and disposed of the services of both men.

'Crashgate', which involved not just winning large sums of money and fame (the 'normal' reasons for cheating) but also possible loss of life is about as serious as cheating gets, which at least puts ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL's latest attempt to deal with one particular form of cheating ('simulation' to you or I) into some sort of perspective, and in fact is very small beer indeed if one wishes to simply ignore the effect on cheated teams, fans, etc.

The facts are these – Arsenal were playing Celtic in a second leg Champions League play off game; an Arsenal player chased a ball into the Celtic penalty area where he



came into very close proximity with the Celtic goalkeeper; the Arsenal player fell to the ground and despite Celtic claims that the Arsenal player had 'dived' the referee awarded a penalty to Arsenal, from which they scored; Arsenal won the game.

Those are the facts and the facts are not in dispute.

What is in dispute is whether the Celtic goalkeeper's challenge made contact with the Arsenal player, or whether the Arsenal player feigned contact, thus deceiving the referee and thereby winning his team a penalty, and a goal, to which they were not entitled.

A huge furore sprung up immediately after the game, continued by the press and Celtic and the Scottish FA next day, such that Uefa, under whose auspices the game was played, became involved.

Apparently Uefa had introduced a new clause to its disciplinary regulations three years ago under which "deliberately deceiving the referee" would result in an automatic two match ban, although in the intervening period only one player had been sanctioned (a Lithuanian, for 'diving' against Scotland two years ago).

After reviewing video evidence of the incident (which was obviously not available to the referee at the time) Uefa declared the Arsenal player guilty of deceiving the referee and suspended him for two Uefa club matches.

Arsenal accused Uefa of presiding over a random disciplinary system and appealed against the sentence.

At an appeal hearing the club, supported by the testimony of the referee, produced video footage that appeared to show some contact between the player and the goalkeeper, albeit contradicted by that from other camera angles which suggested that no contact had been made; the appeal panel then declared "it was not established to the panel's satisfaction that the referee had been deceived in taking his decision on the penalty" and annulled the two match suspension.

All back to Square One then, except the process has opened a very interesting can of worms.

For example, it is my understanding that the overwhelming majority of Select Group referees would prefer to have the assistance of video technology for goal line decisions ie for decisions of fact, such as was the ball completely over the goal line before being cleared or wasn't it?, and possibly even for penalty area decisions, such as was the foul tackle made inside the area or outside it?

However, again my understanding is that Uefa are firmly against the introduction of such technology because it would introduce a two tier game i.e. those games that had such technology and others (the vast majority) without it, which they do not wish to see happen, and instead are proceeding with a plan to put an additional assistant referee behind each goal line to help rule on such incidents.



Well, hello, is there anybody on Uefa residing on Planet Earth?

A two tier (or more) game already exists. Premiership games are televised and video recorded from a number of different camera angles. Football league and a minority of other games are occasionally televised, normally by just one camera, and the vast majority of games have to rely solely on the low tech referee's vision and memory.

Furthermore the vast majority of games played do not have neutral (or any) assistant referees let alone a 4th official at present, so introducing 5th and 6th assistants for top level games is just going to widen the gap between different levels of the game, not keep it on an even playing field.

And whilst accepting that video technology is not foolproof (viz different camera angles appearing to show different things), in those circumstances does anyone seriously believe that an a.a. referee standing behind the goal line would have been able to have definitively and correctly decided in the blur of action if the Celtic goalkeeper had made any contact or not – without the availability of slow motion replay it is simply not possible to be sure, and sometimes not even then.

Given that reality, it is obvious that two more officials are just going to introduce more confusion and what I call 'committee meeting decisions' (which video evidence available to millions of tv viewers will still be able to prove was wrong on many occasions), when anyone but Platini can see that all that is needed is one additional official behind a monitor, with radio communication to the referee, or better still to just accept the referee's original decision.

In the wider interests of justice I can understand the authorities ruling on an incident, after the game has ended, that the referee did NOT see or rule on at the time.

However, given that the referee had decided that the Arsenal player had been fouled and had awarded a penalty, am I the only person to question how Uefa can justify reversing the finality of the referee's decision, particularly by invoking the use of video evidence that they state is unacceptable for the referee to employ to get the decision right in the first place.

The words muddled thinking, or even hypocrisy, comes to mind.

For Uefa's appeals panel to then overrule their own disciplinary committee (implying that not only had the disciplinary experts made a mistake, and that the referee was right with his original decision, but that of only TWO decisions made over a three year period they had got 50 % wrong, which is not very reassuring) raises this little episode from fiasco to farce.

I have one final thought on this situation, particularly if some higher authority is going to continue to overrule the referee, under a ruling probably called 'making it up as we go along', and that is this.

In most other sports, when someone has been found guilty of cheating, thanks to the



use of technology employed after the event has finished, and long after the medals or the cheques have been handed out, the cheats are not only named and shamed but they have their rewards publicly withdrawn or recovered.

I am thinking of drug cheats in athletics who have their gold medals taken away and the records amended to show that the person who finished second was the actual winner and gold medallist, or who have to repay the financial rewards they gained from having cheated, and they are not allowed to compete again until they have done so.

Similarly in cycling, the world's most prestigious event, the Tour de France, have stripped podium placed finishers, and even the winner of his yellow jersey and his winnings when they were able to prove cheating by blood doping or by the use of blood oxygen enhancing products.

Surely if these sporting activities can take such punitive and public action, not from moral indignation but because they know that the total credibility of their sport is at stake, and that if the public decide that a sport is no longer credible due to cheating sportsmen or ineffective authorities then that sport will lose public support and very quickly wither away.

Several contributors last month alluded to the growing involvement of betting concerns within professional football. Well the betting industry issue swings both ways in that, whilst there may be legitimate concerns that the betting industry, by its very presence and its money, does not exert any influence on the result of any sporting event, equally the betting industry will want assurances that the sporting authorities are vigilant and punitive against any form of cheating that may work against the image of the betting industry or the legitimate bets of its clients.

With that thought in mind and the actions taken by other sports to ensure that cheats don't retain their cheating rewards, if the football authorities believe, and can prove by video evidence that a player has cheated, let's say his team scored a goal by a penalty that was won by deception, then that goal should be removed from the records, and if that means altering the result from a win to a draw, or from a draw to a loss, then so be it.

Such dramatic and justifiable action might well curb cheating overnight and it shouldn't be too difficult, in those few games where a potentially result altering incident is in dispute, for the authorities not to award the points, and for the bookies not to pay out, until the authorities have finally ruled.

But then that is the can of worms that has to be dealt with if luddite authorities are not going to allow referees the use of technology to assist them in getting the decision right in the first place, and if the referee's decision is no longer considered to be final.

Steve Redfern



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ASSESSOR

PART 1

All the build up to the match with John Norbury

Match day is here, all the preparation work has been completed and after checking for traffic problems en-route I can hopefully relax for a couple of hours as I negotiate the drive toward the destination. As the ground nears my thoughts will start to focus on the teams, their recent form, key personalities and the expected temperature of the game. The car is parked and tickets collected and I go to find the referee and his colleagues – usually sitting around a table and enjoying a chat. As the fifth member of the team I now want to quickly integrate into the circle and start to build a rapport that will assist. There is tea, coffee and biscuits on the table but these are often untouched as many officials nowadays seem to just drink water -clearly the advice they receive regarding fitness and diet is taken very seriously!

I enjoy this period of the afternoon immensely. The conversation often contains snippets of information regarding the latest playing tactics that referees have come across during their recent work up and down the country and this helps me keep abreast of a much changed game than the one I remember in my active days. This is also a good time to start to focus on the way the match officials team is beginning to gel under the leadership of the referee. Are they respectful, relaxed, keen and enthusiastic? Has the conversation during this period been a positive start to the work that is ahead? It's also important to remember that I'm considered a component of that group so I must also take my lead from the referee and make sure my inputs are well considered and valuable to his afternoon.

We then set off to the dressing rooms in readiness for the safety brief. This is a discussion that really helps to bring the forthcoming match into full focus as the head steward and police commanders give us their inputs regarding safety arrangements for the match ahead. News of difficulties expected between rival supporters, travel problems that may cause a delay to kick off or other unusual situations appertaining can often add a degree of tension and I'm regularly impressed by the calm and efficient way the match officials react to what's said. With the safety brief completed many referees will use the time available before the team sheets are presented to give their colleagues their match instructions and this is when I listen intently to what's expected of the team in the match



laying ahead.

Once completed we all wait those few anxious moments before the knock on the door heralds the arrival of the team management representatives and captains – again, a time to focus carefully for the way the team reps behave and respond to what the referee has to say. Sometimes you can detect tension between the teams or occasionally you will hear a barbed comment from one of the representatives directed toward the referee and these indicators help to guide my early thoughts on the difficulty rating of the game. Once they have left I make a quick check with the referee for the timing of the post match de-brief process and after wishing them all my best I leave them as soon as I can to prepare unhindered for their match ahead.

During the next fifty minutes or so I prepare my paperwork - I use a pre-printed pro-forma that allows me to record the key incidents that occur in the match minute by minute. I pick up a copy of the team sheet and after some refreshment I head for my seat in the stand.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ASSESSOR

PART 2

The match through the eyes of the assessor - with John Norbury

It never fails to irritate me when supporters take up their seat late for the start of the game, so I always make a quick visual check around the seats in my row for empty spaces and when I can see the likelihood of disruption is strong I remain alert so I can quickly cope with the process of letting latecomers settle with minimum fuss. In this regard the first few minutes of a referee's match can be vital toward a successful outcome and I need to concentrate fully as the team attempt to establish their authority quickly and effectively. I try to recognise the manner in which the referee and his assistants are concentrating and particularly the way they are responding to the first challenges their authority receive. I especially hope to record examples of where perhaps a pre-emptive reaction in what turns out to be a very difficult match or a low key response a benign sporting encounter clearly assisted the referees' on-going control of that game.

Throughout, I jot down anything and everything that I think may be important in the way the match works out. These include the obvious matters of goals, penalty kick awards, substitutions, fouls, admonishments, cautions and send offs as well as the more unusual incidents which are likely to require investigation by the Football authorities, like mass confrontation or crowd disturbance. For ease



of reference a time is recorded in all matters and I highlight everything that will require further review on the DVD.

In their general work I'm looking for the refereeing team to demonstrate a sensible approach toward correct Law application. Their decisions need to be accurate and credible and they should be able to remain calm and in control of themselves, especially when moments of stress are encountered. I also look for smart examples of teamwork between the officials. Hopefully my notes will include examples of these types of items and this will help me give some meaningful feedback both verbally and in the report. The assistant referee comes under special scrutiny for marginal decisions regarding ball over the goal line and offside and I especially record all the tight judgements in these regards. I find that being able to accurately assess the important work of an assistant referee can sometimes be very difficult from the angle of my seat in the stand. Therefore the review of key incidents on the DVD, particularly involving close offside decisions, is often necessary to ensure a true report on their work. The standard of fitness of match officials is extremely high nowadays and seems to have increased measurably since my day and officials deserve much credit in the way they have adapted their lifestyle and training to cope with the unrelenting pace of the modern game. Nevertheless, all the aspects of the officials' physical work including their general mobility, pace off the mark, stamina and ability to remain focused and concentrating come under close scrutiny. Finally, I keep a watchful eye on the technical area and look for the positive response of the fourth official as and when required.

Throughout I need to remain alert and aware. Indeed the one draw back I have found to the rather lengthy note taking I employ is that sometimes my head is down writing and I can miss what turns out an important incident. As mentioned earlier I do have recourse to the DVD and can review matters later, although I would still feel very uncomfortable should I be quizzed by an irate team manager shortly after the conclusion of the game on something that I've missed because I was scribbling! Therefore, I do try to be on my guard for all incidents so I can be in strong position to anticipate the questions that are likely to get raised in the aftermath of the match.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ASSESSOR

PART 3

Post Match as an assessor - with John Norbury



At the final whistle I find a quiet corner (easier said than done on some occasions!) and review my notes and write a short précis of the key matters with strengths that I wish to emphasise, development points that have been noted and questions that I need to raise. This is a vitally important time for me as I attempt to bring clarity to my thoughts so that the post match de-brief dialogue will be meaningful and all the significant points get covered.

It is important to involve all the officials and although I try to be succinct whenever possible, the important discussion areas need to be covered honestly and in full. I attempt to approach any key match errors that have been perceived sensitively. I always try to review the DVD on these issues as quickly as possible after the game so I can confirm with the official the outcome of my deliberation. On Saturday matches I have occasionally been able to get a message to officials involved whilst they are still on their way home after the game – they all seem to appreciate an early call.

I always review the DVD footage with care, remembering that the match officials' angle of view may not have been the same as the camera. Nevertheless, if it is clear that an error has occurred then the appraisal system relies on the assessor doing his job properly and this means reporting accurately. Never a pleasant situation, it therefore heartens me to see how many officials react with dignity as the bad news hits home.

The car drive home from the stadium allows valuable time to reflect on the game, the performances and particularly the important incidents and decisions that the clubs will focus in on. During this time I start to consider the key messages I need to impart. The report writing is not my favourite part of the job – it seems to take me much longer than it should and certainly a large chunk of Sunday will be devoted to its completion. Matches that have ended well for the officials are fairly straightforward to complete but games where major difficulties have occurred can involve much thought and it is certain that plenty of soul searching will take place before I'm ready to press that email send button! In these cases I'm never afraid to first discuss matters with some of my trusted peers so that I can be sure that the report will provide the correct amount of detail and be as helpful as possible. Whatever, in every case I'm always keen to make the written account accurate and ultimately rewarding to read, so the rest of Saturday evening finds me pretty much preoccupied as thoughts and ideas for the reports buzz around in my head.



Statues come to life

There were two statues in the park – one of a boy and one of a girl. One day an angel fluttered by and clicked its fingers. The statues came to life. “I am the angel of the statues,” said the heavenly vision. “I can bring you to life for only 15 minutes,

But you are free to do anything you would do if you were human.”

The statues looked at each other. “There’s something we’ve been wanting to do for ages. Can we really do anything?”

“Yes, anything, but you only have 15 minutes.”

Not wanting to waste any more time, the boy grabbed the girl by the hand, they both jumped into a nearby bush, and there was a lot of giggling, thrashing and happy squealing. Finally they emerged, sweaty but very happy, and climbed onto their pedestals

The angel clicked its fingers and they both turned back into stone.

They looked no different, except they had smirks on their faces.

The angel flew off into the distance.

A few minutes later, the angel returned and clicked its fingers again. The statues looked surprised, and the angel said “I’m not really allowed to do this, but you looked so happy, I thought I’d come back and give you another 15 minutes of life. Remember, you can do whatever you want.”

“Excellent! Let’s do it again!” said the boy statue.

“Why don’t we do it the other way round, this time?” replied the girl statue. “You hold the pigeon down and I’ll crap on its head. See you about

Trevor Weaver

IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE

The Editor, David Littler has a change of details.

The new Argus email for articles etc is

argus@sovereignprinters.com

and the new telephone number is 020 8393 2299

Mobile and home numbers remain unchanged.



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, Ian Kerr
Tony Hemmings,
John Cooke, John Faithfull,

NORTH

Old Finchleians
Southover
Woodside Park
Finchley
London N12

Tel: 020 8445 7406

Referees:

Robert Hanison
Society Friend:
Danny McConnell

SOUTH WEST

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, Clive Last, 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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Socks	3.50	3.75	5	5	5
Fox 40 Whistle	5	N/A	5	5	5
Acme Thundered whistle	1	N/A	3	1.50	1.50
Full Kit	39.50	50	50	N/A	53
Full Kit with Flags	50	N/A	75	N/A	74

(N/A – not available through that supplier)

