

# THE WARBLER

Monthly Magazine of the Woking Referees' Society

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Season 2018/19 January Edition

# WOKING REFEREES ' SOCIETY

## FOUNDED 1927

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# The next meeting of the Woking Referees' Society will be on Monday 7th January 2019

Meadow Sports Football Club  
Loop Rd Playing Fields, Loop Rd, Kingfield, Woking  
Surrey GU22 9BQ

## AGENDA

- ◆ 7.30 *Academy Meeting*
- ◆ 8.00 *Chairman's Welcome*
- ◆ *Guest Speaker*

**Aaron Farmer**  
"Keeping calm under  
pressure"

- ◆ *Society Business*
- ◆ *10pm Close*



The next meeting will on 4th February 2019  
The deadline for February Warbler is  
Monday 14th January

*The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the  
Society or its' Committee*

# From the Chair

Good Bye 2018, Hello 2019

I hope you all had a relaxing and peaceful Christmas. The New Year is here and now it's time to look back at 2018 and see what we learnt and time to look forward and get set for the fun and challenges coming up in 2019.

It was with much sadness that we ended 2018, with the news of the passing of our former patron and much loved Pam Wells. Pam was the wife of our former Chairman Dennis Wells and the provider of the Dennis Wells trophy for young referees. Pam was a supporter of our a society, providing buffets for us on many occasions and she will be missed by us all. There will be a service in her memory at St. Johns Church, St, Johns on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 3pm, to which everyone is welcome.

Once again the December meeting was the Christmas meal at Hoebridge and once again it was a fantastic evening. With good food, good humor, a fantastic yet challenging quiz, the monster raffle with more prizes than people and of course the wonderful conversation with friends.

Well done to Martin Read for once again organising a great event.

It just leaves me to say Happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you at our first meeting of the year on January 7<sup>th</sup>.



**Pat**

## Membership and Accounts

|   |
|---|
| <b>2018/19 Membership</b>               |
| <b>72 Full Members</b>                  |
| <b>7 Friends</b>                        |
| <b>1 Affiliate Member</b>               |
| <b>92 Referees trained in 2017/2018</b> |
| <b>20 Referees trained in 2018/2019</b> |

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| <b>2018 Current Status</b> |                  |
| <b>General</b>             | <b>£2,535.12</b> |
| <b>Supplies</b>            | <b>£104.35</b>   |
| <b>Belgium</b>             | <b>£400.00</b>   |
| <b>Training Fund</b>       | <b>£448.68</b>   |
| <b>Youth Fund</b>          | <b>£113.50</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>£3,601.65</b> |

## Academy News

For any recently qualified referees or those going for promotion, our Academy provides a safe, friendly and informal environment to hone your skills. So why not come along and see what your Referees' Society can do for you!

The programme for the season looks like this

- ◆ **7th January - Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct Part 1**
- ◆ 4th February - Practical Session - Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct Part 2  
( Practical Application)
- ◆ 4th March - Law 10 - Determining the Outcome of a Match  
( Cup Final Preparation)
- ◆ 1st April - Practical Session - Assistant Refereeing and 4th Official workshop (including Offside Recognition )
- ◆ 13th May - End of Season Review / Celebration of Achievement.

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Hi All

I Hope everybody had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and hope you all have been enjoying your refereeing and got some well deserved time off over Christmas.

Personally I cannot wait to get back to the action after recovering from a two and. half month calf injury. I'm now fit and raring to go.

At the at the January meeting we will do a session on Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct.

I have several clips to go through but if you have any particular incidents you have seen lately on the TV and would like to to discuss please let me know and I will do everything I can to have the clips available for discussion.

I look forward to seeing as many of you at the meeting as possible and let's get this year after a great start.

Yours in football

**Gareth Heighes**  
*Training and Welfare Officer*



# ABOUT US:



## WHO WE ARE:

A group of young people working to **support young referees** across the country, by delivering **effective programmes** to develop and sustain the young referee workforce.

RA-FA  
YOUTH COUNCIL

## THE RA-FA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



*Recruitment, retention and development of the young referee workforce.*

## THE REFEREE DEVELOPMENT FUND



*Apply for up to £500 towards Referee Development projects.*

## USEFUL LINKS:

 [WWW.RAFAYC.CO.UK](http://WWW.RAFAYC.CO.UK)

 'RA-FA Youth Council'

 /RAFAYthCouncil

 /RAFAYthCouncil

THE REFEREES' ASSOCIATION



TheFA



RA-FA  
YOUTH COUNCIL

 [INFO@RAFAYC.CO.UK](mailto:INFO@RAFAYC.CO.UK)

## Just a Sec!

### R.A. News

Over the last 14 months, The RA has (amongst numerous other cases) been advising, supporting and drafting paperwork for two Members who have been subject to interim suspensions under the FA Safeguarding Regulations. These cases are extremely complex and highly sensitive, as well as being very stressful to the person actually under suspension. We are delighted that these Members have just recently been allowed to return fully to football and restored to refereeing. However, the impact of the initial suspensions should not be underestimated.

Some cases that we have been involved in recently have NOT resulted in favourable outcomes, due to the serious nature of the allegations and the subsequent risk assessments made by The FA. But all our referees are entitled to professional representation and backed by a bespoke welfare support package which Members can be assured are the very best available.

We are extremely grateful to the RA Representation and Welfare Team, who continue to work tirelessly on behalf of our Members.

### Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting of the Woking Referees' Society will be on Thursday 10th January. If any members have any issues they would like raised then please can you forward them to me by Sunday 6th January. [macmcbirnie@gmail.com](mailto:macmcbirnie@gmail.com)

### Supplies

I have just had a batch of new revised referees match report cards printed which as well as having slightly wider spaces to write in, also includes the new caution code for dissent / sin bin. The 50 page books are a bargain at £1.50 (A & H charge £1.97)

Please see Callum at the next meeting if you are in need of a new pad of cards

## Dates for your Diary 2018/19

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 7th January      | Society Meeting - Aaron Farmer                         |
| 4th February     | Society Meeting - Paul Howard & David Coote            |
| 4th March        | Society Meeting and AGM - Steve Worsley                |
| 1st April        | Society Meeting - TBA                                  |
| 13th May         | Society Meeting - Keith Hiller aka "Willy Red Card"    |
| 17th May         | Eve of Final Rally– Bentley Priory, Stanmore Middlesex |
| 6th and 7th July | RA Development Weekend– Venue TBA                      |

## Last Month's Meeting

The December meeting was, as you were all no doubt aware, our Societies' annual Christmas dinner and what a great evening it was.

Once again Martin Read excelled himself and organised not only a lovely meal at a very reasonable price, but also a fascinating quiz which got all the table talking and not forgetting the heads and tails game whereby one lucky member won back the cost of the meal ( well done Tony P)

Jackos senior and junior organised the "raffle" with their usual efficiency and with about 50 prizes I don't think anyone went home empty handed. Even if their number wasn't called Richard Adamson once again generously gave away most of his winnings to the less fortunate!

Many thanks to all those who donated prizes for the raffle and everyone who attended and contributed to make the event a memorable close to the year

Thanks must also go to the staff and chefs at Hoebridge for their excellent service and great food. I'm sure we will be back next year.

## This Month's Speaker

### Aaron Farmer

I qualified as a referee in 2011 at the age of 14 and achieved promotion to level 6 in 2013. This was then followed by promotion to level 5 and 4 in 2014.

I spent two years at level 4, refereeing my supply league cup final in the year of my promotion to level 3.

I am now in my second year as a level 3 referee and my first year on the National League line.

I am also a FA Referee Tutor and an active member of both my local RA, Colchester and County RA.

The subject of my talk will be

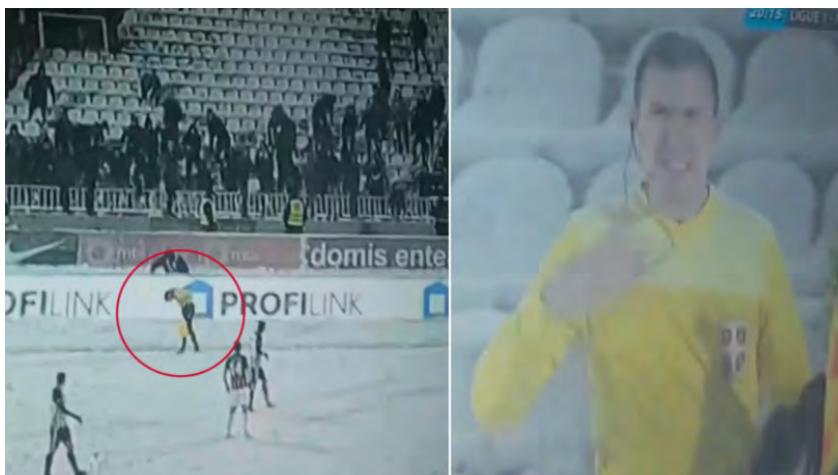
**"Keeping calm under pressure"**

**Aaron**



## Hundreds Of Partizan Belgrade Fans Throw Snowballs At Assistant Referee

Winter is coming and to celebrate the festive period, Partizan Belgrade fans have decided to entertain themselves by pelting hundreds of snowballs at the Assistant Referee.



in a scene reminiscent of a school playground, a bunch of Partizan supporters clearly weren't interested with the 0-0 draw against Macva Sabac, instead doing this to the unfortunate official when the ball went out of play.

The game was stopped but the Serbian home support continued to attack the Assistant, while the referee approached to calm the situation down.

On this week in 2017, the snow was so bad in Cologne that the referee had to remark the penalty spot in the game against Freiburg at the RheinEnergieStadion, but then again, at least he didn't get pelted with snowballs.

The hosts, who sat at the bottom of the table at the time, went 1-0 up in the 8th minute through Lucas Klunter and were awarded a penalty eight minutes after. However, with such a heavy snow presence on the pitch - meaning the orange ball had to be used, penalty taker couldn't find the penalty spot.

And in a moment straight out of Sunday League, the referee had to walk from the goal-line and count the distance to where the spot-kick should be taken.

All was well in the end though, as the 21-year old rolled in the penalty for his seventh goal of the season.



*I'm sure it's here somewhere !*

**Sport Bible via Mal Davis**

## SPEEDING UP THE GAME

Research has shown that at the average football match, if you take out all the delays for stoppages, spectators are short changed for the action they get for their money. In the next round of changes to the Laws of the game, there are likely to be some suggestions to speed up the game. although they don't seem to include an earlier idea of shortening the length of the game from 45 minute halves to 30 minutes. This may sound a little perverse but the idea is that referees would stop their watch for every occasion when the ball goes out of play and that also means for all stoppages.

This already happens in Futsal of course where they have a separate timekeeper and certainly the game goes on longer than the listed time. When I watched England v Greece in a Futsal international, I decided to time the second half and it almost doubled the 20 minutes in the Laws. However, I have two suggestions for speeding up the game that would not put yet another duty (burden) on the referee but I must warn you, the first one is quite revolutionary.

My first suggestion is that we referee to the Laws as they are written. *The research apparently shows that the two major factors in slow play* are throw-ins and free kicks. So let's start with those. Law 12 says a player who fails to respect the required distance at corners, free kicks and throw-ins should be cautioned.

Law 13 elaborates on this by saying a player who deliberately prevents a free kick being taken quickly, shall be cautioned for delaying the restart of play. How often do we see a player of the offending team stand on the ball when a free kick is awarded to the opposing team and no action is taken? And let's forget the advice from PGMO match officials at this year's national development day, that to show a yellow card if this happens in the first few minutes of the game, is not what the game expects. Start as you mean to go on, it's what the Laws expect.

Of course another way of delaying a free kick is to kick or carry the ball away. I ran the line at an academy match featuring the country's leading club. Every time a free kick was given against them, the young players kicked the ball away, not excessively but just a few yards away, enough to delay the immediate restart.

At that age it has to be surmised that the youngsters were taught or at least encouraged to take this action. I mentioned this to the referee at half time and he took some action in the second half and it stopped. There is also holding onto the ball at a stoppage to deny it to opponents, who are anxious to get on with the game. This often happens after a goal, regularly leading to confrontation, more time lost.

Delaying a kick or a throw-in is of course a two-way thing. Players of the side taking the free kick can deliberately slow down their movement to waste time, especially if they have an odd goal advantage. See how the pace of their movement steps up if they lose that advantage.

Throw-ins provide an excellent opportunity for wasting time. There's the old favourite of appearing to take the throw-in but suddenly leaving it to a team mate to take. A yellow card the Law says, so give it.

We also have the time the thrower takes to get to the throw-in. I remember watching a game where the thrower walked slowly, exaggerating the time it took to reach the throw-in position. The referee finally lost his patience and showed the yellow card. The player ran to take the throw-ins for the rest of the match,

This is my point, if yellow cards were shown as the Law expects, then the time wasting would quickly disappear and the spectators would get their money's worth of action.

My other suggestion only applies in the professional game, which is really what we are talking about. Ball boys (or girls) should be employed in the way they were at the Madejski Stadium, before they did away with the multiple ball system. The ball boys work in pairs; one has a ball ready to throw to a player when the ball goes out of play, whilst the other one goes to retrieve the ball. This saves all the delay of the thrower looking for the ball and removes all excuses for play not recommencing immediately.

Oh and another thing, players should stop these ridiculous goal celebrations. It is mentioned in the laws. So you've scored a goal fellas. Isn't that what you are supposed to do?

*Dick Sawdon Smith*

(Reading RA)

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*The biggest time wasters in grass roots games are in my opinion, the goalkeepers. Invariably a missed goal on an open pitch means the ball can easily travel thirty or forty yards beyond the goal line. Trying to decide whether the goalie's walk/jog/amble/ trot (they rarely run unless the time is running out and their team is desperate for a goal) is deliberate time wasting or they are just naturally slow/lazy, can be difficult to judge . Don't you just love it when a losing team is moaning to you about the other team time wasting, until they get a goal back and all of a sudden the balls on the other foot (so to speak) . **Mac***



- ◆ *Relationships are a lot like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y ?*
- ◆ *My pharmacist asked me for my date of birth again today. I'm pretty sure she's going to get me something.*
- ◆ *It's amazing how grandparents seem so young once you become one.*
- ◆ *Aging is when you hear snap, crackle and pop before you get breakfast*
- ◆ *Ok, so what's the speed of dark?*
- ◆ *The biggest lie I tell myself is, "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."*

## One of Cheltenham's most recognisable officials reflects on 50 years as a referee

By [Jon Palmer](#) Football Writer

When Dave Watts took up refereeing, England were World Champions and man had just landed on the Moon for the first time.

He was 20 years old and had been told to stop playing football by doctors due to a persistent ankle injury. But he was determined to remain heavily involved in the sport he loves and his first match in the middle was Spirax Sarco versus Collins Brothers Evesham. The engineers beat the pie and sausage manufacturers 2-0 at Burrows Playing Field in Leckhampton.

That was half a century ago and Watts has barely missed a weekend since, becoming one of the most recognisable whistle blowers on the Cheltenham League circuit. He has made a huge all-round contribution to football in Gloucestershire, founding the Cheltenham Sunday League along with Wilf Hannis in 1968.

Watts started out as a player with Bishop's Cleeve in 1965/66 before starting his own club, Holbeck Rangers. He became club secretary at the age of 16, the start of many years as a football administrator and it soon became clear his playing days were numbered.

"I had an ankle injury playing for Holbeck and the doctor said I had to rest it or he'd put me in plaster," Watts said. "I saw an article in the *Gloucestershire Echo* looking for referees so I did my course at the Victory Club, which used to be next to the Queens Hotel." Three years later, Watts was promoted from class three to class two, allowing him to referee at County League level, with Worrall Hill against Thornbury his first appearance at the higher standard.

He has been fourth official for several Cheltenham Town matches at Whaddon Road, including the 2-1 home win over Doncaster Rovers in 1998 which saw current boss Michael Duff net the first goal of his career. Known for his no-nonsense approach, Watts says refereeing has never been a chore, whatever the weather. "You just go out there and if you come off the pitch and feel you could have done better, you go out the next week and have a better game," he said. "I've never got to the point when I was wondering why I was out there, although sometimes you have a game when a team wins 17-0 and they probably don't even need a referee.

"When you get good, close and competitive games, that's far more enjoyable to be a part of. The hardest part of the job is keeping control of the game. You have to stick with your decision and never start changing your mind because if you do it you do it, that's the end of it. The players' safety is the referee's responsibility so that always has to come first."

Watts also feels first impressions are vital when a referee arrives ahead of kick-off. "You have to look the part, with the appropriate kit and clean boots of course," he said. "The first thing the players notice is your appearance and it's no good turning up looking scruffy."

At one stage Watts was keen to continue his rise up the leagues, but his work and family commitments meant he remained fairly close to home "I was hoping to progress further, but I worked for my father and after he retired and closed the shop (Charles Watts gentleman's outfitters), I had a young family so that was my main priority," he said. "I started working at ICI and that involved working weekends which meant there were times when I couldn't referee on a Saturday. It had to take a back seat, so I was in the Northern Senior League along with the odd County League fixture."

Being a keen follower of the Robins, it was always a highlight for Watts to be involved in any match at Whaddon Road, but one particular occasion involving a Wales, Leeds United and Juventus great stands out. "I was refereeing Cheltenham Town versus Swansea City in the South West and Wales Youth League," he said. "Swansea had a chopsy centre forward who questioned everything and I ended up taking his name. Afterwards I was getting changed and a knock came on the dressing room door.

"It opened and the whole of the doorway was filled. It was none other than John Charles, who was an absolute legend in his day. He said 'thanks for the game ref and well done, my nephew will play for Wales one day when he learns to shut up!' I ran the line for Clive Thomas in a match at Worcester City and I also remember being fourth official for a Cheltenham game against Barnet, when Barry Fry was their manager and he always had plenty to say!"

Watts believes the introduction of sin bins as an experiment in local football has been successful and he would like to see it brought in at all levels of the game. But with his 70th birthday approaching, he knows it will not be long before he blows the final whistle on his own refereeing career.

"My knees take a couple of days to recover from games now, although a long walk with the dog on a Sunday morning helps loosen the joints up a bit," he said. "I can still handle games adequately, but I obviously can't get around the pitch as much as I used to. Having said that I do feel experience counts for a lot.

"I'd like to be remembered as a referee who was firm, but fair. I get on well with most teams and have a laugh and a joke with a lot of familiar faces. Some of them like to take the mick and ask me when I am going to pack it in and some like to shout things at me in town, but I just tend to smile and say 'I'll see you on Saturday!' I think teams know what they are getting with me."

***Via Mal Davies***



**Dave Watts**

## **Do not forget about referees during this festive football period - a quick run of games will lead to more errors**

I'm realistic enough not to expect many football fans to have given this much thought, but at this time of year my sympathies always go out to the country's referees.

In the Premier League especially, officials are about to enter into a schedule that is quite frankly madness.

Michael Oliver and others will cover close to 1,500 miles during the festive period, with the next week or so putting an enormous physical and mental strain on Premier League referees.

For a top-flight official, there is no such thing as a Christmas holiday. The demands of the period are such that alcohol and unhealthy foods must be strictly avoided, and many of those who are doing Boxing Day games will spend their Christmas Day on the motorway.

This is not an attempt to elicit sympathy by the way, rather to give an insight into what is expected of a hard-working group of people - some of whom will be mercilessly criticised for any mistakes - in the coming days. That said, referees have it easier now than they did when I was doing it - I remember in the 1970s working on Christmas Eve and then Christmas Day!

As well as sacrifices like not seeing your family, the festive period is exceptionally tiring for referees.

It's not just the games themselves, the distances Premier League referees must cover increase fatigue - take Martin Atkinson for example, who will travel home the 200 miles after refereeing Watford's home match against Chelsea on Boxing Day, just a few days after heading up to St James' Park for Newcastle against Fulham.

Multiple matches in quick succession is tiring enough, but the reduced recovery time is an additional physical burden and can drastically reduce performance levels.

Mentally as well it's very tiring, and that's a big issue - especially for the older referees, like Mike Dean, who is 50.

The danger is that referees lose their sharpness. These guys are fit but as you get older it becomes harder, and so fatigue becomes an even bigger problem. You have to remember that Premier League referees are covering 11,000 metres per game, and they'll be doing in excess of 1,000 at seven metres per second. Those are sprint speeds. They're probably averaging 40 to 50 sprints a game, and as you get physically and mentally tired then your sharpness gets impaired and you have a higher risk of making an error.

As for a solution, we need more referees, less reliance on elites like Atkinson and Oliver, and fewer games. There also needs to be more care about the way referees are allocated matches during the festive period.

Referees are humans too, and like the players they will make mistakes over the next week or so. It's worth bearing that in mind.

I won't be holding my breath for any understanding from Premier League managers, mind you.

***Keith Hackett writing in The Telegraph (via Mal Davies)***

## Referee Data — English Premier League

| Name           | Games | Fouls Awarded |  Y |  R | Average<br>Yellows per<br>Game |
|----------------|-------|---------------|---|---|--------------------------------|
| M. Dean        | 15    | 329           | 60  | 7   | 4.00                           |
| K. Friend      | 13    | 302           | 53  | 1   | 4.08                           |
| C. Pawson      | 14    | 302           | 52  | 3   | 3.71                           |
| J. Moss        | 13    | 295           | 41  | 4   | 3.15                           |
| L. Mason       | 10    | 236           | 37  | 0   | 3.70                           |
| R. East        | 3     | 67            | 11  | 0   | 3.67                           |
| P. Tierney     | 12    | 268           | 44  | 0   | 3.67                           |
| L. Probert     | 10    | 226           | 28  | 3   | 2.80                           |
| C.<br>Kavanagh | 12    | 233           | 38  | 1   | 3.17                           |
| M. Oliver      | 16    | 344           | 43  | 4   | 2.69                           |
| M. Atkinson    | 16    | 367           | 49  | 1   | 3.06                           |
| S. Attwell     | 10    | 184           | 32  | 0   | 3.20                           |
| A. Marriner    | 15    | 262           | 42  | 2   | 2.80                           |
| A. Taylor      | 17    | 357           | 51  | 0   | 3.00                           |
| S. Hooper      | 3     | 64            | 8   | 0   | 2.67                           |
| G. Scott       | 6     | 113           | 13  | 1   | 2.17                           |
| D. Coote       | 4     | 90            | 7   | 0   | 1.75                           |
| A. Madley      | 1     | 12            | 0   | 0   | 0.0                            |

## *Mac's Musings*

Happy New Year to you all. How was your Christmas?

Half past midnight on Christmas morning my wife and I were at the vets having our dog's stomach pumped out. We'd popped out for a few hours to have a drink with neighbours and as they had a full house we left Henry at home. Knowing his propensity for eating anything he can get his paws on when we go out, we had hidden all the biscuits, bread, sweets and emptied the food scraps bin. Unfortunately we had forgotten the wrapped (and boxed) chocolates under the Christmas tree. On our return we found the remnants of a box of Waitrose mint thins under the tree. We managed to elicit from the torn box that the contents had held 150 grams of dark chocolate. Rapid googling revealed that this was borderline toxic for a dog of his size. Whilst discussing whether we needed to rush down to the 24 hour vets in Woking my daughter wandered into the conservatory and said "what's this empty tub of Quality Street doing on the floor?" (This was my raffle prize from the Refs Christmas Dinner by the way) "That was half full" said my wife. "and on top of the sideboard. How did he get the lid off? And surely he can't have eaten all of them as well. There's not even any wrappers on the floor"

Needless to say we went down to the vet who pumped him out and informed us that the outcome (literally) included a load of quality street chocolates, mostly still in their wrappers. By 2 pm we were finally back home, £285 poorer and with one very groggy dog. It was just as well he didn't manage to get into my chocolate orange under the tree, otherwise the vet may have been asked to perform more than just pump out his stomach.

Saturday 15th December is a date and game I will remember for a long time. I have never in my 20 odd years as a referee, or indeed at any time, been so cold and wet as I was that day. And I used to sell fresh fish from the back of van.

Adie had given me a game, Merrow v Virginia Water. Now Merrow, as many of you may know play at Urnfield, which is on the top of the Downs outside Guildford and must be one of the most exposed pitches on the planet.

I got out of my car and was nearly bowled over by the wind and accompanying rain. "This is going to be fun" I thought.

They at least have decent changing rooms there and on entering found another referee (Andy—I didn't get his surname ) who it transpired was reffing an Elite game on the lower pitch. This meant I was on the more exposed upper pitch. Three layers including a thin waterproof jacket under my refs shirt and by half time I was frozen and soaked. I always wear a cap when it rains as it keeps the rain off my specs, but with the gale force wind the rain was horizontal and the cap superfluous. Back in the dressing room at half time and Andy and I both added another layer. But by full time I was shivering uncontrollably and sure I was succumbing to hypothermia. ( If I wasn't. I reckon I should have been )

Back in the changing room and even a hot(ish) shower didn't completely stop the shivering. I can't remember ever enjoying a hot bath so much once I got home.

Its days like that that I really do think we must be totally bonkers to be a football referee.

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

**Mac**

## **CHRISTMAS LETTER**

What do you want for Christmas, son,  
 What do you want, my boy?  
 What in your Yuletide stocking, lad,  
 Will fill you full of joy?

Give me a plum appointment, Santa,  
 The Final of a Cup;  
 A sympathetic crowd, Santa,  
 A ground that is full up.

Give me a foul free match, Santa,  
 And two good assistants true,  
 So now and then I can be sure  
 I'm right in what I do.

Give me a good assessment, Santa,  
 Top marks, let them be mine,  
 Speed my path to Wembley, Santa,  
 With David on the line.

Give me a giant cracker, Santa,  
 Containing a whistle of gold,  
 Give me the wind to blow it, Santa,  
 Before I get too old.

*Acknowledgements to the author I B Hopeful. Spotted in The Children Referee*



## **ELEPHANT!!**

“You’ll never believe what happened, Officer. A truck backed up to my bank, the doors opened and out comes these robbers and they had an elephant with them. The elephant then breaks through my plate glass window, sticks his trunk in and sucks up all the money. Then the gang lead the elephant back into the truck and drive off.”

The desk officer asks, “Could you tell me, for identification purposes, whether it was an African or an Indian elephant?”

“How can you tell the difference?” asked the bank manager.

“Well,” said the desk officer, “The African elephant has great big ears, whereas the Indian elephant has much smaller ones. So which kind of elephant was used in the robbery?”

“How should I know? I couldn’t see his ears.” said the bank manager...

“...He had a stocking over his head!”

*(Spotted in Touchlines )*

## MURPHY'S MEANDERINGS

When I started playing football in the early sixties I, like many others, had never heard of the Laws of the Game (LOAF) and had no idea about the Laws regarding football equipment. With little money, I bought my first pair of football boots at a jumble sale for five shillings (25p). They were made of rough brown leather and were a cross between rugby boots and builder's boots. The sides came above my ankles and the toe caps were made of specially hardened leather. Behind the toe cap was a wide strip of leather that went across the boot. The studs were worn so my father took them out and replaced them with bars made of leather strips that ran across the sole of the boot. Looking back, I don't think they were legal and didn't comply with LOAF but as I have said, I hadn't heard of LOAF, they did the job, so who cared.

Football studs were made of round strips of leather, compressed together and nailed into the sole of the boot with three nails. After a few games the nails would often come through the sole of the boot and dig into your foot so you either had to knock them back down, blunt them, or put a bit of cardboard over them. As the studs wore, the layers of leather would fall off exposing the nails. This was, of course, illegal, as the studs could cause a very serious injury if raked down a player's shin. In general, I don't think junior players looked after their kit very well. Many chucked their boots in the cupboard and they were never cleaned only seeing the light of day the next time they were worn. Consequently, there were many players who, quite unknowingly, were playing with dangerous studs on their boots.

To protect their shins, players wore shin guards. They weren't very fancy and didn't have the attachments shin guards have today. They varied in size and were simply a pad covered in cloth or plastic which wrapped around the front of a player's shin and had narrow pockets sewn into them. Into the pockets narrow lengths of cane were inserted and the pockets sewn up. Some shin guards also had, in addition to the canes, sponge pads inserted in them. During my playing career in junior football my sock was split down the shin for several inches a few times by illegal studs and on one occasion an opponent's studs split the plastic covering of the shin guards and several of the canes fell out. I used to hear stories of players putting magazines or books down their socks but I never saw anybody do it. The problem of illegal studs never bothered me, being either too young to care or too stupid to understand, it just seemed part of the game.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's a very muddy, wet Council pitch with the six-yard box particularly bad. Following a corner, the ball gets stuck in the mud a yard from the goal line. As a defender goes to kick the ball clear an attacker, after a five-yard run, slides, without jumping or raising his boot, through the mud and meets the ball front on taking all three, defender, ball and attacker, into the back of the net. Nobody is injured or hurt by the challenge. Would you allow the goal? Would it affect your decision if it was the eighty ninth minute of a cup match and this was the winning goal?

The following article was given to me by an old refereeing friend, Eric Fogden, now into his eighties. I often meet up with him and, in fact, saw him recently. Ever the joker he said, "I've got something for you," and he handed me a piece of paper. "It's an article. I wrote it for the Bleep back in the eighties but I don't think I ever sent it in. Found it when I cleared out some old football papers. Better late than never."

*"I was in my first season as a referee and appointed to a division seven match in the local league. Red Heart v WLD. "I wonder what WLD stands for?" I thought. "Never mind I'll find out on the day." When the day arrived, I introduced myself to the Secretary of Red Heart, and after the normal niceties I said, "Oh, by the way what does WLD stand for." "West London Deaf," he said. "You must be joking," I said, "How do they hear the whistle?" "Oh, you have to wave a flag," he said.*

*Now a joke's a joke, but in your first season to remember the Laws, the right position to be in, and blowing a whistle as well is an effort in itself but to wave a flag as well. However, my fears weren't misplaced. Sure enough, this was the drill. Then mortification set in – what if I was being assessed. I wasn't taught how to wave a flag and blow a whistle at the same time in my training. I could see the assessment in front of me – you didn't wave your flag in unison to the blowing of the whistle; you didn't wave your flag hard or long enough. And how do I give an indirect free kick? One hand in the air, the other holding the flag. With what do I hold the whistle?*

*However, all my fears were unfounded, I wasn't being assessed, and apart from a couple of blows without waving and waving without blowing the game went quite smoothly. After the game a thought struck me, what if I had to caution or send someone off? They were not only deaf but dumb as well! Now sign language is not my strong point."*

**Tony Murphy**



A man asked an American Indian what was his wife's name.

He replied, "She is called Five Horses".

The man said, "That's an unusual name for your wife.

What does it mean?"

The Old Indian answered, "It old Indian Name. It was given to honour her inner spirit.

It means...

NAG, NAG, NAG, NAG, NAG!"

## **Law 18 explained – Fouls and Misconduct**

*by the late Len Randall – then an Uxbridge RS member*

It is impossible to generalise as to what minimum degree of offence deserves a caution or a sending-off. Blatant 'professional' fouls such as tripping, handball or obstruction should always be cautioned. Players who fight should always be dismissed.

Perhaps referees do not show sufficient courage in always nipping trouble in the bud. Offences really deserving disciplinary action need dealing with whether in the first or last minute of a game; too often the first bad offender gets away with just a talking to so as not to 'spoil' the game. The determined or aggrieved then think they'll risk it and the referee might or might not then take stronger action. If he does, the first offender will be thought lucky to have escaped; if he doesn't act more will try their luck and control will be lost.

Common sense dictates that referees should take disciplinary action against ALL offences that so merit.

Dissent is probably on the increase, partly because too many referees allow serious dissent to happen without penalty or disciplinary action. The width of the grey area between dissent and reasonable comment or appeal is difficult to define and depends upon your own tolerance level at that time in the match. Dissent is minimised by your adopting a firm line in all matters of control. A weak referee is more likely to encounter problems. Try to wave arguing players away from you indicting they will not influence you - this clearly identifies those determined to have their opinions recorded for consideration by the authorities.

Tolerance levels also feature in dealing with foul and abusive language. It is not just a question of deciding how foul or how abusive but also how loud, to whom it was directed, where it happened and under what circumstances. As it is a common menace and if you believe it should be controlled, it is sometimes wise to put down a marker with the captains before the start of every game. Don't issue specific threats or make up your own rules, simply state that it is not appreciated and 'will be dealt with'. This leaves you free to use whatever action you need to as the game proceeds.

Senior teams, just as much as Sunday pub sides, sometimes contain foul mouthed jobs whose vocabulary is limited mainly to the unacceptable. If advice, warning or disciplinary action fails to persuade them to more modest language, see how they like an early finish to the match.

There are other people than the players to consider. At all levels, not all spectators or passers-by want to put up with, shall we say, excessive bad language. No game should be punctuated with constant swearing by players or from the bench.

***The referee should never swear at players.***

You can only penalise offences that you have seen yourself or that have been drawn to your attention by your official linesmen. What can be done about offences that you believe to have occurred but cannot act upon? Your action will depend upon the significance of the event.

If players are complaining about relatively trivial matters such as a corner-kick being taken with the ball protruding slightly out of the quadrant, politely rationalise with them that you can't be everywhere and see everything, that it hardly matters in the course of events and to get on with the more important things like enjoying the game.

If you happen to miss seeing a more serious happening that you are sure did occur, say a handball, then a quick apology "Sorry lads, if I missed it!" and try to keep the game flowing so that the players soon become more concerned with the present than the past.

When there seems to have been a serious event such as an off-the-ball assault it is wise, when the ball is out of play, to attempt to determine whom the guilty party might have been. Colleagues of the innocent are normally very ready to identify the alleged offender. If you believe there is a case to answer you should take the accused away from all the other players and have a quiet, stern word. You must stress that you cannot take official action but that you have been persuaded that this player might have been guilty and that he had better be sure not to offend again. A further much more public word to the offended team is sometimes advisable, to the effect that you have done as much as you are able and that you would appreciate there not considering their own form of retribution.

It is good practice not to disadvantage a team by stopping play to deal with off-the-ball incidents unless really necessary. As a guide, if a player from each side is equally involved in a serious incident then play should be stopped, the matter dealt with and the game restated with a dropped ball where it was when play was stopped.

If a player from one team is solely guilty, or clearly the guiltier in an incident, it is silly to have to restart in a disadvantageous position to the innocent team. The practice often adopted by experienced referees is to judge the case as being ungentlemanly conduct (*in those days!*) or worse. If the offence occurred some way behind where the offending team were attacking, take play back to the place of the offence for the restart. Try not to stop play if the innocent team are themselves mounting a promising attack and the incident occurs behind the attack.

Goalkeeper's antics always need watching. When diving at an opponent's feet ensure that the intent (whether or not successful) was to play the ball before you award a penalty for the trip. Watch the arm position; was it aimed at the ball or the opponent? By the same token, don't be taken in by the 'diving' attacker. For safety reasons they normally begin their performance a split second before reaching the 'keeper or well past him. The worst theatrical performance deserves a caution.

***With thanks to Mike Coventry and The Chiltern Referee***

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## Adie's Fuchsias Are Blooming !!

The final games on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> of December proved to be a trial for both Referees and players alike - wet and very cold. Many Referees reported to me how cold they were on the pitches, the hot showers afterwards were welcome but many, on their return home, had hot baths.

I know I must not be ageist here, but please remember that in very inclement weather some of us are more vulnerable. Due to my ailments I carry a black water-proof jacket and I do wear it in cold rain as I know what can happen if I become ill. I am giving you this advice as Referees Secretary not as a directive from the League and I am very much aware that some assessors will frown on this practice, though, your health comes first.

At a recent League Management meeting some concern was raised in regard to the abuse of Club Assistant Referees. Sometimes you will be fortunate enough in the League to have a dedicated CAR but more often than not it will be substitutes. I am very much aware that many of these are not always the most willing 'volunteers'. I have been requested to inform you that it is becoming more difficult to retain CAR's as there seems to be a trend to insult these people.

May I point out that the CAR is part of your officiating team. The players would not insult you by word or action (OK there are some that will) and as the CAR is your representative they should not do the same to them. If you hear or witness any abuse you should take action even if it results in a dismissal. If it is reported to you and you have not witnessed the incident then warn the player that if you had seen/heard the insult you would take action against them. Any misconduct should be reported to County who will take action with the perpetrator.

In the garden we have two very fine fuchsias by the house that have exceptional blooms every year. They are of the hardy variety and amazingly are still going! The frost the other day, I thought, would finish them, but there are still one or two flowers yet to open. I guess that experts will tell us we should have cut them back by now but we have found that leaving them to their own devices works best.

Eldest son Graham is now in his first home over at Camberley – moved them in last week so that's him settled. Yours truly has been assisting them by laying a new laminate floor in the lounge and I thought I was on holiday.

Keep the availability updated for us Ref Secs and have a very Prosperous New Year.

**Adie**



## Willy the 'Red Card' Ref

### The Goal Keeper's Touch

Match: Frozen Thistle F.C -v- Windy Wanderers  
League: Sunday Park League (North) Division Two  
Pitch condition: All touch lines visible and no mud in sight  
Weather: Cold and windy

I was just happy with the knowledge that my game was going ahead. Most local matches had already been called off but Frozen Thistle F.C play on a local 4G surface which is great. I love it!

The local park matches at this time of the year are very muddy and very uneven. Divots galore all over the pitch. These conditions tend to be normal for this time of the year and despite the terrible uneven conditions the matches are usually played. The player's safety is paramount but if the playing surface is icy then the referee has a duty to the players NOT to play.

If there is any doubt.....*don't play* but obviously if the sun is out the kick off time can be delayed to allow the icy conditions to improve.

On a grass muddy pitch to have to watch your every step is not ideal but with a 4G surface you just run with the knowledge that there are no divots or uneven areas.

Like most Sunday league teams the match was confirmed on the Thursday evening even though the completion rules state the home team must contact the appointed referee by the Tuesday at the very latest. Administration at grass roots level seems to be getting worse and not better. Being a proactive referee I send a text to the home team contact and was fortunate he replied with the match details immediately.....*but no apology!*

The match kicked off and all was progressing well until the twelfth minute. The Thistle defender decided to play the ball back to his goal keeper but miskicked the ball in doing so. The ball went up in the air and was heading toward the top corner of his own goal. The goal keeper knew he could not use his hands as that would be a '*back pass*' and dived forward and headed the ball. His actions diverted the direction of the ball and it crashed against the cross bar instead. Had the goal keeper used his hands I would have blown my whistle and awarded an indirect free in favour of the Wanderers but this was averted by the goal keeper heading the ball away from the goal instead. That was the good news but as the ball dropped down from hitting the cross bar the goal keeper then dived and pushed the ball over the goal line to avoid a goal.

As the goal keeper lay on the ground the Wanderers players shouted several comments '*Back pass*'

*'He can't do that Ref'*

*'He's denied an obvious goal scoring opportunity'*.

This made me think.....maybe they had a point?

I instinctively awarded a corner kick which was accepted by the Thistle players but I was now surrounded by several Windy Wanderers players.

I pondered and considered my opinions –

- ◆ Award the corner kick
- ◆ Caution the goal keeper for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity
- ◆ Red card for the goal keeper for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity
- ◆ Indirect free kick in the penalty area for goal keeper touching the ball from his own player
- ◆ Ask the ref on the next pitch

I went through all the options in my mind and my thought process was as follows -

- ◆ Had the goal keeper denied an obvious goal scoring opportunity.....in my opinion *absolutely not!* In fact rather than attempt to catch the ball he made a big effort to head the ball away from the goal. *So no offence committed there.*
- ◆ The ball hit the cross bar and the next action was for the goal keeper to dive and use his hands to push the ball over the goal line. Is the goal keeper allowed to use his hands in his own penalty area.....*absolutely yes, so again no offence committed there.*
- ◆ Did the goal keeper handle the ball directly from a team mate in the penalty area.....*absolutely not so yet again.....no offence committed there.*
- ◆ By the time the goal keeper did handle the ball it was a second phase of play so ..... *no offence committed there.*

So do you agree with my decision? It is a judgemental decision as to when one phrase of play ends and another one starts. But as we all know it is the referee's decision that counts.

Stay warm!

***Willie the 'Red Card' Referee***

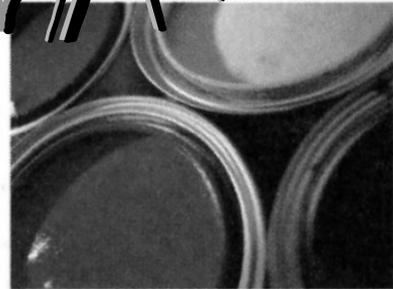




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## What Would You Do ? - Answers to December Issue

**Question 1.** A Red home forward is breaking towards goal with just one defender and the goalkeeper to beat. Even as the defender is about to make a challenge, a loud whistle is blown from the crowd. The Blue defender stops but the Red forward continues past him and bears down on goal. What would you do?

**A1.** Stop play immediately, hopefully before the attacker gets his shot off, and start with a dropped ball. If possible, ask the home bench to find the whistleblower and prevent a repeat.

**Question 2.** You are refereeing an end-of-season final with neutral ARs. With the score at 1-1 the keeper punches a cross clear. Another defender drops back onto the goal-line but all the other defenders push up to the edge of the area, leaving the attacking forwards in the box. A cross is played in. It seems clear to you that the forward who then heads it into the net was goal-side of the keeper when the cross was struck, but your AR keeps his flag down, ignoring the appeals of the defence. You run across to ensure the defenders control themselves at which point your AR explains that the keeper had reached back just before the cross was played and had therefore played the forward onside with his arm, which is possible because keepers can use their arms to play the ball. What would you do?

**A2.** Your AR, despite the apparent logic of his argument, is incorrect. Disallow the goal and award an indirect free kick for offside from where the forward headed the ball.

**Question 3.** You are an AR on an end-of-season final. The game enters the final minute with Reds leading 2-1. Blues mount one final attack and, as the forward jinks round the defender, the defender puts in his challenge. The ball flies out of play and the forward hits the turf. The referee is in a good position and 'cuts the grass' to deny the shouts for a penalty, shouting "Good tackle". However, you have an even better view and are certain that the challenge was late and that the defender actually caught the player's leg. What would you do?

**A3.** Hopefully, the referee will have covered exactly this possibility in his pre-match briefing. The referee clearly believes he has seen a perfectly good challenge. You do not agree. One of you is incorrect - it may be the ref .... but it could just as easily be you! The important factor here is that the referee has already made his decision and is not looking for assistance. Keep your flag down and discuss it in the changing-room later. Flagging here is not going to see the referee change his mind, but it will show a lack of teamwork which could affect match control. If the referee is not certain, he will be making eye contact with you and clearly "inviting you in". If that is the case, then be big and brave and flag for the foul.

**Question 4.** In a one-on-one challenge the keeper drags down a striker. You blow your whistle and point to the spot, only to see the ball carry on rolling and end up in the net. What do you do?

PTO

**A4.** This is poor officiating - you should always delay your decision. So, award a penalty, decide whether or not to send the keeper off. Technically he did not deny a goal-scoring opportunity because the ball rolled into the net. But having awarded the penalty - meaning the game stopped when the foul was committed - you do not need to dismiss him.

**Question 5.** A Red player goes down in stoppage time. The opposition captain, upset by the constant time-wasting, reacts by carrying him off the FoP against his will. His physio screams abuse. What would you do?

**A5.** You can't allow the captain to get away with this; caution him or show him a red card if you feel his action involved excessive force. After checking the wellbeing of the injured player, and telling the physio to calm down, have a word with their captain too, making it clear that any time-wasting will be dealt with firmly. Include the details in your match report.

### What Would You Do?

**Question 1.**

You and your two assistants are carrying out some pre-match warming up exercises on the pitch close to the players. You notice that two opposing players get into an argument and start fighting each other. What would you do?

**Question 2.**

During an attack on Blue's goal, the goalkeeper's cap becomes dislodged and falls to the ground just as the ball is kicked towards the open goal. The ball strikes the cap and stops the ball entering the goal. The goalkeeper then picks up both ball and cap and continues with play via a drop kick upfield. What would you do?

**Question 3.**

You award a free kick to Reds just outside the Blue's penalty area. The Red No. 6 takes the kick, but slices it and the ball hits you and rebounds back to the Red No. 6. He volleys the ball into the net. What would you do?)

**Question 4.**

You award a goal kick to the Red defence. The Red No. 6 takes the kick, but slices it, and seeing an opponent will receive the deviated ball, runs after the ball. Before any other player has played the ball, but with the ball outside the penalty area, he deliberately plays it with his hand to stop the opponent receiving the ball. What would you do?

**Question 5.**

You award a goal kick to the Red defence. After the kick has been taken but before it has left the penalty area, a Blue opponent runs into the penalty area and is deliberately fouled by the Red No. 6. What would you do?

*(Ed. Questions were taken from "In the referee's opinion" in Touchlines - Sutton RS, and from "You Are The Ref" by Keith Hackett and Paul Trevillion in The Observer) Courtesy of Chiltern Referee*

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