

THE WARBLER

Monthly Magazine of the Woking Referees' Society

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Season 2020/2021 March Edition

WOKING REFEREES' SOCIETY

Founded 1927

Patrons	Tim Lawrence & Richard Adamson
Chairman Andy Bennett 07538 714747	President Vince Penfold
Vice Chairman Colin Barnett	Life Vice Presidents Ken Chivers ; Neil Collins ; David Cooper; Peter Guest ; Chris Jones,
Treasurer and Membership Secretary Bryan Jackson 01483 423808 1 Woodstock Grove, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 2AX	Secretary Anthony (Mac) McBirnie 01483 835717 / 07770 643229 secretary@wokingreferees.co.uk
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R.A Delegates Brian Reader 01483 480651 Tony Loveridge	Committee Chris Busby ; Jonty Bolland ;Callum Peter Martin Read ; Paul Saunders ; Will Siegmund
Friends of Woking Referees Society	Roy Lomax ; Andy Dexter; Tom Jackson ; Mick Lawrence ; Lee Peter ; Jim de Rennes : Eamonn Smith ; Tim Robinson Ian Ransom ; Morgan Hamilton
Affiliate Member	

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The next meeting of the Woking Referees' Society is on Monday 1st March 2021

The Meeting will once again be conducted by Zoom
There will be separate Zoom invitations for the AGM
and the Guest Speakers.

Agenda

8pm

AGM (See Agenda page 7)

Centenary Club Raffle

Society Business



8.45pm

Guest Speakers

Sally Lockyer CEO Surrey FA &

Brett Pettit RDO Surrey FA

The April meeting will be on
Monday 12th April 2021
The deadline for the April Warbler is
Friday 3rd April

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

Chairman's Chatter

I can't believe it's nearly March already but welcome one and all to another edition of your Warbler Magazine!!

I'm writing this on the night of Sunday 21st February and tomorrow will hopefully see our Prime Minister setting out his roadmap for the proposed way we can head out of lockdown and back to some kind of normality. Whatever the vision is, I sincerely hope that we can all once again very soon be able to get back to being able to meet at Meadow Sports as I know I'm really missing our group interaction.

Zoom and our continued Society meetings are great but there is no substitute (if you'll excuse the football-related pun) for meeting face-to-face.

As you know, our March meeting will be held on March 1st and is our AGM. This year, we will split the meeting into two parts with two separate Zoom link invites that will be sent out to you shortly.

Part One of the meeting will be the AGM and we plan to hold this with an 8pm start until approx. 8.30pm after all society business associated with this has been concluded

Part Two will see our Guest Speakers Sally Lockyer (Surrey FA CEO) & Brent Pettit (Surrey FA RDO) join us from 8.45pm until close

We're very fortunate to be able to host our Guest Speakers this month and we're the first Surrey LRA that they have presented to since taking their respective posts at Surrey FA. Therefore, I urge you all to please make the effort to join and have some good quality questions for our guests as they are particularly keen to get to know the county referee contingent and hear how you're feeling and what we can all do to improve and drive the referee community moving forward.

Please look out for my email regarding submission of questions ahead of the meeting too.

And now onto one of those pieces I occasionally must write with a heavy heart. As some of you will already know, Pat Bakhuizen and his wife Sally are relocating to Scotland in mid-March. This is the start of a new chapter in their lives but before they leave, I would like to pay tribute to Pat's endless work for our Society and the wider County RA.

At Woking, Pat has held the following roles:

- Chairman
- Secretary
- Training Officer
- Supplies Officer
- Committee Member

He's also planned and headed up the New Referees Courses on behalf of Surrey FA alongside Vince, Gareth, Callum, Steve Worsley, Chris Hayes. And Pete Rogers

On top of that, he's been instrumental over the last year or so in his role as Chairman of the Surrey RA in helping to bring a tighter focus to all things refereeing and working closely with Surrey FA at HQ level.

As you know, there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes to keep this Society as vibrant as possible and if it wasn't for Pat, let me tell you now that we wouldn't be in anywhere near the strong position that we are in.

We owe Pat a debt of extreme gratitude for his selfless hard work and therefore, as a Committee, we were unanimous in our proposal to offer Pat Life Vice President of Woking Referees Society - I'm pleased to say that he graciously and modestly accepted this offer.

Pat – on behalf of EVERYONE at Woking Society, we will miss you, your enthusiasm, your (more than) occasional swear word, your desire to improve us all and above all your passion – thank you for everything you have done for us and we wish you and Sally all the very best in your new adventure over the border in Aberdeenshire.

Congratulations to our very own **Michael Webb** who's been appointed as Assistant Referee to the **Papa John's Trophy Final at Wembley** in March. Michael will become only the fourth Woking Society member to officiate at the National Stadium behind Mike Jermey, Lee Cable and some other guy whose name escapes me right now.

Webby – many congratulations on your appointment from all of us here at Woking Society – may the ball run kindly for you and your colleagues on the day.

Finally, you'll have seen the email I sent out a couple of weeks ago around the great Guest Speakers we've got lined up for you between now and May. We kick it off in March with Sally & Brent then:

April sees us hosting former FIFA & SG1 and now EFL referee **Bobby Madley**
In **May** we'll say hello to the excellent **Stuart Carrington**, Psychologist & Author of "Blowing the Whistle: The Psychology of Football Refereeing"

Trust me, these speakers are **NOT TO BE MISSED** so get the dates in your diary!!

That's it from me - I'm looking forward to seeing you all on Monday 1st March for our two-parter. Please make every effort to attend.

Cheers

Andy



Membership and Accounts

2020/21 Membership	2021 Current Status	
70 Full Members	General	£2288.00
10 Friends	Supplies	£189.77
3 Affiliate Members	Belgium	£0.00
76 Referees trained in 2019/2020	Training Fund	£181.97
	Centenary Fund (formerly Youth Fund)	£652.03
	Total	£3,311.77

Goodbye

Hey Everyone

Well, what a time to be alive!!

It's time to say goodbye to a society that I am truly proud of! Sally and I have decided to up sticks and high tail it to the north – Scotland in fact. It's an exciting time for us to start a new adventure with a change of pace and to reset the life work balance.

Since starting my refereeing journey and meeting the Grey Fox aka Vince Penfold, who enticed me along to a society meeting, I was hooked on the enthusiastic eccentric individual bunch of people who have such a passion for their hobby.

I have had the pleasure of holding many positions on the committee, training, supplies, secretary and chairman, and in each position I have always been supported by great people to help advise and support me. Unfortunately though, moving away does mean that I can no longer commit to the society in a way that would be constructive.

I have made some amazing friends along the way, some who will remain great friends for life. Being part of the society has also led me to being a county tutor - a role I have found both challenging and rewarding - and I have been fortunate to train some amazing referees now climbing the national list. These I count as personal successes stories, having started them on their personal refereeing journeys.

I plan to continue refereeing and tutoring north of the border, and as there are a few differences, I may from time to time contribute to the Warbler with some differences that I notice. I'm already sure that training will be different!

So I want to say thank you to all of you and wish you all the very best for the future.

Pat



Woking Referees' Society

93rd Annual General Meeting

1st March 2021

Agenda

8pm Chairman Opens the AGM – Andy

Apologies for Absence – Mac/ Floor

Review of 92nd AGM Minutes – Mac

Matters Arising - All

Officers Annual Reports –

Chairman – Andy

Secretary – Mac

Membership, Accounts and Subscriptions– Bryan

Training – Pat

Supplies – Gareth

Warbler - Mac

Subscriptions – Bryan

Chairman's Thanks – Thanks to the Committee

**Elections of Officers and Committee – As Listed in the Warbler
Confirmation of Pat Bakhuizen as Life Vice President.**

A.O.B

Anything from the floor or committee

Close of AGM by the Chairman

Woking Referees' Society

92nd AGM 2020

Monday 2nd March 2020

Opened:

Meeting opened at 22.05 by Chairman Andy Bennett

Apologies for absence

Steven Brown, Glenn la Roche, Will Siegmund, Paul Saunders, Jonty Bolland, Tom Ellsmore, Roy Butler, Dave Cooper, Dave Lawton.

Review 91th AGM 2019 Minutes:

No matter arising

Proposed – Bryan Jackson

Seconded – Brian Reader

Officers Annual Reports:

Chairman:

Andy thanked the work done by the committee in particular Mac McBirnie, Bryan Jackson, Vince Penfold. Also Colin Barnett as vice chair for stepping in in his absence and Martin Read for organising another excellent Christmas Dinner. And not forgetting Richard Adamson and Meadow Sports for their hospitality. Everyone had contributed to make his first year as Chairman so enjoyable. He was encouraged by the number of younger referees and ladies attending both the Academy and the main meetings

Great season for speakers and hoping to encourage more top speakers in the future.

Secretary:

Attendance meeting average up from 22 last season to 30 this season, an increase of 36%.

The highest was 41 at the August meeting when Pat Bakhuizen explained the numerous new law amendments and the February meeting when we hosted SG2 / 1 Referee Tim Robinson.

Chairman's Cup was awarded to Mac McBirnie

The Dennis Wells Trophy for the Young Referee of the year was awarded to Jack Oxenham

County Cup Finals. 11 members awarded CCFinals this year, including once again 2 officials to the prestigious Saturday Senior Cup, namely Jon Creswick and Callum Peter. Congratulations also to 3 lady members who have all been appointed to the Girls U14s namely Ellie Monday, Jacqueline Bisley, Eliza Bisley. Tim Lawrence, Surrey FA RDO has retired and his replacement is Brent Pettit who we intend to get along to a meeting in the near future.

Treasurer:

Detailed Accounts in the March Warbler. Bryan Jackson thanked Ken Chivers for once again auditing the accounts.

Key points.

Still healthy position despite small loss of £39.64.

As expected the speakers expenses were slightly higher this past season, but the committee considered that the inclusion of PGMOL speakers were worth the expense.

Fewer Advertisers for the Warbler resulted in an increase in costs of the printed Warbler.

The web site costs occur every 3 years
Raffle profits have increased due to the increase in attendance at Society meetings

There were no questions on the Accounts

Proposed : Bill Collis
Seconded ; Brian Reader

Membership:

Full report in the March Warbler.
Currently 85 Full members, although 18 are free members under the RA new referees scheme, but still an increase of 14 full members from 2018/19

Training

There were 24 candidates on the last new referees course.

There is a change planned in the way the New Referees' Course are run and all County Tutors will have to re-apply if they wish to continue as such.

The Academy has been well attended this year with 10 members regularly attending. Particularly popular have been the last 2 sessions concentrating on Cup Final Preparations and Assistant Refereeing.

Supplies:

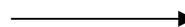
As well the usual match record pads, whistle flags etc there is an abundance of used kit which may have to be donated to a charity.

Warbler:

Big thanks from Mac to advertisers (Hamish, Colin and Bruce) whose contributions help cover the costs. Also to Red Eye printers for their outstanding service, who often print copies the same day. Mac also thanked those who have provided copy and articles etc over the year, including The Chiltern Referee magazine, Tony Murphy, Adie Freeman, Keith "red card" Hiller and lately Dick Sawden Smith from Reading RA.

More articles and particularly match incidents from members would be welcome.

Continued



Subscriptions:

With the Society's Accounts still in a healthy position Bryan Jackson proposed that the subscriptions should remain the same as the previous year.

Proposed : Andy Bennett
Seconded : Tony Loveridge

Chairman:

Committee thanked by the floor
Committee stepped down
Chairman steps down.

President:

Vince spoke about how well Andy has settled into the role of chairman and continued the good work of Pat our previous Chairman. His enthusiasm and energy and ability attract high profile speakers to the monthly meetings have helped revitalise the Society.

Elections

The nominations for the Chairman. Officers and Committee members as detailed in the Warbler was voted in en bloc.

Patrons

The Committee have decided that the Society would like to honour Tim Lawrence (Retired RDO) and Richard Adamson (Meadow Sports) for their commitment and support to the Society by offering them both the role of Patron(s). This they have been happy to accept.

This was carried unanimously

Meeting closed 22.25.

Dates for your Diary 2020/21

1st March Society meeting AGM Sally Lockyer & Brent Pettit

12th April Society Meeting - Bobby Madley

10th May Society Meeting - Stuart Carrington



Don't you just hate answering rhetorical questions?

Man walks into a bakers and asks "Is that a doughnut or a meringue?" Baker says "No, you're right, it's a doughnut."

Where are Michealangelos other 15 Chapel ceiling paintings located?

I'll tell you what makes me cross. Lollipop ladies.

I have a friend called Jay. He's called J for short!

End of Year Accounts 2020

The Society Accounts, have been independently examined and show a loss for 2020 of £260.29, which is larger than our loss of £39.64 in 2019.

They do, however, continue to show that the society is in a healthy financial position, with total net assets of £2569.34.

The committee have also confirmed that in response to the Covid situation and lack of games being played and match fees received that the society will be reducing the cost of subscriptions for one season only (2021/2022). This needs ratification by members at the AGM.

Just to pick out some points from the accounts:

- ◆ Subscription income and expenditure has reduced by £368 and £210 as the amount of the subscription used to cover the cost the Warbler is not included in the 2020 income figure and also due to the reduction in members.
- ◆ Net Warbler expenditure has increased by £74.05 due to bulk purchase of stamps, this expenditure would have been larger if the payment made by members that receive printed copies had not been used to offset the printing costs.
- ◆ There is no raffle profit due to the absence of monthly meetings.
- ◆ Speaker expenses are down due to the fact that we have not had any meetings since March 2020
- ◆ There were no web site costs during 2020
- ◆ The bad debt refers to the cost of the meal for 1 member from the 2019 dinner that failed to attend and despite several reminders did not pay. This member has subsequently not renewed their subscription.
- ◆ The Centenary fund has increased by £538.53 this is mainly from donations received from members. As we are launching our Centenary Club at the March meeting the fund should increase year on year to help with costs of our centenary in 2027

All of the expenditure was approved by the committee.

Membership numbers at 31st December 2020

70 Full Members (7 are free members under the RA new referee scheme)

10 Friends

3 Affiliate members

This is a net decrease of 15 full members from 2019, made up of 11 new referees (free members) and 4 paying members.

No new referees have been trained since January 2020 which has resulted no new members joining the society from this source

If anyone has any questions please email me and I will answer and provide that answer to all members and at the AGM.

Finally, my thanks again to Ken Chivers for his prompt turnaround of the accounts.

Bryan Jackson

Hon Treasurer / Membership Secretary

WOKING SOCIETY of REFEREES ASSOCIATION		
Income and Expenditure Account		
Year ended 31 December 2020		
	2020	2019
	£	£
Income		
Membership fees	1267.00	1,635.00
Profit/(loss) from supply sales	(10.94)	41.73
Donations	0.00	70.00
Profit from raffles	0.00	373.42
Christmas Dinner	0.00	10.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Income	1256.06	2,130.13
Expenditure		
Warbler (net of advertising)	420.05	346.00
RA & SCRA Subscriptions	776.00	986.00
Hire of Hall	0.00	100.00
Stationery & postage	13.07	7.30
Speakers expenses	136.12	271.92
Trophies & Engraving	24.00	49.80
Donations	100.00	150.00
Web site costs	0.00	258.77
Christmas meeting prizes	22.11	0.00
Bad Debt (Christmas Dinner)	25.00	0.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,516.35	2,169.77
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess Income/(Expenditure)	£ (260.29)	£ (39.64)
=====	=====	=====
Notes to the Accounts		
Year ended 31 December 2020		
	2020	2019
	£	£
Accruals		
Hire of Hall	£ 0.00	£ 100.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Debtors		
Training Grant due	£ 0.00	£ 300.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Warbler		
Printing costs for year	405.60	416.00
Postage stamps	179.45	
Less		
Advertising income	165.00	70.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cost to Society	£ 420.05	£ 346.00
=====		

Balance Sheet
As at 31 December 2020

	2020	2019
	£	£
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank	3,213.57	2,616.18
Cash in hand	55.67	74.92
Stock	134.10	153.00
Debtors	0.00	325.00
	-----	-----
	3,403.34	3,169.10
Current Liabilities		
Accruals	0.00	100.00
Centenary Fund (formerly Youth Fund)	652.03	113.50
Training fund	181.97	125.97
	-----	-----
	834.00	339.47
Net Assets		
=====	£ 2,569.34	£ 2,829.63
	=====	=====
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
Opening balance b/f	2,829.63	2,869.27
Excess Income/(Expenditure) for year	(260.29)	(39.64)
	-----	-----
Closing balance c/f	2,569.34	£ 2,829.63
=====	=====	=====

I have examined the records, books and vouchers for the Society and, in my opinion, they show a true and fair reflection of the assets and liabilities of the Society as at 31st December 2020 and the Income and Expenditure Account shows a true and fair reflection of the Income and Expenditure paid throughout the year ended 31 December 2020

K J Chivers fcpa
 Certifying Accountant

B Jackson
 Hon. Treasurer

AGM Officers and Committee Nominations March 2020

Position	Current Role Holder	Nomina- tion Re- ceived for	Nomi- nated by	Seconded by	Elec- tion re- quired
Chairman:	Andy Bennett	Andy Bennett	Bryan Jackson	Mac McBirnie	No
Vice Chairman:	Colin Barnett	Colin Barnett	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
Secretary:	Mac McBirnie	Mac McBirnie	Andy Bennett	Bryan Jackson	No
Treasurer & Membership:	Bryan Jackson	Bryan Jackson	Mac McBirnie	Andy Bennett	No
Asst Secretary & Minutes:	Vacant	Vacant			
Training Officer:	Pat Bakhuizen	Gareth Heighes	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
Magazine Editor:	Anthony McBirnie	Anthony McBirnie	Andy Bennett	Bryan Jackson	No
Supplies Officer:	Garth Heighes	Carl Jones	Gareth Heighes	Andy Bennett	No
County RA Delegates:	Brian Reader	Brian Reader	Bryan Jackson	Mac McBirnie	No
	Tony Loveridge	Tony Loveridge	Bryan Jackson	Mac McBirnie	No
Committee Members:	Chris Busby	Chris Busby	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
	Martin Read	Martin Read	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
	Paul Saunders	Paul Saunders	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
	Will Siegmund	Will Siegmund	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
	Callum Peter	Callum Peter	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No
	Jonty Bolland	Jonty Bolland	Andy Bennett	Mac McBirnie	No

MURPHY'S MEANDERINGS

It was 4pm on a very hot and sticky Sunday afternoon and I was sitting on a boat cruising down the Amazon river in the Peruvian rainforest. All around were trees and the noise of birds singing. Then, in the distance, I heard a lot of shouting and as I looked round, I could see a football match being played in a clearing just behind the far bank of the river between two teams, one in yellow and one in red.

Surprised, I pointed it out to the guide. "Football is THE National sport in Peru. Everywhere it is played by both men and women. Out here, every village has a school and next to the school is a football pitch. Every village has a football team which plays in an area league. The winners of each area play other area winners and then against teams in towns like Iquitos." (I was told that local villages could have a population of between 100 and 1000 people. Iquitos was a big town in the Rainforest and had a population of around 500,000 people.) "The football match is THE big occasion."

A few days later we stopped at a village of around 140 people and I was able to "inspect" their pitch. It was about minimum size running parallel with the river with a broad band of banana trees in between. It was very uneven, and the grass was quite long. It had a big dip in the middle and there were no markings. At each end there were the goalposts, not in direct line, made of tree branches tied together. Further back behind the pitch there was another goal, also made with tree branches which I was told was for the children. Two boys were kicking about in the goal with a tennis ball. Nothing changes, I thought. I was told that they marked the pitch with sand which was washed away as soon as it rained. I didn't get chance to ask what happened if it rained during a game. There again, when it rains, it really rains, and you can't see your hand in front of your face. The referee was supplied by the home village and was not paid but, you've guessed it, did it for the love of the game. Children of young ages usually played in bare feet, but everybody else played in proper football boots.

There were lots of other questions I wanted to ask but it was obvious that the guide was getting fed up and felt he'd spent enough time on the subject because he went on, "Why all the questions about football? The game is serious, yes, but you miss the point. IT IS THE SOCIAL OCCASION OF THE WEEK. Everybody comes to watch, and it is the only time in the week when boys and girls from different villages get to meet each other, form relationships, and find their partners. Where people can come and discuss their problems. That is WHY the football match is important."

As we walked along the front in Lima, there were many small-sided hard surface football pitches on the beach. It was in the middle of the day, yet they were continually in use and when one game finished another immediately started. All the time there were crowds of people standing around watching. Many channels on our Hotel TV were totally dedicated to football and it seemed that over a weekend it was possible to watch a live football match from early Saturday morning to late Sunday night from all over the world. There was even a programme, it looked like FIFA training films, on refereeing. Football is certainly THE sport in Peru and as, the guide said, THE SOCIAL OCCASION. OF THE WEEK.

Tony Murphy

This Month's Speakers

Brent Pettit

Passing the laws test in 2003 opened my eyes to football in a better way than previous where I had played, coached and managed both adult and youth teams.

Officiating the Brighton District League, Mid Sussex football league and local youth leagues I can say that I have seen many aspects of the game at grassroot level. From Gypsies driving through a game to park up, to Mid Sussex Cup Finals as assistant and as referee and the ever testing extra time and 22 penalties on an observed Cup Semi Final.



It has been a great experience and a great opportunity to be involved in the game.

Currently struggling with torn meniscus, I am hoping to return to the middle when I can.

When I am not with my RDO hat on or refereeing, I am still heavily active with football as a club chairman, Head coach of a youth club with 14 teams. Which in itself is like a fulltime job.

My family is full of football as my son plays for his Uni team at good level getting to senior cup final in Norfolk only to be cancelled due to covid. Thanks to my coaching of him through his youth. My Daughter plays for Lewes FC U18s as goalkeeper and a wife who can give me the stats of all their achievements. Any Spare time after that is spent walking the dog or Paddleboarding (when warmer).

I have been a member of the Brighton Referee Association since 2003 and spent 10 years as the recruitment and retention officer where the stigma of R & R 99 has stuck due to never breaking the 100 member mark.

I would love to see the days of when local RA were greatly attended and active. When the RA's and FAs combined to deliver big events and inter county 5 a side competitions happened (had to put that in as Captain of the Brighton Team invited to Guildford for the RA 5 a side event 2007).

Look forward to hopefully a full return to football and normality

Sally Lockyer MBA

Sally is CEO of Surrey FA, an Independent Non-Executive Director of the National Governing Body of Triathlon and a Business Mentor for SPORTED – a charity set up by Sir Keith Mills to provide business and financial support to community sports organisations in disadvantaged areas.



Sally was formally CEO of the British Athletes Commission supporting world class athletes across 40 Olympic and Paralympic sports; CEO of a sports television production company producing programming for BBC, Channel Five and the International Tennis Federation and CEO of a boutique marcoms agency. Through these roles, Sally has worked with major football clubs, events and brands - Juventus FC, Barcelona FC, FIFA World Cup, UEFA Champions League, Nike, Kappa and Lotto.

Sally brings 25 years diverse experience of the sports, music and entertainment industries to Surrey FA, working with major sports events in eleven different countries (Olympics, Commonwealth Games, World Championships, Wimbledon); sports sponsors (Coca-Cola, Virgin, Microsoft, Cadburys, Prudential); leisure operators (David Lloyd Leisure) and a technology company in the music business, working with some of the world's largest music events including Live 8, Robbie Williams, Madonna and the Spice Girls.



Now who's got a pencil



Ignore them Sam

Last Month's Meeting

1st February 2021

Chairman Andy welcomed our guest speaker Dave Phillips to the February meeting along with 37 members and guests, including members from Kingston, Reading and Aldershot Societies.

Dave's talk was entitled "An insight into a PGMO Observer" and also "How to maximise opportunities as a match official"

Dave started by showing us a video clip of an acting scene during which a number of items and actors changed. We were asked how many changes we noticed and between us we came up with about half a dozen or so. In actual fact there were 21. Dave's point was that as an observer he was expected to watch 22 players, the bench, the referee, both assistants and the 4th Official so he really has to have his wits about him.



Dave explained that the role of the Observer is a vital part in the development and progression of match officials at all levels. They are the custodians of the Laws of the Game and ensure that they are applied correctly. They provide match day support by being an extra and experienced set of eyes. They must ensure that they look at each performance afresh, be totally impartial and not influenced by previous reports. All feedback must be balanced and include what the official did well plus areas where development will be helpful. The final written report must be written in a positive and constructive manner—with no surprises.

Dave told us that the worse thing an official who is being observed can do is worry about what the observer is looking for and seeing. This inevitably leads to the official feeling under pressure and prone to making mistakes. The trick is to imagine that there is an observer at all your games and to be relaxed and confident in what you're doing.

He explained that the very best officials never stop learning and trying to improve their performance and this is the quality that the FA is looking for.

Dave then showed us on an iPad / tablet a data capture app that observers at the PGMO level use when at a game. He demonstrated how every action and incident can easily and quickly be added to the screen, with the time automatically recorded. By using a type of short hand code, whole sentences can be quickly added. There is also a microphone for recording actions vocally, providing there is not too much ambient noise such as from nearby spectators. The device also has the added benefit of linking with any video recording of the match. So when preparing the post match report (which can take from 3 to 5 hours to complete) by clicking on the time, the observer is able to watch any incident again and in slow motion if necessary.

The detail the observer goes into, aided by the app, is extraordinary. Apparently there are 42 competencies for a referee, 32 for the A/Rs, and 13 for the 4th Official, hence the time it takes to complete the post match report.

Interestingly the marks are generated aromatically via a rather complex looking matrix system.

Dave was asked whether he thought that the system of observing could be improved. His main thought was how useful it would be if the observers could listen in to the officials communications during a game. This would give them a opportunity to understand how or why certain decisions were made.

The meeting then moved onto "Maximising Opportunities" We were split into "breakout rooms" and each group watched a video clip of mostly local games and asked to feedback how we thought the referees maximised their opportunities or didn't as the case may have been.

We "observed" body language, signalling, use of whistle, movement, advantages, game and player management.

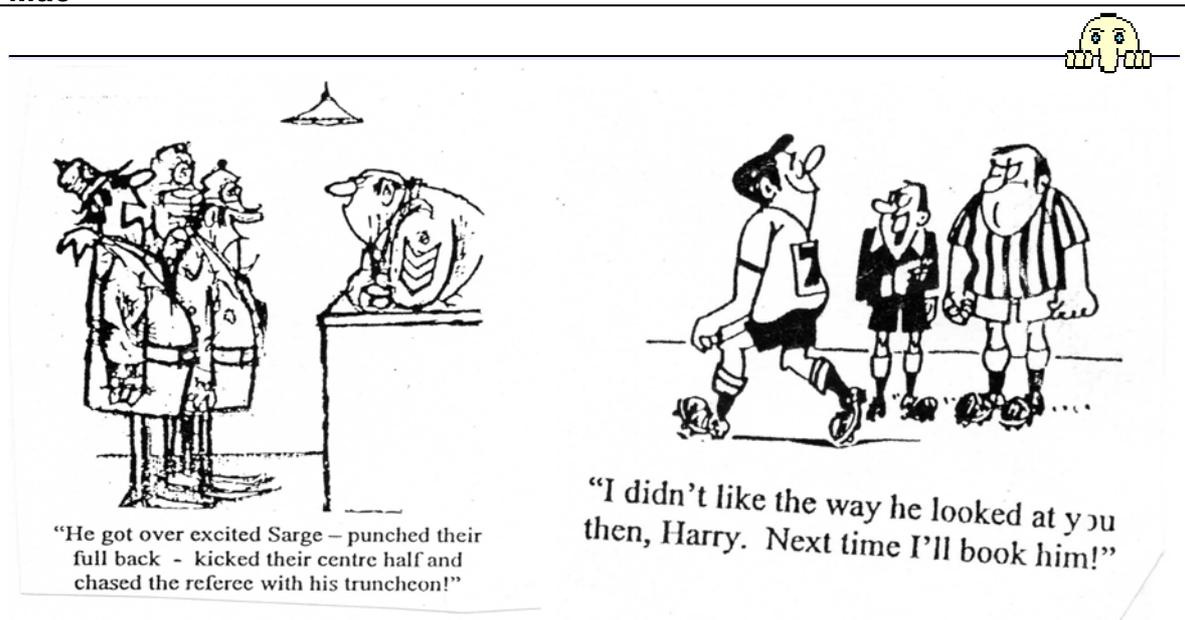
After the feedback and much discussion Dave pointed out a few ways we as referees can maximise our opportunities including knowing the club and their key players; asking for copies of any videos of the game (or looking on u tube) ; self analysing our performance ; seeking feedback form other who may have been watching.

In summary always referee with confidence and without fear. Relax, enjoy and don't forget to smile !!

Andy thanked Dave for taking the time out of his busy schedule to speak with us and for an extremely informative and entertaining insight into the world of the Observer.

After a quick round up of Society news including a plea for more members to sign up for the monthly Centenary Club draw, Andy closed the meeting at 10.20pm.

Mac



Throw –Ins and Stocking Tops

Like most football followers I suspect, I have been watching more football than ever during the latest lockdown forced on us by the pandemic. At least that's the view of my long- suffering wife. This is of course, due to a number of reasons. One is that I am not out refereeing myself, another is that the match kick-off times are deliberately spread out for TV and another is the EFL iFollow.

I nearly fell off my easy chair the other day when I saw the referee penalise a couple of throw-ins. I'll take a little pause here so you can take this in. A referee in a Championship match, penalised a throw-in and gave it to the other team. When did you last see that? It has seemed that this is one part of the laws that could be completely ignored, like socks rolled up around the ankles obviously without any form of protection of the shins. And there's me been telling players at the pre-match inspection, that they can't play without shinpads.

It was difficult for me to see on my computer screen with the offences on the far side of the field of play, what exactly the two throw-ins decisions were for. However, there has been a trend lately to ignore that part of Law 15 which says, 'the player must throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head', and instead it is put back into play with a little flick of each wrist, which is what I suspect was the answer.

The end of the sentence for that part of the throw-in law also seems to be completely irrelevant, except perhaps for opposing spectators at pre-corvids games or the opposition manager. This is where it says, 'from the point where it left the field of play'. In an EFL game last week the ball left the field of play just in front of the camera, and the ball was left for thrower at exactly the spot it went out. The thrower picked it up and calmly walked 10 yards up the field with the ball in his hand and then took another 10 yards waiving it about over his head before releasing it into play, without any reaction from all concerned.

For me, as one of the majority who officiates in the lower realms of the game, I find this comparatively easy to control. I stand level with the throw-in position and once the player reaches what I deem to be an unacceptable distance from that, I blow my whistle before the throw is taken and say, 'with me please'. I do this for a couple of throws and then if it happens again, I let them take the throw-in before blowing and then award it to the opposing team, on the basis of what the law requires. I usually find from that moment on, the throwers look at me for confirmation that they are at the right spot.

I hope no one at the FA is reading this as I will probably be accused of behaviour that is not 'what the game expects' or a lack of empathy.

Dick Sawdon Smith



Has the six second rule had its time?

During the lockdown I've been watching quite a lot of football on TV much to the delight of my wife. One thing that I have noticed is the length of time goalkeepers hold the ball in their hands. Laws of the game say that 6 seconds is what is acceptable. This law has been tinkered with for many years. It is thought that originally it was done to make the game less boring for the 1994 World Cup which was to be held in the USA.

It was felt that the American spectators would not tolerate this tedious and dull type of time wasting tactic. The incident that appears to have caused the rule change was in the game between the Republic of Ireland and Egypt when the Irish goalkeeper Packie Bonner continually dribbled the ball around his penalty area and picked it up whenever he was challenged by an opponent for about six minutes.

The lawmakers had been trying for a long time to reduce time wasting by goalkeepers starting with the four step law in 1982 allowing the goalkeeper four steps with the ball in his hands before he must release it into play. Of course goalkeepers took three steps and put the ball on the ground and dribbled it around the penalty area waiting for an opponent to run thirty or forty yards to challenge him, and then picking it up and having one step "in the bank" to clear the ball into play. So in 1983 the law was modified to stop the goalkeeper picking the ball up again after he had released it. The law was modified again in 1984 to allow the goalkeeper to pick the ball up if it was touched by an opposition player.

This was all very long winded and did not really stop blatant time wasting as demonstrated by the Packie Bonner incident.

Early in its use the six second rule caused all sorts of problems for teams and referees alike. goalkeepers treated the ball like a live hand grenade and kicked it a long way away in any direction because they were so afraid of giving away a free kick. Referees used to count to six and penalise the offence. Of course different referees estimation of six seconds were varied causing more dissent and yellow cards.

The interpretation of a deliberate back pass varied between referees causing confusion and consequently dissent from players. Slowly though as with all changes. players became used to it and adapted their tactics to suit. As I said at the start of this article, I have been watching a lot of football and the amount of time the ball stays in the goalkeepers hands is more than six seconds. However goalkeepers are not deliberately wasting time and the ball is being put back into play without opposition players appealing for free kicks and complaining about time wasting. So perhaps after forty years the problem of goalkeepers wasting time has been solved. In another forty years will the problem of VAR be sorted out?

What do you think?

Courtesy of Mal Dodd "The Last Word" Sheffield and Hallamshire RA

Adie Knows the Way to Amaryllis

I think there are quite a few of us over the past few weeks have been secretly grateful we are not out there refereeing. That NE wind was absolutely bitter, it was what I call a 'lazy wind'. Doesn't go round you – it goes straight through!! I have to admit, a year or so ago I bought a double quilt day-glo yellow jacket that is both water and wind proof – been a real Godsend. I think a lot of games would have been called off though with the pitches being frozen. Fingers crossed, we will get some football later in the Spring and I will keep you informed of any changes.

I have to echo Mac's comments on cyclists and runners puffing and panting when passing you on public footpaths etc. Although we have the Down's Link at the bottom of our garden we are rather disinclined to use it very much at present because of these inconsiderate persons. Some of the cyclists are tearing along with total disregard for others, it must be a major concern if you have small children or a dog. There are even some cyclists who think that riding without any lights, dressed in dark colours along country roads is OK – crazy. I did have one coming at me along Trunley Heath Road with a very bright front light. He got the full benefit of all 6 of my Xenon lights on the Kuga for a couple of seconds! Anyway, we are getting our exercise cutting up logs in the garden so we are avoiding as much contact as possible. Hopefully we will get our vaccinations soon.

It is my turn to have the company car for a couple of weeks as we cannot travel together to work at present. I decide to give it a wash on Friday (as nobody else bothers) and was it filthy and as bitter cold as it was it had to be done. The amount of salt I washed off it that deposited on the drive – I don't think any weeds will grow there this year!

We have the most superb Amaryllis growing in the dining room. I planted it Boxing Day and it has just started to bloom after shooting up to 26" (that's about 660mm for non-engineers and 66cm for those who watch Blue Peter). I hope to save the bulb this year, Diane managed to kill last year's one off!!

Next week begins the refurbishment of our kitchen. So next weekend we shall clear it all out and set ourselves up for food preparation in the Dining Room. We have it all fathomed out with a bench-top cooker and will move the fridge in on Sunday.

Hopefully on the next newsletter it will be done and I will let you know how it all went.

Stay Safe

Adie



How Late is a Late Flag

Throughout my 30+ years running lines and almost as many teaching new recruits to do so, I have held firm to the idea that in making offside judgements, "**A late flag is a great flag.**"

We know that once we raise the flag we can't take it down again because somebody, and often a number of people, will have seen it. It is therefore important to be confident that our decision is correct. We've all made the mistake of flagging too soon, only to realise a split second later that the ball hasn't gone to the player in the offside position. At that point we wish the ground would swallow us up. We can only hope that the referee will for once ignore us and allow play to continue. More usually, of course, they will follow our indication since they assume that we were in a position to make a correct decision.

How late is late? Both in my own practice and in my teaching I have always recommended "**Counting to three**" before raising the flag, saying to oneself slowly "one....two....three" while mentally rerunning the situation we've just witnessed to ensure we are penalising the right player.

Of course, one has to get used to the cry of, "A bit late lino!" from the sidelines, but we can smile quietly to ourselves at the failure of the ignorant to understand what we are doing.

However, current practice on the Premier League, and for all I know elsewhere, seems to be, even with absolutely clear offside offences, to delay the raising of the flag for a very long time indeed, allowing play to continue until the attacker chasing the ball actually reaches it.

This delay seems to me to have no advantages whatsoever and only serves to cause frustration in players, coaches and spectators. There is another, more serious, drawback to not stopping play in that injury or misconduct could arise from the continuation.

From my armchair I have twice recently seen injuries to players as the result of very late offside indications, not hairline decisions requiring a VAR intervention but in situations where the attacker was very obviously offside.

Lining, particularly at the highest level, with VAR looking over the assistant's shoulder, is increasingly challenging, but is made more difficult by an instruction to delay the flag even for obvious offsides. Surely, failure to do so only serves to undermine confidence in the assistant's ability to do the job?

Jim de Rennes
Kingston RS



RISK or REWARD - SHOULD I CHANCE IT?

What do I now? How often have you asked yourself this question in life? It's your wife's birthday and a new ironing board is the same price as a dozen red roses. Where is the risk and reward. Well the reward if you buy the roses is plenty of smarty points. If you buy the ironing board the risk is 12 hours in A & E. Also there are right answers and correct answers. For example if your partner asks "Does my bum look big in this?" There is a **right** answer and a correct answer, and quite often they are not the same thing.

Similarly when we are refereeing incidents occur and there are right answers and correct answers. Imagine a defenders free kick close to their own goal line. You indicate to the kicker where you want the ball to be placed, and he casually throws it three yards further forward than you indicated. You would be correct in law to insist that the kick be taken from the position you specified. The risk in doing that is that the kicker continues to put the ball further forward than you pointed out and you then end up cautioning him. If you allow him to take the kick from where he originally placed the ball, you have to ask yourself some questions. How much advantage is he likely to gain from his actions? Is he likely to score from there. If I make an issue of this how many people am I likely to upset? - The player, the technical area, the spectators, the observer? So in this fairly simple example we can see the risk is low and the reward is that the offender gains very little and the referee retains his match control and does not draw unnecessary attention to himself and lose the confidence of players and coaching staff - "A right little Hitler!"

Of course all decisions of risk and reward are not quite as straightforward as this one. Take instance of a winger running at speed past the technical areas with the ball. He is counterattacking and the majority of his opponents are stranded in the other half of the FOP after an attack has been broken up and the ball passed to the winger. His nearest opponent sees the danger and runs at speed towards the winger but has very little chance of catching him and making a fair tackle. He lunges at the winger with both feet in an out of control tackle. The winger sees the challenge coming and jumps, avoids any contact and starts to continue his run. Here again we have a risk and reward situation. You have to ask yourself some "What if?" questions now, and answer them pretty quickly.

- What if the winger carries on his run and either sets up or scores a goal?
- What if he carries on running for several yards but his jump has upset his balance and he stumbles after several yards?
- What if the wingers technical area start to remonstrate with the defenders technical area about the challenge?
- What if a colleague of the winger decides that as you have taken no action he is going to take his own retribution out on the tackler?

There are of course other things that may have to be taken into consideration.

- What is the score at the time?
- What minute of the game does the incident happen?
- What sort of game has it been up to now? Orderly or very feisty.

- Has the tackler been spoken to or disciplined earlier?

There are no clear cut answers, but on the day you must make a decision, what is the **right** thing to do. Which course of action will keep your match control intact and which one will make everyone lose confidence in you. If you follow law then you should stop play and send the defender from the FOP. No risk, no reward. If you allow advantage and the winger goes on and scores, all is well, but who remembers great advantages played by the referee?

Another example of the right thing to do could be when driving your car. You are first in line on a narrow road at the traffic lights on red. Suddenly behind you is an ambulance with blue lights flashing and the siren going. The only way past you is if you pull past the red traffic light to make room for the ambulance. You know however that there are CCTV cameras at these lights and you will be fined £60 for pulling forward. Is the ambulance going to a genuine emergency or is it a false alarm? The thing to remember is - do the right thing at the right time for the right reason. I refer you to the earlier big bum scenario, a **right** answer and a correct answer? You have to do the right thing at the right time and the better referees constantly manage to do that.

So good luck with your decision making and my last word is that roses are always the best option!

Mal Dodd writing in The Last Word



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I thought it was all over, it isn't yet **

Season number 49 started for me on Saturday 12th September with a game in the Arthurian League at Old Aldenhamians, but for the first time in my refereeing career I thought this might be a season too far.

Summer lockdown had been a miserable time coinciding with my treadmill finally breaking down (this was surprising as all bets had been on me breaking down first) and sending me out onto the streets for my exercise. This was not a pretty sight, and looking a hundred years old in the privacy of my house is one thing but doing so before the neighbours was very dispiriting. Indeed I had to seriously wonder if I could get back on a football pitch and even if I did, would I be able to contribute anything beyond standing magnificently in the centre circle.

Day after day I seemed to get no further than the park bench in a state of absolute collapse and even the squirrels looked away in embarrassment.

However my fears were not entirely justified and so yes, I did get to Old Aldenhamians on 12th September, a seriously hot day and far from my ideal conditions with some wind and rain. The game went well and although I was far from magnificent I did survive and there were no adverse comments from either team.

So at the time of writing I have completed games on eight Saturdays, despite the second lockdown, and with career game 3,544 under my belt I look forward to next weekend. It should have been nine Saturdays but on Saturday 31st October.

I drove to my game in St Albans in torrential rain, avoiding some serious puddles in the road on the way, and with the rain still torrential on arrival (as usual at least 75 minutes before kick-off) I hid in my car from the weather before undertaking the customary pitch inspection. The playing surface was pretty heavy with some puddles forming; both goal nets were barely secured, one hanging loosely from the crossbar; and only one corner flag. The forecast was for more heavy rain.

What to do? One representative from the home side offered thoughts to the effect 'if we play today it will damage the pitch for the season' and I must admit I was 50-50 on my decision. In the event the situation described above moved me to calling the game off despite some away players wanting to play having travelled a distance. I retreated to my car, soaked through, even my match fee was saturated, and drove home – still in torrential rain but I knew in my heart of hearts my decision had been based to some extent in comparing with the usual excellent pitches found in Arthurian circles.

Imagine my surprise the next morning when reading the League results to find in my game the home side had won 6-2. It transpired the players had taken the view that with a second lockdown starting the next Saturday they were prepared to play whatever the state of the pitch and weather. So good for them and I am really pleased my decision, albeit well-intentioned did not spoil their afternoon.

Here's to 2021 - may your match-fee become covid-free; your dressing room return to open; and your post-match hospitality back to the highest standard. And for North Middlesex to lose the shackles of virtual meetings and to see once again the splendid, albeit ageing faces. Happy New Year.

**with thanks to the late Kenneth Wolstenholme for help with this title

Peter Dace *writing in The Normidian*

Willy the 'Red Card' Referee

Unless you are officiating at the top level and the next few levels below that then the vast majority of us have not had any matches since December last year. It really does feel like forever!

This will now be the second season when the leagues and many cup competitions have not been played to completion.

I am sure that I am not alone when I say how much I have missed my football on a Saturday afternoon. What does the future hold.....who knows?!

Happy days and at the moment golden memories! The two 'action' photos show 'Willy' in action from a pre-season friendly back in August 2020. What the photos do confirm is that the photo on the left shows that 'Willy' can still run and keep up with play and the one above is the definitive photo of the 'free kick is here'.



Don't be misled as the goal in the picture is from the next pitch. Here once again our wonderful referee gives the definitive signal for an indirect free kick.

If we can start our football again this September 2021 then fitness will need to be addressed. All officials will need to make a big effort to ensure that we are not struggling in our first few matches back. I certainly do not want to be 'out of position' or struggling to keep up with play. We will all need to make sure that we know all the law changes. Hopefully there will not be too many but whatever the changes are we will need to know them.

At the top football level we all know that 'VAR' does NOT provide the perfect answer. There is an argument that offside is offside so if a player is offside by a centimetre then they are offside. We either accept we want the 'absolute' answer or not. Due to the angle of the cameras the distance can be minute so where should we if you excuse the expression 'draw the line'.

Take care and stay safe.
Willy Red Card Referee





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