

# THE WARBLER

Monthly Magazine of the Woking Referees' Society

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Season 2019/2020 February Edition

# WOKING REFEREES' SOCIETY

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# The next meeting of the Woking Referees' Society will be on 3rd February

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

## **AGENDA**

- ♦ ***7.15 Academy Meeting***
- ♦ ***8.00 Chairman's Welcome***
- ♦ ***Guest Speaker***  
  
***Tim Robinson***
- ♦ ***Society Business***



**March meeting will be on  
Monday 2nd March 2020  
The deadline for the March Warbler is  
Friday 21st February**

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

## Chairman's Chatter

Hello everyone and welcome to February's Warbler.

Straight into it this month and the Surrey FA County Cup appointments were announced last week. As always, Woking Referees' Society has a strong showing of match officials appointed to finals, none more so than Jon Creswick and Callum Peter who have been given the task of overseeing the most prestigious of finals; the Surrey Senior Cup Final. From all of us at Woking Society, congratulations to all who have received their emails recently – go and enjoy the occasion.

This month sees the retirement of our long-standing Surrey FA RDO Tim Lawrence. What Tim has done for refereeing in this county cannot be underestimated and he is certainly big shoes to fill for his incoming replacement (who is to be announced officially very soon I believe). Again, from all of us at Woking Society, we owe Tim a massive thank you for his time, dedication and support, especially of our own society of which he's become a great friend – watch this space for more on this in future editions.....

Our kick-off meeting for 2020 was a belter with a brilliant evening and presentation from our good friend Steve Worsley. Entitled "WWDD" (eventually he told us it meant "What Would Dermot Do?") this was a proper interactive evening with the room split into working groups to discuss video clips, processes and outcomes. This even culminated in myself and President Penfold getting right into the spirit by engaging in some "healthy debate" which I eventually had to concede to!! A fun night all-round and an attendance of just under 30 which was really pleasing to see.

I'm looking forward to a packed Meadow Sport on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February when we welcome another fantastic guest speaker to Woking – Tim Robinson (SG2 and recently SG1 referee) will be coming back to entertain us with another interactive and fun presentation. I'm sure most of you will remember Tim's debut with us last season when he shared with us his dream of reaching his goal – to referee on the Premier League. I'm delighted to say that Tim has now realised his dream with his first game in the Premier League very recently. He tells me he's hoping for a few more before the season is out so let's tell all our friends in football to come down on 3<sup>rd</sup> February to make it another evening to remember – I reckon we can hit the 45 mark for this in terms of attendance so let's make it happen!!



Remember to be diligent and timely with any pitch inspections you're carrying out (either for your own games or for other referee colleagues) – it's that time of year where the weather can dictate what games are on and off. Stay strong, don't be swayed by any pressure from managers and/or other club officials and do the inspections properly. Make sure you get your boots on, walk the entire pitch and take a ball out with you to kick and throw around – I usually find that a ball that doesn't roll and/or plops straight into the mud tends to muffle and silence the club officials who want a game on, at whatever cost!!

Right, that's it from me this month – enjoy your games, I hope the ball runs kindly for you all and I'll see you all on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at Meadow Sports for the evening with Tim Robinson.

Cheers!!

**Andy**

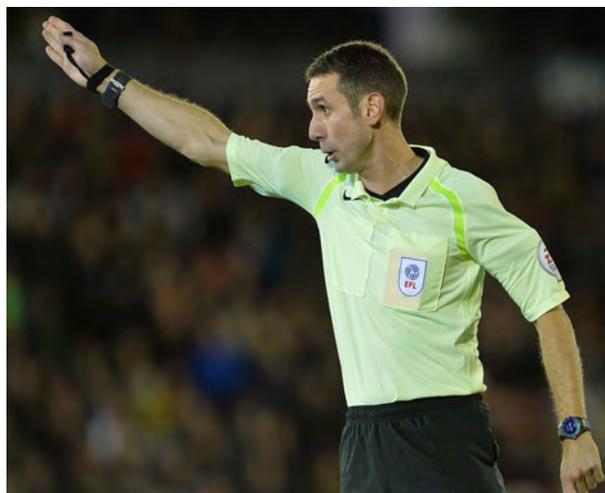
## Dates for your Diary 2019/20

3rd February	Society Meeting - Tim Robinson
2nd March	Society Meeting and AGM -
6th April	Society Meeting - David Phillips
4th May	Society Meeting - TBA

### Four English officials promoted to the FIFA list for 2020.

The Referees' Association is delighted to announce that 4 English officials have been promoted to the FIFA list of referees for 2020. Premier League officials David Coote and Andy Madley have been promoted while Stacey Pearson and Kirsty Dowle join them on the list.

Following his promotion, David Coote said: "it's a great honour to represent The FA, PGMOL and RA and follow in the footsteps of our greatest referees."



## Membership and Accounts

2019/20 Memberships re- newed	2020 Current Status	
85 Full Members	General	£2,243.30
6 Friends	Supplies	£227.92
2 Affiliate Members	Belgium	£0.00
50 Referees trained in 2019/2020	Training Fund	-£174.03
	Youth Fund	£113.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,410.69</b>

## Just a Sec!

First, I must apologise for mistakenly getting Mrs Lawrence's name wrong in last month's Warbler. It is of course Celia and not Claire.

### **Christmas Dinner 2020 - 14th December Hoe Bridge Golf Centre**

Martin has already agreed a date and price for our Christmas Dinner this year so make a note in your diary NOW so you don't miss out on the great annual event.

**Tim Robinson** is our guest speaker this month. Tim visited us last season when he admitted that his ambition was officiate in the middle of the Premiership, which to his great credit, he has done. With such a high profile guest it would be great if we could fill the Meadow Sports clubhouse. To this end I have written to our neighbouring Referees' Societies, inviting their members to come along for the evening.

**Welfare.** An email has been circulating around Referees' Societies and has been picked up by Mark Ives, head of Judicial Services at the FA. It was written by a mother of a 14 year old newly qualified referee, who during his first ever game was allegedly subjected to abuse by both managers and a parent /spectator. The incident was reported to the County FA via WGS but the managers then requested a personal hearing and the young referee was asked (told?) to attend. The mother refused to let her son go and possibly be subjected to more stress and intimidation and was appalled by the way she felt the County FA had handled the case and the "lack of care " displayed. Consequently the case was declared "not proven"

Now I'm sure that Surrey FA would not act in such an alleged cavalier fashion, but should any member, particularly U18s, find themselves in a similar situation then this is where your Referees' Society can offer help and support. Your first port of contact should be our own Welfare Officer, Gareth Heighes (contact details on page 2) or any of the officers or members of the committee. In fact if you need any advice or support or just had a s\*\*t game and feel you need to talk about it, then please just pick up the phone and call one of us. See you all next Monday !

**Mac**

## **Woking Referees' Society Annual General Meeting 2nd March 2019**

**Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Woking Society, The Referees Association will take place on Monday 2nd March 2020 at Meadow Sports FC, Loop Road, Woking, Surrey, commencing at 8pm.**

**Any rules changes and nominations for officers and committee need to be submitted in writing, and in accordance with the rules, to either the Chairman, Andy Bennett, Secretary, Mac McBirnie or Treasurer, Bryan Jackson by the close of the February meeting (Monday 3rd February).**

A copy of the Society Rules has been e-mailed to all members and a copy is available on the Society's website [www.wokingreferees.co.uk](http://www.wokingreferees.co.uk)

## **This Month's Speaker Tim Robinson**



I'm 36 years old and qualified as a referee at the age of 17.

I spent 10 years as a PE teacher at The Weald School, before turning professional 4 seasons ago. I'm an SG2 official and one of the five championship referees used as a VAR match official on the Premier League. I've also refereed on the Premier League this season - Burnley v Newcastle.

I'm also FA Core coach working with 4 referees. *(including our chairman Ed.)*

I've been lucky enough to visit Wembley on 3 separate occasions - Conference Play off final and the League 2 Play off final.

My talk is about "Recognition of Challenges to our Match Control"

# Last Month's Meeting

Chairman Andy welcomed our guest speaker Steve Worsley and 25 members to the first meeting of the year.

Apologies for absence were received from Dave Cooper, Brian Reader, Colin Barnett, Nick Eke.

Steve was making a welcome return to Woking having entertained us last year with his "It shouldn't happen to a Ref" presentation. His subject this year was intriguingly entitled WWDD, which he explained stood for "What Would Dermot Do?"

For those of you not aware Dermot Gallagher, former Premiership referee, has a weekly column on Sky Sports News called Ref Watch, where he passes comment on recent games and the referees decision.

Steve had compiled a half dozen video clips showing particular incidents including slow motion and different camera angles and in our groups we were asked to decide what would our decision be. We were then shown what the referee on the game did and then what was Dermot's opinion.#

The videos included a contentious offside, where a ball was deflected by a defender before reaching an attacker in an offside position, who then scored. Although the ref on the day awarded a goal, Dermot and about half the room thought the attacker should have been flagged offside and the goal disallowed. However there was strong opinion in the room that the defenders action had put the attacker onside.

Another clip showed a defender handling the ball on the goal line but a attacker immediately pounced on the rebound and scored. We all agreed the goal should stand, but we then had a debate as to what would have happened if the ref had blown for the handball just before the attacker had scored. It was agreed a few seconds wait in such circumstances is advisable.

Other clips included a player making two foul tackles in quick succession, the second one a clear red offence but the referee played an advantage, a collision when two players both slid in for the ball and one was injured, both ended up with a caution. A goalkeeper "rugby" tackling a player in his penalty area, where the referee only awarded a penalty whereas the decision by the group and Dermot was that the keeper should have been sent off for serious foul play.

Andy thanked Steve with the our customary bottles of fine wine for once again giving us a very entertaining, informative and thought provoking presentation,

After the raffle, Andy informed the meeting that the Christmas Dinner this year is already booked for 14th December 2020. He than thanked the members for attending and reminded everyone that next month speaker is Tim Robinson, who visited us last season and has now been appointed to the Premier League.



Andy thanks Steve for an excellent evening and presents him with one of our customary bottles of wine

## Academy News

Thanks to those who braved the weather in January for the outdoor session, looking at Positioning in open play

Well now it's the time of the season when the lucky few get awarded County Cup Finals, congratulations to all of you who have managed to get one and if you weren't lucky enough don't worry there are still league cups and trophy games still to be awarded

The academy session this month will be a look at your expectations on what to expect at your final and what is expected of you

I look forward to seeing you on February 3rd at 7:15pm

**Pat**

## *Mac's Musings*

So, how are you all getting on with Sin Bins, or Temporary Dismissals to give them their correct title.?

I seem to have one most weekends. Each time the offender has apologised either at the time or later. However I did have an interesting situation the other week when I "sin binned" a player with 10 minutes left to the end of the game. Off he went and we carried on. I was just thinking that the fellow now running the line ( it's always one of the substitutes) was making a better fist of the job than his predecessors when I realised that it was the guy I had just binned. Now the question is dear reader, should I have stopped him? I couldn't remember if there is anything in IFAB to say he can't and anyway, I as I've mentioned, he was actually doing a decent job, plus the other subs seem to be injured. So I let him carry on and we ended the game with out any further mishap.

However during the game a player made a careless tackle from behind, bordering on a caution. The player then moaned that, as they always do, that he had "got the ball" again bordering on dissent but not enough in my book for the sin bin. But afterwards I thought what would have happened if I'd cautioned the player for the foul and then sin binned him for dissent? I would have to have shown him the yellow card twice and sent him off for the prescribed 10 minutes. Now I reckon this would have confused the hell out of the other players as well as any spectators although in this case it was the ubiquitous one man and his dog. My point of this rambling is that a blue card for the sin bin would be much clearer to all and sundry. We us them in small sided and walking football for temporary dismissals, so why not in 11 a side?

The new law regarding the drop ball came to my rescue last week. I'm hovering around the 18yd box waiting for a corner to be taken. Ball comes in, rather lower than I suspect the kicker intended, and a defender wallops the ball—straight into my chest. The ball then drops invitingly to an attacker's feet who curves a beautiful shot over the defenders and keeper and into the net. Cue short lived celebrations as I explained the new law and gave a dropped ball to the defending team Whew!!!

I've recently started buying the Woking New and Mail each week and have been sending an advert for our monthly meetings to their "what's on in our community" section.

What I've found interesting is that in the sports section they publish the results and league tables of almost every sport played in and around Woking, including Rugby, Squash, Badminton, Bridge, Hockey, Short-Mat Bowls, Table Tennis, Snooker, Pool, Basketball, Running, Darts, Golf, and of course Football, Who knew there was so much competitive sport going on around us?

One thing I do find useful are the league tables of the leagues I run around blowing my whistle on, including Guilford and Woking Alliance and Surrey Intermediate. When Adie send me my game each week I have a quick look to see where the teams are in their respective Divisions, although for some reason the Div 3 is missing from the GWAL League tables ??

**Mac**

## Adie - Lord of the Ring !

A bit of a different scenario for this past weekend. I had a plethora of games called off on Saturday due to waterlogged pitches and whilst on my way to my Sunday game I received a call from the team manager informing me the game was postponed due to a frozen pitch. I guess it is all meant to try us!!

Just before Christmas I received a flavour of the month award. Diane had requested that I take her to school on the last day of term and transport the Christingle Oranges for the children to the local church, wait there during the service (and help out) and then take the boxes of oranges back to the school.

On arrival at the school, Diane's TA was in floods of tears and very distraught. It seems she had taken off her wedding and engagement rings in the bathroom, her kitten had followed her in and knocked the rings flying. She then believed that although she had located the wedding ring her husband had flushed the engagement ring down the toilet.

I was duly despatched with Michelle to find the ring (I thought, I know where this is going. Adie gonna have to put his hand down the karzi). On arrival we searched the bathroom and removed all moveable items to check them.

We moved on to the hallway as a ring can bounce to no avail. Michelle pointed to the lounge and said 'She is in there and is not my Friend'. I walked in and scooped up little Trixie who had devastated the Christmas tree with tinsel in all directions. I moved a piece, bent down, picked up an item and said 'is this what you a looking for Michelle'.

More tears (this time with relief) and we drove back in triumph. I was questioned by another TA if I had put my arm down the toilet to which I retorted that 'she had a vulgar mind', but I could do no wrong for a day or two, (at least in Michelle's eyes).

Things are moving along swiftly with the late Mother-in-Law's estate. I will bring you more news next month but it is all looking good, on the market with a lot of hits on the internet.

We are now getting to the part of the season where I am replying to e-mails congratulating Match Officials on their promotions and preparing a few ideas for the League Cup Finals. On that note if you are going for further promotion or trying for your first please let me know so that I can get you a game or two to prepare you for 'what comes next'.

Please keep your availability coming so that you are not disappointed if you have not got a game.

**Adie**



## Heading Ban

**A ban on children heading the ball in Scotland could be in place in a matter of weeks due to fears over the links between football and dementia.**

BBC Scotland has learned the Scottish FA wants to lead the way on the issue after a report found former players are more at risk of dying from the disease.

The governing body is expected to announce a ban on under-12s heading the ball in training later this month.

A similar ban has been in place in the US since 2015.

But Scotland would become the first European country to impose a restriction on head contact.

Discussions have been ongoing since the release of a study in October which found the first links between former players and degenerative brain disease.

The Scottish FA's doctor, John MacLean, was part of the team which highlighted that former players are three-and-a-half times more likely to die of dementia.

- **Does heading a ball cause dementia?**
- **Will US model be the template for ban?**
- **Dementia death more likely in football**
- **'Dementia study is staggering' - Astle family**
- **Striker had 'boxer's brain condition'**

There remains no firm evidence linking heading the ball to the disease but Dr MacLean thinks a restriction of head contact is common sense.

He said: "We can't wait on the evidence one way or the other on heading." "We need to take some sensible, pragmatic steps at the moment and that's largely going to be about trying to reduce that overall burden, the overall times that young players head - and heading in training is much more common than in matches.

"The study was never designed to, and couldn't identify, why. But I think most people would say, pragmatically, that it would be head injury or heading, in whatever combination that would be."

Glasgow's largest youth football club has welcomed the Scottish FA proposals three months after its own policy change.

Giffnock Soccer Centre has banned heading across its smaller-sided squads up to and including the 7-a-side teams.

Club chairman Craig Inglis said: "As a community club we're parents first and coaches second. In light of the available medical evidence we felt a responsibility to safeguard the future health of our youngest players.

"Although some of the ongoing scientific studies are yet to report, there is a growing consensus among the medical community that heading the football contributes towards players developing dementia and other brain conditions later in life.

"We have a responsibility to our players and would rather give families clear direction on this issue. Our football development work focuses on building skills with the feet 'on the deck' and this is what we will be focusing on."

The Scottish FA move to ban under-12s heading balls will pose questions for national associations across the world when the plans become a reality.

The Football Association in England told the BBC their position remains unchanged - that there is "no evidence to suggest that heading should be banned in youth football" and that it is "significantly less common in children's games than people often think".

The Scottish FA's move will also be a relief for Dr Willie Stewart, who led the study that found the link in the first place.

He said: "I'm delighted. I think that while there were many questions left unanswered by our report, I think the one thing that came through is that football needs to change in some way.

"We can't go on looking at a risk of three-and-a-half times higher neurodegenerative disease in footballers and not do something about it, so this is great."

## **'Leading the rest of football'**

It is also being seen as a progressive move by those who have played the game.

Former Wales, Arsenal and Celtic striker John Hartson says the Scottish FA should be applauded for leading the way on something that seems obvious.

He said "Heading was a massive part of my game. Managers bought me because I could head the ball.

"There have been some serious situations where players have lost their lives and ex-legends suffering from dementia, so I'm glad the SFA are leading the rest of football and doing something about it."

The ban is likely to be confirmed by the Scottish FA in the coming weeks when all stakeholders have signed up to the plan.

***Spotted by Keith Hiller***

## HOW SMART AND ATHLETIC SHOULD A REFEREE LOOK?

Ref Support, a charity that I have only heard about recently, has been complaining about a remark David Elleray made a couple or more years ago. As chairman of the FA Referees Committee he is reported to have said, 'there are too many beards, tattoos and beer-bellies around this table'. Without directly answering the allegation David responded that 'it is quite likely that in the past when talking to young aspiring referees, I have commented on the importance of appearance, as there is a general expectation that referees look smart, athletic etc.

David is quite right about the expectation but I have long wondered whether it has been over emphasized. My brother was an excellent goalkeeper who played for a team in the old Spartan League. One Saturday when my own match was cancelled at the last minute, I decided to watch his game and ventured afterwards into the home dressing room.

'What did you think of the referee?' my brother asked me. 'I thought he did well,' I replied, 'but he was a bit scruffy.' 'Well we don't take notice of things like that', said my brother, a view supported by other players. These were the days when assessors would mark you down for not having scrubbed white boot laces or your white socks turnover weren't of equal length, so I ignored the suggestion that appearance doesn't matter.

Some years later I mentored a new young(ish) referee, who walked out to toss up still smoking his cigarette. Oh dear I thought, but he had a good game and the clubs were happy with his performance. I did point out to him that it didn't create quite the right impression but was my brother right, players don't take notice of such things?

Of course today it is all different, no white laces or sock turnovers and mainly only the older referees still have a white colour to their shirt. There are in fact many designer referees kits, some of course with no collar at all. I wonder if the players have noticed and are impressed..

After a Scottish club years ago, declared that it would fine any players who wore their shirts outside their shorts, I found a statistic for my newspaper column. Players who didn't tuck their shirts inside their shorts, were the ones more likely to commit fouls. Now of course you are unlikely to find players who don't have their shirt free from their shorts.

I wonder how many mentors have advised young referees not to officiate with their shirts on the outside. Are they not just following the trend and would players pay any less respect? I must confess that I suggested to one young referee I watched, who officiated with his socks around his ankles, that pulling his socks up, would give him a more authoritative look.

In their attack on David Elleray, Ref Support claimed that with the mental pressures on referees, to be told that they were fat, might encourage eating disorders. I was for a few years secretary of my firm's football club. As I was also refereeing, I seldom saw them play but I got along to one match where the referee, an older man, was not only, shall we say, rotund, but also wore a white peaked baseball cap. Although he never seemed to run, he was always in the right place and his decisions were instant and clear. Talking to the players afterwards, they loved him and thought he was a great referee.

But that was park football and if we were asked to give advice to a young referee anxious to climb up the pyramid, I'm sure we would be mimicking David Elleray and include, look the part, smart and athletic (slim). Oh - and keep your shirt tucked into your shorts.

*Dick Sawdon Smith*



## PlumTree

Surrey Vets Cup  
Camberley Old Boys v Headley  
Referee : Colin Barnett

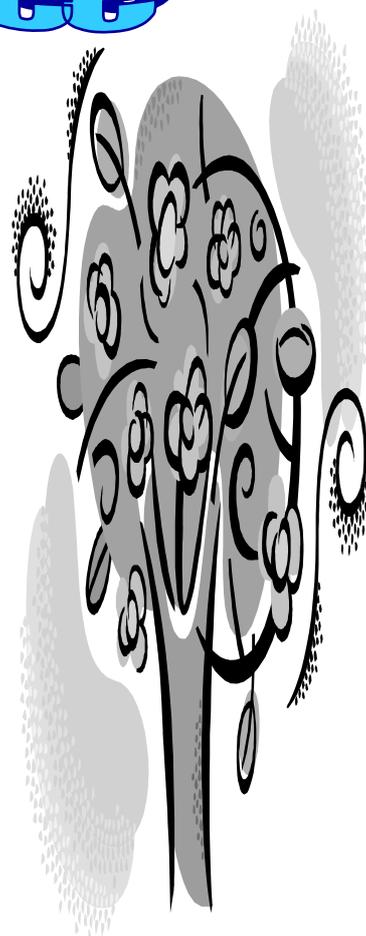
Surrey Saturday Senior Cup  
Met Police vs Sutton Common Rovers  
AR1 : Paul Saunders

Repose Ladies Cup 1/4 final  
Ashford vs Enfield  
AR1 : Paul Saunders

Womens FA cup 4<sup>th</sup> Round  
Southampton v Coventry (played at Saint Mary's)  
Referee : Tom Ellsmore

Surrey FA Sunday Premier Cup  
Assistant referee : Gareth Heighes

Surrey FA Senior Cup  
Assistant Referee : Callum Peter



## MURPHY'S MEANDERINGS

I was linesman on a lower division Football League match and arrived at the ground at about one o'clock for a three o'clock kick off. I met the referee in the changing room and, as it was his first visit to this club, told him that they were a friendly club and that officials had an open invitation to the guests lounge for refreshments before the match. He told me that he had declined the invitation as, by accepting their hospitality, it looked as if he was getting too familiar with them and could be seen as showing favouritism. Our place was in the changing room and that was where we would stay in the period before the match. As a result, we had no refreshments until half time.

In the changing room the referee said very little and we sat mostly in silence. The other linesman had not arrived and as we got nearer to half past one the referee became more and more agitated, constantly looking at his watch and making cynical comments about his non-appearance. On the dot of one thirty he looked at his watch and said, "Right. That's it. Another report I've got to make to the Football League". The linesman arrived twenty minutes late and burst into the changing room, out of breath, looking all hot and bothered, and full of apologies. The referee gave him short shrift and told him to "save his excuses for the Football League, he didn't want to hear them." The linesman tried to apologise again but the referee wouldn't listen telling him he'd shown a lack of respect and caused a lot of problems. He was going to report him and that that was going to be the last word spoken on the subject.

The linesman sat down, looking a little shell shocked, the referee went back to silent mode and the atmosphere became extremely frosty. After about five minutes I made some general comments, hoping to lighten the mood, but the only response I got was from the other linesman. However, we were soon stopped when the referee suggested to the linesman that, after arriving late, it would be better for him to get prepared for the match rather than talking. Silence reigned again and a dejected linesman started unpacking his kit. The referee noticed that he was putting on a short-sleeved shirt and exploded, "You're not expecting to wear that shirt, are you? League rules state that officials wear standard referee's kit and standard shirts have cuffs. Short sleeved shirts don't have cuffs so we wear long sleeved shirts." "This is the only shirt I have," replied the linesman. "Then you've got a problem," said the referee, turning away. It went quiet again and then, after a few minutes, the referee got out a long-sleeved shirt and said to the linesman, "You'll have to use my spare shirt".

The game was a scrappy, low key affair with no problems or controversy and both teams were happy at the end. The referee quickly changed and left, reminding the linesman that he would be hearing from the Football League.

As we walked to our cars the linesman told me that there had been a multiple accident on the motorway and the police had closed his section of the motorway until the emergency services had finished so he was stuck and couldn't go anywhere.

I can't help comparing this situation to a similar, but by no way as bad, one I had on the Football league. I was linesman on an evening kick off first division Football League match. The traffic was horrendous and I was a little bit late. I had run from the underground station, having had to park in a side road and catch a train, and I was in a bit of a state when I entered the official's changing room. I started to make my apologies but the referee, somebody I'd never met before, cut in, "Don't worry, You're here now. We're going upstairs for a cup of tea. You catch your breath and when you're settled come up and join us." When I joined them in the lounge, I again tried to make my apologies but he just shook his head and said, "Forget it, we've all been there," and it was never mentioned again. The game went well and an evening that had started very traumatically became enjoyable and finished on a very friendly note.

**Tony Murphy**

## **IFAB: 'Clear Offsides only on VAR'**

By Football Italia staff

The International Football Association Board has urged VAR officials not to be "too forensic" when judging offsides. "We need to stress 'clear and obvious' applies to every situation."

In Serie A, the Premier League and Champions League this season, some goals have been disallowed for the most millimetric of margins, creating frustration with the presence of VAR.

Now the guidance from the sport's law-makers is set to change following the annual general meeting in February.

"With VAR we see some things that are going in a direction that we may need to re-adjust," IFAB general secretary Lukas Brud told the BBC.

"If you spend multiple minutes trying to identify whether it is offside or not, then it's not clear and obvious and the original decision should stand.

"What we really need to stress is that 'clear and obvious' applies to every single situation that is being reviewed by the VAR or the referee.

"In theory, 1mm offside is offside, but if a decision is taken that a player is not offside and the VAR is trying to identify through looking at five, six, seven, 10, 12 cameras whether or not it was offside, then the original decision should stand.

"This is the problem. People are trying to be too forensic. We are not looking to make a better decision, we are trying to get rid of the clear and obvious mistakes.

"If video evidence shows that a player was in an offside position, he was offside full stop. If it's not obvious, then the decision cannot be changed, you stay with the original decision.

"We will be communicating to all competitions that are using VAR some updates in the coming weeks, because we are observing some developments that are not particularly the way they should be."

***Courtesy of Mal Davies V & A***

## Letter to the Editor of The Chiltern Referee magazine

Dear Brian

I watched the Norwich v Spurs match on TV. As a Chelsea supporter, I did not want Spurs to win, as they would have gone above Chelsea in the Premier League. So, when Pukki scored the second goal for Norwich, I was elated; but then VAR came into play. The 'goal' was ruled out because Pukki had leaned too far forward. He had not been in front of the defender and on his way to goal he had "leaned wrongly!"

As you will understand all my elation was rapidly lost. You will notice, now, when a goal is scored, so many times the scorers, instead of wheeling away in triumph, stop and, as do the spectators, dither as they know it will be checked before being decided upon and the entertainment and excitement becomes lost or at least, muted.

Too many decisions for offside have been given because of either a nipple or an armpit was adjudged the offending part of the anatomy, let alone leaning wrongly.

Some years ago, an edict from the FA for referees to give forwards the benefit of the doubt, a reversal from the onus being for the defence, which went before. This was because we were told goals were the life-blood of the game and the FA wanted to encourage that stance. Now that has all changed. It was stated on the TV that 22 'goals' were turned down by VAR for offside so far this season (Dec 25).

The game is being strangled of its attraction by having to wait so long for the verdict and, when given in my judgement, turned down for ridiculously attributing offside to a part of the anatomy does not give advantage to the attacker.

I hope I am wrong, but in the future, with so many other attractions for people to enjoy, at some point spectators will give up on football. I will be interested to learn what are other members thoughts.

**Mike Jacobs**

### The Wisdom of Phyllis Diller (American Comedienne (1917 –2012))



*As your beauty fades, so will his eyesight.*

*Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance? -*

*The reason women don't play football is because 11 of them would never wear the same outfit in public.*

*Best way to get rid of kitchen odors: Eat out.*

*A bachelor is a guy who never made the same mistake once.*

*Tranquilizers work only if you follow the advice on the bottle - keep away from children.*

## **HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT THE FA'S RESPECT PROGRAMME?**

A few years ago I was on holiday in Italy. I went into a cafe and saw a small sign, it read:-

Caffe € 3  
Caffe per favore € 2  
Per favore, potrei prendere un caffè € 1

I thought, "I'll have the cheapest", but before ordering I asked for a translation. The waitress kindly obliged and it goes like this,

Coffee!	3 euro,
Coffee please.	2 euro,
Please could I have a coffee?	1 euro.

OK it's a pretty weak joke but it does demonstrate how people feel about the way they are being addressed. Politeness costs nothing and in this cafe it might, save you some money. Football players are human too even when they are trying to kick lumps off each other and calling you worse than muck for applying the laws of the game. The way they will react to you will be affected by the way they are spoken to, as I was trying to show in the cafe example!

If you expect players to respect you then you must treat them with respect too. Always stay calm. When someone else is at a boiling point, getting equally angry is only going to make matters worse. Focus on keeping yourself calm, or else the situation might quickly spiral into an argument. This is not to say you should act completely unemotionally, but try not to let your own feelings get too heated.

Respect is not something that is given to you with your refereeing qualification. It is something that must be earned. In the dim and distant past when I started refereeing it was said that the best referees were the ones that you never noticed. They got on and did their job with a minimum of fuss. There were very few well known referees, that may be to do with the lack of TV coverage (1 game on Match of the Day) and the lower profile of the game of football, when it wasn't a business.

What you have to remember is that while the referee is an important part of the game, football is there for the enjoyment of players and the entertainment of spectators. What they do not come to see is a referee who thinks "It's all about me!"

Everyone has their own personality that has been developed over a lifetime. It is not going to change quickly and you will certainly not be able to change it just for the length of the game that you are refereeing on any given day. It is worth thinking about adjusting your behaviour to be best able to gain the respect of players and team officials in order to make your match control more effective.

So when you next go into a cafe try asking "Please could I have a cup of coffee?" and you may not get it any cheaper but you might just get a smile and better service!

*Courtesy of The Last Word The Sheffield and Hallamshire County RA*

## **Frustration, Dissent, Abuse. Is It Acceptable? "A view from the middle"**

Football is played by human beings – thank heaven. They have their skills, their failings and they all react to success, failure, good fortune and ill luck in different ways. That is one of the reasons why the game holds the attention and passion of so many people. It is exactly the same for referees – we are all different.

I have lived long enough in the real world to accept that players will not accept every decision with total calmness. The passion that makes the game so exciting makes it a certainty that, if you are on the wrong end of a poor (in your eyes) decision, there will be a reaction. Despite my residence in the real world, I and my fellow referees are obliged to enforce the Laws of the Game. You will know that referees are being instructed to do this more rigidly, and this includes dissent. The Law states that the referee shall caution a player who shows, by word or action, dissent towards the decision. To save you looking it up, dissent is defined as "*having or expressing a different opinion*".

A player having a different opinion to the referee's is OK, because the crime is to show that different opinion. Dissent is shown by arguing, throwing the ball down in disgust etc, and it is possible that a caution may follow.

The hard part for the players is that their argument may be valid. *They could be right!* Referees, like everyone else do make mistakes, but unfortunately dissent is not acceptable even when the dissenter is correct, and it is *that message that is proving difficult to deliver*.

Dissent is seen as a threat to the referee's control. If players are seen to get away with it, perhaps even sway the odd decision or two, then you will have everyone trying it. Referees should be able to identify the difference between frustration and dissent. Frustration is just the annoyance manifesting itself, and it is usually on the spur of the moment and it quickly passes. It becomes dissent when it continues for longer than the split second, when the same players get eventually "frustrated" or it becomes orchestrated by a group.

There are other examples. I recently cautioned a player who felt that his team should have been awarded a penalty, not for his first little dig, or even his second, which I accepted as understandable frustration. But when he restarted the debate and offered his view for the third time, some 50 seconds later, my patience expired – wouldn't yours?

Please remember that any expression of dissent can attract a yellow card, but most referees only react to the blatant act. Just think what would happen if every dissenter were cautioned? The worst manifestation of this is abuse, usually involving the use of foul language. Again, the law is clear; a player who uses foul or abusive language shall be sent off. This must be in the opinion of the referee. You can see that a docker from Tilbury may have a different view of what is bad language from a lay preacher from Canterbury! The Law also does not discriminate where the recipient of the abuse is concerned.

It can be the referee, linesman, opponent, team-mate, manager or even spectator but it is up to the referee to decide. Most referees will tell you that an accusation of cheating can get a player first use of the showers.

Players who racially abuse opponents usually do it to attract a violent response. Indeed, no words need actually be said, **gestures** form part of sign language which **can**, of course, **be foul**.

Again, the officials are quite discerning when choosing whether to punish. The aim is to eliminate those who use words to threaten, provoke or abuse. If a bad word is uttered in frustration a good referee can manage the situation. I say usually because sometimes this can have disastrous results. A goalkeeper was encouraging his defenders by using some choice language at the top of his voice. The referee had a quiet word with his captain, suggesting that he should ask him to desist. The captain obliged – from a distance of 50 yds – with “Micky, cut out the f\*\*\*\*\* swearing, or the ref will send you off!” Nice try ref!

We do not go looking for problems, the paperwork takes most of the evening as it is, but referees cannot have their control threatened, and abuse of anyone is unacceptable. *Remember, you may be right in having a different view but you do not have the right to express that view*; except in the bar afterwards. But that is a different matter, and it does show we are all human beings, which is where I came in.

Andy Legg It Makes You Smile

*(Ed. These views were written 27 years ago by Andy Legg for The Mitre, the magazine of the Fulham Society. Does it remind you of anything?)*

**Thanks to The Chiltern Referee**



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# Willy the 'Red Card' Referee

## VAR.....The tale continues!

*VAR has gone too far  
I need a drink where's the bar?  
VAR decisions take too long  
Sit and wait, you have to be strong  
VAR confirms that the armpits are offside  
I was so upset I nearly cried  
For the next decision it was the forwards toe  
Let's leave it alone and let the game flow  
Let the ref make the decisions  
Whether or not they are in a good position  
Win some, lose some that's how it was  
But the VAR has made us all cross*

*So next Saturday when you are the ref  
Just relax and take a big breath  
On the pitch and you are all alone  
No VAR but the players will moan  
'Will you be an assistant, here's a flag you choose'  
The substitutes walk away as they all refuse  
No one to help but quick to tell me I'm wrong  
Boring, boring it's the same old song*

*You know you have to do your bit  
And tell the player he was offside by his armpit  
The player will think you'll having a laugh  
If he continues it will be an early bath  
The player will tell you you're mad in the head  
Then the only action is to show a red*

*There is a monitor by the side of the pitch  
 If it's not going to be used then throw it in a ditch  
 But like it, hate it, it's here to stay  
 But most of us wish it would go away*

*VAR decisions made from a hundred miles away  
 Just let the ref has his or her say  
 Sometimes we're right and sometimes we're wrong  
 But all through the season we all get along*

*Laws are different from the Premier to the local park  
 They're really not clear we are all in the dark  
 Maybe only offside in the penalty area?  
 Worse or better can it get any scarier?*

*If VAR was food  
 It would not be my favourite dish  
 Just one bite and we would all think  
 Virtually Absolute Rubbish!*

*What do you think of VAR.....??*

**Willy the 'Red Card' Ref**



**You Must Be Joking**



- ◆ My wife got 8 out of 10 on her driver's test--the other two guys managed to jump out of her way.
- ◆ There may be no excuse for laziness, but I'm still looking.
- ◆ Women spend more time wondering what men are thinking than men spend thinking.
- ◆ Give me ambiguity or give me something else.
- ◆ Is it wrong that only one company makes the game Monopoly?
- ◆ Women sometimes make fools of men, but most guys are the do-it-yourself type.

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## **Surrey FA Appoint a New CEO**

### **The Surrey FA Website has issued the following**

Sally Lockyer has been appointed as our new Chief Executive Officer. Sally brings a wealth of knowledge and experience spanning 20-years within the sports industry across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

The former CEO of the British Athletes Commission, a sports marcomms agency and TV production company, Sally has also previously held senior roles at the Commonwealth Games, numerous World Championship events and worked with the Champions League, Juventus, AC Milan and Fulham Football Club alongside global sports brands Nike, Kappa and Lotto.

Sally is currently an Independent Non-Executive Director at Triathlon England and as a long-standing member of the organisation's strategy working group has helped double membership revenues from £600,000 to £1.3million, launched the hugely successful GOTri entry level product, on target to bring 100,000 new participants into triathlon and increase the sport's online coverage from 500,000 to 10 million views.

Sally said: "I am excited to be joining Surrey FA as Chief Executive and looking forward to working with all our stakeholders in particular The FA, trustees, county members and our talented in-house team. We have a great opportunity to leverage the hosting of UEFA Euro 2020 and UEFA Women's Championships in 2021, to engage and inspire even more players into football. I am looking forward to meeting and supporting our growing clubs, leagues, coaches, officials, players and army of dedicated volunteers so that, together, we can realise the huge potential of the game across the County."

Surrey FA Chairman Les Pharo said: "We are delighted that Sally has been appointed. Sally brings with her a wealth of experience in sport and the Board and I look forward to working with her for the benefit of the game in Surrey."

Surrey FA's ongoing strategic plan through to 2021 focuses on supporting and growing the county's leagues, clubs and volunteer workforce as well as recruiting, developing and upskilling an increasingly inclusive and diverse pool of players, referees and coaches.

*Ed. We at Woking Referees Society welcome the appointment of Sally Lockyer as CEO of Surrey FA. We wish her every success in her new role and hope that she can find the time to pay us a visit at some point in the near future.*



## HOW TO S-E-E YOURSELF!

**Good referees, as distinct from just competent ones, often see their refereeing as a means of providing the game with just what it needs.**

One can argue for ever about what a game of football needs apart from a good referee, but it can all be boiled down to three important qualities. If the first two of these are provided by the right kind of refereeing, the third one invariably follows on quite naturally.

*S is for 'safety'.* It is the referee's task to ensure that players can partake of football in a safe environment. Not allowing flailing arms, crunching late tackles or undue aggression to become the order of the day are examples of how a referee can provide the safety aspect.

*E is for 'equality',* which means that absolute fearless impartiality is required. Players must not be allowed to get away with cheating, intimidation, diving and similar unacceptable forms of wrongful behaviour. Referees nipping in the bud such actions, and tantrums by managers also, are able to play a major part in ensuring that justice is done and equality prevails for everyone.

If the referee makes absolutely certain that he, and his assistants, are doing their best to provide safety and equality for all participants, the quality number 3 should follow on. *The third E stands for 'enjoyment'.*

**S – E – E .... Safety, equality, enjoyment!**  
What more does a game of football need if a good, competent, honest, fearless referee has done his level best to provide those qualities?

Spotted in The Benchmark Sheffield and Hallamshire County RA

# Pages From Yesteryear

## **BRIAN HALL WRITES . . .in a Wealdstone FC programme**

I have for some time been not so much concerned but more interested in the state of our national game. I know that as a Manager I should be more concerned, but feel that as a non league manager I am merely a voice in the dark, that any opinions and views are not relevant nor interesting BUT, at least I get the opportunity to stand on my soap box in this column and convey my views without interruption although they may be somewhat restricted. Such restrictions may I add, are not imposed by the Club, but by the authorities in football.

I was overjoyed some 10-12 years ago at the formation of The Alliance League, which eventually paved the way to the current pyramid system of promotion and relegation, subject of course once again to certain restrictions. I regret to say that I feel that some of those restrictions may be political, and are possibly inconsistent depending on where the club is situated, and on the relationship between the club and the various local certificate granting authorities. I fail to understand these inconsistencies, as I honestly feel that a fire or fire risk is exactly the same, and has the same effect whether it be in Lands End or John O'Groats. Why can there not be a National criteria which is NOT open to different interpretations by different authorities?

I stated before that I felt the inception of the 'Pyramid' was most welcome, and would imagine that feeder leagues would tend to emulate or copy those comparing in more senior competitions, in exactly the same way that youngsters copy or ape their heroes, and learn the game from those above. The learning process is so obvious that it is hardly worthy of comment. I would like to think that the pinnacle for any player is to eventually represent his country at World Cup level.

Likewise I would like to think that officials i.e. referees and linesmen would also wish to enjoy their own pyramid system, which is not unlike our own in many ways, inasmuch that promotion is gradual, culminating in becoming a F.I.F.A. referee should one be so fortunate - but basically that it is the equivalent of playing for one's own country, and is an extremely high honour. I am somewhat critical from there on however, on the consistency at F.I.F.A. level, and as the World Cup tends to be the showpiece, with lessons learned being filtered down to our national game. The results were 1) Players must wear socks up and have shin-guards. 2) Level is no longer offside.

My views are that the former change may make the players look smarter, but that the latter allows more latitude for the poor linesman to get it wrong. However, OUR officials seem even more concerned about rings and jewellery, encroachment or dissent, whilst F.I.F.A. referees do not appear to worry about these futile laws, nor does there seem to be much action over many of the others.

You see I really really want to see our national game revert to the cloth cap, everybody in together, healthy competitive game. Present standards of society and human behaviour will ruin our game eventually.

After some five years or so of not having an English club in European Competition, and that was because of the behaviour of society, we eventually looked forward to the first leg of Man. Utd v. Montpellier a couple of weeks ago.

The game was littered with players rolling about in feigned agony, there was bad feeling between the teams, the referee allowed players to wear any amount of jewellery, the home crowd seemed extremely hostile, and I felt no warmth from the game at all. Was it worth waiting for? I fear not. I understand competition, but the time for honest good manners and genuine sportsmanship must return to our game and our society soon – or else I fear the total decimation of eventually all sport.

So, the next time a player is "injured", and the goalkeeper kicks the ball intentionally out of play, and the ensuing throw-in is sportingly returned to the opposition, is it done in the true spirit of the game or has it just been emulated or copied from the World Cup?

If this spirit is with good intent, why do players kick the ball away from incidents, why do goalkeepers keep their feet up, why do players encroach, why do referees beckon people over or point fingers in players chests, and why when asked a reasonable question, can they fail to answer, or in fact become somewhat aggressive? Why then are opposition supporters so "mickey taking" of each other? Why are we so desperate to return to Europe, when it doesn't appear to me to be much friendlier and possibly just as hostile as before.

There is no point in continuing to talk about it. The time has come for personal action, and that means YOU! If you are a player, an official or a supporter, the time has come to think about where football and in fact sport is going. Time for society, and we are all a part of it, to examine ourselves. It will do no harm. Enjoy the game.

***This first appeared in The Warbler May 1991***

### **You Must Be Joking**



- ◆ I'll bet you \$4,567 you can't guess how much I owe my bookie.
- ◆ Behind every great man is a woman rolling her eyes.
- ◆ If you keep both feet firmly planted on the ground, you'll have trouble putting on your pants.
- ◆ A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kick boxing.
- ◆ When I married Miss Right, I had no idea her first name was Always.



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