REFEREING





JOINT PUBLICATION OF FA EDUCATION AND THE REFEREES' ASSOCIATION VOLUME 26 OCTOBER 2015

Ken Aston MBE:

a referee with vision

Also inside

Adam Gale-Watts

Offside - interfering

with an opponent

Jon Moss *Memories of the 2015 FA Cup Final*

Amy Rayner
Reflection on the
1st women's FA Cup
Final to be played
at Wembley

RA-FA LIAISON COMMITTEE

Chairman

David Elleray

Chairman – FA Referees' Committee President – The Referees' Association

The FA Referees' Committee

David Horlick – Vice Chairman

The FA Refereeing Department

Neale Barry FA Head of Senior Referee Development

Ian Blanchard FA Senior National Game Referee Manager

FA National Referee Manager – Recruitment, Retention & Development Roger Vaughan

Daniel Meeson FA National Referee Manager – Volunteers Keith Stroud FA National Referee Manager – Workforce

The Referees' Association

Paul Field Acting RA General Manager

David Crick RA representative on FA Council; member of FA Referees' Committee

The RA-FA Youth Council

Will Finnie Chairman

Contributors:

David Elleray, Ian Blanchard, Neale Barry, Daniel Meeson, Adam Gale-Watts, Martin Atkinson, Jon Moss, Amy Rayner, Simon Breivik, Joanna Stimpson, Lisa Benn, Farai Hallam, Jack Nield, Ross Joyce, Mike Penn, Darren England, Simon Bennett, Harry Lennard, Craig Pawson, Keith Stroud, Roger Vaughan, Will Finnie, George Lowe, Josh Ainscow, Adam Davies, Tom Bowkett, Ian Tucker, Barry Ereira, Andy Wilding, A.J.Dale, Pat Bakhuizen



Editorial Team:

David Elleray, Ian Blanchard, Thomas Coupland

Design: St. George's Park Design Studio

Image Recognition: Getty Images, FA Education

Acknowledgements:

The contents of "Refereeing" are copyright of The Football Association. No articles, features or any aspects can be reproduced or photocopied without written permission of The Football Association. The views of this journal are not necessarily those of The Football Association or The Referees' Association

Published By:

FA Education, The Football Association, St. George's Park, Newborough Road, Needwood, Burton-Upon-Trent, DE13 9PD

Website:

TheFA.com/Refereeing

Email:

Education@TheFA.com ra@footballreferee.org

The FA Crest is a registered trademark of The Football Association. © The Football Association 2004











| Foreword | David Elleray | 4 |
|--|-----------------------------|----|
| Playing Advantage | lan Blanchard | 6 |
| DOGSO or SPA? | Daniel Meeson | 10 |
| Offside – Interfering with an opponent | Adam Gale-Watts | 14 |
| Offside – Clarification | IFAB | 21 |
| Ken Aston MBE – A referee with vison | | 22 |
| Tribute to Joel Richards | Mike Penn | 26 |
| What it was like refereeing the 2015 UEFA Europa League Final | Martin Atkinson | 28 |
| Memories of the 2015 FA Cup Final | Jon Moss | 30 |
| Reflection on the 1st Women's FA Cup final to be played at Wembley | Amy Rayner | 36 |
| Injury prevention | Simon Breivik | 40 |
| The new FA referees' course | Keith Stroud | 42 |
| Over 100 young referees graduate The FA Referee Development Programme | Daniel Meeson | 44 |
| Introducing two new County Referee Development Officers | Joanna Stimpson & Lisa Benn | 46 |
| Cerebral Palsy Football World Championships | Farai Hallam | 47 |
| My experience refereeing at the 2015 Dr Pepper Dallas Cup 2015 | Jack Nield | 48 |
| Be sensible on social media | | 49 |
| The Iber Cup | Ross Joyce | 50 |
| Dale Farm Milk Cup 2015 – FA Referee Development Group Report | | 52 |
| RAFAYC updates | | 54 |
| RA News | | 59 |





FOREWORD

Sport is ever-changing and football is no exception.

As the game changes, so too does refereeing and the Laws of the Game, which are the structure for every match in the world regardless of location or level. Indeed, one of the enduring attractions of football is that it is a simple game with one of the smallest Law books of any sport, the vast majority of which apply at all levels of football from grassroots to the World Cup final.

Changes to the Laws and to the way the game is refereed are often the result of changes in the way the game is played causing referees and the Law-makers to reflect upon what football is doing and expects.

For example, some time ago 'intent' was removed from Law 12 (except for handball) as the vast majority of fouls should not technically have been penalised because the offender did not intend to foul the opponent.

Most fouls were just mistimed challenges so football was in a strange place where challenges that everyone accepted were fouls were not offences according to the wording of Law 12. Sensibly, the Law was revised to come into line with what might be termed custom and practice in the game.

The recent offside clarification from the International FA Board (IFAB) is another example of the Law reflecting football's expectations. The removal of 'distract' from Law 12 two years ago had, unintentionally, caused some situations technically not to be offside when the whole of football expected them to be penalised, hence the clarification of 'interfering with an opponent' issued by IFAB in the summer.

Whenever a Law changes or is clarified, a period of education takes place and one educational truism is that you 'learn from your mistakes'. Very early this season, in the Liverpool v Bournemouth game, Liverpool's goal was incorrectly allowed when it should have been

given offside. Liverpool's Coutinho clearly attempted to play the ball which was close to him and this impacted on the Bournemouth goalkeeper who delayed his movement to wait and see if the attacker kicked the ball or not. Sadly, the assistant referee did not indicate offside and although this was not good for him, it did bring the IFAB's clarification into sharp focus and debate and many, many people learned from this error of judgement. To help you avoid any such offside mistakes we reproduce The IFAB's circular and a highly readable and helpful article from Adam Gale-Watts of the PGMOL.

While football tends to drive the Laws, there have been times when the Laws and the game have benefited from the drive and vison of an individual. Perhaps the greatest visionary in modern refereeing was Ken Aston, the centenary of whose birth we marked on 1 September. Ken Aston is credited with bringing into the game a number of features that we all now regard as fundamental namely the black and white referee uniform, coloured assistant referee flags, 4th officials and, most significantly, red and yellow cards.

This edition pays tribute to Ken's impact on refereeing and football in general and, if you do not already know, you will discover how he came to invent the red and yellow card system after Jackie Charlton had been 'booked' in a crucial 1966 World Cup match and knew nothing about it until well after the game.

The culmination of any season is being appointed to a Cup final and in this edition we bring you insights from the match officials of The FA Cup Final, UEFA Europa League final and the first FA Women's Cup Final to be played at

Hopefully, these articles will inspire many of you to aim to officiate in such important finals in the future and we also bring you motivational

insights into football tournaments that are accessible to those of you not yet at the top level of refereeing.

At the time of writing, The FA Executive announced significant cuts to all areas of The FA's organisation. The reasons are well known and we now wait to see what impact they will have in all areas and especially refereeing. As we all know, refereeing is sometimes regarded as a necessary evil and in that context it was most encouraging to learn that The FA's new CEO, Martin Glenn, regards it as a core activity.

Refereeing is an integral part of the game not least because it effects the quality of football at all levels so we must continue to recruit and develop top quality referees.

As the season starts and we look forward to the excitement to come we also extend our condolences to all those from the refereeing family who lost friends and loved ones during the close season. In particular, we think and pray for the family and friends of Joel Richards, a young referee who was so tragically killed with his uncle and grandfather in the Tunisian beach atrocity. As you will read in the tributes to him, Joel clearly was not only a talented referee but also a very special young man.

My best wishes to you all for a successful, enjoyable and injury-free season – I recommend reading Simon's Breivik's article

David Elleray

Chairman, FA Referees' Committee President, The Referees' Association





TEMPERATURE OF THE MATCH

In a highly charged match, playing the advantage should be done with caution and should only be applied if the advantage significantly benefits the offended team and then only if it does not risk match control.

By awarding a free-kick, it may help to calm the proceedings without acting as a negative influence on the game.

POSITION ON THE FIELD OF PLAY

he Traffic Lights analogy can be used to lelp decide when to apply the advantage.

The red zone is a high-risk area. If advantage is played here and the defending team lose the ball and a goal results, the referee could be subject to a negative reaction from fans and teams.

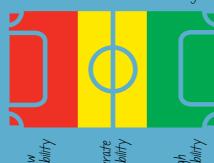
The only exception might be to allow play to continue from an offside signal if the ba goes safely through to the goalkeeper.

As play moves upfield the benefits of applying advantage increasingly balance out the risks.

Traffic lights

Defensive third

Attacking third



MATCH CONTROL

All advantage decisions are at the referee's discretion and while people often talk about the idea of 'team benefit', the most important consideration is 'control benefit' Never put your match control at risk by playing the advantage.

ATTACKING OPPORTUNITY

The probability of a promising attack or an attempt on goal must be a consideration.

For instance, more and more teams are equipped with a specialist free-kick taker and so often want the free-kick around the opponents' penalty area as this is a key attacking opportunity for them.

Whereas, merely having or keeping possession of the ball does not constitute advantage.

The Alpha Sof Advantage

THE 4P'S ARE A USEFUL GUIDE WHEN CONSIDERING WHETHER OR NOT TO APPLY THE ADVANTAGE CLAUSE:

Possession

Active and credible control by the player fouled or bu a team-mate

Without possession, none of the other P's matter

POTENTIAL

Probability of a continuing and immediate attack or an attempt on goal

PLAYERS

Number and skill of attackers versus the number and skill of defenders

PROXIMITY

Distance from goal (traffic lights

In deciding about possession and evaluating potential, referees need to consider the players and the proximity of the offence.

Signalling Advatage

- 1. More commonly, hand and voice signals are given as soon as it is determined that the advantage exists
- Less commonly, there is a brief delay described as "silent advantage" or "wait and see" - before signalling.

This can take place when the infringement is not seen and so it is possible to determine immediately whether it is significant, or what the more desirable outcome for the disadvantaged team is. The risk of this strategy, which is technically against the Laws of the Game, is that it could lead to player retribution or, if another offence immediately occurs, having to go back to the original offence can risk credibility.

HOW LONG DO WE MAINTAIN THE ADVANTAGE SIGNAL?

The advice is three to four seconds and onc the advantage signal is dropped it is no advised to go back to the original offence a it lacks credibility to do so.

Summmary

All advantage decisions should be based primarily on match control and genuine attacking opportunity.

Match control should never be risked by

Most of the time, the outcome of an advantage cannot be second-guessed because to do so would require knowing what would have happened in the absence of the decision. Either giving it or not giving it could be effective but it can seldom be described as wrong.

Final Message: Never use advantage to your disadvantage

D0G50SPA?

Daniel Meeson, FA National Referee Manager (Volunteer Workforce), explores the challenges of recognising the difference between denying a goal scoring opportunity and stopping a promising attack.

MSDENS

One of the biggest decisions in a game for any referee is deciding whether a foul has taken away a clear and obvious goal-scoring opportunity or whether it has taken away a promising attack.

It is often a difficult decision to make but is always an important one that is linked closely to CONSEQUENCE and OUTCOME.

The restarts, the outcomes, the impact and consequence can be very different, but the following equations reinforce why it is essential that we get these decisions right.

- Taking away a promising attack = free-kick (under normal circumstances) + caution for defending player who has committed the offence (where necessary)
- Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity = free-kick or penalty (location dependent) + sending off the player who has committed the offence

Middlesbrough goalkeeper Dimitrios Konstantopoulos reacts as referee David Coote brandishes the red card for a foul on Clayton Donaldson that denied a goalscoring opportunity

RECOGNISEDISTINGUISHREACT

How we recognise and distinguish between these types of offences can often be difficult. As referees we make hundreds of decisions and non-decisions each game, often at great speed and so judging the fine margins between the two types of offence can be hard to detect and deal with.

Fortunately there are tools that we have at our disposal to help us when confronted with this challenge.

LAWS OF THE GAME

If in doubt, always remember what the Laws of the Game tell us in relation to what a referee must consider when deciding whether or not to send a player off for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity.

- 1. **DISTANCE** Between the offence and the goal
- 2. **CONTROL** The likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball
- 3. **DIRECTION** The direction of play
- 4. **DEFENDERS** Location and number of defenders
- 5. OFFENCE The offence that denies an opponent a goal scoring opportunity may be an offence that incurs a direct or in-direct free-kick

Unfortunately, the Laws of the game do not provide guidance and clarity around what constitutes a promising attack.

Players, coaches and often the spectators watching the game can provide you with useful indicators for what a promising attack is, but we must be careful to not use these external factors as our only influence.

Therefore we must refer back to our bullet points in the Laws of the Game around the denial of an obvious goal scoring opportunity and work to check and challenge before making that ultimate decision.

WHAT CAN WE USE TO HELP?

These kinds of decisions can be quite common. Rarely will a season go by where a referee does not have to make a judgement on whether the offence has taken away an obvious goal scoring opportunity or a promising attack. Some offences are very clear but for some of the tighter, more borderline incidents we need to recognise, distinguish and react accordingly.

With this in mind, we can use a quick and easy acronym to help us make the right decision - the F.A.T Referee.

- F = FREEZE FRAME AND FOCUS
- A = ANALYSE THE ACTUALS
- T = TAKE THE PICTURE, TAKE YOUR TIME AND TAKE ACTION



Here's how this simple acronym can help get these big decisions right.

TREEZE FRAME AND FOCUS

- Prepare mentally before the foul challenge some referees will say
 the words 'yellow' or 'red' in their head in the build up to the
 challenge. At the point of impact, they will then have the colour they
 were saying in their mind and act correctly
- Prepare physically before the foul challenge are you in the right position to detect the offence? Who commits the offence? What do they actually do? Do you need to get closer, wider, or give yourself a better angle?
- Focus your mind, focus on what is important
- Watch the hands and the feet as the offence can occur from both
- Take in the bigger picture don't neglect what's around. Where are the defenders? What's the direction? Have they got the ball? Is the ball under control?
- When the offence occurs: remember your offender, remember your restart

\mathcal{Y}_{x} ANALYSE THE ACTUALS

- Remember your freeze frame because the picture will soon change
- What has actually happened? Who has done what? Where did it happen? How did it happen and to whom?
- What is the offence? What is the sanction? What is the restart?
- Does it fit all the criteria to be a denial of an obvious goal scoring opportunity?
- What do we think football expects?

TAKE THE PICTURE, TAKE YOUR TIME AND TAKE ACTION

- As soon as the offence takes place, take a picture in your mind store it and make your decision based on that picture
- Park the offending player and bank their number
- Stay calm and use controlled, confident and cool body language
- Try to be immune from influence and pressure from players, coaches and others around you
- Replay the incident mentally again and again, thinking back to the
 FAT acronum
- Consult your team if necessary they may have a different or clearer angle. After all, your assistant referees are there to assist you
- Take your time, there is no rush. It is always better to take time and get the right decision than making a quick decision that is incorrect





SUMMARY

Denial of a goal scoring opportunity or stopping a promising attack is a big decision, not least because one leads in a player being sent off and the other does not.

It is extremely important to get such a decision right, so remember:

- These decisions are key match decisions let's collectively make the right decision
- We have a responsibility to football to get them right
- There are often telltale signs between the two
- Refer to the Laws of the Game in order distinguish between the two
- Use the F.A.T acronym freeze frame and focus, analyse the actuals and take your time before taking action

OFFSIDE. INTERFERING WITH AN OPPONENT

Adam Gale-Watts, PGMOL senior coach for assistant referees and former FIFA assistant referee, explains what the new offside guidance published by IFAB means for assistant referees and the game as a whole

On 17 July, The International FA Board (IFAB) published additional guidance regarding Law 11 – Offside, with specific relevance to the practical interpretation of interfering with an opponent.

It was also made clear that a 'save' can be made by any player (not just a goalkeeper) and relates to a ball which is going into or close to the goal.

These clarifications follow detailed deliberations between the IFAB Technical Sub-Committee and the IFAB Technical Advisory Panel, which consists of refereeing experts from all of the Confederations.

The clarifications and especially the two additional 'interfering with an opponent' bullet points do not constitute a change in the Laws of the Game, but aim to provide greater clarity for the interpretation of interfering with an opponent.

It is important to note that the current interpretation of offside for 'Interfering with Play, Interfering with an Opponent, and Gaining Advantage from being in that position' remain unchanged, and as such the additional guidance contained in the two bullet points is an addition to current practice.

The purpose of this short article is to provide you with a guide to the interpretation of the additional guidance, with illustrative examples used to assist you with understanding the practical application.

Additional Guidance

A player in an offside position shall be penalised if he:

 clearly attempts to play a ball which is close to him when this action impacts on an opponent

OR

• makes an obvious action which clearly impacts on the ability of an opponent to play the ball

Clearly attempts to play a ball which is close to them when this action impacts on an opponent

It is important to begin by defining the three key elements match officials have to consider when making a judgement:

clearly attempts – this wording is designed to prevent a player who runs towards the ball from quite a long distance being penalised unless they get close to the ball

close – this is important so that a player in an offside position is not penalised when the ball goes clearly over their head or clearly in front of them

impact – applies to a player's ability or potential to play the ball and will include situations where an opponent's movement to play the ball is delayed, hindered or prevented by the player in an offside position

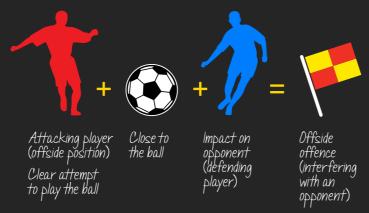
However it is important to remember that just because an attacking player is in an offside position it does not always mean that they will have an impact on an opponent.

To flag or not to flag?

When considering the decision-making process, it is important to remember that **ALL three elements are required** before an offside offence may be penalised.

In terms of the general principles to consider:

- judgement should be based on the **physical evidence** i.e. **movement and actions** of the player in an offside position
- attacking players who clearly benefit from being in an offside position by clearly attempting to play a ball that is close, and in doing so impact on an opponent's ability to play the ball should be penalised



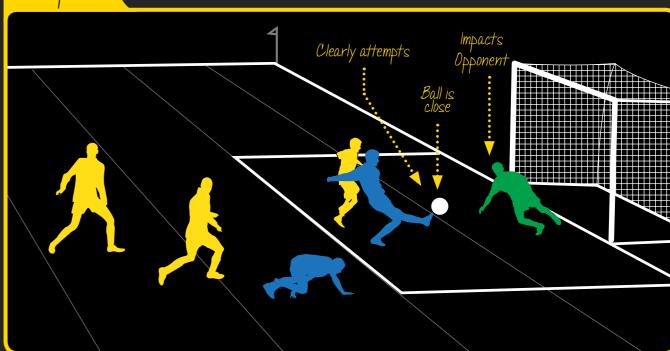
To help illustrate the key considerations for turning the additional guidance into practical interpretation, five match situations are considered:

Impacts Opponent Call is close

The blue attacking player **clearly attempts to play the ball** by stretching with their left leg in an attempt to play the ball and so the ball is **close**. The IFAB clarification means it does not matter if they touch the ball or not. The attacker's clear attempt to play the ball **impacts** on the goalkeeper who delays their movement or reaction to see if or where the attacker will kick the ball.



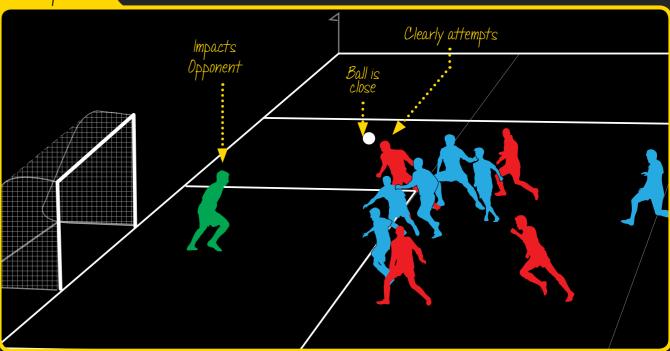
Example 2



There is a **clear attempt** to play the ball by the blue player who stretches their left leg in an attempt to play the ball. No contact is made with the ball, but the ball is **close**. The player's actions **impact** on an opponent - in this case the goalkeeper - who needs to delay their action to wait and see if the attacking player in an offside position touches or plays the ball.

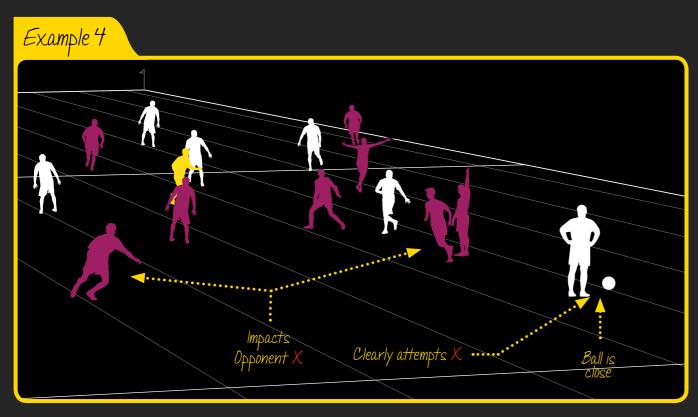


Example 3



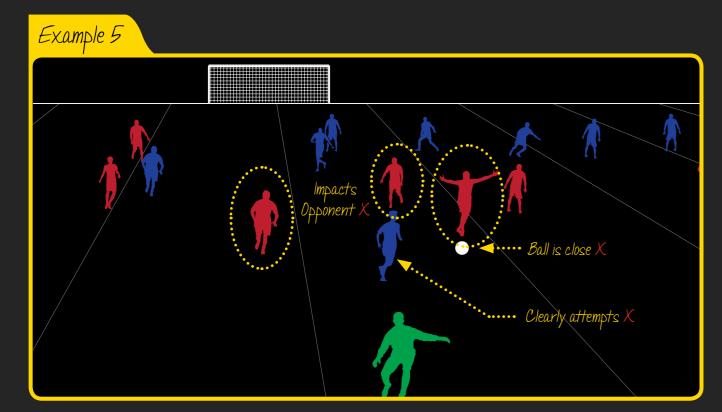
There is a **clear attempt** to play the ball by the red player, who jumps to make a clear attempt to play the ball with their head. No contact is made with the ball, but the ball is **close**. The player's actions **impact** on an opponent, in this case the goalkeeper, who needs to delay their action to wait and see if the attacking player in an offside position touches or plays the ball.





The white player is in an offside position, but **does not attempt to play the ball**. By standing still there is no clear action, which impacts on the ability of any opponent to play the ball. As there is **no clear attempt to play the ball**, no judgement is needed as to whether or not the player's actions impact on an opponent. In this case they **do not impact** on an opponent as the player does not prevent or hinder any opponent having the opportunity to play the ball.

Expected Outcome
NO OFFSIDE
OFFENCE
(play should continue)



The player in an offside position **does not attempt to play the ball**. The player is **not close** to the ball and it is clearly in front. As there is **no clear attempt to play the ball**, no judgement is needed as to whether or not the player's actions impact on an opponent. In this case they do not impact on an opponent and although defending players appeal for an offside flag to be raised, this is not considered an impact as the player does not prevent or hinder any opponent having the opportunity to play the ball.

Expected Outcome
NO OFFSIDE
OFFENCE
(play should continue)

Makes an obvious action which clearly impacts on the ability of an opponent to play the ball

As before it is important to consider the key components of the decision-making process:

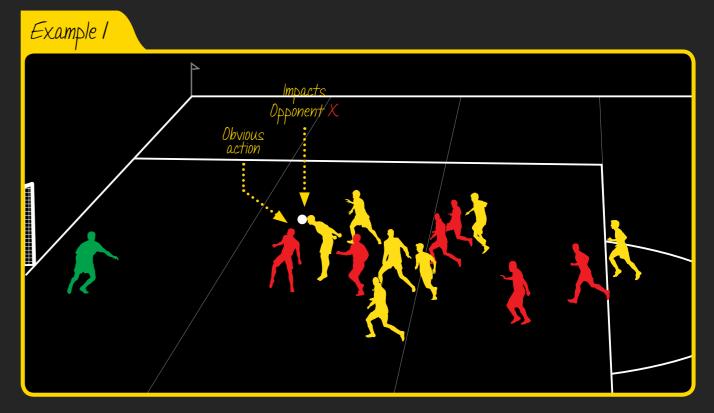


It is worth remembering the working definition of 'impact' and that match officials are encouraged to use the physical evidence that is clear to them at the time. 'Impact' applies to an opponent's ability (or potential) to play the ball and will include situations where an opponent's movement to play the ball is delayed, hindered or prevented by the player in an offside position.

In terms of general principles, to <u>impact the ability of an</u> opponent to play the ball:

- The attacking player in an offside position must make an obvious action. This action must be obvious but does not need to be deliberate
- The opponent would usually have a clear view of the attacking player in an offside position
- The opponent would need to delay their action to wait and see if the attacking player in an offside position touches or plays the ball
- The opponent's movement or ball-playing options are clearly restricted by the physical movement and/or actions of the attacking player in an offside position

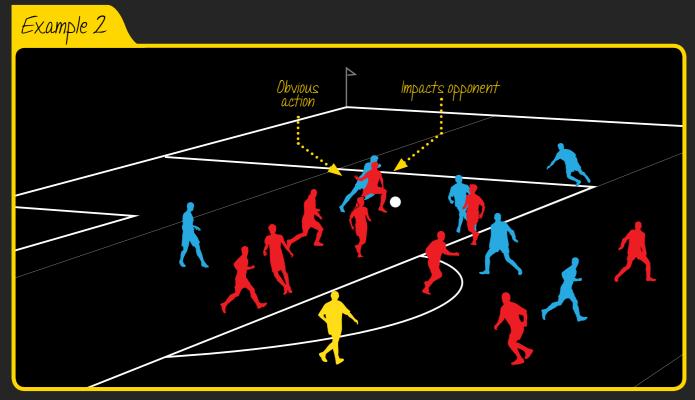
To assist in understanding the two key components, two situations can be considered:



The red attacking player in an offside position does not attempt to play the ball and does not challenge an opponent for the ball. The red player does not prevent or hinder the white defender from playing the ball. Therefore, the attacking player in an offside position does not have a clear impact on the ability of the opponent to play the ball. The consequence of the defender heading the ball into their own goal does not mean that there has been an impact - the Laws do not exist to protect players from making mistakes.

Expected Outcome
NO OFFSIDE
OFFENCE
(play should continue)

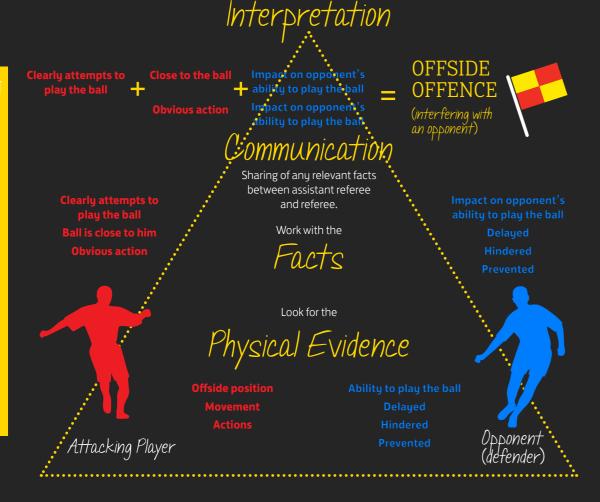
Offside Clarification Offside! Interfering with an Opponent



The obvious movement and actions of the attacking blue player in an offside position clearly impacts on the ability of the red defender to play the ball as the blue player hinders the defender's movement towards the ball. It is important to remember that the obvious action must impact on a realistic or genuine opportunity for the opponent to play the ball before an offside offence occurs.



In summary the following aide memoir can assist match officials, assessors/ observers and anyone else nterested in understanding the key principles of the additional guidance. Each match situation will rely on its own facts, hence the need to continue to make best use of the physical evidence available to reach a reasonable outcome.















OFFSIDE -CLARIFICATION

To all football associations, confederations and FIFA

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON LAW 11 – OFFSIDE

Following requests from a number of football associations and confederations regarding offside, The IFAB would like to provide additional clarification and/or guidance relating to the definition of the offside offence of 'interfering with an opponent' and also to the definition of 'save' in the context of offside (Laws of the Game, p. 110).

This clarification follows detailed deliberations between our Technical Sub-Committee and the Technical Advisory Panel, which consists of refereeing experts from all the confederations.

Please be informed that this clarification replaces any non-IFAB instructions or guidance received previously with respect to this matter. We trust that this clarification will ensure a higher uniformity in the application of Law 11.

1. "INTERFERING WITH AN OPPONENT"

CLARIFICATION

In addition to the situations already outlined in the Laws of the Game, a player in an offside position shall also be penalised if he:

- Clearly attempts to play a ball which is close to him when this action impacts on an opponent
- Makes an obvious action which clearly impacts on the ability of an opponent to play the ball

- 'Clearly attempts' this wording is designed to prevent a player who runs towards the ball from quite a long distance being penalised (unless he gets close to the ball)
- 'Close' is important so that a player is not penalised when the ball goes clearly over his head or clearly in front of him
- 'Impact' applies to an opponent's ability (or potential) to play the ball and will include situations where an opponent's movement to play the ball is delayed, hindered or prevented by the offside plauer

However, just because a player is an offside position it does not always mean that he has an impact. For example:

- If the ball is on the right-hand side of the field and an 'offside' player in the centre of the field moves into a new attacking position he is not penalised unless this action affects an opponent's ability to play the ball
- Where a player tries to play the ball as it is going into the goal without affecting an opponent, or in situations where there is no opposition player near, he should not be penalised

2. "SAVE"

CLARIFICATION

Law 11 outlines situations when an offside player is penalised by becoming involved in active play and these include (p. 110):

- "Gaining an advantage by being in that position" means playing a ball
- i. That rebounds or is deflected to him off the goalpost, crossbar or an opponent having been in an offside position
- ii. That rebounds, is deflected or is played to him from a deliberate save by an opponent having been in an offside position
- A player in an offside position receiving the ball from an opponent, who deliberately plays the ball (except from a deliberate save), is not considered to have gained an advantage

As indicated in the last sentence a 'save' can be made by any player and is not limited to the goalkeeper. Therefore, The IFAB wishes to clarify that:

A 'save' is when a player stops a ball which is going into or very close to the goal with any part of his body except his hands (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).

NB: This clarification is consistent with the use of the word 'save' in Law 12 - Offences by the Goalkeeper (p. 122).

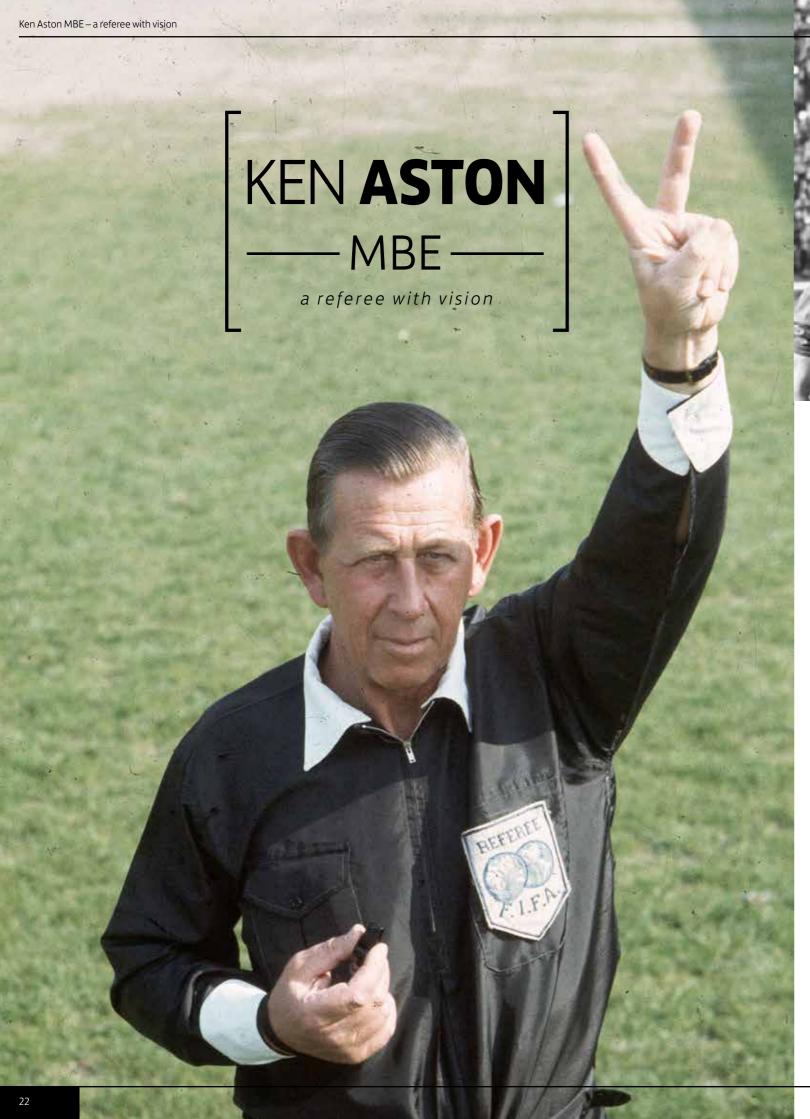
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: CHANGE OF FIFA QUALITY **PROGRAM LOGOS**

Unrelated to Law 11, we would like to take this opportunity to mention the change to the FIFA quality marks on footballs (p. 16), which was not part of the previous correspondence. This change is already reflected in the printed editions of the Laws of the Game 2015/16, which you received recently.

Thank you for your attention and please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or enquiries.

Yours sincerelu. On behalf of the Board of Directors

Lukas Brud Secretary





KEN ASTON WAS ARGUABLY ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL REFEREEING FIGURES OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

He qualified as a referee in 1936 and, following interruptions for World War 2 and military service, he became a Football League linesman (assistant referee) in 1949 and a Football League referee three years later.

Over the course of the next decade he became one of the leading figures in world refereeing and officiated in the 1962 World Cup finals in Chile where he refereed one of the most infamous and violent matches in the tornament's history - the so called 'Battle of Santiago' between the hosts, Chile, and Italy.

Contemporary reports suggest that the build-up to the match was marred by derogatory comments from Italian journalists about Santiago, the capital, and the morality of the women in Chile. On the other side, the Chilean media commented negatively about the Italian team containing some players who had South America passports.

All this led to a febrile atmosphere and the first caution was issued within seconds of the kickoff. After 12 minutes, Aston sent off Italy's Giorgio Ferrini and needed armed police to remove him from the field. This set the tone for the remainder of the match which degenerated into regular brawls and violence, the like of which has never been seen since in the World Cup. To get a real flavour of what happened (and commentator David Coleman's pungent criticism) it is well worth watching the highlights of the match on YouTube.

Working at FIFA

Aston suffered a strained Achilles and did not referee again in the World Cup but he was appointed to the FIFA Referees Committee which he served on for eight years – four of which were as Chairman.

He was responsible for the referees at the 1966, 1970 and 1974 World Cup finals, which was not an easy job. In 1966 he had to go onto the field at Wembley when Rattin, the Argentina captain, was sent off by the German referee but refused to leave the field.

In 1974 he was also involved in a major controversy when Jack Taylor was appointed to referee the final and it was alleged that the original choice, Bobby Davidson of Scotland, had lost out on the final after missing a bad foul when acting as a linesman in one of the semi-finals. FIFA did not appoint specialist linesmen until 1992 so referees at the World Cup finals sometimes had to 'run the line' even though many had not done so for many, many years.





INFLUENCE ON REFEREEING

Ken Aston was a deep thinker about the game and has been credited with many innovations, including:

REFEREE KITS

Before and after the war, the typical referee kit was a jacket or blazer, white shirt, long shorts and long socks.

Ken wanted something more practical and found a black flight jacket in a war surplus store which had a number of useful pockets. He started wearing this with black shorts and, with the colour and cuffs of a white shirt clearly visible, it created the black kit with white collar and cuffs that became the traditional referee kit for many years. Indeed, there are many who would welcome a return to this black and white kit.

LINEMEN'S FLAGS

Ken introduced brightly coloured linesmen's flags, one yellow and one red, to replace the flags that were usually provided by the home team.

This innovation apparently followed a foggy match where he had trouble seeing the brown home team flags. Again, a war surplus store was his inspiration and he found some bright red and yellow material which he used to make flags for his linesmen.

He used his FIFA role for a number of innovations which are now commonplace in the game, most notably:

A substitute referee (which became the 4th official)

Number boards for substitutions

RED AND YELLOW CARDS

Without doubt, Ken's greatest innovation was the system of showing red and yellow cards for cautions and dismissals so that it was clear when the referee cautioned (booked) or sent off a player.

Unlike now when FIFA requires all international officials to have a good working knowledge of English, in Aston's time there were many language problems and players were often cautioned without realising it.

This came to a head in the highly charged World Cup quarter-final at Wembley between England and Argentina. As previously mentioned, Aston had had to intervene when the German referee, Rudolf Kreitlin, sent off the Argentinian captain. What surprised Aston after the match was that several players had been booked without the players being aware of what the referee had done. The most notable of these was England's Jackie Charlton.

Ken was pondering this as he drove away from Wembley and got his inspiration from the way traffic lights make a driver stop:

Green light = go
Amber/yellow light = warning of a coming red light
Red light = stop

He could see a simple application for football:

Yellow card = a warning (caution) that you will be stopped from playing **Red card** = you are sent off and stopped from playing

This simple method of communication to the players and everyone watching was adopted for the 1970 World Cup and soon became a feature of football throughout the world.

After leaving FIFA, he remained very interested in football and refereeing. He was a frequent guest at the Referees' Association Eve of Final Rally and a regular speaker and referee instructor.

Something of a showman, as well as his innovations, Ken was also known for wearing white football boots when he refereed the 1963 FA Cup Final.

There is no doubt that few people have had such a lasting impact on the game.

On Friday 26 June 2015, Joel Richards, a 19-year-old Level 4 referee with The Birmingham County FA, was killed alongside his grandad, Patrick Evans, and his uncle, Adrian Evans, in a terrorist attack while on holiday in Tunisia.



The following is an adaption of the eulogy delivered at Joel's funeral by Mike Penn, Chairman Birmingham County FA and a member of The FA Referees' Committee.

Joel was a talented young man, with the world at his feet.

Born on 3 August 1995 he grew up locally, attending St Mary's School, The Stewart Bathurst High School and then sent to sixth form college at Wood Green to study for his 'A' Levels. He gained a place at the University of Worcester studying Physical Education Sports Science and at the time of his death had just successfully completed his second year.

Joel enjoyed his sports which also included playing Gaelic football for James Connelly, even getting the opportunity to play for them in Ireland. However, his first love was football and he was a keen supporter of Walsall Football Club, seeing them play at Wembley for the first time in their history in March, together with his granddad, uncle and brother Owen.

Joel qualified as a referee in September 2011, aged 16 years old, and his progress since then was nothing short of remarkable. Promotions based on his performances saw him become a Level 4 referee in June 2014 and a member of The FA's National Referee Development Group, one of only a handful of referees in the country to be fast tracked, highlighting Assistant Referee on The FA Contributory Leagues and refereed on the their loss of one so young and so talented. Midland Football League and The West Midlands Regional League.

filling his Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons with more football, refereeing for Wolves Girls FC and fixtures in the Birmingham County Women's League.

Last year, Joel was part of a group of referees selected to represent Birmingham CFA on a trip to Hungary, to showcase the talents of refereeing in Birmingham. Due to his outstanding performances at the tournament, Joel was chosen to referee the U14's Cup final.

He was due to return this summer and had been selected to referee the opening game in front of 6,000 people. The group decided that in memory of Joel, to go ahead with the tour, and they left the day after Joel's funeral doing what Joel would have wanted: smiling. This is because everyone who knew Joel knew his infectious smile. If he smiled, you smiled.

In 2012, Joel was elected by his peers to become Chairman of the newly formed Birmingham County FA Youth Council. During his three years in the position he oversaw many projects which the group were involved with. He was instrumental in an event which raised over £500 for the Teenage Cancer Trust, he supported the delivery of the Empowering Youth Workshop, organised multiple women's football week events, #KeepCalmAndSmileLikeJoel

disability tournaments and supported all Birmingham's County Cup Finals. No job was too small for Joel and he was always looking to support development events and create opportunities for others to get involved in football.

Joel was an extremely talented referee and incredible young leader and there is no doubting that he would have reached the top of the refereeing ladder, such was his drive and determination to succeed.

Birmingham County FA received many e-mails following his death and a couple are shown below as they represent the loss & respect for the

From Liverpool County FA

Just to let you know that everyone here in Liverpool wish to pass on their condolences to all our colleagues in Birmingham, following the tragic loss of one of our young Referees. Words fail us at this very sad time but as we say here YOU NEVER WALK ALONE so if we can do anything to his ability and commitment to refereeing. This also meant he was an help, just ask. Please pass on to Joel's family our heartfelt sadness, at

Although officiating at semi–professional level, Joel was often found At the Cerebral Palsy 2015 World Cup Final at St George's Park Final between Russia and Ukraine a minute's silence was observed. On a beautiful afternoon the silence was deafening, with spectators, officials and all 15 teams from around the world observing it impeccably. A really moving tribute and act of respect for Joel, his granddad and

> Emily Smith a member of staff at the Birmingham County FA wrote a poem which was posted on their website and which the family requested it be read at Joel's funeral

And finally, let us remember this -

It is not the number of years you have lived, BUT what you have done in the years you have lived. This is so very true of Joel.

Too few years lived but what he achieved has left us all with so many memories, a lasting legacy but so many broken hearts.

Everyone at The FA and The Referees' Association extends deepest condolences to Joel's family and friends at the tragic loss of such a young talent and the loss of his granddad, uncle and, indeed, all those who died in the Tunisian terrorist attack.

S M I L E

Joel, that beaming smile, brightened up many a day. Not a bad bone in your body, not a bad word to say.

Always happy, that was your way.

A lovely young man with the world at your feet

A nicer lad we can never hope to meet.

As a Referee you were destined for the top

Always learning, you didn't want to stop.

There's no doubting you were going to go far

Keep blowing that whistle wherever you are.

Your granddad was always at your side,

Sat in his chair, beaming with pride.

He'll be sat now watching over you

Still so proud of everything you do.

Inspiring others, that was your game and

Everyone will always remember your name

Rest in Peace.

By Emily Smith



What it was like refereeing the 2015 UEFA Europa League Final

Martin Atkinson, FIFA Referee, reflects on his experiences taking charge of one of the biggest nights in European football.

At first, I honestly thought the text from Pierluigi Collina - UEFA Chief Refereeing Officer- was a hoax.

And so when he later called me to say I had been appointed to referees this year's UEFA Europa League Final I must admit I was emotional. It was an honour. The hard work and sacrifice had paid off.

The phone call involved a discussion about my team for the game, something which played such an important role in last season's success. I am a big believer that the team gets recognised for their performances, not individuals.

I was delighted when the team was finalised by Pierluigi because I could not have had a better group of professionals:

- Mike Mullarkey and Steve Child (Assistants)
- Andre Marriner and Anthony Taylor (AARs)
- Jake Collin (Reserve Assistant Referee)
- Pavel Kralovec (UEFA Elite Referee from the Czech Republic 4th official)



The news broke at around 5pm on the Monday and soon after my phone went into meltdown. The sheer volume of texts, emails and phone calls was overwhelming. To have so many friends and colleagues take the time to acknowledge our appointment and wish us luck was truly humbling and inspirational.

As part of the announcement, I was asked me to do an interview for UEFA.com which involved half a day of filming and talking about the game. It also underlined the full extent of the appointment and hit home what an achievement this was for us to be involved in such a prestigious game.

On arrival in Warsaw, training and match kit was provided specially embossed with details of the final. A visit to the stadium followed to get a feel for the environment and to undertake a gentle training session. This was also the chance to capture a few photographs, which are, of course, not an option on match dau.

Returning to the hotel, we enjoyed a quiet meal as a team before making sure we got an early night ready for the big day.

The next day, I had to ensure that the build up to the game was the same as any other trip, making sure we prepared in the same professional manner.

I requested the games from the semi-finals to study the teams, tactics and anything that could benefit our team on the night. As normal, following breakfast, we had a short team meeting to discuss the tactics and approach of the teams.

Before long, the evening of the game had arrived. UEFA had kindly arranged for tickets for the officials, which meant my wife Julie and youngest daughter Olivia were at the game. To see them before kick-off as we finished our warm up was a very proud moment.

As for the game, it could not have gone any better. There were eight cautions in total in a hard fought but memorable European final.

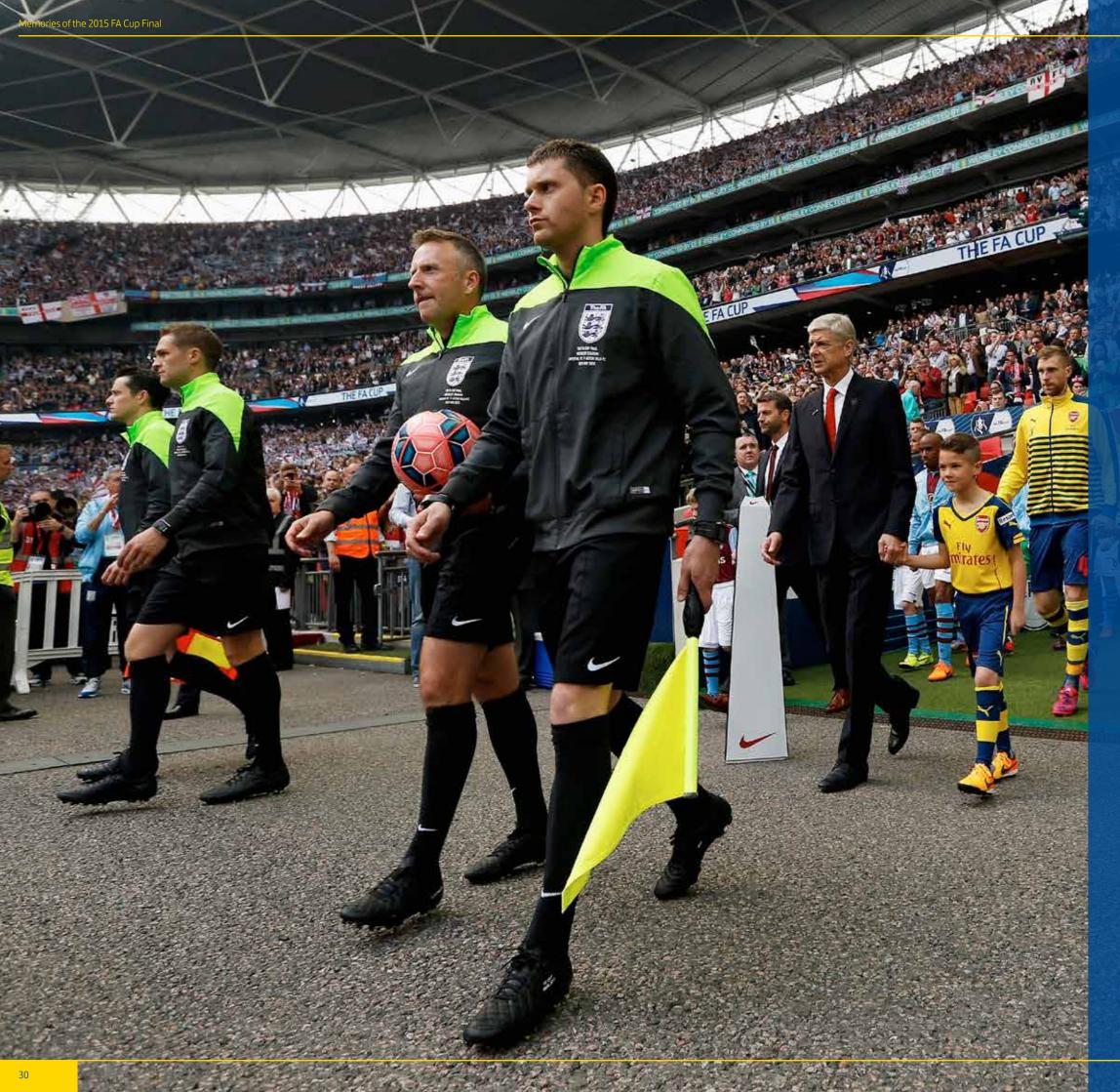
From our perspective, we had delivered. The relief among us was palpable because there was no avoiding the focus that had been on this game, not just from Europe but from across the world. The whole team had pulled together and walking up the steps to receive our medals from Mr Platini has to be the highlight of my refereeing career.

In the dressing room the sense of achievement was overwhelming. The messages of support from home and abroad were so kind - we hadn't let anyone down and made a lot of people proud.

Following the match, the normal de-brief took place with UEFA Match Observer (assessor), Marc Batta, from France. His comments were entirely positive and an endorsement of a job well done.

With formalities over, it was time to eat, drink and celebrate with the family and friends that had travelled to the match before returning home with fantastic memories that will last a lifetime





memories of the THE FACUP FINAL

The team of five officials who took charge of the 2015 FA Cup Final between Arsenal and Aston Villa recount their experiences of taking on the world's biggest domestic football final.

JON MOSS

2015 FA CUP FINAL REFEREE

At 3pm on Monday 20 April 2015 I received a call while on my way to the gym. It was from Peter Elsworth at The FA:

"Hi Jon. Can you do me a favour?" he said as I picked up.

"Yes Peter, of course," I replied.

"Can you referee this year's FA Cup final?"

"What did you say?"

"Can you referee this year's Cup Final?"

When you receive such a call, you are immediately flooded with emotion

To referee The FA Cup final is the realisation of a dream, a lifelong ambition.

It's a huge honour.

As a boy I had watched the Cup Final religiously We arrived at the stadium at about 2.30pm. with my dad, dreaming of playing at Wembley and suddenly there I was, preparing to take charge of the Final as the referee.

Much of my time was taken up by interviews, League games.

I was touched by the huge number of messages and good wishes I received from colleagues, friends and fellow referees from around the At 5.15pm we rang the dressing room bell, world. I made a conscious effort to reply to wished each other well and walked into the each one.

We travelled down to London on the Thursday night to a lovely hotel on the outskirts of London, meeting Simon Bennett and his wife, The noise hit us as we emerged onto the pitch. Charlotte, on arrival.

The next morning we received our kits for the and lined up with the teams. After introductions, weekend before heading to Wembley soon anthems and handshakes, we broke and met after for a tour and a brief meeting with the for the toss up. Sixty seconds later I blew my match day manager.

At the stadium we took in the surroundings, The first half was cagey with three cautions amazed at how much activity was going on for Aston Villa and a late goal for Arsenal five in terms of rehearsals and walk throughs. minutes before half time. The second half saw Pitchside, I did a quick interview with CBBC three more goals for Arsenal and two further and then we were back on the bus and on our cautions for Aston Villa. way back to the hotel.

Following a massage from Barry Philipson, our masseur for the weekend, we were got ourselves ready and headed off into central London for the RA Eve of Final rally. This is a fantastic occasion where past Cup Final referees, young referees and colleagues have the opportunity to listen to and wish the Cup Final officials well.

gave moving speeches before it was over to me to deliver my thoughts on the upcoming game and my journey to Wembley. I must admit it was a very emotional experience with my parents, family and close friends

After my speech, we met with colleagues, signed programmes and posed for photographs before jetting over for a delightful meal at a restaurant in London.

That night, I slept well and before I knew it was FA Cup Final day. I felt great. A light breakfast was followed by a walk with my team around the hotel and a chat about the day ahead.

The next two hours disappeared without a trace, lost to photographs, safety briefings, family and teamsheets.

The next five weeks went by really quickly. After a quick massage and pre-match instructions we were on the pitch for a warmcorrespondence, admin duties and Premier up. The atmosphere was already building as we jogged round and it was great for us all to spot our friends and family who were already in the stadium.

> tunnel. The teams assembled and I chatted to the managers before the signal came to walk

It was a beautiful sunny day. I collected the ball whistle and the 2015 FA Cup Final began.

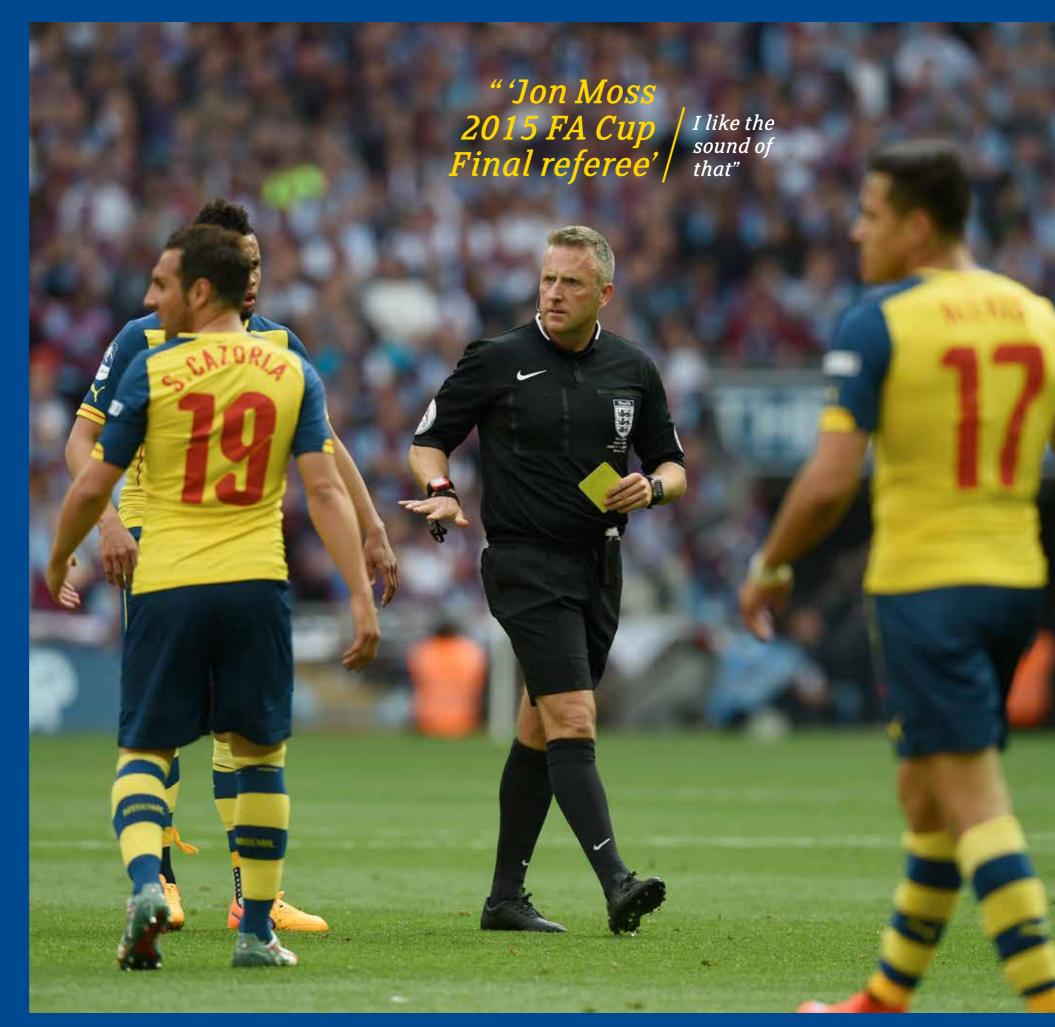
Thirty seconds from time, I took a moment to glance round the stadium and soak in the occasion. Just before I blew my whistle to bring the game to a conclusion I thanked my team of friends who had performed superbly throughout the game.

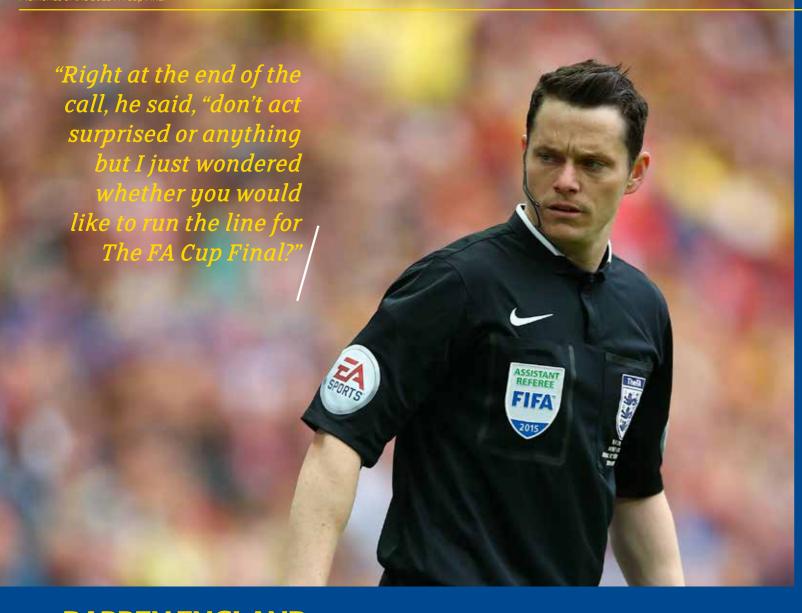
Three guick whistles and the Final was all over. We met in the middle, full of smiles. The game At the Rally both David Elleray and Mike Riley had gone well, nobody would be talking about us. It had been all we had hoped for.

> After a short while we made our way up the 107 steps to receive our medals. We were greeted by congratulations from the supporters en route, which was very touching.

> Back in the changing room we began the post match entertainment which lasted well into

> I would like thank David Elleray, Peter Elsworth, and Neale Barry for a great weekend and also my team of Darren, Simon, Craig and Harry - four great mates and fantastic colleagues.





DARREN ENGLAND

ASSISTANT REFEREE 1

The phone call from Peter Elsworth at The FA came through in the strangest of circumstances.

I was on a minibus and on my way from Munich airport to a hotel with Martin Atkinson and his team.

I was acting as 4th official for Bayern Munich v Porto and Peter had initially phoned to inform me about something for the Barnet game I had at the weekend.

But then, right at the end of the call, he said, "don't act surprised or anything but I just wondered whether you would like to run the line for The FA Cup Final?".

As I had to keep it confidential I needed to hide my emotions, but as soon as I got off the phone they were all quizzing me.

I managed to hold my poker face and deflect their questions. When I got into my hotel room, however, a huge smile spread across my face and I immediately phoned my wife and father.

When the weekend finally arrived the atmosphere between the team and partners was fantastic and very positive. This camaraderie stayed throughout the whole weekend and we were confident that the game was going to be delivered to a safe conclusion.

The Eve of the Final Rally was a great event. Having not been before I didn't know what to expect but it just showed how the family of referees is as strong as ever.

On the day of the game it was all very relaxed. As we arrived at the stadium we had pictures on the hallowed turf and then went out to look at Wembley Way and watch the fans walk towards the stadium. It was at this point that it suddenly became real and I couldn't wait for the game to start.

As we left our partners it was then time to put our game faces on and try to prepare for this game like any other.

The match itself went very well and we stayed on the pitch for as long as possible to soak it all up. As we made our way up the stairs I clumsily tripped up which apparently was caught on TV.

After the match we celebrated with a beautiful meal and a couple of drinks – just to make sure we re-hydrated.

It was such a fantastic weekend for the team and partners and the whole experience only enhanced all our friendships. A huge thank you to The FA, particularly Peter Elsworth who ensured the weekend was a memorable one.

"To walk out in front of almost 90,000 people was an awesome experience."



SIMON BENNETT

ASSISTANT REFEREE 2

To be selected to officiate in The FA Cup Final was an honour and the build up to the event reflected the magnitude of the task ahead.

It is at times such as this when you are grateful to be surrounded by experienced people who know what you're going through, each one having been there on many previous occasions. Their knowledge and reassurance is invaluable.

The pre-match visit to Wembley Stadium and the RA's Eve of Final Rally in central London brought our team even closer together and confidence in our camp was incredibly high.

The day of the match arrived and we were fully focused on our roles. To walk out in front of almost 90,000 people was an awesome experience. The noise was incredible and the atmosphere electric.

It was an emotional experience to hear the crowd singing Abide With Me as we waited in the tunnel area beforehand and then to meet HRH Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, our future monarch, was indeed another huge honour.

As for the game, concentration levels were so high it became a bit of a blur. However, the walk up to the Royal Box afterwards to receive my medal soon brought the reality of the day home.

The post-match meal later that evening was wonderful. We could unwind in beautiful surroundings, in great company and reflect on a job well done.

I was extremely fortunate to be appointed to this fixture alongside some tremendous colleagues who are also good friends and to be able to share the occasion with my family and friends was wonderful.

I will always remember the 134th FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium with a sense of pride and extreme jou.



CRAIG PAWSON

4TH OFFICIAL

The FA Cup Final was a truly marvellous event to be a part of.

It is the greatest competition in world football and it certainly lived up to all my expectations and more. I will treasure the moments from the match and whole weekend.



HARRY LENNARD

RESERVE ASSISTANT

What an amazing weekend, one that I thoroughly enjoyed from start to the finish.

Although I knew the rest of the team well, it was important for me to see how the weekend worked, offer support to the guys and be ready should Darren or Simon suffer an injury.

Watching them deliver the game was a privilege and one that I will always remember.

There are some amazing memories and the whole experience left me wanting more, so I will be doing my best to come back as an active assistant.

lacksquare

IES FC



THE SSE WOMEN'S FA CUP



LADIES



To be appointed to any FA Cup Final is a great achievement, but to get the call asking you to referee the first Women's FA Cup final to be played at Wembley was truly a dream come true.

That dream started for me back in February when it was announced that the Women's FA Cup Final would not only be played at Wembley, but The FA Committee would consider all officials for the appointment regardless of whether they had been appointed to the Final previously.

The significance of the occasion meant that The FA Referees' Committee was willing to change the rules regarding final appointments, which meant that my 25-year ambition to lead the teams out at Wembley was now a possibility.

3 CHELSEA LADIES

Taking that possibility and turning it into reality, however, was going to involve a considerable amount of hard work. I had undergone a toe operation in January and so I knew that I had to recover my fitness, referee before the end of the season and finish strongly. I just had to put myself in contention for this prestigious appointment.

I would only be satisfied if the winning team did it on merit rather than a refereeing error - I wanted the focus to be on the players and my goal was to remain under the radar.

When the call came, I was absolutely delighted and accepted the invitation without hesitation. The news took quite some time to sink in. Just to be included in the refereeing team would have been a significant achievement, but to be the referee was unbelievable. I couldn't wait to be a part of it.

A particularly surreal moment through the whole process was telling my husband that I had got the appointment. That was the moment that really seemed to make the dream a reality.

I then rang my parents to tell them the news, which was also very emotional. It was my Dad who had got me into refereeing and supported me through the highs and lows. I felt like this was the perfect way to say thank you for always being there for me.

Over the next five weeks, the magnitude of the appointment and its importance in the development of the women's game really started to hit home. I soon realised that I had taken on a much bigger responsibility than just refereeing a match. Not only did I want to repay the trust that The FA had put in me, I wanted to ensure that I adopted an approach in keeping with the occasion.

It was also important that my preparation focused on reducing the risk of refereeing errors and eliminating the possibility of controversy. I would only be satisfied if the winning team did it on merit rather than a refereeing error - I wanted the focus to be on the players and my goal was to remain under the radar.

I was confident that I could put into practice all the advice and coaching that I had received in my career. I could then look back on the day with pride. That was the aim.

Since refereeing The FA Women's Cup Final in 2004, the women's game has developed rapidly. The Women's Super League (WSL) has been formed, resulting in increased professionalism and athleticism of the players. Allied to that is the increase in sponsorship and TV deals that have allowed some players to turn professional and focus on improving their skills even further.

The profile of the women's game increased with the success of the England team in Canada. With each round that the England team progressed, the public and media interest in the women's game grew. This increased ticket sales for Wembley and led to record crowds expected. It all added to my focus while the feeling of responsibility and the need to perform to a high standard seemed more important than ever.



My preparation included conversations with referees who have experienced Wembley, which I found hugely beneficial to channel my nerves positively and use them to focus on the game.

Going into the weekend further highlighted the changes that the Women's game has been through in the last 10 years. This time, as a team, we did not have to report at the ground two hours prior to kick-off, but instead arrived in London the day before the game to familiarise ourselves with the stadium.

Part of that process involved walking down the tunnel, which gave me goose bumps. This was the home of English football, the national stadium, where history is made and now the backdrop for my next game. I thought about all the players that had gone before and helped to develop the Women's game and become worthy of the Wembley stage.

To help focus my mind, I watched the media preparation for the game and ran through countdowns and protocol for the next day. I knew that I could do the game but there was still the fear that I could mess it all up.

I was also lucky to have the support of my team. Nathalie, Jane and Rebecca were with me and we used the time in the stadium to talk through some match day scenarios and how we would deal with them. We also ensured that we had the same focus on how we wanted the game to be played so that at 3pm the next day we could perform to the best of our ability.

The next time I walked down the tunnel was on match day. Final checks were made of the pitch and goal line technology before I began my standard pre-match routine. While the routine may have been the same, this was no ordinary game. This was a pioneering moment in Women's football - a moment in history and one that I was immensely proud to be involved in.

I got the game underway with the toss of an old penny from the year of my Dad's birth and it finished with Chelsea winning the game 1-0.

Afterwards, as I sat together with my colleagues in the dressing room looking at my medal I knew that I had done my best. It was for others to pass opinions on our performances but at that specific moment I was able to reflect on an experience in which a dream had come true.

INJURY PREVENTION

Simon Breivik, PGMOL Sports Scientist, takes a look at some at some of the common causes of injury and provides expert guidance on the steps you can take to prevent them.

While injuries in football are accepted as par for the course, we should by no means concede that all injuries are inevitable.

With the value of modern-day footballers at an alltime high, it is no wonder that clubs are investing heavily in strategies to keep their prized assets injury-free and on the field of plau.

to players. This isn't surprising considering that they clock up a similar number of high-speed runs and sprints to the players these days. But, in contrast to the players, most match officials must make do without the benefits of a club looking out for their welfare

Mario Bizzini, from FIFA's Medical Centre of Excellence, is one of few medics who has looked into referee injury rates in detail. He has established that referees suffer an injury for every 200 hours they train and for every 50 hours they officiate. That's the equivalent to an injury every 33 matches – or one per season.

As the pace of the game increases and referees adopt a progressively hard-line approach to physical training, injury rates amongst match officials are likely to rise. It would seem logical therefore that referees should be implementing injury prevention strategies of their own to protect themselves against injury.



INJURY PREVENTION

The term injury prevention hardly existed a decade ago, yet today it is one of the most commonly-used phrases at football training grounds. As much emphasis is placed on training to avoid injury nowadays as on training to improve fitness.

To design an effective injury-prevention programme, we must first understand the common causes of injury. Fortunately, most injuries are caused by influences that are under our control, which effectively means that we are responsible for our own injury risk.

Here are some ways of avoiding some of the most common causes of injury.

PREVIOUS INJURY

Cause: If you've been injured before, unfortunately you run a high risk of re-injury. Strictly speaking, this risk factor is not under our control because we cannot change history. But, providing you manage to identify the cause of the injury, it should be possible to target the weakness that caused it with the aim of reducing the likelihood of re-injury.

Solution: Be honest with yourself and recognise an injury as soon as you experience the first symptoms. The quicker you receive sound medical advice, the quicker you can get the recovery process underway and the less time you'll spend on the sidelines. Ask your physiotherapist whether the injury could have been avoided and whether there are any measures you can take to avoid a reoccurrence.

FATIGUE

Cause: Training and/or officiating while fatigued is a major cause of injury, hence why the majority of injuries in football tend to occur in the second half of the game/season, when players are tired. If you do not allow your body (and mind) sufficient time to recover between matches and training sessions, you run the risk of overtraining and your prospect of injury increases.

Solution: Be vigilant and react immediately to feelings of general fatigue and lethargy. The first thing you should do if you feel chronically fatigued is cut back on the intensity and/or duration of your training sessions. By resting when you feel the need to rest, you will keep your body on an even keel.

Being physically fit will also help reduce the impact of fatigue. The fitter you are, the quicker you will recover between games and after training sessions. So, train hard to be fit, but rest when you need to.

LEVEL OF FOOTBALL

Cause: From existing evidence, it appears that injury frequency among referees varies in relation to the level of football at which they operate. In simple terms, this means that the higher you climb up the refereeing ladder, the more likely you are to suffer an injury. This is most probably because player fitness levels tend to dictate the pace of the game – and players in the top leagues are fitter.

Solution: Be physically prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. These days, the professional game demands that referees perform regular strength, speed, agility, and high-intensity intermittent aerobic training. By performing appropriate training, the next level up will not come as a shock to your body. It would be wise to speak to referees more senior to you about the fitness required for a level up and to familiarise yourself with the fitness test requirements associated with that next step.



WEAKNESS & INFLEXIBILITY

Cause: Strength imbalances between muscles and/or deficiencies in flexibility around a joint can be a cause of injury. The lower back, for instance, is a common area of injury where weak or inflexible hamstrings are usually the culprit. Our modern-day lifestyle is most likely to blame. Sitting in the car and at a desk all day do very little for our posture and general wellbeing.

Solution: The human body is an intricate piece of machinery that requires constant fine-tuning. To perform effectively, you must be strong and adequately flexible. Fortunately, deficiencies in strength and flexibility can quite easily be rectified by devoting time each week to resistance training and stretching.

The stronger you are, the less likely you are to break – hence all referees and assistants should perform regular strength training. When participating in strength training, make sure that you are working all the major muscle groups – not just the muscles you can see in the mirror

Your priority should be to strengthen the movements that are specific to running – as opposed to focusing on individual muscles. Exercises such as squats, lunges, step-ups and deadlifts are most effective for improving speed and agility.

Core stability is a key part of strength training. This is a method of training that targets the muscles that support the spine. Proprioception training is also hugely effective in preparing joints like the ankle for the demands of accelerating, decelerating and changing direction. See The 11+ later in the article for advice on the aforementioned training methods as well as examples of exercises.

OVERUSE

Cause: While overuse injuries are more common in sport than acute injuries, they tend to develop slowly and subtly, making them more difficult to detect and easier to ignore.

One possible cause of overuse injury is increasing the intensity and/or volume of your training too quickly. This is most likely to occur if a referee has been injured and attempts to get back to full fitness too quickly or attempts to train hard for a fitness test in a short period of time without the benefit of a sensible and steady build-up.

Overuse injuries can also occur if training is monotonous. By performing exactly the same training week in week out, you are putting parts of your body under undue stress without enough time to adapt and recover.

Solution: If you experience pain, it generally means that your body is trying to tell you something, so listen to it and seek advice as soon as you experience the symptoms.

Do your best to vary the intensity of your training from week to week. Fitness coaches will often use a hard week/easy week/medium week rotation. And, while the majority of your training should be running-based, feel free to perform the odd spinning class or swimming session to mix things up.

Poor equipment can be to blame for certain overuse injuries, such as shin splints, stress fractures and tendonitis. To avoid these, only ever run in good supporting trainers and replace them regularly. Also, make an effort to run on soft surfaces to minimise the impact through uour joints.

Finally, investigate whether you have a potentially harmful running gait. Conditions such as shin splints can be avoided by investing in a good set of orthotics that will correct your biomechanics.

CONCLUSION

The truth is, no matter how hard we try, we will never prevent injuries entirely, especially as we're involved in a sport where bad luck has a large par to play in many injuries.

and adapting our lifestyles, you can undoubtedly reduce the number of unnecessary injuries you suffer.

Start your new injury reduction plan immediated by visiting http://f-marc.com/11plus/home/.

There, you will find an injury prevention programme designed by an international group of experts for footballers and referees worldwide.



"Gone are the days of courses in stuffy rooms, using flipcharts and pens.

Much of the new course takes place outside and on the football pitch where referees go about their work."

The dictionary definition of the term "practical" is 'the actual doing or use of something rather than with theory and ideas', something which for many years was not associated with a qualification course for referees.

But now there is a new, exciting and inspirational practical FA Referees Course with a syllabus that is 85% practically based and gives candidates hands-on experience of being a referee.

The programme has been designed around various topics including: decision-making, blowing the whistle, waving the flag, showing a red or yellow card and learning about the referee's most powerful tool – man management.

Gone are the days of courses in stuffy rooms, using flipcharts and pens. Much of the new course now takes place outside and on the football pitch where referees go about their work.

THE NEW FA REFEREES COURSE CONSISTS OF 6 UNITS

UNIT 1

UNIT 2

REGISTER PRE COURSE STUDY

PRACTICAL TRAINING

UNIT 3

FOULS AND MISCONDUCT 6 HOURS

UNIT 4

PRACTICAL TRAINING 2 6 HOURS

UNIT 5

5 GAMES 11V11 OR 9V9 MAXIMUM 8 HOURS

UNIT 6

EXAMINATION AND NEXT STEPS 2 HOURS

Soon after booking their place, candidates will receive a copy of the Laws of Association Football, details of the course and the Pre-Course Learning Pack (Unit 1).

This pack will take them through the Laws of the Game with an interactive booklet to complete using the Laws of Association Football. That is then returned to the County FA to be marked ready for the first day of the course.

The tutors will then re-visit the Pre-Course Learning Pack on day one of the course to ensure all the candidates have a good knowledge and understanding of the Laws. Once complete, the practical experience can begin.

Over the course of the two practical days (Unit 2 and Unit 4), all attendees will learn about the different aspects of the Laws of the Game by taking part in game scenarios in which they play the part of the referee or assistant referee and make their own judgements and decisions.

This full-day practical training is a fun experience that also ensures the fundamentals of refereeing are covered. It is no longer just about making decisions or knowledge of Law, but selling those decisions and managing the game are a key part of a modern referee's makeup. Knowing how to react and what to say can be crucial in aiding match control.

The candidates then regroup for Unit 3

– Fouls and Misconduct. This three-hour interactive session is located inside and looks at Recognising Challenges. The presentation looks at the different aspect of Law regarding challenges.

It allows the candidates to watch and discuss up-to-date examples of various tackles and gives them the opportunity to make a number of judgements that generate healthy debate.

The final phase of this session looks at Misconduct Report Writing. The tutors showcase the online Whole Game System and complete a report on the live system to ensure a full understanding of the process and encourages the candidates to embrace the new reporting system.



After a couple of days of well-earned rest, the candidates arrive for the second day of practical work. Once again the sessions are fully interactive as the prospective referees close in on the evaluation process.

This process is a new concept for the referees course and it is designed to put into practice everything the candidates have learned over the duration of the course.

Each candidate will referee for a period of time with their performance being evaluated by the course tutors. The aim of this evaluation is clear, and the simple question

that the tutor needs to ask themselves is - Is this candidate capable of refereeing their first five games?

The areas that are considered are: application of Law, match control and communication, and positioning and

Once this process has been successfully completed, the candidates are ready to referee their first five matches under the watchful eye of a mentor or observer. The aim of this process is simply to encourage and motivate each step of the way as well as to inspire and support the new referees to ensure that the experience they have is a positive one.

As for examination, this now forms part of the new Unit 6 where, upon completion of the five matches, the candidates will return to their County FA to take the written exam and discuss with their peers the experiences they have had during their early matches.

With that, the course is complete and the newly qualified referees are free to begin their journeys.

OVER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The group of talented up-and-coming officials gathered for a two day conference to conclude their two-year journey. *Daniel Meeson*, FA national referee manager (volunteer workforce), details the event that took place at St. Coorge's Park in July

During the weekend of 25-26 July, over 100 young referees from all over the country attended a two-day development conference at The FA's St. George's Park.

For these referees, the conference brought to a conclusion a twoyear development programme that has included an opportunity to take part in the following key initiatives:

- BESPOKE ONLINE LEARNING TASKS AND DISCUSSION FORUMS
- ATTENDING TWO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCES AT STAVERTON PARK AND ST. GEORGE'S PARK RESPECTIVELY
- TAKING PART AS A REFEREE IN PREMIER LEAGUE YOUTH TOURNAMENTS
- TAKING PART IN A YOUNG TALENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMME WITH THE DANISH FOOTBALL FEDERATION

County FAs nominated two or three of their most aspiring, committed and talented young referees to take part in this flagship FA referee development initiative and, by the end of the programme, the vast majority were on the cusp of making that transition into the professional game as a Level 4 referee. The programme provides a superb footing in terms of resources, training, education and experiences to prepare each referee for the new challenges that they will face.

During the two days at St George's Park the referees took part in a number of high quality technical and practical training sessions led by The FA's national referee managers and a small number of support staff from different counties.

They were also treated to a question time session with newlypromoted Football League referee, Darren England, and FIFA assistant referees John Brooks and Natalie Walker. All three have previously graduated from this programme and have since reached the heights of the Football League and respective FIFA panels During the weekend, the referees were joined by a number of high profile FA guests including Barry Bright, leader of The FA Council, Dave Horlick, vice chairman of The FA Referees' Committee, and Peter Ackerley, senior national game delivery manager.

Barry and David joined Ian Blanchard, FA senior national game referee manager, in presenting all the referees with their diplomas of attendance during the Saturday evening graduation dinner in the centre's Sir Bobby Robson ballroom.

Opening the conference, FA national referee manager, Daniel Meeson, told the referees that "there has quite simply never been a better time to be a referee."

He continued: "Referee development continues to be on the rise in this country and the support channels that exist now in comparison to 20 years ago are immense. Take hold of the future. Be the very best that you can be."

At the conclusion of a challenging weekend of training and education, Ian Blanchard also had some thought-provoking words for the young referees who had completed the programme.

He said: "As a group, we have come a long way over the two-year period. I have before me over 100 referees who have matured and grown as individuals and have developed and got better together.

"It is important that you utilise your time on this programme as you now have some solid learning foundations on which to build on.

"I know that the respective conferences will have motivated and inspired you but the hard work now begins.

"As you move through the referee pyramid make sure that you stay focused, disciplined and resilient. It is an honour to have been given the opportunity to play a part in your early development as a referee."

All of the 103 referees who took part in this foundation programme now move into steps 4 and 5 of The FA National Referee Development Programme.





Farai Hallam. National Game Referees Administrator, looks back at a tournament that will live long in the memory.

For two weeks in June, St. George's Park played host to the 2015 Cerebral Palsy Football World Championships.

The 15-team tournament was the first major disability football tournament hosted by The Football Association, while for the teams involved it was the penultimate qualifier for the 2016 Rio Paralympics.

In charge of the tournament fixtures were 13 match officials, nine of whom were from England and selected through The FA's CP Football National Panel.

Of the nine, there were varying levels of experience on show with referees from Level 1 National List to Level 5 Senior County Referees:

FA Appointed Referees:

- SCOTT HENRY
- MINESH GUPTA
- HAYLEY IVES
- ADAM PANTER
- KEITH STROUD

 - JON BURRIDGE
 - The performances of the English referees were more than equal to the challenge, leading to an all-English team of Keith Stroud, Scott Henry, Tom Elliott and Jon Burridge taking charge of a tightly contested final between Ukraine and Russia, with the latter leaving victorious thanks to a 1-0 win.

moving forwards.

For those wanting to learn more about CP Football or if you are interested in exploring the refereeing opportunity within the sport, please contact Farai.Hallam@thefa.com

The tournament itself provided an opportunity for the match officials

and analysis. And across both weeks, the learning and development

to experience two weeks of full-time referee training, preparation

opportunities were endless thanks to the on-field performances

of the players, which have set the standard for CP Football



- - TOM ELLIOTT

 - ASHLEY LIST
- STUART CAMPBELL



BUILDING ON YOUR SUCCESS

Earlier this year, a host of Level 3 and 4 referees, tutors and assessors gathered in Shropshire for the inaugural FA Futsal Referees Conference. Alongside them was Roger Vaughan, FA national referee manager (Referee Development), who provides an insight into what was involved across the two-day event.

On Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 July, at the idyllic surroundings of the Lilleshall national sports centre near Telford, Shropshire, the first FA Futsal Referee National Conference took place.

The theme was **Building on your Success** which was chosen to highlight the progress and achievements in Futsal Refereeing since in its inception in 2006. More importantly, it was an opportunity to continue the building process and lay the foundations for further achievements.

Saturday's proceedings commenced with David Dixon, Futsal referee development officer (fitness and sports science) taking the National Group successfully through the Yo-Yo fitness test and sprint and agility sections. I then officially opened the conference by welcoming all the attendees and outlined the importance of the conference to the building process.

Ian Blanchard, FA senior national referee manager, joined the National Group who had been split into three groups for DVD match analysis to discuss various incidents. The two topics were 'Denying a Goal Scoring Opportunity' and 'Back Pass to the Goalkeeper', both of which were discussed in a highly interactive manner.

The FA was also privileged to secure the services of Pedro Galan Nieto from Spain, who is a FIFA and UEFA Futsal instructor, president of the Spanish FA Futsal Referees Committee and is widely regarded as one of the world's leading Futsal referee educators.

On Sunday morning, following a review of Saturday's activities, Pedro delivered practical sessions on positioning and movement as well as cooperation and teamwork that had been designed to assist in the uniformity of decision-making.

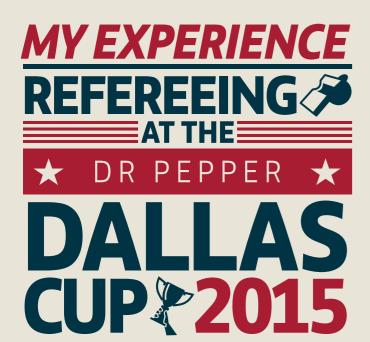
Sean Dipple, Futsal referees development manager (National Group) then led a session with a combination of these areas. All sessions were observed by other referees, tutors and assessors.

In the afternoon, Pedro returned to update everyone with his expectations of a Futsal referee and this was combined with further DVD match analysis on decision-making which clearly emphasised the importance of uniformity.

To close the conference, Ian Blanchard outlined the key messages of the weekend and observed that it had displayed the progress made in England and the opportunity to keep learning and developing as Futsal referees. He expressed the hope that it would provide competition among our referees for further achievements.

Afterwards, feedback received from the attendees was very positive and it was clear that the wealth of skill and experience on show was invaluable to all who took part.

The FA Futsal Referee Development Programme clearly has a very bright future.







Level 4 referee, Jack Nield, recounts his trip to the USA where he spent two weeks officiating at the prestigious annual youth tournament.

I was filled with a deep sense of pride when I found out I had been selected to be involved in The Dallas Cup.

The selection process had been tough through The FARDP Regional Group in the North West, and so I was proud of my achievement but also firmly aware of the enormity of what I was about to embark upon.

After a preparatory first week that included technical and fitness sessions from the coaches and PGMOL referees, we had the opportunity to work with senior coaches such as Steve Dunn and Keith Stroud on a day-to-day basis. They observed our games and offered valuable advice to improve our games.

I also had the opportunity to meet and talk to Howard Webb, who made every effort to watch each of The FA academy referees in action. To have a former World Cup final referee watching one of my games and offering me feedback on my performance was unbelievable.

Another invaluable experience was meeting Dave Allison, referee manager at The Football League, to talk to him about his experiences and gaining advice on making that next step in my refereeing career.

The trip wasn't all about refereeing, though. On one day we visited a homeless shelter where we fed roughly 700 people. I volunteered to be behind in the kitchen and the entire experience was completely eye-opening.

We also visited the SMC junior school and took part in a Q&A session with the students. It was brilliant to share my experiences within refereeing and to explain how it has helped me progress as a person.

At the tournament itself, I officiated on eight games as referee, assistant and as fourth official. I had the opportunity to work with referees from the USA, Australia, New Zealand as well as within a team of FIFA referees from Haiti, Guatemala and Canada.

I was then informed I was to referee the U14 final with Lisa Benn and Andy Ellis as my assistant and Shelby Elson as fourth official. I was overcome with joy when I found out. It was an honour to have the opportunity.

And then, at the game itself, I saw my dad and granddad in the stands - they had flown over to watch me in the tournament and it felt great that I could reward them by refereeing the final.

The final was decided by a penalty shootout without any major talking points thanks to great effort from my team. Afterwards, I was able to reflect on a fantastic experience and a sense of overwhelming pride to have represented The FA and the academy group at the Final.

Be sensible on social media

Neale Barry – FA head of senior referee development - provides some practical guidance on how to avoid the pitfalls of social networking.

Social networking websites, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are now part of everyday life for millions of people.

They are used and enjoyed by people from all walks of life and it is an individual's right to use these sites as they wish, within the bounds of legal acceptability.

For us as referees, however, there are reasonable expectations associated with our position and standing within the game as match officials.

Unfortunately The Football Association regularly has to take disciplinary action against referees from all levels of the game due to inappropriate use of these tools to criticise, insult and even abuse other referees, clubs, managers, players, assessors and County FA officials.

It is important to understand that any comments or views posted on social network sites are effectively being made public and are no different from these comments being published in a newspaper or reported on television or radio.

If you enter potentially sensitive or critical comments on any social networking site, e-mail or twitter about colleagues, clubs, or players, do you know where they will end up?

Nearly every time The FA has had to contact a referee about comments put on social networking sites the answer comes back: "it was only a chat among friends and it wasn't meant to become public".

The reality is that there will always be someone prepared to forward critical comments to the football authorities either to cause the maximum embarrassment to the author of the comments or out of a genuine feeling that what has been written is unacceptable or inappropriate.

As a match official at any level of the game, you have a responsibility to conduct yourself in a professional manner, on and off the field of play. Inappropriate use of any of these sites or e-mails may leave you open to criticism, comment, ridicule, or even a disciplinary charge, even if the matter is of a personal nature.

So please think carefully before posting on any social networking site. The Football Association would not wish you to jeopardise your position as a match official by inappropriate or ill-founded use of such sites.



BER

Ross Joyce – referee development officer, North Riding County FA - reflects on a trip that saw six members of the Referee Development Group travel to Portugal.





The Iber Cup in Portugal is one of the most popular and influential youth football tournaments in the world.

Over 50 countries are represented by more than 8,000 players, referees and coaches who come together in Estoril for a week of competition. Each year the lber Cup hosts some of the world's top teams such as: FC Porto, SL Benfica, Sporting Lisbon, F.C Zenit and Reading FC.

Following several exchange trips with various County FAs across the country including Liverpool FA and Birmingham FA and, not forgetting, the fantastic Danish exchange trip that took place in September 2013, the North Riding County FA (NRCFA) Board was delighted to announce to the Referee Development Group the opportunity to represent NRCFA for the first time at the lber Cup.

The selection process was rigorous to ensure that the county selected the match officials who would gain the most from the opportunity.

For the 2015 tournament, the decision was made that all 18 members of the Referee Development Group would be considered. The Referee Development Officer along with the Referee Development Coaches formed the panel and considered each member of the group with a number of key factors to ensure the most transparent decision could made.

It was pleasing to have such a hard decision to make. That said, the panel were unanimous in the decision that the following four match officials should be selected:

DANE MCCARRICK

GEORGE ROBERTS
(Level 6-5 promotion candidate

JONTY GILL

evel 6-5 promotion candidate)

TIM CRAIG

Andy Himsworth (NRCFA referee & FA development coach) also accepted an invitation to join the group as referee coach.

This was a good decision. Not only was Andy's experience invaluable to the referees, but it acted as a reward for his current commitments to coaching within the Referee Development Group.

Two preparation days were hosted at NRCFA HQ which focused on body language, advantage and human kinesics along with examinations on the Laws of the Game and the official's current fitness levels with the aid of Football League Assistant Referee, Matthew Dicicco.



Following an extremely successful tournament the North Riding FA Officials explained their experiences as follows:

ROSS JOYCE, RDO

The tournament has been the most powerful piece of referee development that has taken place since I took up my position in February 2008. I witnessed first-hand Dane, George, Jonty and Tim develop day by day. Their willingness to be open to regular development feedback both on and off the field of play, combined with the way in which they responded and looked to improve, was incredible.

ANDY HIMSWORTH, COACH

I can truthfully say it was the most rewarding week of referee coaching I've had the pleasure to be involved in since 2003 when the early MFC Academy was founded, setting a fine example within the CFA set-up. In my opinion this present crop of officials has the capacity to go far in the modern game.

DANE MCCARRICK

The lber Cup has been the most enjoyable refereeing experience I have been involved in. Following a lot of preparation work behind the scenes and an interview on BBC Tees to promote the event on behalf of the CFA, I can confidently say that it was all worth it for what was such an invaluable week in Portugal. I cannot thank the NRCFA enough especially Andy and Ross - for such an unforgettable tournament.

TIM CRAIG

I was absolutely elated to find out I had been chosen to officiate at the Iber Cup. The tournament is fantastic as it allows officials to learn so much in such a short period of time. It is safe to say I will never forget my tournament experience and I could not recommend it enough to anyone wishing to attend.

JONTY GILL

What a week we had in Portugal. I am not exaggerating by saying it was one of the best weeks of my life.

When I began the Basic Referees Course, I couldn't have dreamt that just 28 months later I would be refereeing in one of the biggest youth tournaments in the world.

GEORGE ROBERTS

It was a first class experience, not only to officiate abroad and to compete with a language barrier, but it was great that we could work with different officials and our own colleagues from the North Riding CFA.

Also, to experience feedback and development points from highly professional assessors and coaches was fantastic for my personal development.

 50 $^{\circ}$ $^{\circ}$



Following talks between The FA's national referee manager – volunteer workforce, *Daniel Meeson* and the Irish FA's referee manager, Lee Tavinder, an invitation was extended for a team of English referees to officiate in the Dale Farm Milk Cup.

Three Level 4 referees were selected from The FA's Referee Development Group. They were:

NORTH EAST

JOE STARKIE AGE 23 **WEST MIDLANDS**

TOM REEVES AGE 23 EASTERN REGION

CHRIS DARLING AGE 21 Gary Evetts, FA RDP Eastern region co-ordinator, attended for the week to offer support, guidance and technical advice to the referees officiating and to also experience the Milk Cup himself.

The event is one of the world's top youth tournaments with over 50 teams from around the world taking part. For the referees, it meant an opportunity to work with different officials and referee teams from all over the world.

This included delegations from the English Premier League, Brazil, United States, Australia and Spain, as well as county teams from Northern Ireland. The games took place over two age groups - Premier and Junior – with venues based all around the Coleraine and North West coastal region of Northern Ireland.

There were also officials from Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, which again added to the officials' experience of working with colleagues from around the UK.

Tournament Structure

Teams were separated into two age categories – Premier for U17s teams and Junior for U15s teams.

Over the course of the five days, there were 115 games – 55 in the Junior section and 60 in the Premier section. The finals were held on the Friday 31 July 2015.

The FA RDG candidates officiated in 20 games -13 as referee, six as assistant referees and one as fourth official.

The Tournament

The team arrived on the evening of Saturday 25 July 2015.

Based in Port Stewart, their week began with an informal meeting at the Lodge Hotel in Coleraine where they were introduced to the Milk Cup Referees Committee and some of the participating Officials from Northern Ireland.

The tournament itself was set to begin on the Monday, so there was time arranged for the team to do some sightseeing around the lovely coastal areas of Northern Ireland, which included a trip to the famous Giant Causeway. In the evening the traditional Milk Cup Parade took place at Coleraine FC where all the participating teams and officials were introduced to a large and excited local crowd.

The next morning saw the assignment of the first matches by the referees committee, in which all three FA Referees were appointed to referee on the first day. At the end of the day they all met again for a review of the day's performances.

The rest of the week followed the same structure. Appointments continued to be distributed every morning and match cards were returned either throughout the day or in the evening to the Lodge Hotel. Kick-off times were staggered during the day with 12 noon being the first and 7pm being the last. This allowed some referees to have two games on some days.

Premier games were set at 35 minutes each way, while Junior matches were 30 minutes each way.

Each ground had a match co-ordinator, who helped the referees complete the paperwork and return subs sheets after the game. Fully completed match cards had to be returned either during the day or at the evening meeting.

Summary

The Milk Cup 2015 was a challenging tournament where all the candidates represented The FA, themselves and their Regional Referee Development Groups with professionalism, dedication and commitment.

This was an extremely well organised tournament that ran like clockwork.
The Milk Cup Referees Committee must be congratulated for their hard work and excellent execution of events.



NEWS

LATEST FROM THE RA-FA YOUTH COUNCIL



AN EXCITING SEASON AHEAD

Will Finnie, RA-FA Youth Council Chairman, reflects on a successful season for the RA-FA Youth Council and looks forward to a number of exciting projects for 2015/16.

Last season was an exciting time for the RA-FA Youth Council. It brought a number of changes that allowed us to engage with more young referees, particularly with the introduction of regional representatives who are a single point of contact for all County FAs, Local RAs, Youth Councils and young referees across the country.

The excellent work conducted by our regional representatives has led to a number of exciting programmes being delivered nationwide through the RA-FA Youth Council Referee Development Fund.

As the number of youth councils in County FAs and Local RAs has increased year on year, the RA-FA Youth Council put in place the CYC Development Programme. This initiative provides bespoke support to Youth Councils, focusing on how they can best support and impact officials within their local area. The CYC Development Programme culminated with an end of year conference.

A number of successes were observed by the RA-FA Youth Council throughout the 2014-15 season:

- The growth of youth councils 65% of County FAs have one
- A 250-strong youth council volunteer workforce
- Delivery of eight regional seminars and a national conference as part of the CYC Development Programme
- £3,000 invested in County Youth Council projects through the RAFAYC Referee Development Fund
- Over 600 young referees engaged through a number of events



Following a successful year, the RA-FA Youth Council is ready and excited to take things one step further. The 2015/16 season promises to give opportunities for us to enhance the programmes we offer to Youth Councils, County FAs and Local RAs. These include:

- Funding opportunities through the RAFAYC Referee
 Development Fund is now open all to County FAs, Youth
 Councils, communities and Local RAs.
- Enhanced CYC Development Programme, including an online resource and interaction platform, regional development days and national conference at St. George's Park
- A new programme of events at RA Conference 2016
- New website that keeps you updated with our latest news

We look forward to keeping you updated with these new and exciting opportunities via our new website - www.rafauc.co.uk

Should you want further information about the RA-FA Youth Council or any of the programmes we deliver, please email info@rafayc.co.uk

NORFOLK FA YRG LEAD DEVELOPMENT DAY

August saw Norfolk FA hold their annual Referee Development Day. *George Lowe*, RA-FA Youth Council web development, social media & marketing lead, shares an overview of the day.

This year's development day was split into two parts - a morning session of CPD and an afternoon that consisted of practical sessions that were part funded by the RA-FA Youth Council Referee Development Fund.



These included:

- A mock fitness test
- Assistant referee master class run by Premier League assistant referee, Lee Betts
- · Positioning and movement

These sessions allowed referees to observe key skills such as the correct signalling when acting as an assistant referee, how to move along the line, and utilising technology to analyse decision-making for close offside judgements.

The afternoon session was aimed at Young Referee Group Members (referees aged 14 to 25) but more experienced referees joined in and shared their knowledge with their younger colleagues.

David Robinson, Norfolk FA RDO, was delighted with how the day went.

"The day was hugely beneficial, especially for the younger referees, because they would not have looked at areas like assistant referee techniques before, apart from the basics on their initial FA Referee Course," he said.

"Having a Premier League assistant to learn from gave them a fantastic experience and the Norfolk FA will reap the benefits in future on Supply League games when these young referees act as assistant referees.

"The same was true of the positioning and movement session which is a hard area to teach in the classroom, so being outside and getting referees running around into different positions will hopefully improve their positioning on the field of play, getting them into the right place to make the right decisions."

Talking about what the Referee Development Fund has done for the event, he continued:

"Hiring a 3G pitch, as you can imagine, is hugely expensive. Fitting that into the budget would have been a major problem. It was also nice to have additional tutors.

"Normally, the budget would have run to three tutors plus myself but we were able to get two more and split them off to do two sessions in one.

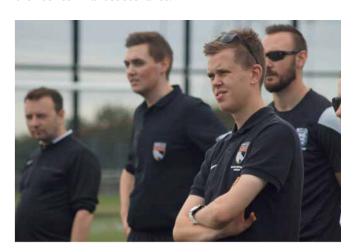
"That has allowed me to be able to do the assistant part with the iPad, which has been a great help to our budget and helped us make our event better than we planned."

Tom Harvey, Norfolk YRG Chairman, was also pleased with how the day went:

"It was a fantastic day," he exclaimed.

"Referees have been taught how to do a fitness test with a pacemaker for a Level 4 fitness test pace, a positioning and movement class which taught them how to position themselves correctly on an 11-a-side pitch with club and neutral assistants.

"Having Premier League assistant referee, Lee Betts, delivering a masterclass with the help of Mary Harmer, really helped them learn about how to give the correct signals and keep control of themselves in various scenarios."



The Norfolk FA Young Referee Group part funded this event by successfully applying for the RA-FA Youth Council Referee Development Fund.

For more information about the Referee Development Fund, please email RDF@rafayc.co.uk or use #RefDevFund



A YEAR OF SUCCESS

Josh Ainscow, RA-FA Youth Council area coordinator — South, outlines the impact the fund had last season on supporting Youth Councils around the country.

It has been a successful inaugural season for the Referee Development Fund.

The RA-FA Youth Council provided opportunities for the country's 32 Youth Councils to apply for funding which could be used for any referee development project, programme or initiative in a County FA.

We received applications from nearly 50% of the 32 Youth Councils eligible to apply and invested a total of £3,000 into the work they do. This is a fantastic opportunity for young people to be empowered to develop their refereeing peers.

A list of successful applicants is below:

- Birmingham FA Referee Youth Council Referee Development Day
- Leicestershire RA-FA Youth Council Mentor Scheme
- Herefordshire FA Youth Council Football Futures Camp (Referee Section)
- Worcestershire FA Youth Council

 Football Futures
 Camp (Referee Section)
- Somerset FA Youth Council Mentor Scheme
- Dorset FA Young Referees Committee Young Referee Conference
- Hampshire FA Referee Youth Council Young Referee Development Day
- Gloucestershire FA Youth Council Young Referee Development Programme
- Lancashire RA-FA Youth Council Development Events
- Sussex FA Youth Council Referee Observation Scheme
- Birmingham FA Referee Youth Council Young Referee Group
- Norfolk FA Young Referee GroupYoung Referee Development Day
- Surrey FA Youth Council Referee Course Bursary Scheme

We are pleased and excited to announce that the RA-FA Youth Council will continue to deliver the Referee Development Fund for 2015/16 and open it up to projects from County FAs, Local RAs, Youth Councils and the wider community. This means young people will have an even greater opportunity to develop others in refereeing.

We will provide further information about how to apply through our website, social media and by email. Should you have any questions about the Referee Development Fund, please contact RDF@rafayc.co.uk

RAFAYC TAKES THE RA CONFERENCE BY STORM: ATTENDEES' REFEREEING MISSION MADE POSSIBLE

Adam Davies, RA-FA Youth Council Area Coordinator — North.

Making your refereeing mission possible was the theme for the RA-FA Youth Council events at the 2015 RA Conference where over 100 officials attanded.

The RA-FA Youth Council have been fortunate enough to host a series of events at RA Conferences since 2013 and this year our Friday afternoon event took place at Harlington Sports Ground, the training venue used by QPR.

Practical training was a central feature of the event and three sessions were delivered by a number of high profile refereeing figures. Overseen by David Elleray, the three sessions all highlighted key topics that match officials need to ensure they are confident in delivering and including within their refereeing:

- Daniel Meeson, Ray Olivier, Jon Moss, Lee Mason and Harry Lennard led a workshop on Dealing with mass confrontation – something that we hope will not occur, but when it does we need to ensure that we have a process in place to deal with it
- Adam Gale-Watts, Darren England, Simon Bennett and John Brooks took referees through a series of exercises aimed at Getting offside right that included the opportunity to review live offside decisions
- Ian Blanchard, Roger Vaughan, Keith Stroud, Simon Breivik and Craig Pawson looked at the fitness levels required within officiating alongside positioning to ensure delegates were in the Right place at the right time

Richie Watkins, Birmingham FA, attended the event and was left impressed with how it was all organised and delivered:

He said: "As usual, the organisation of the day was superb. The presence of the FIFA and Select Group officials as well as The FA staff ensured that referees from all levels could learn something to take into next season.

"There is no substitute for practical refereeing experience and I will undoubtedly take the key learning points from all of the sessions into my games."

We are extremely grateful for the support offered to our events by the PGMOL, FA and RA and to have a number of FIFA and Select Group officials in attendance proved to be a great benefit to those officials who signed up to attend the event.



Particular mention goes to Craig Pawson and John Brooks who had officiated in a UEFA Europa League match the night before and got up at 3.30am to travel back to London to honour their promise to help with the session.

Our Friday evening event took place at the Radisson in Heathrow and included several development sessions along with a buffet dinner.

After an official opening, Will Finnie and Tom Bowkett delivered an interactive and entertaining presentation on *Selling Decisions*, which included analysis of a number of video clips. There was a lot of discussion among the groups about what is central to selling decisions and how this can vary depending on the level of football that you referee.

Ian Blanchard then delivered a session about *Getting to the top*, which had delegates working in teams to get to the summit of the refereeing mountain. Through questions on the Laws of the Games, video highlights and a number of other methods, a number of key skills were identified as vital to making their refereeing mission possible.

We were also very pleased to welcome Olivia Boughton, from Breast Cancer Care, the official charity partner of The FA. After a thought provoking and intriguing presentation, we were delighted to present Olivia with £200.00 that had been raised for the charity during the evening.

The event was once again deemed to be a huge success and those in attendance left feeling that their refereeing mission had been made possible. It is a privilege to be able to open the RA Conference weekend with the RA-FA Youth Council events and we hope to continue to build on these activities in the future.

BUILDING ON REGIONAL SUCCESS



Tom Bowkett, RA-FA Youth Council Vice Chairman, reports on a successful second year for the County Youth Council Conference

In May 2015, the RA-FA Youth Council hosted its second ever County Youth Council Conference at St. George's Park.

Building on the success of the inaugural event in 2014, Youth Council representatives from around the country took part in a day packed full of activity designed around the theme - Building Bridges, Supporting Young People, Developing Refereeing.

With the ever-growing number of Youth Councils, the event offered a significant opportunity for networking between representatives from all around the country, while allowing time for key topics to be delivered and discussed.

The day started with a number of interactive and engaging ice-breaker activities, which were planned by RA-FA Youth Council members Jess French, Charlotte Sparling, James Whittaker and Josh Ainscow. These aimed to encourage delegates to think about their Youth Council's aims and asked them to look at how they can deliver projects effectively while also ensuring that they are relevant to the refereeing workforce in their area. Most of all, they were designed to be interactive, with fun being a key element.

Delegates then took part in three key workshops that highlighted the themes of the day:

- Adam Davies and Charlotte Sparling led a session on working together, looking specifically at how Youth Councils can utilise members' skills to ensure best practice
- George Lowe and Natasha Wilson asked delegates to think about the different learning styles that exist and how Youth Councils need to ensure that their work focuses on all learners
- Ollie Williams and James Whittaker's workshop linked the use of advantage within refereeing to the projects that Youth Councils undertake, specifically looking at risk vs reward and creating a balance between the two



Following lunch, which offered the opportunity for discussions between delegates about good practice, Adam Davies introduced the RAFAYC Referee Development Fund to delegates. A number of those in attendance were members of Youth Councils who had been successful in applying and receiving funding throughout the season and they shared details about their projects.

Delegates were asked to assess three exemplar applications against the assessment criteria used to determine whether funding should be awarded. This activity offered a vital source of information to Youth Council members around the detail that needs to be included in potential applications in order for them to be successful.

The final session provided the opportunity for Youth Councils to share best practice and work together on creating ideas for future projects. In groups with of a similar size and type, a number of interesting ideas were formulated for programmes and events that could be implemented by County Youth Councils.

Overall, the day was a huge success and built on the regional seminars held earlier in 2015 in each specific area of the country. The support network nationally is now extremely strong and the County Youth Council network continues to grow and go from strength to strength.

For more information on the CYC Development Programme, please email **CYC@rafayc.co.uk** or use **#CYC**



NEWS

LATEST FROM THE REFEREES' ASSOCIATION



NEWS FROM CORNWALL.

Ian Tucker – Cornwall RA secretary – looks back at a year full of successful events and positive memories for England's furthest west county.



Our season of celebration started in October 2014 with a dinner organised by the Referees Department of the County FA. Ray Brown, county referee development officer, led the organisation of the event held at the Sandy Lodge Hotel, Newquay.

The guest of honour for the

evening was Howard Webb OBE, who kept us entertained with an interesting talk about his career in football that, coincidently, lasted for 45 minutes. This was duly noted and appreciated by the referees present.

After the talk Howard presented the County Long Service Awards, which included 30-year awards for Ray Brown, Steve Lawrence, County RA Treasurer, and Iain Tucker, County RA Secretary as well as a 20-year award to Rob Tucker, Iain's son (pictured).

Ray Brown is also the Chairman of the County Schools FA and has had a busy year with his Committee managing to secure a Schools international with Wales. This was a first for the county and on 27 February 2015 a near capacity crowd of 3,000 turned up on a cold night to cheer England to victory at Truro City FC

On the field, the Referees' Association was well represented with Lee Probert, Premier League Referee and Wiltshire RA member, refereeing with two Cornish members Ben Judd and Ciaran Barlow as assistants and Ray Brown as fourth official.



Next up was our annual dinner and dance, which was hosted by the West Penwith Society in Penzance at the Lugger Hotel on 21 March. Thanks must go to the County President, Peter George, his wife Anita and the West Penwith members for their hard work.

The special guest this year was another great speaker - Ray Olivier from the PGMOL, who spoke passionately about his career while engaging the members in the room by asking questions as the talk progressed. He then, on behalf of the County RA, presented Long Service Awards to Gerald Seale, Paul Minns, John Reid and Iain Tucker and 15-year membership certificates to Ken Keemer and Neil Harvey.

In the week leading up to Easter, our Referees Academy was invited to send two mentors and a small party of referees to help at the Nike Cup at St. George's Park. Our group was well looked after by the hosts and all received great feedback from the Premier League and Football League officials they were assisting during the tournament.

In Cornwall we have a trophy in memory of Graham Cutler, a Football League official who died at Easter City, which is presented annually to the most promising Level 7. This year's recipient, Jake Webster, was unable to receive the trophy at the County Dinner but received it at St. George's Park when Premier League Bobby Madley presented the award on behalf of the County. The picture below shows the Academy members with mentors Kev Knowles (left) and Ray Brown (right).



As the season came to a close RA members received County and League Final appointments, while for three members there was a call from the ESFA Competitions Department to officiate at the last two games in the National Finals at the Madjeski Stadium on May 20. Ryan Cornelius, Mid Cornwall Secretary, refereed the Under 14s Boys final assisted by lain Tucker and Jake Webster with Ray Brown as fourth official. Jake refereed the Under 13 Girl's final assisted by Ryan and Ray.

As Secretary of the County Referees' Association, I can proudly say that in Cornwall we have a special working relationship with the County Football Association as well as the County and National Schools Football Associations and the Professional Game Match Officials Ltd

This is no doubt partly because our Vice Chairman, Ray Brown - being the County RDO and Schools FA Chairman - is a staunch RA man, which allows the RA to meet referees in training and to participate in Schools football, both locally and nationally.



MOVING FORWARD

OUR VISION FOR SUFFOLK

Three RA secretaries in Suffolk share some of the ideas and initiatives they are putting in place to successfully strengthen membership figures across the county.

SUFFOLK COUNTY RA

BARRY EREIRA

Secretary Suffolk County Executive RA

In Suffolk, we have seen, as have other areas, a lack of interest by newly qualified referees to become full members of the Referees' Association.

We have pondered the reason and have asked the question 'why?' time and time again. Often the response we receive is one of the following three:

- I can get all of the training I need from my CFA
- Why do I want to sit in a hall being bored by a load of old people?
- My friend went to one meeting and will never go
 back again.

How many of you have heard one or all three when you have asked similar questions?

They're disappointing responses, but we have to act now to cease this negativity that exists when The RA is mentioned. We have to speak about the positives and change negative perceptions. There is absolutely nothing I or anyone else can do about what happened yesterday, so why do we dwell on it? We have to look to the future.

Potential new members only want to hear positive messages as to why they should attend RA meetings. Once they are there, as RA members we then have a duty to make them feel welcome and that they are an important part of the evening.

Part of the new FA Referee Course format is the Referee Introductory Evening, which is attended by a parent if the referee is less than 16 years of age. This has proved to be invaluable. Not only do parents gain an understanding of what is involved with being a referee, but they also get an insight into the support available to their child.

For the 2015/16 season, we are discussing an end of season RA Family Fun Day, incorporating referee workshops aimed at referees of all levels. They will feature our own FA Tutors and referees who will provide an insight into the process for new referees who strive to improve.

Another addition is an Insight into Moving up the Ladder session in which we share the experiences of successful referees to give members the encouragement to apply for promotion that they may not have had before.

Encouraging younger members to join Branch Committees is one of the main aims for the forthcoming season. A central Youth branch, which may only meet two or three times a year, will be run by youth members for youth members with the aim to incorporate them into the main branches when they reach adulthood.

These are only some of ideas we intend to turn into reality this forthcoming season, but we see the future as being bright if we all move in the right direction.

STOWMARKET RA

A.J.DAL

Level 3 Referee. FA Referee Tutor Level 2 Chairman, Stowmarket RA

I can still remember sitting at my local Referees' Association meeting shortly after passing my course - a keen but slightly intimidated 14 year old in a shirt and tie.

It was in that meeting that a National List Referee came over to me during the break and made a point of asking what games I was doing, if I was enjoying it and wishing me the best. I have never forgotten that moment. "Try to gain a 'golden nugget of information' from every training session you attend," he told me.

The significance of that evening shows just how much impact The RA can have, providing the opportunities for regular training and support, ensuring that new referees – both young and old- are well looked after early in their refereeing careers.

Fortunately for me, that first evening I had my Dad with me. He had been a referee for a number of years and was already a member of The RA. I say fortunately, because as a young referee I'm not sure that, had it not been for him, I would have sat through the business part of the meeting on my own. I know I certainly would not have made comment. Fourteen years on and that shy and naive referee has now been elected Chairman of his local society in Stowmarket.

My aim while in post is to ensure that everyone takes away a 'golden nugget' of information from each meeting that will make them a better referee, assessor, mentor or coach than when he or she walked through the door at the start of the night.

I am very lucky in that I take over a society that is willing to embrace new ideas and has bucked the national trend and increased its membership. I am supported by another National List assistant as secretary and together we hope to be able to pass on some of the excellent training information and ideas that we are fortunate enough to receive to referees not only within our society but also to others within Suffolk.

Our business will be done by the committee prior to each meeting and anything important fed back. The format of our meetings is simple - they will alternate between a development and training evening and a guest speaker.

This year, we will also be running an incentive scheme. Every time a member attends a meeting, they will be entered in to a mid-season and end-of-season draw to win a brand new kit. It might be a small token, but how much better it always feels when you put on a new kit to go out and take charge of a game.

I am keen, in the future, to see learning sets introduced to RAs across the county and referees from The FA Referee Courses attend as a training element to their course. The new practical course format naturally lends itself to people building friendships with colleagues, so why can't it be continued at the RA?

I mentioned earlier how I was fortunate to have my Dad, but perhaps encouraging referees to attend together might just get that hesitant referee through the door with a friend.

We have all heard the phrase Refereeing Family throughout our careers. Just like our own family, it helps us to learn as we grow and allows us to share experiences together. In a society that is ever-increasingly electronic, I hope to be able to convince referees in our society and local area that there is definitely still a benefit to The Referees' Association.

It is there to help each and every referee improve their own performance in whatever their refereeing capacity, to become a better official, and perform at a slightly higher standard than before, remembering always those golden nuggets of information they gained at their RA.

IPSWICH RA

ANDY WILDING

Level 5 Referee. FA Referee Tutor Level 2 Secretary Ipswich RA

Membership at Ipswich RA, which had been declining since 2003, is now on the up. We managed to stem the ebb of reducing figures around four years ago and have maintained steady numbers ever since.

One of our key initiatives is an incentive to reduce membership fees for the 2015/16 season and to offer a County FA handbook free of charge. We introduced it because we understand that finances at this time are very tight, and so a potential saving of £10 is a welcome bonus for our referees. Already, these added benefits have generated interest from local referees of all ages and levels and we are confident that it will lead to an increase in membership for the new season

For the 2015/16 season we are also introducing a change to our meeting format that will see the business part only discussed at committee level with the relevant information filtered out to branch members via social media

Meetings will now be centred around development and may include delivery by FA Tutors or taking in a non-league fixture, watching the match officials and then discussing their performance. The latter is an excellent learning and development tool for any member.

We also intend to introduce various social media channels for our members to keep them in touch with forthcoming events and also provide a platform for them to share their experiences. Added to that, we will be launching a new online membership system that should appeal to younger referees.

We will also be encouraging our members to attend meetings at other branches within Suffolk, not only to share their events, but also to build upon the social side of refereeing.

A bright and exciting future lay ahead for lpswich RA.

WOKING SOCIETY MAKING LEARNING FUN

Pat Bakhuizen - Society Secretary at Working Society – gives us the lowdown on what makes Woking Society's meetings tick.

At Woking Society we like to think of ourselves as a modern, forward-thinking society.

We have thrown off the convention of the old style meeting where only society business is discussed and instead turned them into social evenings where we embrace the changing face of referees and refereeing. This enables like-minded people to get together and discuss matches – both watched and covered - and incidents that have happened.

Our society evenings are now broken down into three parts:

1 THE ACADEMY

Targeted at new and young referees, this starts at 7:15pm and looks at different aspects of refereeing each month based on feedback from the participants. A lead tutor goes through issues and provides clarification for any referee who may be uncertain about a particular point.

Support is offered where needed and, if necessary, this includes going to watch and give support to individuals at their next match.

The Academy is open to all members but its main focus is for newer and younger referees. We understand everyone needs help sometimes and we use the wealth of knowledge at our disposal to build trust, better referees and, above all, a stronger bond within the societu.

2 THE GUEST SPEAKER

This forms the main part of the gathering and starts about 8pm. Our speakers hail from a diversity of expertise, such as PGMOL referees, physiotherapists, motivational speakers, tutors from other societies, and even younger members.

This part of the meeting is for learning, motivation and, above all, interaction. We actively encourage debate and speakers are asked to do at least a one hour slot. The main objective is for fun interaction and learning. We then have a break which is followed by our monthly raffle

3 FINAL WORDS

This final part rounds up the evening with thanks to the speaker, questions from the floor, and any match incidents anyone wishes to discuss. The evening ends at about 10pm. All other society business is covered during society committee meetings with

Away from the meetings, we keep in touch with our members via our Facebook page - Woking Referees - and on Twitter handle @WokingRA, while our monthly magazine called the The Warble offers further guidance and support with lots of extra information and fascinating articles. It is also available to download from our website **www.wokingreferees.co.uk**.

We may be among the most expensive societies - membership costs £36 a year - but we have a strong membership averaging 60 members every year, which we are confident is down to the forward thinking and fun approach we have.

Jon Moss inspires in Carlisle

Steve Dobinson (RDO, Cumberland FA) and John Cotter (Secretary, Westmorland CRA) reflect on an academy meeting that featured one very special guest.



This picture was taken at our May monthly academy meeting.

It was our final one of the season, but one that will live long in the memory thanks to a very special visit from FA Cup Final referee Jon Moss as guest speaker.

Jon had recently refereed a pre-season friendly at non-league Workington Reds for which the Cumberland FA had appointed the assistants. Afterwards, Jon agreed to attend one of our meetings providing he could fit us in his diary.

After many emails, he confirmed to attend our May event. It worked out well for us as it was our final one of the season, and you can imagine our delight when he was appointed to The FA Cup Final just prior to the meeting.

On the evening, Jon's session was fantastic. It was interactive and insightful as he shared with us his career journey followed by an informative look at all aspects of managing the game. What was also great was how he catered for both grassroots and professional referees - Level 9s to level 2s attended and were all able to take something from the experience.

For many of the younger referees who attended it will no doubt have given them hope and boosted their aspirations to aim high and achieve success as a referee.

Introducing two new County Referee Development Officers

Two of the newest additions to the national RDO workforce share their thoughts about taking on one of the most challenging and rewarding positions in refereeing.



JOANNA STIMPSON Somerset FA



LISA BENN Berks & Bucks FA

What attracted you to becoming a Referee Development Officer?

Through my role as an FA licensed tutor, I developed a real passion for referee development. To be able to support and develop referees as my job and in my home county is a dream come true.

The thought of being able to develop referees at all levels.

Creating training opportunities for new and developing referees that will enable them to seek promotion and achieve their dreams.

Working with a variety of people, whether they be new referees, more experienced referees, assessors, mentors or tutors, we can all learn from each other and it is my job to create the balance and opportunity to do so.

How does it feel to be a member of your County FA team and the national RDO workforce?

I am proud to be part of the development team at Somerset FA. They are a team of hard-working, passionate people who work tirelessly to develop and promote all areas of football in our County.

I hope to match their dedication and I feel honoured to work alongside some very successful referees and tutors from across the country. I also hope I can share their skills, knowledge and experiences to benefit the referees that I work with.

It is a great workforce to be part of - we all have the same ethos and attitude towards the game and to refereeing.

My new County FA has been very welcoming and there is a great group of people to work with. They are very knowledgeable about the structure of the CFA and with my refereeing knowledge I am sure we will take refereeing in the county in the right direction.

What advice would you give to newly qualified referees?

Be inspired by your colleagues' success. Use their support as your development and believe that the sky is your limit.

Refereeing has taken me places I never thought possible. Your first games bring new challenges which are great opportunities to learn and develop, making us even better referees.

Even the more experienced referees will encounter different situations and challenges to learn from, so we are always learning.

Take these challenges as opportunities to learn from, build a good network of people around you to discuss your games and learn from each other.

Refereeing teaches you more than how to officiate a game of football.

What are you most looking forward to about the job and whu?

I am looking forward to getting to know each referee in the county individually and working with them to help them achieve their goals, whatever they may be.

Like any new job the start can always bring new challenges. I am looking forward to meeting the Berks and Bucks referees and playing an active role in their game and their development. With the introduction of The FA's new referees' course it is an exciting time to be involved in developing our training pedagogies.

What is your refereeing experience?

I qualified as a referee in 2007, spent a year at Level 7 and 6 then two seasons at Level 5 before achieving my current Level 4. I am the first female Level 4 referee in Somerset and currently the only one in the South West but hopefully that will change.

To date I have been very fortunate with my refereeing as it has opened many doors for me, doors that I never thought would be available 10 years ago when I took my referee course.

There are so many opportunities available to referees nowadays. I have just completed my first year as a Level 4 and my major highlights include refereeing at the Dallas Cup in America with a great group of people, being an assistant referee for the Nordic Cup in Denmark and actively refereeing the men's and women's game. Outside of my refereeing, I am a referee tutor and I want to build on this in the near future.

FA Education The Football Association St. George's Park Newborough Road Needwood Burton-Upon-Trent DE13 9PD

T: 0800 085 2012 **F:** 01283 576 201

E: Education@TheFA.com

TheFA.com/Refereeing

The Referees' Association 1b Bagshaw Close Ryton on Dunsmore Warwickshire CV8 3EX

T: +44 (0) 2476 420 360 **F:** +44 (0) 2476 601556 **E:** ra@footballreferee.org



