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Howard has worked prodigiously at all levels to inspire, motivate and encourage referees, especially young officials.

The start of season 2014-15 will always be remembered in refereeing circles by the announcement that Howard Webb, the greatest referee of his generation, was stepping down as an active official to take up a position as Technical Director at the PGMOL, a position that will enable him to help develop future generations of English match officials.

The news came after our main editorial deadline so we will pay a full tribute to him in the next edition. However, it is important to record here the enormous impact Howard has had both on and off the field in the last decade.

Being regularly appointed by the FA, PGMOL, UEFA and FIFA to the most important matches is not easy and requires an ability to withstand pressure, manage the big occasion and deliver.

Howard invariably produced wonderful performances (often supported by Mike Mullarkey and Darren Cann) and was regarded with respect and admiration throughout the world. However, he was not content just to deliver on the field and he has worked prodigiously at all levels to inspire, motivate and encourage referees, especially young officials.

His work has not been confined to refereeing and he has been a true ambassador for football. Throughout all he has remained modest, and one of the nicest things said about him is that he is the same person as he was before he reached the top.

Although it was disappointing that Howard had only had two matches in Brazil it was incredible that what turned out to be his final match as a referee was Brazil v Chile, as four years earlier in South Africa he refereed the same match at the same stage of the competition and on exactly the same day of the month.

Once again he showed himself to be strong when, assisted by Mike Mullarkey, disallowed Hulk’s goal for handball.

The match in South Africa four years ago was played the day after the Frank Lampard ‘no goal’ against Germany so it was good to see Goal Line Technology in action in Brazil even if it was rarely needed.

Interestingly, the vanishing spray was very well received and is already being used in the Premier League as well as the group stages onwards in both the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League.

On that point, in line with general practice worldwide and FIFA’s intention that vanishing spray is only for the very highest levels of competition, The FA has approved the use of vanishing spray in the Premier League, the Johnstone Paint Trophy and the later rounds of The FA Cup only. Referees must therefore not use vanishing spray in any other matches or competitions.

Becoming Technical Director at the PGMOL will see Howard working not just with our top officials but also with those already moving towards the upper echelons of officiating in this country and they could have no better role model than Howard.

Whilst we will miss his commanding presence on the field, he enters at a time where the future of English refereeing is looking promising and the next generations are beginning to be rewarded with top appointments.

On the international level this was demonstrated by Mark Clattenburg’s appointment to referee the all Spanish UEFA Super Cup between Real Madrid and Valencia in Cardiff where he was assisted by Simon Beck and Stuart Burt (Assistant) Michael Oliver and Anthony Taylor (Additional Assistant Referees) and Darren England (4th official).

For Darren England, this appointment came just after he had been Assistant Referee No.3 for the UEFA U21 final in Budapest between Germany and Portugal.

The summer also saw the election of a new RA Board Chairman, with Ian Davies replacing Albert Alburquerque, and the Chair of the RA’s Youth Council changed with Will Finnie taking on the major challenge of trying to follow the remarkable Tom Nield.

Within this edition there are important information articles especially relating to The FA’s new and enhanced betting rules and regulations (which will affect many referrees), as well as advice and help in the very important area of misconduct reports. Please read them carefully.

Season 2014-15 promises to be exciting at all levels. Much of your success and enjoyment will be partly the result of the largely unseen work of a myriad of unsung heroes and heroines. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to and thank all those who work at local, county and national level in refereeing departments, refereeing committees, Referee Societies and as assessors, coaches, mentors, tutors and supporters of referees.

Finally, with 2014 being the Centenary of the outbreak of World War I, we should not forget the hundreds of thousands of people who paid the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the future for us all.

Many referrees were involved in the conflict and we paid tribute to them at the RA Conference Dinner.

We have reproduced some articles from editions of the Refereeing Magazine from those times, along with messages from referees at home and the front.

Please take time to read them and as you do I am sure you will reflect and pay due recognition to the very special people who fought so bravely, often in unspeakable conditions, 100 years ago.

My very best wishes to you all for a wonderful season.

David Elleray
Chairman, FA Referees’ Committee President, The Referees’ Association

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Foreword

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Please take time to read them and as you do I am sure you will reflect and pay due respect to the huge contribution they made.

My very best wishes to you all for a wonderful season.

David Ellery
Chairman, FA Referees’ Committee
President, The Referees’ Association
**PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF A MODERN DAY REFEREE**

Daniel Meeson, FA National Game Manager – Volunteer Workforce, examines what physical and mental attributes a modern referee must possess to cope with the demands of the modern game.

Imagine for one second that you had to sketch out a modern day referee. Imagine that you were introducing a modern day referee to somebody who had no comprehension of refereeing nor what a referee looked like.

What would you draw? How would it look? What body parts and characteristics would you emphasise?

In today’s modern game referees need to have the right physical attributes as well as various mental skills to keep them strong, fit, focused and ready to make the right decisions.

**Eyes**
- To detect offences
- To recognise players’ intentions
- To maintain eye contact with players when issuing disciplinary sanctions
- To keep assistants in view at all times

**Arms and Hands**
- To give directions and signals – to assistants, players, and spectators for the game
- To use the hands and palms as a tool to calm and diffuse a volatile situation that occurs in your game
- To communicate decisions (and sometimes explain them) to ensure the game’s participants are aware

**Lungs**
- Coupled with a healthy heart the referee needs strong lungs to see through 90 minutes and beyond
- To be fit, strong and healthy to make clear decisions especially towards the end of the game when everyone is getting tired

**Ears**
- To listen to players, colleagues and officials
- To listen to advice offered by peers
- To take in information provided at training events

**Mouth**
- To communicate effectively with players, colleagues and officials
- To project the voice amongst fans, noise and stadia when making decisions
- To sometimes stay quiet – silence is occasionally the most effective tactic

**Heart**
- Refereeing is a cardiovascular activity – good nutrition, supplements and regular exercise maintain a healthy heart
- To have understanding, passion, enthusiasm and empathy for the game
- Sometimes the referee needs to make difficult decisions in difficult circumstances – it takes a strong will and a strong heart to make these decisions

**Legs and feet**
- For movement fitness – strong legs will take you through 90 minutes
- To be in the right place at the right time to make those crucial decisions
- To rest and to recover ready for your next game

**Stomach**
- Confidence
- Reduce anxiety and nerves before games
- Sometimes our best decisions come from our gut – trust your judgement, trust your instinct

**The Brain**
- To know, remember and apply the Laws of the Game, competition rules and directives
- To create a game plan for their matches to maintain control and communicate with players
- To absorb information on players, managers, coaches and colleagues – all of which can affect the game
- To adjust to the changing nature and tempo of a game
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2014 RA CONFERENCE: KEY LEARNING POINTS

The 2014 RA Conference was a hugely successful weekend for all involved. The interactive workshops delivered by many of England’s top match officials and key figures from The FA and PGMOL, featured a wealth of valuable guidance, information and practical advice that attendees could take away with them. Our aim now is to ensure that the great content on show at the conference is shared even further, and so in this extended feature we are delighted to bring you the key learning points from each of the workshops.

CONTROLLING THE PENALTY AREA

Anthony Taylor (FIFA Referee), Jon Moss (Select Group Referee) and Gemma Gale (County RDO)

The penalty area is a critical area of the field of play when it comes to decision-making because the consequence of awarding a penalty kick is a major decision in a match. The aim of the workshop was to review our decision-making and recognition of challenges when incidents occur inside the penalty area, including the decision-making process that gives us the best opportunity of arriving at the correct outcome.

By reviewing match incidents from the recent World Cup in Brazil, we considered the following key factors:

1. Positioning of the referee prior to and at the time of the incident (Viewing Angle)
2. What is your initial reaction to the challenge? (Recognition)
3. Was there an opportunity to be proactive? (Preventative Strategies)
4. What support (if any) would you expect from your colleagues (Teamwork)
5. What action should be taken (if any)?
6. What disciplinary action would you take (if any)?
7. How do you restart play correctly?
8. How can we learn from the process by reflecting after the match?

IN SUMMARY:

**TAKE CONTROL**
- Rely on a combination of intuition, experience and your knowledge of the Laws of the Game

**CONSIDER**
- Positioning (See)
- Recognition (Recognise)
- Process (Think)
- Action (Act)

**FOR EXAMPLE:**
- Big decisions can occur at any time of a match and anywhere on the field of play, and as such, referees should be physically proactive in optimising their view of play from the beginning to the end of each match. This can represent a significant physical challenge.

Big decisions can occur at any time of a match and anywhere on the field of play, and as such, referees should be physically proactive in optimising their view of play from the beginning to the end of each match. This can represent a significant physical challenge.

When dealing with mass confrontations, referees must be aware of why, when and where they occur to formulate a strategy for how to deal successfully with them.

**WHY DO THEY HAPPEN?**
- Reaction to a poor challenge
- Reaction to retaliation
- Scare
- Time of the game
- History between players/teams
- Influence from coaches and crowds

Where do they happen?
- Anywhere
- Goal area
- Near to technical areas
- Near to corner flag - players wasting time towards end of match
- Do our actions change based on where these confrontations occur?

When do they occur?
- After a goal
- After a bad foul
- After an unpunishing act
- After the award of a penalty
- At a time when many players get together – half-time and full-time

**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REFEREE AND WHY DO WE NEED TO DEAL WITH THEM?**
- Apply law
- Maintain control
- Make the correct decisions
- Can we prevent?
- How do we cure?
- Protect the image of the game

**PREVENTION**
- Have a plan – know how to react
- Know your players
- Do your homework – is there a history?
- Be alert to trigger points
- Use your assistants
- Use the captains
- Safe refereeing
- Have a presence to prevent further misconduct
- Will the whistle help?
- Quick and early disciplinary sanction

**CURE**
- Stay calm, confident and in control
- Stay safe – very important!
- Your position is key
- Identify aggressor
- Identify peacemakers
- Identify the ‘tuners’
- Isolate your offenders
- Correct discipline
- Remember – you restart

Key summary points to remember:
- Be alert to the why, when and how
- What is our role – think Ref doctor
- Can we prevent – what are the triggers?
- How do we cure?
- Maintain control
- Be calm and stay safe
- Have a 10 point plan

MASS CONFRONTATION

Referees have to be aware of why, when and where mass confrontations occur to formulate a strategy for how to deal successfully with them.

To help get you started, consider the following key words and phrases to act as a prompt:

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GETTING FIT TO BE IN POSITION FOR THE BIG DECISIONS

Referees should have a clear and unobstructed view of play at all times. The quality of a referee’s view depends more on viewing angle than distance from play. However, being close to play can increase a referee’s credibility.

Big decisions can occur at any time of a match and anywhere on the field of play, and as such, referees should be physically proactive in optimising their view of play from the beginning to the end of each match. This can represent a significant physical challenge.

A referee’s physical work rate increases with the physical fitness of the players and with the speed at which the game is played. The pace of the game has never been higher. Consequently, match officials are under more pressure than ever to keep up with play.

A physically fit referee will be able to maintain a high physical work rate whilst maintaining a fresh mind. This is particularly valuable in the late stages of a match.

Match officials should be able to perform an explosive acceleration to seek out the best viewing angle during unpredictable play and should possess a high ‘top speed’ allowing them to keep up with a quick break in play or fast counter-attack.

Referees also need to be agile so that they can adjust their position quickly and get out of the way quickly if required. Agility is especially important to assistant referees, who tend to perform more changes of direction than referees during a match.

Aerobic fitness is fundamental to a referee’s physical performance if they are to follow play for 90 minutes. It is also called upon in situations when play moves quickly from end to end.

The pace of the game has never been higher. Consequently, match officials are under more pressure than ever to keep up with play.

To achieve the required fitness levels, match officials should perform a mixture of training sessions aimed at improving each aspect of their fitness.

These training sessions should be demanding and should form the basis of a referee’s weekly training regime. They should include aerobic training, speed and agility training and strength / power training. Pitch-based running sessions are more effective than training sessions performed on a treadmill / exercise bike.
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MASS CONfrontATION

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Why do they happen?

- Reaction to a poor challenge
- Reaction to retaliation
- Scare
- Time of the game
- History between players/clubs
- Influence from coaches and crowd

Where do they happen?

- Anywhere
- Goal area
- Near to technical areas
- Near to corner flag – players wasting time towards end of match
- Do our actions change based on where these confrontations occur?

When do they occur?

- After a goal
- After a bad foul/challenge
- After an unruly act
- After the award of a penalty
- At a time when many players get together – half-time and full-time

What is the role of a Referee and why do we need to deal with them correctly?

- Apply law
- Maintain control
- Make the correct decisions
- Can we prevent?
- How do we cure?
- Protect the image of the game

With the above in mind it is important to focus on two key areas: Prevention and Cure

Prevention

- Have a plan – know how to react
- Know your players
- Do your homework – is there history?
- Be alert to trigger points
- Use your assistants
- Use the captains
- Safe refereeing
- Have a presence to prevent further misconduct
- Will the whistle help?
- Quick and early disciplinary sanction

Cure

- Stay calm, confident and in control
- Stay safe – very important!
- Your position is key
- Identify aggressors
- Identify peacekeepers
- Identify the ‘victim’
- Isolate your offenders
- Correct discipline
- Remember – you restart

Key learning points to remember:

- Be alert to the why, when and how
- What is our role – think Ref doctor
- Can we prevent – what are the triggers?
- How do we cure?
- Maintain control
- Be calm and stay safe
- Have a 10 point plan

GETTING FIT TO BE IN POSITION FOR THE BIG DECISIONS

Referees should have a clear and unobstructed view of play at all times. The quality of a referee’s view depends more on viewing angle than distance from play. However, being close to play can increase a referee’s credibility.

Big decisions can occur at any time of a match and anywhere on the field of play, and as such, Referees should be physically proactive in optimising their view of play from the beginning to the end of each match. This can represent a significant physical challenge.

A referee’s physical work rate increases with the physical fitness of the players and with the speed at which the game is played. The pace of the game has never been higher. Consequently, match officials are under more pressure than ever to keep up with play.

A physically fit referee will be able to maintain a high physical work rate whilst maintaining a fresh mind. This is particularly valuable in the late stages of a match.

Match officials should be able to perform an explosive acceleration to seek out the best viewing angle during unpredictable play and should possess a high ‘top speed’ allowing them to keep up with a quick break in play or fast counter-attack.

Referees also need to be agile so that they can adjust their position quickly and get out of the way quickly if required. Agility is especially important to assistant referees, who tend to perform more changes quickly and get out of the way quickly if required. Agility is especially important to assistant referees, who tend to perform more changes of direction than referees during a match.

Aerobic fitness is fundamental to a referee’s physical performance if they are to follow play for 90 minutes. It is also called upon in situations when play moves quickly from one end to the other.

To achieve the required fitness levels, match officials should perform a mixture of training sessions aimed at improving each aspect of their fitness.

These training sessions should be demanding and should form the basis of a referee’s weekly training regime. They should include aerobic training, speed and agility training and strength / power training. Pitch-based running sessions are more effective than training sessions performed on a treadmill / exercise bike.
Mental strength to cope with big decisions

Control of emotions  
Concentration  
Courage  
Confidence

Every time you make a decision

Mental strength to cope with big decisions

See

THINK

RECOGNISE

OFFSIDE

Offside – the story of ‘the three wise pigs’
The primary role of the assistant referee is to provide the referee with accurate and timely information in offside scenarios.

The aim of the workshop was to assist others in understanding the current interpretation of Law 11 - Offside in relation to interfering with play, interfering with an opponent and Gaining advantage from being in that position - to get the big decisions correct, which was the theme of the RA Conference 2014.

The simple motto of the workshop was to “THINK PIG”:

- Plays, or touches the ball
- Interferes with an opponent
- Gains advantage from being in that position

By using clips from the World Cup in Brazil, each of the three aspects of Law 11 was discussed. The key learning points were as follows:

Interfering with Play
Remember that there are occasions where the flag may be raised before the ball is touched by the attacking player in an offside position i.e. when it is clear that no other teammate in an onside position has the opportunity to play the ball and there is a risk of collision with a defending player (typically, but not always, the goalkeeper).

Interfering with an Opponent
Remember to work with the physical evidence (the facts). To determine whether the attacking player in an offside position has challenged an opponent for the ball, take into consideration the:

- Attacking player (in an offside position)
- Defending player (opponent)
- Ball
- Playing Distance

Gaining advantage from being in that position
Remember to work with the physical evidence. Take into consideration the following:

Rebound
- Opponent is stationary
- Ball returns to the direction it came from

Deflects
- Ball changes direction
- Opponent finds the ball coming at them in an unexpected manner
- Opponent creates an obstacle e.g. blocking

Deliberately plays the ball
- Opponent makes a clear movement towards the ball and physical action
- The quality of the play is not relevant

When is handball a genuine handball?
The workshop focused on trying to define deliberate handball and how that might manifest itself on the field of play. Time was also used to look at some of the rationales adopted by players which might help in deciding if a handball offence was committed.

As a starting point Law 12 clearly states that a Direct Free Kick should be awarded to the opposing team if a player handles the ball DELIBERATELY (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).

A penalty kick is awarded if a defending team player deliberately handles the ball outside their own penalty area (except for the goalkeeper within their own penalty area).

So that’s the easy part and one would think that handball should be one of the simplest of all the Laws of the Game, yet the difficulties for referees in a match situation is trying to determine whether a handball act is or isn’t deliberate.

The handball offence is so very simple, yet it is so universally misunderstood by players, managers, sports commentators, journalists and spectators alike.

Determining what a deliberate act of handball often causes the most problems and provides the referee with one of his hardest challenges. It is important to stress that not every deliberate handball is punishable by a yellow or red card and a direct free kick or penalty kick is sufficient punishment.

In deciding whether the handball is deliberate or not, referees are effectively influenced by the following four criteria:

1. The proximity of the offending player when the ball is struck. The closer the player is to the ball the less time they have to react, less time to move their arms out of the way or even towards the ball. The ball struck at close range on to the arm or hand of an opposing player is less likely to be considered a deliberate act than a ball struck from distance where a player has more opportunity to move their hand out of the way of the ball.

2. The movement of the hand or arm towards the ball or away from the ball to prevent a handball offence occurring

3. Consideration of the hand or arm in the unnatural and distinguishing whether a player is merely protecting themselves or unable to move their arms out of the way as the ball was struck from close range. However, when a ball goes to the side or above a player, where the hand or arm moves towards the ball, that is not a natural position or a defensive reaction and in these situations it is likely to be more a deliberate act of handball.

4. Whether the player uses their hands or arms to make themselves bigger to prevent the ball from going past them in either towards goal or towards the penalty area. This action is a deliberate attempt to handle the ball and to give the defending player an unfair advantage.

Ball to hand is the well-known phrase used by referees to describe an accidental handball. It is usually obvious to Referees when a player purposefully moves their hand (or arm) towards the ball with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage over their opponents by handling the ball. Deliberately handling the ball implies full consciousness of the nature of one’s act and its consequences.

Discipline
- Caution if unsporting behaviour, for example to prevent an opponent from gaining possession, denying a good attacking opportunity or attempting to score a goal
- Sending off if the handball denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity

Remember: Not every handball offence is punished by a Yellow or Red Card.
Mental strength to cope with big decisions

**Key learning points**

1. **CONFIDENCE**
2. **Courage**
3. **Concentration**

Our actions – control the controllables

First, we must be in control of ourselves, our emotions and decisions is:

- The key to having the mental strength to cope with big decisions

**Extraordinary incidents including**

- Critical offside judgements
- Penalties and/or gestures, second caution)
- Spitting; using offensive, insulting or abusive language
- Red cards (DOGSO, violent conduct, serious foul play, spitting; using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures, second caution)

**IN SUMMARY:**

- The key to having the mental strength to cope with big decisions is:
  1. First, we must be in control of ourselves, our emotions and our actions – control the controllables
  2. Concentration
  3. Courage
  4. CONFIDENCE

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**Mental strength to cope with big decisions**

**OFFSIDE**

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- To get the big decisions correct, which was the theme of the RA Conference 2014.

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- Plays, or touches the ball
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By using clips from the World Cup in Brazil, each of the three aspects of Law 11 was discussed. The key learning points were as follows:

- Interfering with Play
  - Remember that there are occasions where the flag may be raised before the ball is touched by the attacking player in an offside position i.e. when it is clear that no other teammate in an onside position has the opportunity to play the ball and there is a risk of collision with a defending player (typically, but not always, the goalkeeper).
  - This activity challenges an opponent for the ball, takes into consideration the:
    - Attacking player in an offside position
    - Defending player (opponent)
    - Ball
    - Playing distance

- Interfering with an Opponent
  - Remember to work with the physical evidence (the facts).
  - To determine whether the attacking player in an offside position has challenged an opponent for the ball, take into consideration the:
    - Attacking player (in an offside position)
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    - Ball
    - Playing Distance

Gaining advantage from being in that position

- Remember to work with the physical evidence. Take into consideration the following:

  **Rebound**
  - Opponent is stationary
  - Ball returns to the direction it came from

  **Deflects**
  - Ball changes direction
  - Opponent finds the ball coming at them in an unexpected manner
  - Opponent creates an obstacle e.g. blocking

**Deliberately plays the ball**

- Opponent makes a clear movement towards the ball and physical action
- The quality of the play is not relevant

**IN SUMMARY:**

- Have a clear and simple process in place for responding to match situations
- Apply the wait and see principle
- Take time to gain all relevant information which results in a greater chance of the correct outcome

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**When is handball really handball?**

The workshop focused on trying to define deliberate handball and how that might manifest itself on the field of play. Time was also used to look at some of the tactics adopted by players which might help in deciding if a handball offence was committed.

As a starting point Law 12 clearly states that a Direct Free Kick should be awarded to the opposing team if a player handles the ball DELIBERATELY (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).

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**Discipline**

- Caution if unsporiting behaviour, for example to prevent an opponent from gaining possession, denying a good attacking opportunity or attempting to score a goal
- Sending off if the handball denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity

Remember: Not every handball offence is punished by a Yellow or Red Card.

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**When does a reckless challenge become serious foul play?**

This workshop involved group work to discuss the key factors involved when judging challenges that could be considered reckless or serious foul play, a recap of the Law as well as video clip analysis, decision making and justification when making that decision.

The consistent considerations that each group came up with were:

- Intensity of challenge
- Possibility to play the ball/injure the opponent
- Distance that the challenger travelled to make the challenge

Is the challenger in control of their body?
On 19-20 July, the 2014-15 Young Referee Development Programme held its first conference for aspiring young match officials. In this article, three attendees detail their experiences and provide an insight into some of the key learning outcomes they took from two days of bespoke refereeing presentations and workshops.

An Overview of the Weekend

Joe Stokes (19) – Kent FA Level 7 Referee

In July of this year I, along with 328 other young referees, had the privilege to be invited to the 2014 YRDP Foundation Conference. The weekend was made up of an enjoyable combination of high profile speakers and eight practical sessions all focusing on different areas of refereeing.

Arriving on Saturday morning, there was clearly a sense of excitement and intrigue amongst all of the referees present, not really knowing what to expect.

The morning consisted of a series of talks, all focusing on various important facets of refereeing.

The first one put the weekend into context by asking two questions – Why are you here? And How good are you? Two very simple questions answered by two very passionate speakers who reflected the enthusiasm every coach at the conference had for trying to improve every young referee.

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It was quickly evident that for each and every referee in the room, there was a clear desire to make it to a high level, and the excitement we had for this new-found opportunity was something we all clearly didn’t want to pass up.

Later that evening we heard from a former member of the YRDP about his experiences at the Dallas Cup, an opportunity given to him because of his involvement within the YRDP programme, which provided fascinating insight into the experiences and the knowledge he had gained from the trip.

The fact it was made clear to us that the Dallas Cup was something we could potentially be involved in was yet another inspiration to work as hard as we could to keep developing and improving.

The next morning we were back into a talk, this time on the barriers to success. The main message was, ironically, that there were no physical barriers to success and how, with the right mindset, a clear set of goals and good work ethic, nothing and no one can stop you.

Indeed, a recurring point throughout the whole weekend was that the only person standing in the way of success was ourselves and that if we make the correct decisions off the pitch, work hard and focus we can make special things happen.

To close the weekend, Michael Oliver and Stuart Burt took to the stage to talk about their career journeys, the experiences that have shaped their careers as well as their first-hand experience of the value of the YRDP.

Both were inspired to listen to and their revelation that around 30% Football League and above referees came through the YRDP most certainly left a lasting impression on every one of the 329 referees in the room.

I, on behalf of every other referee, would like to thank the wonderful conference had for trying to improve every young referee.

The Workshops

Ben Bowles (23) – Kent FA Level 7 Referee

Session 1: Assistant Refereeing (Decision-Making Under Pressure)

In this workshop we were required to determine the correct offence, either a penalty kick or an attacking free kick, and to do so using the correct signal.

The coaches placed one bib on an attacker and another on a defender. They would then bounce the ball very close to the end of the penalty area or in the penalty area, leaving us to make the decision.

KeY Lesson:
Be calm, firm, authoritative and confident

Session 2: Management of Technical Areas and Managers

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Session 3: Who Has the Credibility of the Decision?

In this workshop, we had to judge whether it was a free kick or a penalty, but for this task we had our assistant on the line.

We also had the referee starting on the halfway line, sprinting around a series of cones and then trying to get in a credible position to give the correct decision while our coaches tried to almost drop the ball at the assistant and keep him out.

We also had to think about the area in which the offence occurred and whether the referee or the assistant was credible enough to give the decision and to know that, if we were giving the foul or penalty, we were certain it was a correct decision.

KeY Lesson:
Maintain clear communication with your assistant through eye contact and hand signals, because if the referee is not in a credible position to give the foul, hopefully the assistant should be in a position and have an angle to assist the decision.

Session 4: Mass Confrontation

Another role play workshop. The group was split into two teams with two observers to provide feedback plus a referee – in this instance myself.

After indicating a foul, a mass confrontation erupted that consisted of the fouled player hitting the offender and another team mate trying to get involved.

I used my whistle as a tool to try to calm the situation, but I didn’t get physically involved in the confrontation. I first identified the offender and then the retaliator, sending the offender off for serious foul play and then the retaliator for violent conduct.

KeY Lesson:
Make sure you identify the offender and retaliator along with anyone else involved, as well as the importance of staying calm whilst being firm and authoritative at the same time.
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The significance of fitness and positioning was discussed, as well as the dangers of social networking and how careful you must be.

After lunch, we headed to Staverton Town FC for an insightful afternoon of practical sessions, where we worked in eight different groups on four exercises on Saturday afternoon and four more on Sunday morning.

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All of the speakers who shared their experiences and provided an insight into some of the key learning outcomes they took from two days of bespoke refereeing presentations and workshops.

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Young Referees’ Development Programme

Session 5: Refereeing Signals

This session involved a couple of drills. In the first, we split into two teams, and had a relay race, which involved the first person sprinting from the touchline to the penalty line and then giving a signal, for example a corner kick, then sprinting back. The rest of the team would have to remember that signal and give a new signal each time someone went, whilst also replicating the previous signals.

The second drill focused on a scenario in which a defender fouled the attacker and we had to give the correct decision whilst making sure our signal was correct, clear and with a good technique.

KEY LESSON:
Make sure your signals are clear, crisp and positive so that you convey to the players, managers and spectators what you have given is clear to everyone.

Session 6: Fitness

A key message from this workshop was the idea that you have to be able to last 90 plus minutes per match whilst maintaining 100% concentration.

First we had two 40m sprints in which we were challenged to record the quickest time possible, before working on our stamina, team work and awareness. We played a game of noughts and crosses, where we had to sprint 40m, place a bib on a cone and sprint back to tag a team-mate, which I found enjoyable and engendered a strong sense of team spirit as well.

Alongside this we had a relay race, which involved the first person sprinting from the touchline to the penalty line and then giving a signal, for example, “indirect free kick and blue cone!” shouted a signal we had to perform and a cone colour, for example, “Indirect free kick and blue cone!” fro example, “indirect free kick and blue cone!”

This became trickier, as other factors were thrown in as the session progressed, which really got me thinking and tested my fitness.

KEY LESSON:
It is vital to think about the areas you should play advantage, the tempo of the game and whether an advantage will be gained from your decision.

Session 7: Advantage

This session was based around advantage and the considerations of playing it. We spoke before about the traffic light system, for example defensive third, mid third and attacking third.

There was a situation where the team with possession was fouled in their defensive third and the referee would need to decide whether advantage should be given. We then would move up the field of play, increasing the likelihood of playing advantage.

KEY LESSON:
The importance of maintaining concentration, especially when you are getting tired (towards the end of a match).

Session 8: Making Decisions Under Pressure

The last session of the weekend involved running at pace and crabbing around a series of cones while one of our coaches shouted a signal we had to perform and a cone colour, for example, “indirect free kick and blue cone!”

This became trickier, as other factors were thrown in as the session progressed, which really got me thinking and tested my fitness.

KEY LESSON:
Not only do you need to have stamina as a match official, you definitely need signalling power to get to those potential key match decisions.

Lessons Learned

Sharleen Watkins – Hertfordshire FA Level 6 Referee

The Young Referees’ Conference has already helped me in many ways, but the key aspect has been my mental toughness.

During the past season I had several ups and downs with my confidence after being promoted to Level 6 and being moved up to referee in the Hertfordshire Premier League, which I found challenging at times.

The Conference taught me that it is important to learn from what you cannot control, and if you make a mistake it is essential to forget about it and focus on the next ten minutes of the game.

Mistakes can be reflected upon after the game, where you can think about what caused it to happen, how you dealt with it, and what you can do differently next time to improve. In other words, use every mistake as a learning opportunity instead of allowing both your head and confidence to drop.

The conference was also a great way of meeting a lot of young referees who are as passionate and enthusiastic about refereeing as I am. However, what stood out the most for me was the sheer variety of practical sessions that were put on for us.

All of the sessions were highly enjoyable, and just when I thought they couldn’t get any better we were very fortunate to have FIFA officials Michael Oliver and Stuart Burt lead two of the practical sessions on the Sunday.

Over the whole weekend I do not think that I once stopped smiling (even after finding out that the group I was in had to redo the fitness test on Sunday morning after we thought that we managed to escape it due to rain on Saturday afternoon) and I am now more determined to progress within refereeing.

It left such a lasting impression, but there are perhaps two memories that stand out above all other. The first was when David Ellery explained that up to three of us would likely officiate in the Premier League and one will referee an FA Cup Final, while the second was a quote by David Ellery: “Ordinary people can do special things.”

A Tutor’s Perspective

Nick Dunn – Kent FA Referee Development Officer

Having been asked to assist in delivering in 2013 and now 2014, I have always considered it a privilege to try and help develop our County’s next group of up-and-coming Match Officials.

The importance of this two-year programme is unequivocal; not only is there a platform to learn, but these young people have the prospect of showcasing their skills to, and learning from, experienced FA Tutors, the PGMOL, FA National Managers, and the FA Referees’ Committee.

It’s an incredible opportunity, especially considering some of them will be selected to officiate at future Premier League Youth Tournaments, or even take part in the Danish Exchange and Dallas Cup.

Expanding my role as an FA RDO, Kent grasped the opportunity to send three young Match Officials to YRDP.

Whilst selection was tough, it was those who demonstrated potential on the field of play, as well as exceptional administrative duties, positive off-field conduct, professionalism, the right attitude, commitment and enthusiasm as well as the hunger and desire to learn, develop and progress who made it through.

Once selected, the importance of having personal drive underpins the entire programme as the YRDP is a journey of self-analysis and reflection that guides match officials towards taking responsibility for their own learning.

As an RDO, I feel it is so important for a County FA to take full advantage of this opportunity. The YRDP is a fantastic chance for any aspiring referee because it allows them to nurture themselves within a safe environment, thus equipping and building their own skill sets that they shall need as they move into their competitive fixtures back in their County FA.

“Whilst selection was tough, it was those who demonstrated potential on the field of play, as well as exceptional administrative duties, positive off-field conduct, professionalism, the right attitude, commitment, and enthusiasm as well as the hunger and desire to learn, develop and progress who made it through.”
Young Referees’ Development Programme

Session 5: Refereeing Signals
This session involved a couple of drills. In the first, we split into two teams and had a relay race, which involved the first person sprinting from the touchline to the penalty line and then giving a signal, for example a corner kick, then sprinting back. The rest of the team would have to remember that signal and give a new signal each time someone went, whilst also replicating the previous signals.

The second drill focused on a scenario in which a defender fouled the attacker and we had to give the correct decision whilst making sure our signal was correct, clear and with a good technique.

KEY LESSON: Make sure your signals are clear, crisp and positive so that you can convey to the players, managers and spectators that what you have given is clear to everyone.

Session 7: Advantage
This session was based around advantage and the considerations of playing it. We spoke before about the traffic light system, for example defensive third, mid third and attacking third.

There was a situation where the team with possession was fouled in their defensive third and the referee would need to decide whether advantage should be played. We then looked at what would have to remember that signal and give a new signal each time someone went, whilst also replicating the previous signals.

The second drill focused on a scenario in which a defender fouled the attacker and we had to give the correct decision whilst making sure our signal was correct, clear and with a good technique.

KEY LESSON: Not only do you need to have stamina as a match official, you definitely need spitting power to get to those potential key match decisions.

Session 6: Fitness
A key message from this workshop was the idea that you have to be able to last 90 plus minutes per match whilst maintaining 100% concentration.

First we had two 40m sprints in which we were challenged to record the quickest time possible, before working on our stamina, team work and awareness. We played a game of noughts and crosses, where we had to sprint 40m, place a bib on a cone and sprint back to tag a team-mate, which I found enjoyable and engendered a strong sense of team spirit as well.

KEY LESSON: The importance of maintaining concentration, especially when you are getting tired (towards the end of a match).

Session 8: Making Decisions Under Pressure
The last session of the weekend involved running at pace and crabbing around a series of cones while one of our coaches shouted a signal we had to perform and a cone colour, for example, “indirect free kick and blue cone!”

This became trickier as other factors were thrown in as the session progressed, which really got me thinking and tested my fitness.

KEY LESSON: The importance of maintaining concentration, especially when you are getting tired (towards the end of a match).

Lessons Learned
Sharleen Watkins – Hertfordshire FA Level 6 Referee

The Young Referees’ Conference has already helped me in many ways, but the key aspect has been my mental toughness.

During the past season I had several ups and downs with my confidence after being promoted to Level 6 and being moved up to referee in the Hertfordshire Premier League, which I found challenging at times.

The Conference taught me that it is important to learn from what you cannot control, and if you make a mistake it is essential to forget about it and focus on the next ten minutes of the game.

Mistakes can be reflected upon after the game, where you can think about what caused it to happen, how you dealt with it, and what you can do differently next time to improve. In other words, use every mistake as a learning opportunity instead of allowing both your head and confidence to drop.

The conference was also a great way of meeting a lot of young referees who are as passionate and enthusiastic about refereeing as I am. However, what stood out the most for me was the sheer variety of practical sessions that were put on for us.

All of the sessions were highly enjoyable, and just when I thought they couldn’t get any better we were very fortunate to have FIFA officials Michael Oliver and Stuart Burt lead two of the practical sessions on the Sunday.

Over the whole weekend I do not think that I once stopped smiling (even after finding out that the group I was in had to redo the fitness test). Nevertheless, the weekend was a huge success, both from a personal and a professional level.

A tutor’s perspective
Nick Dunn – Kent FA Referee Development Officer

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As an RDO, I feel it is so important for a County FA to take full value of an opportunity of this magnitude.

The YRDP is a fantastic chance for any aspiring referee because it allows them to nurture themselves within a safe environment, thus equipping and building their own self sets that they shall need as they move into their competitive fixtures back in their County FAQs.

Overall this was a fantastic conference full of budding young officials who are embarking on an exciting journey, so with that in mind I feel it’s only pertinent to highlight one final quote from the weekend “Remember, there is only one barrier to not achieving, and that is you.”

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ENHANCED EDUCATION FOR COACHES AND MENTORS

Rob McCarthy, FA Referee Coaching and Mentoring Manager, looks at the new Coaching and Mentoring Competency Pathway.

Earlier this year, with The FA’s Professional Game Refereeing Department continuing to strive to achieve its goal of developing referees to officiate effectively at the higher levels, it became apparent that we needed to enhance the capabilities of our coaches and mentors by giving them a more effective and modern approach to their important roles. This will enable them to become more effective and to gain even more enjoyment from their roles.

All good coaches and mentors, regardless of the level of the refereeing pyramid they operate within, must have the right balance of strong interpersonal skills, solid knowledge of modern refereeing techniques for that level, and the correct approach to the relationship with each referee.

Coupled successfully together, these result in the coach/mentor being able to engage effectively and jointly agree on each phase of development, with the referee then taking full ownership of putting it into practice.

If any of these attributes is lacking then a productive, two-way trusting relationship is unlikely to be achieved and the referee’s development will be greatly hampered, as they will not know how to approach either their refereeing or their personal development in the most constructive manner.

Therefore, to provide our coaches and mentors with enhanced skills and knowledge to help the development of their officials’ techniques and attitude, The FA has launched a new Coaching and Mentoring Competency Pathway.

The Pathway provides education and training on the eight best practice competencies of coaching and mentoring.

These were created in conjunction with leading training and development organisations and Professor Clutterbuck, a subject matter expert in this specialism.

Each of the eight competencies is important to master not only individually, but also collectively. If they are all achieved and used collectively, then all coaches and mentors – regardless of whatever level of the game they operate – will become more effective in their roles.

In line with The FA Referee Tutor Pathway, the new Coaching & Mentoring Competency Pathway consists of a number of interactive development courses, assessments and on the job appraisals which can result in coaches and mentors progressing through the various stages of the Pathways and being recognised for their effectiveness in both their skills and delivery.

The FA hopes that by providing a new and more structured education and benchmarking process for coaching and mentoring, we will be able to develop and engage coaches and mentors more effectively so they receive the recognition and enjoyment they deserve for the hard work and important role they play in developing our officials.

The FA has changed the betting-related integrity rules for season 2014-15 and it is important that, as Match Officials, no matter what level, you are clear about your position.

Referees and Betting

Referees and betting is not a new concept for football. However, as with the development of the game in recent years, the FA has updated and tightened its rules to reflect the increased complexity and sophistication of betting.

The FA Referee Coaching and Mentoring Competency Pathway

The Pathway focuses on developing the competencies that will enable referees to operate within, must have the right balance of strong interpersonal skills, solid knowledge of modern refereeing techniques for that level, and the correct approach to the relationship with each referee.

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The FA Referee Coaching and Mentoring Competency Pathway

Understanding yourself as a Practitioner

Managing the Coaching/ Mentoring Contact

Evaluation and Self Development

Competencies

Building an Effective and Trusting Relationship

Effective Use of Models and Techniques to Gain the Best Results

Outcome and Action-Focused Development

Enabling Insight and Learning by the Referee

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Referees and Betting

Referees at Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4

Referees at Levels 1 – 4 are covered by FA Rule E(1) which provides for a worldwide ban. They are thus NOT PERMITTED to either directly or indirectly, instruct, permit, cause or enable any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of or occurrence in a football match or competition anywhere in the world.

This rule applies to all participants at Step 4 and above and thus includes referee assessors, coaches, tutors mentors etc.

Those operating at these levels are strongly advised to consult FA Rule E8 (1) for more information.

Referees at Level 5

Referees at Level 5 and below and all participants below Step 4 (including referee assessors, coaches, tutors mentors etc) are subject to FA Rule E(2) which means that they may not bet, either directly or indirectly, or instruct, permit, cause or enable any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of or occurrence in a football match or competition.

In which the Participant is participating, or has participated in that season

In which the Participant has any influence, either direct or indirect

Those operating at these levels are strongly advised to consult FA Rule E8 (2)

Everyone

It is also very important to note that:

You are also prohibited from offering or accepting (or agreeing to offer or accept) any bribe, gift or reward:

• In relation to you, or any other Participant failing to perform to the best of your/their ability

• In relation to any person, directly or indirectly seeking to influence for an improper purpose the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in a football match or competition

You are prohibited from (directly or indirectly) seeking to influence for an improper purpose the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in a football match or competition.

The FA may take disciplinary action against any Participant found by another sport’s disciplinary body to have committed a betting or fixing offence under the rules of that other sport.

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Referee Report Incident

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• Of any bribe, gift or reward or consideration of any nature, or any other incident, fact or matter, which is related in any way to you, or any other Participant, failing to perform to the best of your ability

• Directly, or indirectly seeking to influence for an improper purpose the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in a football match or competition.

Report Misconduct

You must report any approach/offered made to you (or any other Participant):

• By any person in relation to betting contrary to FA Rules

• Of any bribe, gift or reward or consideration of any nature, or any other incident, fact or matter, which is related in any way to you, or any other Participant, failing to perform to the best of your ability

• Directly, or indirectly seeking to influence for an improper purpose the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in a football match or competition.

Reports can be made by phone on 0208 795 9640 or email at Integrity@thefa.com.
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Coupled successfully together, these result in the coach/mentor being able to engage effectively and jointly agree on each phase of development, with the referee then taking full ownership of putting it into practice.

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“Fixing” in Relation to Matches and Competitions

You are prohibited from (directly or indirectly) seeking to influence for an improper purpose (i.e., “fixing”) the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in, any football match or competition, worldwide.

You are also prohibited from offering or accepting (or agreeing to offer or accept) any bribes, gifts or rewards:

• In relation to you, or any other Participant failing to perform to the best of your/their ability

The FA may take disciplinary action against any Participant found by another sport’s disciplinary body to have committed a betting or fixing offence against any participant found by another sport’s disciplinary body to have committed a betting or fixing offence against any participant found by another sport’s disciplinary body to have committed a betting or fixing offence.

The FA has changed the betting-related integrity rules for season 2014-15 and it is important that, as Match Officials, no matter what level, you are clear about your position.

Referees at Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4

Referees at Levels 1 – 4 are covered by FA Rule E(1) which provides for a worldwide ban. They are thus are NOT PERMITTED to bet either directly or indirectly, or instruct, permit, cause or enable any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of or occurrence in a football match or competition anywhere in the world.

This rule also applies to all participants at Step 4 and above and thus includes referee assessors, coaches, tutors mentors etc.

Those operating at these levels are strongly advised to consult FA Rule EB (1) on The FA website at www.TheFA.com.

Referees at Level 5

Referees at Level 5 and below and all participants below Step 6 (including referee assessors, coaches, tutors mentors etc.) are subject to FA Rule E(2) which means that they may not bet, either directly or indirectly, or instruct, permit, cause or enable any person to bet on the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of or occurrence in a football match or competition:

• In which the Participant is participating, or has participated in that season

• In which the Participant has any influence, either direct or indirect

Those operating at these levels are strongly advised to consult FA Rule EB (2) on The FA website at www.TheFA.com.

Everyone

It is also very important to note that:

• When acting in a personal capacity, you are not permitted to advertise or promote any betting activity that you are prohibited from engaging in under the Rules.

• The FA may take disciplinary action against any Participant found by another sport’s disciplinary body to have committed a betting or fixing offence under the rules of that other sport.

All match officials, referee coaches and referee assessors are reminded of their ongoing responsibilities under the Rules regarding “fixing” and the reporting of misconduct. These apply regardless of the Level at which they operate.

Reporting Misconduct

You must report any approach/offers made to you (or any other Participant):

• By any person in relation to betting contrary to FA Rules

• Of any bribe, gift or reward or consideration of any nature, or any other incident, fact or matter, which is related in any way to you, or any other Participant, failing to perform to the best of your ability

• Directly or indirectly seeking to influence for an improper purpose the result, progress conduct or any other aspect of, or occurrence in, a football match or competition.

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Fouls in and Around the Penalty Area

**Adam Watts, PGMOL Senior Coach – Assistant Referees, explains The FA Guidelines for Assistant Referees regarding fouls in and around the penalty area**

The art of being a very good assistant referee requires an understanding of the need to ‘add value’ to the refereeing team’s decision-making by assisting not insisting.

Before committing to any public indication with their flag, the very best assistants are always aware of both the position and body language of the referee.

By being able to read the referee, the assistant referee will know best how to ‘add value’, recognising when a flag indication will have positive impact.

Decision-making in and around the penalty area brings additional focus as the consequence may well result in the award of a penalty kick by the referee.

Teamwork and co-operation may be required to arrive at the correct outcome, and on rare occasions the assistant referee may well need to lead the decision-making process and indicate with their flag that in their opinion a penalty kick should be awarded by the referee.

In England most assistant referees have used a flag across the chest to signal a penalty kick.

However this signal is not in the Laws of the Game and is not approved by either FIFA or UEFA. In addition it is used by very few, if any, Football Associations.

The FA Referees’ Committee (in consultation with PGMOL) has thus decided that this signal should no longer be used and the following procedure should be adopted:

- Before indicating with a flag signal that a foul challenge has occurred, assistant referees should always adopt a simple traffic light process: LOOK, READ, RESPOND.
- **LOOK** – Make Eye Contact with the referee.
- **READ** – Establish the Position and Actions of the referee.
- **RESPOND** – Take the appropriate action to ‘add value’ to the decision-making process and outcome.

By adopting the LOOK, READ, RESPOND process the assistant referee should understand how best to assist the referee in any particular match situation.

A flag across the chest is very conspicuous and creates management challenges that can be avoided by a more discreet physical movement.

The FA Referees’ Committee has thus decided that this use of the flag across the chest signal draws unnecessary attention to the assistant referee, which can as a consequence create dissent and management problems.

It also potentially creates conflict if used at the same time as the referee is indicating in their opinion the offence is outside of the penalty area, or they decide not to award a penalty kick.

By not placing the flag across the chest, the referee has options available. For instance if the assistant referee indicates an offence by agitating their flag, and then following the whistle from the referee they move with purpose to the goal line, it is more straightforward for the referee to award a direct free kick outside of the penalty area if this is where the referee knows the location of the offence to be.

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Inside or outside?

Where a referee penalises a defending player near the boundary of the penalty area, it is the only occasion when the assistant referee leads the decision making process because:

- it is clear that the referee has not seen the foul.
- The assistant referee is better placed to make the judgement.
- A flag signal is necessary to indicate publicly that a foul has taken place.

The actions of the assistant referee should be as follows:

- **Raise the flag in the same hand that will be used for the remainder of the signal and agitate/wave the flag to indicate a foul has been committed** - the flag should not be placed across the chest. Where available it is recommended that the electronic beep is used and/or the ‘communication system’ is used to advise “penalty, penalty, penalty,”
- **By following the signal for the foul the assistant referee should make a clear physical movement along the touchline towards the corner flag post keeping alert in case the referee does not see or override the flag signal. When the situation is calm, only then move to the standard position from which to monitor the penalty kick.**
Fouls in and around the penalty area

Adam Watts, PGMOL Senior Coach – Assistant Referees, explains The FA Guidelines for Assistant Referees regarding fouls in and around the penalty area

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Before committing to any public indication with their flag, the very best assistants are always aware of both the position and body language of the referee.

By being able to read the referee, the assistant referee will know best how to ‘add value’, recognising when a flag indication will have positive impact.

Decision making in and around the penalty area brings additional focus as the consequence may well result in the award of a penalty kick by the referee.

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- LOOK – make EYE CONTACT with the referee

- READ the referee – establish the POSITION and ACTIONS of the referee

- RESPOND – take the appropriate action to ‘add value’ to the decision-making process and outcome

By adopting the LOOK, READ, RESPOND process the assistant referee should understand how best to assist the referee in any particular match situation.

A flag should be used together with the whistle by the assistant referee to give assistance to the referee. It is recommended that the electronic beep is used and/or the ‘communication system’ is used to advise ‘penalty, penalty, penalty’.

In situations where a foul is committed by a defending player near to or inside their own penalty area, it is the only occasion when the assistant referee leads the decision making process because:

- It is clear that the referee has not seen the foul.

- The assistant referee is better placed to make the judgement.

A flag signal is necessary to indicate publicly that a foul has taken place.

Fouls in and around the penalty area

In situations where a foul is committed by a defending player near to or inside their own penalty area, it is the only occasion when the assistant referee leads the decision making process:

- Raise the flag in the same hand that will be used for the remainder of the signal and agitate/wave the flag to indicate a foul has been committed - the flag should not be placed across the chest. Where available it is recommended that the electronic beep is used and/or the ‘communication system’ is used to advise “penalty, penalty, penalty.”

- Following the signal for the foul the assistant referee should make a clear physical movement along the touchline towards the corner flag post keeping alert in case the referee does not see or over-rules the flag signal. When the situation is calm, only then move to the standard position from which to monitor the penalty kick.

The actions of the assistant referee should be as follows:

When the foul is INSIDE the penalty area and the assistant referee is leading the decision making process:

- Raise the flag in the same hand that will be used for the remainder of the signal and agitate/wave the flag to indicate a foul has been committed - the flag should not be placed across the chest. Where available it is recommended that the electronic beep is used and/or the ‘communication system’ is used to advise “attacking free kick, outside, outside, outside”.

- Following the signal for the foul the assistant referee should make a clear physical movement along the touchline towards the halfway line to a position level with the front edge of the penalty area and stand still.

Inside or outside?

Where a referee penalises a defending player near the boundary of the penalty area and seeks guidance from an assistant referee concerning the exact location of the offence, if in a credible position to assist, the assistant referee’s action should be as outlined above without the flag being raised.

In the picture (left) whilst the referee would be expected to recognise that an offence has taken place, the assistant referee should be positioned to offer advice regarding the location of the offence i.e. inside or outside.

GETTING IT SPOT ON
Frequently Asked Questions

What should the assistant referee do if the referee is leading the decision-making process i.e. awards a penalty kick without the need for the assistant referee to become involved?

In the event that the referee indicates a penalty kick, the assistant referee should move to the goal line and remain at the corner flag until the situation is calm. Only when the situation is calm should the assistant referee move along the goal line to the intersection of the goal line and the penalty area, as shown in the picture below.

How should the assistant referee signal with their flag in the event that they are leading the decision-making process?

Before signalling for an offence, the assistant referee must determine that the offence was out of the view of the referee or that the referee’s view was obstructed – the flag signal should add value to the decision making process and outcome.

Where the assistant referee needs to make a signal with their flag to indicate that an offence has taken place, the flag signal should add value to the decision making process and outcome.

Where a foul is committed inside the penalty area:
- Assistant referee: Raise flag, agitate
- Referee: Whistle
- Assistant referee: Lower flag and make physical movement

What does clear physical movement mean and how is this done?
Clear physical movement is a visible movement with purpose in a particular direction. For example, if the assistant referee is leading the decision making process and the outcome is a penalty kick, following the flag signal of the assistant referee and the referee blowing their whistle to stop play, and penalise the offence, the assistant referee will clearly move along the touchline with purpose towards the goal line.

The ‘movement style’ of the assistant referee should allow for a constant view of the field of play, a controlled side-stepping movement or mid-pace jog whilst looking in field should be used. Sprinting should not be used for this movement.

What does the assistant referee do if they are already standing at/near the corner flag when they make a flag signal to advise the referee that an offence has taken place?

In the event that the assistant referee is already positioned at/near the corner flag, they are required to make a flag signal and clear physical movement to assist the referee.

If a penalty kick is being indicated, the assistant referee should clearly signal with an agitated flag, followed by direction and then stand still positioned behind the corner flag.

If the offence is close to but outside of the penalty area, the assistant referee should signal with an agitated flag, followed by direction and then stand still positioned behind the corner flag.

In a situation where player confrontation develops following a flag signal, the assistant referee must prioritise monitoring and management over the subsequent movement. The assistant referee can confirm to the referee the restart of play (penalty kick or direct free kick) following the confrontation being dealt with.

What should the assistant referee do if, following a flag signal, a confrontation between players develops?

At all times in the match the assistant referee must consider three priorities:
- Offside
- Ball out of play
- Fouls and Misconduct

In a situation where player confrontation develops following a flag signal, the assistant referee must prioritise monitoring and management over the subsequent movement. The assistant referee can confirm to the referee the restart of play (penalty kick or direct free kick) following the confrontation being dealt with.

Summary

There is no particular assistant referee flag signal for a penalty kick. When the foul is clearly inside the penalty area, if needed, the regular indication for a foul should be followed by a clear physical movement to the goal line – the flag should not be placed across the chest.

When the foul is outside the penalty area, if needed, the assistant referee should make a clear physical movement to a position level with the front edge of the penalty area.

These FA Guidelines are consistent with the approach that is documented in the Laws of the Game, a practice that is successfully used in Competitions outside of England.

Fouls Outside the Penalty Area

When a foul is committed outside the penalty area (near the boundary of the penalty area), the assistant referee should make eye contact with the referee to see where the referee is positioned and what action he has taken. The assistant referee must stand in line with the penalty area and raise their flag if necessary.

In counter-attack situations, the assistant referee should be able to give information such as whether or not a foul has been committed and whether a foul was committed inside or outside the penalty area, which is a priority in any case, and what disciplinary action must be taken.

Fouls Inside the Penalty Area

When a foul is committed inside the penalty area out of the vision of the referee, especially if near to the assistant referee’s position, the assistant referee must first make eye contact with the referee to see where the referee is positioned and what action they have taken. If the referee has not taken any action, the assistant referee must raise their flag and use the electronic beep signal and then visibly move down the touch line towards the corner flag.
Frequently Asked Questions

What should the assistant referee do if the referee is leading the decision-making process? i.e., awards a penalty kick without the need for the assistant referee to become involved?

In the event that the referee indicates a penalty kick, the assistant referee should move to the goal line and remain at the corner flag until the situation is calm. Only when the situation is calm should the assistant referee move along the goal line to the intersection of the goal line and the penalty area, as shown in the picture below:

![Diagram showing the assistant referee moving along the goal line to indicate a penalty kick](image)

What does clear physical movement mean and how is this done?

Clear physical movement is a visible movement with purpose in a particular direction. For example, if the assistant referee is leading the decision making process and the outcome is a penalty kick, following the flag signal of the assistant referee and the referee blowing their whistle to stop play and penalise the offence, the assistant referee will clearly move along the touchline with purpose towards the goal line.

The ‘movement style’ of the assistant referee should allow for a constant view of the field of play, a controlled side-stepping movement or mid-pace jog whilst looking in-field should be used. Sprinting should not be used for this movement.

What does the assistant referee do if they are already standing at/near the corner flag when they make a flag signal to advise the referee that an offence has taken place?

In the event that the assistant referee is already positioned at/near the corner flag, they are required to make a flag signal and clear physical movement to assist the referee.

If a penalty kick is being indicated, the assistant referee should clearly signal with an agitated flag, followed by direction and then stand still positioned behind the corner flag.

If the offence is close to but outside of the penalty area (the foul most likely to have occurred in this ‘opposite’ shown in the picture below), then the assistant referee should clearly signal with an agitated flag, followed by a direction and then a visible purposeful movement, side-stepping along the touchline back towards the halfway line (if it is not necessary to move all of the way to be level with the front edge of the penalty area – a clear movement of 5-6m is sufficient).

Where it is clear that the location of an offence is outside the penalty area, the assistant referee should signal with an agitated flag as they would do for any other direct free kick, and remain stationary.

How should the assistant referee signal with their flag in the event that they are leading the decision-making process?

Before signalling for an offence, the assistant referee must determine that the offence was out of the view of the referee or that the referee’s view was obstructed – the flag signal should ‘add value’ to the decision making process and outcome.

Where the assistant referee needs to make a signal with their flag to indicate that an offence has taken place, the flag signal should be as follows:

- Raise the flag with the same hand that will also be used for the remainder of the signal - this gives the referee a clear indication as to who was fouled
- Agitate/wave the flag back and forth (avoiding any excessive or aggressive movement)
- Use the electronic beep signal, and communication system if available.

What should the assistant referee do if, following a flag signal, a confrontation between players develops?

At all times in the match the assistant referee must consider three priorities:

- Offside
- Ball out of play
- Fouls and Misconduct

In a situation where player confrontation develops following a flag signal, the assistant referee must prioritise monitoring and management over the subsequent movement. The assistant referee can confirm to the referee the restart of play (penalty kick or direct free kick) following the confrontation being dealt with.

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Fouls inside the penalty area

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![Diagram showing the assistant referee signaling a penalty kick](image)
High-Intensity Aerobic Training Sessions

Simon Breivik, PGMOL Head of Sports Science, provides guidance on how you can improve your aerobic fitness levels and improve your ability to maintain your work rate on the field.

Aerobic fitness – otherwise known as endurance – refers to a person’s ability to sustain a given work rate for prolonged periods of time. Since officiating is an aerobic activity, you should train to optimise your aerobic fitness.

An aerobically fit official will enjoy the following benefits during matches:

- Keep up with play easily for 90+ minutes
- Maintain a fresh mind and high level of concentration throughout a match
- Possess the ability to perform multiple high-speed runs when required
- Recover quickly between sprints and high-speed runs
- Recover quickly in the hours / days after hard training sessions and matches.

If you are just starting out, you should first focus on longer, steady-state aerobic exercise, such as medium-paced jogging, cycling and swimming. You should be able to hold a conversation during this type of exercise.

The fitter you get, the more challenging it becomes to keep improving. This is where interval training comes in. You should feel uncomfortable during this type of training, otherwise it will not work. And you should only use running as your mode of exercise.

The following training sessions have been designed to improve referee-specific aerobic fitness. To benefit from these training sessions, you should already possess a reasonably good level of fitness.

The Rating of Perceived Exertion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Very, very easy</td>
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<tr>
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1. **HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-7)**

Perform a 12-minute time trial, covering as much distance as possible around the track, on the road or on the treadmill.

- Rest / walk for 3 minutes
- Perform a second 12-minute time trial, attempting to cover the same distance again.

Your heart rate should be >86% HRmax for each interval run. Aim to cover between 2.5km and 3.0km for each trial

**Run 1.6km / 1 mile (4 laps of a track) X 4 at high speed**
- Your heart rate should be >86% HRmax for each interval run.
- I would expect you to complete each run in <6 minutes.

2. **3 HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-7)**

Perform very high-speed runs around the track as follows:

- 200m, 400m, 600m, 400m, 200m, 400m, 600m
- Your heart rate should be well above 86% HRmax for each run
- Use a work to rest ratio of 1:1 (if it takes you two minutes, rest two minutes etc.)

3. **3 TRACK-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)**

- Perform two sets of six laps of the exercise below.

**Run 3 length, 1 width and 1 length of the pitch at very high speed (>86% HRmax)**
- Then walk the width of the pitch back to your starting point (1 minute)
- Perform 6 continuous laps, then rest 4 minutes and repeat (total = 12 laps)

4. **4 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)**

- Set a very high speed (above 90% HRmax)
- Perform two sets of six laps of the exercise below.

**Run 3 length, 1 width and 1 length of the pitch at very high speed (>86% HRmax)**
- Then walk the width of the pitch back to your starting point (1 minute)
- Perform 6 continuous laps, then rest 4 minutes and repeat (total = 12 laps)
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The fitter you get, the more challenging it becomes to keep improving. This is where interval training comes in. You should feel uncomfortable during this type of training, otherwise it will not work.

If you do not have a heart rate monitor, please refer to the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale top right.

1 HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-7)

Perform a 12-minute time trial, covering as much distance as possible around the track, on the road or on the treadmill.

Rest / walk for 3 minutes

Perform a second 12-minute time trial, attempting to cover the same distance again.

Your HR should be >86% HRmax throughout each interval run.

Aim to cover between 2.5km and 3.0km for each trial.

THE RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION

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2 TRACK-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)

Perform very high-speed runs around the track as follows:

• 200m, 400m, 600m, 400m, 200m, 400m, 600m

• Your heart rate should be well above 86% HRmax for each run.

• Use a work to rest ratio of 1:1 (if it takes you two minutes, rest two minutes etc.)

3 HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-7)

Run 1.6km / 1 mile (4 laps of a track) X 4 at high speed.

Rest for 3 minutes between repetitions.

Your heart rate should be >86% HRmax for each interval run.

I would expect you to complete each run in <6 minutes.

3 TRACK-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)

Perform two sets of six laps of the exercise below:

• Run 3 length, 1 width and 1 length of the pitch at very high speed (>86% HRmax).

• Then walk the width of the pitch back to your starting point (1 minute).

• Perform 6 continuous laps, then rest 4 minutes and repeat (total = 12 laps)

4 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)

Perform a 12-minute time trial, covering as much distance as possible around the track, on the road or on the treadmill.

Rest / walk for 3 minutes

Perform a second 12-minute time trial, attempting to cover the same distance again.

Your HR should be >86% HRmax throughout each interval run.

Aim to cover between 2.5km and 3.0km for each trial.

The fitter you get, the more challenging it becomes to keep improving. This is where interval training comes in.
5 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)
Perform the following box-to-box exercise:
- Set 1: single runs; set 2: double runs; set 3: triple runs
- Perform each run as quickly as possible (>86% HRmax)
- Rest flat for the same amount of time each run took
- There is no rest between sets, so perform the entire exercise continuously.

6 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)
Perform six complete laps of the following exercise (= 12 runs)
- From the corner flag, run to the far opposite corner flag and back again at very high speed
- Walk along the goal line to opposite corner flag between each run
- Time yourself for each run and try to maintain a consistent pace

7 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)
Perform 2 sets of 10 runs of the exercise with a minimum 3 minute rest between sets (= 20 runs)
- Run from corner of penalty area around far penalty mark and back to opposite edge of original penalty area at very high speed (>86% HRmax)
- Perform a recovery walk across edge of penalty area between each run
- Change the shoulder you turn on for the second set – so turn right for 5 and left for 10

8 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)
Perform the following high-speed runs at very high speed (>88% HRmax)
- Run from goal line to half-way line and back as quickly as possible (approx.150m)
- Rest 10 seconds and repeat x 20
- You should attempt to complete each run in <20s

9 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)
Perform the following runs at very high speed (>88% HRmax)
- Perform repetitions of 400m using 50m shuttles (i.e. 8 X 50m = 1 run)
- Attempt to complete each run in <90 seconds
- Rest for 90 seconds between repetitions
- Perform 6 runs

10 PITCH-BASED SPEED & HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)
Perform the 20 continuous runs at very high speed (>88% HRmax)
- From the green cone, backpedal quickly to the blue cone, turn and perform curved high-speed run to red cone at far end of the pitch
- Walk slowly between the red and green cone (15 seconds)
- Run wide so that you are making a tightly curved run
5 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)

Perform the following box-to-box exercise:
- Set 1: single runs; set 2: double runs; set 3: triple runs
- Perform each run as quickly as possible (>86% HRmax)
- Rest for the same amount of time each run took
- There is no rest between sets, so perform the entire exercise continuously

6 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 5-6)

Perform six complete laps of the following exercise (> 12 runs)
- From the corner flag, run to the far opposite corner flag and back again at very high speed
- Walk along the goal line to opposite corner flag between each run
- Time yourself for each run and try to maintain a consistent pace

7 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)

Perform 2 sets of 10 runs of the exercise with a minimum 3 minute rest between sets (> 20 runs)
- Run from corner of penalty area around far penalty mark and back to opposite edge of original penalty area at very high speed (>86% HRmax)
- Perform a recovery walk across edge of penalty area between each run
- Change the shoulder you turn on for the second set – so turn right for 30 and left for 10

8 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)

Perform the following high-speed runs at very high speed (>88% HRmax)
- Run from goal line to half-way line and back as quickly as possible (approx. 200m)
- Rest 30 seconds and repeat x 20
- You should attempt to complete each run in <20s

9 PITCH-BASED HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)

Perform the following box-to-box exercise:
- Set 1: single runs; set 2: double runs; set 3: triple runs
- Perform each run as quickly as possible (approx. 100m)
- Rest for the same amount of time each run took
- There is no rest between sets, so perform the entire exercise continuously

10 PITCH-BASED SPEED & HIGH INTENSITY AEROBIC TRAINING (RPE: 6-7)

Perform the 20 continuous runs at very high speed (>88% HRmax)
- From the green cone, backpedal quickly to the blue cone, turn and perform curved high-speed run to red cone at far end of the pitch
- Walk slowly between the red and green cone (15 seconds)
- Run wide so that you are making a tightly curved run
Peter Elsworth, FA Senior Referee Administration Manager, provides an insight into the key role played by the Referee Liaison Officer at some of football’s biggest events.

The FA Cup Final is a day that so many football fans fall in love with from an early age. The pomp, the ceremony, the history, it grabs you by your collar and never lets go. Many of us will remember childhood dreams of scoring the winning goal in front of a baying Wembley crowd, emulating our idols as we win it in front of 90,000 fans. Without question, that still happens today.

Children today, simply dream of being one of a new generation. They shout the names of Hazard, Di Maria or Sanchez in the playground and reel off in mock celebrations of their new heroes, eager to one day follow in their footsteps.

Few though, I imagine, ever wonder about the role of the referee liaison officer. I would most certainly be impressed if they did considering ten years ago, when I started my role, I was quite unaware that the position even existed.

But fast forward to Arsenal’s comeback win against Hull City last season and it marked the seventh time I have acted as referee liaison officer (RLO) for the FA Cup Final. Indeed, that game took my overall number of RLO appearances to over 50, including two UEFA Champions League Finals.

All England first team and U21 fixtures, UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League, UEFA Youth League and UEFA mini tournaments, as well as showcase finals staged in England, require an RLO and I am one of 15 who cover these games.

So what are the kids missing out on?

Well, the basic responsibility of an RLO is to create an environment to allow the match officials to remain fully focused on the game. We are appointed to elite, highly pressurised games which often represent the pinnacle of many of the participants’ careers, including the referees. This is especially true of the FA Cup Final. The line ‘you will only ever referee the Cup Final once’ is true and only serves to increase the pressure of the occasion.

As a result, we do not want the match officials to have to concentrate on anything other than doing their job.

Booking hotels (independent of both participating clubs), arranging tickets for family and friends, deciding where to eat – ensuring it is not too far from the hotel, open on a Sunday and have not got a history of food poisoning – creating a suitable itinerary; arranging transportation; organising kit and explaining the pageantry of the occasion such as the acceptable level of sweatiness for shaking the hand of the future King are all part of the RLO’s job.

Understandably, it is not always plain sailing. Clubs’ desire to wear their home colours for the big day has been the source of many a dispute, whilst persuading hotels that it is in their best interest to keep the match officials’ booking ahead of that of the multi-billion pound football club takes a bit of effort.

Ultimately, this work is put in place to ensure match day runs smoothly and that any problems on the day are the result of issues outside our control.

After meeting at the hotel the day before and attending The RA’s Eve of Final Rally, a relaxed morning is arranged with the aim to arrive at the ground approximately three hours before kick-off.
This is especially true of the FA Cup Final. The line 'you will only ever referee the Cup Final once' is true and only serves to increase the pressure of the occasion.

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After meeting at the hotel the day before and attending The RA’s Eve of Final Rally, a relaxed morning is arranged with the aim to arrive at the ground approximately three hours before kick-off.
Bringing It All Together

This ensures the referees have time to soak up the occasion before getting into the standard match day procedure.

Photos are taken with partners and close family ahead of the officials moving upstairs to see the crowd building up on Wembley Way. This opportunity is rarely afforded in a league game but on an occasion such as a Cup final, it allows the team to see the anticipation build.

Once we reach kick-off minus two-hours, the referees return to the changing room and start to focus on the match. This is where you get to see the personalities of those involved.

Some cannot sit still, some stick ‘hard house music’ on the stereo, while some look as though they’ve just got home after a spa day.

This is where the RLO has to judge their role accordingly and adapt as necessary. If an official is having a quiet moment on their own, running through Leeds United’s 1975 European Cup Final line-up is not what they want, even if I do.

During these two hours before kick-off the RLO is the point of contact for any issues which may occur with the teams or the event organisers.

Issues have ranged from late team sheets and players injured in the warm-up, to explanations to the media as to the use of goal line technology.

The RLO acts as a go-between so that responses are provided without having to bother the match officials. GLT testing, security briefings, team sheet exchanges, warm up and bell for the players are co-ordinated by the RLO before it is handed over to the referee for the match itself.

Throughout the game and at half time, the RLO acts as a buffer between the referees and the event owners, security and media.

For example, the RLO will convey police advice to the referee, regarding any security issues with a specific set of fans, which could influence the chosen end for kicks from the penalty mark.

Conversely, if the referee has an issue with anything off the field, such as a replay of a controversial incident on the big screen, the RLO will liaise with the Events team to ensure it is stopped.

Once the final whistle goes, one set of players will crumple to the floor whilst the others will run off in the direction of their fans. The RLO will be one of four people (fourth official, reserve assistant and masseur) whose first response will be to go onto the pitch to shake the hands of the match officials and congratulate them on their achievement. It is at this moment that the emotions take hold and the magnitude of the occasion reaches its peak.

I have been on the end of some incredibly sweaty hugs (too sweaty for a prince but not too sweaty for an RLO), and been faced with grown men with a passion for hard house breaking down in tears.

Both are understandable. It is at this time that the many years of dedication to refereeing become worthwhile.

The one thing which is consistent is how much the event truly means to those refereeing the game, and how every one of them is desperate to avoid being the point of discussion after the game.

It is a special moment for me too. Although no child has ever dreamt of being an RLO (and long may that continue) it has provided me with the opportunity to walk onto the Wembley pitch and stand amongst the biggest occasion in the English footballing calendar on seven separate occasions.

&advising FA Cup Final referees on the optimal sweatiness for shaking hands with the future King is amongst the RLO’s responsibilities"
This ensures the referees have time to soak up the occasion before getting into the standard match day procedure.

Photos are taken with partners and close family ahead of the officials moving upstairs to see the crowd building up on Wembley Way. This opportunity is rarely afforded in a league game but on an occasion such as a Cup final, it allows the team to see the anticipation build. Once we reach kick-off minus two-hours, the referees return to the changing room and start to focus on the match. This is where you get to see the personalities of those involved.

Some cannot sit still, some stick ‘hard house music’ on the stereo, while some look as though they’ve just got home after a spa day. This is where the RLO has to judge their role accordingly and adapt as necessary. If an official is having a quiet moment on their own, running through Leeds United’s 1975 European Cup Final line-up is not what they want, even if I do.

During these two hours before kick-off the RLO is the point of contact for any issues which may occur with the teams or the event organisers.

Issues have ranged from late team sheets and players injured in the warm-up, to explanations to the media as to the use of goal line technology.

The RLO acts as a go-between so that responses are provided without having to bother the match officials. Gl testing, security briefings, team sheet exchanges, warm up and bell for the players are co-ordinated by the RLO before it is handed over to the referee for the match itself.

Throughout the game and at half time, the RLO acts as a buffer between the referees and the event owners, security and media.

For example, the RLO will convey police advice to the referee, regarding any security issues with a specific set of fans, which could influence the chosen end for kicks from the penalty mark.

Conversely, if the referee has an issue with anything off the field, such as a replay of a controversial incident on the big screen, the RLO will liaise with the Events team to ensure it is stopped.

Once the final whistle goes, one set of players will crumple to the floor whilst the others will run off in the direction of their fans. The RLO will be one of four people (fourth official, reserve assistant and masseur) whose first response will be to go onto the pitch to shake the hands of the match officials and congratulate them on their achievement. It is at this moment that the emotions take hold and the magnitude of the occasion reaches its peak.

I have been on the end of some incredibly sweaty hugs (too sweaty for a Prince but not too sweaty for an RLO), and been faced with grown men with a passion for hard house breaking down in tears. Both are understandable. It is at this time that the many years of dedication to refereeing become worthwhile.

The one thing which is consistent is how much the event truly means to those refereeing the game, and how every one of them is desperate to avoid being the point of discussion after the game. It is a special moment for me too. Although no child has ever dreamt of being an RLO (and long may that continue) it has provided me with the opportunity to walk onto the Wembley pitch and stand, with a view from the halfway line, amongst the biggest occasion in the English footballing calendar on seven separate occasions.

“Advising FA Cup Final referees on the optimal sweatiness for shaking hands with the future King is amongst the RLO’s responsibilities”
Former Premier League and FIFA referee, Howard Webb, reflects on a job well done by him and his team at the World Cup Finals in Brazil.

The road to the World Cup finals in Brazil had begun many months before. Preparatory seminars in Zurich, Rio de Janeiro and Gran Canaria were followed by a variety of FIFA tournaments such as the Under 20 and Under 17 World Cups, the Confederations Cup and the World Club Cup.

Based upon various criteria, the initial shortlist of officials was reduced until, in early January, the final list of 91 officials was announced - 25 referees with two assistant referees each and eight reserve referees each with a reserve assistant referee. The competition had been strong and there were many high quality officials who missed out. Only 10 of UEFA’s 20+ elite referees made the cut, so the sense of relief and satisfaction at being selected was palpable.

Having been informed of our successful inclusion in the final list, thoughts initially turned to our previous involvement in the World Cup finals, in South Africa four years earlier. We knew that our success there would make a strong impact on our 2014 tournament, and we were going into somewhat unchartered territory as no referee in the modern era had returned to a World Cup finals tournament having taken charge of match 64 - the World Cup Final.

We were realistic enough to know that nobody had ever refereed two final matches and had no reason to think that this would change. After all, why would FIFA have many talented and capable officials to choose from for the final.

Going into a tournament knowing that it wasn’t possible to reach the end was unusual, but we hoped it would make us a little more relaxed. As such, we didn’t set ourselves specific outcome goals as we knew from experience that you can’t control the number or type of appointments you receive at a tournament because so many external factors come into play that effect this. All you can do is control your own performances. As such, we set ourselves performance goals and worked with Professor Ian Maynard (sports psychologist who works with PGMOL officials) pre-tournament to ensure we went to Brazil in the best possible frame of mind.

Preparing for the heat

Four years earlier I had done some acclimatisation work at Sheffield Hallam University to deal with the altitude we would encounter in South Africa. I decided to repeat the exercise prior to Brazil 2014 by undertaking acclimatisation for the heat and humidity we would face, especially if appointed to the northern Brazilian venues such as Manaus, Fortaleza and Natal.

Eight sessions followed throughout May, performing interval sessions on a non-motorised treadmill in an environmental chamber at temperatures of anything up to 40 degrees celsius and 85% humidity. In order to replicate a real match situation, a full 90 minutes was spent in the chamber in each session. It really was torture: the hardest training I have ever done in my life, both physically and mentally, but I knew it would stand me in good stead.

Not only could I see my physical output improve but I also knew that psychologically the sessions would do me good because I knew that I could cope with such conditions for the length of a match.
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Pre-tournament assessments

I flew to Rio on 31 May together with my wonderful team of assistant referees Darren England and Mike Mullarkey. Once there we attended a 12-day pre-tournament seminar, which involved of video review sessions of handball, DoGSo, penalty cases and video reviews of features of the tournament which involved video replay. Once there we attended a 12-day pre-tournament seminar, which involved of video review sessions of handball, DoGSo, penalty cases and video reviews.

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Adapting to innovation

FIFA World Cup 2014 saw several innovations, all of which we prepared for in the pre-tournament seminar phase in Rio. Alongside the goal line decision system, which we already had experience of from the Premier League’s similar system, we were also prepared for the use of cooling breaks. Two three-minute breaks would take place at 30 minutes and 75 minutes if the wet bulb globe temperature (a measurement that takes into account not only heat but also humidity) exceeded 32 degrees. The time lost for the breaks would be added onto the time shown on the time allowed board at the end of each half. The third innovation was that of the vanishing spray that helped to ensure the defensive wall remained 9.15 metres/10 yards away from the ball.

We spent some time on the training ground practicing its use, deciding where best to wear it on the wasteline of the shorts. We also established best practice in terms of where to use it on the field of play and what procedure to follow, drawing upon the experience of those officials who had used it before.

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Match 21

On 19 June, in the capital Brasilia, we took charge of our first match, Match 21: Colombia v Ivory Coast, in the second group stage. Games between nations from different continents are what the World Cup is all about and we were delighted with the appointment.

The match passed smoothly, with only two yellow cards being necessary and a good attitude from the players as Colombia went on to win 2-1.

I also had an opportunity to use the vanishing spray after about 20 minutes, but not before it had fallen from my waistband in the second minute when I began to sprint on a counter-attack.

At a tournament it’s always a great feeling to get that first match under your belt. It’s only at that point that you really feel part of the tournament.

Match 49

One of the tricks of being successful in tournament football is to not over-analyse the fixtures in anticipation of which you might receive.

It’s not easy though because we are there to work and we all want to be involved in matches. We tried to stay relaxed and continued to give 100% on the training ground.

When our next assignment did come we were thrilled with it. Match 49, the first of the knockout matches and when things become really serious.

All matches at this stage are big ones but this one involved the home nation Brazil which meant the eyes of the world were on it. Their opponents, Chile, had looked really good in the group stages and we knew, in all likelihood, that we would be in for a tight affair.

The mind games started the day before the match with the Chilean contingent suggesting that the referees at the World Cup wouldn’t be strong enough when officiating Brazil, whilst the Brazilians retorted by claiming offence at the thought that they needed the referees to help them through. Of course this was all water off a duck’s back and is something I’ve experienced so many times before.

At 3pm in the Mineirao Stadium, Belo Horizonte, the match kicked off. Naturally all 56,091 seats were occupied and the atmosphere was intense. I would suggest it was as intense an atmosphere as I’ve experienced in 25 years of refereeing, which has included many big games.

The biggest moment came on 61 minutes, with the teams still locked at 1-1. A long cross, which left me a little distant from play due to poor anticipation on my part, was controlled by Brazilian attacker Hulk.

From my position, albeit 27 metres away, I was able to see that Hulk brought his right arm around and that the ball was controlled through a combination of chest and bicep. Without contact with the arm the ball would, in my opinion, have reacted rather differently than it did, dropping nicely to his foot before he knocked it past the Chilean goalkeeper into goal. I knew the use of the arm had been crucial.

As the stadium erupted and Hulk wheeled away, I penalised the handling offence and cautioned Hulk. It wasn’t lost on me that this was a huge moment in the match and could have proved to be a huge moment in the World Cup for these two teams. Brazil won through in a tense decider from the penalty mark. When we returned to our dressing room mentally and physically exhausted, we were delighted to receive messages on our mobile phones congratulating us on our performance and confirming that the big decisions were correct.
number of referees that appeared for their second World Cup finals

13 assistant referees that appeared for their second World Cup finals

1 trio of match officials that returned as a team for their second World Cup finals: Howard Webb, Mike Mullarkey and Darren Cann

19 million UK audience that watched Brazil v Chile, officiated by Howard Webb. It became the most tweeted-about sporting event ever, exceeding the number of Twitter entries for the Superbowl of 2014.

187 yellow cards issued, down from 241 in 2010

10 red cards issued, down from 17 in 2010

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A job well done

The huge profile and exposure of the match the day before became evident as we jogged along, with motorists slowing down and shouting ‘Webb, Webb’ through open windows.

We were pleased to be on the list of retained referees announced after the quarter-final stage but we knew options for another match were limited and so it turned out with the teams who made it through to the semi-finals.

Prior to us leaving Rio for home FIFA confirmed they were delighted with our contribution and that we couldn’t have done any more.

Naturally we were thrilled for our good friends from Italy, led by Nicola Rizzoli, on their appointment to the final and were happy to share with them the benefit of our experiences from four years earlier. It was pleasing to see them subsequently deliver the match to a safe conclusion.

FIFA World Cup 2014 was another amazing experience for us. The universal view seems to be that it was one of the greatest World Cups and it was a privilege to be a part of it.

Whilst slightly disappointed that we hadn’t been utilised more, we flew home with a sense of pride at how we had performed.

We felt grateful for the opportunities afforded us and honoured to have represented English refereeing at a major tournament once again and, in fact, for the final time.

As a team we are too old to be considered for the 2016 European Championships in France. However, we can look back on a truly amazing journey through six tournaments together and look forward safe in the knowledge that we have excellent English colleagues to take the baton on to France 2016, Russia 2018 and beyond.
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Howard took charge of two matches during his time in Brazil – Colombia v Ivory Coast and Brazil v Chile
Futsal referee Marc Birkett followed up his appointment to the 2014 UEFA Futsal EUROs by making his final international appearance of the season at the World University Futsal Championships in Spain. This is how his tournament went.

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“In any form of refereeing, it’s always a great feeling to work with good friends and, more importantly, leaving the pitch with the feeling of doing a professional job.”
All international appointments are special but it is always good to go back to a country or competition that holds special memories. The World University Futsal Championships hold many special memories for me as within my previous two visits in 2008 and 2010 I wouldn’t have experienced what I have been lucky enough to have done in the last two years. This year’s championships were in Antequera near Malaga.

Held every two years the WUFC’s showcase the best up and coming men and women Futsal players as they push for full international appearances; some have already made the step up, and the majority of teams are led by coaching staff from their full international sections.

The seven days of competition got underway after an opening ceremony in front of a capacity crowd of 2,500 in the main arena and to a host of VIPs from FISU (organising body), local dignitaries and Javier Lazano, Head of Spanish Futsal.

The Championships are a chance for referees to gain valuable experiences working with officials from around the world. There is plenty of game time, usually two games a day. I started with a challenging women’s match: Spain v Portugal. The skill level and technical ability of the players was of the highest level and the game remained very close until the large home support got vocally behind their team and helped push them to a 4-1 victory. I was then timekeeper for a 3-3 draw between the Czech Republic and Israel in the men’s competition.

Match Day 2 brought a challenging men’s match: Ukraine v Iran. The day before Ukraine and Brazil had contested a heated match in which Ukraine received three red cards and were involved in an incident with one of the match officials, which is not normal in Futsal.

Both teams needed to win to progress and the game proved extremely challenging to balance the flow of the game to keep it under control.

My Kyrgyzstan colleague and I worked hard from the first to the last whistle and walked off the pitch having escaped major incident. I was then referee for Portugal v China (Women). This gave me the opportunity to watch the other games and study other players and refereeing styles especially the CONMEBOL (South America Football Confederation) officials who have a long history in the game.

The rest day allowed some breathing time and the opportunity to visit the city and sit by the pool learning about their domestic competitions, structures and development in other countries.

Match Day 4 found me officiating Ukraine v China for the 9th place; the championships play for full ranking 1-16 in the men’s and 1-8 in the women’s. The experienced Ukrainian team easily swept aside their opposition 5-1 in a very slow paced game in extremely hot indoor conditions.

Match Day 3 was my easiest of the week with one game - timekeeper for Portugal v China (Women). This gave me the opportunity to watch the other games and study other players and refereeing styles especially the CONMEBOL (South America Football Confederation) officials who have a long history in the game.

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Match Day 5 was a lot harder. I had an early start as Costa Rica Women narrowly lost to China 3-5 and then I was third referee for the Russia v Iran men’s semi final with the Portuguese referee team.

As expected it was a challenging game on and off the pitch and the technical areas were very animated throughout the game.

The turning point was a second yellow card for Russia which seemed to spur them on as two minutes later they scored the winning goal, taking the game 2-1.

In any form of refereeing, it’s always a great feeling to work with good friends and, more importantly, leaving the pitch with the feeling of doing a professional job.

The evening routines of late meal times, following the last kick-offs at 7:30pm, and announcement of the appointments were the same all week, but the evening before the final day of competition does tend to have more tension and anticipation as everyone waits to discover if they have a final.

The appointments were read out in reverse order and I had a feeling of growing excitement as my name was not read out for the lower ranking games.

The feeling of receiving any final appointment is amazing, and to learn that I would lead the referee team for the Women’s final between the hosts Spain against Brazil brought back memories of my 2012 World Cup final between their male counterparts – I was excited at the prospect of the game.

The game was played in the evening with a full house trying to lift the hosts to a victory. When my colleagues – who hailed from Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan and Germany – and I arrived the buzz around the arena. It was a very special moment and without doubt a highlight of my career to date.

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With pre match rituals and checks completed it was time to lead out the teams, featuring the best Women players and particularly the current best female player in the world Vanessa (Brazil).

As we walked through the tunnel the noise was deafening: the home supporters were at full volume with patriotic dress and flags everywhere, but there was also a sizeable Brazilian fan base in one corner.

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The game burst into action from the moment I blew the whistle with counter-attack after counter-attack: a complete Futsal showpiece.

Both sets of players were technically of the same ability as the men, as they moved the ball at pace, utilised the full pitch and a whole range of tricks and skills which entertained the crowd. Brazil took the lead in the 19th minute following an attacking kick when world player of the year, Vanessa smacked the ball into the top right hand of the goal and silenced the home crowd.

Brazil added two more without reply in the second half, however the crowd were not subdued and continued to get behind their team who managed to grab a goal back following a great attacking move. As a referee team again we had worked hard for this game, which whilst not having the physical contact typical of men’s games was no less competitive.

As the final buzzer brought the game to a close and the Brazilian players celebrated, the referee team met in the middle of the pitch to congratulate each other and soak up the atmosphere that was still ringing around the arena. It was a very special moment and without doubt a highlight of my career to date.

After the game it was a quick turnaround for the men’s final, so after quick congratulations in private we emerged to savour the atmosphere for the men’s final, Russia v Brazil, which was ill-tempered and culminated in a first half mass confrontation and two red cards. The fouls continued throughout the second half with both teams reaching the maximum of five, but it was Brazil who continued the foul count and conceding three 10m penalty kicks.

Russia took full advantage and scored one of the best goals of the tournament. As the Brazilian goalkeeper came to close the kick the Russian player neatly chipped the ball over him and into the goal which brought everyone to their feet and a round of applause.

Russia held out to deservedly claim the men’s title.

Having helped launch the Futsal refereeing scene these championships have always held a special place for me – this time round I added a 5th international final and this honour in Spain, the hotbed of Futsal, closed my season on a high.

“the feeling of receiving any final appointment is amazing, and to learn that I would lead the referee team for the Women’s final brought back memories of my 2012 World Cup final.”
All international appointments are special but it is always good to go back to a country or competition that holds special memories. The World University Futsal Championships hold many special memories for me as without my previous two visits in 2008 and 2010 I wouldn’t have experienced what I have been lucky enough to have done in the last two years. This year’s championships were in Antequera near Malaga. Held every two years the WUFCs showcase the best-up and coming men and women Futsal players as they push for full international appearances; some have already made the step up, and the majority of teams are led by coaching staff from their full international sections.

The seven days of competition got underway after an opening ceremony in front of a capacity crowd of 2,500 in the main arena and to a host of VIPs from FISU (organising body), local dignitaries and Javier Lazano, Head of Spanish Futsal.

The Championships are a chance for referees to gain valuable experiences working with officials from around the world. There is plenty of game time, usually two games a day.

I worked for the match between Ukraine and Brazil as their match was a step up for the Ukrainian players and opened the tournament. The Ukrainian team had not played an international game in the last two years. I was third referee for the game which was played in the evening with a full house trying to lift the public and the home supporters were at full volume with patriotic dress and flags ringing around the arena. It was a very special moment and without a doubt a highlight of my career to date.

The game burst into action from the moment I blew the whistle with counter-attack after counter-attack: a complete Futsal showpiece. Both sets of players were technically of the same ability as the men, as they moved the ball at pace, unleashed the full pitch and a whole range of tricks and skills which entertained the crowd. Brazil took the lead in the 19th minute following an attacking kick when world player of the year, Vanessa, smashed the ball into the top right hand corner of the goal and silenced the home crowd.

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I started with a challenging women’s match: Spain v Portugal. The skill level and technical ability of the players was of the highest level and the game remained very close until the large home support got vocally behind their team and helped push them to a 4-1 victory. I was then timekeeper for a 3-3 draw between the Czech Republic and Israel in the men’s competition.

Match Day 2 brought a challenging men’s match: Ukraine v Iran. The day before Ukraine and Brazil had contested a heated match in which Ukraine received three red cards and were involved in an incident with one of the match officials, which is not normal in Futsal. Both teams needed to win to progress and the game proved extremely challenging to balance the flow of the game to keep it under control.

My Kyrgyzstan colleague and I worked hard from the first to the last whistle and walked off the pitch having escaped major incident. I was then third referee (Futsal’s equivalent to the 4th official role) as favourites Brazil comfortably beat the fancied team Russia 4-1.

Match Day 3 was my easiest of the week with one game - timekeeper for Portugal v China (Women). This gave me the opportunity to watch the other games and study other players and refereeing styles especially the CONMEBOL (South America Football Confederation) officials who have a long history in the game.

The rest day allowed some breathing time and the opportunity to visit the city and sit by the pool learning about their domestic competitions, structures and development in other countries.

Match Day 4 found me officiating Ukraine v China for the 9th place; the championships play for full ranking 1-16 in the men’s and 1-8 the women’s. The experienced Ukrainian team easily swept aside their opposition 5-1 in a very slow paced game in extremely hot indoor conditions.

Match Day 5 was a lot harder. I had an early start as Costa Rica Women narrowly lost to China 3-5 and then I was third referee for Russia v Iran men’s semi-final with the Portuguese referee team.

As expected it was a challenging game on and off the pitch and the technical areas were very animated throughout the game. The turning point was a second yellow card and subsequent red card for Russia which seemed to spur them on as two minutes later they scored the winning goal, taking the game 2-1.

In any form of refereeing, it’s always a great feeling to work with good friends and, more importantly, leaving the pitch with the feeling of doing a professional job.

The evening routines of late meal times, following the last kick-offs at 7.30pm, and announcement of the appointments were the same all week, but the evening before the final day of competition does tend to have more tension and anticipation as everyone waits to discover if they have a final.

The appointments were read out in reverse order and I had a feeling of growing excitement as my name was not read out for the lower ranking game.

The feeling of receiving any final appointment is amazing, and to learn that I would lead the referee team for the Women’s final between the hosts Spain against Brazil brought back memories of my 2012 World Cup final between their male counterparts – I was excited at the prospect of the game.

The game was played in the evening with a full house trying to lift the hosts to a victory. When my colleagues – who hailed from the Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan and Germany – and I arrived the buzz around the hall was amazing.

With pre match rituals and checks completed it was time to lead out the teams, featuring the best women players and particularly the current best female player in the world Vanessa (Brazil).

As we walked through the tunnel the noise was deafening; the home supporters were at full volume with patriotic dress and flags everywhere, but there was also a sizeable Brazilian fan base in one corner.

As a referee team again we had worked hard for this game, which whilst not having the physical contact typical of men’s games was no less competitive.

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“The first game is always important to create the best on-field impression. However, you are being observed the entire time at tournaments – every minute you have to be professional and create a positive impression.”

On the 16 June I received an unexpected phone call. It was from Peter Elsworth, The FA’s Senior Referee Administration Manager, calling to inform me that I had been selected by UEFA as Assistant Referee for the UEFA Under 19 Finals in Budapest, Hungary.

As you can imagine it was an exciting call to receive, but I couldn’t dwell on it for long because it was important to prepare for the trip as soon as possible.

As part of UEFA’s requirements, I had to complete the FIFA fitness test by 3 July, which I organised with PGMOL Sports Scientists Simon Breck and Phil Hewitt.

I had only finished the previous season on 6 June so my fitness levels were still relatively high, and so luckily there wasn’t much fitness work to do. Once I passed the test the preparation and excitement really started.

I set off on the 15 July to Budapest. As England’s sole representative, I was made up of six referees from Albania, Norway, Romania, Scotland, Spain and Switzerland and eight assistant referees from Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Ireland and proudly, England.

There were 2 observers (assessors) from Hungary and 2 UEFA Referee Committee members: Josef Marko (Slovakia) and Nikolai Lavrikov (Russia); Philip Sharp (England) to work with the assistants. Although I speak a little Spanish, my Norwegian or Danish aren’t the best but luckily all UEFA matches and tournaments use English for all meetings.

The first thing we were required to do was a fitness check. The assistants had a different check to the referees consisting of the T-Drill 6 times (3 right, 3 left) and then 18x50m runs in 20secs each with a 30secs rest in between before a four-minute rest and then another 18x50m.

Having completed it successfully, there were mixed emotions afterwards. I had passed and I was, understandably, elated. But one assistant unfortunately failed and was sent home immediately, which went some way to reinforce the high levels that are expected by UEFA. Another assistant arrived from the Czech republic, passed the fitness check and we could then start to bond as a team.

All UEFA tournaments are crucial for the teams and officials, but this had an even greater level of importance than usual for the nations involved because the top three teams in each group would qualify for next year’s FIFA U20 World Cup in New Zealand.

For my first game, I was assigned to the host nation’s fixture against Austria alongside the Spanish referee, Belgium assistant and Albanian fourth official.

There was quite a large, optimistic home crowd in attendance, and overall the match went very well for us – but the same couldn’t be said for Hungary, who lost to a very good Austrian team.

Despite the fact that we were the underdogs in the group stages - and we knew that afterwards two referees and four assistants would be going home. It was important that I performed well and added value to the team to give me the best possible opportunity of being retained for the Semi-Finals.

I was appointed to Serbia v Bulgaria with the Albanian Referee and Czech assistant.
Darren England, FIFA and Select Group Assistant, recalls his experiences officiating at the UEFA U19 Finals in Hungary.

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After the first game we had an even greater level of pressure and importance to be together for a second game running meant that we could communicate to each other.

The match was between Bulgaria and Ukraine, and turned out to be a quiet game until the last few minutes when the referee awarded a match-winning penalty and I had to inform the referee of two yellow cards for adopting aggressive attitudes.

What was pleasing was that for my second match I was once again with the Romanian referee and Belgian assistant referee. To be together for a second game running meant that we could build on our last performance together and maintain a level of consistency in what we did, for example checking the ball for goal-kicks in the same position and using the same key English words to communicate to each other.

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After the match, we were delighted to receive positive feedback from the observer, Josef Marko, who was pleased with our performance.

While the first game is always important to create the best on-field first impression, I quickly realised you are being observed the entire time at tournaments.

From arriving on time for the bus to training, to how you conduct yourself at meal-times and how you contribute in the technical meetings - you have to be professional and create a positive impression with everybody from minute one.

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These situations are a stark reminder that we have to remain fully focused until we are back in the changing rooms. The Hungarian observer was very pleased.

Our attention then turned to Match Day 3 - the last round of the group stages - and we knew that afterwards two referees and four assistants would be going home. It was important that I performed well and added value to the team to give me the best possible opportunity of being retained for the Semi-Finals.

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Darren England (centre-right) enjoyed a “fantastic experience” at the U19 finals in Budapest.

“The first game is always important to create the best on-field first impression. However, you are being observed the entire time at tournaments – every minute you have to be professional and create a positive impression.”
The match itself finished in a thrilling manner with Serbia scoring in the very last minute to secure their place in the Semi-Finals and a trip to New Zealand.

The announcement of which officials were to stay on was made after all the games had finished so we all sat anxiously waiting at 1.00am in the hotel meeting room.

It was a new experience for me and you could sense nerves and tension. We had bonded very well as a team so for nearly half of us to be going home was going to be hard.

Marko read out the retained referees and then it was onto the assistants; "Connotte, Larsen, Beliskiy" were read out. I thought I was going home.

But then "England" was announced. In that moment you go from elation over your own success to a distinct sadness for the officials who were going home in such a short space of time.

Whilst it was sad that some of the team had gone home, we had to re-focus and prepare for the semi-final appointments.

I was appointed to somewhat of a local derby: Germany v Austria. With both teams playing well in the group stages this old rivalry should have made for a tight encounter.

In the third minute there was a very difficult offside situation for me where I disallowed a goal. It was a decision that relied on many factors to consider, and I knew that the accuracy of my call would probably dictate whether I was retained for the final or not.

As it was early in the game, I had to make sure I didn’t dwell on it. I didn’t want it affect my other decisions, which, as it turned out, was crucial because later on I had two more close decisions to make and both for Germany – the first being another disallowed goal, and the second a tight but onside finish.

All three decisions were proved to be correct, but seeing as one incorrect decision could have led to me being sent home it just showed the level of performance required.

Both Semi-finals were handled very well by each team of officials and we were all happy that we had made it difficult for the committee to decide who would do the Final.

The announcement was made at 2.00am. There was a similar atmosphere to the previous announcements but, with the Final at stake, there was even more tension.

"Estrada, England, Beliskiy and Jorgji will be the U19 Final officials" was finally read out. I was ecstatic to have been chosen, but again sympathetic for the departing officials.

With the group being dramatically reduced our surroundings certainly became a lot quieter, but our focus on the final ensured we maintained our concentration.

On paper the two best teams were deservedly in the final: Germany v Portugal. For the refereeing team, the build-up to the match included an interview with UEFA, the regular fitness training and technical meetings but also some time to relax and reflect on our experiences.

Throughout the tournament there wasn’t too much down-time which was good as being away from home for a long time can be difficult if there is nothing to do.

The liaison officers were current referees and they knew exactly what we wanted and they facilitated some great social events including sightseeing around beautiful Budapest, bowling, shopping and different restaurants including that of Hungary’s most famous footballer - ‘Puskas Restaurant’.

Ahead of the Final, Pierluigi Collina, UEFA’s Chief Refereeing Officer, emailed all of us before the game to wish us good luck, which gave me even more reason to perform to the best of my ability.

And by the final whistle things had indeed gone very well. The match proved a nervous affair with both teams not wanting to make a mistake, which was reflected in the 1-0 score line that saw Germany crowned U19 European champions.

From our point of view the game went very well with only two yellow cards and nothing controversial. More importantly the UEFA Referees Committee were pleased with our performance.

Overall, the UEFA U19 Finals was a fantastic experience and even though it was hard being away from my wife for a long time, being retained and appointed to the final made it all worthwhile.

I was very proud to represent the FA and I feel it has developed my knowledge of European football, how referees from other countries operate and the different expectations that are needed for tournament football. But, just as important, I left Hungary having gained new friends from the world of refereeing.
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On 4 August 2014 the country marked the 100th anniversary of the start of that most terrible of conflicts, the First World War. There have been many opportunities to reflect on and learn about this awful period of time and at the RA Conference Dinner we spent some time reflecting on the impact of WWI on refereeing and referees. Our reflections were made all the more poignant by the presence amongst us of Bill Pearce, RA Life Member from Devon, who lost a brother in the conflict.

Below, and on the accompanying pages, are some extracts from war records and from the archives of the Referees’ Association which, at that time, was called the Referees’ Union.

Referees’ Union:
Membership fell from 500 to 250 as so many members were away fighting – some Societies stopped meeting.

Exhortations to Members:
“We who cannot fight can do a very great deal… Don’t referee as if you had no heart for the game. Referee with all your heart and with all your might. I was opposed to the playing of football during the war, but I have read so much from the enemies of the game in the newspapers that they have forced me to the very contrary conclusion.

“All must give blood or money, and many both in this hour of terrible trial. Unless a man makes a sacrifice for the sake of others at a time like the present his contribution is of no much value. To give what we can easily afford is not sacrifice. Give, give – if you are not fighting, and thank God that you live in England.”

Voices from the war and the trenches as recorded in the Referees’ Union magazine:
Mr. W. Katoen – apologises for being late sending his Subscription fees but says it is caused by being on military service and his garrison town is far away from Amsterdam. By the kindness of my commanding officer I can referee matches in southern Holland. He has been promoted and says “I am very enthusiastic with regard to refereeing and wish to rise to the highest rank. So long as I can manage to referee I am not downhearted and therefore the sport is helping me to keep my temper good. That is the principal matter in these bad times.”

“Private H. Howarth sent cordial greetings to all refereeing friends. Though France is a strange land to him he still feels in touch with the game, thanks to The Football Referee, which he declares enables him to call friends men he has never seen. He would much like to give readers an account of his experiences but, of course, is forbidden.”

Union Member given Commission
“The RU had a communication from the trenches somewhere in France that Sgt F. Garvey of the 1st Norfolk Regiment had been given a commission and was now a 1st Lieutenant. The RU magazine comments: “Lt Garvey does not mention the reason for such distinction but we know that shirkers are no so favoured, and we are proud of you, sir.” The magazine printed a rousing message to him: “May you stop all the foul tactics we hear the Germans are fond of practising, may you detect all their offside infringements, and above all may you keep clear of all the shots at our goal. The best of luck to you.”

East Riding RA
Mr. Drewery writes, “I shall be only too pleased to contribute my guinea to the East Riding Referees’ Fund which has already raised £5… despite the lists of matches being very much reduced. I should like to point out that 20 of our referees have joined the colours!”

The Great War and its Call – How Referees and Linesmen can help
Give one month’s match fee to one of the War Relief Funds to help the poor. Referees should remember that if football had stopped, as at one time seemed likely, there would not have been any fees.

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Developing the Talent of the Future

The FA Referee Development Programme

Roger Vaughan, FA National Referee Manager - Referee Development, looks at the changes to the National Referee Development Programme rolling out this season.

Following the success of The National Referee Development Programme (NRDP) in retaining and developing referees over the last three years, The FA Refereeing Department in conjunction with The FA Referees’ Committee have been working at enhancing this further and looking at developing a Talent Identification Programme for the highest levels of the game.

As a result, The NRDP will be revised to form part of a bigger FA Referee Development Programme linking the National Game with the Professional Game.

The aim of this programme will be to enhance the quality of referees at all levels of the game and identify those with the opportunity to become FIFA officials, by providing consistent messages throughout all stages of a referee’s career.

In order to do this the previous stages of the NRDP have been replaced by the new series of steps (see opposite).

The programme will start to roll out in the new season and will offer referees a fantastic opportunity to develop and, at the same time, identify the FIFA Referees of the future.

Step 1 – Qualifying Stage (current NRDP Stage 1)

This will be aimed at all trainee referees finishing their Referee’s course by refereeing their first six games and offer them access to a Mentor.

This will help these new referees gain confidence to increase the chance of retaining them to referee while the RDO, tutor and Mentor will be aware of those showing commitment, as well as a desire and an ability to be a referee.

Step 2 – Newly Qualified Stage (current NRDP stage 2)

Referees will be eligible to opt-in on completion of the Referee’s course and then officiate in Partner Leagues or Charter Standard environments. Should the individual referees require a Mentor one will still be made available to them.

This will provide further confidence of the referee for the remainder of their first season and early stages of the following season.

Step 3 – County Development / Academy Groups (previously Stage 3 NRDP)

At this point the referee will enter their County Development/Academy Groups with access to a referee coach.

Referees will be considered for this step if:

• They have applied for promotion from level 7 to 6
• Aged 16 to 23
• Adhere to the Codes of Conduct

The RDO and coaches will continually review the referee’s suitability to remain in the programme and no more than two playing seasons should be spent within this stage where they will be offered regular development opportunities.

Step 4 – Regional Development Group 1

This new stage of the FA RDP is designed to meet the vision of identifying talented referees at an earlier stage in their careers.

The offer of high quality education and enhanced development opportunities should develop the referees quicker and offer them chances for development and progression.

The criteria are:

• Aged 16 to 23
• Have applied for promotion either from level 6 to 5 or from 5 to 4
• Adhere to the relevant Code of Conduct

Previously, County FAs were given a maximum of four places per regional group. Under the new scheme allocation of places at Step 4 will be for those candidates who would benefit the most from this experience.

The number of places per region will be determined by The FA Referee Department and a selection of participants will be made by the RDOs, the Regional Co-ordinators, who will head up each regional group, and ratified by The FA Referee Department.

Each group of four referees will be supported by a Referee Coach and an annual review will be carried out to determine selection and retention, with a referee usually only staying at this step for a maximum of two playing seasons.

Step 5 – Regional Development Group 2 (previously Stage 4 of the NRDP)

The Regional Co-ordinators, identified by The FA Referee Department (most of whom were the previous coordinators of Stage 4 of the NRDP), will operate, manage and co-ordinate both stages of the Regional Development Programme.

Referees will be eligible for selection if they:

• Complete an application
• Are aged between 18 to 26 years

Selection will be controlled by The FA Referee Department using information from the Regional Co-ordinators, The RDOs and members of The FA Referee Department. An annual review will determine suitability and selection and referees will spend no more than two playing seasons in this stage.

Step 6 – FADP

This stage of the programme already exists and relates to those referees operating at Level 3 and 2b and is managed by The FA Referee Department and will provide a closer link with referees ideally being selected from those operating well within the previous steps of the programme.

It must be emphasised that County FAs have a key role in developing and supporting those referees who are not selected to be involved at any step of the FA RDP and referees may enter it at any appropriate step to aid their development.
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Safe Not Sorry

Most children have a really great time playing football—and long may that continue. With you, our job is to ensure they continue to enjoy the game in a fun and safe environment. With this in mind, The FA and County FAs recognise their collective responsibility for children and young people within football. And that’s why our policy is straightforward when it comes to Criminal Record Checks (CRC). The CRC is exactly the same as what was formerly known as CRC – Criminal Records Bureau Check.

Who needs a check?
Everyone aged 16 years or over who undertake unsupervised roles with children.

These roles could be teaching, training, instructing and supervising. They include giving advice or guidance on well being, caring for children or driving a vehicle solely for children on behalf of a club or organisation. And by children, we mean anyone under 18.

Anyone performing these roles MUST obtain an Enhanced Criminal Record with Children’s barred list Check. This Check is made against the Government’s national list of those barred from working with children. This apply to referees. For more information on how to use your original ID documents, but they can be rechecked, some people may be affronted. They may feel an implication that there may be something inappropriate or untoward in their behaviour. Nevertheless, The FA and County FAs have a responsibility to ensure that no-one barred from working with children is allowed to provide a safe infrastructure for children and young people to participate in our national game. Carrying out the right checks, ensuring those in key roles are educated on the indications of abuse—and knowing how to refer any concerns—are fundamental to creating a fun and safe environment.

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FA Criminal Record Checks: Guidance for referees

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Who needs a check?

Everyone aged 16 years or over who undertakes any unsupervised roles with children.

These roles could be training, instructing and supervising. They include giving advice or guidance on well-being, caring for children or driving a vehicle solely for children on behalf of a club or organisation. And by children, we mean anyone under 18.

Anyone performing these roles MUST obtain an Enhanced Criminal Record with Children’s barred list Check. This Check is made against an enhanced Criminal record with Children’s barred list Check. this Check is made against any person who has been convicted of an eligible offence or is barred from working with children.

Note: When ‘children’ or ‘children and young people’ are referred to in this document, this means persons under the age of 18, playing in organised leagues.

CRBs with an issue date prior to 2010 need to be renewed before 1 September 2014.

CRBs with issue dates of 2010, 2011 or 2012 need to be renewed before 3 September 2015.

CRCs issued in 2013 should be renewed in line with The FA three-year renewal policy – ie before 1 September 2016.

Can I renew my FA CRC automatically?

Yes. You can now have life time renewals of your FA CRC which means you will not need to renew it every three years.

To take advantage of this you will need to:

- Register your CRC with The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)*
- Inform The FA Criminal Records Body who administers the Checks. They will charge a £10 administration fee.

*You must register your CRC disclosure with the DBS update service within 19 days of issue.

Once registered for this service, The FA CRC will make annual checks on your CRC status for as long as you remain in football.

For more information and guidance on The FA CRC policy, the DBS update service and FA CRC life-time checks please visit: www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks.

Isn’t having a CRC a bit intrusive?

It’s certainly not meant to be – it’s simply a way to make sure your past involvements with children should operate and is a requirement under the Protection of Freedoms Act, 2012.

However, we fully understand that as soon as someone says you’ve to be checked or rechecked, some people may be affronted. They may feel an implication that there may be something inappropriate or untoward in their behaviour.

Nevertheless, The FA and County FAs have a responsibility to ensure that no-one barred from working with children is allowed to referee within youth football.

Everyone would surely agree that we must provide a safe infrastructure for children and young people to participate in our national game.

Carrying out the right checks, ensuring those in key roles are educated on the indicators of abuse – and how to refer any concerns – are fundamental to creating a fun and safe environment.

Can I apply for a CRC online?

Yes – and we’d prefer you to use this method. It’s cheaper, faster and easier.

When you apply for – or renew – a CRC online, your County FA will still need to see your original ID documents. But they can now verify these online as well.

For more information on how to use the online CRC application service, please contact your County FA Referee Development Officer (RDO) directly, or contact The FA Criminal Records Body on 0845-210 8800 or via email to crcinfo@thefa.com.

I already have a current FA CRC, but have only just started refereeing. Do I need another one?

No. If you already have an in-date FA CRC you do not need another one for your role as a referee.

Also, if you have a CRC from outside football which you wish to bring into football, you may not need a new one, provided it meets the portability criteria.

It has been registered for the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) update service.

It is for the role you work for (Cherub). There is a one-off charge of £10 for ‘porting’ a CRC from outside football into the FA. For most volunteers it is quicker and cheaper to apply for an FA CRC.

Does it take a long time?

No. If you’ve never had a CRC, don’t worry, it’s simple and totally confidential. Approximately 100,000 checks have been undertaken in football within the last 10 years. That covers coaches, managers, welfare officers and regular first-aiders within youth football, as well as referees.

It only takes a few minutes to complete the form online and your County FA RDO can provide assistance if you have any queries.

If your Check does reveal some information, this does not automatically exclude you from working with vulnerable groups in football.

The FA is very fair, but it does have a duty to make sure the information in a Check may reveal does not affect the safety of children. Every Disclosure is assessed individually, taking into account the person’s age at the time of any relevant incident; the time expired since the conviction; the way the court dealt with the crime and other salient information.

Almost everyone sails through the check, but identifying anyone who could pose a risk to children is so important to children, parents – and all of us working in football.

We are a football family and it’s vital we all contribute to that.

You can apply for an FA CRC online at: www.thefa.com/my-football/more/county-fa

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Anyone performing these roles MUST obtain an Enhanced Criminal Record with Children’s barred list Check. This Check is made against the Government’s national list of those people barred from working with children (the ‘Children’s Barred List’). Then the checked person has to be approved to work in youth football.

This applies to referees.

That’s why any referee without a current and accepted FA CRC will not be able to register to officiate within youth football after the 1 September 2014.

Why do I need one?

Mainly because of football’s overall responsibility to children, their parents and carers.

Rightly, parents and carers are increasingly asking people in football two questions:

1. Are you following the correct procedures when recruiting people to work with children?

2. Are all the relevant people checked?

The response has to be ‘yes’ in both cases if the integrity of clubs, leagues, County FAs and The FA is to be preserved.

As a referee, if you don’t have an in-date accepted FA CRC in place, we will not be able to use you in your vital and valued role in youth football – and no-one wants that.

It all comes down to one thing: Let’s make sure football’s safe – not sorry.

How long does a CRC last?

In short, three years. Criminal Records Checks are a snapshot in time and therefore need to be renewed. We do this every three years to ensure that the FA has ‘in-date’ conviction and offending information on the people working with children and young people.

To be ‘in-date’: means:

- CRBs with an issue date prior to 2010 need to be renewed before 1 September 2014.

- CRBs with issue dates of 2010, 2011 or 2012 need to be renewed before 3 September 2015.

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FA News

Reporting Misconduct e-book

The Reporting Misconduct e-book is a new online interactive reference guide to aid Match Officials with writing and submitting their misconduct reports, which can be viewed here.

Misconduct reports are the key component in maintaining an effective disciplinary process. Clear, accurate reports are required to take action against the offenders, helping to shape player behaviour throughout the game, making them an essential tool to help support referees. Developing a consistent approach to reporting misconduct also helps to ensure fairness and uphold the integrity of the game.

This guide includes videos and resources to help you to write clear and concise misconduct reports. The guide also explains what to expect and how to prepare if you are required to attend a Disciplinary Commission.

Make sure your misconduct reports are the best they can be: click here to access this unique guide.

Vanishing Spray

In line with general practice worldwide and IFAB’s intention that vanishing spray is only for the very highest levels of competition, The FA has approved the use of vanishing spray in any other matches/competitions.

Referees must therefore not use vanishing spray in the FA Cup only. The FA has approved the use of vanishing spray for the very highest levels of competition, including the FA Cup.

In June, The Football Association’s annual conference for newly promoted Level 3 referees was held at St. George’s Park for over 85 new Level 3 referees.

The delegates, who had been newly promoted on their marks and performance throughout the previous season as Level 4 Supply League referees and ranged in age between 19 and 51, attended sessions based around informative education to prepare for the season ahead as Neale Barry, FA Head of Senior Referee Development, explained.

“The referees in attendance have been promoted into semi-professional football for the first time, which in itself brings a far greater level of expectation than they have previously experienced. The aim of the day was to explain what is expected of them in terms of a professional attitude and approach. The referees in attendance have been promoted into semi-professional football for the first time, which in itself brings a far greater level of expectation than they have previously experienced. The aim of the day was to explain what is expected of them in terms of a professional attitude and approach. The referees in attendance have been promoted into semi-professional football for the first time, which in itself brings a far greater level of expectation than they have previously experienced. The aim of the day was to explain what is expected of them in terms of a professional attitude and approach.”

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FA News

NEWS

LATEST FROM THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

FA Referees' Committee

The FA Referees' Committee for Season 2014/15 is as follows:
- David Elleray – Chairman
- David Horlick – Vice Chairman
- Maurice Armstrong
- Peter Barnes
- Ron Banston
- Barry Chaplin – new member*
- David Crick
- Sue Hough – new member*
- Ray Lewis
- Roger Pawley
- Mike Penn
- Mike Riley
- Roy Schater

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Vice Chairman: David Horlick

Maurice Armstrong, Peter Barnes, Ron Banston, Barry Chaplin, David Crick, Sue Hough, Ray Lewis, Roger Pawley, Mike Penn, Mike Riley, Roy Schater

*New members as of the season 2014/2015

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“The aim of the day was to explain what is expected of them in terms of a professional attitude and approach with regards to areas such as administration, commitment, availability, social media responsibilities, general media exposure, the difference in quality of football between Supply and Contributory League football and their inclusion and participation in the Mentoring Scheme.”

The Conference was led by Rob McCarthy, The FA’s Referee Coaching and Mentoring Manager and included presentations from current Level 3 referees who had been promoted in the last few seasons.

It enabled the new officials to hear directly from those who have experienced the challenges of successfully making the transition within the modern game.

Lindsay Robinson from Durham, 2014 FA Women’s Cup Final assistant referee, was amongst the delegates and she spoke passionately about what the promotion meant to her going into the new season:

“Being promoted to Level 3 is a great achievement and a key milestone,” she explained.

“The season ahead will present new challenges that will test my skills and knowledge, and I am relishing the opportunity to push myself further and continue my development.”

Following an exam on the Laws of the Game, sessions were delivered covering a variety of topics including:

- Creating the right image as a Level 3
- Understanding the reality of being a Level 3 referee both on and off the field of play
- Assisting Level 2/1 on the Conference North and South (supported by John Brooks – Select List Assistant Referee and recently promoted to Level 2A)
- Getting the Work–Life–Football balance right
- The clubs perspective of do’s and don’ts delivered by the Secretary of Marine FC from the Northern Premier League
- The Decision-Making Process via an interactive video session
- Getting the most from your Mentor

Amongst the candidates was also former Bristol Rovers and Southend United professional footballer, Steve Parmenter, who achieved promotion to Level 3 this year.

Speaking after the conference Steve believed the event was “outstanding” overall, and that “the level of professionalism was so apparent – the whole day really was thoroughly enjoyable and superbly set up from start to finish.

“Level 3 is a serious step in refereeing, the difference from Level 4 to 3 is huge, and so it means a lot to have achieved this.

I am looking forward to all aspects of next season.”

Once the new Level 3s have completed their pre-season fitness test they will be refereeing Step 3 – Step 5 football matches as well as running the line on the Conference North and South.

The referees in attendance have been promoted into semi-professional football for the first time, which in itself brings a far greater level of expectation than they have previously experienced. The aim of the day is to explain what is expected of them in terms of a professional attitude and approach.”

Neale Barry, FA Head of Senior Referee Development
The 30th anniversary of the Rotherham Referees’ Association was marked with the presentation of a commemorative gavel by the RA Board Chairman, Albert Astbury (centre) at a celebratory dinner at the New Year Stadium (the home of Rotherham United) on 6 June. More than 200 attended the dinner.

Albert Astbury (centre) is seen (from left to right) with Rotherham RA members: Philip Clough (Chairman), Mick Bell (Treasurer), Bill Webb (President) and Phil Woodward (Secretary).

Refereeing Hat-Trick in Queen’s Birthday Honours

The Queen’s Birthday Honours, announced on Saturday 14 June 2014, contained the names of three very well-known referee figures who have contributed to refereeing in England from grassroots to the highest international levels: Harry Hardy and Pat Partridge, who received British Empire Medals (BEMs), and David Elleray, who was awarded an MBE.

Harry Hardy has been officiating for nearly 55 years, having passed his exam in November 1959. He has been Secretary of Evesham Valley Referee’s Society since 1963. His commitment remains constant and at 87 years of age, is still officiating on a weekly basis.

Harry is a Life Member of The Referees’ Association and received The FA’s 50 years’ service to football award from Barry Bright, Leader of The FA Council and Sir Trevor Brooking at the England v Spain U21 international in 2007 (see picture).

In 2013 Harry was presented with the FA Carlsberg Referees Special Award at Wembley at the England v Scotland game and was promoted to the FIFA referees’ list in November 1959. He has been refereeing in Brazil and the World Cup, in Europe and Asia.

Harry started refereeing in 1958 and has refereed in the UEFA European Championship Final in 1998, the 1977 European Cup Winners Cup Final between SV Hamburg and Anderlecht in Amsterdam.

Pat Partridge started refereeing in 1953, with the Durham CFA. He became a Football League referee in 1966 and was promoted to the FIFA referees’ list in having just run the line for Jack Taylor in the 1971 European Cup Final between Ajax and Panathinaikos at Wembley. He refereed the 1975 FA Cup Final, the second leg of the 1976 World Club Championship Final in Brazil and the 1977 European Cup Winners Cup Final between SV Hamburg and Anderlecht in Amsterdam.

Pat officiated in the 1978 World Cup Finals in Argentina where he was Linesman for Argentina v Hungary and France v Hungary and refereed Peru v Poland. He refereed Greece and Czechoslovakia in the 1988 European Championships in Italy and in 1981.

Pat was rewarded for 50 years membership of the Referees’ Association in May 2004.

David Elleray started refereeing in 1968 as a 13 year old and progressed to become a Football League Referee in 1986 and was one of the original Premier League Referees in 1992. He was a FIFA Referee from 1992 – 1999 and his major appointments include The FA Cup Final (1994), the World Club Championship Final (1995) in Tokyo, EURO ’96 and the UEFA Super Cup (1997).

David refereed as a Premier League Referee in 2003 and is currently Chairman of the FA Referees’ Committee, RA President and a member of the UEFA Referees’ Committee.

In May last year, Henry Nagloy and Arran Williams wrote about their intentions of reforming Halifax Referees’ Association. They succeeded in their venture, and this is their story.

After visiting other Referees’ Associations in West Riding to conduct some market research, Arran and I met referees from the Halifax area to share what we had found and what referees wanted from a new Association.

It was agreed that our old working men’s club venue was unsuitable for female and under 18 referees so we now meet at the primary school I teach at – much more inviting and appropriate environment.

In the beginning we adopted a meeting model very similar to one we witnessed at Birkston Ash RA with a combined physical and practical training session but, unfortunately, this didn’t really work out so instead we have held some practical training sessions over the summer to keep on top of fitness levels ready for fitness tests and the new season.

In September we invited referees from across the country to our official re-opening where we were thrilled to have Heavy Woollen- based FIFA and Select Group referee, Martin Atkinson, cut the ribbon for us.

A great turnout was treated to a talk on his career so far, a heavily laden raffle and a fantastic buffet. Since then we have had a number of speakers, both guests and in house tutors, to lead sessions including Jane Simms (using body language to aid match control), David Coste (managing free kicks) and Trevor Massey (‘But I’m Only a Liner!’).

We have ties with Huddersfield RA, which grow closer by the month, and members are often found at each other’s meetings and enjoying each other’s banter.

Plans are in motion to team up with some local associations over the next season to benefit from shared experience.

In December we had our first Christmas get-together where we shared good food, funny jokes and silly party games. It was great to see a close bond between Halifax referees across the age range.

We’ve also sent our first team to the West Riding RA Games Night held by Leeds RA. We didn’t win but one of our younger members, who shall remain nameless, learnt how to play dominoes.

More recently, Bobby Madley, our Recruitment and Retention Officer, introduced our mentoring scheme. It will operate in a similar way to West Riding’s School of Excellence so that referees who either feel that they would like to have a dedicated point of contact, or would like to offer advice, are put into a mentoring chain of two or three referees.

We’re hoping this will encourage newly-qualified and under 18 referees to stick with refereeing and not be put off by difficult games and incidents.

We’re very lucky to have referees who have regularly officiated on the Football League, Premier League and FIFA List; but we have a large amount of playing and refereeing experience at grassroots level which is far more important, particularly for our referees who officiate in the local Saturday and Sunday leagues.

It seems to be an increasing trend that referees are travelling abroad to represent their County FAs or RAs refereeing at tournaments in places like Lisbon and Dubai.

Over the summer we sent two referee teams to the English International Super Cup and Welsh International Super Cup to begin to experience tournament life with the possibility of venturing abroad one day.

Our development is still in its infancy and we owe large thanks to the other West Riding refereeing associations for their support over the past 12 months. We’d like to think we offer something different and something for everybody regardless of age, level or experience.

If you can take just one thing from our meetings then to us our efforts have been worthwhile. We were fortunate to be able to build our constitution from scratch, so all of our correspondence is done by e-mail to allow our meetings to start quickly and move steadily on into the educational part.

Some of you may think it might be too difficult to make changes in your Association, to reverse a decline in numbers, but I would encourage you to put yourself forward to lead something you think would make a difference.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to our Committee as we are all small cogs in the Halifax RA wheel and each of us plays a part in organising speakers and events.

If you’re ever in the Halifax area, please drop in and say hello and do join us on either Facebook (www.facebook.com/HalifaxRA) or follow us on Twitter (@Halifax_RA ).
Rotherham RA Centenary

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Albert Astbury (centre) is seen (from left to right) with Rotherham RA members: Philip Clough (Chairman), Mike Bell (Treasurer), Bill Webb (President) and Phil Woodward (Secretary).

Ian Davies – New RA Board Chairman

Ian started refereeing in 1978, achieved Level 5 in 1982 and became a North West counties referee in 1995. Following his retirement in 2002, he recalls with fond memories two games from his last season:

• A Premier League Reserve match at Anfield between Liverpool and Manchester United in front of 20,000 spectators.

• His last ever game at Goodison Park for an English Schools FA National Final.

Ian’s non-active involvement with refereeing includes being a County FA Assessor and a Council Member of the Chester & District FA.

Ian has held a number of Society and County posts including Secretary of Chester & District Referees’ Society and Secretary of Cheshire County RA.

At national RA level Ian was a member of the Board of the Referees’ Association of England (2007-2010) and was elected to the RA Board in 2013 achieving the highest number of votes. Following the RA Conference weekend Ian was elected Chairman of the RA Board for 2014-15.

In 2006 Ian’s service to the RA resulted in the award of the Long & Meritorious Service Award by the RA which recognised at least 20 years’ dedicated service.

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In 2013 Harry was presented with the FA Carlsberg Referees Special Award at Wembley at the England v Scotland friendly international in August 2013 and he was one of 150 volunteers honoured at Buckingham Palace in October 2013 to celebrate volunteering in football for The FA’s 150th Anniversary.

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HALIFAX RA RISES FROM THE ASHES

LATEST FROM THE REFEREES’ ASSOCIATION
RA-FA Youth Council News

**NEWS**

**LATEST FROM THE RA-FA YOUTH COUNCIL**

**RA-FA Youth Council Review**

**Tom Bowkett – RA-FA Youth Council (Finance and Events) Board Member**

The RA-FA Youth Council was formed at the 2012 RA Conference with an initial two-year plan to raise awareness of the Council and with the aspiration to become a recognised body in refereeing.

Since then, the Council has generated a great following through their continued work with the refereeing community and received many plaudits from high profiled figures in the Referees’ Association and The Football Association.

The philosophy ‘Inspire, Develop, Promote’, that the Council has adopted, has in turn inspired the creation of Youth Councils at a County FA level, with the emergence of 46 Youth Councils nationwide over the last two years, 80% of which encompass a refereeing element.

**First County FA Youth Council Conference**

In order to recognise and promote best practice, share ideas and build strategies, the RA-FA Youth Council hosted the first County FA Youth Council Conference on 11 May at St. George’s Park. There were more than 60 delegates who shared their experiences, key skills and ideas to their colleagues. It enabled the RA-FA Youth Council to identify where more support can be offered and what opportunities County Youth Councils need to receive.

Not only did the Conference facilitate the networking of Youth Councils, it also offered the chance to develop key skills required by those influencing County FAs. Workshops on Communication, Leadership and Passion were delivered by RA-FA Youth Council members and were well received by the delegates.

RA Board Member Laura Ritchie and FA Senior National Game Referee Manager Ian Blanchard both attended and supported the day. Going forward, the RA-FA Youth Council is looking to further develop the network and links between County Youth Councils, and offer support to them in their fantastic work by seeking to recruit Regional Representatives in the near future.

“**The work that the Youth Council has achieved has not only consolidated the five key initiatives that they started with but have also guided them to become leaders of young people. They will form a fundamental role in shaping the next national game strategy that will take us from 2015 – 2018 and onwards.**”

Ian Blanchard, FA Senior National Game Referee Manager speaking at the RA-FA Youth Council’s Sub County event in May 2014

With the network of County Youth Councils increasing all the time, it is now vital that the National RA-FA Youth Council supports these fantastic groups of young people, in both the creation and delivery of ideas and projects at County level. The emergence of Youth Councils within County FAs has been a fantastic step in allowing the voices of young people to influence vital decisions being made in grassroots football.

It is with this in mind that the RA-FA Youth Council has introduced a new two-year plan to support the County FA Youth Council network in Inspiring, Developing and Promoting young referees at a county level.

**RA-FA YC Inspired Fund Launch**

For the second consecutive season the RA-FA Youth Council has launched the Inspired Fund. The Fund allows young people, aged 14-25, to access an FA Basic Referee Course in return for promoting football and officiating amongst young people in their community. The Inspired Fund targets communities where football and refereeing is not prevalent and is therefore difficult to get involved. This not only helps develop the sport amongst these communities but establishes key networks and links for the relevant County FA to further enhance football in under-represented areas.

This season, bursaries of up to £150 were awarded to six young people to complete a Basic Referee Course. These young people have demonstrated the skills and desire to promote refereeing within their community, as well as committing to being a match official in their County.

The Council received a wide range of applications from young people around the country and would like to congratulate the successful six on receiving their bursaries. We look forward to the successes they will surely bring to their communities.

Will Finnie Becomes RA-FA Youth Council Chair

Will Finnie, 19, has succeeded Tom Nield after Tom’s distinguished two-year leadership of the RA-FA Youth Council.

Will, pictured right at the Dallas Cup, is a Level 3 Referee and Level 2 Tutor who lives in Newcastle, Northumberland where he is studying Chemistry at Newcastle University. Will is a founder member of the Youth Council and has been Project Manager (2012/13) and Head of Projects (2013/14).

He represented The FA at the 2013 Dallas Cup and was appointed to referee the U14 final.

Will is also a Team Leader at the Youth Sport Trust (voluntary) and is the logistical lead on sporting events nationwide, including hosting the School Games 2014 Opening Ceremony in September (Manchester).

He enjoys being involved in referee development and working to ensure the voice of young people is heard positively influence the future of refereeing. Reacting to becoming RA-FA YC Chair he said, “I am looking forward to building on the strong foundations the RA-FA Youth Council has established over the last two years and enhancing the impact the group of young people can have on shaping and guiding The FA and RA in their referee development programmes.”

Fulsome tributes were paid to Tom Nield, retiring RA-FA YC Chair by the RA, The FA and the RA-FA Youth Council during the RA-FA-FA YC Conference weekend.

Presenting Tom with the RA’s first ever ‘Outstanding Achievement Award’ at the Conference Dinner, RA President David Elleray commented that Tom had shown great maturity in leading the RA-FA YC in its first two years. He also praised Tom’s exemplary ability to find consensus and delegate so that everyone felt part of the RA-FA YC ‘team’.

Refereeing, and especially young referees, have been extremely fortunate that Tom Nield was the first RA-FA YC Chair and his legacy will be felt for many, many years to come.

Inspired Fund Successful Applicants

2014/15

Adeoyinka Adeyemi  Mohammed Bham  Amber Pearson  Jawhar Roble  Nancy Hammond  Zade Lunat

Outgoing RA-FA Youth Council Chair Tom Nield motivating young referees at the Young Referee Development Programme
RA-FA Youth Council Review

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RA-FA YC EVENT AT RA CONFERENCE

Earlier this year, The RAFA Youth Council was once again privileged to organise the Friday events programme at the 2014 RA Conference, hosted at St. George’s Park.

After the successful inaugural event in 2013, the RA-FA Youth Council was eager to extend the opportunity to young referees to train with some of the country’s top officials.

With the new venue of St. George’s Park capable of accommodating a greater capacity for our practical training sessions, FIFA and Premier League officials and coaches in attendance, the experience for those attending was once again extremely exciting and worthwhile.

Afterwards, first time attendee, Kent FA’s Oliver Fyle expressed his pleasure at working with the tutor at the event: “You get world class referees and coaches here, people that you don’t often get a chance to work with and gain experience from. It’s great to be able to take back home what you learn and then implement it into your own game,” he said.

The event brought together over 85 young referees from every end of the country, which helped to create a strong community feel amongst the group, something which really impressed London FA’s Joshua Osofa: “You get people from all over the country coming together all with the same common purpose - we all love to referee. Some people say refereeing can be a lonely sport but this event proves that it isn’t. It’s great to become united.”

With the 2014 FIFA World Cup nearing its conclusion, the RA-FA Youth Council themed the social evening around the tournament, celebrating the competition and its host nation.

There was a Brazilian themed buffet and an interactive analysis of incidents from a variety of matches, led by Ian Blanchard. The evening offered an insight into what is needed to perform and achieve at the highest levels of the game.

Next, a panel of some of the country’s top officials including Craig Pawson, John Brooks, Sian Massey and Adam Watts took to the stage to answer questions and offer insights into their own refereeing experiences.

Julia Ladbrooke, RA-FA Youth Council Vice Chairperson, was delighted with the way the evening event ran: “To be able to theme the evening around the World Cup was fantastic and offered a great basis for development and learning, whilst at the same time being in a setting that was enjoyable for those who attended,” she said.

On the Saturday, delegates were treated to a selection of high quality, interactive workshops where participants were challenged to think outside of their comfort zones, and about how they would handle a range of scenarios. Presented by a host of high profile guests including Andre Marriner, Michael Oliver, Sian Massey and Adam Watts, each workshop offered a chance to develop new skills that could be practically applied on the field of play.

From sessions on dealing with mass confrontation, to workshops that challenged the recognition of handball offences, the high quality content that was delivered left all participants with new skills that they could take away to apply to their own refereeing.

Josh Bradwell, a Birmingham FA referee, expressed how useful these workshops were to his own promotion aspirations: “I thought the workshops were very beneficial towards my promotion,” he said. “Being in an environment where there are other referees around you inspires you to demonstrate your knowledge of the Laws of the Game and refereeing in general.

“It is nice to share refereeing matters with the top officials and realise that at times we are all in the same boat no matter which standard of football we referee.”

Indeed the way the event brought younger and more experienced officials together was a great success of the RA Conference as a whole, and was something Tom Bowkett (Finance & Events Manager for the Youth Council) recognised: “We must remember that we are one refereeing community and the spirit and teamwork ethic set by members of all ages over the weekend was great to see.

“It is pleasing to see just how much enthusiasm there is from the wider refereeing community to be involved in the development and education of referees of all ages.”

This concept was clearly highlighted by a standing ovation for RA Life Member Brian Pearce from Devon, who evidently made a real impression on attendees of all ages.

Brian attended a whole host of workshops and interacted into discussions with older and younger members, proving that even when you are in your 80s, there is still something to give to the refereeing community.

The Saturday evening offered a chance to recognise those who have dedicated a lot of hard work toward the refereeing world as well as those officials appointed to Cup Finals at the top of their games.

Richard Blackman (Dover), Jock Campbell (Maidstone), John Harvey (West Somerset), Harold Oliver (Stockton), Alan Owen (Cannock Chase), John Oxley (Chiltern District), Michael Todd (Stroud) and Tony Truman (Cirencester) were all made Life Members of the Referees’ Association.

A special RA award was presented to RA FA Youth Council Chairman Tom Nield for his outstanding contribution. As the night came to a close, regular RA Conference attendee Michael Ryan from Sussex FA reflected on the night.

“Having been a regular attendee at the RA Conference for the past five years, the Saturday evening dinner is always an event I look forward to.

“It was great to witness Tom Nield being recognised with the Outstanding Contribution Award for his services; it is a monumental championing for the RA FA Youth Council and hugely positive for young referees in this country.”

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Planning for the 2015 Referees’ Association Conference has already begun and further updates will be made available in due course.
Once a season draws to a close, my preparations for the new campaign begin. It’s important for me to start straight away for the simple reason that I always want to be in the best possible condition, both physically and mentally.

To achieve it I believe there are a series of factors that are key for an effective pre-season. The first is taking the chance to stop and reflect on the season that has just passed, reset objectives and shape goals for the future.

As a member of the Level 3 Mentoring Scheme, I also work with Trevor Massley, a former Premier League Assistant Referee and Level 3 Referee to ensure I am fully prepared. We speak each week through the season to complete my self-analysis as well as to debrief my assessments.

It was from this that I was able to detect patterns within my performances which helped highlight the areas that I needed to focus on, namely positioning and my sprinting speed.

With this in mind in February 2014 I approached Phil Hewitt, PGMOL Strength and Conditioning Coach, for help and guidance with my sprinting. If I could improve this it would ultimately enhance my positioning.

I continued to work closely with Phil throughout the close season to prepare for my Contributory League Fitness Test, which I successfully passed in June.

I continued working on my sprints and I followed a tailored programme this summer to ensure that I am physically ready for the new season ahead.

For me it was also essential that I take a break from football, to allow my body to rest and to spend time with loved ones. I timed my rest period after my fitness test and to coincide with the WSL mid-season break, thus ensuring I was available during the summer months for WSL appointments.

As my focus shifted to the season I made sure to attend several conferences, beginning with the PGMOL Conference in June where I was involved in interactive workshops led by Premier League Referee, Lee Mason.

The aims of the sessions were to appreciate the different viewing angles of the Referee, Assistant Referee and the Match Assessor when making a decision on a key match incident. It was important to gain an understanding of each other’s roles in these match situations.

Then, in July, I attended the RA Conference, which focused on the theme of Getting the Big Decisions Right.

I also tutored alongside Ian Blanchard and Lee Mason on the topic of ‘When is Handball Really Handball?’ which looked to provide delegates with a broader understanding of how to achieve a consistent approach when penalising handball and to improve the accuracy of that ‘Big Decision’.

This summer I was also honoured to be invited to the YDP and deliver eight training sessions on Fitness for Referees.

I felt inspired to be supporting and encouraging the next generation of referees and to now be mentoring the female candidates as they progress through the two year development programme.

As for myself, I have set my short term, mid-term and long term goals with Trevor for the season ahead and I know the work I need and am prepared to put in.

I will continue to self analyse after every game to measure where I am against my objectives to ensure they remain realistic and attainable.

Hopefully I will be on track in November when I will re-evaluate where I am and where I need to be for the months ahead.

Good luck. Work hard. And enjoy the season.

Jane Simms, Level 3 Referee & FIFA Women’s Assistant Referee, provides an insight into her preparations both on and off the field to get her ready for the new campaign.
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