

*The Normidian
Magazine
Season 2011/2012*



March 2012

COUNCIL 2011 - 2012

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THE NORMIDIAN is the Official Publication of North Middlesex referees Society, and is published nine times during the football season, between September and May.

The next Meeting of the North Middlesex Referees' Society will take place at Holtwhites Sports and Social Club, Kirkland Drive, Enfield, Middlesex at 7.45 pm on Thursday the 15th of March 2012 when the guest speaker will be – Adrian Shorter the Referee Development Officer to the London FA. Who will be speaking on “Dissent What Is It?”

EDITORIAL

Wouldn't it be nice if all journalists and television commentators and pundits managed to get the Laws correctly named even if they cannot interpret them correctly? As a result of their perpetually getting them wrong these media verbal shortcuts have caused extra problems all round. The following typifies what I am trying to get at. I was refereeing recently and a player on the goal-line but not between the posts kicked the ball deliberately so I thought to the keeper who caught it well. They were fairly close together but their actions appeared to me to constitute a breach of the Law I hate as will be apparent from what I add later. Of course the defending side argued it was accidental and then they argued that as the ball was being played forward it could not be a deliberate back pass. After blowing my whistle hard and shouting for quiet I explained that it was a deliberate kick to the keeper and there was no such thing as a back-pass rule or Law and the offence was by the keeper, who in this case I said should not have caught the ball. They missed the indirect free kick but later another player queried whether a ball chested back was a back-pass and should have been penalised but again I had to tell him that it was not a kick to the keeper and therefore not punishable. Two things stood out for me. One is that this was a Law brought in to stop goalkeepers wasting time and that in turn was because referees did not penalise under the existing Law. My view is that we should revert to the old system and only allow the goalkeeper 4 seconds control time and that should be strictly adhered to. Then we would get a better game and less stupid goals or mistakes as goalkeepers are required to get rid of the ball so quickly at their feet. The obvious point concerning the media is that they have confused the position with such terms as back-pass rule; last-man rule; and other similar misnomers. We even have the pro's talking about bookings instead of cautions, – and bye lines instead of goal-lines plus 6 yards and 18 yards boxes instead of goal and penalty areas. It is hardly any wonder that the players get confused and cry out for a player to be sent off because a defender fouls an attacker and they want him sent off because “he is the last man” Likewise no-one seems to know what is or is not a handball. Players want a free kick or penalty every time the ball hits a hand or arm even though it is accidental and although there has been clear guidance given it does not seem to have percolated down to the players from the Premiership all the way to those playing at grass roots.

Good news however is afoot for the pro game as FIFA are now trialling the last two technical teams working on the aspects required for Goal-line technology.

Ken Goldman (Editor)

The Adventures of Willy 'The Whistler' Woodwork

Part 16 – The mad hatter

Match: Cockfosters Casuals –v- Reds Rovers
Venue: Hackney Marsh – Pitch 165
League: Division Three – Sunday Park League (North)

The truth be told that we as referees never know what will happen next. We need to have eyes at the back of our heads and we should be literally on our toes ready to anticipate what may happen next and where it may happen. Knowing the laws of the game is not enough. It is knowing when to apply them and how they are applied. It is not always that easy to judge if the challenge was careless or reckless and when is the appropriate time for a quiet word to a player or a caution. For me the secret is move to the best position to give the right decision.

Anyhow, enough advice from me and back to the match. Suddenly from wet and windy weather the sun appeared and it was like a hot summer's day. I went over to my bag by the touch line and put my baseball cap on. Both goalies did the same and the Casuals captain asked if he could leave the field of play and do the same. I told him he could not. He questioned my decision by asking 'if I was okay to wear one plus the two goalies why was he prevented from doing the same'. I explained it would be dangerous if he were to head the ball. He asked if he could turn the cap around that would not be dangerous.

That seemed to make perfect sense so I allowed him plus four other players to do the same. No doubt you would have done the same as me in the circumstances?

If only I had known what was going to happen next.....Casuals attacked the Rovers goal and the Casuals forward run past one defender and then another and he kicked the ball only for the goalie to produce a great dive and manage to make contact with his finger tips. The ball was still goal bound even though it was trickling towards the goal at a slow pace. Just before the ball entered the goal the goalie threw his base ball cap towards the ball. The cap fell to the ground upside down and the ball stopped and rested snugly in the cap. The goalie scrambled to his feet and picked the ball up. I instinctively blew my whistle as I felt something was not right although I could not immediately think of the exact reason as to why I had blown the whistle. I pontificated over the various options –

- a) *Award a goal as there was no doubt the ball would have entered the goal*
- b) *Caution the goal keeper for unsporting behaviour*
- b) *Apologise for blowing my whistle and just tell the players to continue*
- c) *Ask the ref on the next pitch what to do*
- d) *Award an indirect free kick to Casuals*
- e) *Award a direct free kick to Casuals*
- f) *Award a penalty to Casuals*
- e) *A red card for the goalie for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity*
- f) *Restart with a drop ball*

g) Restart with an indirect free kick to Rovers by claiming the forward was in an off side position

Well you tell me.....what would you do?

I decided to restart with an indirect free kick to Casuals. I knew a penal offence had not been committed so I could only award an indirect free kick. This then caused the next problem. I could not have the indirect free kick taken from where the offence occurred as this was only six inches from the goal line. The defenders had to be a minimum ten yards from the ball so I placed the ball two yards in front of the penalty mark. Again players queried my decision but I explained the penalty mark is twelve yards from the goal line so two yards nearer the goal makes the ten yards. This proved to me how important it is to remember the measurements of the field of play.

At least it made it easy for me to ensure the defending players were ten yards from the ball as they had to be on the goal line.

After all the commotion the Casuals forward kicked the ball and it must have been kicked at least ten yards over the cross bar. Had we been playing rugby what a great conversation that would have been.

Another minute went by and the sun disappeared as did thankfully all of the baseball caps. Twenty seconds later it was almost the same scenario with the Rovers goal keeper beaten he threw one of his gloves to prevent the ball from entering the goal. This time the ball did cross the goal line and I awarded the goal. Only this time being a little wiser I cautioned the goal keeper for unsporting behaviour. On reflection maybe I should have done that the first time round.

See you all soon,

Regards



Willy 'The Whistler' Woodwork

Willy Woodwork

WHEN THE BALL IS OUT OF PLAY BY OBSERVER

If you take a stopwatch along with you next time you watch a game and stop it every time the ball goes 'dead', you will probably find that something in excess of twenty minutes elapses when there is nothing doing in the way of actual play.

As a referee on the field, you could easily be lulled into a false sense of security by drawing the conclusion that you could take a breather during this quarter or so of the game. A very false sense of security!

Is it not true to say that many of those off the ball, behind-the-referee's-back incidents, take place when the ball is actually dead? Those few seconds that it takes for the goalkeeper to retrieve and position the ball for his goal kick may well be selected by the defender as the best time to intimidate his opponent with a few well-chosen words. Or it could be that while everyone is taking up his position for the corner-kick (referee and linesmen included) the centre forward and the centre half are exchanging a few crafty nudges and pushes.

Quite clearly, it is when the ball is not actually in play that the wise referee will continue to be 'all eyes and ears' in his attempts to detect the potentially explosive moments in the game, for it is often the unsavoury side of modern football that finds its birth in moments like these. Before he realises it, the carefree referee might have a fight on his hands.

A timely, quiet comment about what he has heard or seen might be just enough for the referee to keep control of the situation, and he can be reasonably sure that no matter how unnoticed by the spectators his firm but friendly words might have been, enough of the players will have noticed his efficiency.

Too many referees are lax in their work while the ball is out of play. How often do you see a referee awaiting a goal kick actually have a glance at what is happening on the field of play? Too rarely, I would suggest. Very likely you will see the referee in the local league award a goal-kick, turn and run back toward the centre of the field ready for the kick, without ever being aware of what the players are doing.

The golden rule of refereeing must surely be to keep an eye on the centre of activity while the ball is in play, and to use those moments when the ball is dead to check all around him that everyone is behaving himself. This includes keeping an eye on the last two or three players involved in the activity immediately prior to the ball going out of play. The referee can help himself a great deal in this respect if he perfects the skill of running backwards when taking up his next position should the situation demand it. Most referees can run backwards, but many seldom actually do so.

When operating without assistant referees (Club or Neutral), the referee must undertake all those tasks that he would normally delegate to his neutral colleagues with the flag. All too frequently do you see the ball go out of play and be retrieved many yards way down the touchline? In such cases the throw-in will be made from a position that is more advantageous to the thrower, and there are two basic reasons for this. One is the natural tendency for players to 'get away with what they can', while the other is because the referee lets them do so.

It could be that the thrower is allowed this unfair advantage because the referee relaxed his concentration at the moment the ball went out of play, perhaps in the belief that nothing will go wrong for him at this stage. He looked away too soon and therefore did not actually know the correct place for the throw-in to be taken.

Wise referees, when working alone, frequently position themselves exactly opposite the position for the throw. If this is not convenient, however, there is still often a simple and unflamboyant way for the referee to indicate the correct place to the thrower who has just retrieved the ball. The referee positions himself in such a way that he creates a straight line involving three important points, himself, the correct position for the throw-in and the thrower approaching the line. A little practice on this and the skill can soon be perfected so that you will then have a moment or two spare for that vital glance around the field to see who is trying to take advantage of the dead-ball situation, for it is odds-on that somebody will be doing so if he thinks the referee isn't looking.

There are several other things for the referee to look for while the ball is dead, so he should develop the art of 'making a few moments time for himself'.

Think about the following and try to make sure that you have time to look and listen for them from time to time during your next game, whether it is in a stadium or on the local park pitch

When the play is temporarily stopped:

- a) Is the goalkeeper at the far end of the field quite safe from spectator interference?
- b) Are those men on the trainer's bench behaving, as they should be?

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50 Years of History – Charles Lifford

In 1999, a book relating to the 50 years History of the North Middlesex Referees 'Society was published. Whether you purchased a copy is neither here nor there, what is important, and it should be to you, is that I have been keeping the History up to date, 62 years, in total .What have you sent me since that date? Have you had a County Cup Appointment? Does the Society know? Have you done a local Cup Final during this period, about which you can send me details? Have you had a photograph taken whilst refereeing, or been part of a group photo of referees that may be of interest to anyone in the Society? A full record has been kept of the 50 years up to 1999. If you don't do your bit –and it only needs to be a little bit – the History will not be maintained. Please send me as much or as little as possible.

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Could this space work for you? Perhaps an advert or even a few short lines of interest to members or readers, or better still something akin to an article or even a match incident. It all helps to fill a few spaces.

Ed.

PERSONAL VIEWPOINT

This is intended to be the first in a series of articles which I hope will become a feature of the magazine and encourage members and indeed other readers to contribute to this page. The idea is to promote wider ideas on football which are related to the game, but not necessarily to refereeing, which people might find of interest. It is difficult in a monthly magazine to always be topical unless something comes up immediately before the magazine goes to the printer, but nonetheless may still be of importance. Whilst all correspondents' views, including my own, are exactly that and not of the Society or the Council and we want a broad base, nevertheless a right is reserved either not to publish or to Edit with the writer's permission anything which would be defamatory or a breach of the various statutes on discrimination etc.

[As the Editor I am taking the opportunity of writing the first piece which centres on the current England Manager position.]

Whatever anybody thinks about John Terry's off the field activities over the years and I can't say I think very much of them, nevertheless the very English principle "that a man is deemed innocent until proved guilty" should have applied in his case in both senses of the word. It was therefore inappropriate to have had the England captaincy removed for anything other than football reasons so that that principle could have been maintained before the trial of the issues on racial discrimination can be heard. It is going to cause even more controversy if he is acquitted having already lost the captaincy in the way that he did. The incumbent England Manager Fabio Capello cited the principle as a considerable factor in his speaking out against the removal of the captaincy and was it appears a catalyst for his resignation from the post. Anyone who the night before saw the Sky programme on him as part of their series on "Great Managers" would have realised from what was said about him by previous players under his command, that he would brook no interference with his team selection or that of his choice of captain and would not let his own decision on the subject be undermined by his employers however well-meaning they may have been. After all that is how the late Sir Alf Ramsey (then plain Alf) redefined the position as being solely in charge following on from the principle of team selection by a selection committee, and finally led England to World Cup success as we all know in 1966. Numerous players who appeared on that Sky programme testified that Capello was a Manager who had his own ideas and again principles and stuck to them throughout and that they had led to his unprecedented achievements at Club level. Whether indeed Don Fabio as the press christened him could have led England to success at the forthcoming European Championships is only conjecture but we certainly all hope the next Manager can do it.

Fabio Capello's routes to both the European Finals and the preceding one in the South Africa World Cup were based upon an impressive number of victories. His record shows Played 42-won 28- drew 8 and lost 6. In competitive games it was P22; W15; D5; L 2. He had the best winning record of any England Manager @ 66.7%.

Dear Ken

I wondered if you might like to forward the following letter, through the pages of the Normidian, to Willy 'The Whistler' Woodwork.

Dear Mr. Woodwork, or may I call you Willy?

I was not quite sure what to make of your article printed in the February 2012 edition of the Normidian. Was it written with your tongue in your cheek as a test for your readers?

I particularly refer to your first match incident, regarding the direct free kick from which the defender, taking the kick, put the ball straight into his own goal. From the six options available to you, you said that you decided that to award the goal was the correct one because "...a direct free kick is exactly what it says, meaning if the ball is kicked directly into the goal it is therefore a goal!" Makes sense logically, particularly as you said the players agreed with your decision, but were you really trying to pull the wool over our eyes? One began to smell a rat with the tale of the assessor spending a long time scribbling in his notebook?

At our meeting in February, we discussed your enigmatic report and came to the decision that the goal should not have been awarded.

On page 38 of the 2011/2012 Laws of the Game, it is clearly stated that "if a direct free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team."

Did we get it right? We hope that no referees were influenced by your little jape, just because it was in the Normidian.

With thanks for sharing your adventures with us, I remain yours sincerely,

Mick Osborn
F.A. Confirmed Inactive Referee

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Guest Speaker

Our March guest speaker took the Referee's exam in 1986. By 2007 he was joining the London FA to assist their Andy Porter and became their RDO in 2009. In 2002 he became an Instructor and then a Licensed Instructor in 2004 then County Training Officer for the London FA and finally a Level 3 Tutor in 2009.

Get well soon.

We mentioned previously that Bob Martin one of our longest serving members is back in hospital in the Melbourne Ward of Chase Farm Hospital Enfield. Visiting is from 2.30pm to 6.30pm and he will; be there for another few weeks.

Membership Fees for Season 2012/2013 are now due!

Yes ladies and gentlemen, it's time again for my annual message. Your membership subscription for Season 2012/2013 becomes due on 1 April 2011. Where the Society has an e-mail address on file, and you normally receive your magazine by e-mail, you should have received a Membership Form in this way; for everybody else, a Membership Form is included with this month's Normidian.

Regrettably, for the new season it has been necessary to increase subscriptions for the first time in eleven seasons – the last occasion being season 2001/2002 when base subscriptions were increased from £9.00 to £10.00. Council has agreed an increase for season 2012/2013 of £1.00, meaning that the base subscription will increase to £11.00. At the same time, there will be an additional increase in subscriptions for members who receive their magazine by post, as the differential will increase to £13.50 to help offset the increased costs of producing and distributing a paper based magazine. Over this same time, prices have risen around 38%.

The Referees Association has held its subscription at £16.00 this year. However, the Referees Association has also introduced some additional, voluntary benefits – details later.

Membership Fees payable are as follows:-

• Full Members

- **£27.00 if your magazine is received by e-mail and £29.50 if your magazine is received by post.**
This includes your Referees Association fee of £16.00 including the Insurance Premium of £4.00. If you are over 75, you are not automatically covered by the Insurance Premium, and your fee payable will be reduced by £4.00. However, should you wish to purchase insurance cover, this can be arranged on request. Please contact me for a proposal form which you need to complete and return to me.

• Associate Members

- **£11.00 if your magazine is received by e-mail and £13.50 if your magazine is received by post.**
You must pay your Referees Association fee through another Society, and this should be shown on your Membership Form. Alternatively, you may join as an Associate Member if you have other interest in football work – please indicate on the Membership Form.

• Junior Members

- **£15.50 if your magazine is received by e-mail and £18.00 if your magazine is received by post.**
For Members under 18 years of age at 1 April, and it includes your Referees Association fee of £10.00.

Individual fees payable are shown on your personalised Membership Form. You are reminded that you will not be covered by the Referees Association Insurance after 31 May 2012 unless your fees have been paid to the Society by that date. Please complete and return your Membership Form as soon as possible. You need to bear this in mind if you will be refereeing late season or early pre-season games.

Some members also opted to take advantage of the Referees Association Physiotherapy Insurance. Where appropriate, this is also indicated on your membership form, but as this is a voluntary subscription, this is not in the figures quoted above, and you are free to delete this from the remittance shown due if you so desire. If you have not taken advantage of this cover in the past, and now wish to do so, please add the appropriate fee to your remittance and indicate as such on your membership form. If you require more information about this cover, please let me know, and I will let you have the relevant information.

You can also take this opportunity to join or rejoin the Society One Hundred Club – just complete the appropriate part of the membership Form, and include the additional remittance with your membership fee.

It would be appreciated if you could check your details shown on the Form, and amend any information that is shown incorrectly. Please also specifically check e-mail addresses shown carefully, as a few that we have on file are occasionally resulting in rejections. Additionally, please check that the NPD Number (Registration Number) where shown is correct, and complete it if it is missing from the Membership Form. The number can be found on your County FA Registration Form. If you are not currently registered with a County FA, please indicate on your form as Not Registered. Please also indicate where requested whether you are an Assessor; Examiner; Instructor; or Mentor.

You may wonder what benefits you get from your membership of North Middlesex. Outlined below are some of the visible – and invisible – benefits of membership:-

Visible Benefits other than Society Meetings.

1. The Normidian – full of articles, news and information on refereeing and other topical matters.
2. Mentoring of new referees.
3. RA and other kit supplies available at meetings and to order.
4. Society Website - also packed with up-to-date information on the Society.
5. Monthly 100 club draw; Christmas social; and other social events.

6. RA Conference.
7. RA Website.

Invisible Benefits - behind the scenes and available if needed.

1. Representation on the MCFA Council; the MCFA Referees' Committee.
2. Representation to the RAE through the AFA Referees' Association.
3. Advice, support and representation if assaulted, charged or suspended.
4. RAE Personal insurance when officiating or attending refereeing business.
5. RAE Representation on the FA Council.
6. RAE Representation on the FA Referees' Committee.
7. RAE representation to the FA Refereeing Department.
8. RAE Service awards

Gary Cobden
Honorary Treasurer



The Vennearce Report

The Vennearce Report was written (April 1968) by two former Life Vice Presidents of the Society, Arthur Pearce and Owen Venning, and called for a radical restructuring of The Referees' Association. Owen Venning went on to become the first full-time secretary of the Referees Association. This month we reproduce the final extract from the Report which covered the Suggested Reconstructed Referees Association.

The National Council should consist of the following Officers:-

President (Chairman)

1. General Secretary
2. Two Delegates from each of the existing Divisions
3. Public Relations Officer
4. National Publications Officer
5. National Training Officer
6. Sales and Supply Officer

Committees required to cover all aspects of refereeing:-

- a. Finance Committee
- b. Promotion Committee (Senior Competitions)
- c. Laws Committee
- d. Press and Publications Committee
- e. Liaison Committee to the F.A.
- f. Conference Committee

The County R.A. should retain their present Committees drawn from Societies, but have two sub-committees to cover:-

1. Assessing Committee. Covering local examinations; assessing; and promotions
2. General Administration Committee

The duties of these committees are self-explanatory and the omission of a treasurer is due to the fact that all registrations and monies received would be handled at R.A. Offices by the paid staff and that the need would arise for a Financial Committee to control spending and review income each year. This, of course, would need a Chairman, with the qualifications of an astute Treasurer.

The Laws Committee, would consider when necessary, changes required and would work in close co-operation with the Football Association, thereby ensuring that referees would be fully conversant with proposed changes of laws and themselves have a channel, whereby suggestions concerning the laws can be considered for further action by the governing bodies.

The Liaison Committee to the F.A. would be entrusted with the work of retaining co-operation with the governing bodies and would work in similar fashion to the present set-up of joint meetings.

Conference Committee would be responsible for organising the A.G.M., instructional conferences; refresher courses for Senior Referees; and the raising of funds, (liaise with the Finance Committee) thereby relieving the enormous task placed on individuals who valiantly endeavour to do the job at present, even under the existing impossible chaotic circumstances.

Manpower would be found among the already willing band of unpaid helpers, working with the knowledge that they are doing something entirely for referees without interference from other bodies who control the playing and administrative side of football.



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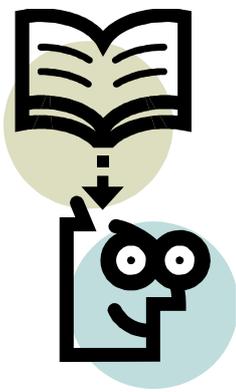


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The **North Middlesex Referees Society Quiz Nite** is back.

Get your thinking caps on again, as its time for the 2012 Quiz – which this year will take place on Friday 30 March 2012 at Old Owens Association, Coopers Lane, Northaw, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 4NE.

Tickets cost £10 each inclusive of a hot buffet.

Teams to consist of no more than 8 players. If you would like to attend, whether you have a team, or will be attending on your own, please let Robin Jagot (Secretary) or Gary Cobden (Treasurer) know.



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Are once again pleased to support North Middlesex Referees Society in Season 2011/2012



North Middlesex Referees Society - One Hundred Club Membership

Below are the results of the February draw which was made at the recent Society meeting. There are 49 shares subscribed for the current season, and in February and August we pay out the full amount subscribed, meaning the winnings for this month total £49.00. Cheques for winners are enclosed; if you receive your magazine by e-mail, your cheques will be posted to you.



February

1st 4 Steve Palmer £28.00 2nd 10 Brian Langstone £14.00 3rd 36 Mick Osborn £7.00

To renew your membership of the 100 Club for season 2012/2013, please indicate on the membership form enclosed with this months magazine.

Gary Cobden
Honorary Treasurer



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Middlesex County Cup Final Officials

We congratulate the following members who have been appointed to officiate on Middlesex County Cup Finals this season:-

John Noblemunn	Referee	Sunday Junior Trophy
Laurentiu Hantea	Fourth Official	Sunday Junior Trophy
James Morris	Assistant Referee	Midweek Cup
Caroline Ross	Assistant Referee	Womens Junior Cup
John Fowler	Fourth Official	Veterans Cup
Paul Watts	Referee	Under 16 Cup
Darren Fenner	Assistant Referee	Under 16 Cup
Simon Martindell	Fourth Official	Under 16 Cup (Trainee Member)
Alex Bedwell	Assistant Referee	Under 15 Cup
John Vyras	Fourth Official	Under 15 Cup
Nicolas Nicolaou	Referee	Under 12 Cup

The Council of North Middlesex Referees Society hope you all have an uneventful, but enjoyable day.



Attwell leaves the Select Group

Stuart Attwell has lost his place on the list of Select Group of referees and has returned to Football League duty on the National List. The move, which is said to come by mutual consent, comes after the 29-year-old made a string of high-profile errors after being promoted to the elite group of referees at the start of the 2008-09 season aged just 25.

Only weeks into that season, he attracted heavy criticism for awarding Reading a goal against Watford when John Eustace had kicked the ball over the byline four yards wide of the goal before it was put back into play by Noel Hunt. Attwell's linesman Nigel Bannister signalled for a goal. More

recently in December, he sent off Gary Cahill, then of Bolton, for fouling Scott Parker only yards over the halfway line, saying he had denied Tottenham a clear goalscoring opportunity. The red card was overturned on appeal.

Following the Watford-Reading game, further controversies followed when he was accused of "losing control" of a Derby-Nottingham Forest derby, having disallowed two Derby goals in the final stages, booking eight players and sending off Forest's Lewis McGugan. He has also attracted the ire of Wigan manager Roberto Martinez, who accused the referee of lying about his reasons for sending off Gary Caldwell in April 2010, while Stoke's Danny Higginbotham claimed Attwell could be too easily influenced by players.

Later that year, he awarded Liverpool a highly controversial goal against Sunderland. He had awarded the Black Cats a free-kick inside their own half and Michael Turner touched the ball back to Simon Mignolet, apparently for the goalkeeper to take the set-piece. But he ruled the ball active, allowing Fernando Torres to steal it and set up Dirk Kuyt to finish into an empty net.

In a statement, Professional Game Match Officials Limited general manager Mike Riley backed Attwell to improve as a referee and return to the top level.



Former North Middlesex Referees Society member Gerald Sinstadt, who is now a member of the North Staffs Referees Club, and a councillor on Staffordshire County FA recently became a columnist for his local newspaper, The Sentinel, Stoke-on-Trent. Gerald recently penned a column on Technology, and this topical article is reproduced – with permission – below.

Goal line technology - a blessing long overdue. Football is crying out for it. Everyone says so. Well, take it from me, it will be more trouble than it's worth. This may make me a heretic, but hesitate before you light the bonfire.

Several systems are being trialled. They must "... prove to be accurate and to be affordable." Last month FIFA President Sepp Blatter claimed that two have now passed the test. He is more than just hopeful there will be a puff of white smoke from headquarters when the International Board meets in March. He believes sanctions will be in place for next season and the technology will be used at the 2014 World Cup Finals in Brazil.

It will have been a long time coming. There were trials at the Under-17 World Cup in Peru as long ago as 2005. Adidas - whose system was tested - would have been working on it well before then. Yet the target date is still a few more months away at best.

Nine potential suppliers, all from Europe, have made presentations. There are two basic methods: a chip in the ball which sends an audible signal to the referee, or cameras in the goal frame which send a response to the referee's wristwatch. In either case FIFA insist the verdict must be virtually instantaneous. If Blatter is correct, the problems have been solved.

But others may lie in wait.

For a start, FIFA dare not create a world-wide monopoly for one supplier. Football Association General Secretary Alex Horne said last November, "There's not going to be one technology for all of world football. Multiple technologies, if they meet the criteria, will be available ... and people will buy."

Will the Premier League make an arbitrary choice and hope for the best? Or will it want to run its own tests first?

Here comes another huge factor: money. How many ready-chipped footballs, or how many camera-embedded goal frames, would a successful supplier be able to sell to just one league? What would the world market be worth?

A co-founder of one development company, David Parden, told Sky News last November, "Over twenty years you could be making hundreds of millions." From an "affordable" system?

Think, then, about the end users. Clubs in football-wealthy nations will be irritated but not deterred by estimated £100,000 installation costs. But it's a world game. FIFA ranks the Faroe Islands at 116. From there down to the Cayman Islands at 206 are the not-so-well-off and the downright poor. Will

FIFA donate the equipment they need? Or will they bar from international competition any nation lacking state of the art technology?

Forget the World Cup for a moment. Think how it might work here. Can you envisage it at ninety-two league grounds? Nor can I. In that case, what about promotion and relegation? A Premier League club could survive because a crucial decision is technologically verified. In the no-tech Championship a club could be denied a goal that would have taken them up.

After a season of thirty-eight no-tech games in the Championship, the final promotion playoff is at Wembley where the technology will surely be available. Should it be switched off?

Before we try to put the lid back on this can of worms, consider this scenario. At the Britannia Stadium, Matt Etherington cuts the ball back from the goal line, Peter Crouch pokes it towards the net. The keeper dives and pushes the ball out. Too late. The referee has received the signal. Goal stands.

Enter old-fashioned television. Sky will be keen to confirm - or not - the efficiency of this wonderful innovation. Sure enough, a camera looking along the line shows the ball clearly over the line in the goal. But it also offers, from a few seconds earlier, a freeze frame of the ball fractionally out of play before Etherington's foot made contact. Although unseen by referee or assistant, the correct call would have been a goal kick.

Put that on the big screen to entertain the spectators. Perhaps better not. Though it won't deter opinions from Gary Neville with his Sky gismos or from Gary Lineker and the Match of the Day chorus. Then there'll be the phone-ins. And the newspapers. There's progress for you.

Another thought keeps two words nagging at the back of my mind. Scientists will tell you how hard it is to prove a negative. In this scenario, a shot hits the bar, bounces down and is cleared. No signal reaches the referee, so play continues. The two nightmare words are: system malfunction.

According to an Aerospace Corporation paper, "Of the 4378 space launches conducted worldwide between 1957 and 1999, 390 launches failed." For example, in 1996, "...failure was attributed to errors in the design and testing of the flight software."

Sepp Blatter says it can't happen in football. Let's hope he is right.

In the end, is it worth it? Undeniably, there have been injustices. Frank Lampard's 'goal' in the last World Cup; Pedro Mendes - Tottenham v Manchester United 2005; Chesterfield v Middlesbrough - FA Cup 1997; Geoff Hurst - 1966 World Cup Finals. Four examples from the last 45 years.

How many more can you recall? Enough to justify an outlay of "hundreds of millions"?



Pictured recently at The Emirates is Society member Tony Ward with Sir Alex Ferguson before a recent Arsenal v Manchester United match. Tony looks after the match day officials for Arsenal. What were the two talking about? Forward your thoughts on the topics of the discussion please to Normidian Editor Ken Goldman. The best responses will be published in the next edition.



NORTH MIDDLESEX REFEREES SOCIETY

Minutes of the Society Meeting held at H. S. C. Enfield on February 16th 2012

Apologies: Ken Goldman, Jeff Till

Chairman's Welcome: Chairman welcomed members and LVP Mick Osborn for kindly stepping in to cover our Guest Speaker Marvin Thompson who had to withdraw because of family commitments.

Minutes of the last Society Meeting – held on Thursday November 17th 2012 at HWSC. Were signed as a true record.

Matters Arising: None

Secretary's Report: Secretary reported that he had received 100 RA Draw Books for distribution to members. The Grand Draw takes place at the Annual RA Conference in July/2012. Treasurer spoke on the issue and stated it had never really benefited the Society and was a painful exercise to carry out. It was decided to return the Draw Books to the RA.

The County Cup final appointments had been announced and will be published in the March magazine. The Secretary informed the meeting that Council will be meeting in Mid-April and the date is yet to be confirmed.

Treasurer's Report: The Society membership stood at 88 full members and 7 associates - 95 in total. The treasurer also announced Council had agreed to increase the Society subscription next season to £13.50. It was also agreed that those members who wish to receive their copy of the magazine electronically will pay a subscription of £11.00 a saving of £2.50. This is the first increase in Society subscription for over ten years.

The Society Quiz will take place on Friday March 30th at Old Owens Sports Club and we still need members and friends to join us (tables of 6-8 persons tickets £10 ea. including hot buffet) on the evening. Contact Gary or Robin.

Any other Officer's Report: None

Any Other Business: None. There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.30pm and this was followed by match incidents.

Chairman.....

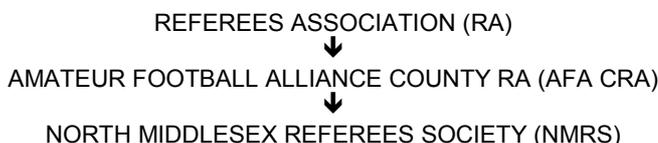
INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SOCIETY

The Referees' Association (RA) is the national body for Referees. The RA is independent of, but works closely with, County Football Associations to ensure that matters affecting referees are discussed and resolved. These include law changes, current interpretation, assaults and other problems affecting referees nationally.

North Middlesex Referees Society (NMRS) Is one of some 350 local Referees' societies that are spread all over the country; some are referred to as Societies, others as Branches, Associations, or Clubs. They often work closely with local leagues to aid recruitment, and to ensure that any parochial problems are resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. NMRS meets on a monthly basis throughout the season; Guest Speakers are invited; training sessions are held; social events arranged; and local problems - including Match Incidents - are discussed.

So what is the link between the Society and the National Body? All Societies must be a member of a County Referees Association (CRA). North Middlesex, together with the AFA and London Society of Association Referees, form a County Referees Association known as the Amateur Football Alliance County Referees Association (AFA CRA). This Association operates with Officers and a delegate from each Society who, like the Officers and Committee of this Society, are elected annually in a democratic manner. The AFA CRA send a delegate to the locally held annual RA Liaison meeting which reports back to The RA Board, who meet at least four times a year. All delegates and officers of the AFA CRA Committee are elected annually in a democratic manner.

The National Structure for the Society is:



As a full member of NMRS you are a member of the RA.

The Objects of The Referees Association are clearly defined in their rules, and include:

- provide insurance, and financial support for members
- improve the status and reputation of referees.
- protect members from injustice or unfair treatment.
- promote, educate, train and develop referees in general.
- promote the best interests of the game of Association Football.
- provide guidance and support for members of local Societies.

What are the Benefits of RA Membership?

Insurance - The major benefit is the Personal Accident Insurance Policy. For a small amount, the insurance policy covers you whilst actually refereeing; travelling to and from a match; attending meetings (including travelling to and from home); attending organised training; and loss or theft of kit whilst at a match. Full details are available to members on request, as it is now no longer a requirement that each member who has paid the insurance premium is supplied with a copy of the terms of insurance. A range of increased benefits are also available - for an additional premium - and members should contact the insurers direct if they wish to take up these benefits. Additionally, active referees who are over the age of 75 can now be covered by the Insurance subject to an additional premium being paid. Physiotherapy insurance is now also available for a premium of £5.00.

Supplies - A full range of equipment is available from The RA - and often at a lower cost than if you bought it from a local sports shop. By purchasing equipment in bulk, the RA is able to pass the cost savings on to its members. Publications by top names are also available, along with "The Referees' Association Manual of Guidance" which gives advice to the referee on such varied subjects as diet, law queries, training, pre-match preparation, match control and lots more. "The Assessors Challenge" is another book that forms essential reading for every referee and assessor. It deals with every aspect and quality required for promotion. All items are available from the Society's Supplies Officer - although kit may need to be ordered. The Society's Supplies Officer is also able to supply you with kit and other refereeing items from a range of suppliers to make your purchasing requirements easy.

Refereeing is a joint publication of the Football Association and the Referees Association. It is mailed direct to all registered referees by the Football Association. The magazine includes features and updates from the Football Association and items of RA-FA and RA news.

Benevolent Fund - It is hoped that you never have to apply for assistance from the Fund but, sadly, some of our members do fall on hard times through sickness and other reasons. The NMRS Fund is available to all NMRS members, and the RA Fund is also available to full members.

Why do I receive two different Membership Forms each year? You will receive Membership Renewal Forms from both NMRS and the CFA with which you are registered, although not necessarily at the same time. The CFA form will also show the 'three lions' badge of the FA, as the FA now has overall responsibility for the registration of all referees, although you will still be parented by a local CFA. When you successfully completed your six matches, following your completion of the Referees Examination, you were automatically registered with a CFA appropriate to the area in which you live, and this is most likely to have been either Middlesex; London; Hertfordshire; Essex; or the AFA. During your training, you will have been invited to take up Trainee Membership of NMRS. If you want to continue with your refereeing, then registration with a CFA is a compulsory requirement. However, the CFA's and RA-FA are unable to offer you the benefits available locally through NMRS. Whilst your membership of NMRS is entirely voluntary, it is strongly recommended as you will be able to participate in regular meetings held throughout the season - on local territory with the opportunity to discuss relevant local matters; meet and hear Guest Speakers; and receive regular training updates, along with the other benefits outlined above.

Note

Abbreviations that are commonly used in magazine articles or in reports at meetings.

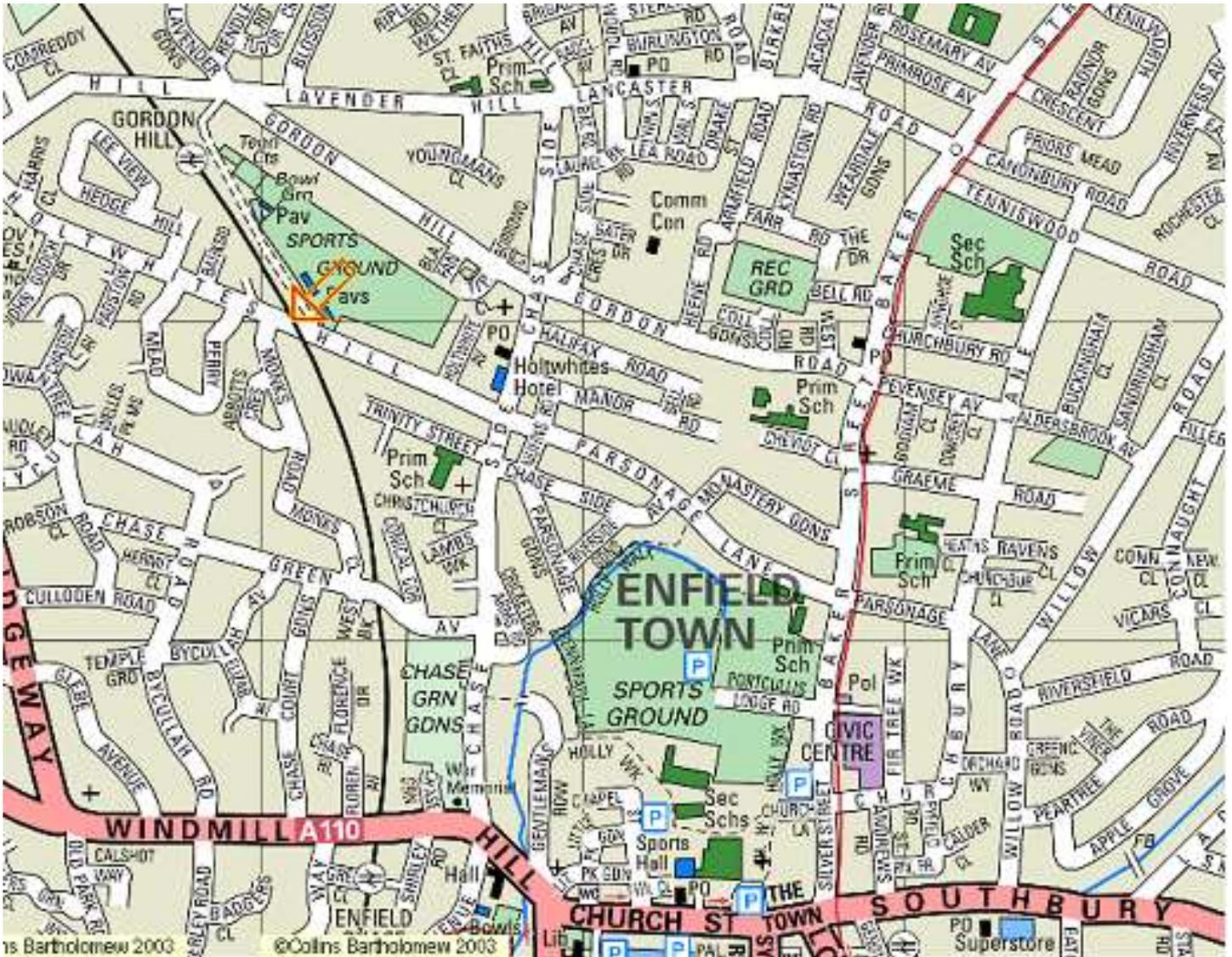
AFA	Amateur Football Alliance
AFA CRA	Amateur Football Alliance County Referees Association
CFA	County Football Association
CRA	County Referees Association
LFA	London Football Association
MCFA	Middlesex County Football Association
R.A.	Referees Association
RA-FA	Referees Association/Football Association partnership for co-operation between the RA and FA.

Updated July 2011

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Are held on the third Thursday monthly (except October – first Thursday) commencing at 7:30 pm, at Holtwhites Sports and Social Club, Kirkland Drive, Holtwhites Hill, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 0RN
Telephone: 020 8363 4449

Dates for Season 2011/2012:- September 15; October 6 (first Thursday); November 17; December 15 2011; and January 19; February 16; March 15; April 19; May 17 2012



The venue is passed by Bus Route W9 and Bus Route 191 stops just a short distance away - direct from Enfield Town, and Enfield Chase; and Gordon Hill Rail Stations are only a short distance away. For fuller directions and how to get to the venue, see our website. See also www.tfl.gov.uk; www.nationalexpresseastanglia.com; and www.firstcapitalconnect.co.uk. If anybody has difficulty reaching the venue, and would like assistance, please contact one of the Society Officers – whose details are on the inside front cover.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE NORMIDIAN EDITORIALY, OR BY CONTRIBUTORS, DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE NORTH MIDDLESEX REFEREES SOCIETY.

ARTICLES SUBMITTED FOR INCLUSION IN THE MAGAZINE MAY BE AMENDED BY THE EDITOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH EDITORIAL POLICY.

PERMISSION IS GIVEN TO REPRODUCE MATERIAL WITH A SUITABLE ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

THE SOCIETY WAS FORMED AT THE CROWN PUBLIC HOUSE, SOUTHGATE, LONDON, N14 ON 20th JANUARY 1949