



YOU ARE THE REF

A GUIDE TO GOOD REFEREEING

BY PAUL TREVILLION
AND KEITH HACKETT

B L O O M S B U R Y



**YOU ARE
THE REF**

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FOREWORD

The 1981 FA Cup Final between Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur always sticks out in my memory. I was only nine at the time, but I vividly recall that pulsating final played out over two games, and of course the amazing solo match-winning goal scored by Ricky Villa. But that wasn't the only thing I remember about that final. What also sticks out in my mind was the imposing figure cut by the match referee, Keith Hackett. Keith was everything that a referee should be – tall, powerful, no-nonsense. I wasn't the least bit interested in refereeing in 1981 but Keith Hackett made such an impression, my mind was changed.

When I started refereeing in 1989 I desperately wanted to be like Keith Hackett. I had the build, the height and his South Yorkshire accent. But of course what I didn't have was the experience and expertise that he had built up over many years at the highest level of the game. It wasn't until some 21 years later that I had the privilege of having Keith as my coach on a referee development team, aimed at turning raw enthusiastic Football League referees into Premier League models. That was my opportunity to work alongside this giant of refereeing, to tap into his experience and knowledge of what makes a top referee. Keith Hackett



was instrumental in moulding me into a Premier League referee, ultimately guiding me all the way to the 2010 World Cup Final in South Africa. I'm delighted that he is now sharing his knowledge, experiences and expertise in the art of refereeing, in this truly wonderful book.

And who better to bring Keith's words to life than the amazing talent that is Paul Trevillion. The term 'genius' is probably over-used, but, in Paul's case, it doesn't do him justice. For many years I'd seen Paul's work in 'You are the Ref' strips and marvelled at what he produces. To have recently had the chance to meet Paul, to see at first hand the passion he has for his work and football, was a genuine privilege. Paul is a special man with a special gift.

Whether you are an aspiring Premier League referee, a lover of football, admirer of great art or a combination of all three, I know you will enjoy owning, reading and learning from this amazing publication.

Howard Webb MBE
Referee, 2010 FIFA World Cup Final




If the referee's position impedes your run to the ball and you do not use excessive force – hand off – then it's a goal

INTRODUCTION

Refereeing has given me a great deal of pleasure over the years and I have been fortunate to officiate in many famous stadiums around the world. There's no better venue than Wembley, and the Football Association allowed me to fulfil my ambition of refereeing an FA Cup final there in 1981.

Shortly after the final I was promoted to the FIFA list of International Referees where I stayed for 10 years until the compulsory retirement age of 45. When the Premier League was formed I had the pleasure of refereeing in that competition and watching its formidable growth with games now shown in 211 territories around the world. After 35 years of active refereeing, I retired and took up a post with the Professional Game Match Officials Ltd, becoming its general manager in 2004.

I continue to be the Premier League referee ambassador travelling the world under the banner of Premier Skills Introduction to Refereeing programme, a joint initiative run by the Premier League and the British Council, working with young people around the world encouraging them to become match officials. I am also a member of the UEFA Referee Convention Panel and a UEFA referee observer.

Refereeing at the highest level is more demanding than ever before. Blanket television coverage, the huge financial rewards at stake, and the relentless rise of social media means that every decision is intensely scrutinised. A referee in a World Cup game enters the stadium knowing that he will be operating in front of a minimum of 22 cameras with the game beamed to over 200 territories around the world with billions watching. Crucial, game-changing decision can be replayed or viewed from an angle often not afforded to him or his colleagues, leaving him open to criticism and, even, vilification.

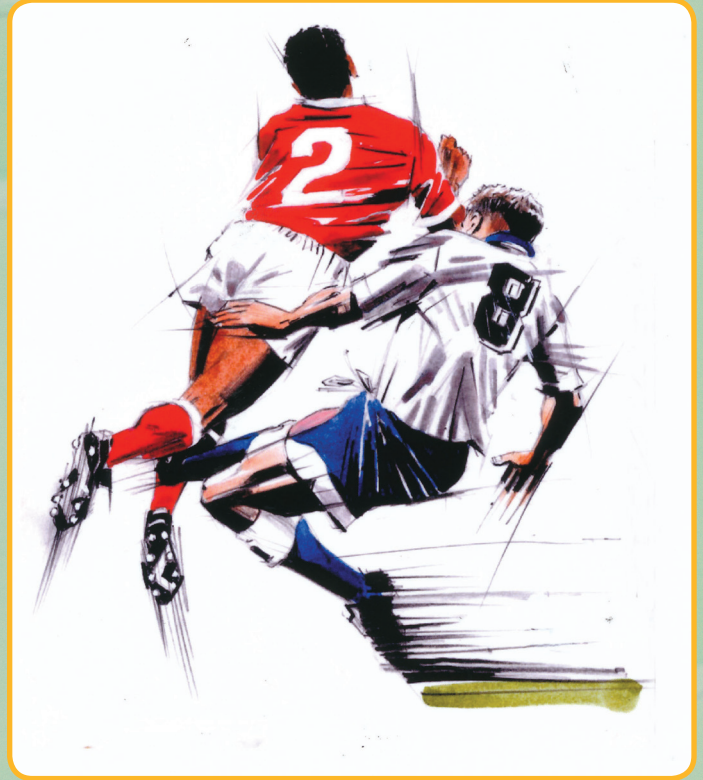
Thankfully, the International Football Association Board has approved the introduction of goal-line technology which I believe is a great advance. Post-match analysis using Prozone technology also provides detailed information on the technical and physical performance of referees and assistant referees. This is welcomed by officials, managers, coaches and players alike because it allows officials to constantly evolve in their demanding roles.

I have channelled all of my experience of refereeing, coaching and managing referees for over 50 years into this book, and Paul Trevillion, the world's finest football

FA Cup Final, when Bolton's Nat Lofthouse bundled the ball, still held by Manchester United keeper Harry Gregg, into the back of the net for his side's second goal, that it became a regular feature. By the late 1950s and early sixties, with Paul also drawing comic art realism stories for *Roy of the Rovers*, the feature appeared in a new, larger format in the Roy annuals under the title 'If You Were The Ref'.

In 1969 the strip moved to the newly launched *Shoot!* magazine and took on referee Stan Lover, head of the London Referees' Association, to provide the answers. Over the next two decades, working with Stan, Clive 'The Book' Thomas and finally Keith Hackett, the strip became a cult classic.

After a few years' hiatus, *The Observer* newspaper contacted Paul and Keith to see if they'd be prepared to bring the strip back to life. Both jumped at the chance and, in January 2006, 'You are the Ref' was reborn. The enormous success of the weekly strip created the demand for a *You are the Ref* football annual, which was published by Observer Books in 2009. The 2010 World Cup presented an opportunity for another *You are the Ref* annual, which became a bestseller, reaching number seven in the Amazon sports books of the year.





THE REFEREE

The referee enforces the Laws of the Game. He controls the match. Where appointed, he may have assistant referees and a fourth official to work with and help in the decision-making process, but the decision of the referee is final. In this chapter, I will outline the basic responsibilities of a referee.

THE SIX Cs OF REFEREEING

1 CONTROL

On the field the referee must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the Laws of the Game and maintain complete control – all players and spectators must know that the decision of the referee is final.



From the moment a referee receives his appointment to officiate a game he needs to start preparing in a professional manner. This will involve examining earlier games using Prozone and considering the likely tactics to be used by both teams.

After confirming acceptance of the appointment, the referee should advise the secretaries of both teams of their appointment and confirm their expected time of arrival for the game (a minimum of one hour before kick-off in junior games). If the referee is fortunate to have assistant referees, then they should contact them by phone and take the opportunity to prepare them for the game ahead. This will involve deciding where and when to meet, sometimes away from the ground. In some semi-professional leagues match officials are encouraged to travel together to keep costs down.

When I was refereeing on the Yorkshire League, each season I would be appointed to officiate at Scarborough and Bridlington Town. I would travel to the coast with two assistant referees and throughout the journey we would be talking about officiating.

We would discuss the strengths of the best referees in the game at that time: the legendary Jack Taylor, a tall commanding figure who had real presence on the field of play; Harold Hackney from Barnsley, a real character; Pat Partridge, a terrific referee who would glide around the field of play producing a high accuracy of decision making; and Clive Thomas who had a reputation of producing lots of yellow cards. I later had the pleasure of meeting them and running the line for them. They were all prepared to offer advice and I always took their comments on board.

I was later to receive a special 'Legends' award from the *Sheffield Star* newspaper for services to football. What a surprise that Jack Taylor had travelled from his home in Shropshire to offer his congratulations. Sadly, I am writing this following the news of Jack's recent passing.



2 COMMUNICATION

In order to control any game of football you need to be able to communicate well. Referees need to be good communicators with their two assistant referees, fourth official and players. Clear verbal communication, vivid hand/arm signals, correct use of the whistle and confident body language are all key aspects in refereeing a game well.

3 CONSISTENCY

The referee's aim is to be consistent in his performance, whether in terms of physical effort, the application of the laws or the management of players. He should treat every game as a cup final.

4 CONFIDENCE

Elite referees and assistant referees develop a shut-off process where their total concentration is focused on the game in front of them. Concentration and awareness are a priority in ensuring top decision making. Officials use the energy from a large crowd to help rather than let the sometimes derisory comments interfere. They have to have huge levels of confidence to ensure that they continue to enjoy their involvement in the game. However, confidence must not cross over into arrogance.

5 COURAGE

The referee will be called upon to make some tough decisions and therefore courage is required.

6 COMMON SENSE

There should be no surprises in the actions a referee takes. If his decision or award of, say, a penalty kick takes everyone by surprise, then he will have a big task ahead of him in 'selling' that decision to the players.

I can recall in one game pointing to the penalty mark believing that a defender had handled the ball. The surprised look on the faces of both sets of players told me I had got it wrong. Post-match, I looked at a video of the game and to my horror saw that it had missed the hand of the defender. I had been facing the defender head-on and from my position it seemed obvious that he had handled the ball. The side-on camera, however, showed the ball had dropped and fallen short of the player's hand. I was determined after that game that guessing was not part of a referee's make up. I had to be 100 per cent certain when making these big decisions.



Concentration is vital to a ref. Before running on to the pitch I pull down a mental blind which cuts out any outside interference. I could play through a rainstorm and not notice it. When the crowd screams I don't hear them, I'm playing to empty terraces. I don't recognise players individually – George Best, Bobby Moore – they're faceless. The precise moment the ball goes in the net I couldn't tell you if it was the home or away team that scored.

NORMAN BURTENSHAW – Referee

REFEREEING ESSENTIALS

The referee will need:

- Two coins
- Two whistles
- Red and yellow cards
- A notebook and pencil(s)
- Two stopwatches
- Clean handkerchief – useful to get mud out of players' eyes
- A pair of flags – in grassroots games where you do not have qualified assistant refs and need a couple of volunteers to run the line for you.



The referee must:

- Keep a record of which team kicked off
- Keep a record of the score of the game – at grassroots level only (at professional level, you only need to record the score in a penalty shoot-out in your notebook)
- Record the name of the player, the team, the time and nature of the offence when issuing a yellow or red card
- Record any events that take place that need to be reported to the authorities.

USE OF THE WHISTLE

- Give the whistle a loud blast for serious fouls
- When controlling players from a distance, short bursts will help get the message across
- If a group of players are in conflict, keep blowing the whistle in order to regain control.

THE BALL

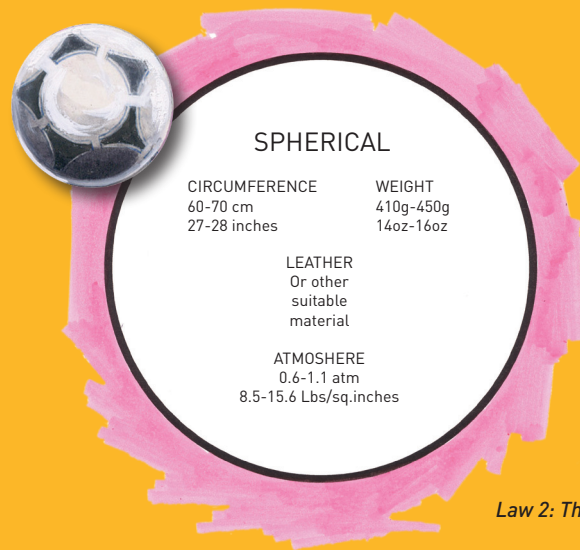
One of the first things a referee should do upon arrival at the ground is to check the pressure of the balls that are to be used. Where the multi-ball system is used, it is likely that there will be a minimum of 10 balls in the possession of the ball boys. When the ball goes out of play the ball boy quickly replaces it with the ball to hand.

At grassroots level this ball is often handed to you just prior to kick-off. You are then responsible for it and at the end of the game you need to ensure that it is in your possession so that you can hand it over to the secretary of the home team. This is often a must at grassroots and you should hold onto it until you have been paid your match fee and expenses.

Through experience the referee will, by pressing two thumbs into the ball, get a feel that the ball complies with law. However, some referees always carry a pressure gauge to ensure that, if there is a query, they are able to demonstrate that the ball complies with the law.

During the Centenary FA Cup Final in 1981 between Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur, the match ball lost pressure and I had to call for a replacement. I was

given a ball by a different brand. At half-time I was met in the tunnel by the representative of the original ball's manufacturer wanting to know why I had replaced it. I explained, but unsurprisingly the supplier was unhappy because their ball had become defective during the game. Now, at the top level, you will always have multiple balls of the same brand available.



Law 2: The ball

OFFENCES

- The referee must punish the more serious offence when a player commits more than one offence at a time
- The referee must take disciplinary action against players who commit cautionable or sending-off offences

TAKING ADVICE

The referee can act on the advice of the assistant referees and the fourth official on incidents that he has not seen. They can also assist him in his duty to ensure that no unauthorised person enters the field of play. At the top level of the game the stewards and police have contingency plans in place should this happen and match officials are advised to let them deal with such situations.



TEAM OFFICIALS

The referee is allowed to take action against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. In senior-level games where there's a fourth official, the fourth official has the ability to manage the technical area and advise the referee if any occupants are guilty of irresponsible behaviour. Incidentally, while the referee would show red or yellow cards to substitute players occupying the benches, the management team are not shown a card but would be removed and reported to the authorities for misconduct.



DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The referee provides the authorities with a match report, which includes information on any disciplinary action taken. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored, and the result of the match are final. The referee may only change a decision on realising that it is incorrect or, at his discretion, on the advice of an assistant referee or the fourth official, providing that he has not restarted play or terminated the match.

At elite level, post-match, every major decision is carefully analysed – usually a couple of days after the game – using Prozone software. Was it the correct decision? Was the referee in the best position to view the incident? How far away was he? Were any players in his line of sight? Was the referee on the move or static? All these things are carefully assessed to ensure refereeing standards are checked and pushed to improve. However, Prozone is not used by the football authorities retrospectively in the player disciplinary process.

Red-card decisions can be analysed retrospectively using Prozone technology



Here is a snap shot of Prozone showing how the system is used to analyse the referee's management of a free-kick. Using video and animation, I can see whether the referee has got the defending wall back the desired 10 yards and the yellow lines across the field of play are monitoring for offside. The graph in the bottom right-hand corner shows the movement profile of the referee.