

# Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Districts Referees' Association

## Getting Promoted

It won't take too many games for a referee who is enjoying being in the middle to think, "I wonder how I can get promoted to the next level". In this leaflet we hope to give you the outline how you can achieve that.

### Different Grades of Referees

There are eleven grades of referees

- Level 1**    **National List** (Premiership and Football League)
- 2**        **Panel List**
- 3**        **Contributory Leagues**
- 4**        **Supply Leagues**
- 5**        **Senior County Referees – this includes referees who have served at a higher level**
- 6**        **County Referees**
- 7**        **Junior Referees**, who are not Level 8 or below.
- 8**        **Youth Referees.** Qualified referees but who are under 16 years of age. On reaching that age they are automatically moved up to Level Seven.
- 9**        **Trainee Referees** (Probationers)
- 10**       **Referees who are no longer active.** This can include Assessors, Instructors, mentors etc

Every referee in the country has to start at the bottom and then works him or herself up through the grades to get to the top. There are no short cuts and no one is able to start halfway up the ladder. So everyone has the same opportunities to get right to the top.

### The Football Pyramid

This is the term used to describe how football is structured in this country. At the bottom of the pyramid is the vast majority of soccer being played at junior levels and on the local parks. One step above this are the **Supply Leagues**, where the football is of a much higher standard and the leagues are more professionally run. In our area The Supply Leagues are the West Lancashire League, The Lancashire League and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the North West Counties League.

Onwards and upwards moves us into the **Contributory Leagues**. In this area they are the North West Counties League and the Unibond League.

Next up the ladder comes the **Blue Square Conference North and South**. Above that is the **Vauxhall Conference**.

Then comes the **Football League**, topped of course by the **Premier League**.

It follows that the better-qualified referees are matched to the higher leagues. There is a rough rule of thumb that referees often act as an assistant in the next grade above the one they referee in.

## **So how does a referee get promoted?**

There are many referees who are content not to strive for promotion and get sufficient satisfaction from giving something back to the game. These are not to be looked down on. The vast majority of football is played at local levels and these officials give invaluable service.

## **The First Rewards**

We all start out in the lower leagues and after every game the clubs decide how many marks to award to the referee and send those marks to the league secretary. At the end of the season the referees with the highest marks and who have fulfilled their responsibilities, who have been good with correspondence etc, are given the league finals as a reward for their efforts.

## **The Promotion Season**

This does not coincide with the normal season, but lasts from 1<sup>st</sup> March to the end of the following February. This is so that all the marks can be in and looked at for promotion to take place at the start of the next season in August.

If you want promotion you MUST tell the Lancashire Football Association when you are registering. They will remind you but YOU must tell them.

## **Promotion to Level 6**

All referees start out as a Level 7 or 8 and the first promotion is to Level Six. To qualify for promotion to Level Six, you can referee games on Saturdays or Sundays. You will have to referee at least 20 games in open age football, i.e. Under 17's and above. Clubs marks count and you will be independently assessed at least three times during the season if you are wanting promotion. In addition you will have to act as an assistant at least five times.

You will also have to attend an evening seminar at the LFA when you will also sit a short examination on the Laws of the Game. You will be encouraged to take the Fitness Test before the season starts

## **Promotion to Level 5**

To achieve this you will only be assessed and marked on Saturday open age football. You will have to again referee at least 20 games. You will be assessed at least three times and these

will be taken into account, as will club marks. Once again you will have to act as an assistant on at least five occasions. There is also a seminar and examination to be taken, plus the fitness test must be passed.

## Promotion to Level 4

By this time you will be relatively experienced and achieving this level means that you will step up the ladder to referee in the Supply Leagues where overall standards are much higher. So your levels of competence and fitness have to be greater as well. To attain Level Four you must referee at least 20 games and be assessed at least three times. While club marks are still important, far more weight is given to the assessments. You will also be expected to act as an assistant at least five times. The Fitness test is compulsory.

The jump to Level Four is so important that the Football Association are the ones who set the criteria and decide who moves up. It is not unknown for referees to move from Level Six directly to Level Four – if they are good enough.

## To Level Three and beyond

Once at Level Four you will be assessed at least eight times per season, you must maintain excellent fitness and almost every move is monitored to see if you can be promoted further. Level Fours regularly act as assistants in the higher contributory leagues.

It goes without saying that once you are at that level of football you have to show total commitment to football and be prepared to travel all over the north to any games you are allocated.

## Even Bigger Rewards

Apart from the satisfaction of getting yourself recognised and stepping up, promotion means that you will referee at a level where the football and general atmosphere is much better and more professional. Additionally the financial rewards are greater, but so are the demands on YOU. You have to be more available and must perform consistently at a higher standard.

## So what is required from you?

Here are some of the basic requirements to move up the ladder in no particular order-

**Commitment:** - While top Premiership referees are full time professionals, the rest of us have jobs and families to fit in as well. But that means that we **MUST** find time to referee, travel to games, train, attend meetings etc., etc all in our own time. The higher you go the more time this will take

**Fitness:** - It goes with saying that fitness is key to any referee's game. We run our own training programme, ask about joining it.

**Knowledge of Laws** - Another vital factor. Keep up to date by joining our weekly training sessions, where every aspect of the latest changes are discussed, as well as sharing other members experiences and learning from them

**Communication:-** Replying to letters and e-mails immediately is vital. Keeping people up to date with your fixtures and availability is key. Many referees let themselves down in this area – don't be one of them. We will keep reminding you about this.

**Availability:** - Being available and fulfilling fixtures, even at short notice, show commitment. You can't expect to be promoted if you pick and chose only the games that suit you.

**Luck:** - Everyone needs a bit of luck sometimes. Being in the right place at the right time. But by working hard, delivery great performances, keeping in touch, you can generate your own luck sometimes.

## **The World is your Oyster**

**Remember, every referee at Fifa level, or in the Premiership, has started at the bottom. It is up to you to put the effort in to see how far up the ladder you want to go.**

**If you have any questions or problems, don't hesitate to ask them at any of the Monday night meetings we have.**

**GOOD LUCK IN YOUR REFEREEING  
CAREER AND ENJOY IT!**