

Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Districts Referees' Association

The first few games

Here are some tips to get you through those first few games

Correspondence

If anyone from a League or club contacts you about a game and you are not in, or if you receive a list of fixtures. Reply **immediately** by e-mail, letter or telephone. Don't leave it until tomorrow – you'll forget.

The day before the game

Make sure all your kit is ready and is clean. Pack it the night before. **YOU** check every item is in your bag – don't leave the packing to someone else.

Do you know where the ground is and how to get there? Check the League Handbook to see time and what time the League wants you there before kick off. Will extra time or penalties be needed? Are there other duties, e.g. checking boots etc?

At the ground

Get there early, minimum 30-45 minutes before the kick off time. Find the team managers, let them know you are there – and make sure the teams are there as well.

Examine the Field of Play.

The Field of Play

Make an early examination to ensure all the markings are correct. Are the nets and corner flags OK? Defects can be rectified if given time.

Make sure the pitch is safe! For example, no ruts, holes, standing water, glass, syringes etc. The Home club is responsible to clear it up – tell them. If it is not safe or can't be cleared – call the game off.

Examine the pitch by yourself. **YOU** make the decision. Don't be influenced by players, managers or parents.

Your Dressing Room

Take a few minutes by yourself to prepare

Get changed in plenty of time

Check the players' boots; look for jewellery (or anything dangerous). Look out any for colour clashes.

Make sure you have all your pencils, whistles, watches, notebook, coin, cards, flags etc before your leave.

Make sure you have got the team details, names of substitutes etc.

Make sure you are on the Field of Play in plenty of time for a last minute inspection, to have the toss up and be ready for the kick off at the appointed time. If the teams are late – then you may have to report them

Club Linesmen

Some are unwilling 'volunteers'. Most know little about the Laws of the Game. A few will give their own team the benefit of the doubt. Give them simple instructions, perhaps like asking them to indicate solely for ball in and out of play. Some may wish to indicate offside. Never ask them to judge on fouls.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO OVERRULE THEM, but always signal a thank you.

If they are clearly causing you trouble or start to abuse you – see the team manager and have them replaced.

During the game

- Don't be afraid to blow the whistle hard to get the players' attention and to stop the play.
- Always keep up with play so that you are in the best positions to give decisions. Try to always jog or round around the field (it looks good and gets you into position quickly). Don't walk or stroll about.
- Give clear decisive signals (using both arm and whistle) so everyone understands what you mean.
- You **MUST** understand the Laws of the Game thoroughly and give decisions accordingly. You don't get a chance to look things up!
- Don't worry if you think you have made a minor mistake, like a throw in the 'wrong' way.
- But **DON'T MISS THE SERIOUS FOULS**, which might cause injuries or provoke retaliation.
- If possible (and if you have time) try to explain decision to the players. Try to use calls like 'Goal Kick', 'Blue Throw', 'Corner Kick' in addition to using your arms and whistle – it will help you to get used to talking to the players.
- **BUT** remember when you speak to players or managers **YOU TALK – THEY LISTEN**. Discussion or arguments are not allowed.
- However your first few games will probably be Under 11's or Under 12's so don't be rushing to use your red and yellow cards. Get used to being a referee first, before clamping down seriously.
- Try to anticipate where the play is like to go, it will enable you to always be close to the action.
- Watch the 'dropping zones', i.e. where the ball is likely to land after a free kick or goal kick. That is where there is likely to be contact between the players.

- Using the time when the ball is 'dead' (for example when it is out of play before a goal kick), it will enable you to get into positions better, without having to 'catch up' with the action all the time.
- Only start or restart the game when YOU are ready. Get yourself into positions for corners, throw ins, free kicks etc before signalling for the game to get underway again. Don't be rushed by the players.
- After a goal is scored, cautions or send offs, write down what you need, put your book and pencil away and get into YOUR position before restating the game.
- Try and run some sort of diagonal, but don't worry if you don't at first – you will quickly get into the swing after a few games.
- Try and ignore parents, managers or spectators. Most of them haven't a clue about the Laws and in any case will naturally be biased.

Secret of Success

Know the Laws, be fit enough and then relax and enjoy yourself

After the Game

You must send the Match Report to the League immediately

If there have been any defects on the Field of Play or Misconduct by club officials or spectators – report to the League by letter.

YOU MUST SEND ANY PLAYERS/ MISCONDUCT FORMS TO THE LFA.

Don't be 'persuaded' by the players or managers to forget them

Any Problems?

If you have had any difficulties with any aspect of the game or are not sure about anything connected with the Laws, which has happened: -

Contact another member of our Association or better still come to any Monday night Training Meeting when we can talk you through it.