



The Referees' Association of England

News Digest November 2006

From the desk

This edition has been timed to coincide with the 2006 election for RAE Board members. ABSs receiving this newsletter will have the result announcement.

RA Conference 2007

The Conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel, Warwick again. It was hailed as great success by those who attended the 2006 event there.

The feedback will be worked on and those things that can be improved upon will be.

The programme for June 8 and 9 2007 will be sent out to all Societies early in the New Year.

Subscriptions 2006/7

I will repeat a paragraph from the last newsletter:

Why is it so many Societies have registered few or even no members yet? Without names and monies being remitted to Coventry, former members ARE NOT INSURED. They will not be covered until such time as we have their details.

The membership year commences on 1 April and surely it is not unreasonable to expect a faster rate of re-registration than we have been experiencing.

I know we are all volunteers with busy work and family lives as well as other interests outside football but please can ABS officers spare a little more time to chase up subscriptions and forward them on to Coventry sooner?

Grand Draw 2007

Well done and many thanks to those who supported us this year. The net proceeds reached £6000 for the RA and have been invested in the new website - see below.

Some £17,000 was also returned to ABSs as their 50% cashback for selling tickets in 2006. Shouldn't you join in the 2007 Bonanza???

Tickets for the 2007 Draw are printed ready for distribution and will be sent out via the County RA reps at the meetings in early December.

The 2006 Board election

In the first annual election to be held by the RAE under its Constitution, **John Harden** and **John Starkey**, who this year retire in rotation, were re-elected with very significant votes for them, expressing confidence in their work over the past three years.

Ian Davies from Chester joins the Board for the first time. Ian at 45, will be the youngest member of the Board. He comes from Chester and already serves as both his Branch Secretary and County RA Secretary. Obviously a busy man, he will now be even busier! He replaces Sid Harrison.

Commenting on the result, **Alan Poulain**, the RAE chairman paid a warm tribute to the hard work of Sid, who stands down voluntarily from the Board at the end of the year. *"He has worked tirelessly over the past three years for us and before that as the Divisional Secretary for the South in the 'old' RA. His particular strengths have been as a master of the detail and in pursuing honesty and fairness, which always guided our meetings."*

Alan welcomed Ian to the Board and confirmed the re-election of the two Johns in personal phone calls to them on Friday 17th. He also called to commiserate with the unlucky candidates and thanked them for putting themselves forward, expressing the hope that they will reconsider a nomination in future years.

RA Website

It went live on 1 November and has been welcomed by all surfers as a significant improvement.

We now have the facility for members to read and download standard documentation such as rules, nomination and application forms, which was barely possible before. These pages are gradually being populated and a full range of documentation will be available soon.

The Discussion Board has been relaunched. It was plagued with idiots from time-to-time who post malicious or obscene items that have necessitated constant surveillance. The new Discussion Board has improved security.

Members and non-members can apply for registration and through that filter we shall be able to manage the postings, eliminating disruptive idiots.

Surf to www.footballreferee.org

RA Supplies

The 2006-7 brochure is now available from the office. Email or freephone 0800 328 9474 for your copy or look us up on the web at

www.RAshop.co.uk

that runs independently of the main RA website for security reasons.

Most important - all members can still buy direct post-free, which can show significant savings.

5% and 10% discounts are offered on ABS bulk orders for retailing to members at list prices. Another opportunity to raise funding for your Society. For large 'special' orders, we can negotiate even better deals.

Some ABSs do buy considerable quantities from us and many ABSs run a 'kit' business but too few order supplies from the RA. They get things from people who are our competitors. **Please support your own Association.**

Giftware Catalogue

Another reminder that we have our supplementary catalogue of gift and presentation items - trophies, certificates etc. The range is comprehensive but we can also source 'specials'.

The customised presentation certificates that come complete with recipients' names in script have already proved popular. Certificates can be produced to order for Societies and County RAs to commemorate achievements and as service awards. If you can provide high quality electronic artwork for crests and badges, we can design a certificate around it.

The RAE tie

AT LAST!!!! The new tie will be Sid Harrison's everlasting legacy. He has worked tirelessly to get this off the ground, battling inefficient suppliers and finally getting a consensus on the colouring and design.



You will recall that we showed some possible designs to the round of County RA delegates' meetings last year. While no clear favourite emerged then, we were given a strong steer towards a broad striped tie with the Association motif boldly featured.

The official tie will be in the dark blue and saxe blue taken from our logo, picked out with fine red and white stripes. Available in the new year from *RAshop*, it will be priced at £8.00 inc P&P.

FA votes for change

At the last Council meeting the members voted to adopt the principles of Lord Burns' proposals to modernise.

The FA Board had endorsed the recommendations for change some months ago but it was the Council that, under the current constitution, has the final word on virtually everything, needed to embrace the revolution if it was ever to happen.

In principle, Burns says:

- Move to a sleeker management system to improve and speed up decision-making
- Give the 'professionals' in the FA more executive power
- Reform an Executive Board made up of a dozen people equally representing the professional and non-professional games with the Chief Executive, currently Brian Barwick, having both a place and a vote.
- Appoint an FA Board chairman as a part-time independent (paid) from outside the game.
- Replace the current FA Council (that mainly comprises representatives from the County FAs and other organisers of football) as the ultimate decision-making with a new 'Council' made up of a wider ranging set of interests.
- The new 'Council' will be advisory and have a number of 'special interest' sub-committees.
- As well as representatives from County FAs, the new advisory body will have delegates appointed by football supporters, women's football etc., **AND REFEREES.**

So, subject only to the FA shareholders endorsing in a few weeks' time the decisions the FA Board and the FA council have already made, referees will have the stronger voice they have been seeking for many years.

While nothing can be taken for granted, all the signs are that this will come to pass next year.

The trickiest hurdle in this process was getting the FA Council to agree to hand over the power they have held since the FA was formed.

We understand the debate was lengthy and complex but we must salute their courage in giving up much of the personal power and status they have enjoyed.

The new magazine

We do hope you enjoyed the first edition of *Refereeing*. This was put together, mainly at the expense of the FA, by a joint RAE/FA editorial team on behalf of the RA and FA.

As a reminder, the FA agreed that we should still make it available free to our members in the Associations in Wales and Northern Ireland, hence it carries the RA, not RAE logo. It is a commercial venture and rightly sits under the RA banner that represents our commercial interests.

The FA have professional production resources far in excess of anything we could muster or afford and we must be grateful to them for devoting so much expense to this.

While there are some restrictions we have to live with - no blatant advertising, for instance - the FA are quite relaxed about us using 'advertorial' as a means of recruitment into the RAE.

The FA clearly see us and them both benefiting from increased RAE membership and there will be new initiatives on recruitment being pursued jointly in coming months.

For members, the big advance is a quality magazine that is not only FREE & DELIVERED TO THEIR DOOR but that costs the RAE next to nothing to produce. This financial year, running down the 'old' *Refereeing Today* magazine will have cost the RA another considerable amount in subsidies, purely because so few members subscribed.

We think the new venture is a massive step forward.

This newsletter is edited by Len Randall for the RAE. Electronic versions may be requested by email to:

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