

D'Arcy Joy At County Cup Final

Congratulations goes out to society member Nigel D'Arcy, as just recently D'Arcy was assistant referee for the Lancashire FA Women's Knockout Cup Final between Blackburn Rovers L.F.C. v Curzon Ashton L.F.C.

This was a great reward for D'Arcy as he has officiated in the local ladies leagues throughout the season and was also in charge of one of the semi-finals prior to the final.

Blackburn Rovers L.F.C. ran out 6-1 winners to retain the trophy for the fourth year running. 160 people turned out for the game in which Blackburn showed their class.

Rovers are also in the Ladies FA Cup Semi-Final against Charlton Ladies.

Full credit to D'Arcy for receiving this appointment as his commitment to ladies football is superb. Once again well done Nigel and it could be you to officiate in the Ladies F.A. Cup Final in the near future.

The Wait Is on

The wait is now on for society members Gary Halliwell, Nigel D'Arcy and Alan Bennett as they seek promotion to Level 4.

All three members comfortably passed the required fitness test to be level 4 at Blackpool's Stanley Park last Sunday. It is now the waiting game for these three as they are now waiting to find out whether they have gained promotion to level 4. Fingers crossed that they have been granted the promotion they deserve.

Ones for the future

Just recently our society has once again increased in its members with what are two of our youngest members as well.

14 Year olds Lewis Clarkson and Garry Molyneaux have joined the society after successfully passing a referee course guided by our very own Duncan Tighe. Below are a few things about our newest society members.

	Garry Molyneaux	Lewis Clarkson
Age	14	14
Current Level	8	8
Sporting Idol	Steven Gerrard	Ole Gunner Solskjaer
Aim for the season	To have a good time	To have a good time
Aim for the future	Champions League Final	World Cup Final
Favourite Team	Liverpool	Manchester Utd
Favourite Holiday Destination	Spain	Florida

Perv-fear ref's snub

A football referee refused to shake young player's hands at the end of the match – in case he was accused of child abuse.

Parents were stunned when the official at a junior match in Ipswich told kids he was not allowed to touch them.

Suffolk FA Secretary Martin Head said "There are no specific guidelines, but I don't see a problem – handshakes are an accepted ritual."

Show him the union card ref

Top football referees have made a decision to tackle unfair play at work as well as on the pitch – by joining a trades union.

The 18 officials in the Premiership are now members of the union Prospect, which will offer employment advice, and negotiating better pay. It will be very interesting to see what changes will occur in the near future.

Top Dogs

An interesting column by ex-premiership referee Kevin Lynch came across me in the 'Football Paper' highlighting his views on our current crop of Premiership referees. For those who don't know, Kevin Lynch now works as a MC on match days for Wigan Athletic.

REFEREE	SEASON'S STATS	CLAIM TO FAME	KEVIN LYNCH VERDICT
Uriah Rennie Aged 47 Joined list 1994	Red Cards: 1 Yellow Cards: 51 Matches 06/07: 12	Demoted in Jan after Newcastle-West Ham match when he forgot his cards. Allowed an off-side goal in the same match	Uriah is extremely inconsistent at the moment and that is a big concern. With the experience he's got, he should be peaking, but he's not.
Mark Clattenberg Aged 31 Joined list 2000	Red Cards: 0 Yellow Cards: 78 Matches 06/07: 19	Disallowed Pedro Mendes shot after Man Utd keeper Roy Carroll dropped a 60 yard-lob over the line, costing Spurs 3 points. Jan 2005.	Mark is one of the rising young refs. I coached him in the past and he's got a lot of ability, but the danger is that he's got a big ego like Graham Poll.
Mike Riley Aged 42 Joined list 1994	Red Cards: 6 Yellow Cards: 58 Matches 06/07: 16	Sam Allardyce insists Riley always rules against his side. Awarded debateable penalty in Man Utd-Arsenal match in 2004.	Mike is a personal friend of mine, but that isn't why he is in my top three refs. Gets on quietly with the job and I can't understand the stick he gets.
Andre Marriner Aged 36 Joined list 2003	Red Cards: 1 Yellow Cards: 23 Matches 06/07: 6	Criticised for not postponing the Newcastle-Portsmouth Carling Cup Tie. Played in monsoon conditions on a swimming pool.	Andre has performed well on the Football League. He has the potential, but now has to prove his worth at the top.
Graham Poll Aged 43 Joined list 1991	Red Cards: 3 Yellow Cards: 79 Matches 06/07: 21	Booked same player three times in World Cup match, and blew whistle 15 seconds earlier, thus disallowing Australia winner.	He thinks he's England's number one, but this view is not shared by many. The World Cup damaged him and I think he is past his

			best.
Mike Dean Aged 38 Joined list 1997	Red Cards: 5 Yellow Cards: 71 Matches 06/07: 20	Suspended in 2005 for involvement in betting company. Replaced by Wiley for 2006 FA Cup Final, after concerns of bias towards Liverpool.	A steady but unspectacular referee. Hopefully he will get this year's FA Cup Final after last seasons decision to replace him.
Howard Webb Aged 35 Joined list 2000	Red Cards: 3 Yellow Cards: 80 Matches 06/07: 22	Praised by Mourinho, but was criticised at Goodison in 2005, when he didn't send off Shearer for an elbow and Babayaro and Cahill for fighting.	I rate Howard as number one ref at the moment. The former policeman has a bright future. Has physical stature and presence on the pitch.
Steve Bennett Aged 46 Joined list 1995	Red Cards: 4 Yellow Cards: 68 Matches 06/07: 20	Sent off Tim Cahill in 2005 for lifting his shirt in celebration, a decision attacked by FIFA President Sepp Blatter.	Steve is a solid referee and doesn't tend to get involved in too much controversy. The former PE teacher has just recently come off the FIFA list.
Rob Styles Aged 42 Joined list 1996	Red Cards: 3 Yellow Cards: 66 Matches 06/07: 20	Failed to send off Michael Essien in 2005 for studs up challenge on Bolton's Ben Haim, a decision he later admitted was wrong.	Rob could be described as a poor man's Graham Poll. I set him on the road to glory when he was my fourth official at Wembley in 2000.
Martin Atkinson Aged 35 Joined list 2003	Red Cards: 2 Yellow Cards: 50 Matches 06/07: 16	Frustrated Liverpool and Arsenal when he deemed their Carling Cup Tie unplayable due to the fog.	This could be the kiss of death but I think Martin will go all the way to the top. He's level headed and is the second best ref at the moment.
Alan Wiley Aged 46 Joined list 1995	Red Cards: 3 Yellow Cards: 64 Matches 06/07: 21	Awarded penalty to Arsenal after Robert Pires dive, earning the Gunners a point in Sept 2003	Very lucky to have reffed last season's FA & League Cup Finals. Middle-of-the-road ref who has made the most of the limited ability he's got.
Phil Dowd Aged 44 Joined list 1997	Red Cards: 2 Yellow Cards: 50 Matches 06/07: 17	Called 'worst ref in the league' by Paul Jewell who said Dowd swore at his players. Criticised by	I actually rate Phil as a ref, but he's now in the middle of a crisis and has to be really strong to get through

		Martin Jol after Blackburn game.	it. A steady referee.
Dermot Gallagher Aged 49 Joined list 1990	Red Cards: 3 Yellow Cards: 22 Matches 06/07: 9	Only showed Ben Thatcher a yellow after his elbow put Pedro Mendes in hospital. Neil Warnock urged him to retire in October.	Given a year's extension to carry on, but looks past it. Reffed QPR in China brawl and then taken off Arsenal-Wigan match – probably thankful.
Mark Halsey Aged 45 Joined list 1996	Red Cards: 4 Yellow Cards: 35 Matches 06/07: 15	Sent off Sol Campbell towards end of the Arsenal-Man Utd championship deciding game in 2003.	A better referee in his own head than he actually is. Mark was a goalie at semi-pro level and players seem to like him, but not reached his full potential.
Lee Mason Aged 35 Joined list 2002	Red Cards: 1 Yellow Cards: 13 Matches 06/07: 6	In charge of Sheff Utd-Arsenal clash in Dec where Chris Morgan was found guilty of punching Van Persie, behind Mason's back.	Just got a full-time contract with the Premier League. They have thrown him in at the deep end and seems to be doing well.
Chris Foy Aged 44 Joined list 1996	Red Cards: 1 Yellow Cards: 33 Matches 06/07: 15	Awarded Ronaldo and Dider Zakora penalties for dives.	He gets a little run of games and then goes off the scene.
Peter Walton Aged 47 Joined list 1998	Red Cards: 0 Yellow Cards: 19 Matches 06/07: 9	Awarded penalty in Watford-Everton game for handball. Replays show the ball his head rather than his hand.	Very similar to Chris Foy. Seems to get low profile games in the Premier League and is seen more as a fourth official.
Lee Probert Aged 34 Joined list 2003	Red Cards: 0 Yellow Cards: 3 Matches 06/07: 2	Inexperience at the Premiership level.	The Premier League is just testing him out at the moment. Performed well in Football League, but a lot of work to be done to reach the top.
Steve Tanner Aged 36 Joined list 2003	Red Cards: 0 Yellow Cards: 0 Matches 06/07: 1	Made premiership debut this season.	Like Lee Probert, Steve is just being tested out in the top flight this season to see how he copes. He has to get use to the Premiership pressure.

Apologies go out to all society members for no magazine issue in February; this was down to me being taken ill the week of the meeting. Thanks a lot Alan Bennett aka Flag breaker.

Caring Cruz shames the Premier prats

When you look at the some of the overpaid scum playing Premiership football – you might be forgiven for believing that football and humanity and decency were in separate universes.

I'm pleased to report that they can come together. In the shape of Ulises de la Cruz.

While the revolting stars of many clubs are trying to work out which colour to paint the Bentley, Cruz ambition is different.

The 32-year-old – who plays for Reading and previously had stints as Hibernian and Aston Villa – sends much of his wages back to the impoverished Ecuador community of Piquiucho, his home village high in Andes.

His achievements are remarkable and are well worth noting in detail. He provided a fresh water supply with 18km of pipes and a water treatment centre.

He set up a medical centre, paying for a doctor, a dentist and a nurse.

He pays breakfast and lunch for 100 school children every day and has supplied a new school roof playground and nursery.

He is currently financing the building of a sports and community centre and hopes to open it later this year. Of course Cruz is still doing better than the most of us.

He earns £600,000 a year but lives in a modest flat in Reading and still owns a semi in Birmingham from his days with Villa. But by Premierships standards his pay is peanuts.

Wouldn't it be a fantastic to have a charity league of Premiership stars where their position was in line with the amount they have given away to needy causes?

Would it be cruel of me to believe that in any charity league the disgusting Craig Bellamy would probably be bottom of Pontins Combination (Wales & West Division)?

My suspicion is that Lampard and Ferdinand would only be a couple of places ahead.



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