

# Let the games begin

**Well the start of the season has arrived and I'm sure that it's going to be one of the most exciting ones in modern times. I' am pretty sure that many of us have taken part in pre-season fixtures and that you are all itching to get going.**

Young Karl Evans started his Football League journey at Darlington where they faced Wrexham in the Coca Cola League Two. As we know Karl is not shy of getting the book out and it only took him 63 minutes to issue the first red card of his Football League career, this was to Darlington keeper Oakes, for denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity. **(See inside for a report from Duncan Tighe on this game)**. Furthermore Karl is in charge of his second Football League match this weekend when Peterborough takes on Chesterfield.

As for me (Alan Bennett) I began my level 4 journey as assistant referee for the Unibond North Tie between Clitheroe and Bamber Bridge. My game was not short of cards either as referee for the game Darren Handley rightly so awarded nine cautions and two dismissals. A very enjoyable experience for me as a very vocal crowd of 265 turned out to watch the game.

Nigel D'Arcy started the season with a bang (excuse the pun) as he was appointed assistant referee for the FA Cup Extra Preliminary Round Replay between Atherton Collieries and Rossington Main. Five minutes was on the clock when an ambulance was required due to a horrific broken leg suffered by one of the players following a tackle. In the end Colls ran out 5-0 victors and Nigel reached a personal milestone by officiating in this tie.

Other members to mention are Gary Finch, Keith Swindell and new society member Danny Hibbert as they begin their season this weekend in the Lancashire Amateur League. Gary is in charge of Ashtonians vs Broughton Amateurs Res, whilst Keith is in charge Horwich Victoria Res vs Howe Bridge Mills Res. In addition Danny will be taking charge of the match between Castle Hill and Thornleigh.

May I wish all society members the best of luck this season whatever your goals and aspirations may be. And as I said before I feel that this society is in one of the most exciting periods it has ever been in.

***Alan Bennett - Editor***

# Editors Views

**Well one for thing for sure is that it's good to be back. I feel that this society has entered one of the most exciting times in its ninety years of existence.**

First of all I would like to mention that Duncan and Nigel have obtained a £7000 grant for the society. This money will take this society to a level that no other society is at. So I would like to thank Nigel and Duncan for putting the time and effort in to get that money.

It will be interesting to see how the mentor scheme will develop this season as it's now in full swing. And I'm pretty sure that the youngsters on the scheme will benefit if they listen and take on board the advice they are given.

From a personal point of view it is very exciting times for me and I'm delighted to be given the opportunity by the FA to operate on Level 4. It's a chance I am certainly going to take with both hands.

Casting our minds back to the weekend and once again the referees were spread across the front and back pages. In particular Rob Styles.

This situation has been a very interesting one to follow since the weekend as the Head Of Premiership Referees Keith Hackett has showed his feelings on the weekends matter.

For my point of view, I feel that Andy Gray made matters worse on whether or not Chelsea should have been awarded a penalty. As soon as the incident occurred Gray stated that the referee will give a penalty. Then 75 different camera angles later Gray then decides to tear into referee Styles for awarding a penalty, stating that his decision was a bad one.

Furthermore Rob Styles has been dropped this weekend from all fixtures and so has assistant referee Ian Gosling who didn't award Fulham an equaliser in injury time when the ball clearly crossed the line.

What has surprised me is that referee Styles was dropped for his mistake but not Mike Riley. Riley failed to award Wigan four clear penalties in the first half of last weekend's game against Sunderland. In addition Riley's assistant failed to flag Emile Heskey's opening goal offside but I'm lead to believe he hasn't been dropped for this weekend either.

So what I'm getting at is where the consistency as regards dropping officials is. If officials are to be dropped lets ensure that it is not one rule for one and a different rule for someone else.

**Alan Bennett - Editor**

# Secretary's Chat

**Date line:** August 11<sup>th</sup> 2007

**Destination:** Darlington FC

I have been asked to recall my thoughts on the above detail in time. What a great day, off I went via British Rail from Manchester Piccadilly direct to Darlington. Why you may ask quite simple I knew that at precisely 3 00pm this society would finally after a long wait have a member, who would officiate as a football league referee at Darlington versus Wrexham Division two.

I arrived at the ground at around 1 15pm who should I bump into, but the coach of the newly appointed Football League referee, Mr. Eddie Wolstenholme. We made our way into the stadium we were greeted by the referees match day representative we were given directors box tickets and then we were shown to the media room where we met Karl Evans and his three colleagues who were to oversee the game. And yes I helped myself to the sandwiches and coffee that was made available to us. I had a brief chat with Karl, asked how he was feeling, "absolutely great"; I needn't have asked I could tell.

Karl and his colleagues left us I was still in the room with the match assessor, Eddie Wolstenholme, various scouts from different clubs and the referee's representative. We completed the gorging of the plate of sandwiches and asked for more coffee. I struck up a very informative discussion with the Millwall yes Millwall scout who works in that area and Scotland. I think he may become one of our guest speakers.

From the media room off I went to the bar to watch the climax of the Sunderland - Tottenham game, the collective crowd seemed to enjoy Sunderland grabbing a late winner. Well 2 50pm came I decide it was time to take my seat in the Directors box so in the company of Mr. Wolstenholme I took my seat just to the right and above the player's tunnel. The announcer introduced the away team to rapturous barracking then the home team to rapturous adulation, then the match officials. At this point I could feel the hair on the back of neck stand, what a proud moment!

I had already realised the Karl had a right to be at this level he had earned that and I had seen him on several occasions now I knew. Then within the first twenty five minutes two in the book half time 1 - 0 to the home team then in the seventieth minute the decisive point in the game the **BIG DECISION** the difference between great referees and average ones. Home team Goalkeeper professional foul outside the penalty area or is it inside, was it a foul. Keeper red card, restart free kick, Wrexham want a penalty, what a to do. Was Karl right, is the keeper off? I knew why, experience, no the home team bench had the reserve keeper stripped instantly, question answered referee spot on even having viewed the DVD of the game outside the area, **BIG DECISION** spot on! The game proceeded three more cautions, a good goal from Darlington, who ran out winners 2 - 0. But for me the day belonged to a guy who started with this society when he was sixteen and had followed a path and refereed his way to the football league middle. Well done to Karl, I accompanied Karl back home in his motor vehicle, he dropped me off, what you doing later, not a lot fancy a beer so in the company of Mr. D'Arcy and I we accompanied this guy, who without airs and graces could stand with professional football players and still give time to us at the lower level. Stood in the bar holding my beer Karl on water (yeah yeah) it was hard to believe just where we had been that day.

As an Instructor how do you advise new and young referees simple you have to listen to others, filter that advice, be yourself and work hard Karl typifies this ethos. Well done to Karl a proud moment for him, the society we belong to and for me, thanks Karl I had a great day.

**Duncan Tighe**

# Members Appointments

Fixture	Referee	Assistant Ref	4 <sup>th</sup> Official
<b>25<sup>th</sup> August</b> <b>L.A.L.</b> Castle Hill v Thornleigh	Danny Hibbert		
<b>L.A.L.</b> Ashtonians v Broughton Amateurs Res	Gary Finch		
<b>L.A.L.</b> Horwich Victoria Res v Howe Bridge Mills Res	Keith Swindell		
<b>FA Premier League Academy</b> Bolton Wanderers v Nottingham Forest		Nigel D'Arcy	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> September</b> <b>L.A.L.</b> Thornleigh v Spotland Meths	Gary Finch		
<b>L.A.L.</b> Horwich Victoria v Howe Bridge Mills	Nigel D'Arcy		
<b>L.A.L.</b> Astley Bridge v Rossendale Amateurs Res	Danny Hibbert		
<b>L.A.L.</b> Accrington Loyal Amateurs Res v Hesketh Casuals Res	Keith Swindell		
<b>Lancit Haulage League (L.H.L.)</b> Salford Res v Kendal Town Res <b>3<sup>rd</sup> September</b>	Alan Bennett		
<b>N.W.C. Div 1</b> Bacup Borough v Maine Road <b>8<sup>th</sup> September</b>		Alan Bennett	

# Referee World

## POLL'S CHARITY

GRAHAM POLL refereed a match at the weekend and pocketed a cheque afterwards for charity.

It was at Leighton Town, in Bedfordshire - the last friendly before their season in the British Gas Business Southern League Midland Division. The "crowd" was about 150 and Poll will donate the cheque to charity.

He has retired from the professional game but has remained registered as a referee, though he dropped automatically from level zero? The grade for elite officials - to level five.

He is in demand for games near his home in Hertfordshire and corporate matches organised by big companies. He has decided that any fees will go to the Iain Rennie Hospice at Home, who provides nursing in the Chilterns area for people with terminal illnesses.

## VIDEO REPLAYS – WHAT THE FA SAYS

In relation to an incident during last night's match between Fulham and Middlesbrough, The FA can issue the following clarification on video replays.

*A spokesman said: "We understand the debate around goal-line technology and it's always going to be an important talking point after these incidents.*

*"FIFA rules clearly state that a referee must take decisions based on what he sees on the field of play and cannot refer to video replays at any time during the game.*

*"However, there have been experiments with goal-line technology which sends an instant signal to the referee telling him whether the ball is over the line, without using video replays, and there is currently a trial going on at Reading.*

*"It would need FIFA's approval before it could be introduced more widely but it is something we are very keen to explore fully."*

**A further point regarding this issue, is that a few days ago on Sky Sports News an interview was shown of the inventor of Hawkeye – Dr Paul Hawkins and he stated that an Hawkeye system will be ready to use from next season should the FA, FIFA & Premier League come to an agreement on using this technology in games.**