

MILTON KEYNES REFEREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

“Keyne Whistler”

FEBRUARY 2005

Thoughts of the editor.....

Welcome once again to the latest edition of Keyne Whistler.

Not a great deal for me to chat about this month, mainly because neither Geoff nor Ron appear to have done anything to be held up for ridicule recently, which as you know cuts out half my material. So guys, sort it out for next month and give me something to write about if you would!

I would imagine all promotion candidates have had nearly all of their practical assessments completed by now, and so begins the agonising wait for that letter to drop through the door from county. I remember last year being quite unintentionally rude to the postman when he hadn't brought my result with him, and one of my fellow candidates had already received theirs. I'm sure it wasn't his fault, but that didn't make me feel any better.

It was interesting to watch the latest instalment of football's equivalent to the Benny Hill Show at Highbury the other night. In my humble and completely insignificant opinion, I thought Graham Poll did very well in what will I'm sure turn out to be one of the hardest games of his career. Aside from missing a probable Arsenal penalty, and not cautioning Ashley Cole for an outrageous dive in the first few minutes, he dealt with everything else as he needed to. Mind you, I can't be too critical of Ashley Cole, because if I'd looked up and seen Roy Keane charging at me like that, I reckon I'd have jumped twice the height he did. On a more serious note, I can't recall reading one article or hearing one report about any misbehaviour by either set of fans at any of their three meetings this season. That makes the conduct of the players during these fixtures all the more disgraceful. Sixty thousand people can mingle and socialise quite happily off the pitch, whilst twenty-one grown men and Gary Neville kick lumps out of each other for an hour and a half on it. Obviously earning eighty grand a week gives you the right to behave like that.

Gareth

There's an idea.....

Thank you to Alan Branch for sending in the following idea.....

If anyone has any match incidents that they wish to send in to me for a response from the membership then please do. It would be quite interesting to see how different people would deal with different situations that arise during a game, many of which the laws of the game can't help you with!

Surely not.....

Many of you may have heard about this over the past week or so, but for those that haven't, it's a classic. And just ask yourself.....have I ever been tempted?

A football referee was forced to abandon a game after showing himself the red card. Andy Wain decided he had to go after a run-in with a goalkeeper in a Sunday League match. The incident happened in a contest between Peterborough North End and Royal Mail AYL. North End keeper Richard McGaffin was unhappy with a goal that put the opposition 2-1 up, insisting a player had been fouled. But instead of giving McGaffin a ticking off, Wain lost his temper. The ref hurled down his whistle, untucked his shirt and marched up to eyeball the player, before realising the error of his ways. The 39-year-old official, who had a few personal problems leading up to the Peterborough Sunday League Two clash, admitted he should have stayed at home. "With hindsight I should never have officiated" he said. "It was totally unprofessional. If a player did that I would send him off so I had to go. I heard the keeper say 'It's always the bloody same with you ref, we never get anything'. It was the last straw but fortunately I came to my senses". Wain, whose future as a referee now hangs in the balance, had to abandon the game as he headed for an early bath in the 63rd minute - because there was no-one else to officiate.

Fortunately, he did not compound his error by arguing with himself about the sending off.

Lets go for it.....

Whilst driving back up the M40 from High Wycombe, I was deep in thought. I know what you're thinking - Why didn't he take the short cut through Aylesbury? But that's another story. I was on my way back from a county (un)fitness session with Alf Field. For those of you who don't know Alf, he is the Berks & Bucks County Fitness Instructor, and he had very kindly put together a practice run for the fitness test on 6th March. This particular fitness test is for level 5 officials that wish to be nominated for contributory league assistants next season, something which I am very keen to do. The reason for my deep contemplation during my journey was that it had just occurred to me that the system for the promotion of referees was slightly inconsistent. Quite fitting you may think, but let's think about it logically for a moment. To progress from level 7 to 6, you must complete a minimum of three satisfactory practical assessments, whilst making sure you do at least 20 games during the assessment season. The same applies to go from level 6 to 5, except you must complete a minimum of four satisfactory practical assessments. To go from level 5 to 4, and progress to contributory league assisting, you have to pass the fitness test twice (once in March and once in June) and be nominated by county. This therefore means that you do not necessarily have to complete any assessments during the season, and to my knowledge anyway, I haven't. Now I am not criticising the system here for one second, far from it, as I firmly believe that if you have attained level 5 statuses then you have done a lot of hard work to get there. The reason I am writing this article is to try and raise the awareness of how the system works, as I am sure there are several people out there who, like me, were unaware of how you progress once you have reached level 5. I certainly wouldn't go so far as to say it's 'easy' to get from level 5 to 4, but if you are willing to put the effort in, then it is very achievable. The fitness test has two components - You must be able to run continuously for 12 minutes, whilst completing a minimum distance of 2700 metres. After a short break, you must be able to complete two 50

metre sprints, each in no more than 7.5 seconds. It sounds tough, but if you don't mind a bit of commitment and hard work then it's a price worth paying. I started training properly and dieting back in November, and I believe I will pass the test in March. And trust me, if I can do it then absolutely anyone can. Well, maybe not Bradshaw, but most people. I struggled to complete the distance in less than fifteen minutes when I started, so it just shows what can be achieved if you want it enough. Don't get me wrong, I am fully aware not everyone wants to progress that way and that's absolutely fine - I just think everyone should be fully aware that the opportunity is there should they wish to pursue it. The FA do impose an age limit, which at the minute anyway, I believe is either 42 or 43, check the county website for confirmation. But from personal experience I would strongly encourage anyone who is under the age limit to consider making that step.

Our special guest.....

The next branch meeting of the Milton Keynes Referees Association will be held at Shenley Leisure Centre on Thursday 10th February commencing at 7.30pm. Our special guest this month is Mr Dave Richardson, travelling all the way from his home in Furzton to see us. Dave has been a local referee for many, many years, and indeed was formerly the training officer of this very association. His hobbies include photography, playing with his organ, and getting beaten by younger, fatter people on the Badminton court. For one night only, he will be coming out of retirement and will be giving a not to be missed training session on.....er, I don't know exactly, but it will be useful whatever it is, so do come along.

And finally.....

If anyone wishes to write anything for next month's newsletter then please submit it to me via one of the following methods. All articles need to be with me by Wednesday March 2nd at the very latest.

Gareth
E-Mail garethv2001@yahoo.co.uk