

NORFOLK COUNTY FA REFEREES' BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2022

WELCOME

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Hello and welcome to the February edition of the Norfolk County FA Referees' Bulletin.

We hope you have had a good start to 2022 and are enjoying your refereeing 😊.

CONTACT

WORKING HOURS

As well as the office numbers, each member of the Referee Department now has a work mobile and the numbers are below.

- Harvey Newstead - Mobile: **07467 806248**
- Ryan Starkey - Mobile: **07467 806238**
- David Robinson - Mobile: **07554 422301**

Please ensure you contact the correct member of staff that your query relates to.

Please be reminded of the Referees' Department working hours.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Harvey	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm		
Ryan	9am-11am		8am-3:30pm	8am-3:30pm	8am-3:30pm	8:30am-12:30pm & 5pm-6pm	
David	7am-9:30am	6:30am-9am	6:30am-9am	9am-11:30am	6:30am-9am		7am-3pm

APPOINTMENTS

RYAN STARKEY



After discussions at REG meetings about appointments we thought we would let our Saturday Referee Appointments Officer, Ryan Starkey talk you through the appointment process he goes through every week to give you an insight and to help you

understand what goes on behind the scenes.

INITIAL WEEKLY APPOINTMENT PROCESS.

"When doing the weekly appointments there are several factors to take into consideration when finalizing the provisional appointments. These are as follows.

- Work with RDO to give promotion candidates required matches first
- Check Pitchside availability list/closed dates/pool matches
- Check Referee conflict list
- Check the tracker system for previous games in the past 3-4 weeks
- Check location of fixtures to available referees

- Issue games to referee based on location of games in county
- Issue games to referee based on referee level.
- Check the nominated leagues chosen by the Referees to officiate on.

Once these have all be considered and referees allocated games according to the above. These will then be allocated to the referee in question via the Pitch side Account.

Referees are then given approx. 72 hours to confirm the game on pitch side before they are sent a follow up email to confirm the game.

In the event a referee declines a fixture for any given reason, we remove the referee from Pitch side and allocate any Referees who have become spare from match call-offs, late availability to the uncovered matches where applicable.

RE-APPOINTMENTS PROCESS

- Based on referee level
- Based on fixture location
- Check conflict list.
- Referee fixture swap (last resort if needed)

It is not always possible to cover the games straight away once a referee declines a game and this will show on the Full-time system as "NO REFEREE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE". However, every effort is made to source a referee including weekly emails through the RAO weekly report, Facebook Page etc.

We try to avoid swapping Match Officials late in the week on games where possible but sometimes this is unavoidable and so I may have a level 6 or 7 for example become available who can pick up a game and free up a higher level referee to do a game higher up the pyramid.

We do remind all referees to continue updating your Pitchside system and to close dates you are not available for a county appointment."

REMINDER

DUGOUTS

An important reminder for you with regards to young people occupying the technical area. Law 1.9 states that the number of persons permitted to occupy the technical area is defined by the competition rules. In open aged football, those individuals occupying the technical arear must be 16+. Please be vigilant and ensure this practice is always adhered to, and the competition rules are followed.

10 POINT PLAN

PITCH INSPECTIONS

1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK:

Have a look at the forecast and anticipated conditions the day before your game. There are regular updates on the media and there are plenty of websites on the internet that will give you accurate information.



2. BE PROACTIVE - PICK UP THE PHONE AND MAKE CONTACT:

It will normally be the responsibility of the home club to confirm the fixture with the referee, but don't be afraid to make initial contact if the weather is already looking uncertain and ask them what their plans are in terms of ground inspections or what the current condition of the field of play is like.

Remember, as the referee you are the leader and sometimes it will be you that has to take the initiative. If you are required to complete a pitch inspection, ask the home club what time somebody will be at the ground to meet you.

3. GET TO THE GROUND EARLY:

Be prepared to inspect the field in appropriate clothing. By being prepared it will allow you to complete your inspection more realistically, so pack your boots, a tracksuit and a match day coat.

Make sure where possible you get to the ground before the players and managers get there – the fewer the people present when you make your initial assessment the easier your situation becomes.

4. THINK BALL:

Before you walk out onto the field of play, remember to take one out with you. Consider how you as a referee can sell to the people watching that a ball will not roll, it won't bounce, and it simply sticks in the puddles and the mud. The ball is an invaluable tool for you to have and quite often by using the ball effectively it will publicise the judgement of whether or not the game can be played even before you do.



5. EVERY BLADE OF GRASS:

Don't just consider the main activity areas (centre circle and penalty areas). The fact is the game will

potentially be played on every single blade of grass and it's therefore important to survey the entire playing surface before deciding. Don't forget to ensure that it is not just the areas that the 22 players will also operate – remember to ensure that the perimeter lines are also fit for assistant referees to operate on throughout the 90 minutes. Their safety is paramount.



6. NOT JUST THE FIELD OF PLAY:

Some of the games that you will referee will take place within stadia where there is terracing, a covered standing area or maybe some form of seating. In conjunction with the club, you may have to check that these areas are fit and safe for spectators to watch the game.

In addition, especially as you go further up the refereeing pyramid you will also have to consider travel for those involved - what are the access roads like? What are the conditions like that they will face when they try to return home? All of these areas are equally important.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE TEMPERATURE?

In freezing cold conditions remember that the temperature will often begin to drop after midday. It's important to understand this specifically when you are completing inspections before 12pm – what might seem playable now may be a very different story at 3pm.

Remember the weather forecast, its conditions, and anticipated temperatures. Even more important, you need to try to work out what the conditions will be like at the end of the match.

8. DO IT ON YOUR OWN OR WITH YOUR TEAM:

You will need an open and clear mind when you are undertaking a pitch inspection. People will undoubtedly give you their input such as a groundsman, so don't be afraid to absorb their early thoughts.

After this, politely ask that you be given some time alone or with your team so that you can survey the field of play for yourself.

9. THINK SAFETY, NOT FARCE:

The most important factor you need to consider above all when making your final decision is - 'Am I satisfied that this field of play and the surrounding areas pose no risk or place no player in danger?'

If you have any doubt, then the game must be postponed.

Secondly, consider - 'if I decide to play this game then whilst it may pose no risk to me or the players, will it develop into a farce?'

10. THE DECISION IS MADE – COMMUNICATE IT WITH CONFIDENCE AND STRENGTH:

Make sure that you communicate with confidence, explain your thought processes, highlight the risk areas if you are postponing a game and reiterate the importance of player safety and avoiding farcical conditions.

TOP TIPS

KEEPING WARM AS AN ASSISTANT REFEREE

The following are some tips for keeping warm as an assistant referee, intended to help avoid the distraction of cold temperatures or difficult underfoot conditions:

FUELLING AND HYDRATION: Almost everything we do, whether it is a physical behaviour or a mental process, requires the same energy source: glucose. Prepare by consuming suitable foods and hydrate appropriately prior to the match and top up your levels at half-time.

WARM-UP:

Wear suitable clothing for the warm-up, which is designed to get you warm and ready, not to make you cold before you start.

Consider wearing a tracksuit top and bottoms, and a hat and gloves in extremely cold temperatures – remember to ensure that any clothing fits in with a professional appearance.



OCCUPYING YOUR MIND: Keep focused and concentrate fully on the match to distract yourself from feeling cold. Some assistant referees use self-talk, where they do not speak out loud, to keep focused on the match

WALK YOUR TOUCHLINE

Walk the touchline prior to the match to know what the underfoot conditions are like. This will allow you to select the most suitable footwear e.g. studs, moulded boots, trainers. Review at halftime whether a change of footwear is required

AVOID GETTING COLD FEET: Cold feet can be very distracting, so here are a few tips:

- Avoid putting on wet/damp footwear – dry out your footwear
- before you put it on
- Consider putting Vaseline on your feet
- Consider wearing a second pair of ankle socks under your football socks
- Change your socks at halftime
- When standing still, wiggle your toes to keep your feet moving



AVOID GETTING COLD HANDS: Cold hands are not only very distracting, but they can impact the ability to hold the flag and/or write so here are a few tips:

- Consider putting Vaseline on the backs of your hands and arms
- Avoid putting Deep Heat on your hands, as this may well rub off in other sensitive areas, like eyes and cause irritation
- Consider wearing a long-sleeved shirt
- Consider wearing gloves that allow you to grip the flag, write, and fit in with the professional appearance of a match official – a short-sleeved shirt and gloves should be avoided

INVEST IN SOME GOOD QUALITY UNDER GARMENTS:

Good quality base-layers under your shirt and undershorts are a way of retaining body warmth and avoiding unnecessary heat loss. Consider a change of undershirt and/or shirt at half time.



In summary, open your mind up to thinking about strategies and approaches to keep warm as an assistant referee during the winter months. Applying a layer of Vaseline to exposed skin on hands and arms, adding additional layers of clothing, changing clothing at half-time and being fuelled and hydrated are ways to keep warm. Don't be the assistant referee who came in from the cold having made a poor judgement because they failed to avoid distraction.

FURTHER LEARNING

MATCH CONTROL & ASSISTANT REFEREE



Online Match Control' module available [HERE](#).

Online Assistant Refereeing module available [HERE](#).

MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION

CALLUM PARKE

RESILIENCE IN REFEREEING EVENT

As February approaches, bookings are still open for our Resilience in Refereeing event on Thursday, February 3rd, which celebrates Time to Talk Day.

We will welcome some great speakers from around Norfolk including Premier League Assistant Referees, Dan Robathan and Lee Betts, as well as local referees Tim Sadler and Tracey Clayton, to talk about how resilience can help you both on and off the pitch and how you can recover from setbacks.



You can register for the event on the link [HERE](#), and I look forward to seeing you there. Callum

DRONES

GUIDANCE FOR MATCH OFFICIALS



The use of drones is becoming ever more present in sports settings and particularly at football matches, with some examples from recent seasons in the English professional game. The following guidance is predominantly for Match Officials, but is also relevant to players, coaches/managers, parents, spectators and club officials.

- Upon sighting of a drone above a football pitch/stadium, the Referee should stop the game and advise both team captains and managers that play will not continue until the drone has passed, or left the vicinity of the players and spectators.
- If the drone is not passing or appearing to leave, where possible the referee should advise both teams to return to the changing rooms, similar to if there was lightning. At grounds where this is not possible (open playing fields, public parks etc.), the Referee continues to wait until the drone has left.
- It is not within a Match Officials remit to dictate where a drone can/cannot be flown.
- Where drones are used for filming and media purposes, the drone must not fly above the playing area once players have entered the field of play to warm-up and until the players leave post-match having cooled down.

The guidance is not in place to discourage the use of drones, but to adhere to the number one priority of any football match, the safety of the players and participants.

CPD

EAST REGION CPD

In 2022 we will be continuing our joint CPD with Cambridgeshire FA and Suffolk FA for referees within the East Anglian Region.

Sessions are being held online via Microsoft Teams on the first Monday evening of each month and all registered referees will receive an email each month to register to attend.

If you missed the sessions, click [HERE](#) to view them.

GLASSES

Q. CAN PLAYERS WEAR SPECTACLES OR GOGGLES WHEN PLAYING FOOTBALL?

Flying footballs and close physical contact make football a moderate risk sport for eye injuries. Spectacles or goggles may provide protection from injury and can also be worn with those who need to wear prescription lenses.

Polycarbonate Lenses: This is the most important property of all protective spectacles or goggles. Good polycarbonate is virtually unbreakable and will sustain the impact of a ball or finger.

Sports Band: an elasticised band and not temple pieces should secure the frame. Players must have something that will be secured tight to the head so that the spectacles or goggles won't fall off. A frame with temples will not hold tight enough and a jab from a finger could lift the frame off and potentially damage the eye.

Although sports eyewear is intended to offer the best protection available, there is always the possibility that the wearer may sustain an eye or facial injury due to severe impact or because of the nature of the athletic activity.

Referees should ensure that if a request has been made to wear glasses/goggles, that they must not be a danger to himself or to any other player.

Children and Grassroots Football: Whilst The FA recommends Polycarbonate lenses, we recognise this may be an issue for children playing in grassroots football. Therefore, we encourage referees officiating in grassroots youth football to be tolerant over glasses. However, the individual referee has to show concern for all those playing in that game and if s/he feels there is something dangerous in the glasses i.e. sharp edges, etc, then in order to protect players and also the wearer him/herself s/he has the authority to say the glasses can't be worn.

DBS & SAFEGUARDING

ENSURE YOU HAVE THE CHECKS

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. As a referee you have a responsibility to make the game as safe and enjoyable for everyone.

If you are aged 16+ and officiate in Youth football (including Academy games) you **MUST** have a valid, in date DBS Certificate. Lasting for a three year period, a disclosure certificate costs just £10.

Please contact Harvey Newstead to start your DBS process via the whole game system.

You must also ensure your Safeguarding Course is up to date and you can check your expiry date on your Whole Game System under the Learning section on 'My Account'.

RESPECT THE REF

LORRAINE CATCHPOLE

We spoke to local grassroots match official, Lorraine Catchpole, about her experiences within grassroots football, the reasons she loves refereeing and why it is vital to respect the ref:



"I got into refereeing five years ago now in 2016 through my daughter. When she turned 14 years old, she always said she wanted to go on a refereeing course. I used to volunteer at Waveney Football Club in the kitchen when they were short (usually when Graham had to go referee a game as they had no referee). This was on a Saturday morning and all the children would come and get their sweets and bacon rolls after Saturday football club, and to see their faces light up if they'd won the star player of the session and they could pick their prize, a bag of sweets was an absolute delight.

Click [HERE](#) to read more

REG

REFEREE ENGAGEMENT GROUP

Whether you have a refereeing concern, a matter that you think could improve your refereeing experience or you have a new idea of how we, as your Norfolk County FA Referees Department, can support you better as a Match Official, please let us know [HERE](#).

BELIEVE TO ACHIEVE

THE FA WOMEN AND GIRLS REFEREE DEVELOPMENT EVENT

The aim of the event is to offer key development skills to the match officials, whilst motivating and inspiring them to progress within both the men's and Women's pathway. The event will take place on Saturday 12th March at Warwick University, 10.30am till 5pm.

The target audience is Female referees Youth, Trainee, Level 4W, Level 7 & 6 who have potential and the ambition to progress in the game.

Click [HERE](#) To sign up:

DROP INS

REFEREEING

On Thursday 17th February we will be running a monthly drop-in session for referees during the evening. These will take place between 5pm-8pm on Microsoft Teams.

All the drop ins will be 1 to 1 and you can discuss anything referee related, any concerns or even help with starting DBS procedures.

An email with full details will be sent on the week of the drop-in evening but the Microsoft Teams Link can be found [HERE](#).

AVAILABILITY

PITCHSIDE REFEREES



The key to our joint success lies with the accuracy of your Pitchside Refs calendar. Please keep this up to date in terms of plotting when you are NOT available. We'll keep things up to date by popping your appointments in this same calendar. Don't forget if you are officiating on the Thurlow Nunn Leagues or have been nominated for national tournaments, then you need to close those same dates and time on MOAS too!

INFO

MATCH OFFICIALS BOOKLET



The answer to 90% of the questions we're asked, lies in this guide. We love to talk to you; but help us by checking here first!

Download it NOW by clicking the link [HERE!](#)



HAVE A GREAT MONTH OF REFEREEING
NORFOLK FA REFEREES DEPARTMENT