

MINUTES of the MEETING of GUILDFORD REFEREES' SOCIETY held on MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2007 at GODALMING TOWN FOOTBALL C LUB

Chairman Geoffrey Comley opened the meeting at 8.06pm with 26 members present. He especially welcomed our Guest Speaker for the evening, Ian Blanchard, Head of Referee Development at The Football Association.

He then made reference to Walter Bailey who had died in September and Geoff commented on the very high standards that Walter had always set. He asked members to stand for a few moments with respect for Walter.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. Hourigan, Ireland, D. Stobbart, North, Thornton, Spina and T.Morgan.

The minutes of the previous meeting were recorded in the Magazine. It was proposed Martin Feast and seconded Steve Ferris that they be accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Hon. Secretary's report - at the end of September SCRA had 470 members compared to 633 at the same time last year.

- Nationally there were 10,407 members compared to 13,153 same time last year.
- Brian had written to Walter Bailey's wife and family on behalf of the Society offering our condolences
- Safeguarding of Children - if anyone is made aware of those not completing this process properly for eg. ticking answers but without seeing the CD, then please report the matter to County.

Hon. Treasurer's report - numbers as printed in the Magazine. We had still not received any benefit from the recent Portman/Nationwide merge and this is in the process of being followed up.

Magazine Editor - appealed for articles, especially for the December edition

RA Delegates report -

- RA Kit Supplies - there had been a problem recently where 100 on-line orders had been accidentally deleted.
- There would be an RA election this year. 4 candidates for 3 places
- Next year's RA Conference is the Centenary one and there will be a commemorative coin struck for all members to in recognition of this.
- Misconduct by spectators - don't worry too much if you can't get the names of the offenders, just report the Club and County will follow up
- "Friendlies" ie non competitive games, should still be Refereed in accordance with Law. If you do the discipline then follow it up properly.
- The next edition of Refereeing Today is imminent

Training Officer - In Tony's absence, Brian agreed to contact him about when the next Course is being held

Match Incidents

Bob Dick sought guidance as to how a League might handle a situation where an un-named substitute had come on and influenced the outcome of a game

Bob also queried the taking of a throw in from a kneeling position. Consensus around the room was that this was incorrect and should not be allowed.

Cyril West made reference to a Referee who was issuing cards to players but far too discreetly ie he only showed the colour to the player in question. It was agreed that the issuing of cards is a communication for everyone.

Martin Feast had had personal property stolen from the Referees dressing room at a recent game. He reminded everyone to be careful with their belongings and this point was reinforced by Vic Rolland.

AOB

Jon Jones queried whether or not it was legal for one club to use the name or part name of another. View was that ideally it was not but sometimes this might happen when teams from different Counties are involved?

David Sands asked if we can consider our time keeping at meetings and target a 7.45pm start as advertised please

HALF TIME

The second half of the meeting was opened by Vic Rolland who did citations for 15 Year County Service Awards for Kevin Josey and Bill Matthews who were then presented with their plaques by Ian Blanchard.

GUEST SPEAKER - Ian Blanchard took the floor and delivered an outstanding address about his personal background, his role going forward and his vision for Refereeing at our level over the next 5 years.

Clearly changes have to be made. 40,000 games of Football are played each weekend and we'd like to cover all of them. Ian believes that is unrealistic. With 24,000 Referees now and a programme where we train 7,000 but then lose 7,000 makes saturation coverage difficult. He has been charged with recruiting an additional 8,000 Referees by 2012.

The nature of change needs to be drastic, positive and workable. Ten Counties will work on pilot schemes which will eventually be rolled out.

Whereas Ian recognised that recruitment numbers and instances of verbal abuse exist, he did feel that there was still room for tremendous optimism within Refereeing, citing promotional opportunities and overall investment in initiatives as reasons to be positive.

Ian then took questions from the floor before Brian Fish proposed a vote of thanks which was fully endorsed by those present.

Robert Hughes had the winning ticket in the Key Draw but selected the wrong key. The meeting closed at 10.14pm.