



Sept – Dec 09

[www.cambsdistra.co.uk](http://www.cambsdistra.co.uk)

*The newsletter of the Cambridge & District Referees' Society*

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## Welcome

by Matthew Leach - Chairman

Welcome to the first magazine of the 2009/10 season. Apologies for the late publication of the magazine but we have been have some difficulties with getting the magazine created.

We have decided at our last committee meeting that we will make the "on-side" magazine a quarterly publication. We will however be communicating with our members on a monthly basis. We will do this via The monthly newsletter produced by Cambridgeshire FA, E-mails with current news on meetings and via our new look website.

If anyone has articles that they would like to submit for the next issue, please drop me an e-mail to [cambridgera@gmail.com](mailto:cambridgera@gmail.com) or telephone our secretary Chris abbott. Comments are always appreciated too!

I hope everyone is enjoying the start to the season. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and New Year.

[www.cambsdistra.co.uk](http://www.cambsdistra.co.uk)



Our website has had a transformation over the summer if you have not taken a look we strongly recommend you do. The site will contain Information on meetings and news from the society \* pictures and videos of members refereeing \* plum appointments \* social events \* fitness training \* downloadable newsletters past and present \* links to other useful websites.



# The Meetings so Far.

by Chris Abbott



So far this season the Society have had 4 meetings. They have all been held at the Cambridgeshire Football Association. We would like to thank the Association for letting us headquarters for our meetings.

The first meeting of the season was the counties FAMOA day. There were some excellent presentations on being an Assistant Referee from Bob Spiller and Ralf Bone. We have also had an enjoyable and informative meeting where Darren Deadman did a presentation on judging challenges and Carding technique, using some superb Videos. Also with the help of the Cambridgeshire FA we had a mock disciplinary commission, which explained events if you go to a hearing. There were some memorable acting roles which I am sure will be followed up with bafta nominations. Also our most recent meeting was a quiz night which was full on fun and enjoyment.

## Future Meeting Dates

The dates for this season's Referees' Society meetings are as follows:



Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February – Simon Long

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March – PGMOL Speaker

April – AGM - TBC

Details of each meeting will be e-mailed out prior to the meetings and will also appear on the website. We should be getting a **Premiership Referee** visiting the society before the end of the season.

All of our meetings start at 7.30pm and are at Cambridgeshire Football Association Head Quarters.

# Why not JOIN US every **WEDNESDAY**

At

*Swavesey Village College Sports Centre*

— *Gibraltar Lane, Swavesey – (or CB24 4RS for sat navs)*

On

*The TENNIS COURTS – Training as per the FA Fitness section –  
<[www.refworld.com/news/1/article/weekly-training-plans](http://www.refworld.com/news/1/article/weekly-training-plans)> (Need to paste this link in your browser)*

*The GYM – Using the fitness facilities of Swavesey Sports Centre –  
**Note: You will need a fitness induction first before commencing training .***

**7.30 – 8.30 pm**

Meet about 10 minutes before outside the Tennis courts / Sports Centre



The sessions at SVC will be free, however if we go in the gym the cost will be £3.50 payable to the Sports Centre. Each session will be related to referees' fitness levels. I shall be updating both the RA and Cambs FA websites so please keep an eye out for further developments.

Please ring **John Steel** for more details **01353 777806** or **07971 575218**.

*Changing Room & Shower Facilities are available.*

*Please make sure you bring a bottle and a towel (for the gym).*

# The Art of Positioning

by Bob Spiller

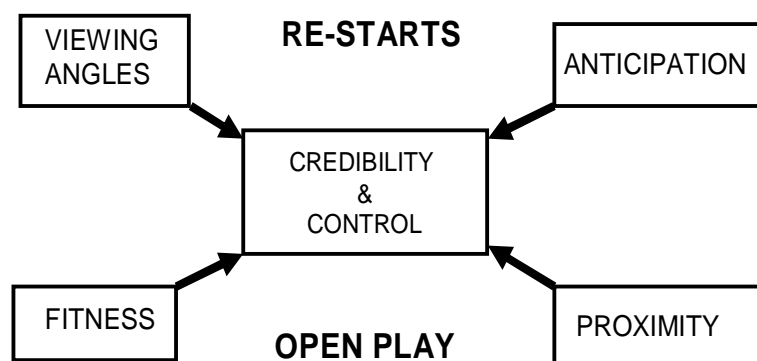
*Many receive advice but only the wise profit from it ---- Purlilius Syrus*

## INTRODUCTION

The objective for every referee in every game must be to ensure that he/she is in the right place at the right time to make the right decision which will undoubtedly be the key to successfully controlling the game of football. .

To understand the true significance of positioning during the progression of a match where open play and restarts in play are encountered, it will first be necessary to examine those essential variables which are important for the achievement in the art of positioning.

As shown below there are four essential variables which interrelate with each other for the achievement of optimised positioning and contribute to the enhancement of match control. The four essential variables are interrelated and each one is discussed with respect to both open play and restarts in play with specific reference to positioning.



The four major variables responsible for positioning during open play and re-starts in play culminating credibility of decisions and match control.

## THE REFEREE'S CONTROL PATH

Considering how the modern game is contested in terms of tactical coaching and planning and the speed of movement at which the game is played, significantly taxes the referee's ability to be in the right place at the right time to make the right decision. It is therefore, no longer viable for the referee to strictly adhere to the established diagonal control path which routes the referee through the central mid-field area where the greatest congestion of open play generally takes place.

An alternative control path which the referee could find extremely advantageous would be the inverted and highly flexible **Z** shaped control path as illustrated in the accompanied diagram.

The enclosed area of the control path is representative of the flexibility the path demands depending upon the area in which the open play is taking place. Following the control path the referee can still observe the movements of open play, but not in a situation where he would interfere with the players' movements "on and off the ball". However, it is important to emphasise the necessity to move across the central mid-field as quick as possible to reach the far side of the field of play in order to continue following play to the penalty area and goal line.

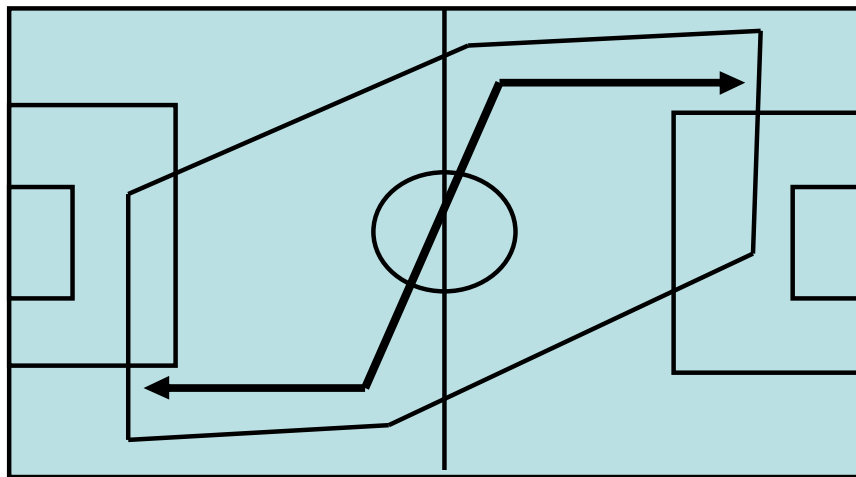


Figure 1. The Z patrol path within area of flexibility.

To successfully meet these expectations the referee's fitness will need to be in peak physical condition to cope with the stringent demands of being almost continuously on the move to be in proximity to the open play. This will require total adoption and application of a highly flexible control path which will allow for the exploitation of the field of play extremities and personal space which will be significant.

The objective will be to create space and utilise it when taking up positions from which to clearly view the player's movements and activities both on and off the ball during the progression of open play. The flexible positioning will also allow sighting of any potential 'off the ball' activity without the attendant problem of getting in the way of the players and interfering with the progress of the players intricate moves. The control path and its associated flexibility for the exploitation of space will allow the referee to "ghost" into prime positions to keep in close proximity to the open play and moreover, the closeness of the referee to the playing activity may well inhibit a player from committing an offence.

In addition the control path will allow the referee to follow the open play to its extreme conclusion down as far as the goal line for example and possibly into the corner flag area whilst retaining excellent side-on and indeed peripheral and panoramic cross-field viewing angles of the field of play and the activity of the players taking place as well as a clear sighting of your far side assistant referee's flag signals.

It must be remembered that extreme flexibility of the control path will be required to cover the various stages of open play, particularly when the play moves across the field to the opposite side beyond the penalty area. All that will be required in this case will be for the referee to cover the development of play by moving with it, taking care not to be drawn too deep into the assistant referee's sector of the field of play when doing so.

When the play switches back again or progresses up-field the referee can either retreat with backward running movement or accordingly quickly move to follow the progressive play. Positioning accordingly with side-on, peripheral and panoramic views of the action which will allow for complete observation of the progression of the open play and the movements and activities of both attacking and defending players.

## **FITNESS**

In practice it will be essential that the referee operates with a commendable level of physical fitness which will permit him/her to freely move round the field and fully exploit the extremities of the field of play and take up prime viewing positions depending on the dictates of the open play.

When restarts in play are encountered the secret will be to quickly move to where the next phase of play is likely to develop following the restart. Remember the game will not wait for you.

Your fitness and mobility factor must be such as to allow freedom of movement to generate the best possible viewing positions of the open play without any attendant problems of labouring. You will need to pace yourself with the game tempo and keep a reserve for the extra effort when required.

Always consider minimising your sprinting ability in relation to your envisaged positioning. No point in sprinting full out when you can reach a position with less effort. Save the sprint power and physical effort for when you really need it. The use of stoppage time (ball out of play) would be another opportunity to take advantage of moving from one location to another.

Do work hard on your match fitness requirements to ensure your personal fitness will be acceptable for the level of competition you will be officiating in. Remember, as the saying goes, there is no gain without pain.

The key points relating to fitness are:

- **Be fit enough to cope with the level of competition you are to officiate in.**
- **Be fit enough to easily keep pace with the game.**
- **Be fit enough to maintain mobility throughout the game.**
- **Be ready to cope with quick changes of pace and playing activities.**

## PROXIMITY

In today's technically orientated game and the speed in which it is played, dictates a level of fitness which will permit the referee to be in the best possible position to make the correct decision. Ideally the closer the referee is to an incident the more likely the decision will be accepted without question. Likewise the referee must be prepared to move from one location to another with the prime objective of repositioning relatively close to the active play to clearly view impending challenges.

Being close to the active play at any time during the course of the game will lead to credible decisions which promotes players acceptance. In other words, being in an optimised position and close to play you will "sell" your decision without question.

Of course it will be impossible to be in close proximity to the active play every moment of the game, but with careful anticipation whilst reading the game and exploiting available space, optimised proximity to open playing situations will be achievable. On no account must positive movement culminating in the achievement of optimised positioning in any way be sacrificed for the sake of effort. This is where the high level of fitness comes into the equation.

Inevitably there will be occasions when you are distant from an incident when giving your decision and in such cases you will need to keep moving '*urgently*' toward the centre of the incident. In other words continue to follow through with your movement until you are in close proximity to the incident creating an impression that you were relatively close any way. Moreover, such an expedient will also generate a presence prevents scenario if trouble is likely to occur or is anticipated.

When restarts in play take place repositioning accordingly within the envisaged area or dropping zone in which the next phase of play will develop can be covered by initially checking the flight path of the ball and then, more importantly, observing where the defending and attacking players are gathering in readiness to play the ball. Such player movements will be your guide as to where you need to be standing and ready to move into close proximity of the action without interfering with the players.

The key points relating Proximity are:

- To be in the right place at the right time.
- To give credible decisions.
- From close proximity to open play.
- With unobstructed views.

## VIEWING ANGLES

One of the prime requisites for good refereeing practice is to be extremely vigilant and clearly observe everything that occurs and in doing so let the players know you are fully aware of what has occurred and then take the appropriate action. It would be nice to know that fouls such as the

vicious and deplorable over- the- top offence or the studs into the Achilles tendon and the more routine run-of-the-mill kicking, tripping, pushing and holding offences were constantly identified and punished but this is not always the case due to the "blind spot" or "blind zone". These offences will only be clearly observed if the referee is positioned to clearly view the challenge culminating in a foul.

When an imminent challenge is to be made the referee must be prepared to quickly modify his/her path or position in order to avoid the blind spots or blind zones which exist around an imminent challenge. This applies all over the field of play to challenges on the wings, to tussles within the defence in deep mid-field as the ball is crossed and mid-field tussles or the fifty-fifty balls involving the goalkeeper. Remember however, blind spots or blind zones are not only the same size for every foul but grow wider the further the referee is from the challenge.

There is, however, the danger of being too close to an incident which results in tunnel vision and ball watching as opposed to opening up the viewing angle to encompass a panoramic presentation of the incident and surrounding player activities. For example becoming involved in the open play within a congested mid-field activity and physically impeding the player's movements and/or being hit by the ball.

In both open play situations and play developing directly from a restart; particularly where aerial challenges are to be encountered in mid-field, deep mid-field and the penalty area from corner kicks, positive side-on viewing angles will be crucial. Carefully watching players jumping for the ball to ensure the arms, elbows and knees are not used illegally.

The key points relating viewing angles are:

- **The angle of a clear view of challenges will be most important for the making the correct decisions.**
- **Side-on viewing angles for accurate judgement of aerial challenges.**
- **Forever on the move to avoid blind spots and blind zones when assessing challenges.**
- **Generate peripheral viewing angles.**
- **Avoid the tendency to "ball watch"**

## **ANTICIPATION**

The ability to anticipate and read the game is without doubt, an important attribute to the referee in the quest for optimised positioning. Reading the game in this context relates all aspects of both open play and restarts in play. The level of competition the game is played will have a significant bearing on how well the referee can expect to anticipate and read the game.

For example, the more skilled the players' the more likelihood that the game will be played at variable pace and tempo, interlaced with short and long passing movements of the ball with tactical manoeuvres and pre-arranged set-pieces being attempted at restarts. On the other hand, the less skilled the players and the team work; the chances are that the game will lack organised direction and tactical awareness laced with periods of unpredictable open play.

Energy can be conserved during the course of the game if you learn to anticipate and read the signs and let the patterns of open play and the outcome of set-pieces when restarts are encountered guide you. Watch out and listen for players' reactions and tell tale signs to colleagues during both open playing situations and restart occurrences. Mentally note which players are the skilful, who are the fastest runners and those who are slow and clumsy in movement. Look out for the 'key' playmaker to offer protection and in particular look for and identify the teams' hard men so you can keep a watchful eye on them.

During the progression of the open play think about the exploitation of available space as you follow closely behind the open play and the interchanging movements of the players and the general direction of the ball. During open play try to be just behind the centre of activity which will give you a wide perspective of the play taking place in the active area and the peripheral playing areas. At restarts such as, goal kicks, corner kicks, free kicks and throw-in's, observe and anticipate where the next phase of the open play will take place following these restarts. Quickly assess and then get into position in readiness to clearly view the envisaged next phase of play.

The key points relating anticipation are:

- **Think positioning all the time.**
- **Where on the field do I need to be next?**
- **Read the game movements.**
- **Try to identify the various phases of play.**
- **Be tactically aware.**
- **Forever expect the unexpected to occur.**

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The astute reader will now have realised the art of positioning, encompassing four essential variables when combined to interact with each other, will produce optimised positioning. Such optimised positioning will only be attainable by the referee who is prepared to think deeply and work hard on perfecting his/her positioning skills.

By thinking deeply and working hard on perfecting the art of positioning the referee will ultimately observe and penalise more offences more often as a result of achieving optimised positions during both open play and re-starts in play which will lead to credible match control.

# Caption Competition

From the [www.cambsdistras.co.uk](http://www.cambsdistras.co.uk)



We have reinstated a caption competition on the website and in the magazine. This will be a regular thing which the society will run.

This quarter's picture is of John Steel our fitness officer. The picture was taken from the Debenham website.

There is a prize for the best entry into the competition

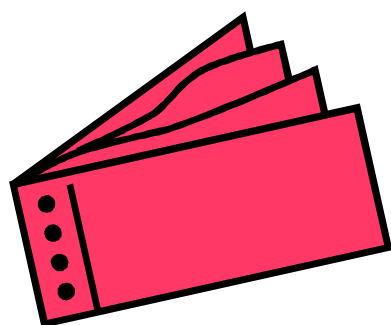
Closing Date is 30/01/2010

To enter the competition please e-mail [cambridgera@gmail.com](mailto:cambridgera@gmail.com)

## Social Evenings

We are currently in the process of arranging a bowling evening against Cambridgeshire FA. As soon as we have a date we will e-mail and put details on the website.

Get practicing as we cannot have the FA defeating our society



## RA Raffle Tickets

Due to some problems with collecting in Raffle Tickets we have decided that we will not be issuing RA Raffle Tickets to members at our monthly meetings.

However we will still have some available if you would like them. If you would like some please contact Gerald Whitfield and he should be able supply them [gerald.whitfield@tesco.net](mailto:gerald.whitfield@tesco.net)

# Our future in your hands

From [www.footballreferee.org](http://www.footballreferee.org)

Budding young Howard Webbs and Martin Atkinsons were given the ideal opportunity to mix with top company at a recent evening in Peterborough. Mike Riley the former FIFA and Premiership referee and 2002 F.A.Cup Final referee was the principal guest at the event entitled "Our Future in Your Hands". Organised by Peterborough Referees' Association in conjunction with the local Football Associations of Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire the event attracted an audience of over 100. Maurice Armstrong the Vice Chairman of the Referees Committee at the FA opened the evening before the youngsters the majority aged 14-24 went into workshops led by Referee Development Officers. This was followed by an inspiring presentation by Riley about the opportunities and demands of being a top flight match official. Certificates were also presented by Riley and Alan Poulain the Chairman of the Referees' Association of England to successful candidates from a recent course. The evening was a resounding success and pulling together four County FA's and all the local Referees' Associations in the area certainly paid off , parents also had the opportunity to be involved with the feedback from them and the youngsters forming the basis of future developments.



## The Wadsworth Cup

By Matt Leach



As a committee we have decided to reinstate the playing of the Wadsworth Cup Charity Football Competition. This was an annual event which the society runs for a chosen charity. The teams and officials are invited by the committee to participate.

We are currently organising details for this year's competition but can announce that we have chosen **The East Anglian Air Ambulance** as our chosen Charity.

## Joke Time

A well-known footballer and his wife recently decided to take a holiday at a nudist camp. He was asked to referee the camp football match but, surprisingly, he declined the offer.

'Why did you refuse to referee that match?' asked his wife.

'I wasn't too happy about where I had to carry the spare whistle,' replied the husband.

## Refereeing Interview – Gerry Daish

How did you get introduced into refereeing?

*At the end of a 34 year playing 'career', with the last 12 years as player-manager, I was ready for a change. I was sat in the stand at Newmarket one cold, damp winter evening, passing 'supportive' comments on the refereeing, and a local club chairman, whose opinions I respect (but who shall remain nameless in case people hold him responsible) said "Gerry, you'd make a good referee". I obviously didn't hear the word "weep" at the end of this sentence and I was qualified before the end of that season!*

How long have you been refereeing?

*In my third full season – currently attempting to move from Level 6 to 5.*

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

*Refereeing the Reg Haig Arthur Peck Cup Final at Histon in 2009, assisted by two of the finest up-and-coming young refs in the area – Ashley List and John Marasca. The game was unfortunately marred by a broken leg but the better team won and the cards stayed in my pocket.*

What is the best game you have officiated and why?

*Brampton v. Chatteris in Senior A in November. A competitive physical game, plenty of challenges, plenty of chat, a disputed penalty, a yellow card for dissent. Actually the match was rubbish but my assessor wrote: "The best element of the game was your performance..." 'Nuff said!*



If there was one thing you could change about football what would it be?

*Simple: eradicate cheating, especially dissent, which is a cowardly form of cheating, especially in the professional game as it sets the tone for all football.*

What are your aims as a Referee?

*(1.) To reach Level 4 to referee on the League I used to play in – the Kershaw Premier. (2.) To be appointed as AR to a Ridgeons League match at Woodbridge Town where I played for 14 years. I'm too old to go any further...*

What skills do you think you need to become a referee?

*Rudyard Kipling said it best: "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you. If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you and make allowance for their doubting too..." (You'll be a ref my son!!)*

Who has been the biggest influence in your career and why?

*My Dad instilled in me the appreciation of fair play and what it means to be a sportsman, values I still take onto the pitch with me every game. 'How to play football' came from the old guard at Woodbridge Town in the 1970s – guys I watched as a kid, trained with, then eventually joined in the team. The coach who got the best out of me as a player, at an age when most players were hanging up their boots, was Steve Campin at Phillips in the early '90s. As a referee, I was trained by the best: Bob Spiller and Colin Hills. That's the long and the short of it.*

In your opinion who is/was the best referee?

*The best ref I have encountered personally was a fellow called George Whight, who is now Chairman of the Suffolk FA County Match Committee. As a ref in the 1970s & '80s he was universally the players' favourite, not because he was lenient – he wasn't – but because his love of the game and utter fairness shone through every action and every word. In the professional game, no doubt about it: Roger Pawley!*