



Kent Football Association

Iber Cup 2013 – Tournament Summary & Personal Reviews

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Iber Cup 2013

Having returned from one of the most productive weeks in my time as Referee Development Officer, I felt it was only appropriate to provide an outline into the experience shared by 5 Kent Match Officials at the Iber Cup 2013. This is the first time that Kent has been represented at an International Tournament of this nature, and it proved to be a resounding success for refereeing development, so much so that Kent have come back with three greatly developed Match Officials, as well as two more equipped referee coaches.

There is no doubting that the ten days in Portugal have been a worthwhile success, with our Officials ensuring that their professionalism and commitment to development was maintained for the entire week.

Tournament Background

Having gained the backing and support from The Kent FA Board of Directors, it was pleasing that Kent could now offer a new and exciting prospect in providing 3 young Match Officials, and another Official (Referee Coach) with the opportunity to attend the Iber Cup in Lisbon, Portugal. Having gained previous knowledge of this tournament, and other International competitions, it was a real success to have managed to negotiate 3 Match Official places. Having spoken to the organiser and Chief Executive of the Tournament, places are extremely prestigious to obtain, and to have been awarded 3 in our first year of interest, I believe is credit to the positive reputation Kent are building around our Match Officials.

The level of football is very high and many professional teams participate every year in all age categories. There were several high profile clubs at the Tournament, including Atletico Madrid, Sevilla and Villarreal (Spain), Southampton and Reading (England), Sporting CP and FC Porto (Portugal), Hamburg SV and Bayern Leverkusen (Germany), PSG, Marseille and Olympic Lyon (France), Chivas (Mexico), Inter Milan and Juventus (Italy), amongst others. This would undoubtedly provide these Officials we selected with a fantastic opportunity to experience the very best standard of youth football, unavailable here in England.

From the outset, there were several development opportunities for the selected Match Officials to consider, and I was keen to work on much of the following;

- Development of communication skills; Match Officials will be refereeing International players, with the majority not being able to speak English. They will have to quickly learn the art of communicating with these players to help sell their decisions, and speak during the game, due to the language barrier. This will heighten their ability to use additional skills, when they come back to referee in Kent.
- Improving fitness skills; Match Officials will be required to have an excellent level of fitness before attending the Tournament.
- Exposure to fellow Officials across the World, enabling them to share best practice, and develop ideas they may not receive in this Country; for example, learning from FIFA referees.
- Initiating a sense of pride for our Match Officials, and Coaches, to represent their County FA at an International Tournament.
- Develop confidence, self-esteem and positivity for these young Match Officials; they will have to interact, spend time, and liaise with people they have never seen or met before, which is daunting. By allowing them the opportunity to do this at a Tournament they have no recognition of, they will be able to bring these skills back to Kent, and introduce themselves with confidence, enhancing their presence, persona and personality, both on and off the field of play.
- An appreciation of the different styles in which the game is played, across the World, as well as different cultural styles.
- Enhance social skills of Match Officials.
- An insight into what you can achieve as a Match Official.

Preparation

Preparations for the tournament started back in November 2012. Following successful approval from the Board, all Match Officials between the age of 18 and 24 were sent an invitation to apply for the Tournament. Officials were required to submit a written application in no more than 1,000 words, detailing the benefits they could take from the Tournament, and why they should be selected. In total, 14 applications were received, and then 6 shortlisted for interview.

Having been asked to supply young, up and coming, promising referees, I was happy with the final shortlist, and confident that we could support each and everyone one of them, with their development as Match Officials. Interviews were conducted on Tuesday 18th December 2012, at Kent FA; the judging panel comprised of Paul Dolan (CEO at Kent FA), John Moules (Chair of the Kent FA Referees Committee) and myself as Referee Development Officer. Following completion of the Interviews, it was decided that the following three officials would be taken to represent Kent at the Iber Cup;

- Jason Down (24, 1st Year Level 4)

- Ollie Butcher (18, Level 6)
- Glen Childs (19, Level 6)

The standard of interviewees was extremely high, and each and every candidate conducted themselves in a professional capacity. Nonetheless, the final three stood out for me, and I was delighted to be taking these Officials. Alongside the referees would be another Referee Coach, who would also perform assessing duties at the Tournament. As a reward to the work undertaken so far at the Academy, I asked coaches from the Referee Academy, and then selected Mike Marsh to accompany us.

It was a great feeling to be able to call the 4 people who would be joining me at the Tournament, and sensing their excitement over the phone told me we had selected the right candidates to help them develop. July could not come quick enough!



Referee Review

Ollie Butcher

Ollie Butcher Review

The Interview Process

When the e-mail outlining this opportunity to attend the Iber Cup was received, I was naturally intrigued, very keen but more hopeful than expectant of my selection. Knowing there would be tough competition from my peers in the Academy, I carefully comprised an application, centralised around my desire to improve and succeed as a Referee. As a result, I was offered an interview. At the time, I was working in London and was therefore unavailable for the interview times. To my great gratitude, Nick arranged another date for me to still be in with a chance. As grateful as I was, this was a daunting prospect I felt I had to make my interview additionally special to stand out.

I prepared for this with revision of law, and clearly outlining to myself what I wanted to take back from the trip. I felt it went surprisingly well, though it was hard to gauge Nick's reaction to my answers and presentation! Once it had finished, I came away reserved to the fact I would not be attending, as I felt I could have answered a couple of the questions better than I did.

A couple of days then passed, and whilst on the train home from work in London, I received a call from Nick, who kindly proceeded to tell me how high the standard was, with every sentence starting with "unfortunately". Once he had stopped laughing at his own joke, he told me I had been selected; I was delighted, and couldn't wait to get going. This ended up being a great Christmas present, the news that I'd be refereeing at an International Tournament! Months passed, but it seemed to come around so quickly. About a week before we were due to fly, we received our referee kits, plus an array of training wear and a couple of bags to keep whilst we were there. It all started to dawn upon me that soon I would be representing Kent at the Tournament.



Refereeing Abroad

When the much anticipated 28th June arrived, we faced a long day of travelling. I was appointed DJ for the car journey, and treated the RDO and Glen to hit after hit. If 'Johnny Cash - Danny Boy' didn't take their fancy, 'Marvin Gaye - Let's Get It On' certainly did. After small delays and a humid transfer journey, we arrived at Hotel Pestana Cascais in the early evening. Our first impressions were pleasing - and it looked to be a luxurious retreat after what proved to be a tough week's refereeing.

Time in appreciating our retreat was, however, short-lived. Nick and Mike arranged an early morning run along the sea front for the following morning, in an attempt to acclimatise us prior to our fixtures. Despite being 8am, the heat was a real struggle, everyone was somewhat taken back by just how hot it was - and it was a telling sign to us all that we weren't in for an easy time. The evening saw us attend an introductory meeting, after miles of aimless wandering in search of the venue, and finished with a quick bite to eat on the way home.



Game Day 1

Our first day refereeing arrived and there was a real buzz amongst us to get underway. Our tournament began watching Jason act as 4th Official. He had a straight forward opening fixture, albeit in the sweltering heat wear a black kit!

I was next up, again with a 4th Official appointment, which saw me battle with the language barrier. I soon learnt the value of clear, positive hand signals, as I struggled to direct the Portuguese bench with their instructions of where to warm up, to stay back from the line when warming up and most problematically, the need to warm up in an alternative strip to the 11 on the field.

My next fixture was with the Kent trio in action - myself and Glen on the line to Jason. After posing for the camera in our impressive red kits, we were underway. The game went very smoothly and I felt we, as a three, had a solid game - clear pre-signals, effective communication to players and an eagerness to impress carried us through. I ran the line in front of Nick and Mike, who subtly coached me through the game, ensuring concentration, and ultimately standards, did not lapse in the now oppressive heat. A pleasing start, nonetheless.

I was given a third fixture on the opening day - a line to a Level 4 from Sussex - and this again went to plan for me despite the ever-rising temperature. A flurry of cautions, and serious injury to one of the players, lead to a busy game for the referee. I finished the day pleased with my start, and keen to get to the pool to rest, recover, and eat an alarming quantity of White Magnums. Drained from our opening day officiating, we made sure we got an early night as we had another tough day to follow.

Game Day 2

My second day of officiating began as an assistant to a young Level 5 referee from Liverpool. His pre-match was very similar to



what I was used to hearing, as was his general style and eagerness to communicate. Hamburg were in this fixture, and though we expected a very professional outfit, they did not deliver this, as they were short on kit, their

manager was very aggressive and disorganised, and indeed they lost to a local side. This was a good game which tested the referee.

I then had my first middle of the week, again with another big name involved; Atletico Madrid Under 13's. Unlike Hamburg, they proved to be a very well set-up outfit. Their shape was impressive, even at such a younger age, this felt like a 'proper' football team. They dominated their opponents and were generally very well disciplined. This was a good opening game for me as it allowed me to focus on the minor details of my own game, as there was little managing to be done.

That said, this game did not go entirely smoothly for me as I encountered one of the most testing/embarrassing situations of my refereeing career. Atletico took a goal-kick, and the centre half entered the penalty area and played the ball. I ordered a re-take. On this re-take, he did the same thing. I then tried explaining in detail with hand signals involved too to get the message across. Third time lucky? Not really. He did the same again but this time it was close enough for me to sell it coming out. This was the first instance for me that the language barrier had become a real issue. In hindsight, perhaps I could have tried to find an English-speaker amongst their bench, but even this would have been very messy. A big learning curve, but fantastic opportunity to improve how I deliver instructions, communicate and lay down my expectations. I was then finally 4th Official to Glen in his opening fixture and was very glad to make use of the shade by the half-way line.



Game Day 3

We waited up late into the night, on the second match day, to receive our fixtures for the following day, and were all slightly disappointed by what we received. Between the 3 of us, we had a mixture of Under 10, 11 and 12 fixtures in the 7-a-side format. The silver lining for me was the two big names were involved in separately in both of my Under 11 fixtures; Malaga in the first and Lyon in the second. Despite coming a long way to officiate in the Tournament, it was on one hand disappointing to be refereeing Under 11s, but on the other, exciting to officiate World-famous clubs.



Naturally these games were not particularly testing, but to my great surprise they were thoroughly enjoyable. In a 40 minute match, Malaga pummelled a local side 18-0. They were fantastic. Their build-up was slow and, similar to Atletico's, very well structured. Their passing was sublime and, as the score line suggests, their finishing was clinical. I had to mainly focus on positioning as on the small pitch and with the young Spaniards moving the ball to all corners, I was forever conscious of keeping out of the way but still in a good position, as I was aware frustrated tackles were a possibility.

Next up was Lyon, again playing a local side. Though they 'only' won 14-0, it is this fixture that will live longer in my memory. I have never refereed in an atmosphere as good as this. The French turned up with about 40 fans, and began laying banners covering the small terrace. Amongst them, they were armed with large flags, a siren, a drum and a speakerphone. They sang start to finish and it was a brilliant experience.

Game Day 4

The following day was one of the hottest. It was another early start, but the heat was still very unforgiving. The first game saw our Kent trio in action together again, with a Polish referee as 4th man. This was a very straightforward game for Jason, though it did produce the first red card for there were no real complaints.

I then had my second middle of the tournament, an all-Portuguese Under 13 affair with 2 Polish assistants. This fixture saw me produce 2 yellow cards - for a poorly timed challenge and a shirt pull respectively. This was another one-sided fixture and so perhaps where usually I may have managed the shirt pull, I felt I should produce the caution to show the team that any frustrated tackles would not be tolerated. It seemed to work and the game finished smoothly.

I then finished the day as 4th man to Glen, and was again keen to utilise the shade in what seemed to be the hottest day so far! It was then back to the pool to relax and more importantly cool down. Towards the end of the day, we all received the appointments later that evening for the Friday. Today



Game Day 5

I had been appointed to two fixtures. The first was to be 4th Official to a Level 4 from Cornwall for an Under 13 Playoff Semi-Final: Atletico Madrid v PSG. The PSG manager was a fiery character to say the least, and this was far from an easy game to be 4th Official as many big tackles flew in.

My final appointment in the Tournament was the Playoff B Final, to be played between a Canadian and a Finnish side, with Glen on my line along with a referee from Wiltshire FA. Knowing that this would more than certainly be my last game of the Tournament, and that I was being assessed by Cornwall's RDO, I was particularly eager to impress. Mike also coached me and interestingly picked me up in something I was repeatedly saying to players in trying to be pro-active that needed re-phrasing. It was a valid point and food for thought as I went into the second half. His encouragement was greatly appreciated I was thoroughly enjoying what was proving to be my toughest game of the tournament. I issued 2 further cautions and generally had a lot more managing to do. The game went to penalties and was a very pleasing climax to my time officiating The Iber Cup.



After a quick shower, we headed to the final meeting in which former FIFA Referee Peter Fröjdjfelt, and Premier League Referee Bobby Madley, delivered speeches on their climb to the top, along with practical aspects to improving our games. This was followed

by the awards for the tournament, and the cup final appointments for the final day in which Glen picked up a 6th Official Appointment in the Under 16's Final – a fantastic appointment for Glen!

Message of Thanks

My tournament had come to an end, and we were left with a couple of days to enjoy the remainder of the experience, celebrate our success and try to find a tan from somewhere! This experience brought many surprises, but exceeded my expectations. It put me in situations I haven't been in before and taught me many valuable lessons. I have no doubt in saying I returned from Portugal a more accomplished Match Official than the one I arrived as. It gave me a taste of the set-up of professional clubs from around the world, allowed me regular assessment, coaching and feedback and with this combination, allowed me to develop my game.

To conclude, in short, my brief blog of the trip, I would just like to mention a few messages of thanks;

- To Glen and Jason; you both were forever upbeat, officiated to a very high standard, and for not making my part of the room messy! It was a team I felt very comfortable and assured within. Thank-you for tolerating me over the course of 10 days!!!
- To Mike – thank-you for the highly valued feedback, guidance, and poor sense of humour that made my jokes seem comparatively better.



- To Nick, not only for providing me with this fantastic opportunity by choosing me in the first instance and putting his trust in me to positively represent Kent FA. A massive driving force behind the trip, with meticulous organisation, and invaluable guidance and assessment that I have found to be imperative to my improvement as a Match Official.
- Finally, to the Kent FA for making it happen and allowing this to happen. It has seen 3 young referees return much improved, and with a refreshed hunger to reach the very top.



Referee Review

Glen Childs

Glen Childs Review

Pre-Tournament Preparation

After being selected as one of six officials to have an interview at Kent FA headquarters, I prepared by going through my original application and pin-pointing the key skills I wanted to develop, if I were to be selected for the trip to Portugal. I then focused on how I would improve on these skills and use the opportunities that the trip had to offer. As additional preparation, I also looked at the Laws of the Game, just to make sure I would be ready for any law based questions that may have been asked. I felt that these were important factors to complete, to help me prepare both mentally and physically for the challenges of refereeing with other nationalities. Once I was happy with this, I prepared a PowerPoint presentation, which highlighted key points relating to my aspirations and hopes for the trip including, the key skills required making a successful match official at the Iber Cup, and how I would go about making sure these key skills are implemented.

The Interview was on Tuesday 18th December 2012, and I was presenting at 18:00. I felt I delivered my presentation confidently and professionally; kept it simple, going through the key points from my presentation, explaining them all in further detail, and how these different aspects would help me improve as a match official after the Iber Cup had finished. The presentation was followed by questions from the interview panel, consisting of Nick Dunn (RDO), John Moules (Chairman of the Kent FA Referees Committee) and Paul Dolan (Chief Executive of the Kent FA). I felt the answers I gave showed I had a good knowledge, but also identified to me, that my knowledge of law can always be improved. I was very happy with how the interview went.

Having left Kent FA that night, I tried to forget about the interview, and was never expecting a call to say I would be going to Portugal. Nonetheless, I received a call on Friday 22nd December from Nick, who later informed me that I had been selected. I was very pleased to be accepted as a match official to officiate at the Iber Cup, but ultimately very happy to be trusted to represent the Kent FA. It was good to know that senior officials at the County FA could trust me to be professional, and represent the county responsibly and respectfully. I had great pride in telling my family and friends of my success.

The Iber Cup Experience

Day 1 – Saturday 29th June 2013

The day started with a morning run, before breakfast, to help acclimatise to the conditions that we would be officiating in. This was a little shock to the system, but helped greatly in preparing us for the Tournament. At the hotel we met up with other County Referees including colleagues from Cornwall FA and the Berks and Bucks FA. It was really interesting getting to know people from other Counties, and finding out that they had been to the Madrid Cup the week before, so we started to pick their knowledge on officiating International football. This was a good opportunity to ask about different aspects of the games I would be officiating on, such as the ability of teams, and how they manage different people as different roles of the refereeing team. This was a useful start for me in getting to know how other referees operate, and to utilise their experiences.

Day 2 – Sunday 30th June 2013

Today was a relaxing day in the main, although we did have to attend an evening meeting with the Tournament Organisers. We were informed of the Tournament rules and expectations placed upon us as Match Officials, and it was interesting hearing these. Once back at the hotel we planned for the next day, regarding meeting times, departing time from the hotel for our morning games, and ensuring we got to the ground with sufficient time to prepare both mentally and physically. We were also challenged, by Nick and Mike, on the rules and regulations for the games, to ensure we were not going to make any big mistakes. As this was my first tournament of this type, it was good to be involved in events like this, as it was interesting to compare it to ones I've officiated in back home.

Day 3 – Monday 01st July 2013

The refereeing begins. Monday began with a short trip to the Torre ground, kicked off by watching Jason Down as fourth official in his opening fixture, and followed by Ollie Butcher as 4th Official in the second game. Here, I was watching the other officials from Austria, trying to see if there was anything they did differently to me, and adding this to my overall game. At 11am I lined to Jason Down with Ollie Butcher on the other line. This I felt went very successfully, one minor development area for me, was that Jason and I crossed at a throw in, more eye-contact and that could maybe have been avoided. I then finished the day when I was



fourth official in a game involving a Portuguese team and Israeli team. I enjoyed this as the Israeli team were getting very irate over some decisions; this meant I had an immediate opportunity to test my communication skills with the occupants in the Technical Areas.

Game 1: ARC Paço (Portugal) vs CD Venha do Pinheiro (Portugal)

Referee: J. Down (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Fourth Official: H. Rajwani (England: Essex FA)
Assessor: R. Brown (England: Cornwall FA)

Areas to consider for development

- When running with the flag, keep it parallel with my leg, so that it is straight and gives a better perceptive image when I am running.
- Ensure eye-contact is made with the referee when tight throw in decisions are required. On one occasion in this game I crossed with the referee, so I should look out for discrete signals that the referee offers, to ensure I don't cross again.

Game 2: Tichon Hadash (Israel) vs SC Linda-a-Velha (Portugal)

Referee: M. Ryan (England: Sussex FA)
Assistant: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: H. Rajwani (England: Sussex FA)
Fourth Official: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Assessor: R. Brown (England: Cornwall FA)



Acting as fourth official, I was not assessed by R.Brown, but I enjoyed this game as it tested my communication skills. There were many decisions which frustrated the Israeli side, and so I felt it was my responsibility to try to calm them, trying to explain decisions.

Day 4 – Tuesday 02nd July 2013

This was another early start for us all; 08:30 kick offs, at a new venue. Jamor was the sporting complex that was miles away from our hotel. We left at 07:00am, and got on a train to the other end of the line, walking the rest of the route to the complex. I started the day by lining to Liam Corrigan, an Official from the Liverpool FA. This was a very competitive game, but I was very content with my performance, with no key match incidents to get involved in. I was then fourth official to Ollie on the second game, which differed greatly from the first game; nothing really happened, and both technical areas were very quiet. I then had my first middle of the Tournament. I had a couple of key match incidents, namely having to decide on two penalty decisions. One I gave for a trip in the penalty area, and one I turned away for a handball appeal. I had three yellow cards, one for delaying the restart, one for failing to retreat, and one for unsporting behaviour. My first experience of International football was one that was testing, but enjoyable.

Game 3: Hamburg SV (Germany) vs CT EF Belenenses B (Portugal)

Referee: L. Corrigan (England: Liverpool FA)
Assistant: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Fourth Official: P. Dus (Hungary FA)
Assessor: N. Dunn (England: Kent FA)

Areas to consider for development

- Being able to watch the match referee, I could sense the temperature of the game rising, and on occasions, the referee's match control came into question. By observing all of this, I was trying to find ways in which the referee could have regained greater control. Listening to Nick's debrief also helped me, as we focused on several key moments in the game, where the referee could have asserted his authority, which may have then prevented the temperature rising.

Game 4: Athletic Madrid (Spain) vs Vestre Aker SK (Norway)
Referee: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: L. Corrigan (England: Liverpool FA)
Assistant: P. Dus (Hungary FA)
Fourth Official: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Assessor: N. Dunn (England: Kent FA)

Game 5: ASF Le Perreux (France) vs CF Montelavarenses (Portugal)
Referee: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: J. van Schepen (Netherlands)
Assistant: P. Dus (Hungary FA)
Fourth Official: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assessor: N. Dunn (England: Kent FA)



Areas to consider for development

- In reflection, I was very pleased with how my first middle went, and I felt Nick was also quite happy. I felt I got both KMIs correct, but we discussed some areas to consider. When I waived away the second penalty shout, I was about 20 yards away from the incident, and although I clearly indicated that I would not award the penalty, it would have been sold to a greater extent had I moved towards the incident
- At times, I became too close to my Assistant Referees. I was conscious of this, as I rarely work with neutral assistants at home, but should I progress higher, I need to consider my positioning in open play.
- We also discussed after the game, the viewing angle of incidents because of my positioning, and so there were some real positive development points that came from this game.

Day 5 – Wednesday 03rd July 2013

I had a trip to a new venue for this day of fixtures. Accompanied by Nick, we went to St. Julian's ground, a private school with fantastic facilities. I had been appointed to three under 10 fixtures;

Game 6: EFB Caneças (Portugal) vs FC Juniorul (Portugal)
Referee: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)

Game 7: EAS Moita (Portugal) vs UF Palmense (Portugal)
Referee: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)

Game 8: Ass. Torre (Portugal) vs NK Bubamara (Croatia)
Referee: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)



I did not really take much away from these games, as they were very one sided, and not very competitive at all. They were still beneficial to help develop my communication skills further, but they were not a challenge to my overall match control. It seemed difficult to also work on my positioning, as these games were seven-a-side, with smaller pitches and no assistant referees. This said, the games were enjoyable, and the crowds were amazing. The development area that I did take from this set of fixtures was that despite the young age of these players, their English was relatively strong,

however there were phrases that they did not understand, so I needed to adopt more non-verbal communication, for example by using my arms a lot more, to sell decisions, and making players aware of my presence.

The day finished with a trip to Carcavelos. We went to watch Jason on his Under 15s appointment, and I was fortunate to get a late call up onto his game, as one of the Officials had not turned up. So, stepping out from the stands onto the pitch, I had five minutes maximum to get ready! Borrowing a kit from all the officials, I took my position as second assistant and had to get mentally prepared immediately. I was quite impressed that I was so focused so quickly. The game went without a problem; I signalled strongly and helped the match referee when needed by communicating to players when play came close to me, and also signalled for a couple of free-kicks out of the view of the match official.

Once we had finished, we ended the day by watching one of the Cornwall FA referees, on a game between a Spanish side and a Portuguese side. It was a heated, ill-tempered game, which resulted in seven yellow cards and two red cards. Although entertaining for a neutral, this was a great game to watch for myself, as it gave me the chance to see how other officials deal with mass confrontations.

Day 6 – Thursday 04th July 2013

The first fixture of the day was a line to Jason, a relatively easy game, although there was one red card for violent conduct, as a French player stamped on an opponent. I then fourth officiated to a Polish Referee, both sets of managers were good, and substitutions were carried out well. The game went to penalties – and this is where I had my first real issue of the Tournament, as both sets of managers and subs entered the field. A big learning point for me, in dealing and managing the technical areas, and thankfully, nothing negative came from this. I finally refereed, which went very well, a close game, with no key match incidents, three yellow cards, all for unsporting behaviour.

Game 9: NK Bubamara (Croatia) vs ASF Le Perreux (France)

Referee: J. Down (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Fourth Official: A Karwaciuk (Poland FA)
Assessor: N. Dunn (England: Kent FA)



Game 10: Siddis Sportklubb (Norway) vs ASS. Torre (Portugal)

Referee: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: D. Mikla (Poland FA)
Assistant: A. Karwaciuk (Poland FA)
Fourth Official: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assessor: M. Marsh (England: Kent FA)

This was my second and last 11 a side fixture of the tournament, it went fantastically, I was very pleased with the way the fixture went, playing some good advantages and giving out three strong yellow cards, to assert my match control, which I felt, was never in doubt.

Areas to consider for development

- Pace myself better; it was a very hot day, in excess of 35°C, and I started off very quick in the first half. In the last 5 minutes of the first half, and first 10 minutes of the second half, I struggled physically, and these are key times during a game, to ensure I maintain match control. The game became stretched and I should have thought about this during the pre-match preparation.
- I still felt that my positioning was a little weak, and I was getting too close to the Assistants, so Mike and I discussed this.
- Also, the need to get into the penalty area; a break in play took place in the second half and instead of running with play, I was watching the ball, leaving me stranded at the half-way line. I needed to then put in a big sprint to get myself into a credible position, should anything untoward occur. Luckily, the sprint helped me, but I learnt not to rely on this, and instead read patterns of play.

Game 11: EF 4 Linhas (Portugal) vs Juv. Castanheira (Portugal)

Referee: A. Karwatuik (Poland FA)
Assistant: D. Matyszcak (Poland FA)
Assistant: J. Down (England: Kent FA)
Fourth Official: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Assessor: M. Marsh (England: Kent FA)

Game 11 went to penalties, and again, I had a problem, as at full-time, both sets of substitutes and managers ran onto the field. As fourth, I had to control this, and get them back into the technical areas, which seemed an impossible task. After a messy couple of minutes, we regained control of the situation, but another important lesson to me...note all substitutions as they happen to ensure we know who exactly finished the game!

Day 7 – Friday 05th July 2013

Today I lined a Play Off B final with Ollie Butcher Refereeing, this went successfully for me. The game went to penalties where I acted as line judge, I communicated with both goalkeepers to warn them to stay on their line, which had the desired effect.

Game 12: Athletic FC (Portugal) vs Unionville-Miliken (Portugal)

Referee: O. Butcher (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
Assistant: C. Clarke (England)
Fourth Official: C. Simpson (England: Cornwall FA)
Assessor: R. Brown (England: Cornwall FA)

Acting as senior assistant in this game, I had little to do, and tried to support Ollie where possible. I tried pro-actively communicating with players to warn them of potential challenges, in my area, and only had to indicate one offside, which was given by Ollie. This game also went to penalties.

On Friday evening we attended a meeting hosted by former FIFA Referee Peter Fröjdelt, he spoke about his refereeing career, making the point that he started refereeing seriously aged twenty nine. This was good especially as I have started so much younger and very keen to reach higher levels in the game. Then Premier League Referee Bobby Madley talked about making the most of advantage, stating when to play it and thinking about the key aspects before playing the advantage, the biggest aspect being the main beneficiary of the advantage rule is the referee. We had not intended to stay long at this meeting, however, we did stay for the award ceremony. None of us expected to be given one of the finals on the main day, but to my surprise, and of course delight, I had been appointed as 5th Official (goal-judge) on the showpiece final – the Under 16s final at Estoril Stadium. The other boys congratulated me, and I was shocked to have been given this game.



Day 8 – Saturday 06th July 2013

Saturday was finals day. I was really looking forward to playing my part in the final, and representing Kent. Kick off was due to be at 13:00 hours, but ended up being delayed by 2 hours. This gave the other boys a chance to watch some of the other finals, whilst the officiating team for our final waited around the changing room area.

The pre match was a good experience, with an experienced Scottish Referee, Danny McDermid. Walking out to around 1,000 people, with the Champions League anthem playing, was also a great feeling, the biggest crowd I have officiated in front of. The game itself was a bit of a non starter, going all the way to penalties.

Game 14: Chivas Guadalajara (Mexico) vs Amunike SA (Nigeria)

Referee:	D. McDermid (Scotland FA)
Assistant:	K. Johnson (England)
Assistant:	M. Sowerby (England)
Fourth Official:	G. Brigman (USA)
5th Official:	G. Childs (England: Kent FA)
6th Official:	S. Farrer (England: Surrey FA)
Assessor:	P. Fröjdfelt (Sweden)



During the game, I did feel a little restricted as the match referee had been clear as to what he wanted from his assistants prior to the match. He made it clear to me that he only wanted me to get involved if a blatant infringement had been committed, which both he and the assistant had missed, which I did feel devalued my position. During the penalty shootout I made sure the goalkeepers stayed behind me, on the edge of the penalty area, not interfering with either the penalty taker or the opposing goal keeper. Afterwards the assessor, who was Peter Fröjdfelt, came in to de-brief us had some minor development areas for the match referee, they included using both arms in giving signals and to make sure you are not running too close to your assistant referees, which I know is something I need to develop on, having neutral assistants on a regular basis, will help improve this positioning skill.

Closing Thoughts

The Tournament was now over, Sunday 7th July and Monday 8th July gave me an opportunity to reflect on the week's trip and, tried to identify the main areas of development which I could take back into my refereeing in Kent.

Overall, I felt the tournament was a massive success for me. From every game I watched and officiated on, I took at least one development point from it, to adopt into my own game. If I focus on improving these individual points one at a time it will make me a better match official. Continuing to implement these points into my game, means that they will come naturally to me, and become a positive aspect of my refereeing, making me a better well-rounded match official.

The organisation of the tournament at the beginning of the week was poor; waiting a few hours to transfer from the airport to the hotel, getting fixtures at 2am for the next day (especially if you are down for the 8.30am game), not being allowed water at the venues, just some of the highlights. However as the week progressed, organisation improved. The standard of football was good, and in my two eleven-a-side fixtures, both games were competitive, offering me different challenges regarding my match control, from the awarding of a penalty kicks to issuing different cautions for delaying the restart of play to reckless challenges.

With this Tournament, I have been given me the opportunity to work in a team of officials and give pre-match instructions, giving me the added confidence in instructing my team of officials back in Kent. This has been an incredible experience, and a great opportunity for me to develop. My thanks to everyone at the Kent FA, for giving me this opportunity to officiate in Portugal, representing my County.



Referee Review

Jason Down

Jason Down Review

Iber Cup Interview

Once I found out I had successfully reached the interview stage I tested (refreshed) my knowledge on the laws of the game and learnt a few key phrases in Portuguese, German, Spanish & French. On top of this I did some basic research about the history of the tournament and the competition rules. I was also given the following question to also consider 'What skills do you believe are required to make a successful Match Official at The Iber Cup, and how will you ensure you implement these skills?' I focused my presentation on the importance of both verbal and, arguably more important, non-verbal communication skills. I also stressed the importance of a good understanding of competition rules and knowledge of the Laws of the Game.

I felt that the interview went well excluding one question based on the Laws of the Game. I struggled to remember the 7 cautionable & 7 send off reasons. Once I received the phone call to inform me I had been successful I was obviously delighted. I started packing in December!!!

Brief Tournament Outline

We all went to the main refereeing headquarters to register, on Saturday, and then go through the opening briefing for the competition organisers. This included what was expected of us and how things would operate. We did have some relaxed team-bonding time on Day 1, as we also did on Day 2. We all met up nice and early for a morning run along the coast. This was followed up by sometime around the hotel, exploring the local area and going through the competition rules.

Game Day 1:

Game 1: Seneca (Spain) Vs Kenkre (India)
Result: 5 – 0
Time: 8:30am
Age Group: U15's
Round: Group Stage
Role: 4th Official
Assessor: Nick Dunn (England)



This was a very one sided game as Seneca out classed Kenkre for 50 minutes. As the three other officials were from Austria, my objective for the game was to understand how they worked and if there were any differences. They all spoke very good English as did both teams. My duties as a fourth official were done with relative ease.

Game 2: ARC Paco (Portugal) Vs CD Venda do Pinheiro (Portugal)
Result: 1-0
Time: 11am
Age Group: U15's
Round: Group Stage
Role: Referee
Assessor: Ray Brown (England)

My first middle was a well contested affair in blistering heat. My main objective for this game was to adapt and improve my communication for players and coaches who spoke very little English. To do this I tried to exaggerate arm gestures.

My development points were to lose my regular thumbs up I gave players, become more vocal and stop using negative words such as 'no' when trying to be pro-active. For example instead of saying 'No pushing' I should say 'I'm right here guys' or 'Let's keep it clean' etc. However my biggest learning curve for this game was to never try and speak Portuguese again 'No pusha!!!'.

Game Day 2:

I travelled to my game however sadly due to visa reasons one of the teams was not allowed into Portugal and therefore both my games were cancelled. It was several miles away in the morning whilst the others had afternoon games. Sadly when I arrived at the venue I was the only person there. After an hour and half I was informed that my games were cancelled so I went back to the hotel. I then decided to go and watch both Glen & Ollie in their afternoon games.



I decided it would be a good idea to watch both Ollie and Glen and try to offer them any advice or tips I could. Nick and I also discussed Ollie's movement into the final third when play was breaking into the box and how he firstly got a great viewing angle then secondarily worried about proximity to play.

Game Day 3:

Game 1: CF Badalona (Spain) Vs Alexandria SC (Egypt)
Result: 5-0
Time: 5:15pm
Age Group: U16's
Round: Group Stage
Role: Referee
Assessor: Safija Dautovic Sappelt (Sweden)

Despite the score, this was a very competitive and fast paced fixture. My objectives for this game were to build on the development points I had been given on the first game. Having not really noticed the extent of my thumbs up before, this game was a reality check as to how much I did it. I was trying to ensure I stopped but I clearly needed to continue working on this. I do however feel I improved on my arm signals and how vocal I was.

Game Day 4:

Game 1: NK Bubamara (Croatia) Vs CF Montelavarenses (Portugal)
Result: 0-6
Time: 8:30am
Age Group: U13's
Round: P
Role: Referee
Assessor: Nick Dunn (England)

This was a nice game to try and continue working on my previous development points. It was a very one sided match and sadly resulted in my first card of the tournament, a red for violent conduct. Other than that one moment of madness, this was a game that really did not challenge my match control or fitness. Despite this, I enjoyed the game and feel I made further progress at getting rid of those thumbs.

Game 2: Vitoria FC (Portugal) Vs GSMD Talaide (Portugal)
Result: 7-0
Time: 9:50am
Age Group: U13's
Round: Playoff A Round 32
Role: 4th Official
Assessor: Nick Dunn (England)

As previously experience on Day 1, my duties as the 4th Official included substitutions, controlling and managing both benches, ensuring substitutes warmed up behind the assistant referee etc. All of these duties were managed with ease and with no threat towards match control.

Game 3: EF 4 Linhas (Portugal) Vs Juv. Castanheira (Portugal)
Result: 2-2 Pens 5-4
Time: 12:30pm
Age Group: U13's
Round: Playoff B Round 32
Role: Assistant Referee
Assessor: Mike Marsh (England)

The referee for this game was from Poland as was the other assistant referee. I found his pre-match and his style very different to that in the UK. One major difference that showed was he asked that we have eye contact before a throw but did not ask for any indication by our waists. This meant my first decision, a throw in, caused confusion as I went one way and he went the other. There was no clarity before either of us made our decision. He also asked that in our half we go first and he will follow and as the ball went out in my half I incorrectly assumed he would follow. Moments later this lead to confusion again when the ball went out in his half and I put my flag up to show the ball had left the field of play but he failed to make any direction with his arm. I was left for a number of seconds with my flag up in the air as if there was an offside and no one really sure which way I had indicated the throw was.

I strongly felt throughout most of the match that the referee was making the decisions regardless of my thoughts or advice. This game, for me, clearly highlighted the need for clarity in pre match instructions along with clear indication from both the referee and the assistant referee before decisions are made.

Game Day 5:

Game 1: AC Capostrada (Italy) Vs Atletico CP (Portugal)
Result: 1-1 Pens 4-3
Time: 3:20pm
Age Group: U16's
Round: Playoff B Semi-Final
Role: Assistant Referee
Assessor: A Aumjaud (England)

The referee for this game was from Spain, spoke very little English and it was a real pleasure to work with him. His pre match used key words and lots of pointing, for example he would say 'offside' and then point to the buzzer on his arm, 'throw' and then start gesturing clear indication by his waist. Throughout the 50 minute I felt we had a clear understanding of each others thoughts on which way a decision was and worked well as a team.

Nick and Mike came to watch the match and gave me some advice on my flag techniques. Firstly they told me to raise the flag from my side rather than drawing it like a sword and secondly to have my elbow pointing to the side rather than down. This gives a much straighter look to my arm opposed to the kink I was previously showing.

Game 2: RCD Espanyol Barcelona (Spain) Vs Atletico Madrid (Spain)
Result: 0-4
Time: 6:00pm
Age Group: U17's Girls
Round: Playoff A Semi-Final
Role: Referee
Assessor: A Aumjaud (England)

This was my final game for the tournament and one in which I tried to piece together all that I had learned. I feel I was very vocal, always talking to the players, being pro active and making sure they knew I was there. I managed to lose the thumbs and give clear and strong directional signals. I had one caution for a foul tackle and other than that I managed the game with a good level of match control.

Final Thoughts

For me the main development I got from the Iber Cup was communication, such as the importance in using clear, strong and authoritative arm signals and 'positive' verbal comments. I have already been implementing these new skills in a few pre-season friendlies, which have so far enhanced my game. I have also got rid of those thumbs I seemed to use, became more pro-active during stoppages, adapted my positioning to more of an 's' shape opposed to a strict diagonal, and tried to remember a good viewing angle can be more advantageous than proximity.

Despite the organisational issues we experienced I thought that the tournament was of benefit to my refereeing in general. There were some very good teams competing in some challenging games. However I do feel that if they wish to expand and retain referees they need to vastly improve their organisation, system of releasing fixtures, system of assessing and which pitch they appoint you to.





Coaching Review

Mike Marsh

Mike Marsh Review

Pre-Tournament Preparations

I was originally asked, along with the other Referee Academy Coaches, if I wanted to apply for a trip to Portugal for 10 days to coach 3 referees (yet to be decided at the time). It was made clear that only 1 place was available and the place would be given to who Nick had thought had contributed to the Academy the most in its' first year. I spoke to my wife who amazingly agreed to allow me to go, should I have been accepted, and so applied immediately, before she changed her mind.

I was not confident that I would be the selected Coach, as although I had contributed in the academy both at coaching games and meetings; I had not felt that I had done anymore than the other Coaches.

I was at work when my phone rang; Nick's name appeared on my screen. "I have an offer for you", were his first words. I had completely forgotten about the event. "How would you like to come to Portugal?". My response was "Yes, Really?" The rest of the conversation was a blur as I was like an excited child at Christmas.

The excitement continued as I told my wife and colleagues that I had been chosen to represent the Kent FA at its first tournament abroad. As the weeks progressed, my pride was starting to turn into nerves with anticipation of the tournament. I started looking at the Iber Cup website, reading about the big name teams that were going to represent themselves. On Facebook, the referees from all over the world, were writing their comments. I was nervous about how I would come across; could I coach and assess referees from different continents with their own styles, could I communicate effectively with them, and most notably I would be spending 10 days in the company in the company of a few people that I did not know very well.

The excitement nerves and pride continued with every week that led to the departure date, choosing the Hotel, meeting point, clothing, travel all made the anticipation grow. I could not wait to get going.

My Tournament Experience

The start of the Iber cup got off to a bad start getting stuck in traffic on the M25 meant that we only just made our flight with just enough time to walk from the baggage drop to the gate. Once we boarded the flight we could relax for a couple of hours or so we thought; the take off was a little bumpy and swaying from left to right did nothing to ease the flight fears of many on the plane.

The landing in Lisbon was a touch better than take off and as soon as we were able to get off the plane it was straight into the heat, which hit you as soon as the doors opened. Collection of our luggage was straight forward with no delays, unlike trying to find our transport and transfer in the airport arrivals area. After asking around for 45 minutes we decided it would be better to get a taxi to the hotel as we did not have internet connection to get hold of the Tournament Organisers, but as there was 5 of us, two taxi's would be required. Just as we had chosen to get in the line for a taxi, 2 Canadian referee's turned up looking for transport. We started talking to them, and found out they were going to be officiating at the Iber Cup. They went on to tell us that they had just spent 48 hours travelling, spending a night on the floor at Paris airport, after missing their original connection. Our situation was explained to them and they had a contact to call, transport was finally arranged for all of us, 2 hours after landing.

We managed to get to our hotel, Hotel Pestana, relatively late in the evening, but we did have the opportunity to quickly unpack, before finding a restaurant for a bite to eat.

Our first morning was used to train in the heat of Cascais (our base for the week) a 10K run to the Marina and back, at 08:00am, with the temperature already at 26°C. The run to the marina was down hill most of the way leaving a gruelling uphill run, back. Following a quick shower and breakfast it was time to explore the area and get to know each other a little better, as we had only met each other briefly prior to the tournament at meetings or games. It was clear that Jason and Ollie were extroverts and Glen was clearly reserved in his group interaction. This was in no way a problem, but initially was concerning as he would need to use all of his communication skills during the week to control players that did not speak the same language.

Sunday was another acclimatisation day, but also an opportunity to meet our fellow colleagues; some were staying at the same hotel, Liverpool FA, Berks and Bucks and Cornwall. A meeting was held in the evening at Carcavelos School, but we were required to make our own travel arrangements. Again this did not go so well as we knew the general direction we needed to head but not the final destination. We jumped on a train from Cascais station and headed for the school that the coach had dropped of us off at.

Arriving at Carcavelos station we headed for what we thought was the correct direction, although 1 hour later it was clear that we did not know where we were going a real test of people's character, for example Jason was asking directions at a Chinese restaurant! Finally after finding someone who spoke English he pointed us back to the train station towards a boarding school, it only took us another hour to walk back!!! Once we had found the school, a Volunteer helper of the Iber cup told us that we needed the secondary school and told us how to ask for it as we had had enough of walking and decided a taxi was the safest option.



The school was the centre of the tournament for referees and we were introduced to the Organisers and Committee who would be making the appointments, as well as the head of assessing referees. The school was also the accommodation base for some of the referees, and I think it dawned on our entire group how fortunate we were to be staying in a greater level of accommodation for the duration of our stay. We were advised of the appointments for the next 2 days and how the appointments would be made following this, (Facebook) we were also informed that a meeting at 9pm would follow every evening at the school with guest speakers. This seemed somewhat in-practical for our group, considering the nightmare in transport, length of time on the fields during the day, and the distance from our hotel to the school. Although a great concept, rather unaccommodating! We were given our Iber cup referees passes and informed that these allowed us to travel on all public transport, and most importantly, to get

to the front of the queue in the food halls (the less said about the standard of food the better). The walk back to the train station was a long one, although we had the pleasure of getting to know the Berks and Bucks referees on the journey, discussing expectations, pitfalls so far, and hopes for the Tournament.

The first day of refereeing and assessing saw our three referees together at a venue called Torre, which was only a ten minute walk from our hotel. Nick was down to assess three Austrian officials with Jason as 4th official. I had not been appointed to assess for the day but went along to support and to see the first day in full motion. The sun was shining as the first game was kicked off, and myself and Nick were in the shade to discuss the refereeing team. As I did not have any games I was appointed photographer for the day, which I believe I did a sterling job!!!



Nicks second assessment for the day was on a Sussex referee, which included Ollie as 4th Official. This referee decided to take it upon himself to wear a chest camera to capture the game from a referee's point of view. Personally, I wasn't an advocate of the concept, as it seemed unsafe and an ill-judged idea.

As the 3rd game kicked off the sun had moved around and we were no longer in the shade, and the heat was reaching mid 30's. This was the first game for the Kent referees to show their potential; Jason as referee and Ollie and Glen his assistants, being assessed by Cornwall FA RDO Ray Brown. The boys were in control and done well, with the only talking point being Jason's 2 Portuguese words that he used frequently "NO PUSHE". I think this will live with him forever, but credit to him for trying to adapt his communication to suit the teams involved!



The evening saw us hold a brief summary of the day, asking the boys what they had gained and learnt from Day 1. It was clear that the language barrier was a problem, and so we discussed ways around this, mechanisms to maximise communication, ultimately telling them to be themselves. Most teams spoke a little English and so it was about creating a presence on the FOP, and using this, coupled with big, bold body language to help sell the decisions to all. Nick and I told discussed the performance overall, as a team, and we were very much pleased. Out of all the teams that performed, the boys from Kent were most collectively performing, and looked the part.



The evening continued with the opening ceremony, held at the Estoril Praia stadium. Again transport seemed to be a problem but we managed to jump the queue onto a coach and leave the football teams behind us that were waiting. The weather had turned a little colder and our coats came into full use despite my reservations for packing them. Nick made a great call on the jackets...especially seeing Jason, Ollie and Glen's faces when we were warm, and they were freezing!

The ceremony consisted of live singers, cheerleaders, gymnasts and a walk on from the participating countries similar to the Olympics, the referees had a small team take to the field at the end of the procession. Just as we thought it was all over fireworks started from the stage area. A long walk back to the station ensued discussing the day as a whole and then they boys managing to make some small talk with the Under 17 Girls team from Sweden!

Day 2 of the Tournament saw our teams have games in the afternoon, which meant a welcomed lay in for most of us, however Jason was being sent to 'Tires' at 8.30am for morning games. We were not able to accompany him as we would not have time to get back for the afternoon games. This proved a lucky move considering both of Jason's fixtures had been cancelled, and he was not informed!

The games in the afternoon were being staged at a sports complex called 'Jamor', approximately an hour away from the hotel and included a change of train (which we found out too late), and then a taxi ride from the train station. The complex was home to 8 football pitches consisting of 3G and grass, an athletics track and hockey pitches, making you wonder why we cannot have more facilities like that here in England.

I was to assess 3 games in the blistering heat; one game was an under 13s with a Canadian referee. He was very pernickety, with 5 yellow cards, yet the most obvious, clear-cut caution for a reckless challenge was a caution missed. The second game was with an Englishman, who was competent, and in control, but lacked fitness. Finally, the third fixture had a Finnish referee, and I was pleased that he had an excellent game, controlling everything from the first whistle to the last. The debriefs for the Canadian and Finnish referees were done in broken English, accompanied with hand and body gestures, and I got the message over to them about improving their game.

We all arrived back at the hotel for 9.30pm, following the train journey, where Nick and I began writing up our assessments for the day, and awaiting the following days fixtures. We both soon realised that writing three assessments that night was too difficult, and hard to produce in a short spell. Back in England we have hours to sit and contemplate our development advice, and look through copious notes, taking a couple of days to compile the final assessment, here they wanted the assessments in ASAP following the games. The fixtures for the following day came out at 10.30pm, just before the three boys went off to bed leaving myself and Nick to finish our assessments which were completed at 01.30pm, although we were then reliably informed by counterparts from other County FAs that the appointments had changed at 02:00 in the morning!



Day 3 started with the team being split up; myself going back to Jamor for four assessments Glen, Nick, Ollie, and Jason all on separate grounds. The fixtures had changed at 2am in the morning so a frantic rush around to make sure those that had afternoon games knew where they were going and those that had morning games were awake and knew where they were going.

At Jamor, I was to assess a team full of Polish referees. It became clear that the stand out referee and highest level referee was the most competent in speaking English with the debrief on the team's performance was directed through the referee, who was kind enough to translate. The games were fast and free flowing but a trait of the Polish referees was to blow their whistles in 5-6 short blasts on a regular basis which, overall, lost impact and became irritating. Their style for

cautions was also spoken about at length with them rushing into a group of players and brandishing a yellow card, leaving absolutely everyone unaware of who had been cautioned. In the main though, their communication with each other was excellent talking to each other throughout the whole game.



My afternoon was spent getting to another pitch and waiting for the our Kent team to meet up to watch Jason referee; his only game of the day. I arrived at the ground with no one around as it was clearly the siesta time. I wondered down to the gorgeous beach at Carcavelous, and took the opportunity to sit on the beach and write up some of my reports, before returning to ground.

That evening, once Nick and I had completed and submitted our assessments, we had decided to venture into Cascais town for something to eat. We were pleasantly surprised by the food on offer, and ate at a great restaurant, which we later re-visited in the week.

Day 4 and we were again back down at the Jamor complex for an early start, but our team were kept together on the same pitch, Nick assessing the first 2 games and myself the second 2. The boys were joined by Polish referees and this kept them on their toes for the pre match brief and explaining their expectations.

From my perspective, the highlight of the day was seeing our usually very quiet and timid referee, Glen, turn into an accomplished referee, with clear vocals, selling decisions, and getting into credible areas for viewing fouls. This had been the best performance I had witnessed in the tournament to date, and went onto settle my previous concerns about Glen's original presence in the group. He had well and truly established himself, with an impressive performance.

Back at the hotel, we had some leisure time, and so utilised this by sitting around the pool (although ending up writing assessments for some period) and discussing the day. We decided that, following the release of the fixtures for the following day, to once again head into Cascais for something to eat (by now you have probably gathered that the food provided at the hotel was not that great). As we had afternoon games on the penultimate day, we decided to enjoy some time in a couple of the local bars, for a quiet drink, although ended up singing along happily with the live entertainment on offer.



Day 5, and no assessments to complete, although we were back at my favourite ground Jamor! With no assessments, we used this as an opportunity to finally be able to coach our referees; I went to coach the two Academy referees, Ollie and Glen, and Nick went onto look at Jason.

This was to be Ollie and Jason's last game in the tournament, albeit a final and semi-final respectively. I did not manage to catch much of Jason's game, but Ollie did not disappoint. He had used the last 4 days as a huge learning curve, and whilst being



assessed by Ray Brown, put into practice what he had developed over his previous games. Ollie's performance outclassed his status as a Level 6 referee; his vocals were clear, his use of advantage brilliant leading to a fantastic goal, control spot on, application of law very good, amongst other promising traits. Glen seemed a little disappointed not to be officiating on the day, and although lining to Ollie, it was clear he wanted to be out again. Little did we know that later that night, he would receive some fantastic news.

The evening saw a meeting take place at Carcavelos School. It was another trek to get there following the afternoon games, and we arrived late, although not as late as some of our other colleagues from around the World.

Thankfully the main speaker, former FIFA Referee Peter Frödijfelt, had not started, so we were able to slip in during the break. He spoke about his career and how he managed to get into the professional game, the teams and grounds that he had been to and games he had been involved in. A truly inspirational talk that everyone was fascinated by. Following Bobby Madley's presentation, on the use of advantage and then his career to date, the cup final appointments were announced. The Kent Boys were not very hopeful, but following the announcement that Glen had been given the 6th official role on the Under 16's boys final, his disappointment from earlier in the day turned into elation (not that he is one to show it). All of us were very proud and extremely pleased for him.

The final day and the only one with an appointment was Glen. The final was to be played in the Estoril Praia Stadium, and we made our way there. We arrived to find that the games were running about an hour and a half late but found some shaded area in the stands, as the temperatures were soaring.

Entertainment was again on show in the form of cheerleaders and music, the trophies from the previous games were being given out to the roar of the crowd, and the atmosphere inside the stadium was brilliant.



After a long wait, Glen, along with his team, led out the 2 sides, with the Champions League music ringing around the stadium. A very proud moment, not only for Glen but, for the other boys and the Kent FA too. The game went without any problems, controversy or goals so went to penalties. I'm sure that Glen will remember this occasion for many years to come, and I'm delighted he was able to experience something of this magnitude. To be recognised at this Tournament for his performances is a great achievement.

The evening was spent going down into Cascais, but not before a very lengthy chat with the former FIFA referee, who was staying in our hotel and decided to come and sit with us in the reception area, before going out to eat with his colleagues. He spoke about the days finals and how he thought the referee done, answered questions from us about his experiences in the game and spoke about his love for fast food, despite being taken to top-class restaurants! To be able to pick the brains of a man who has refereed at the highest level was a great opportunity, not only for our young Officials, but for myself and Nick too.

So the end of the tournament and the rest of the day and a half was ours to celebrate a hard week's work, mostly spent by the pool trying to get a sun tan in the very hot and humid weather, to take back to the UK. From my perspective, there have been plenty of positives to gain from the experience. Although there were a few negatives (The transportation needs improving drastically, the fixture programme needs to be more robust and there needs to be greater clarity in the need and benefit of official assessments), I will take away with me many positives. For me, the highlight is most definitely the ability to be able to see young referees learn and develop day to day, rather than month to month, and put right problems immediately. I've picked up so many tips from other referees and assessors, and will definitely utilise these when I get the opportunity to coach our other





Closing Remarks

Nick Dunn

Closing Summary

Over the past 12 months, I have been personally determined to ensure that a greater structure to refereeing development is in place, to help develop officials within this County. Whilst we are a long way away from where we could potentially be, we now have multiple structures in place, forming the ground-work in moving forward. This has only been possible through the work of the volunteers who are dedicated to making a difference. As part of these improvements, additional opportunities have become available, such as the Iber Cup.

The Iber Cup has provided an opportunity for Kent Officials to develop their own refereeing, with the ultimate goal of enhancing their current skill set. The desire for these boys to develop was outstanding, and having bonded immensely over the course of the Tournament, it was pleasing that each of them were keen to not only take on board our coaching points, but learn from each other. One of the most valuable moments we had on the trip was getting together as a whole group every other day, just spending 20 minutes or so talking about the refereeing team, how they had performed, how they could improve and develop, and then really focusing on goals for the next performance.

Having so many games in such a short period of time allowed Mike and I to help develop the Officials before, during and after every game. Needless to say that their performances dramatically increased in the intense period, although eventually, early mornings (06:30) and late finishes (1am on some days), in 40°C heat, did take its toll!

The overall organisation of this Tournament, was relatively poor; lack of communication from the Tournament staff, lack of clarity in referee appointments, water not being made available to referees, transfers, as well as the generic football politics that we are all used to, but never once did Mike and I hear our own boys complaining. They simply kept their heads down, refereed to the best of their ability, were professional, and represented Kent fantastically. Hearing tales from other County FAs about games, conduct, and representation helped prove in my own mind that we took with us some extremely competent young individuals.

Whilst some may still believe that this was a holiday, in which some refereeing took place, the blogs and series of events from our referees clearly intimate otherwise. It was a tough week, both physically and mentally, yet we kept trying to maximise development as much as possible.

Message of Thanks

Mike Marsh

The work-horse behind much of what went on and was organised in Portugal. I know you've taken much away from this trip, and believe that the Academy will have a greater coach to help develop younger, up and coming referees. A personal friend, and great colleague on the field, you have been a fantastic member of the refereeing development workforce and to the Academy set up. I was delighted you agreed to help coach and assess at the Iber Cup, and knew you'd be a great attribute in representing us. Without any real direction, you knew exactly what was needed and required to get the most out of the trip, not only for the referees, but for your own development as a coach. You were fantastically sarcastic to our group, some entertaining comedy, with a great ability to 'go fishing' at the end of the week; just a shame I caught you with a big fish with your Nike shorts! Just one small request for future note; if I ever have to share a room with you again, sort the snoring out! Thank-you for your help over the Tournament!

Jason Down

Although you bored us to death with pointless stories and historical outlooks on life, it was a pleasure to be able to assist you in building your skills for your second year as a Level 4. You kept us entertained throughout the Tournament with un-repeatable stories, although I do feel you need to develop the 'digger-dance' a little more! You made the week easy for me, with your dedication to wanting to improve, and I'm confident that if you continue to focus on everything we tried to work on in Portugal, you should have a successful second year on the Supply League.

Ollie Butcher

There is no doubting that your humour over the course of the 10 days helped make this trip enjoyable and worthwhile. Your confident and enthusiastic approach, both on and off the field, proved the reasoning behind selecting you to represent Kent. I'm pretty sure that the Portuguese would have no hesitation in welcoming you back either; there's no doubt that you single handily managed to keep at least 5 shops in business with the quantity of white Magnums you tucked away. You have all the attributes to succeed, both on and off the field; this will be a big season for you, and wish you every success over the next eight months or so.

Glen Childs

The quietest person I can safely say that I've ever met, yet as soon as you stepped over the white line, onto the field, you have the greatest set of communication skills I have known. You went about your business calmly and professionally, and I would have no hesitation in recommending you for further events of this nature. I think you positively surprised both Mike and I with your performances, yet were keen to build on your current knowledge. The next couple of lines will have no relevance to anyone else apart from the five of us, but it's safe to say that you had an "alright" week, I guess! Your reward of an Andrex loo roll is on its way to you, although after your performance on the final night in Carcavelos, perhaps we should send you that video as a constant reminder of how well you enjoyed yourself, and those fantastic snow angels you made...?

Kent FA

Without the support of Paul Dolan, John Moules and the Board of Directors, this trip could not have been made possible. I personally believe we have benefited significantly from this trip, and have three better Match Officials in the County.



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