

Everyone Associated with the Surrey Youth Football League

I find myself, after what has been a wonderful weekend for Children's football in a League for which I am Chairman.

I am going to pull no punches in the following few paragraphs. The level of outright Respect, Encouragement and Pleasure needs to be applauded and set as a beacon for Children's football in the country. With behaviour like this maybe we will have removed necessity for any need to have Pitch Marshalls, Respect Sanctions and we will all have appointed referees for every one of our 400+ matches each week.

A play on the message I sent one year ago. On Sunday evening last week I received the following few words from Gordon Campbell, who many of you know has been our fantastic Respect manager this year for the Surrey Youth League

*Not a single Respect, misconduct or even Pitch Marshal report flagged up on Prawn Sandwich from today's games!
I suppose something will appear tomorrow, but that is a first.*

Gordon

We did get one, but only one. Well done everyone. However a little battle won in a bigger war, we will not sit back and think everything is now going to be OK.. What a difference a year has made following that email to everyone, that made the Times front page headlines 24thFeb 2016.

Let me reflect on the season and where the Respect Campaign has gone and whether you can judge it to date a success or not.

Overall Statistics

This season we implemented an ability for Referees and Pitch Marshalls to report matches into Prawn Sandwich. The following statistics are from the reports we have received, the level of reporting is another topic that I will touch on later.

Age Group	Games Played	Respect	County
U7	616	0	0
U8	1193	4	0
U9	1151	0	0
U10	1031	6	1
U11	1056	11	7
U12	1032	13	2
U13	984	20	11
U14	800	15	7
U15	698	15	10
U16	695	15	16
U18	378	7	7
Totals	9634	106	61

The adjacent table indicates the number of Respect issues that the League dealt with, and in the County column this is the number of additional misconduct issues that the county FA's (Surrey/Middlesex) have dealt with.

The stats show that roughly 1% of matches during the season had reported respect issues.

You can draw your own conclusions, but even 1% of incidents is too many. If 1% of drivers that got behind the wheel were drunk we would be horrified.

Total	Breach Type	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
68	Manager Disrespect Towards Referee	5	26	10	10	4	4	9
57	Spectator Disrespect Towards Referee	7	15	9	7	6	5	8
21	Spectator Disrespect Towards Linesman	4	5	1	2	3	2	4
10	Spectator Disrespect Towards Opposition			1	3	3	3	
9	Manager Disrespect Towards Linesman		2	1	2	2		2
7	Manager Disrespect To Opposition	2	1		3			1
38	Spectator Misconduct	4	9	6	3	3	9	4
22	Manager Misconduct	2	5	5	1	2	5	2

The above table indicates the type of Respect breach (Yellow), whilst the number seems to be twice that as reported in the previous table, that's because in some games we have two or more respect breaches.

As you can see respect issues still come from the Managers and Spectators alike, with still a very clear indicator of Spectator linesman disrespect towards a linesman – it really shouldn't happen.

For the first time ever we now have some solid statistics that enable us to move forward with focused plans of how the 1% can become smaller, and no doubt a further 1% or 2% that are not reported.

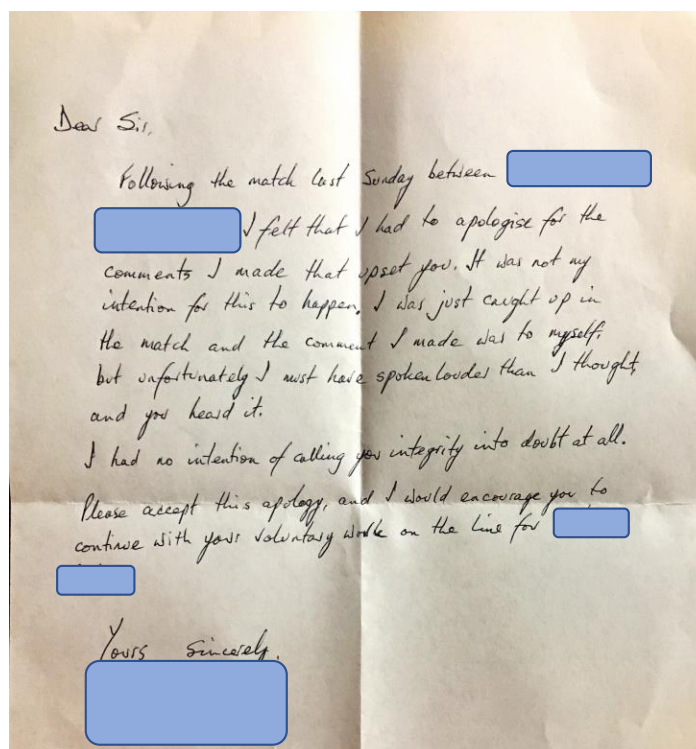
Club Ownership and Sanctions

From mine, Franks and Gordon's perspective we can only thank every single club for embracing the Pilot and owning the issues from a Clubs reputation perspective.

At the end of this report I have attached a list of Clubs that have had respect issues to deal with, 76 in total. This is no name and shame list, this is a list to be demonstrably applauded. You as Clubs have taken the issues at face value, very little challenging as a Club, i.e respected the Referees view and swiftly dealt with the issues. These are the sort of clubs that Children should feel safe in as the Clubs are taking their responsibilities seriously.

Clubs have implemented a range of sanctions mainly in the Written and Verbal Warning category, but some teams removed managers, suspended parents for a week or two, written letters of apology to referees and one big winner was ensuring two managers attended a "Your having a laugh ref" evening at their club that was a huge success, with the comments at the end of "Didn't realise how hard decision and refereeing is." You will see more on this course for next season which we think is a great educational vehicle.

I would like to highlight a fantastic email received from a grandfather of a child in our league who seemed to upset a linesman, and from his response seemed a little mortified by his actions. I have anonymised the screenshot, an honest apologetic view, thank you.



To summarise this area, we have only had one manager with a repeat offence during the season. The actions you have taken as Clubs has been successful and appears to have worked, just brilliant, thank you.

Referees

I cannot be more pleased with our senior referees who have embraced the Pilot, reported matches and engaged with every team they referee. Equally though we have much to do with the vast majority of the younger referees.

It is quite a challenge for me to encourage the clubs to respect the referees when many are wearing jogging bottoms and hoodies, don't brief Pitch Marshalls and Linesman before the match starts and then fail to report including significant issues from the match.

Next season we will be on a drive to raise the standards of the younger referees through education and mentorship to provide a better service to our clubs. We believe that in itself will improve the situation and the match day relationship between managers, parents, players etc.

Our Referee appointment and development team of Alan Wiggins, Steve Worsley, Ray Herb and Cliff Ward will be enhanced with a few other volunteers to manage through the induction process, the early games that they do, and also raise the levels of reporting. We are discussing mandatory workshops regarding how we can improve the situation and are planning to enhance the match result card process on Prawnsandwich to include more detail on how the referee briefed the teams, their attire, presentation etc.

Furthermore, we as a league will be working with the FA and the clubs to ensure that every league and CLUB appointed and paid referee, is registered with the FA which then ensures that they

- a) Have an up to date FA CRC check,
- b) Have attended an FA Safeguarding Children Workshop
- c) Are conversant with Law changes
- d) Are subject to FA sanction should they be found guilty of misconduct themselves which includes failing to report match day issues correctly in a timely manner

Mostly this all about education and raising standards. At the recent respect workshop I had a great comment from a guy there whose 15 year old son has just started refereeing, he said "The induction pack that the league sent out was great and very informative, I have just now got to get him to read it!" – this is our challenge.

Respect Workshop and Survey

In mid-March I held a workshop with Clubs to gauge their direct response about the Pilot during the season.

There was a 100% support from the room to continue the pilot, in fact the survey that was completed by over 1100 participants gave 95% support to continue as the steps we had taken have worked.

The summary of a few actions and reports from this workshop largely supported by the survey data is below.

Highlights were;

Pitch Marshalls

- We will make Pitch Marshalls mandatory at all ages
- Hi Vis Jackets stay – it the visibility that's important
- Respect Marshall as a new name is more fitting rather than Pitch Marshall
- League will try to issue further guidance through various media methods

Coaches / Managers

Very clear from the feedback and statistics that if we are to improve further then the Coaches need to be setting the tone

- The vast majority of our Coaches are fantastic
- Multiple coaches around the pitch cause issues
- Coaches running behind linesmen cause issues
- Coaches need to embrace respect

No Spectators behind opposition Linesmen

- Fully accepted that this works well when implemented
- When not implemented its usually through ignorance
- Respect Marshalls need to be clearly understanding of this league rule

Sanction Process

Generally found it was fair, one or two sanction's had a surprise element to them, but generally by the League informing the clubs that it was the Referees view on how he felt (A matter of fact) then it was accepted.

- A request for statistics to be published – knowing that things are happening helps to re-enforce the Pilot.

Referees

All the room, including the league, expressed the frustration level of communication between referees and Respect Marshalls. Many referees are good, many especially the young appeared to be intimidated before they start the game and don't brief Respect Marshalls.

- View's were expressed that perhaps the Adult Pitch Marshall might be more proactive in starting the conversation with the young refs.
- Referees don't always use the Respect Marshalls during or even after the game to inform that they will report a respect issue.

All of the points will be taken onboard and we will attempt to tackle the area's through education and further directives.

Summary

As the season has gone on we have continued to attract media attention on what we are attempting to do, perhaps we don't reach the front page anymore, as perhaps no one is going to die this time, but people are still interested in how we can drive in the good behaviours, talksport, Sky, the telegraph and Matt Dickinson at The Times continue to highlight the issue.

The Pilot is going to be adopted into the Standard Code of Rules issued to all Youth Leagues nationally, I myself will be speaking at the National Youth League Conference after Easter on our approach to Respect.

With all the hard work we have been through I think we can all be proud that we have made a difference to the Sunday mornings, its not finished, but we are in a much better position than last year, we have much work in progress, but heading in the right direction.

Thank you.

Graham Ekins
SYL Chairman

Clubs that dealt with Respect Issues			
AC Fulham	Croygas	Manorcroft Utd Jnrs	Stoneleigh Athletic
AFC West End	Doverhouse Lions	Mayford Athletic	Surrey Predators
Aldershot Boys	Dundonald Juniors	Mayford Athletic	Sutton United
Ascot United	Epsom and Ewell Colts	Meadow Sports	Three Bridges(Sx)
Ashford Town	Epsom Athletic Falcons Youth	Merton	Vitoria
Ashtead Colts	Epsom Town Youth	Met Police Youth	Waddon Wanderers
Badshot Lea	Esher	Mitcham Park	Wallington Wanderers
Barnes Eagles	Ewell Saxons	Motspur Park FC	Walton Casuals
Bedfont & Feltham Yth	Farnham Town	Old Coulsdon Colts	Wandgas Youth
Bedfont Eagles	Goldsworth Park Rangers	Old Isleworthians Yth	Whitton Wanderers
Bees United	Halliford Colts FC	Oxshott Royals	Woking Cougars
Brockham Badgers	Hampton Rangers Juniors	Raynes Park Vale	Woking Town
Camberley Town Youth	Hampton Youth	Roehampton Rangers	Worcester Park Colts
Carshalton Athletic	Hanworth Sports	Rushmoor Saints	Worplesdon Rangers
CB Hounslow Utd	Hook Youth	Ruts Youth	
Cheam Sports	Junior Shots	Sandgate	
Chipstead Youth	Kew Association(A)	SCR Colts	
Claygate Royals	Kew Park Rangers	Shelton Athletic	
Cobham	Kingston Town	South Park	
Corinthian-Casuals	Kingstonian Youth	Spelthorne Sports	
Cove Youth FC	Leatherhead	St Helier Youth	