

ISSUE ONE

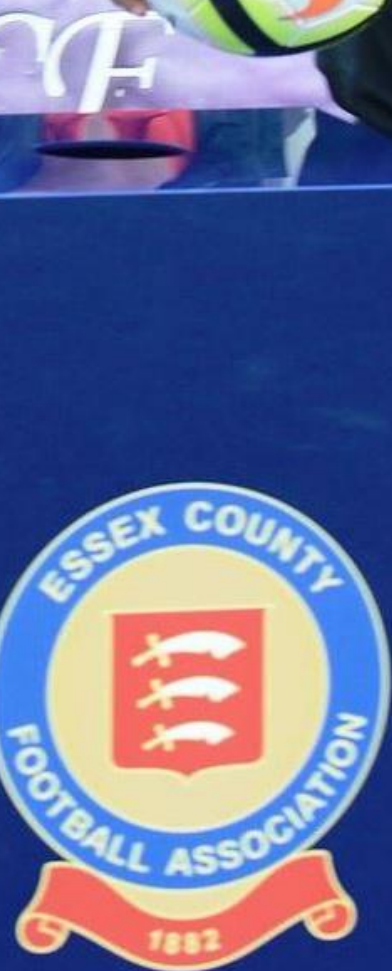
**SPRING
2023**



**MO MATADAR - PHILIP SHARP - JULIETTE JOSEPH -
PETER ELSWORTH - ANIKA LESLIE-WALKER -
GOOD NEWS UPDATES AND MORE!**

HOT & COLD
FOOD

ROLLS
HOT DOGS
S
CHIPS
TKS
WATER
CRISPS



Eugene Robinson



DEAR COLLEAGUES,

ON BEHALF OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE, IT GIVES US GREAT PLEASURE TO BE WRITING TO YOU ALL IN OUR FIRST EVER EDITION OF THE BAMREF QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER...

Since our inaugural conference that was held at Villa Park on July 24, 2022, we have continued our work with the game's key stakeholders, ensuring the needs and voices of Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage officials are front and centre of all discussions and considerations.

I am delighted that we can now offer a platform where we can share our work with you more regularly with our communities.

When Joel had his first interview with BBC Sport's Tom Gayle, back in 2018, Tom asked him two key questions:

- **Where are the Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage referees?**
- **What difficulties does he face as a Black referee in the football world?**

The answers were not easy, but the truth was told. And that enabled Joel to find like-minded colleagues and allies like Aji, Shelley, Val, JJ, Darren, Phil and Minesh, forming BAMREF in 2020 to take the necessary action required.

Reflecting now on the progress we have made as a group, we are of course extremely proud.

We are all volunteers who are simply passionate about equity, inclusion and providing help and support to colleagues from black and brown communities on the referee pathway.

Our short-term objectives were to ensure that the key stakeholders accepted that there were systemic barriers across refereeing that had been neglected.

These led to a visible situation whereby we have just one Black (Sam Allison) and one Asian (Sunny Gill) referee in the men's professional game in nearly 20 years.

Action was required to drive a more inclusive culture throughout the refereeing pyramid. With tremendous support from our ally in Kick It Out, we do believe we have made significant progress in getting key stakeholders to accept the systemic barriers in refereeing that affects Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage colleagues. It needs changing.

We have seen a significant change in mindset at the FA Refereeing department through a positive change in refereeing leadership, leaning towards incorporating a more inclusive strategic approach to the workplace, through increased training and education of the existing workforce.

The pace of change remains very slow and challenging but the engagement with the new Refereeing leadership gives us **INCREASED OPTIMISM THAT OUR LONGER-TERM OBJECTIVES FOR OUR COMMUNITIES CAN BE ACHIEVED.**

We will continue to challenge and collaborate with stakeholders to ensure there is accountability for change

through investment and ownership of actions that are required.

Our ambitions to create the support network we all need to be our authentic selves - while still achieving our goals and dreams in refereeing - also led to our first-ever conference in 2022 to which over 120 referees from our community attended in support.

You shared your opinions, contributed to the journey and your feedback has led to our name change: **BAMREF.**

We went on to adapt our organisation logo to ensure that it reflects everyone on our journey, including assistant referees.

We have grown the wider team with Dan Forbes, a former professional footballer turned referee from Cumberland FA coming on board to help with designing our organisational platforms and Ashley Hickson-Lovence, a retired referee and now observer (author of the new novel '**Your Show**' based on the life and career of Uriah Rennie) adding his editorial talents to our work.

Our focus going forward is on building an inclusive refereeing culture that incorporates measurable and significant shifts in the stakeholders (FA/PGMOL) approach toward nurturing all of us - past, present, and future candidates.

This work needs to include a root and branch review of the recruitment, support, promotion and retention processes with tangible visible representation in all areas of refereeing including grassroots and the professional game. This should not be limited to the active referees' pathways.

It should also include supporting administrative pathways. We welcome the move made by both the FA and the PGMOL to recruit subject matter experts such as Arran Williams, who himself is an active official of colour who has moved from the FA to the PGMOL as the new EDI Manager. Also, Raj Randhawa who is moving from Kick it Out to the FA Referee department as the new EDI Delivery Manager, to help the key stakeholders drive the engagement we hope will lead to better outcomes for our communities. We look forward as a committee to working with them both.

One of the reasons we are launching this brand-new quarterly newsletter is to create a regular way of keeping you all informed and encouraging your involvement. We need your continued engagement to drive the change we all want to see across refereeing. There are several pathways within refereeing beyond blowing the whistle and running the line. We will cover some of the many opportunities within this newsletter to kick start your thought process on where else you can be involved.

We have also had open discussions with those in Leadership roles at the FA and PGMOL. This first edition features Head of Referee Operations Peter Elsworth and what to look forward to in the new three-year '**Referee Strategy**' that will be launched at the beginning of next season.

We remain focused on our long-term ambitions of tangible and visible change within FA and PGMOL Refereeing Culture, with particular focus on data transparency,


benchmarking, monitoring, training, proportionate discipline for race-led incidents and education.

We also want data reporting of progression for the Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage colleagues within the refereeing community - whether at Grassroots, Elite Sports and also Administrative and Leadership function, including Refereeing Governance.

Today the committee members, as well as our ambassadors, will continue to share their experiences with you and support you where possible.

In the meantime, we are delighted to launch this new newsletter, counting down to our next annual conference on July 23rd 2023. The venue and registration details will be confirmed to you all in due course.

Our plans, however, are a sign of our progress. We move from strength to strength.



BAMREF

Steering Committee

Joel Mannix Chairman	Aji Ajibola Vice-Chairman	Shelley Alexander Secretary	Val Anekwe Safe Guarding
Darren Lewis Press Officer	Phil Sharp Special Adviser	Minesh Gupta Membership Officer	JJ Roble Women's Game

Ambassadors

Joseph Ross Ambassador	Patsy Andrews Ambassador	Phillip Prosser Ambassador	Jarnail Singh Ambassador
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The aims of the BAMREF Black, Asian & Mixed Heritage Ethnicity Referee Support Group are:

- To offer guidance, support, mentoring and counselling to existing Black, Asian & Mixed heritage Referees.
- To work with the football authorities, other football diversity and inclusion organisations, professional and national game clubs, players and fans to ensure there is a level playing field for existing and new Black, Asian & Mixed heritage referees to progress in the national game.
- To Increase Representation within all levels of the game from Black, Asian & Mixed heritage Referees.



BAMREF TEAM



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Chairman



**AJI
AJIBOLA**
Vice Chairman



JJ ROBLE
Women's Game



**SHELLEY
ALEXANDER**
Secretary



**MINESH
GUPTA**
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ANEKWE**
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Officer



**DARREN
LEWIS**
Press Officer



PHIL SHARP
Special Adviser



BARCLAYS
WOMEN'S
SUPER LEAGUE



Lauren Impey





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REFEREE



Inspiring

Stories:

Juliette

Joseph

THROUGHOUT THE LATE NINETEES AND EARLY NOUGHTIES IN THE UK, JULIETTE JOSEPH PLAYED FOR A RANGE OF LADIES' FOOTBALL TEAMS ACROSS LONDON AND KENT.

She was given the opportunity to trial out different positions and hone her skills on the pitch as a versatile player, finding her feet as a left-back for Chiswick Ladies FC. The team spirit and camaraderie could only be described as infectious and as time went on, she became more involved in other disciplines for the team, taking on a variety of roles. Having suffered a serious injury, she was no longer able to have an impact on the pitch so moved into coaching and spent time developing teams from the touchline and helping develop girls and women's football.

Juliette coached at Orpington FC for their Girls and Ladies teams and also spent a stint coaching the Brighton and Sussex University Ladies team. **Juliette actively champions the positive influence sport has on the mental health, fitness, and general wellbeing of an individual.**

As a coach, her team regularly struggled to find qualified referees for their fixtures, a factor that ultimately encouraged her to take up the whistle. The disparity in male and female referees was a paramount desire to amend, and she felt passionately that her girls' teams should see woman involved in every aspect of the game.

Juliette was happy to share with the BAMREF team that refereeing remains a wonderful vocation for her today, it allows one to combine their love of football, with crucial skills such as teamwork, problem solving, communication, flexibility, consistency, and composure which she believe is beneficial on and off the pitch. It's also an opportunity to meet people from all walks of life.

Whilst refereeing for various grassroots football leagues in the UK, Juliette had the opportunity to officiate at the Crystal Palace Academy and meet several of the Crystal Palace Youth coaches. One of the coaches knew she was a supporter of the club and was kind enough to donate a kit from the club which has been passed onto the youth squad in St Lucia in the Caribbean which they are all extremely appreciative of this goodwill gesture.

Sport is one of the cornerstones to develop and inspire the youth in a positive manner and I look forward to seeing the benefits of sport and football, along with other vocations having a major impact with our aspiring youth.

In March 2023, Juliette made history by becoming the first female referee to be appointed to the

Smiths Intermediate League Cup Final between Rusthall FC Development v Swanley Oaks at Jockey Farm Stadium, assisted by Ben Cooper & Jason Robinson and Fourth Official Mark Perrin. The league has been in existence since 1906.

Chris Goulbourn, who is the referee Appointments Secretary for the Sevenoaks & District Football League shared his feedback and observation with BAMREF with a crowd of over 200 in attendance for the fixture stating: Juliette enjoyed a commanding game and kept a tight grip on both teams and the only flashpoint came in the last five minutes of the game when a Swanley Oaks player suffered a suspected broken nose. She was well-placed to see the incident that could have got very ugly as this occurred right in front of the main stand and given the colourful history of Swanley Oaks.

The injured player demanded a red card for his opponent who caused the injury but Juliette managed the whole incident with calmness and empathy, explaining what you had been seen (accidental impact) and deemed a yellow card for unsporting behaviour was sufficient. The fact that no other Swanley Oaks players caused any problems endorsed her decision to be the correct one.

Over the season leading up to the appointment Juliette had average an average score of 80/100. This is a clear indication of a high level of performance.

JULIETTE JOSEPH IS OUR FIRST EDITION IN OUR INSPIRING STORIES SERIES AND WE HOPE TO BRING YOU MANY MORE STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY IN FUTURE EDITIONS.

Peter's Principles



FIFTEEN YEARS ON, URIAH RENNIE is still the only Black man to have ever refereed a top-flight Premier League game. Liverpool's 2-0 win over Spurs, in May 2008, should have seen the door opened for talented Black officials to follow him. Instead their whistles lie in the Black Man's Graveyard, that vacuum between senior county standard and the bottom of the Non-League pyramid where non-white referees are 'lost in the system'.

Instead, the game continues to weed out yet more of the observers, hitting them with suspensions for their racist language. Observers that Black referees believe have been suppressing their progress for years.

The FA's Refereeing Department is working to address those concerns, exhume those whistles and inspire more

Black and Asian referees into the fraternity. With the road ahead strewn with cans kicked down it, they'll have their work cut out.

Peter Elsworth, the FA's Head of Refereeing Operations, is facing the challenge head on.

To his, and the FA's credit, there is an acceptance of the rut refereeing finds itself in - and how it has arrived there.

"In terms of structure it has always been too linear," he explained. "If you were a referee in England, there was one pyramid. "If someone said: 'Actually, I don't like the way this is being run, I want to go and find some other refereeing body', they couldn't.

"There was a monopoly which ended up creating a limiting structure.

"That predates me but it has started to erode away over the last 10 years or so.

"There's been a real push to move towards accepting you're in a better position if you provide options and treat people with respect.

"When I first came into a room some 15, 16 years ago, it was a case of: If you were five minutes late you were locked out - even if you've travelled 200 miles to get there. That was the culture. it wasn't about communication.

"It was: 'You're late, doors shut". No conversation.

"Where we are now is that that's not the way forward, there has had to be change.



Uriah Rennie



David Elleray [former referees chief] was a part of that change.

“Mike Riley [Former PGMOL Managing Director] has also been a massive part of changing the approach to say that this is about individuals.

“We are a people industry. The dial moved to a place where it’s about actually how we provide support and what we give to create the environment.”

Here’s the thing: For Black and Brown referees to be late to the meetings, they need to be invited in the first place.

With Sam Allison and Sunny Gill the only non-white referees in the Men’s professional game, the environment has never existed for Black and Asian officials to be themselves let alone feel accepted. Peter agrees.

“I think there was a lot of endeavour with little outcome,” he said. “I don’t think there was a true realisation of the issues for underrepresented groups.

“There’s been this idea that everyone is treated the same and that you all go through the same processes. Now we know that it’s more complicated than that. “The history of refereeing has been that for those people who make it to the top it is a test of resilience, not competence. Not until recently. “So we’ve been losing people who were very skilled early on in their career. What hadn’t been appreciated is the test of resilience if you’re from an underrepresented group. We have to make sure that the world we are operating in is open and accessible to everyone. If we have to

go in and help that in some way, shape, or form, we will - rather than assuming the system will look after it.”

Peter, who works with Dan Meeson, The FA’s Head of Technical & Referee Development, provided a background to why the walls yet to be broken down for Black and Asian referees have existed for so long. “Dan and I picked up the baton a couple of years ago,” he said. “At that time there was a level of cynicism and hostility towards us, as a department. It was about a place that refereeing found itself in since I’ve been here.

“There’s a wider context. Football in general has seen refereeing as this ‘other’ within the family. If you put yourself in a school playground and there’s a group of people considered to be the ‘other’ in that environment, you form a group within yourselves.

“You kind of go: ‘Right, we’re going to keep out of the way, sit around a table, keep our heads down and have our own little dynamic.’

“So we sit out on the side with everyone else going: ‘What are they about? We don’t know anything about them’. That has been the culture of refereeing with football.”

“Not anymore. Refereeing has accepted it is unrepresentative of the people who play the game and the people who watch it around the country”.

Forty-three percent of the Premier League’s players are Black with 33% in the professional leagues. Those numbers have only been acquired as a result of independent analysis with the refereeing fraternity previously reticent to share them.

“I don’t think any protectionism necessarily came from a place of fear,” Peter went on. “We weren’t worried about how you were going to construe the numbers

“That’s the world that we had. It has had to be chipped away at and we are working out how we open up. How we have proper forums with the various stakeholders so that there is a suitable conversation with clubs about performance and match issues, for example.

“We are now having conversations about specific referee support to drive up satisfaction levels. We are having conversations about a tougher stance and sanctions for inappropriate behaviour and abuse to keep our referees safe and encourage their enjoyment.

“We are having discussions about improving standards as well as developing initiatives on how we celebrate our referees in meaningful ways at grassroots levels.

So far, so very understandable. But it is still not yet actually possible to find a detailed breakdown of refereeing demographics from the Football Association.

“We need to strip back the curtain and say: ‘Look - this is for people. People who play football now, who coach in football now. Who love football now. Come and be a part of it.’ “That’s the task we are embarking on at the moment, key parts of which are set out in the FA’s new, three-year refereeing strategy from 2023/24 season to the 26/27 season to be launched in the summer.

“We want to make sure that if you are a Black referee from South London, you feel as though this is an option for

you. That you are given the support to compensate for the cultural barriers.”

Those barriers have been brought into sharp focus in recent weeks by the third case in the last ten months of an Observer suspended for using racially offensive language.

It follows a litany of claims from Black and Brown referees - going back years - that some individuals who assess referees for promotion to the higher leagues have been holding back potential graduates on the basis of the colour of their skin.

A 53-page refereeing report on diversity, submitted to the FA three years ago, outlined the allegations. Compiled by BAMRef, it claimed one observer told a referee: “You lot can all run fast, but that’s all you are good for.” Another allegedly said: “If you want to progress, you need to cut your dreadlocks.”

Another made an offensive comment about throwing a banana. Concerns also persist that weak punishments handed out to the Observers most recently sanctioned have failed to send out a message of zero tolerance.

We are now working towards an environment where Black and Brown officials who would previously suffer in silence, have the strength in numbers to speak up.

As Peter explained, the plan is also to ensure Black referees know they will be fully supported with appropriate action taken.



Akil Howson 

“Empowerment is the key in all of this,” he went on. “We need all of our referees to feel comfortable in flagging issues.

“We’ve created something in the last 12 months called an Observer Feedback Process. With the workforce issues we’re talking about, one of our challenges is how we get the information?

“What we didn’t have is the route for people to be able to go and say: ‘Actually, that’s not acceptable.’ “Now the Observer Feedback means that for every game, it’s not a case of what you thought of the Observers view of your performance. “We’re asking you: ‘What were their behaviours like?’ “We’ve had around 95% saying: ‘Yes, Brilliant. “But in 5% of cases, there are occasions where they tell us about an Observer – and this isn’t necessarily about discrimination: ‘Your behaviour wasn’t quite good enough.

‘You were actually quite rude to an individual’ or ‘You were quite obnoxious with the way you behaved on that day.’

“That actually empowered us to be able to actually go and challenge poor performance. We’ve never had that before. “So there have been a couple of occasions where we’ve investigated and said: ‘Hang on a minute, what you’ve said there is inappropriate’.

“In those extreme examples those people are no longer working for us. “But what we’ve found is that there are people who have used phraseology where you say: ‘You can’t say that, that is inappropriate’. “And to be fair, they’ve been on that learning journey. They’ve had that education.

Someone has said to them: ‘Do you realise how that is perceived?’ ‘It might be a phrase you're using with the best of intentions. The one example that jumps out is someone saying: ‘You’re not refereeing like an English referee’ or words to that effect.”

This was to somebody who wasn’t native to the UK. And this person has taken offence at that

“What the Observers was trying to say was that: ‘You have a non-English style of refereeing’ which is about managing and building rapport.

“So you’ve kind of ended up in this place where we get around to explain why that matters. So actually, it’s been really good for us in terms of education.”

With the ages of the Observers suspended for using racist language ranging from 70 to 82, it is easy to understand why a priority for Peter, Dan and their team is working to reduce the average age of the Observer workforce.

“The challenge we have is the cradle to the grave kind of logic,” Peter explained.

“You referee, referee, referee until your legs don’t let you anymore. Then you go:

‘Okay, what do I want to do now? I love it, I’m gonna go into observing. Don’t get me wrong, the volunteers who perform this role are invaluable to us. The vast majority do a great job and are critical for the system to operate.’

“What we’re trying to do is get people to go into observing whilst they're active.

“One of the ways is by not limiting ourselves with just ex-referees. There’s a world of people out there who love



Ashley Hickson-Lovence



football and have an extensive knowledge about what's good for football.

“They just need to be given the education package from a refereeing point of view and to be told: ‘This is what you’re looking for. These are the skills we are identifying’.

“Why are we not going and finding those people? So one of the things that is part of our strategy, will be opening up the door for our observer workforce beyond just those people who happen to referee. “Then all of a sudden you open up the door to new insight, diversity, to the game.”

“We need the pipe to be on in terms of the pathway, and at the moment the pipe is dripping,” Peter continued. “This isn’t one size fits all either. Everyone who is non-white is not one homogenous group with the same motivations and desires.

“But if you take some areas of the country where the wider population is ethnically diverse, the diversity from a refereeing point of view is nowhere near the level of diversity of the players or the people living there. “Why is that and what do we do about it? To address that we need to go and recruit very heavily.

A new Equality and Diversity Manager (Raj Randhawa) will come in to work, Arran Williams at the PGMOL. Among their most important tasks will be to address exactly that refusal among Black and Brown referees to be seduced into believing things will change.

“The hostility came from a conversation I had where the view towards us was: ‘Are you bulls*****g me again?’” Peter

explained candidly. “And that rang massive alarm bells for me. We can’t just keep talking. “We will take the lead in the sense that we will effectively fund the courses and say: ‘This is where we are going to hold it.

The aim is to move away from just more white boys in suburbia. “We intend to go into the parts of the country where you can run the course on the terms of those people empowering the individuals on the ground. “We’ve got the best part of 2000 referees who are from a Black and Asian background in this country. Okay, we deal with the people who are at the elite end of the game. “But if we are talking semi-professional then you’re still talking about around 40-50 referees from that background. “That means there are still the best part of 1950 referees out there. We need to work with them. We need to support them.”

BAMRef welcome the principles and objectives of the new three-year Referee strategy. The fireside discussion between Darren and Peter is encouraging and we as a Committee look forward to the actions and journey ahead.



RAISE YOUR GAME

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

📍 Emirates Stadium

Thursday 27th April 2023



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A man with dark hair, wearing a black polo shirt with a white collar and a small logo on the chest, is holding a white soccer ball. He is standing on a green field, possibly a soccer pitch, with a blurred background of spectators and stadium seating. The text is overlaid on the image in four black boxes with white text.

A MINUTE

(OR SO)

WITH MO

(MATADAR)

WHERE DOES YOUR JOURNEY BEGIN?

The journey begins in the North West of England in the industrial heartland of Blackburn, Lancashire. I was born to immigrant parents from India, who worked in the local cotton mills. Being born and raised in a strong Muslim community in Blackburn, my life revolved around attending the mosque on a daily basis until the age of 15, for evening classes. School days started early with a 3 mile walk to school each morning and afternoon followed by 2 hours of religious teaching in the evenings. Even now, my parents still live in the house I was born and raised in and which stands in the shadows of one of the main mosques in Blackburn.

WHERE DOES YOUR FAMILY COME FROM?

My family originate from the Gujarat region of North West India. Their families were mainly farmers and rural workers. Both parents moved to the UK at an early age and were raised in North West England. My parents have remained in Blackburn ever since, and that is where I was born, raised and have lived.

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST FOOTBALL MEMORY?

My first ever footballing memory takes me back to the young age of 10 when I was playing for my Primary School team. The school was Roe Lee Park Primary School. I remember playing on an incredibly cold afternoon on a very wet and muddy pitch -the sort of pitch that games would probably get

called off for nowadays. Whilst I can't remember the score or the opposition, I remember winning the game and finishing off being incredibly muddy caked in wet dirt. I walked home in the wind and rain, and couldn't wait to have a warm bath once I got in from school. The game was refereed by my school teacher as no school games ever had referees in those early days.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB? WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER?

My first ever job, at the age of 13, involved working on a market stall every Saturday at Ellesmere Port in Cheshire. I would leave very early at approximately 5am and would be driven by the market stall owner to set up for the day. We sold leather products, such as leather coats, leather jackets and leather waistcoats. I can't remember how much I was paid, but I remember it seemed pretty naff for working 14 hour days. It didn't matter however, as I really enjoyed my time working alongside some incredibly nice people and dealing with members of the public. Throughout my schooling I always wanted to be a school teacher which is quite ironic because I spent half my life making excuses not to go to school and then spent the other half of my life getting back into school as a school master.

WHERE DID YOU STUDY?

I studied Physical Education and Sport at Sheffield Hallam University, and that is where I had my first experience of refereeing. During my studies, we were encouraged to gain as many qualifications in sport as we possibly could.

Alongside being a qualified referee I am also a qualified rugby, cricket, hockey, football, basketball, handball, orienteering and tennis coach. These qualifications were to prove invaluable when I got my first teaching role.

WHAT'S YOUR JOB NOW?

I am a Senior Leader in a Secondary Boys' School in Preston. My official job title is Assistant Principal.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN FOOTBALL NOW?

I have several roles in football at the moment. Firstly, I am a PGMOL match observer and watch Step 1 and Step 2 referees each week on behalf of the PGMOL. Further to this, I am also the appointments' officer for Level 4 referees in the North West of England. This season I have been leading the prestigious FA CORE referee development programme for the North-West region. This is a very important part of the work I currently do as it gives me the most satisfaction seeing referees develop, learn and grow. Finally, I have been the appointments' officer for Blackburn Rovers Academy for the last 28 seasons. As you can see, my life is dominated by football administration.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO IT?

I got into refereeing at University. As I mentioned earlier, I took many qualifications while studying in Sheffield. I decided to give football refereeing a try, enjoyed it and was given lots of plaudits about my ability and decided to continue with regular games. This is where the whole journey started and it soon escalated with more games, and enhancing by learning through moving from junior football into adult football. I slowly climbed the footballing pyramid, having spent several seasons in the amateur leagues in Lancashire and then into the semi-professional leagues. As a young referee, I was very keen to develop my skills and enhance my reputation as a referee at that level of the game. Having operated on the



North-West Counties Football League for two seasons, I was promoted onto the National List of Assistant Referees.

Having embedded myself at that level of the game, I was then selected as a Panel League referee, which, in today's money, is the National League Premier Division. My lining ability took me to the Premier League and this is where I operated for several seasons going to some of the best grounds, officiating some of the best players and working with some of the best referees in the world. This was an enormous experience and one which had a profound impact on my life. Alongside this, I was also selected to represent the English FA as a FIFA Assistant Referee on games outside of England. I am pleased to say that I was the first Asian match official in the Premier League and also the first Asian match official to be awarded the FIFA badge whilst representing the English FA. I am incredibly proud of this achievement and have many amazing memories that will live with me for many years.

WHAT'S YOUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE/WHAT IMPACT DO YOU HOPE TO HAVE?

My hope for the future is to help observe, coach and mentor match officials who are working at the elite levels of the game. I feel that my experiences at the highest levels of the game can be harnessed and channelled into a coaching programme that can help others become better officials and become the best they can be. As referees, we should be

learning about the game from every single appointment we officiate and should never consider ourselves the finished product. Even now, I find myself learning things about the game that make me sit up and take notice. The game is evolving all of the time and match officials must evolve constantly as well to keep up with the modern game.

WHAT ADVICE WILL YOU GIVE ANY ASPIRANTS FOR SUCH A ROLE?

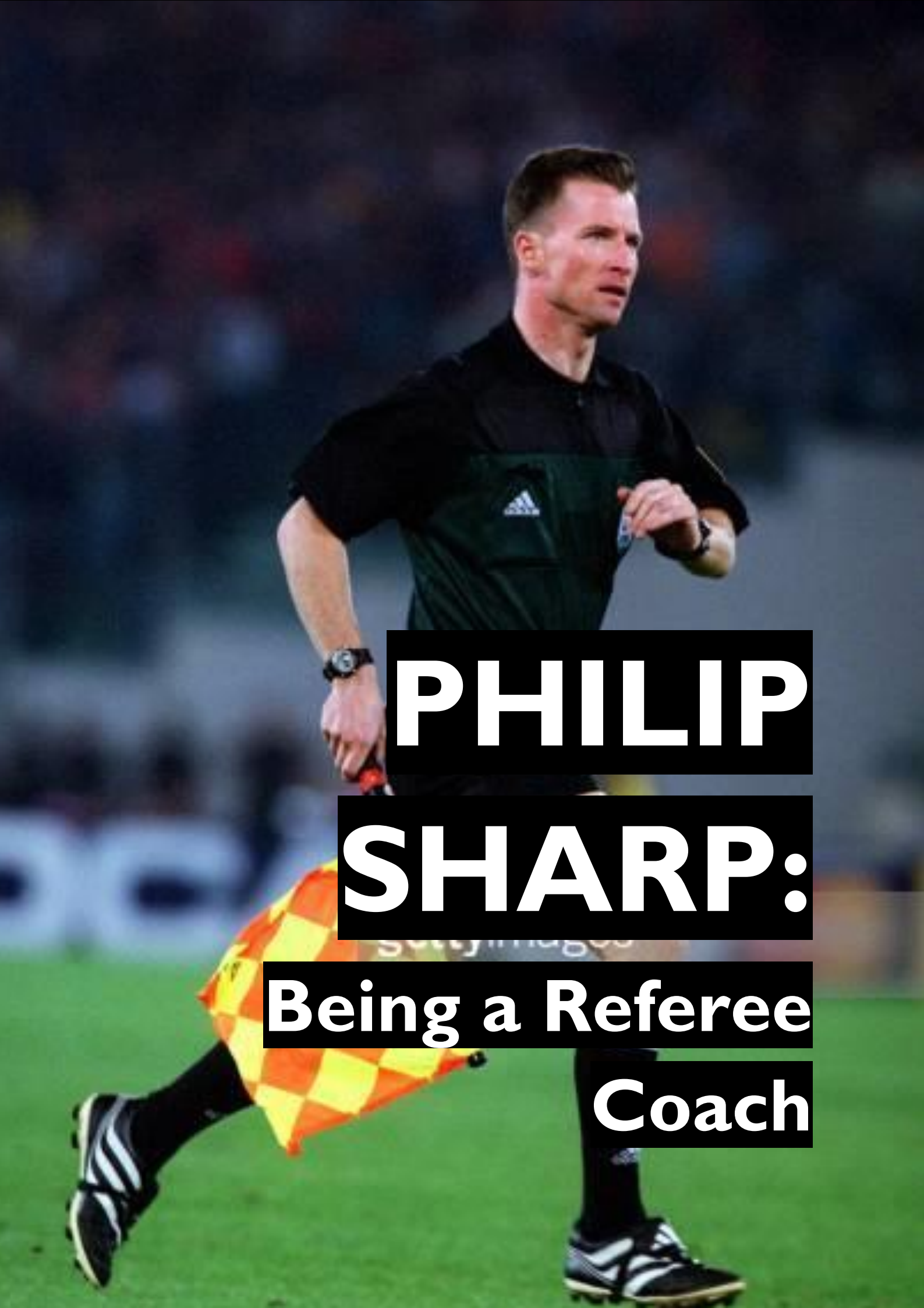
The biggest single piece of advice I can give any referee is to speak to senior colleagues when things are not going well. My biggest problem was that I used to internalise bad performances and become incredibly withdrawn. This is not a good way of dealing with setbacks. I would encourage anyone who is suffering with a confidence crisis to speak openly and seek help and support. On reflection, withdrawing into oneself is probably the worst thing that you can do. With all decisions being very openly dissected by the media at the highest levels of the game, there is lots of opportunities to watch and learn and dissect decisions and performances to help future games.

WHO MOTIVATES YOU?

My motivation comes from seeing others grow and develop. Whether this is a newly qualified young referee or an official in the professional game, I enjoy seeing officials put my advice into practice and trying new things based on my

conversations with them. The best experience is when that advice leads to improved performance.





PHILIP

SHARP:

Being a Referee

Coach

BEING A REFEREE COACH - AN INSPIRING AND VERY REWARDING ROLE

My refereeing journey began at the age of 15, when a friend informed me that The FA were hosting a referee course at Highbury, the then home ground for Arsenal FC - it was a nine-week evening course which I would have to take the train from Cockfosters every Thursday evening to get there. Little did I know then that making the decision to attend and complete the course would change my life in a very positive way.

The course itself was only theory and was held in the Players' Lounge, just off the tunnel entrance to the pitch (later to be informed its called 'the field of play').

Attending each week for two hours, the candidates were taught different aspects of law but unlike The FA referee courses that are held today, where there's so much practical learning, in those days there was none!

The exam to pass the referee course was held in a local school and basically was a tutor (experienced referee) on one side of a Subbuteo table and me on the other. He laid out the players on the cloth field of play and asked me if I was the referee, is everything ok to start the game?

I scanned what was in front of me and said, "Do you have any corner flags and is there a reason one team doesn't have a goalkeeper?" he smiled and said, "Well done! Before you can start a game, you must check that everything is good to start".

I was then asked numerous questions by the tutor who at the end of the evening, confirmed that I had successfully

passed the referee course exam and could start refereeing. This was my first experience as a trainee referee on how to coach others and one that I have developed not only during my active career but also after retiring from the Professional game and actively involved in coaching match officials at grassroots level and becoming an FA Tutor (now called Developer) myself.

Coaching is all about developing others to assist them in reaching their goals, with support, encouragement and advice both in theory and practical learning.

My career started at the age of sixteen, where I refereed in the Barnet Sunday League, where my first game was two local men's teams and because I had no man-management skills or practical experience, I refereed the game, as if I was reading the Laws from a book and so anything that was deemed a caution (yellow card) or dismissal (red card) was issued to the players and as you can imagine the game did not finish with twenty two players remaining on the field of play!

I was officiating in adult football only and learnt quickly, that the way you speak to and treat people is a great life lesson and this has helped me in all the roles I've been involved in, not just in football but in my working life too. Yes, there are times when I had to be firm with people, otherwise they would not take what you are saying as serious or important and do what they want. You don't need to shout just be assertive!

My refereeing career progressed over the years and I soon gained a reputation as a really good Assistant Referee, which was something I really enjoyed doing and within my own local referee society, where match officials met once a month, I was often asked to be an Assistant Referee in some pre-season friendlies and Testimonials at the main grounds of Football League and Premier teams and this gave me the impetus and inspiration to progress up the refereeing ladder. Although I didn't make it as a Referee, I was more than happy to achieve National List (Football League) status as an Assistant Referee and within three seasons I became a Premier League Assistant Referee officiating Wimbledon v Sheffield Wednesday in my first game.

Some eighteen years later, I retired from the game to spend more times with my two young sons, as I wanted to see them growing up.

In my career, I was appointed to The FA Cup Final in 1999 between Manchester United v Newcastle United and promoted to The FIFA International Assistant Referee list, just one of ten from England, and remained on that list for thirteen years, officiating in 180 International appointments, travelling the World and being involved in some high-profile games and Tournaments.

Two of those high-profile games being the 2002 World Cup Final in Japan/South Korea, where I was appointed to the Final between Brazil v Germany, which was refereed by the Italian referee Pierluigi Collina who I learnt so much from, in handling and communicating people from different countries and cultures.

The other memorable game was the 2004 Olympic Games Football tournament Final in Athens, Greece where the all South American Final between Argentina v Paraguay was decided by a single goal, scored by Carlos Tevez of Argentina. In that tournament I worked with match officials from different countries and developed skills that would help me in the future dealing with people, especially listening to the needs and requirements of others, who thought differently to you.

During my time as an active match official on the Football League (EFL) I was asked if I wanted to attend a National Course run by The FA for anyone wanting to be an FA Referee Course Tutor, this was something that I really wanted to do to help develop other new referees in their careers. It was a weekend course learning theory and practical skills to take away and use when 'running' a course yourself as an FA Tutor.

It was invaluable and something that I would highly recommend to anyone that wants to help develop other match officials.

The FA have just recently held a Tutor taster session at St. Georges Park to encourage more people from underrepresented groups to become tutors as this will create role models for younger people to be inspired by and learn from, which is a great initiative to involve more people from different heritage and backgrounds.

Each FA referee course can have up to twenty-four candidates on each course, ranging in ages from fourteen and upwards and as the Tutor you are sharing your knowledge

with them to develop them into being able to referee Mini Soccer matches to start with and whilst they are refereeing in scenarios on the course they are receiving coaching to achieve this.

The FA also run through County FA's a Referee Mentoring programme and that is another avenue to start with. Mentoring is being a support mechanism for new referees especially, attending matches and offering any support the referee may need. I would suggest contacting your County FA for more details.

Becoming an FA Tutor led me to become a Coach of Referees and Assistant Referees because it is important to have a sound knowledge of law and to be able to offer the right advice when asked. In fact being a Coach just happened when other match officials asked for advice either remotely or when I was at a game by simply asking, "What would you do?" or "What advice can you give me about this situation?" for example.

I referred to my own experiences to pass on, what I hoped would be the right answers and you only find out as a Coach when those people come back to you and say, "It worked, Thanks for the advice".

What's interesting about this, is that as a Coach you can be asked anything both positive and for development and you have to be able to get your point across so that the person who is looking for your support gets it.



Raising funds



World
Challenge

Think of it that everyone has different requirements and learning is no different, do you just tell someone, do you give them a book to read or do you show them what to do? Sometimes its all three versions of learning and as a Coach you have to be adaptable to get the best possible learning to someone, in the best way for THEM!

Personally, I'm a visual learner, I like seeing how it's done and then having a go myself and when I'm Coaching, I use visual aids plus written information and set up practical scenarios to get the match official to try it for themselves and see how they get on.

Feedback is just as important as knowing the learning style of each person and any feedback you give as a Coach has to be considered:

- What are the needs of the learner?
- When is the best time to deliver the feedback?
- How much time do you have to deliver the feedback?
- What style of feedback will you offer?

Coaching young/new referees for example is great in Mini Soccer (5v5 and/or 7v7 format) in Youth football. Normally played in four equal quarters. Before the game starts, you would offer advice to start with based on knowing what experience, if any the referee has?

After each quarter, ask the referee what they thought went well?

If they struggle to say anything because they are nervous or shy, say something but say it in a way that is going to instil

confidence like, “I really liked the way, you got the two captains together at the start and the way you dealt with, who has kick off and choice of ends” or “I thought your whistle technique was loud enough for everyone to hear, that was really good”

Then, ask them, “If there was anything they might change or do differently in the future?”

They might respond with, “I got hit by the ball” or “I didn’t know who’s throw in it was?” but don’t give them the answer, ask them, “What would you do next time?” get them to come up with the answer so their learning is ongoing by self-reflection, don’t give them all the answers, unless they struggle to do so.

Speak in a calm tone of voice and don’t complicate matters with jargon or words that they don’t understand, make the feedback relevant to the learner.

Finally, ask them if they understand what you have said? Reinforcement of the message is important for any learner, at any level.

Then, before the next quarter or half starts, say something to motivate them, like “I know you can do this, show me what you can do” or “I believe in you, believe in yourself” for example.

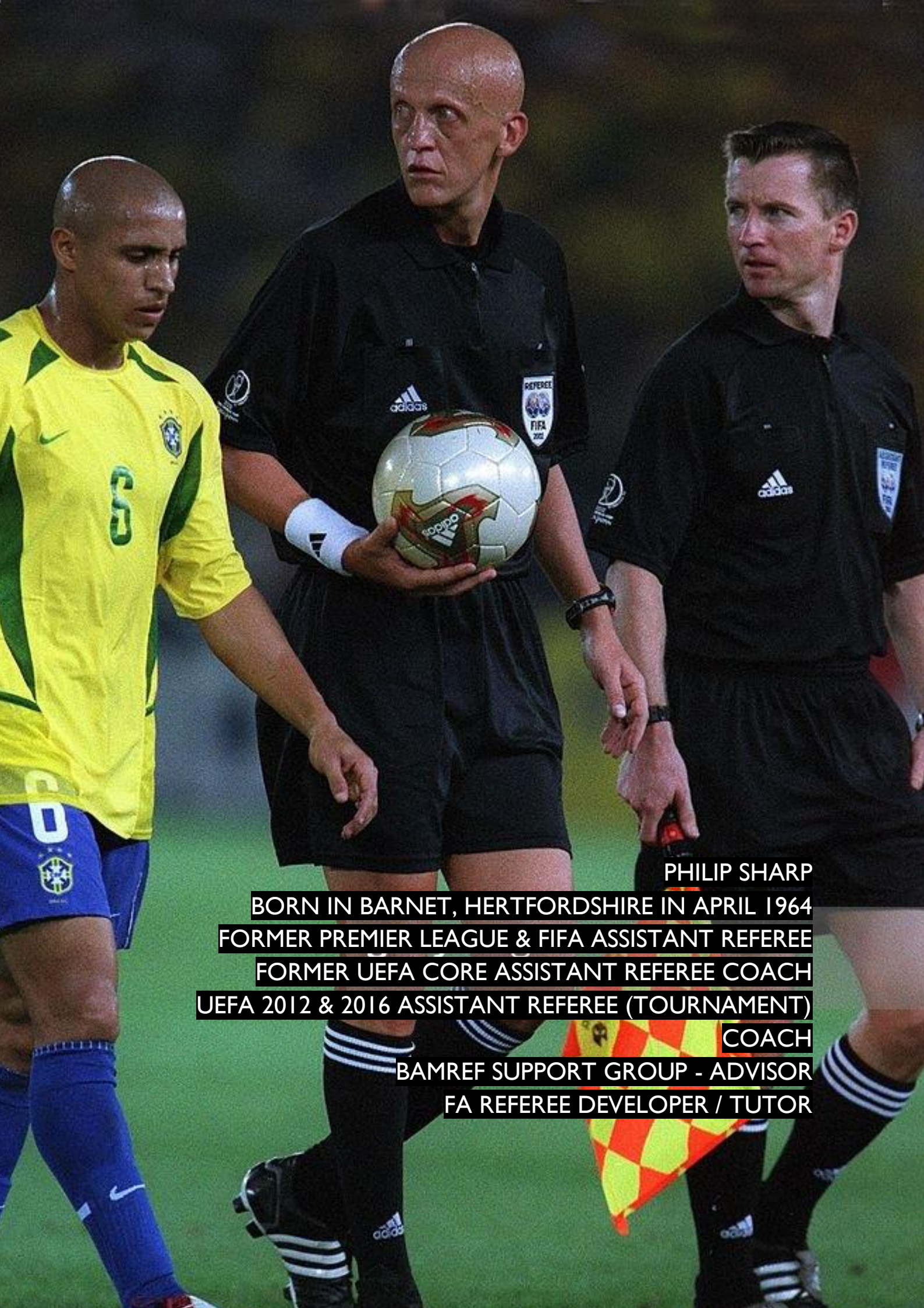
The best part of being a Coach is the reaction from the learner, both on the field of play and after the event. If they show by their actions that they have learnt something and developed that’s very rewarding as a Coach. If they come off at the end of the game with a smile on their face or they have grown in confidence as a person, that is the reward.

What skillsets are required to be a good Coach?

- Good Listening skills
- Good Communication skills
- Willingness to support others for their Development
- Good subject matter knowledge
- Share your knowledge and experience
- Consider all learning styles – what is the best style for each individual you are coaching
- Continue learning yourself, to develop not only others but yourself also
- Be Inspiring

AS A COACH, THE REWARD IS THAT YOU HAVE DEVELOPED SOMEONE ELSE BY GIVING THEM THE BELIEF AND SELF CONFIDENCE THAT THEY CAN DO THIS AND YOU ARE THE SUPPORT REQUIRED TO HELP THEM ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS!

IT'S A VERY REWARDING ROLE AND I WOULD ENCOURAGE ANYONE TO BE A COACH, IN MY CASE AS A MATCH OFFICIAL IN FOOTBALL.



PHILIP SHARP

BORN IN BARNET, HERTFORDSHIRE IN APRIL 1964

FORMER PREMIER LEAGUE & FIFA ASSISTANT REFEREE

FORMER UEFA CORE ASSISTANT REFEREE COACH

UEFA 2012 & 2016 ASSISTANT REFEREE (TOURNAMENT)

COACH

BAMREF SUPPORT GROUP - ADVISOR

FA REFEREE DEVELOPER / TUTOR



**PICTURE
THIS:
ANIKA
LESLIE-
WALKER**

WHERE DOES YOUR JOURNEY BEGIN?

I was born in Nottingham, so a midlands girl at heart however I have been living up in the North for the last seven or so years.

WHERE DOES YOUR FAMILY COME FROM?

My parents were born in England however my grandparents were born in Jamaica. I love Jamaica, I recommend for anyone who has not visited to put it on your travel list! I was fortunate to visit in December 2022 and it was so nice to visit family and enjoy the beach life.

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST FOOTBALL MEMORY?

My first memory was playing outside my house with my brother and his friends however they did not always let me play, so I worked hard to increase my skill and strength on the ball. Once I had mastered that, I was never last pick. Thinking about playing in a more formal setting, they started a girls' team at my junior school, we had a strong 5 a-side team and were often entered into tournaments. My love for football continually grew, so I went to play for a local team where many of my friends from school played.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

In sport my first part time job was working as a sports coach during the school holidays. My first full time job was working at Bedfordshire Football Association as a Football Development Officer with a remit to developing the women and girl's game. I loved this job, I was able to build a strong

network with the football clubs, schools, coaches, volunteers and officials across the county, working within The Football Association strategy it allowed me to position various opportunities to ensure football was developing and sustainable.

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER?

My dream job whilst at school was to be a physical education (PE) teacher, I had a really good experience of PE at school therefore looked up to my teachers as role models. When I went to university and worked towards that goal, it allowed me to realise there were so many other career opportunities available. When I completed my level 2 football coaching certificate, it opened up opportunities to coach at Luton Town football academy and to coach in California. These opportunities provided me an increased love for the game and the motivation to work in football full-time.

WHERE DID YOU STUDY?

My undergraduate degree (BA) Sport Studies, I undertook at Bedfordshire university. I also completed an MSc Sport Management at Loughborough university and a teaching qualification at Warwick University. I am currently in the final stages of completing my PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University, my thesis examines female university students' engagement in sport and physical activity. I still have further aspirations to continue studying post PhD, I really like learning and often listen to books on audible.



WHAT'S YOUR JOB NOW?

I am currently a Senior Lecturer in Sociology of Sport at Nottingham Trent University; I have worked in higher education for almost eight years and really enjoy it. I currently teach undergraduate students who are on a Sport Science course, I mainly teach on the sociology and professional development modules. I also supervise dissertation students which I thoroughly enjoy, as some of their research is so innovative and I often see growth and development in their dissertation journey. As part of my role I also undertake research, I specialise at looking at sport through the lens of gender and ethnicity. I am currently undertaking a study that explores the spectatorship experience of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic women in football.

I am also a Non-Executive Director at Manchester Football Association and Chair of the Inclusion Advisory Board. This is a role that I started in June 2022, within this role I work with the team to consider the different protected characteristics and ensure that everyone in Manchester can access football and feels supported by the county football association. I am really enjoying the role; the county FA have a lot of inclusive work they are delivering and we aim to engage with the Manchester community to enhance their football experiences.

WHAT'S YOUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE/WHAT IMPACT DO YOU HOPE TO HAVE?

There are numerous structural challenges in sport which affect inclusivity, National Governing Bodies understand the requirement for equality, diversity, and inclusion however some organisations are not being accountable which is having an impact on the development of their sport. I would like to work on projects that allow this transition by consulting organisations on ways to improve their practice.

I believe in collaborative working and have done a lot of work around youth leadership, empowering the next generation to be in spaces where their voices can be heard and they can make an impact is important to me.

WHO MOTIVATES YOU?

My mum is my key motivation; she has always supported me in my development and is very hard working. She is my number 1 fan, although she is not a fan of football she does try to act interested at times which is funny. In fact, during the 2022 Women's Euros she did show some interest, I was shocked when she was telling me the score lines of random matches (small wins!).

FOOTBALL BLACK LIST





GOOD

NEWS &

UPDATES



BAMREF Support Group @BAMERef · Mar 29

Congratulations to Sam Allison, appointed as Referee in the FA Youth Challenge Cup Semi-Final between West Ham and Southampton. This is the first time since 2003, a Black Referee has taken charge of a major cup Semi -Final competition following Uriah Rennie FA Trophy Final



BAMREF Support Group @BAMERef · Mar 28

What an image from last week's fixture with Lauren Impey, the only active Black female referee in the pro game taking charge in the WSL!... 3 teams, 3 captains, 3 inspiring black female role models! Where are all the Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage Female officials?





BAMREF Support Group @BAMERef · Jan 5

...

Many Congratulations to BAMREF Women's Game Officer on receiving a MBE in the Kings first New Year Honours list for her services to football and charity work. The team know how passionate Jj Roble is about Refereeing and driving inclusion. This recognition is truly deserved.



BAMREF Support Group @BAMERef · Mar 20

...

The BAMREF Support team have been on the road this week with Minesh Gupta, @muscleboundref @RashpalReferee and Ambassador Jarnail Singh promoting Referee to underrepresented Communities. #refereeingisforall.





FOR REFEREES

23 THE REFEREE RECOGNITION AWARDS

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FOR REFEREES

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ALL WE NEED ARE YOUR NOMINATIONS





FOOTBALL
**BLACK
LIST**

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

NEXT BAMREF SUPPORT GROUP ANNUAL CONFERENCE 23 JULY 2023



'THE FOOTBALL NOVEL IS BACK.'

THE TIMES

ff

YOUR SHOW

'WONDERFUL.'
IRENOSEN OKOJIE


'FANTASTIC.'
CANDICE CARTY-WILLIAMS

'A NOVEL RICH IN BOTH
POETRY AND DETAIL.'
DAVID PEACE

ASHLEY HICKSON-LOVE

YOUR SHOW



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