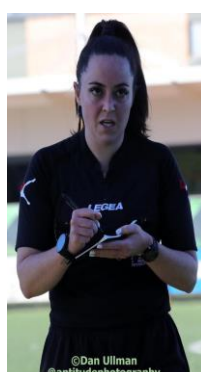




Welcome to this ninety third edition of **“The Referee”**, the newsletter for all NSW State League Football Referees. This newsletter will enable our branch to communicate directly with our members and will cover issues and areas of interest to all referees. We wish to ensure that all information, educational resources and opportunities that our branch provides for referees finds its way to those who are likely to benefit most – and that’s you!



To do for NSWSLFR members in July 2021:

1. [Review the 2020/21 LOTG changes](#)
2. [Make yourself available for competition matches on Horizon WebRef](#)
3. [Attend training every week](#)
4. [Attend July General Meeting](#)
5. [Register for Fitness Check Assessments](#)

How To Become A Better Referee - Keith Hackett

Keith Hackett, counted among the top 100 referees of all time, discusses how to improve at officiating.

HOW TO BECOME A BETTER REFEREE: A Referee must always strive for perfection in their career, knowing that every time they go out onto the field of play to officiate a game it is an opportunity to learn. Nothing should have been left in the dressing room, for 100% effort will reap reward.

When you are watching games either on television or at a stadium, I want referees to look closely at the team of officials. Examine the movement of the referee in open play and positioning at set pieces. Consider the quality of the decision-making accuracy and the way decisions are communicated to the players and fans. How did the referee manage conflict? A referee should study these aspects in the top officials.

I had the pleasure of coaching the top English referees who officiate in the English Premier League. Every game is beamed live across the world with a minimum of twenty-two cameras forensically viewing every decision made by the referee. One of those referees that I worked with was Howard Webb, the World Cup Final Referee in South Africa 2010. It was a proud moment to watch someone who you had seen locally referee at grassroots level, and thanks to his efforts and a willingness to listen and learn, there was the man from Rotherham, South Yorkshire walking out into the World Cup Final, holding the ball. In the years leading up to that final he had developed into a referee who was impressively fit and mobile around the field of play. This fitness was down to the hard work and dedication in his training. He was not afraid to seek advice and then absorb it into his game plan. His years as a serving police officer had provided him with excellent interpersonal skills, preparing him to work closely and effectively with his assistant referees and fourth official. Managing conflict through his calm and positive body language and presence quickly earned him the respect from players.

I now want to give you some insights into refereeing in order for all stakeholders to have a greater understanding. Referees have to develop a matrix of skills, and in this article, I want to touch on a few of them for your consideration.

THE SIX 'C's IN REFEREEING: It is of course essential that a referee has a clear understanding of the Laws of the game, as well as a fitness and nutrition regime that ensures the adoption of lifestyle necessary to keep up with the game, even at the highest levels. My rule of the Six C's highlights other requirements of a match official.

CONTROL: The ability to have self-control and to manage players and the soccer match. A referee must stay calm and composed, as well as authoritative and respected.

COMMUNICATION: The effective use of the whistle, giving it a loud blast when you are penalising those foul challenges. Any kind of communication must be clear and decisive.

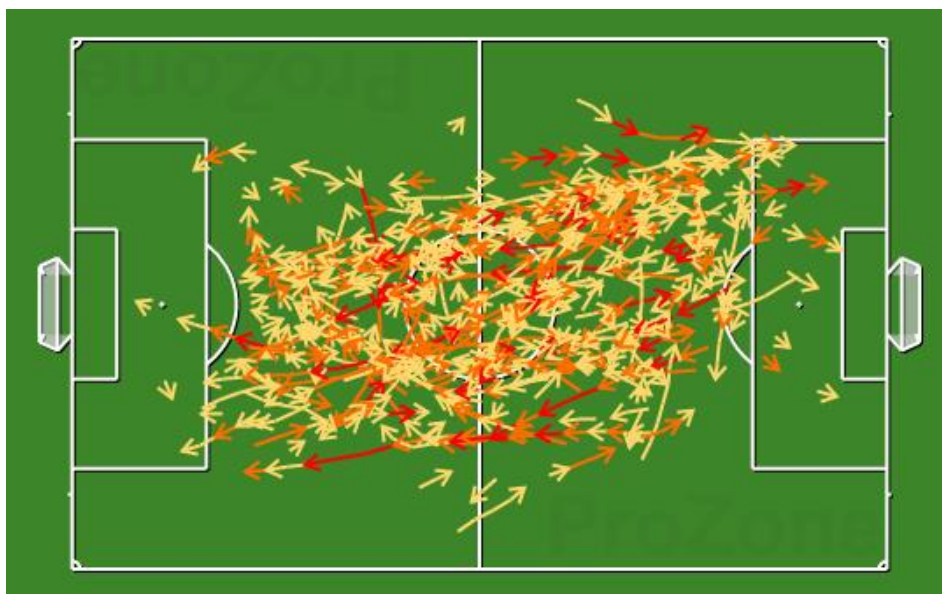
CONSISTENCY: When you step onto the field of play in front of you is a blank canvas, the behaviour of players can change, and when substitutes take place, the game may change as well. A referee needs to be aware of these potential changes, and despite them stick to his/her officiating instincts and decisions.

CONFIDENCE: Through positive body language you can display confidence, but take care because others may see it as arrogance. A referee must strike the balance of being authoritative and assertive without arrogance.

COURAGE: You will be called upon to make those big calls and you must have courage. You have earned the title of referee because of your knowledge and ability, so trust yourself and make your decisions decisively.

COMMONSENSE: I like referees who have an understanding of the game, and when and where appropriate will apply this skill set often to take charge of situations.

FITNESS AND MOVEMENT: The following picture demonstrates the movement of a top FIFA referee. The red arrows show the explosive short bursts of speed at approx. 7 metres per second. Howard Webb in his games constantly delivered an average distance in excess of 12,000 metres, with 1,000 metres delivered in explosive sprints. It is clear that top referees must maintain an exceptional level of fitness, not only for covering long distances but also for frequent high-intensity bursts to keep up with the game.



MANAGEMENT SKILLS: Referees have to manage players, but at the upper echelons of the game they are in fact managing an event. I expect referees to possess at least four skills in this area:

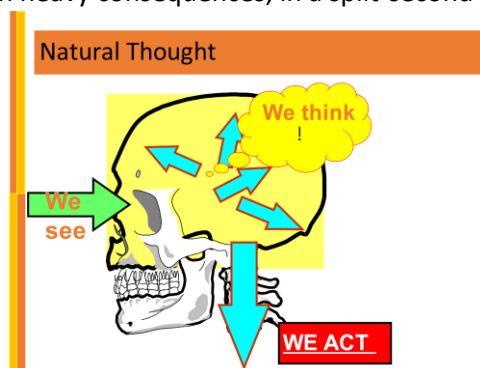
1. Management Skills
2. Interpersonal Skills
3. Presentational Skills
4. Cognitive Skills, (Anticipation/awareness – Better referees see things before they happen)

These abilities are necessary for managing an event with so many different variables.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING: Decision making is the cornerstone of effective refereeing. In order to make appropriate decisions, referees must:

- Be able to communicate well
- BE ABLE TO HANDLE AND DEAL WITH CONFLICT
- Be fit and mobile
- BE PROACTIVE NOT REACTIVE
- Have a good knowledge and accurate implementation of the laws of the game.
- BE A GOOD MANAGER, OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS: SEE. RECOGNISE. THINK. ACT. Referees must be a master of this process, able to make difficult decisions, often with heavy consequences, in a split-second and with confidence.



Step 1: SEE

- Fitness – mental/physical
- Viewing positions
- Dropping zones
- Scanning radar
- Reading and anticipating play

Step 2: RECOGNISE

- Messages from players
- Speed of challenge
- Fair or Foul?
- Player's reactions

Step 3: THINK

- Consider what you have seen, and what the appropriate response is.

Step 4: ACT

- Whistle, arms, voice
- Calm approach
- Air of confidence
- Firm but fair
- Correct application of Law

This is an insight into the world of officiating football from grassroots to the top level. All referees must study, reflect on, and improve these essential aspects of their performance. Examine the discussed topics and consider which you might be able to improve in. Watch for each in professional referees at the top level, and see how they approach and handle different scenarios and challenges. Refereeing takes time and dedication, but with the right attitude and continuous learning you will see yourself improving.

“When I started refereeing, in 1989, I desperately wanted to be like Keith Hackett. I had the build, the height and his South Yorkshire accent. What I did not have was his expertise. 21 years later I had the benefit of Keith as my Coach. Keith was instrumental in moulding me into a Premier League referee, ultimately guiding me all the way to the 2010 World Cup.” - Howard Webb, 2010 World Cup Final Referee

Modified and adapted from an article on SportsEDTV blog by Keith Hackett

Reacting Well To High Pressure Periods During Games

How do you officiate under pressure? What situations within games do you find the most stressful? Play-off fixtures, knockout matches and the last minutes of close games are stressful for many referees. As the importance of the contest grows, the pressure officials feel skyrockets. Fixtures with lengthy additional time, or which go into a period of extra time are particularly stressful for some referees.

An official may be fixated upon not being the reason that a team wins or loses in their mind, that they end up finding themselves unable to judge key match incidents for fear of the impact of making a mistake. This, in turn could lead to them making an even bigger mistake if they, for example, failed to recognise foul play in the penalty area. It is also possible that a referee in this position could fall into the trap of spoiling the spectacle of the match by being quick on the whistle, awarding free kicks for every foul, irrespective of the magnitude of that foul and failing to play advantages when it is possible to do so.

Reasons For Feeling Increased Pressure in Games Which Enter Additional or Extra Time:

- You may want to get the game over quickly, instead of patiently waiting for opportunities to ensure the game is played fairly.
- You might want to get straight in to make a big decision and avoid debate ensuing amongst players, instead of getting your colleagues involved and taking their advice to come to the correct decision.
- You may feel your team of officials depends upon you to deliver the game successfully.

When you feel increased pressure, you tense up, rush into decisions, and make costly mistakes. Officiating with excessive pressure rarely results in peak performance.

The Key to Producing in Added Time is Managing Pressure & Refereeing Your Game.

In the Canada & United States National Hockey League, 'overtime' play is frequent. We can learn a lot, as officials, from Ice Hockey players, as detailed in this example; In a 2021 regular season fixture where the Minnesota Wild faced the Los Angeles Kings, the game was tied 3-3 heading into overtime.

As time was running out in overtime, Minnesota winger Mats Zuccarello threaded a pass between defenders to teammate Matt Dumba. Dumba skilfully rounded the goal tender and scored in the last seconds of overtime to give the Wild a 4-3 victory. The win was the fourth overtime victory by the Wild in the 2021 season and Dumba's goal broke a record for most career overtime goals.

Why has Dumba been so successful in overtime? Dumba doesn't overthink or try to force his game. Instead, Dumba keeps pressure at bay by playing within himself and focusing on the action as it unfolds on the ice. ***"I wasn't even thinking. I was just focusing on making the right play and not trying to force it. Just so happened that Zuccy was able to find me."*** – Matt Dumba, Minnesota Wild

Managing Pressure Does Not Mean Eliminating Pressure, it Means Reacting Well to Pressure Situations.

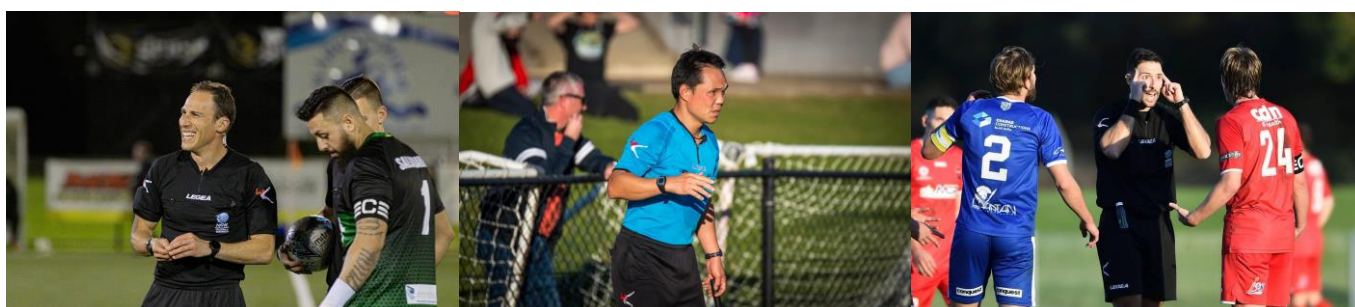
Coping with pressure is well within your mental abilities. Learning to maintain just the right range of pressure will help you perform at your optimal level no matter if it's midway through a league game, extra time or a knockout fixture.

How to Manage Pressure in Matches Which Reach Additional & Extra Time:

1. Embrace the pressure as a something that will elevate your officiating level and give you more energy to perform well.
2. Use breathing, stretching, staying in the moment, and trust in your skills to perform well under pressure.
3. Referee as you would at any other point during the season and try to allow the game to flow as much as possible to a natural conclusion.

Managing pressure is a mental skill that all officials should have within their armoury.

Modified and adapted from an article in The Third Team Blog by Nathan Sherratt



Highlights From 2021 - So Far This Season

NSW State League Referees / Football Australia / FIFA

- **Stephen Lucas** – 50 A-League matches
- **Kris Griffiths-Jones** – 200 VAR matches on the A-League
- **Sarah Ho** – Nominated for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup
- **Waratah Cup Elimination Final** – Craig Fisher (R), Brad Wright (AR1), Cameron Wright (AR), Matthew McOrist (4th Official) – Postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions
- **W-League Debut** – Amber Morris (4th Official) and Rebecca Mackie (AR)
- **W-League Semi Final** – Maggie Price (AR), Kelly Jones (AAR)
- **W-League Grand Final** – Sarah Ho (AR)
- **A-League Debut** – Tim Danaskos (AR)
- **A-League Elimination Finals** – Andrej Giev (AR), Kurt Ams (4th Official), Kearney Robinson (AVAR), Kris Griffiths-Jones (VAR), Alex Glasgow (assessor)
- **A League Semi Finals** – Michael Bailey (AVAR), John Bowdler (Assessor)
- **A-League Grand Final** – Kris Griffiths-Jones (VAR), Kearney Robinson (AVAR1), Michael Bailey (AVAR2)

Additional

- **Instagram** - NSW State League Football Referees now online with Instagram
- **John Bowdler** – Refereeing comeback at the Bathurst Cup
- **Zoe Benjamin** – Opportunity to referee with FIFA referee Kate Jacaewicz in the Sutherland Shire local district.
- **Legends Game (Leichhardt Apia Tigers v Sydney Olympic)** – Con Diomis (R), Sandro Peticarni (AR), Jim Nicolaou (AR), Emmanuel Loupis (4th Official), Robert Colombo (Assessor)

2020-2021 Laws of the Game Quiz

A thorough understanding of the Laws of the Game is an essential quality of a good referee. All referees should regularly review their Laws of the Game book to ensure they are correctly interpreting and applying them.

This monthly LOTG Quiz is highly recommended for all active referees and assessors and counts towards meeting part of the criteria for honour games consideration and annual awards. To reinforce your knowledge, you are encouraged to utilise your Laws of the Game Book to assist in answering the quiz questions. All quiz questions are based on the new 2020/2021 IFAB LOTG.

[Click Here](#)

Click on the "Click Here" button to complete the highly recommended monthly LOTG Quiz to test yourself on how well you know the laws.

June 2021 LOTG Quiz Answers: 1 - C; 2 - C; 3 - B; 4 - A; 5 - D; 6 - B; 7 - A; 8 - C; 9 - D; 10 - B.

Save These Dates

Friday 2nd July 2021 – General Meeting Via Zoom at 7.30 pm.

Friday 6th August 2021 – TBC

Friday 3rd September 2021 - TBC

Note: Zoom meetings may replace in person meetings.

**New Uniform - Red - Manly United vs Apia Leichhardt Tigers
Black - Apia Leichhardt Tigers vs Northbridge Bulls**



**Richard Baker - NSWSLFR TSC Member
and Newsletter Editor**

