



# Report Writing

## WHAT'S IN A GOOD REPORT?

A well-written report provides the Judiciary Committee all the information necessary for them to make a decision. It deals entirely with FACT and has no place for OPINION.

Therefore a good report has as its essence -

- ◆ All the relevant details
- ◆ It must be completely objective

One of the strengths of good Referees is their ability to handle the bubbling emotions and actions of player whenever they occur in the game. The referee always remains firm, calm and in control. The Referee bases his actions on his observation of the particular match under his control.

If the Referee remains calm and is civil to the player / players when applying the appropriate sanctions, it enhances the Referee's control of the match and gain's respect from the players.

Decisions are made on things that have occurred AND NOT on what the Referee THINKS may have occurred.

When a Referee has to apply a sanction against a player in the form of a Caution or a Send Off, it is because of something that the player has done which is contrary to the Laws of the Game.

The decision to Caution or Dismiss a player results from the following process:-

- ◆ Observation of play
- ◆ Consideration
- ◆ Decision
- ◆ Action

The Referee's Report should mirror this process.

It must **ONLY** include the facts about the incident that occurred. It must **not** include any comment on matters of opinion that the Referee may have in relation to the incident.

A Referee needs to be careful with the words that are used in their reports. Colourful language tends to mask the facts rather than make them clear. Avoid using overly dramatic and emotive terms in your reports.

Remember what is required is: -

**“THE FACTS MA’M ..... JUST THE FACTS”**

Give some careful thought to the wording of your reports, as it may make all the difference between being a help or a hindrance to those adjudicating on the case, as those charged with this duty are always anxious to support the referee as far as justice will allow.

Referees' would do well to seek the help and guidance of senior colleagues, should they experience problems in the writing of reports.

The following hints should be digested by the Referee and retained for future guidance.

- a) Good reports are not only clear but also concise
- b) In the report, do not be vague
- c) The report must omit nothing of importance
- d) If questions are asked, it is obvious the report did not cover the subject fully
- e) Your statements and information must be quite definite
- f) Content yourself with the bare facts of the case
- g) Do not over elaborate
- h) Remember your report is a first hand account of what has happened
- i) Keep in mind the need for clear and impartial thinking
- j) Your report should be based on facts, not prejudiced by emotion or pre-conceived ideas
- k) Those people dealing with the report only want to know what actually happened
- l) Too many words may confuse the issue
- m) They are prepared for busy people by busy people and therefore must waste no time or words
- n) The language should be suited to the people who are going to read it
- o) In the reporting of foul language, the full words used by the offender must be used. First letter, underscore, last letter should never be used to describe the foul word used by the player. For example, if the following was shown in a Send Off Report “F\_\_\_\_\_G”, a player could argue that he said that he was “falling” or “fasting” or something similar.

**INCIDENT REPORT WRITING.**

Under Law 5 of the Laws of the Game, the Referee shall report to the appropriate authority any misconduct or misbehaviour on the part of spectators, officials, players, named substitutes or other persons which takes place either on the field of play or in its vicinity at any time prior to, during or after the match in question so that the appropriate action may be taken.

The preparation of Incident Reports can and does present problems for many Referees, both experienced and the inexperienced. You must bear in mind that your report will form the base for any action that the Judiciary Committee or the Football

Association may take. Reports should be BRIEF, CLEAR and CONCISE so as to enable the Judiciary to see quite clearly what has occurred during the match.

Referees must ensure that they differentiate between "The Offence" and "The Incident" when making a report.

- "The Offence" is a classification according to the Laws of the Game of a player's misconduct.
- "The Incident" is a description of what the player actually did at the time he committed the offence.

### **SEND-OFF OFFENCES / REPORTS .**

A player is sent from the field of play if he commits any of the following:-

- 1. Is guilty of Serious Foul Play**
- 2. Is guilty of Violent Conduct**
- 3. Spits at an opponents or any other person**
- 4. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (field player only)**
- 5. Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or penalty kick**
- 6. Uses offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures**
- 7. Receives a second caution in the same match**

While the layout of the Send Off Report may have changed slightly over the years, its content (i.e. information required) has not changed at all.

### **HEAD OF REPORT.**

This section contains information on:-

- a) The Teams playing
- b) The Grade / Division and, if required, the Competition e.g. State Cup
- c) The Date / Ground and, if required, the Kick Off time
- d) The Players Name / Shirt No / Team and, if required, his I.D. number
- e) The Offence (as per the above) and the Offence Code.
- f) The Referee must take down those details as required from the team sheet prior to handing it over to the home team at the conclusion of the match.

### **BODY OF REPORT.**

To help the Judiciary to decide exactly what occurred and what if any penalty should be imposed on the player concerned, the Body of the report should make reference to the following : -

- a) Time of incident
- b) Lead up to the incident
- c) The incident itself and position of the ball
- d) The Referees position (distance away, angle of view etc.)

- e) Treatment of injured player (if any) and if he continued to play or had to be substituted because of injury.
- f) How did the player ordered off, leave the field (immediately or did he have to be removed)
- g) If for a second caution, mention the first cautionable offence

If a player is sent - off on an Assistant Referee's Report -- The Assistant should indicate his position at point (d) above

The following specimen reports are a guide only and while they do not provide for all eventualities, they will cover those incidents, which are most commonly reported by Referees. It is **not** claimed that these specimen reports are ideal in every detail, but it is hoped that they will provide a useful guide for you the Referee.

#### **A. OFFENCE : SERIOUS FOUL PLAY**

**INCIDENT:** In the 73rd minute of this match, after a scramble in the goal mouth, No 7 of Blue Dragons and an opponent began to push each other in such a manner that it led to firm blows being struck by both players.

I was about five (5) metres from the players with a good angle of view.

As I signalled for play to stop, No 7 of Blue Dragons landed a blow with his clenched fist on his opponents face before two of his teammates restrained him.

I at once showed the Red Card to No. 7 of Blue Dragons and his opponent and sent them from the field.

**Please note** - You will of course submit an additional, separate report concerning the opponent's part in the incident along similar lines.

**INCIDENT:** During the second half of this match, I had occasion to speak to No. 6 of Harriet Town and an opponent when they exchanged words with each other after they were involved in a tussle for the ball.

Shortly afterwards, No. 6 of Harriet Town launched a ferocious tackle with his legs/feet on the same opponent when he was in possession of the ball, bringing his opponent down without making contact with the ball.

I signalled at once for play to stop, had the opponent treated for his injuries, and showed the Red Card to No. 6 of Harriet Town and sent him from the field.

The opponent was unable to continue and was substituted before play was restarted.

#### **B. OFFENCE : VIOLENT CONDUCT**

**INCIDENT:** In the 4th minute of the second half No. 4 of Red Devils was pushed by an opponent in a scramble for the ball and I awarded a free kick to his team. As No.4 of Red Devils ran past the same opponent, he punched this player with a clenched fist, on the side of the head farthest away from me.

I witnessed the incident from about twenty five (25) metres away and my Assistant Referee also flagged immediately the incident occurred. He was about ten (10) metres from the incident on the opposite side to me.

After having stopped play, I conferred with the Assistant Referee to make sure no other infringement had taken place by the players in the incident. I then showed No. 4 of Red Devils the Red Card and sent him from the field of play.

**INCIDENT:** In the 75th minute of the match, with the score at 1 - 1, I disallowed a goal to Wild Emus for obstruction on the opposing goal-keeper by one of their players.

I was immediately surrounded by protesting players and in the scramble, No.9 of Wild Emus placed both his hands on my shoulders and pushed me hard backwards off my feet causing me to fall onto my back on the ground.

I regained my stance and immediately showed the Red Card to No. 9 of Wild Emus and sent him from the field.

### **C. OFFENCE : OFFENSIVE, INSULTING OR ABUSIVE LANGUAGE or GESTURES**

**INCIDENT:** In the 65th minute of this match, I called for play to continue when No. 7 of Tollford City appealed that an opponent had fouled him as he prepared to shoot for goal from near the penalty spot.

Realising that he had not been awarded a penalty, this player, who was no more than ten (10) metres from me, shouted "Referee! You're a blind arsehole!"

I at once stopped play and No7 of Tollford City was shown the Red Card and sent from the field.

**INCIDENT:** In the last few seconds of the first half of the match, I had awarded a goal to the Blue Angels which was hotly disputed by the Red Devils who claimed that the ball had not gone over the goal line.

As we were walking back to the centre of the field, No10 of Red Devils, who was about two yards from me, said in a threatening tone using offensive language "You bastard! I'll fucking get you for that!" to the player who had scored the goal.

I called No.10 of the Reds Devils aside, showed him the Red Card and sent him from the field.

### **D. OFFENCE : PERSISTENT MISCONDUCT AFTER RECEIVING A CAUTION**

**INCIDENT:** In the 6th minute of the second half, when an appeal for off-side by Harriet Town against an opponent failed to bring any response from my assistant or myself, No 3 of the Harriet Town shouted to my assistant "Stick the bloody flag up goose". I stopped play and Cautioned this player for Dissent.

As I had already cautioned No. 3 of Harriet Town in the first half of the match for a late tackle, he was duly shown the Red Card and sent from the field.

### **E. REPORTS BY ASSISTANT REFEREES ( NEUTRAL)**

**INCIDENT:** In the 8th minute of the second half, the Referee awarded a free kick to No. 4 of Tollford City for pushing. As this player ran past his opponent who did the pushing, No. 4 of Toll City did strike his opponent with a clenched fist to the side of his head.

I was about ten (10) metres from the incident and signalled the referee who had in fact seen the incident. The Referee sent No. 4 of Tollford City from the field after conferring with me to make sure no other infringements had occurred.

**INCIDENT:** I was the Assistant Referee in the above match, and positioned on the other side of the field to the technical area. In the 4th minute of the second half, I saw my fellow assistant referee raise his flag and heard the referees whistle to stop play.

The referee then walked over to the other assistant, and then showed No. 4 of Blue Angels the Red Card. I was about 70 metres from the incident and did not in fact see what had occurred.

#### **F. REPORTS OF MISCONDUCT BEFORE / DURING OR AFTER A MATCH**

Such reports are written on the "INCIDENT REPORT" form for all events for which a Caution / Send Off Report is not appropriate. It is used for offences committed by players, club officials, managers etc immediately prior to, during or at the conclusion of the match.

**INCIDENT:** I have to report that, as I returned to my dressing room after the match, the coach of Ashmore Animals, Mr Havawhinge, was standing by his team's door. As I passed him, he said to me, "You must be the worst fucking referee in the country". When I failed to make any response, he turned to his players and said to them "He's not only stupid and blind, but he's fucking deaf to boot".

After having ascertained his name from the team's manager, I informed the coach that the whole incident would be reported to the local football association.