Elite Association Football Referee Training and Officiating:
A Comparative Analysis of Refereeing Practices in Three
European Leagues

Thomas Webb

‘The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Portsmouth.’

November 2014
Abstract

Association Football referees have been an under researched subject within the social sciences. Association Football more generally, has been researched more extensively, whereas ‘the referee’ has been the subject of research in the natural sciences, most notably in physiology and psychology. As a result of this lack of attention from social scientists little is known about elite referees, their historical evolution, development pathways and structures, training, match preparation and performance.

This PhD thesis offers a comparative analysis of elite refereeing in three countries namely England, Spain and Italy. The thesis provides a comparative analysis of elite refereeing in the domestic leagues identified, as well as UEFA and FIFA and offers a detailed series of recommendations, designed to inform, develop and improve elite refereeing in European and world football.

Initially the thesis utilises an historical approach in order to outline and analyse the inception and early development of refereeing prior to the codification of Association Football in 1863, paying particular attention to referee training, assessment and support until the modern day. Empirical research is also employed in the form of semi-structured interviews with elite referees and those involved with the management, administration and training of these referees. The cultural differences that exist between the leagues, players, fans and media that operate within those leagues are considered as is the impact of UEFA and FIFA and the focus on standardisation and uniformity across domestic countries, principally driven by UEFA and FIFA. This thesis has identified significant aspects of difference in practice between individual referees and the systems that they operate within, contrary to objectives connected with the uniformity and standardisation of match officials.
Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION: THE RESEARCH FOCUS ................................................................. 2
JUSTIFICATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH .................................................... 2
RESEARCH, ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL AND REFEREEING .................................................. 7
STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS ................................................................................................. 8

CHAPTER 2 – REFEREEING IN ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL: KEY EVENTS AND SIGNIFICANT
DEVELOPMENTS UNTIL 1900 ............................................................................................... 10
EARLY FORMS OF FOOTBALL ............................................................................................... 10
INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF RULE MAKING AND THE NEED FOR AN ARBITRATOR ............ 13
FOOTBALL, RULES AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOL INFLUENCE ............................................ 14
THE USE OF UMPIRES OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ................................................. 17
‘UMPIRES’ AND ‘REFEREES’ IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL ........... 19
THE FORMATION OF THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE .................................................................. 21
EMERGENCE OF THE REFEREE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF POWER ....................... 22
VIOLENCE, GAME MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT FOR REFEREES ................................ 23
THE FA REFEREES’ COMMITTEE AND THE REFEREE’S UNION (ASSOCIATION) REFORMED .... 29

CHAPTER 3 – THE DEVELOPMENT OF REFEREEING (I): FROM PROFESSIONALISATION TO
PAYMENT .................................................................................................................................. 33
THE INTRODUCTION OF REFEREE CLASSIFICATIONS ......................................................... 33
AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL CLASS-BASED STRUGGLES ........................................... 38
THE ‘PROFESSIONAL’ REFEREE AND THE GROWTH OF ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL ........... 44
REFEREES AS AN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING: DIVISIONS AND DIFFICULTIES ............ 47
PAYMENT FOR REFEREES ...................................................................................................... 48
FIFA, REFEREEING AND THE ENGLISH REPRESENTATIVES ............................................... 50

CHAPTER 4 – THE DEVELOPMENT OF REFEREEING (II): THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING,
ASSESSMENT AND STRUCTURE .......................................................................................... 55
ADVISING THE REFEREES – GUIDANCE FROM GOVERNING BODIES ............................... 55
THE FA MEMORANDUM, 1935 – FOR THE GUIDANCE OF REFEREES AND LINESMEN ........ 57
THE NATIONAL REFEREES CONFERENCE 1946 – A CONCERTED FOCUS ON REFEREE TRAINING,
EXAMINATION AND PROMOTION ..................................................................................... 61
REFEREE TRAINING, ASSESSMENT AND PROMOTION 1945-1950 ..................................... 63
REFEREE GRADING, ASSESSMENT AND APPOINTMENTS 1950-1960 ............................... 66
ASSESSORS, TRAINING COURSES AND REFEREE FITNESS .............................................. 69
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FA AND THE RA ....................................................... 72
FURTHER TRAINING, PROMOTION AND ASSESSMENT: 1960-1980 .................................... 74
ADMINISTRATION OF TRAINING AND REFEREE FITNESS FROM THE 1970s .................... 76

CHAPTER 5 – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS ..................................................................... 82
INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................................... 82
CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH PROCESS: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS ... 83
PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLE ............................................................................................... 87
# Table of Contents

- **Research Design, Methods and Choice of Analysis** .......................................................... 89
- **Content Analysis** ............................................................................................................. 97
- **Building Trust/Trustworthiness and Credibility** ............................................................. 98
- **Confidentiality and Ethics** ............................................................................................... 99
- **Conclusion** ..................................................................................................................... 100

## Chapter 6 – Referee Structures and Support: The Modern Game of Association Football

- Refereeing in England in 2014 – Current Development Pathways .......................................... 101
- The National Referee Development Programme ..................................................................... 105
- The ‘Fast Track’ Programme ................................................................................................. 107
- Managing the ‘Fast-track’ Programme .................................................................................. 109
- Elite Structure of Refereeing in England .............................................................................. 112
- ‘Professional’ or ‘Full-Time’ Referees ..................................................................................... 113
- Physical training and fitness ................................................................................................. 117
- Current Referees: A Physical Comparison with Players ......................................................... 126
- Improvement in Fitness Levels – An English Example ......................................................... 130
- Managing Elite Referees in England ..................................................................................... 136
- Refereeing Structures in Italy ............................................................................................... 139
- Pathways and Promotion in the Italian System ..................................................................... 142
- Refereeing Structures in Spain ............................................................................................... 143
- Pathways and Promotion in the Spanish System .................................................................... 146
- Promotion of Referees .......................................................................................................... 148

## Chapter 7 – Referees’ Reflections on Training, Preparation and Officiating

- Elite Referee Training ............................................................................................................ 152
- Physical Training and Testing in England ............................................................................. 152
- Physical Training and Testing in Spain and Italy ................................................................. 153
- Technical Training in England .............................................................................................. 157
- Technical Training in Spain and Italy ................................................................................... 160
- Psychological Training in England, Spain and Italy ............................................................. 162
- Match Preparation .................................................................................................................. 166
- Match Preparation and Referees’ Approaches in England ..................................................... 166
- Match Preparation and Referees’ Approaches in Spain ......................................................... 169
- Match Preparation and Referees’ Approaches in Italy ......................................................... 170
- Concluding Remarks ............................................................................................................. 173

## Chapter 8 – The Influence and Impact of UEFA and FIFA Policies on the Standardisation of Refereeing

- The History of Standardisation in England ............................................................................. 179
- Decision Making, Pathways and Administration .................................................................. 179
- Standardisation and Refereeing ‘Abroad’ ............................................................................. 180
- UEFA and FIFA and the Drive for ‘Top-Down’ Standardisation of Refereeing in Football .... 181
- The Implementation of ‘Top-Down’ Standardisation in Domestic Leagues .............................. 187
- Standardisation within European and International Tournaments ......................................... 191
- Differences between Leagues and European/International Tournaments ............................ 193
CONTINUING ANOMALIES: DIFFICULTIES WITH STANDARDISATION .................................................. 195

CHAPTER 9 – REFEREES’ PERFORMANCE AND PRACTICE: CULTURAL FACTORS ........... 199

CULTURE AND CULTURAL COMPARISONS .................................................................................. 200
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LEAGUES .......................................................................................... 204
‘IT’S EASIER TO REFEREE IN EUROPE’: DOMESTIC AND EUROPEAN DIFFERENCES .......... 209
PLAYERS, ‘CHEATING’ – THE STRUGGLE WITH SIMULATION: AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE? ... 212
REFEREERING AND THE IMPACT OF THE MEDIA ..................................................................... 214
THE INCREASED SCRUTINY OF REFEREES’ DECISION MAKING .............................................. 214
ITALIAN REFEREES AND THE MEDIA RELATIONSHIP .......................................................... 215
SPANISH REFEREES AND THE MEDIA RELATIONSHIP ......................................................... 217
REFEREES’ ERRORS AND DEALING WITH ERRORS .............................................................. 218
REFEREES’ ASSESSMENT ......................................................................................................... 221
REFEREES’ ASSESSMENT IN ENGLAND ................................................................................ 221
SPANISH AND ITALIAN ASSESSMENT REPORTS ................................................................. 225

CHAPTER 10 – POLICY IMPLICATIONS: RAISING STANDARDS AND REDUCING
DIFFERENCES IN REFEREES’ TRAINING, PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE ............ 231

DIFFERENCES IN SYSTEMS: IMPLICATIONS FOR STANDARDISATION .................................. 232
THE ‘FAST TRACK’ PROGRAMME AND THE OPPOSITION ..................................................... 232
DIFFERENCES IN THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF REFEREE TRAINING AND SUPPORT
NETWORKS .................................................................................................................................. 234
PHYSICAL TRAINING AND STANDARDISATION ...................................................................... 237
TRAINING AND SUPPORT NETWORKS: PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE ...................... 239
PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT .................................................................................................... 239
TECHNICAL TRAINING: DEALING WITH ERROR AND CHANGING PERFORMANCE .............. 240
RELATIONSHIPS WITH UEFA AND FIFA: A LACK OF ENGAGEMENT? .................................. 243
PRE-MATCH PREPARATION BECOMING PRE-MATCH JUDGEMENT ......................................... 246
REFEREES UNDER PRESSURE: DEALING WITH MEDIA ATTENTION .................................... 248
PROBLEMS WITH PLAYER BEHAVIOUR .................................................................................. 252
REFEREES’ ASSESSMENT: A COMPARATIVE SUMMATION ................................................... 254

CHAPTER 11 – CONCLUSION: FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR ELITE REFEREEING .............. 260

THE INTRODUCTION AND FURTHER USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN FOOTBALL – IMPLICATIONS FOR REFEREES 265
THE FIVE OFFICIAL SYSTEM ...................................................................................................... 268
RECOMMENDATIONS, ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES FROM THE RESEARCH ................................. 270
FURTHER RESEARCH .................................................................................................................. 276

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................................. 278
Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

Word Count: 80,095
List of Tables

CHAPTER 2
TABLE 1 – NUMBER OF GROUND CLOSURES AND WARNINGS TO CLUBS CONCERNING SPECTATOR DISORDER FROM 1895-1915 IN LEAGUE AND NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL ....31-32

CHAPTER 5
TABLE 2 – CATEGORISATION OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS ........................................88

CHAPTER 6
TABLE 3 – REGIONS IN ITALY ..........................................................................................140
TABLE 4 – BREAKDOWN OF THE SECTIONS WITHIN THE REGIONS IN ITALY ..............141
TABLE 5 – BREAKDOWN OF THE REGIONS WITHIN THE TERRITORIAL COMMITTEES IN SPAIN........................................................................................................145

CHAPTER 7
TABLE 6 – THE COOPER TEST MEASUREMENT AGAINST NORMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AGE GROUPS ......................................................................................174-175
TABLE 7 – THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLES ........................................................................................................175

CHAPTER 8
TABLE 8 - COURSES DELIVERED TO MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS BY UEFA AND FIFA.....183-184

CHAPTER 9
TABLE 9 – NUMBER OF FOULS PER GAME IN THE MAJOR EUROPEAN LEAGUES IN THE 2012/2013 SEASON .................................................................................................204

CHAPTER 11
TABLE 10 – SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REFEREE PROVISION IN ENGLAND, SPAIN, ITALY, UEFA AND FIFA IN RESPECT OF REFEREEING PROVISION ...............261-264
TABLE 11 - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFEREE PROVISION IN ENGLAND, SPAIN, ITALY, UEFA AND FIFA ........................................................................................................271-274
# List of Figures

## CHAPTER 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 1</td>
<td>STREET FOOTBALL IN OLDEN TIMES</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2</td>
<td>THE EVOLUTION OF THE PLAYING PITCH</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 3</td>
<td>THE FIELD GAME AT ETON, TRYING TO CONVERT A ‘ROUGE’</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 4</td>
<td>THE ETON WALL GAME</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 5</td>
<td>FA COUNCIL MINUTES DETAILING UMPIRES CHOSEN BY THE ASSOCIATION AND UMPIRES BEING ABLE TO CHOOSE THEIR REFEREES</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 6</td>
<td>FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION MINUTES DETAILING THE ‘REGISTRATION OF A PROFESSIONAL PLAYER’ FORM</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 7</td>
<td>A CARTOON DEPICTING DISGUISES FOR REFEREES</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 8</td>
<td>PROUD PRESTON’S PEERLESS RECORD, A CARTOON DEPICTING THE INCIDENTS DURING A MATCH, ONE OF WHICH INVOLVED THE REFEREE</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 9</td>
<td>FRED BYE, ‘HOW TO PLAY THE GAME’, A REFEREES’ VIEW OF HOW TO PLAY THE GAME</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 10</td>
<td>MEMORANDUM ISSUES BY THE FA FOR THE GUIDANCE OF REFEREES AND LINESMEN</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 11</td>
<td>REFEREES’ CHARTS 1929-1930 &amp; 1970-1971</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 12</td>
<td>LAWS OF ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL 2007-2008</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 13</td>
<td>AN FA DIRECTIVE RELATED TO A UNIFORM APPROACH FOR REFEREE EXAMINATIONS</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 14</td>
<td>A COPY OF THE FA MINUTES RELATED TO THE CLASSIFICATION OF REFEREES</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 15</td>
<td>SUGGESTED PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST FOR REFEREES</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 16</td>
<td>INITIAL CODING AND ORGANISATION OF INTERVIEW THEMES</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 17</td>
<td>FINAL GENERAL DIMENSIONS AND HIGHER AND LOWER ORDER THEMES AFTER DATA ORGANISATION</td>
<td>93-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 18</td>
<td>MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF DATA</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Appendix Figures

APPENDIX A

FIGURE A1 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS SUNDERLAND, 03/09/1924 .................................. II
FIGURE A2 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS SHEFFIELD UNITED, 28/02/1925 ....................... III
FIGURE A3 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS OLDHAM ATHLETIC, 29/08/1931 ...................... V
FIGURE A4 – CLOSE UP OF THE GRADING SYSTEM ON THE PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS OLDHAM ATHLETIC, 29/08/1931 ........................................................................................................ VI
FIGURE A5 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS BURNLEY, 26/12/1931 ..................................... VII
FIGURE A6 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS ARSENAL, 20/12/1958 ................................. VIII
FIGURE A7 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS BARNSLEY, 20/02/1971 ................................. IX
FIGURE A8 – PNE REFEREES' REPORT VERSUS SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY, 4/03/1972 ........... XI
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UEFA</td>
<td>Union of European Football Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIFA</td>
<td>Fédération Internationale de Football Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Football Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Referees Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County FA</td>
<td>County Football Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSkyB</td>
<td>British Sky Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGMOL</td>
<td>Professional Game Match Officials Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VO2</td>
<td>Oxygen Consumption/Uptake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCACAF</td>
<td>Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFC</td>
<td>Oceania Football Confederation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAF</td>
<td>Confédération Africaine de Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFC</td>
<td>Asian Football Confederation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSF</td>
<td>Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAP</td>
<td>Referee Assistance Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-MARC</td>
<td>FIFA Medical and Research Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>British Telecom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgement and Dedication

Firstly I would like to acknowledge the support of my department, the Department of Sport and Exercise Science at The University of Portsmouth, for assisting in the funding of this research. It would not have been possible to undertake and complete the research without this support.

I would like to thank my supervisor Barry Smart for his direction and support throughout the duration of this thesis. This research would not be what it is without his feedback, enthusiasm and drive to support me during this process.

Thanks are also due to my other supervisors, Richard Thelwell and Matt Taylor, both of whom were happy to read and give feedback, share ideas and help develop the research.

I would like to acknowledge the help and support from the staff at the National Football Museum. Without their support and flexibility access to the historical material in the museum archive would have been much more difficult to utilise in this thesis. I would also like to thank all referees and those associated with refereeing and Association Football, for giving their time for the interview process.

I am very grateful to both of my parents, Liz Webb and Harry Webb, for their support through undergraduate and postgraduate education. In particular for this thesis, I want to thank my dad who has read through and proofed the work, always in good time and offering the linguistic insight and finer intricacies associated with split infinitives.

Finally, I am extremely grateful and indebted to my wife, Hayley Webb, who has been incredibly supportive and understanding throughout the whole project. It seems those nights slaving away were worth it in the end. I also want to thank my children Fynley and Ayla, though they might not know it yet, the number of times that they managed to sleep through the night and allow me to work and also manage to stay at least nominally focused the following day was invaluable.
Dissemination

PUBLICATIONS

WEBB, T. (UNDER REVIEW). REFEREES AND THE MEDIA: A DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIP BUT AN UNAVOIDABLE NECESSITY. SOCCER & SOCIETY.

WEBB, T. & THELWELL, R. (IN PRESS). “HE’S TAKEN A DIVE”: CULTURAL COMPARISONS OF ELITE REFEREE RESPONSES TO REDUCED PLAYER BEHAVIOUR IN ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL. SPORT, BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL.


CONFERENCES

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF SPORTS REFEREEING. ORAL PRESENTATION. (2014).

STANDARDISING ELITE ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL REFEREEING: AN HISTORIC PROBLEM, NO EASY SOLUTION

NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR SPORTS HISTORY. ORAL PRESENTATION.


EUROPEAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. PHD CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP. FULLY FUNDED APPLICATION PROCESS.


NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR SPORTS HISTORY. ORAL PRESENTATION.
'UNDER PRESSURE': ELITE ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL REFEREE RESPONSES TO SYSTEMIC AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES. (2011).
“...for the football referees who worked in the World Cup: with both the referees and the games vigilantly watched, the proof of their mistakes came from hundreds of images, megabytes, replays, super slow-motion, and paraphernalia of combinations with other types of visual discourse. The crisis occurs, in this case, not due to the credibility of the representation, but rather to the growing gap between the information view and the referee’s view. The soccer referee is a poor devil, limited and defeated by the belief and performance of an ultra-equipped view which is opposed to him. One of the worst jobs in the world.”

*Da Silva jr and Queiroga (2010, p. 117)*
Chapter 1 - Introduction: The Research Focus

Justification and Rationale for the Research

Sport occupies a prominent place in contemporary social life. Professional sport in particular has an unrivalled popular appeal and considerable economic and cultural significance. The middle years of the nineteenth century saw sporting activities becoming codified, more rule governed and organised, subject to national sport governing bodies and in due course their international equivalents (Wigglesworth, 2007, p. 93). From the late nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, one sport after another embraced professionalism and became more business-like and commercially orientated (Smart, 2005, p. 191); perhaps the foremost example of this is the evolution of Association Football. As a consequence of this evolution there have been significant economic and commercial changes alongside an increase in international competitions throughout the twentieth century that have helped transform the game (Miller, Lawrence, McKay, & Rowe, 2001, pp. 62-76). This economic transformation has had consequences for the ethos of sport in general and, more specifically, football, in terms of the values that have traditionally been part of the game, and for the administration and on-field/in-play officiating of games, matches and events. In short, the actions and accountability of referees have become more important as the potential economic significance of any decisions they make and their bearing on competitive success and failure has increased.

The referee is scrutinised by the media, supporters, academics and also governing bodies such as Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the Football Association (FA) to a greater extent than ever before. Some of this increased attention can be attributed to the impact of technological innovation. Associated technological developments such as computer-generated simulation of contentious incidents and the sheer number of cameras that are in operation at a football match serving to scrutinise refereeing decisions, have contributed to the evolution of the role and profile of the referee. This
growing media focus has, in turn, meant an increased scrutiny on elite referee training, performance and accountability.

The focus on continued improvement in the quality and standardisation of elite refereeing across Europe and internationally, is something that is a primary consideration for organisations such as UEFA and FIFA; indeed, FIFA’s mission statement when describing refereeing states that;

“Football is a global sport and its rules must be interpreted and applied with absolute consistency wherever the game is played. FIFA therefore has a policy of ongoing training for its referees to ensure that refereeing standards continue to improve and the Laws of the Game are applied the same way everywhere.”

(“Refereeing missions and goals”, n.d, para 1)

There is, therefore, a tangible desire both to increase the quality of officials at the elite level and also attempt to standardise officiating throughout national leagues. Examples of these attempts to standardise officiating can be demonstrated through the training and management of the referees in operation at the World Cup. FIFA attempts to bring the selected referees together to train and learn, referees are selected from the confederations (UEFA, CAF, CONCACAF, CONMEBOL, AFC & OFC) and are the best officials that these confederations can provide. FIFA, are aware that there are differences in the way referees prepare for a match and how they perform on the pitch itself. FIFA also recognise that a referee’s style of officiating is dependent on the league and culture to which they belong.

In attempting to achieve uniformity in the application of the Laws of the Game FIFA modernised training for those referees who were selected for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. This training was focused on standardising the way that the referees officiated, primarily to ensure players understood why decisions had been given and the decisions they can expect from referees in any given scenario during a match. Massimo Busacca, FIFA’s head of refereeing, commented that there should be no change in performance by referees, “…how it was interpreted before has to be how it is interpreted at the [2014] World Cup” (Crossman, 2014, para 24). FIFA carried out seminars and meetings with the referees selected for the 2014 World Cup from the different confederations. The training events involved technical training with a
significant focus on standardisation in respect of responses to any overly physical challenges between players, referees reading of the game, consistency and uniformity in decision making and understanding of different football mentalities and cultures ("Seminars announced for 2014 World Cup referees", 2014). These preoccupations demonstrate that FIFA understand that there is still considerable progression required to achieve uniformity in the practice of refereeing.

The South African World Cup in 2010 gave rise to a number of comments being directed at the standard of refereeing. For example, the South African coach at the time Carlos Alberto Parreira commented that Swiss referee Massimo Busacca was “…giving yellow cards that weren't yellow cards” (“World Cup 2010: Parreira slams referee's performance”, 2010) and Dunga then Brazilian coach was scathing towards French referee Stephane Lannoy for a “…totally unjustified sending-off” also stating that “when the referee allows certain fouls or certain incidents to go unpunished that is not right, as happened today” (“World Cup 2010: no Brazil complaint over Kaka dismissal against Ivory Coast”, 2010). There were also a variety of comments directed towards Howard Webb’s handling of the final between Spain and Holland, with opinion divided over his interpretation of situations and the decisions that were subsequently given (“World Cup 2010: Webb faced 'hard task' says Blatter”, 2010).

Similarly in the first match of the 2014 World Cup tournament in Brazil questions were raised about the overall performance and some of the specific decisions that were made by the referee. Yuichi Nishimura of Japan was widely criticised for giving Brazil a penalty, with Croatian player Dejan Lovren claiming that "this referee should not be at this World Cup," and “it wasn't a mistake, it was a scandal” (“World Cup 2014: Brazil v Croatia referee scandalous - Dejan Lovren”, 2014). It is a difficult challenge for FIFA to use referees from all the different confederations for their experiences of refereeing vary significantly according to the quality of the leagues in which they officiate. The World Cup brings together referees from leagues and competitions all over the world, and there is an acceptance that referees from different countries officiate differently in certain situations. FIFA are therefore trying to minimise these differences through the training and pre-tournament preparation the referees have undertaken (“Referees continue World Cup preparations”, 2014).
Similarly in European football UEFA are trying to standardise refereeing across the domestic leagues and also in the Champions League and the Europa League, as well as the European Championships. In their Refereeing Convention document\(^1\), UEFA state that:

“The UEFA Referee Education and Organisation programme is intended...to improve the quality of match officials at all levels of the game in the UEFA member associations by incorporating general regulations for the standardisation of referee education and the way refereeing is organised at the level of the national football association.”

(UEFA, 2006, p.3)

Comparable to the examples on the world stage, there have also been recent high profile incidents in European football that have led to questions being posed regarding the standardisation, uniformity and performance of referees from different countries. For example, Swedish referee Anders Frisk decided to retire early from the game following criticism of his performance from then Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho and the subsequent volume of abuse and threats that this brought (Campbell, 2005). Norwegian referee Tom Henning was also heavily criticised for his performance following the Chelsea versus Barcelona Champions League match in 2009, and was still receiving death threats in 2012 (Nakrani, 2012). The high profile nature of European competition brings with it further scrutiny of teams, managers, players and referees. For example, in 2013 then Celtic manager Neil Lennon identified Spanish referee Alberto Mallenco as “pro-Juventus”, asking whether “…the rules are different in Spain” and further stating that “…it’s not rugby we're playing, it’s soccer” after concluding that a number of Celtic players were physically held in the penalty area during corner kicks (Hardy, 2013). English referees have not been immune to criticism of their performance in European fixtures; Mark Clattenburg was criticised by Juventus manager Antonio Conte for his performance during the match against Benfica in the Europa League. Conte suggested that “…UEFA should show us more respect by sending a referee of the required standard” (“Antonio Conte highly critical of Mark Clattenburg after Europa League exit”, 2014).

This necessity to increase uniformity and standards of performance has been driven, in part, by the increase in television exposure which is arguably one of the most
significant recent developments in the game. The increased involvement of television has elevated Association Football to a height of popularity and cultural prominence that would have been unimaginable even as recently as the 1980s, before the formation of the Premier League and the emergence of Sky Television in the United Kingdom.

The growth in television provision and the accessibility to matches that it provides has done much to increase the popularity of football and also, in turn, has enhanced the profile of the referee and drawn attention to refereeing decisions. Football and television became irrevocably intertwined in the 1950’s as two of the central tenets of British popular culture evolved together. With the growth of global television coverage, following the development of satellite communication technology, a number of professional sports have benefited from increased exposure, including football. The political economy of Association Football has changed considerably in the ‘elite’ European leagues as money or the ‘cash-nexus’ has become increasingly associated with playing success, through enhanced financial benefits derived from winning tournaments, championships or cups, income from television rights, sponsorship, and also merchandising. In particular there has been a significant increase in the television coverage and global diffusion of the association code of football, especially the leading professional leagues considered in this thesis – the Premier League (England), the Primera División (Spain), and Serie A (Italy).

Increased media exposure, as well as an apparent growth in popular cultural and commercial interest, has raised the profile of all those involved in the game of Association Football, including players, managers, referees and even some administrators. As a consequence there is a heightened accountability for decisions, especially those that are perceived to have a bearing on outcomes and success in matches, and these decisions have grown in significance and attracted increasing attention, interest and scrutiny. Indeed it might be argued that never before have players, managers and referees been scrutinised to such an extent and with such intensity.
There is a wealth of related research into Association Football, with a significant and important contributing strand emanating from England, perhaps due to the historical roots of the game. Eminent authors (Dunning & Sheard, 2005; Goldblatt, 2006; Goulstone, 2001; Giulianotti, 1999; Giulianotti & Robertson, 2009; Harvey, 2005; Mangan, 2008; Swain, 2008; Taylor, 2008) have considered the historical evolution of Association Football.

There is also a significant body of research related to refereeing that, in recent years, has increased including a number of studies that have focused specifically on the referee’s physiology. Prior to 2000 there were a limited number of studies, with perhaps the seminal publication in the area of physiology being, “Analysis of the work-rates and heart-rates of Association Football referees” by Catterall, Reilly, Atkinson and Coldwells (1993). More recent research in the area of referee’s physiology, has tended to consider the activity profile or aerobic fitness of referees both in training and in match situations.²

In addition strands of psychological academic research on referees have emerged and developed including studies on the effects of bias and social pressure on decisions (Boyko, Boyko & Boyko, 2007; Buraimo, Forrest & Simmons, 2007, Dawson & Dobson, 2010; Dawson, Dobson, Goddard & Wilson, 2007; Johnston, 2008; Sutter & Kocher, 2004), the influence of crowd noise on decision-making (Nevill, Balmer & Williams, 2002; Nevill, Webb & Watts, 2013; Page & Page, 2010) and decision making based research (Catteeuw, Gilis, Garcia-Aranda, Tresaco, Wagemans & Helsen, 2010; Jones, Paull & Erskine, 2002; Lane, Nevill, Ahmad & Balmer, 2006; MacMahon, Helsen, Starkes & Weston, 2007). Despite this developing interest in the referee and refereeing, there has been relatively little attention paid to Association Football referees in terms of their training and development in the major leagues across Europe. While there has been some research conducted on elite refereeing in England (Colwell, 1999; Colwell, 2000; Colwell, 2001), there is little to date in terms of comparative analyses that consider the crucial issue of standards and training and compare elite referees in comparable leagues and competitions.
Structure of the Thesis

Initial chapters of this thesis focus on the introduction and evolution of the arbitrator in the game of Association Football. Chapter Two considers the formation of the game of football, the introduction of codification and the changes that this entailed with reference to the arbitrator. Chapter Three continues on the same historical trajectory. This chapter begins with an examination of the introduction of referee classifications; an important milestone in refereeing development. Chapter Four begins with some consideration of referee assessment and the guidance given to referees by their governing bodies regarding training and performance; this training and support is brought into focus during the 1945-1950 period and through the National Referees’ Conference in 1946. The importance of the delivery of this training is subsequently linked to the relationship between the FA and Referees’ Association (RA) and the levels of support and guidance each organisation has offered referees. Chapter Five provides explanation of research design and methods employed to collect the primary data which is utilised in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Six focuses on the structures and pathways in place, initially within England, and then, latterly, as a form of comparison, in Italy and Spain. The differences of each pathway and system are discussed with a particular focus upon England. Chapter Seven continues to explore referees’ opinions and perceptions regarding training, preparation and officiating. Consideration is given to the different types of training in the three countries, as well as the approaches taken to match preparation. Chapter Eight refers to refereeing at national and international levels and as a consequence, the impact of UEFA and FIFA upon the refereeing structures and programmes evident in England, Spain and Italy and on the standardisation of refereeing across leagues.

In Chapter Nine the attention shifts towards referee performance and practice and the perceived differences and standards between the Premier League in England, the Primera División in Spain and Serie A in Italy. Central tenets of this chapter are the effect of the media upon the game of Association Football and, more specifically, referees, the cultural factors and differences that exist in refereeing between the respective leagues in question and the importance of referee assessment.
Chapter Ten identifies the implications for policy in the areas considered in the preceding chapters and considers how the most pertinent aspects of the research can assist in raising standards and reducing differences in referee training, preparation, and performance. The thesis concludes with Chapter Eleven which focuses on the way forward for referees in the current game of Association Football. The introduction of technological assistance and additional referees in some competitions are considered as the future direction for refereeing is scrutinised.

The primary aim of this thesis is to comparatively examine and analyse the development, training, preparation, support, performance and assessment of elite referees across national and international boundaries. As an initial starting point the following chapter sets the scene for the birth, introduction and subsequent evolution of an arbitrator in football, and latterly Association Football. The accelerated development of the 'national sport' since codification in 1863 has meant the role of the referee has grown in significance over time as part of the transformation of the game. The pertinent societal changes that have affected the development of this arbitrator are considered and, in order to explain fully these changes, wider developments in the association code of football are discussed.

---

1 The UEFA Refereeing Convention document considers the approach taken to education and organisation by UEFA and was constructed to promote the role of football referees and improve the quality of match officials at all levels from grassroots practitioners to amateur referees and those at the professional level (UEFA, 2006, p. 2).

Chapter 2 – Refereeing in Association Football: Key Events and Significant Developments until 1900

The shifts in British society that occurred before and after the codification of the association game of football at the Freemasons’ Tavern in London on 26th October 1863 (“The FA story”, 2012, para 1) are in some cases directly related to developments within the game and also provide a backdrop for many of the decisions made by the FA during the period up until 1900. In order to understand the establishment and development of the referee within Association Football we must, initially, consider how the game changed. In essence, it is a matter of comprehending the evolution of football and of the role of the referee within this process. The referee has had to change with the game, but crucially, not always in line with the game itself.

This chapter aims to identify the important developments in football and also in refereeing, in order to chart the emergence of the match official as the early rules of Association Football began to form.

Early Forms of Football
There have been several histories of ‘mob’, ‘folk’ and ‘Shrove football’ in England (Harvey, 2005), but what is less evident in accounts of the development of the game is the involvement of an umpire or referee to oversee and officiate on the practices of these early games (Dunning & Sheard, 2005; Goldblatt, 2006; Mangan, 2008; Taylor, 2008). In reality, this would have been an extremely difficult challenge for an arbitrator due to a lack of formalised rules and the fact that any rules in existence were not applied throughout the United Kingdom.

Folk football was a game played by the lower or working classes, and certainly in its early form is exemplified by ritualised, holy day or annual matches between communities and villages. The form the game assumed tended to vary from place to place, according to local custom and tradition, with regional influences significantly
shaping when, where, as well as how games were played and who was involved. Descriptions of the game of ‘hurling’ in Cornwall, demonstrate the range and popularity of basic forms of folk football and there are detailed descriptions of the game in Cornwall containing rules and strategies, involving teams of 15, 20 or 30 (Holt, 1989, p. 13).

Furthermore, an eighteenth century account of the Norfolk variant of folk football, known as ‘camping’, describes a game that demonstrated its own rules and variations (Holt, 1989, p. 14), involving, at times teams as large as five hundred to one thousand people (Brailsford, 1969, p. 53; Russell, 1997, p. 6). It is also worth noting, given the comparative nature of this research in later chapters, that in Italy a game entitled ‘calcio fiorentino’ can be traced back to the first century B.C., when Roman legionaries played it to prepare for combat, though the game's rules date to 1530 and were first published in 1580 (Golblatt, 2006, p. 16). The game seems largely to have been played by the Italian aristocracy and appears to have been a combination of football, rugby and mixed martial arts, and was discontinued for centuries until it resurfaced in the 1900s (Halpern, 2008, p. 42)

Derby meanwhile, also boasted a less well known version of football called “street football” (Holt, 1989, p. 38; Tranter, 1998, p. 11; Figure 1) which the authorities struggled to remove from the streets and, arguably, had more in common with the modern form of football. Whatever version of football is considered in terms of the ‘folk’ antecedents, there is little evidence to clarify the role of the arbitrator. Any rules of play were handed down through oral tradition and were not very elaborate, although how matches were started, and how victory and defeat were determined, were usually agreed upon by the players themselves, who also regulated the play (Dunning & Sheard, 2005, pp. 31-32; Green, 1960a, pp. 44-45). The writings of Richard Mulcaster, a 16th Century English schoolmaster, make reference as early as 1561 to an ‘outside’ authority, who is described as supervising play by watching over and judging the parties involved (Dunning & Sheard, 2005, p. 32; Rous & Ford, 1974).
The information regarding the violent and sometimes criminal behaviour associated with early forms of mob football is well documented (Mangan, 2008; Curry, 2007; Harvey, 2005; Henson, 2001; Goulstone, 2000). Opposition to this form of football grew as the game was seen to disrupt the local economy by forcing the closure of shops and encouraging drinking, public disorder and other forms of behaviour that were considered to be ‘socially and morally corrosive’ (Taylor, 2008, p. 22). There was subsequently a decline in the traditional forms of the game, and the emergence and reinvention of the game of football at public school began. This reinvention of football also engendered a shift away from the working class/lower class origins of the game.

The role of the referee at this time can be perceived in the light of the theory proposed by Dunning and Sheard (2005, p. 2) that football developed in five stages and that the role of the referee or arbitrator can be viewed as developing within these stages of evolution. The formulation and gradual acceptance of rules meant that football was, in theory, becoming less ritualised and brutal over time. During this time, it can be argued that society was also becoming less violent and there were far-reaching changes in the refinement of manners and social standards (Dunning, 1993, p. 46). The ‘Civilizing Process’ theorises that societies have undertaken this journey since the Middle Ages. The introduction of an arbitrator was moving ever closer as greater self-control over behaviour and feelings was expected, both in social settings and, correspondingly, on the football pitch.
Initial Development of Rule Making and the Need for an Arbitrator

There is some mention of the existence of an arbitrator in different regional areas across the country outside the public school system; for example, some annual Shrove-matches, notably those at Derby and Scone, had ‘men of both sides attend to see fair play’ was done (Harvey, 2005, p. 84) and as early as 1841, in Bolton, a referee awarded the game to the opposition because ‘his’ team was breaking the rules (Harvey, 2001, p. 56). Although it appears that many of these games were regulated and controlled by referees they varied greatly in the level of violence they provoked (Harvey, 2005, pp. 84-85). This, alongside the fact that rules were not formalised at this time, made it extremely difficult for arbitrators to operate effectively.

There is evidence to suggest that organised football matches (as opposed to “folk football”) played using defined and printed rules were more common than was previously thought (Goulstone, 2000, p. 210). There were also common features between these rules, but crucially they were still local or regional in nature and specifically related to the match they were governing (Vamplew, 2007, p. 849). However, the primary reason for the development of laws and rules was the growth in gambling on sporting fixtures, this meant that there was a need for an arbitrator to apply the laws that had been developed (Vamplew, 2007, p 864). Initially, the rules needed to be standardised, routinised and regulated and a good example is the evolution of rules concerning the playing area or the pitch\(^8\) (Figure 2). The different sets of rules that had developed varied greatly and the nature of the game differed from area to area and also from school to school as a form of football gradually moved into the public school system.

Paralleling the movement of football into the public school system from the countryside and towns, there were widespread changes taking place to the English societal system that would have a profound impact on the game of football, and therefore, by association, the arbitrators of this developing sport. The onset of the industrial revolution in England from approximately 1760-1850, proved to be the catalyst for widespread societal, cultural and economic change, and sport, in general, was affected. Some of the changes associated with the industrial revolution
and a shifting societal structure would come to have a significant impact on the game of football and how it was played.

The Industrial Revolution and its effects on British society have been well documented (Daunton, 1995; Birley, 1995; Price, 1999). The challenging and gradual reorganisation of the existing, rigid class system meant more conflict and competition between the classes throughout the industrial revolution. The historical organisation of the upper, middle and lower classes was shifting at this time as fluidity, opportunity and the growing possibility of movement between the classes increased, and inevitably this in turn brought class conflict (Galor & Moav, 2006, p. 85).

Alongside the shifting class structures, legislation that was introduced also affected football. For example, the 1870 Education Act ensured that a greater number of the population attended school; there was a shift of the population from the countryside into the town and city (Wrigley, 1972, p. 227) and also the shortening of the working week through the 1875 Factory Act, which permitted playing or watching football on a Saturday afternoon ensuring that football developed rapidly among the working classes.

As a consequence of the 1870 Education Act a larger number of the population were becoming educated (Walvin, 1994, pp. 55-56), and there was, an increase in the number of people attending schools. These individuals brought with them the game of football. The initial game introduced in the public schools certainly bore some resemblance to that which had evolved in the English countryside and had transferred into the cities and towns following the migration of population to these areas.

Football, Rules and the Public School Influence
There appears to be little doubt that when football entered the public schools it was still a very rough game, but the reform of the public schools led to a corresponding reform of the rough type of football that was played there (Mason, 1980, p. 14). This led to a more structured set of rules, which were then introduced to the universities.
as the former pupils of these public schools continued their education at higher seats of learning. Between 1845 and 1862 pupils and staff of the major public schools had formulated written rules for the game, which were then embraced at Cambridge University, initially, in 1848. Subsequently, in the 1860s, after a series of formal and informal experiments, a body of rules was produced that appeared to gain widespread acceptance (Mason, 1980, p. 14).

There had been a variety of games that were embraced by the public schools, each with varying rules and structures associated with them. Examples of these games were the Field Game, played at Eton (Figure 3), and the Wall Game which also originated at Eton (Figure 4). The search for evidence of developing control in the modern game often leads back to the public school system. However, when looking at these public school games, it should be noted that referees had not received much attention previously within this school system (Mangan & Hickey, 2008, p. 727).

Figure 2, The evolution of the playing pitch, (Adapted from Offord, 1906, p. 90)
Early mentions of the referee or umpires within the embryonic rule formulations are somewhat scarce. Despite a number of references to the involvement of a referee before the game actually became accepted in public schools, it is to these institutions that it is certainly necessary to turn to explore the more formal inception of an arbitrator in football. The games played at Eton included the influence and judgement of an umpire; indeed, reference to the act of ‘bullying’ in the rules at Eton required the judgement of the umpire to decide when an act of ‘bullying’ was deemed worthy of punishment (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 22). Furthermore, the Eton rules required the selection of two umpires, one by each team, and these umpires were placed by the goals of their respective teams, making these umpires effectively goal judges (Pickford, 1940, p. 80).
At Winchester school the rules mention the existence of umpires, although these were positioned at opposite corners of the ground. The Winchester umpires had the responsibility to record the score, to give a decision in all cases of doubt (these decisions were final), and one of these referees also had to carry a watch, to call time at the end of the match (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 25). Reference is also made to the involvement of two umpires at Harrow, although these umpires were not stationed solely on the goal line, they were permitted to move around the field of play. The Harrow rule that made the decision and judgement of the umpire irrevocable was in fact seen as a pre-cursor of the power subsequently given to the referee.

In the Cheltenham rules it was the duty of the umpire to call offside decisions and, perhaps more importantly given the evolution of football and the officials that oversaw the game, there is the first mention of a ‘referee’. The referee was chosen by the umpires to adjudicate on any point or decision on which the umpires could not come to a consensus (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, pp. 28-31; Green, 1953, p. 15). If the umpires failed to agree, they referred the point at issue to a third man who was outside the field, and who later became known as the referee (“Laws of the game”, n.d. para. 13). As the number and relative importance of competitions between and within the schools increased, so did the use of umpires (Colwell, 2000, p. 202). The competition evidently became fiercer and the need for an official to control and apply the laws started to become a necessity.

**The Use of Umpires outside the Public Schools**

In these early years, before the formation of the FA, the onus was on the players themselves and over time the captains, to agree any disputes on the field of play. In the mid-nineteenth century, the idea of external control developed in school football and by 1847 there was an established practice of having two "umpires", to resolve disputes (“Laws of the game”, n.d. para. 10). Despite these mentions of umpires in the public schools aberrant rules were being employed in different parts of the country outside the public schools. The fact that the game was being played according to one set of rules in a given part of the country and by another set of rules
in another part of the country ensured that there was no standard form of football. However, there was a more structured football culture that emerged in Sheffield\textsuperscript{11} that has provided a source of debate. Indeed, how much authority the public schools had on the development of football has been subject to a significant level of scrutiny in recent times\textsuperscript{12}.

The formation of the Football Association in 1863 lends further insight into the attempt to constitute one set of rules. Newspaper reports shed more light on the purposes of the construction of the FA in terms of the regulation of rules. One report states that ‘the great public schools have their respective rules, which it is thought desirable to assimilate; but this proposition has, in some instances, been received with reticence’ (Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser, December 9, 1863)\textsuperscript{13}. For umpires (as opposed to referees at this time), there were fundamental problems with the rules that were being created by the Football Association and by the public schools before; umpires were often seen as an afterthought and therefore were in very real danger of becoming marginalised (Thomson, 1998, p. 21). The concern over this marginalisation was apparently deserved as during the initial process that led to the code of law being drawn up for a game in 1863\textsuperscript{14}, the umpire or referee was not given a single mention.

This was not the case in Sheffield, when Sheffield FC was formed in 1857. Indeed, Sheffield had produced its first set of printed rules by 1859\textsuperscript{15}. The Sheffield rules included reference to the ‘umpire’ and were entirely concerned with the enforcement of the rules that had been established, bestowing full power to settle all points and maintain fair play (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 42). A further significant element stipulated by the Sheffield rules is the fact that each umpire within the rules was ‘referee’ in one half of the field nearest the goal of the team which had nominated him, a concept revisited when standardised approaches towards a uniform method of refereeing were considered (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 42).
‘Umpires’ and ‘Referees’ in the Development of Association Football

The inception of the FA Challenge Cup in 1871 saw the inclusion of umpires in procedural matters (Thomson, 1998, p. 23) as a ‘neutral’ umpire was introduced to resolve the disputes between the team appointed umpires in later rounds of the FA Cup (Russell, 1997, p. 31). Because of this potential conflict, gradually ‘neutral’ referees were introduced, and by 1880 referees had the power to send players from the field of play who persistently infringed the laws. Although these were actions that were available to the referee they still needed to be ratified by the agreement of the captains of both teams.

Many of these early referees were, perhaps inevitably given the role of the public schools in the evolution of association football, public school teachers (Mangan & Hickey, 2008, p. 667; Mangan & Hickey, 2008, p. 750). The 1870 Education Act resulted in an expansion of the number of working class pupils who were admitted to elementary schools and, as a consequence, an expansion of teacher training colleges (McArdle, 2000, p. 16). Many of these teacher training colleges had Association Football teams, and Birley (1995, p. 268) notes that these teachers and attendees at the training colleges "were often the mainstay of early clubs, especially in industrial areas". Early referees were required to officiate matches between these clubs and were subjected to difficult and hostile circumstances. Even though some of these early referees may have been products of the public school system they were not exactly popular figures even at this time (Thomson, 1998, p. 10; Mason, 1980, p. 160).

The FA considered the popularity and treatment of referees to be a particular problem in the early years post codification. With that in mind they supported referees by treating rule breaking harshly, advocating “the necessity of dealing vigorously with rough play, and pointing out that players so offending were to be summarily removed from the game” (FA Council minutes, 22/11/1886). There have been documented incidents which give a clear rationale for this circular administered by the FA. One such account is of a referee who had officiated a Bolton Wanderers Cup match in 1883 and was subsequently followed and assaulted by a large crowd.
In another incident Woolwich Arsenal had their ground closed for six weeks after a referee was assaulted during a match (Mason, 1980, p. 161).

The early years of the referee required the relatively frequent involvement of the FA as they sought to establish the referees as the guardians of the laws of Association Football. There were several incidents involving referees that necessitated action and a response from the FA. An occurrence of encroachment by the crowd at Aston Villa in a cup tie versus Preston North End in 1888 meant the referee had to stop the match and the game was subsequently awarded to Preston North End. In the same set of minutes, a referee also reported the captain of Crewe Alexandra for insulting language in a cup tie against Swifts in Derby on 17th December 1887, and he was subsequently banned for two weeks (FA Council minutes, 14/01/1888). These occurrences led to a further meeting of the FA Council (FA Council minutes, 06/02/1888) which outlined a proposal for law change. This law change referred to the amendment of law 15, detailing that the referee has the power to stop a game whenever he sees fit or necessary to do so.

The amendments to law being made by the FA were gradually beginning to mean that there was more decision making and constitutional power afforded to the referee. This increase in power did not give the referee complete control over the match. Referees in 1888 still had umpires and although these umpires were selected by the referees for cup matches (FA Council minutes, 20/11/1887 – also see figure 5) there were also neutral or club umpires that were often nominated in other matches. However, it was the formation of the Football League which provided the regular organised, competitive structure that made the use of a referee essential.
The Formation of the Football League

William McGregor, associated with Aston Villa, constructed a letter which he sent on 2nd March 1888 to four other clubs with the intention of forming a league. After an initial meeting, a further meeting ensued and at the Royal Hotel in Manchester on 17th April 1888 the name and concept of 'The Football League' was born (Fletcher, 2013, paras. 8-11). A structure of competition in England had been established. The formation of the league meant regular fixtures for the teams involved, and it also meant that these fixtures would need to be officiated. Further to this, the clubs competing had to agree on a referee; if this did not happen a referee was subsequently appointed by the League Secretary (Sutcliffe, Brierley & Howarth, 1938, p. 4).

The formation of the Football League in 1888 (“History of the Football League”, 2010, para. 3) and the subsequent introduction of relegation and promotion for the teams involved in the league meant there was a call, and a need, for an acceptable standard of referee to officiate the matches. Referees were appointed on the following basis. The Football League allocated referees for their competition, through a list submitted by the FA and the County FA’s were responsible for the placement of referees at the regional cups and for the initial stages of the FA Cup. The regional placement of referees was undertaken by the County FA’s through the formation of...
area committees. The FA itself was responsible for the advanced stages of the FA Cup through the Referees’ Committee from 1907 onwards.

Against the backdrop of these changes which were transforming the game, the 12 founding clubs of the Football League in 1888 grew to 14 in 1891, 28 in 1892, 31 in 1893, 32 in 1894 and 36 by 1898. By 1905 the club membership had risen to 40 and after the First World War the number was at 44 (Mangan, 2008, p. 172). Despite the growing membership of the Football League, most southern teams played in the Southern League that had been set up in 1894 (Evostick Southern League, 2013, para. 9). The formation of a Southern League was intended to rival the already established Football League and the development of the two organisations was bound up with a rapid growth in the number of affiliated teams16.

**Emergence of the Referee and the Transformation of Power**

Alongside the initiation and development of league football, the FA continued to enhance the role and significance of the referee and, in so doing, diluted the effect umpires could have on a match. As a consequence, an addition to law fifteen in April 1888 saw further power handed to the referee. The addition to law fifteen stated that if umpires from either side could not agree, or they were unable to make a decision, the referee would have the power to do so. Furthermore, the referee was also instructed to act as a timekeeper and given the ability to issue cautions and to “rule the offending player or players out of play” (FA Council minutes, 15/04/1888), which in effect meant that they had the ability to send players from the field of play at their discretion. By 1889 referees were permitted to award free kicks without appeals from the players and the introduction of the penalty kick duly followed in 1891 after a lengthy trial period (Giulianotti, 1999, p. 6).

The changes in the game of football, and to the role of the referee as an arbitrator continued apace. By 1891 referees had moved onto the field of play from the sidelines, complete with a whistle, which had been introduced in 1878 (Green, 1960a, p. 22), and they were no longer acting as a time-keeper and a peace-maker between the two club-nominated umpires (Inglis, 1988, p. 14; Giulianotti, 1999, p. 6).
The enlargement of the role of ‘referee’ coincided with the demotion of ‘umpires’ to linesmen. The FA Council declared in their minutes in 1892 that “it is desirable that the positions of umpires should be abolished and that lines-men should be appointed, whose duties (subject to the referee), should be to decide when the ball is out of play, and which side has the “throw in” (FA Council minutes, 27/05/1892). This was drafted as a proposal, that was duly passed by the International Board, to delete the term “umpire” and replace it with “linemen” which updated laws 10 and 12 of the laws of the game.

The move from umpires to linemen, later to become linesmen, not only gave the referee more direct decision making authority, without the need (if he so wished) to consult any other officials, it also meant that umpires had in effect become relatively powerless touch judges (Thomson, 1998, pp. 38-39). Further developments followed in the role and responsibilities of the referee. An 1895 ruling stated that linesmen were permitted to give the referee an opinion on the ball crossing the goal-line between the posts (Witty, 1960a, p.193) and in 1896 specifically stated field of play markings were enshrined in the rules of the game (Witty, 1960b, p.160).

In effect the changes that had been implemented represented a promotion for the referee. But whether structures were in place at the time to support, train and promote referees, and whether the individual referees themselves were adequately prepared for such significant changes, is another matter to which attention will be directed in Chapter 3.

Violence, Game Management and Support for Referees

The increasing importance and significance of the role of the referee within the game led to the formation of the Referees Association (RA) (London Branch) in 1893, and the introduction of training for referees utilising the official FA handbook which constituted an attempt at standardising the laws of the game and their application by arbitrators (Mangan & Hickey, 2008, p. 730). The formation of the RA (London Branch) was orchestrated by The FA, which presided over the formation of this first Referees’ Association at Anderton’s Hotel in London. The meeting was attended by
79 individuals, with CW Alcock (Secretary of The FA) nominated as President, FJ Wall (later Secretary of The FA 1895-1934) assuming the role of Chairman and Arthur Roston Bourke that of Honorary Secretary. The purpose of the meeting was to examine the qualification of referees and to appoint them to matches for which a fee was to be paid (Davies & Carosi, 2008, para 3; Witty, 1960c, p.197).

The introduction of the RA, the examination of referees’ qualifications and their subsequent placement at matches was due in no small part to the number of ‘incidents’ involving referees and the general dissatisfaction with their performances. From the 1880s dissatisfaction with the performance of referees was commonplace, with anger spilling over into violence with some regularity. There were relatively frequent occurrences of reports and complaints from referees themselves during this period, quite possibly as a reaction to the lack of direction, or as a consequence of the failure to address troublesome points that arose from the Laws of the Game (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 114-115). For example, in an amateur cup tie between Chatham and the Casuals in 1894 a referee was forced to report the Chatham club’s spectators and the Chatham club were duly suspended until the end of the season and once they were permitted to compete again the club were not allowed to play within five miles of Chatham itself (FA Council minutes, 28/02/1894).

Research undertaken by Dunning, Murphy and Williams (1998, p. 95) from FA minute books details the number of ground closures and warnings to clubs concerning spectator disorder in the period from 1895-1915\textsuperscript{17}. This evidence reveals that between 1895 and 1915 there were a total of 46 ground closures and 64 warnings to clubs about spectator behaviour across both league and non-league football. The closure of a team’s ground was a measure that was employed by the FA as a deterrent and also as a method of attempting to enforce and enhance respect for referees (Lewis, 1906, p. 263)\textsuperscript{18}.

Further instances of dissatisfaction among referees with the behaviour of clubs and players can be seen throughout the FA Council minutes during the mid-1890’s. Two players, H. Manning of Eastern Rovers F. C. and W. Hewlett of Railway Swifts F. C., were suspended for one month from 4\textsuperscript{th} November 1896 for striking a referee, and H.
Arblaster of Walsall Wood F. C. and W. Guest of Rugeley Albion F. C., were suspended for one month for fighting on the field. Additionally, F. Thorp of Normanton F. C. was suspended for three months for striking an opposing player on the field, abusing and threatening the referee, and subsequently was suspended for insulting and swearing at the committee of the Football Association and threatening the Chairman at the hearing (FA Council, 16/11/1896). Following the FA rule changes that increased the referees’ control over the game it was clearly a difficult time to be a referee.

There were also wide discrepancies between the applied Laws of the Game, laid down as the official rules, and the practice of numerous clubs in different parts of the country the end result being that, ‘many years were spent by the controlling bodies in attempts at self-discipline, and progress was slow’ (Marples, cited in Mangan & Hickey, 2008, p. 730). The formation of the RA (London Branch) was an attempt to speed up this progress. Moreover, the new found powers that had been given to the referee brought with them some unwanted attention. The control afforded to referees could, at times, incite or increase violence, with any one of the decisions sparking a riot. For example, in the 1890’s referees were being assaulted as a type of retribution by gamblers who had wagered unsuccessfully on the outcome of a match (Vamplew, 1980, p. 11).

Due to the difficulties in the application of the Laws of the Game and the challenges that referees faced enforcing these rules, further referee associations, branches and societies were organised, and by 1899 there were 27 societies’ and 773 members. This increase in societies and membership ensured that the appointment of referees became far too onerous for these organisations to administer and manage and responsibility for this was transferred to The FA in 1899 (“Background and formation”, n.d. paras. 4-5).

In a further attempt to improve refereeing experience and knowledge, following a decision made by the FA Council, the RA (London Branch) in 1895 began production of the Referees’ Chart. Because of the increased importance of the decisions that referees were being asked to make, the FA had to turn their attention towards the
training and support that referees were receiving within the game. Therefore the first Referees’ Chart, a code of rules which attempted to address the need for standardisation within refereeing, was produced. The then Vice President of the FA, William Pickford, was instrumental in convincing the RA to produce “The Referees’ Chart” for the 1895-96 season. It contained the 17 Laws of the game and was far more substantial than those drafted originally in 1863 (Davies & Carosi, 2008, para 3) and it gave the referee:

“...absolute power to award a free kick for every breach of the Laws that he sees, the penalty kick only excepted, whether there be an appeal from the player or not. Only in the case of a breach of Law 13 must he wait for an appeal before awarding a penalty kick, and even here he must award a penalty kick, with or without appeal, for a wilful trip.”

(FA Council minutes, 16/01/1895)

Formulation of the Referees’ Chart was one of the last undertakings of The London Society of the RA as it ended its short but important existence in 1899, having given the referee some form of status and initiated many improvements (“Background and formation”, n.d. paras. 4-5). Despite these steps forward, the initial guidance given to the referee was skeletal, and it took eleven years for the next round of instructions to be released, although these instructions did at least leave the referee better equipped to deal with the machinations of the game as it moved into the 20th century (Thomson, 1998, p. 43).

Alongside the developments within officiating that have been outlined to this point, the game generally was also changing, as was the society in which it existed. The restructuring that was being driven by the FA regarding the referee and control of the game was not the only area of Association Football that was being irreversibly altered. The legalisation of professionalism in football was ushered in by the FA through the FA Council in 1885 (Colwell, 2000, p. 202); the introduction of the professional player (The ‘registration of a professional player’ form was introduced in 1886 - figure 6) was something which would change the game at the turn of the twentieth century, but also affect the modern game in a way that would have been wholly inconceivable at the time the decisions were made.
Professionalisation had implications for football that would have a related consequence for the referee. The formation of the Football Association in 1863 and the ensuing professional organisation of football on a national level ensured that as well as the emerging possibility of providing an income through the game, there was a financial benefit that could be attained through success in football. The monetary rewards that the national organisation of the game now made possible also meant that it was essential, that a greater form of arbitration and control of players was introduced.
Figure 6, Football Association minutes detailing the 'Registration of a professional player' form (Adapted from FA Council minutes, 1886)
The FA Referees’ Committee and the Referee’s Union (Association) Reformed

It could be argued that the increase in the role and significance of the referee around the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also increased their public profile and their accountability for their decisions. This, in turn, led to greater pressure and sometimes associated action from fans towards them as arbitrators. However, just when the referee needed a substantial amount of support from governing bodies and related organisations, the RA (London Branch), which oversaw the examination and appointment of referees, was disbanded in 1899. Following an inquiry into refereeing the FA in 1900 organised a ‘Referees Committee’, whose members were appointed from the FA Council (Green, 1953, p.558). This committee, in terms of its roles and responsibilities, was in effect a type of replacement of the RA (London Branch). For example, the newly formed Referees Committee at the FA delegated the registration, appointment and examination of referees to the local County FAs, something which had previously been undertaken by the RA (London Branch).

During the early 1900s referees were generally disliked, often cursed and at times assaulted and this made the need for a union of some type all the more important. Referee associations, branches, societies and clubs, mainly from the north and midlands, gave their initial approval, believing that unification brought strength. To that end, meetings took place in Carlisle, Manchester, Birmingham and London and Charles Sutcliffe (who would become the first president of the newly formed Referees Union)21 convened an informal meeting on 5 March 1908 in Manchester (“The Referees’ Association: A Glimpse into History 1908”, 1955, p. 3), with the intention of forming the union. As a result of structural changes in Association Football and consequently also refereeing, and doubtless as a reaction to the unpleasant experiences of referees who were subjected to abuse and crowd disturbances in many parts of the country, the Referees’ Union (latterly Association) was founded in 1908 (“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 11).

The game was changing; codification and the subsequent acceptance of professionalisation had meant major changes in the fledgling sport. Football had moved a long way in a relatively short time period and there were issues that needed to be addressed as the game’s development progressed, particularly with respect to
refereeing. At the end of the nineteenth century the role of the referee had become established, although there was still a considerable amount of change required both in Association Football and refereeing before an official similar to those known today would emerge.

The central aim of this chapter was to identify the pertinent developments in football specifically related to refereeing, in order to chart the emergence of the match official as the early rules of Association Football began to form. In order to achieve this early forms of football, the introduction of rules and the emergence of umpires and referees both in and out of the public school system have been considered in order to examine the initial support that referees were afforded as the codified game of football began to emerge.

1 Rules of this traditional form of the game in Italy include a football, a 100-by-50-metre sand pitch with goals running the width of each end and two teams of 27 men. There are fifty minutes of play. No half-time and no substitutions. There are some forms of behaviour that are forbidden, such as punching and kicking in the head. Otherwise, head-butting, punching, elbowing, choking and throwing sand in opponents’ eyes are encouraged, and at times applauded (Halpern, 2008).

2 The systematic removal of the ‘shrove’ and ‘folk’ forms of football was unquestionably encouraged by the authorities across England at both a local and national level. A bill was passed in 1831 that specified anyone found playing football, amongst other games, would be fined forty shillings (Harvey, 2005, p. 5).

3 References to an ‘outside’ authority as part of football in the sixteenth century are perhaps not surprising given the context of other sports and rule governance at a similar time. Real Tennis, for example, required a need for self-constraint and there was an inherent requirement for upholding respect for the referee and host players (Lake, 2009, p. 570).

4 Football was not alone in the level of violence that occurred in these early sports. Malcolm (2002, pp. 38-44) argues that there was evidence of the close association of cricket with violence and injury and that early forms of cricket were characterised by displays of relatively high degrees of violence.

5 There were arguably many genuinely proletarian clubs that formed and, this ensured that the working class roots of the game were not lost, although in reality historians have found few examples of these clubs (Taylor, 2008, p. 43) and therefore the evidence is not compelling.

6 For further information on the sociology and theories of Norbert Elias related to the civilising process see Elias (1982), Elias (1994) and Loyal and Quilley (2004)

7 Harvey (2005, p. 85) elaborates on these examples of umpires throughout the years 1841-1852 and their roles within the games of this period.

8 The formation of the Football Association in 1863 is seen by some authors as a natural development of these rules being produced, and the split in the ways that rugby football could be interpreted; the formation of the Football Association led, in turn to the formation of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) in 1871 and officially marked the separation of the codes (Horne, Tomlinson & Whannel, 1999, p. 41).
The 1870 Education Act meant laid the foundations for the provision of state education ("Going to school", n.d.). The act ensured the formation of ‘school boards’ to build and manage schools in the areas they were needed. The act also meant a considerable increase in the number of school places available; grants administered through the churches doubled the number of places they could offer (to a million) and the new ‘school’ boards also created half a million places (Armytage, 1970, p. 128).

The improved rail network, the rise of the mass media, advancing literacy levels and the penny post also had an effect. These changes to accepted working standards, alongside the other technological and educational advancements meant that working men had Saturday afternoons effectively free and some spare money in the years when the FA had begun to promote and encourage the expansion of football (Walvin, 1994, pp. 55-56).

The first large scale football culture can be found in Sheffield alongside the formation of the world’s first football club, and there is a general recognition of the importance of the game to the working class (Harvey, 2001, p. 59; Metcalfe, 1988, p. 15).

There is a school of thought that identifies the game in Sheffield and the north of the country as being equally important, if not more so, than the developments that occurred in the public schools of England. For further information on the debate over the influence of public schools over the development of football see Curry, (2014), Dunning and Sheard (2005), Dunning and Curry (2002), Dunning (2001), Dunning (1999), Goulstone (2001), Goulstone (2000), Harvey (2005), Harvey (2004), Harvey (2002), Harvey (2001).

A further report in the Sheffield and Rotherham Independent just four days after the formation of the FA proclaimed that a ‘numerous and influential meeting of the captains and other representatives of the football clubs of the metropolis and the suburbs was held at the Freemasons’ Tavern for the purpose of promoting the adoption of a general code of rules, and generally to bring the game into a more definite position’ (October 30, 1863, p. 4).

It is widely accepted that the rules adopted by the FA were most in line with the ‘Cambridge Rules’ (Pickford, 1940, p. 135).

Initially these rules were derived from the practices generally outside the public schools; Sheffield integrated practices from other codes, such as the ‘rouge’, from Eton’s game. By 1863, seventeen teams in the area were utilising the Sheffield rules regularly. The numbers of teams utilising the rules grew and in 1867 they were able to organise a cup competition for twelve of the teams in the area (Swain & Harvey, 2012, p. 1429).

Between the formation of the league and the election of 12 clubs initially, up to 1920, when 22 clubs from the Southern League were admitted to the Football League and finally to 1950, by which time the number of clubs in the Football League had risen to 92 (Mangan, 2008, p. 172), football had developed at an astonishing rate

A further report in the Sheffield and Rotherham Independent just four days after the formation of the FA proclaimed that a ‘numerous and influential meeting of the captains and other representatives of the football clubs of the metropolis and the suburbs was held at the Freemasons’ Tavern for the purpose of promoting the adoption of a general code of rules, and generally to bring the game into a more definite position’ (October 30, 1863, p. 4).

It is widely accepted that the rules adopted by the FA were most in line with the ‘Cambridge Rules’ (Pickford, 1940, p. 135).

Initially these rules were derived from the practices generally outside the public schools; Sheffield integrated practices from other codes, such as the ‘rouge’, from Eton’s game. By 1863, seventeen teams in the area were utilising the Sheffield rules regularly. The numbers of teams utilising the rules grew and in 1867 they were able to organise a cup competition for twelve of the teams in the area (Swain & Harvey, 2012, p. 1429).

Between the formation of the league and the election of 12 clubs initially, up to 1920, when 22 clubs from the Southern League were admitted to the Football League and finally to 1950, by which time the number of clubs in the Football League had risen to 92 (Mangan, 2008, p. 172), football had developed at an astonishing rate

### Table 1: Number of ground closures and warnings to clubs concerning spectator disorder from 1895-1915 in league and non-league football (Adapted from Dunning, Murphy & Williams, 1988, p. 95).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Closures</th>
<th>Warnings</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Closures</th>
<th>Warnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Football was not the only sport that suffered from crowd disturbances. Indeed, cricket, as early as 1693, has recorded incidents related to crowd disturbance. These incidents are documented throughout the 1700s and 1800s in particular (Malcolm, 1999, pp. 19-22).

It may be that the police did not see football crowds as a particular problem at this time, and this could have meant that the abuse of referees was, at times, left relatively unchallenged. Indeed, the fact that football crowds held a large number of middle class spectators may have meant that the police did not view football crowds as a particular issue concerning public order. Furthermore, judgements about the behaviour of crowds and in particular the working class sections of crowds, were made by middle class commentators (Collins, 1998 p. 76).

Football was not the only sport that suffered from crowd interference in response to officials’ decisions. Indeed, umpires that stood in cricket matches around the same time and in cricket’s earliest stages were unlikely to have the luxury of an easy task. In 1893, there were recordings of an umpire being ducked in a pond by some disgruntled players, and it was clear that well before this time players were concerned to have an umpire who could effectively exercise authority. In 1818 a condition of playing the England vs Nottingham match was that both umpires be ‘gentlemen’ and professional umpires were used in the 1830s (Curiosities cited in Malcolm, 2002, p. 51).

It is worth noting at this point that referees were often administrators and sports journalists. Referees often took on these roles concurrently and some of the leading figures in the organisation of the game in Britain and beyond (such as Charles Sutcliffe and Stanley Rous) were key figures in defending and extending the roles and rights of referees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1899</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1902</th>
<th>1903</th>
<th>1904</th>
<th>1905</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 3 – The Development of Refereeing (I): From Professionalisation to Payment.

By the turn of the twentieth century the game of Association Football was becoming firmly established in English society and professionalisation was beginning to have an impact, not only on clubs and players, but also on referees. The latter part of the nineteenth century saw a movement, both in terms of action and the development of law, towards greater power for the referee. This power, in turn, meant greater responsibility and increased scrutiny related to the referee’s on-field decisions.

It is the aim of this chapter to identify the introduction of referee classifications, training and assessment and to set these changes into the context of wider societal influences. This chapter initially considers the advent of the ‘professional’ referee and how this was associated with issues related to the payment of officials amid class tensions in the wider society. The chapter also briefly considers ‘professionalisation’ and its application to refereeing in the early 1900s. Referees as an occupational group attempting to professionalise are discussed, and the emerging issues related to referee governance, and training are considered. Initially the introduction and changes to referee classification are examined. Referee classification as a means of identifying and organising referees depending on ability was inevitable once a formalised league competition had been introduced. Despite the inevitability of these referee classifications, the process was clouded by historical promotion structures and the relationship between the FA and the County FAs that oversaw promotion at a regional level.

The Introduction of Referee Classifications
Various forms of referee promotion existed and were in operation, largely dependent on the practices of the County FA with which a referee was associated. One of the earliest forms of this promotion system was outlined in 1893 with the FA stating that a list of referees would be prepared by the council of the Association ‘...such referees to be selected from nominations of Associations which are duly qualified for
representation on the council’ (FA Council minutes, 11/09/1893). With this initiative the classification process, designed to more effectively ensure promotion and placement of referees at the appropriate level of competition, had begun. But despite the initiation of this process, there was little guidance as to how County FAs should undertake the classification of referees and there were no guarantees at all that this was not viewed and implemented differently by separate County FAs in different counties in England. Because of these potential differences in application, as early as 1895 there were suggestions put before the FA Council to change this classification structure and make it more robust.

In 1895 a proposal by Mr J. A. MacGregor of Port Vale, which was seconded by Mr J. J. Bentley from Bolton Wanderers, was made to change and update the classification of referees. The proposal was for the introduction of three categories of classification, Class A for referees of at least three years’ standing, eligible for appointment in English Cup Ties and Senior District Cups; Class B referees, it was proposed, would be officials of at least twelve months’ standing, eligible for appointment in Local Cup Competitions, finally Class C was recommended where referees would be eligible for Junior Cup Competitions. The motion also proposed that promotion from Class to Class should be considered on an annual basis. The proposal was discussed at the FA Council meeting and subsequently withdrawn as a motion (FA Council minutes, 21/05/1895). Despite the withdrawal of this motion the fact that it was debated and discussed at all demonstrates the importance that was being accorded to the grading and classification of referees towards the close of the nineteenth century.

As the requirement for a more formalised promotion and classification structure became more pressing a modified version of the proposal made by Mr MacGregor and Mr Bentley became operational seven years later. The Football Association and the Football League had decided a list of referees was required that could then be appointed to County Cup matches as well as being submitted to the FA for possible use in the FA Cup Competitions. The newly formed Referees Commission at the FA began attempting to classify referees into Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 referees (instead of Class A, B and C previously proposed), with Class 1 designated ‘senior
referees’ and a proportion of these Class 1 referees were recommended by the appropriate County FA for appointment to the first-class type of match (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 5/02/1902; Witty, 1960c, p. 201). This list was compiled by the County Football Associations and these classifications came into use in February, 1902 ("Durham F.A.", 1927, p. 64). Class 1 referees were required to undergo a special examination, due to the significance of the matches in which they would be officiating; Classes 2 and 3 required no additional examinations. The FA believed that this classification system would improve the standard of refereeing because there would be a coherent list of the ‘best’ referees from all County FAs.

The newly introduced classification system meant that referees were being selected by perceived ability. The County FAs were making decisions on the quality of a referee and grading them according to their perception of this quality. However, there was no formal, standardised, and uniform method of assessment. The County FAs were responsible for conducting their own assessments, and producing their own lists. The lack of agreed criteria meant there was no guarantee that the ‘best’ referees were in the correct category or class, or that the ‘best’ referees were officiating in the Football League or in the FA competitions.

In 1909 Charles Sutcliffe, a former player and referee in the Football League¹, proposed that referees should be appointed to a league on a seasonal basis, rather than month by month, given the amount of work that this entailed for the FA and Football League. This proposal, which was accepted by the Football League Management Committee in 1909, meant that the list of referees for the Football League was set at the start of the season, subject to any necessary revision each month (Sutcliffe et al, 1938, p. 15), a procedure still followed in the modern game.

As a means of promoting referees a form of referee assessment was in place at the turn of the 1900s, although these practices were very informal and operated on an ad hoc basis. However, by 1910 the Football League Management Committee was receiving reports on referees’ match performance (Sutcliffe et al, 1938, p. 15) in an attempt to regulate the quality of referees². By 1912 in a further move to monitor performance and standardise the quality of referees, the Football League had
ensured that referees required satisfactory performances in lower standard matches in order that they might progress to league level (Vamplew, 1988, p. 261). This meant that through the League Management Committee the Football League had managed to organise their own classification system and therefore the ability to be able to appoint referees to their league matches.

Despite this move towards standardising the quality of referees, by 1913 referees and those associated with refereeing were asking for more to be done by the authorities in terms of their training and promotion. Up until this point training had been neglected as promotion and classification had taken a more important place in the development of the referee, this despite complaints from clubs regarding referees’ performances.

The lack of consideration of referee training is perhaps not surprising given that there was a belief that referees were born into refereeing, and that it had little to do with training or practice, ‘...first class referees are born not made, and if a referee fails to control a game satisfactorily let us put it down to the fact that he was not born a Knight of the Whistle’ (‘A Low Birth Rate’, 1912, pp. 6-7). The attitude that individuals either could or could not referee, by definition rendered the concept of training an afterthought. Nevertheless, referees wanted further training. FA Referees’ Committee minutes reveal that referees started to ask for a more uniform strategy towards their training and promotion. In an attempt to achieve this, the Conference of County and District Association Referees, Secretaries and Representatives put forward a suggestion:

‘It was unanimously resolved that this Conference urge upon the Referees’ Committee of the Football Association the necessity of investigating and considering the present methods adopted by the various affiliated Bodies for the training and promotion of Referees with a view to formulating a definite scheme for adoption’

However, after deliberating the motion, ‘the Committee decided that it was not desirable to formulate a definite scheme’

(FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 05/07/1913)
The rejection of a definitive scheme for training and promotion was taken despite referees deeming that further support from governing bodies was necessary. Evidence, in 1913, suggests that referees were becoming ‘sufficiently fed up with all the criticism and extra public scrutiny that they took the unprecedented step of sending a petition to the League, which was signed by 38 referees’ (Inglis, 1988, p. 77). These referees had been selected to officiate in the Football League, following the promotional structure that had been developed between the FA and latterly the Football League, although evidently they did not believe the support from these organisations was satisfactory.

Despite the strength of feeling towards the FA and Football League, changes to the promotion structure and classification system continued. The FA introduced a ‘special list’ of referees that required the formation of a sub-committee, subordinate to the full Referees’ Committee. This sub-committee had the responsibility of selecting the names of seventy-two referees that constituted this ‘special list’ as well as giving match appointments to those referees on the ‘special-list’ (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 26/08/1929). This was the first step in distinguishing the different classes or categories of referees in a more formal manner and this process progressed further with the introduction of the starring system for referees. The County FAs were still required at the start of the season to submit a list of referees and linesmen for FA competitions, and the County FAs were also ‘...requested to “star” the names of the nominees whom they particularly recommend for appointment as Referees’ (FA Council minutes, 01/06/1931). This procedure was at the discretion of the County FAs and it remained in place until referees were re-categorised according to the recommendations outlined in the FA minutes in 1951 (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 26/02/1951).

These discussions and decisions concerning the promotion and grading of referees were taking place at a time of growing social class tensions from which association football and refereeing were not immune. The changing class structure in the wider society had spilled over into sport, and Association Football, in part due to the professionalisation of the game, provided an arena for these societal influences to evolve (Smart, 2007, p. 114).
Amateur and Professional Class-Based Struggles

Class-based prejudices were aimed at players and referees alike after the introduction of professionalisation. N. L. Jackson, a well-known Corinthian (and coincidentally assistant secretary to the FA), possessing all of the gentleman amateur ideals that would be expected from an individual who represented 'The Casuals', or the Corinthian Football Club as they were also known, was scathing in his appraisal of referees generally when writing in 1899, directing his closing comments to those referees that make a ‘business’ of refereeing:

“Nothing more forcibly illustrates the enormous change that Association Football has undergone during the last twenty-five years than a comparison between the referee of today (1899) and the umpire – for there were few referees then – (1874).

How different it is now! The referee is the autocrat of the game. He gives his decisions without appeal, and once given they are final. His word is Law, and providing he does not outrageously ignore the rules, there is little chance of his most glaring mistakes being rectified by the only power above him, viz, the Council of the Football Association.

It is astonishing to find how few referees there are who really understand football as it was handed down to us by the founders of the game. Men of the public-school class, many of whom would make splendid officials, will not act because of the insults that referees are subjected to by spectators, players and – worst of all – a section of the press. Very few men will subject themselves to these humiliating annoyances and accordingly, the majority of referees are either men whose vanity leads them to believe that they are born to officiate, or who make a primary or secondary business of it, considering the fees compensate for the annoyances of the position.”

(“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, pp. 11-12)
The underlying tensions that existed at the turn of the twentieth century are encapsulated in the sentiments expressed by N. L. Jackson above. The amateur versus professional struggle, as well as the position and influence of the referee are amongst the prominent and pertinent issues that were being discussed within the game at this time. The historical review in ‘The Football Referee’ gives a unique insight into the mentality and social status of the referee. We know that many referees were school teachers (Mangan 2008, p. 174) and also railway workers, and those that could arrange shift work. Also enlightening is the fact that, ‘most men that took up refereeing were anxious that this should not be known, and were especially concerned should their name get into the papers through a disturbance at the game, or by official punishment for alleged failure to satisfactorily carry out their duties’ (“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 12).

Crowd disturbances were still something that referees had to contend with. The vociferous and at times aggressive nature of the crowd, referred to as ‘the madding crowd’ by Vamplew when considering crowd disturbances connected with sport (1988, p. 266), meant that crowd and stadium sanctions were imposed by the FA. These crowd disturbances, and generally aggressive approaches towards the referee continued into the twentieth century. The general mood of the crowd and the way they interacted with the referee often depended on the referees’ decisions for or against the home team. For example, in 1913 there are accounts stating that ‘...a referee is good or bad according to the manner in which his decisions affect the home side’ (Taylor, 2008, p. 95)

Decisions made not only affected the match being officiated, but also the employment career of the referee. Refereeing was seen as a ‘distinct handicap to continuing employment’ if their past time as a referee found its way into the reports in newspapers of crowd disturbance or unruly behaviour (“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 12). It is evident that referees were not the most popular figures in football. Referees were being attacked and victimised by crowds, something which is documented in the FA minutes where assaults, both verbal and physical, have been recorded. FA minutes indicate that during this time period these were not isolated incidents, something which was a concern for the FA and the
referees themselves. Some of these issues were covered by the press and media at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. This focus of the media was often a mocking or humorous approach, which figures 7 and 8 illustrate. It should also be noted that this was not always the case; indeed, the press did treat referees with more respect at times and also attempt to understand a referees’ view of the game, as figure 9 demonstrates. Much of this understanding of a referees’ view of the game can be attributed to the fact that some referees contributed to local and national newspapers alongside their refereeing career.
Figure 7, a cartoon depicting disguises for referees (Adapted from the Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green'Un), 14/03/1908).
Figure 8, Proud Preston’s Peerless Record, a cartoon depicting the incidents during a match, one of which involved the referee (Adapted from The Athletic News, 23/11/1903).
Figure 9, ‘How to play the game’, a referees’ view of how to play the game (Adapted from the Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 17/01/1913).
The ‘Professional' Referee and the Growth of Association Football

An ‘amateur' within English sport has come to mean simply an individual who does not play for pay, however the initial meaning is more nuanced. The concept of the ‘amateur’ athlete, embodying a set of distinctive sporting practices versus the ‘professional’ athlete, was evident in various sports, including football, and brought class tensions and fundamental viewpoints on the payment of individuals in sport into focus. The FA were ‘...keen to keep professionalism at arm’s length’ (Holt, 1989, p. 106) despite allowing its legalisation in 1885, and as a consequence, championed the introduction of an amateur cup in 1893. Nevertheless, by the 1900s professionalism was advancing from the north of the country to the south of England (Porter, 2006, p. 408).

The amateur versus professional debate that the game of Association Football was experiencing also affected refereeing. ‘The Football Referee' included a piece which considered the ‘professional' referee, entitled ‘The Referees’ Association Forty Years Ago'. This article was published in March 1956 and was therefore making comment on referee payment in 1916, including the initial payment of referees and the lack of tolerance within refereeing of these individuals who accepted payment for their services.

The definition of a ‘professional' offered in this article was ‘the referee who accepted a fee for their services', and these individuals were ‘...regarded with great disfavour from the beginning’ (“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 11). Furthermore, at the time of the publication of this article it was felt that ‘...this feeling had not completely died away' and, some still felt resentment towards those referees who accepted a fee. The general feeling towards these early pioneers who took payment for their services appears to be one of general dislike. At the time such arbitrators were proclaimed as ‘professional' referees, class distinctions were still shifting and ‘a nobleman was a nobleman’ whereas ‘a fee taking referee was to be endured, though only through necessity; they certainly were not ‘old school tie’ (“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 11). In addition there were growing tensions between the amateur game and the FA. The FA’s decision to embrace professionalism had led those in favour of the game remaining amateur to form the
Amateur Football Association (AFA) in 1907. The AFA split from the FA in 1907 before returning in 1914. Within the wider game of Association Football there were disagreements over the payment of individuals and therefore it is not surprising that refereeing also generated similar discussions over the payment of officials.

The resentment directed towards the FA concerning the professionalisation of the game only grew with the changes that professionalism had initiated. Commercialisation, for example, (something to which football would have to become accustomed) directly brought the ex-public school and varsity amateurs into contact with the businessmen who controlled the professional clubs. This meant that the FA Council was becoming increasingly subject to the influence of these club directors and the societal grouping to which they belonged and this led to further tension between club directors and the ‘gentleman amateurs’, who continued to regard themselves as socially and morally superior (Porter, 2006, pp. 408-409).

The club directors viewed the organisation of Association Football very differently from the gentlemen amateurs that had played the game, which they also helped to codify, through the school system. The notion that gentlemen would no longer be able to dominate the game as they had was becoming a reality. The middle classes found their authority challenged on the playing fields and in the committee rooms (Collins, 1998, p. 90) and the eclipse of the public school-based clubs was seen as a distinct measure of this.

The tensions and conflicting views associated with the amateur and professional dimensions of the game also began to affect the referee. A number of referees continued to participate without taking a fee for their service. Known as ‘gentlemen referees’ these referees were afforded, as expenses, the privilege of charging for a first class rail fare (“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 11). Professionalisation was something that was increasingly debated as refereeing developed and more power and later guidance, as well as training, was given to the referee. The onset of the ‘professional’ or ‘full-time referee’ in 2001 was not the result of a brief consultation or discussion, rather it was something that had been a part of a dialogue over a period of almost 40 years with the first mention of ‘professional’
referees in ‘The Football Referee’ publication coming in the May 1964 issue in an article entitled ‘Professional Referees’ by D. L. Bullard. Bullard, recalling listening to a broadcast of ‘Sports Report’ on the radio and hearing the presenter call for professional referees, decided that this would attract ‘the wrong type of man’ and that ‘...referees do not enter the game in this sphere for monetary gain’ (1964, p. 20). Bullard also states that there was a proposition to the Football League referees some years before this article was written, putting forward the idea of professional referees, and that this idea was never accepted.

Further reference to this theme of the professional referee within ‘The Football Referee’ publication occurs in the January 1966 edition in a contributory article by R. Simeon, who argues that it would be something that is difficult to implement, but if it were to be implemented he would expect that ‘...with all their time available for training, they will be physically fitter’ (1966, p. 12)\(^\text{15}\); something which has now occurred and is discussed in detail in Chapter 6. A subsequent article written by the Leicester Branch of the Referees’ Association from the April 1971 publication of ‘The Football Referee’, cited the press asking again for professional referees. Professional referees are debated within the article with queries raised over referee payment, selection for the professional ranks and how football should be played and undertaken for the love of the game rather than financial gain (Leicester Branch, 1971, p. 11).

The FA, writing in ‘The Football Referee’ through their Referee Secretary, Reg Paine, was also involved in the debate and submitted an article entitled ‘Why we don’t want professional referees’. Paine, an ex-Football League referee himself, argues that whilst he can see that fitness would improve with professional referees, he saw no reason to believe that the knowledge and interpretation of the laws would improve (Paine, 1973, p. 14). Paine also argued that a move towards professional referees might begin to erode their integrity and invite questions over their impartiality if they received a contracted salary through the game.
Referees as an Occupational Grouping: Divisions and Difficulties

Early in the twentieth century referees as a group, lacked cohesion and solidarity. In some cases referees were accused of touting for appointments, gambling on matches, reporting on matches for the press, approaching players on behalf of clubs and also, according to the following report entitled ‘The Referees’ Association Forty Years ago’, drinking alcohol before and even during matches:

‘...pubs opened at 5.00am., closing at midnight; beer and spirits were freely drunk if the coppers were available. It was not rare for a referee to stop a game for his own purposes, returning feeling the better. Indeed the 1909 minute book of a County FA records the findings of a special commission. It appears one side scored a goal, and looking round for the referees’ confirmation, found him in the far penalty area, relieving himself before a mixed, if small assemblage of spectators. He gave offside and was reported for being drunk! However, the usual excuse of illness was accepted and the chap was solemnly warned he must not repeat his conduct, which was likely to bring the game into disrepute!’

(“The Referees’ Association 40 Years Ago”, 1956, p. 12)

This account includes the assertion that ‘the usual excuse of illness was accepted’; inferring that drinking and excessive use of alcohol by referees in 1909 was not an irregular act. If the referee was indeed ill and not inebriated there would have been no need to warn and advise him not to repeat his conduct for fear of bringing the game into disrepute. However, in the absence of further evidence occurrences such as this cannot be assured to have been widespread. Referees were subjected to forms of abuse at most levels of the game from 1900 to 1910 (Inglis, 1988; Taylor, 2008; Vamplew, 1988), but in terms of public perception they did not assist themselves by engaging in behaviour not befitting someone holding a position of authority.
Controversial incidents and reports involving referees led to calls in national and regional newspapers for them to unite. An example of this can be seen in a section of the Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) (27/12/1913) entitled ‘Leaves from my notebook: For referees’ where the anonymous writer refers to referees as ‘the Ishmael of the game’ before urging them to support each other, ‘...if the referees will not support each other, to whom may they look for support?’ The article also alleges that referees were often heard decrying each other, something which appears to have been an issue at this time. The president of the Referees Union (later to become the Referees’ Association), J. A. H. Catton\textsuperscript{16}, was submitting articles into regional newspapers, such as the Sheffield Telegraph, urging referees to band together, stating why he believed that refereeing was important and stressing the need for confidence. Catton also coined the term ‘old Aunt Sally’ when referring to referees, asserting that they are there ‘for every man to throw at’ (‘The status of the referee’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un), 20/12/1913), explaining a view shared by many within refereeing.

**Payment for Referees**

The calls for unity within refereeing also included critical references to the on going issues of payment of referees and the professionalisation of refereeing. Writing in the Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special, Catton revealed his stance on these matters by arguing that ‘...we must prefer men of the quasi-amateur type. I hope we shall never see the day of the professional controller in the middle of the arena’ (‘The status of the referee’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un), 20/12/1913). The Referees’ Union was openly discouraging the movement towards professional referees, something which would only become a reality at the turn of the twenty first century.

In 1883 referees were paid for FA Cup ties when the association appointed neutral officials (referees and umpires) and gave them second class train fares together with ‘cab expenses where necessary, as well as ‘5s. for sundry expenses if travelling 30 miles from home or 10s. if unavoidably absent from home for the night’ (Witty, 1960, pp. 197-198). Five years later in 1888 The Football League provided payment for
referees of £1, 1s as well as a third class railway fair, although this was subsequently halved (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 101; Sutcliffe et al, 1938, p. 4) and by 1890 the fees had increased to a guinea up to 80 miles and £1.11.6 over 80 miles plus a third class train ticket (Mason, 1980, p. 162).

Payments for referees in 1913 were allegedly fixed at around £4 a week; further to this there was also the added weight of expectancy and pressure upon them that came with the introduction of promotion and relegation into Association Football. In an article entitled ‘The Payment of Referees’ “Perseus” the Lancashire pseudonym for a writer who dealt with ‘the referee question’ argues that referees' payments at the time were not enough for the role they were given. Furthermore, the same article stated that:

‘...it is the duty of the authorities to-day, when such weighty issues hang upon a single mistake on a vital point, to make refereeing as efficient as possible...that can only be done by giving a greater equivalent for the service, and what is more, paying it through an official channel’

(‘The payment of referees’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 20th December, 1913).

Sutcliffe et al (1938, p. 26) state that the money available for referees and linesmen officiating in the Football League was increased in May 1921 and then remained the same until at least 1938, however they do not give specific figures on the increase.

By this point in time referee payment was firmly entrenched in the game, and other matters considered here, such as promotion and classification, the support of authorities such as the FA and Football League, and the idea of professional referees, were consistent subjects of debate for those involved in and with refereeing. As refereeing developed there was a requirement for a supportive structure in order to deal with the challenges that faced officials, something which would involve both the Referees’ Association and the FA.
The powers that had been transferred to the referee meant that their knowledge and interpretation of the relatively newly formed Laws of the Game were central to the consistent and orderly on-field running or governing of football matches. The referee was the sole arbiter on the pitch, assisted by two linesmen when needed; they were now the decision makers, the guardians of the Laws of the Game on the field of play. The referees’ interpretation of these laws was central to the evolution of the game, especially so following the abolition of the team-nominated umpires. The referee had become time keeper, whistle blower, and also gate keeper to the Football Association; they represented the association both in their own FA Cup competition and also in the Football League fixtures to which they were appointed.

By 1910 Association Football was a global game just 47 years after its codification; it was increasingly being played around the world and competitive leagues were forming in all four corners of the globe. The role of the referee was of paramount importance to the game’s development and the lead for this arguably should have come from the country that codified the rules of the game, England. With that in mind the relationships that supported the referee throughout the game’s development up until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 can be considered.

**FIFA, Refereeing and the English Representatives**

A view of the perceptions of refereeing in Europe and in particular England can be gleaned from a consideration of the FIFA minutes from 1913. The 10th annual FIFA congress was held in Copenhagen from 31st May until 1st June and featured discussions on refereeing. A motion was raised to move towards more international uniformity within the refereeing of matches. The representative from Belgium at the congress proposed that in order to increase standardisation and uniformity in respect of the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, a refereeing congress should be organised. This was met with a great deal of conjecture and disagreement, in particular from the English representative J. Lewis, who stated that he ‘considered such a congress a waste of time and money, although in England a referees union had been formed the conditions were no better than 25 years ago, many referees don’t even carefully read the Laws of the Game’ (FIFA Annual Congress minutes,
These views were supported by the Scottish representative H. S. McLauchlan, who agreed that even though Scotland had a long experience related to this issue, ‘...at present there was no uniform interpretation of the Laws of the Game’ (FIFA Annual Congress minutes, 01/06/13).

The comments made by J. Lewis, the English representative, can be explained in three possible ways. Firstly, that Lewis was being critical of referees per se and the standards he had observed; secondly, that he was being critical of some referees who did not take the vocation seriously; or thirdly, that Lewis was in fact dismissive of the suggestion from FIFA that those within England needed to subscribe to international standards and guidelines. His comment, and other subsequent comments at this annual congress, exemplify that refereeing was not held in high regard within English and indeed international football, although there was also no inclination to assist the development of refereeing. Following the comments concerning referees not reading the rules of the game, the president of FIFA stated that a circular would be sent out with regard to the rules of the game; and if this did not work, it was proposed that the matter would be revisited by congress again at a later date.

The proposal received support from the Austrian representative, who wanted better control of referees in relation to the administration of the laws of the game. The Russian representative believed that more good would come from ‘arranging friendly meetings of referees to discuss important matters.’ But another English representative, F.J. Wall, ‘considered the question one for individual associations to deal with’ in their own country (FIFA Annual Congress minutes, 01/06/1913). Standardisation was evidently not something that was of particular interest to some countries within FIFA, although other countries did attach more importance to this notion.

The tenor of the discussion at an important FIFA meeting outlines the lack of support for referees in 1913. Nevertheless, the fact that such conversations were taking place within relevant committees and governing bodies does demonstrate acknowledgement that the issues at least warranted discussion. Referees appeared
to be an afterthought in the game at this point, yet there was a clear understanding, within the international game, if not in England, that refereeing was something with which governing bodies should be concerned.

Despite the lack of support from the English representative at the FIFA congress in 1913, ‘The Football Referee’ (“International Corner”, 1938, p.3) in 1938 suggested that an international refereeing conference would be something that would be desirable and asked ‘when may we hope to have such a conference?’ In the period between the FIFA meeting in 1913 and 1938 an international refereeing conference had not occurred. This suggests that, in the view of the FA, referees did not require formal, standardised training. Furthermore, it also raises questions about refereeing standards and the ability to ensure that standards were at least consistent with the development of Association Football and the professional player.

How referees were being trained, developed and nurtured in England was vitally important for the continuing development of the game. The following chapter will focus further on the changes associated with referee training, assessment and the structure of refereeing in England. With the professional game firmly established, the era of the professional player meant that it became increasingly essential that the level and quality of training afforded to those who refereed professional matches should be intensified to a correspondingly professional standard. The game was changing and, as has already been noted, these changes were not universally accepted.

This chapter has considered the introduction of referee classifications, training and assessment. A concerted focus has been placed upon the professionalisation of refereeing, the reason behind this professionalisation and the onset of payment for these early arbitrators. All of these concepts have directly influenced the amateur and professional class based struggle which was evident in wider society as referees and those associated with refereeing were beginning to experience challenges as they continued to develop and evolve.
Charles Sutcliffe was a member of the Football League Management Committee, and president of the Referees’ Union from 1908-1913 and 1919-1920 (“Background and formation”, n.d. paras. 8-18), later to become League President in 1936 (Tomlinson, 1991, pp. 31-32).

These reports became a necessity (enforced by the Football League) to be completed by football club secretaries in 1920 (Sutcliffe et al, 1938, p. 20).

Even as early as 1897 The Football League had received complaints and protests concerning referees from clubs affected by perceived inconsistencies in referee decision making and general efficiency (Vamplew, 1988, p. 260). The clubs in question were supported, to an extent, in this procedure and the referees implicated were not given matches involving these clubs in an attempt to placate them (Vamplew, 1988, p. 260). These issues were not unforeseeable, given the lack of training and assessment that these early referees experienced.

These concepts are linked closely to the shifting class structure. There was a perception that these referees were bred from a superior class to those that were playing Association Football and that those referees were ‘born to rule’ and more specifically ‘born to rule’ over the lower classes, to whom they still represented a figure of authority.

Further information related to assaults on referees before 1900 can be found in the FA Consultative Committee minutes. For example, Walton, who was the Captain of Jardine Swifts, was banned in 1897 for striking a player several times and then striking the referee when ordered off the field (FA Consultative Committee Meeting minutes, 12/10/1896). It is also reported that Shoreham FC’s ground was closed for one month in February 1897 due to the ungentlemanly conduct of the spectators towards the referee and Rushden Town FC suffered a similar punishment with their ground being closed for two weeks on February 15th 1897 for the misconduct of spectators towards the referee. Furthermore C. Claridge and O. Claridge, both members of Rushden Town FC’s committee, were severely censured for improper conduct towards a referee (FA Consultative Committee Meeting minutes, 15/02/1897).

Positive reports are evident in newspapers certainly from 1900 onwards. The fact that many referees wrote articles in newspapers and were often sports journalists as well as referees, would have assisted in the move towards a more balanced stance. Furthermore, referees also wrote after they finished officiating.

It is worth noting here that referees’ involvement in writing articles was some time after the turn of the twentieth century. Prominent FA Cup final referees of their time such as W.E Forshaw, J.W.D. Fowler, J.T Howcroft, and W.P. Harper provided material in various regional and national publications (W. E. Forshaw wrote in Thomson’s Weekly news in the early 1930s; J.W.D Fowler also wrote predominantly in Thomson’s Weekly News in the mid to late 1920s; J.T Howcroft wrote fairly prodigiously in the Sheffield and Telegraph and Star Sports Special, or Green’Un in the mid 1930s; whereas W.P. Harper wrote in Thomson’s Weekly news in the early 1930s) and in the case of W.P. Harper, a personal scrapbook about his career preserved in the archives at Worcester Records Office.

Amateurs were gentlemen of the middle and upper classes, who played sports that were often enjoyed by the common people, but who played these games in a special way (Holt, 1989, p. 98).

Amateurism included values stressing voluntary association, active and ethical participation, and repudiation of both professionalism and gambling (Holt, 2006, p. 352). Further information can be found in Holt (2006).

The amateur versus professional debate was not limited to the association code of football. Similar discussions were also evident in forms of rugby, and often related to class conflict and the growth of the working class, and therefore class tensions as members of the upper and middle classes viewed those perceived as working class with growing hostility (Dunning & Sheard, 2005, p. 141).

The class structures that were shifting in British society, discussed in Chapter two, had infiltrated football. The particular issue with Association Football, as occurred in rugby with the split between Union and League and latterly the professionalisation of Union, the game of Association Football was still administered at the
turn of the twentieth century and beyond by an amateur mentality. Issues in English football originated from overlapping conflicts of interest, such as the amateur versus professional debate, the middle class versus working class societal issues, the north versus the south of the country and the bulk of professional players and teams hailing from the north of England, and also the historic gentry and gentrified middle class versus the new brash commercial and industrial bourgeoisie who had managed to gain access to football (Porter, 2006, p. 409).

12 The payment of individuals for ‘sport’ was seen by many as a rather vulgar means towards remuneration. Professionalisation was certainly, in the view of those who regarded themselves superior to many working class individuals within society, as a working class problem; Collins states the thoughts of these members of society when they poured scorn on “those pampered members of society, the British lower classes, who can apparently only regard any form of sport as it assists them to make money” (1998, p. 162).

13 Commercialisation affected several sports between 1880 and 1914 including football, with the emergence of professionalism in football a by-product of commercialisation (Vamplew, 1988, p. 183).

14 The AFA was officially an independent body for only seven years, returning to the FA as an affiliated association in February 1914. These events did have an effect on the public school and university teams who found the remaining amateur cups as ‘plebeian’ as the professional game. These teams retreated into an exclusive sporting world populated by their peers and established the Arthur Dunn Cup as a response to their dislike of professionalism, despite the fact that many of their schools and universities had helped to create modern football. This sequence of events also ‘marked a deeper unease about the changing social roots and composition of the game’, to which the referee now belonged (Walvin, 1994, p. 91).

15 Simeon (1966, p. 13) goes on to ask how these referees would be superior other than through physical fitness and also what would happen if these referees suffered a loss in form. The main issue though was related to their payment and how this payment could possibly compare with footballers, who were currently paid much more.

16 J. A. H Catton was a well known sports journalist and well known in football circles of this time.

17 The fees that were paid to referees were subject to misuse by the referees themselves, with the Football League and the FA forced to take action when a number of reminders about fines related to adherence to the regulations, overcharging for the use of taxis due to late arrival and having visitors in the dressing rooms, were ignored (Sutcliffe et al, 1938, p. 26).
Chapter 4 – The Development of Refereeing (II): The Importance of Training, Assessment and Structure

This chapter considers the ongoing development of the referee. Particular attention is paid to the introduction and evolution of the training and assessment that referees have received over time and the major changes that have affected these provisions. Also discussed are the emerging relationships that have evolved between referees and the major organisations that have influence over referees in England, namely the FA, Referees’ Association and the Football League.

The primary aim of this chapter is to further chart the increasing attention and importance paid to referee training and assessment as the 1900s progressed. Therefore, consideration of developments in referee training, assessment and support structures since the end of World War One and throughout the twentieth century can give an insight into the approach taken to refereeing by football authorities. The previous chapter culminated with an examination of the views of the international community on the subject of refereeing at a FIFA Referees’ Committee meeting in 1913. The opinion expressed by some of the delegates at this meeting, including English representatives, made it clear that views of refereeing needed to change, as did the approach to the education, promotion and support of these officials.

Advising the Referees – Guidance from Governing Bodies
The start of the First World War in 1914 meant an enforced break for professional football in England from 1915, as professional football continued for one year after the start of the war (Taylor, 2008, p. 119). FA Councils met throughout this period, although a majority of the deliberations were related to the war effort and the benevolent fund associated with the war and those members of the associations affected by the conflict. Many players and referees were involved with the war and therefore much of this period, and indeed the period that takes in the Second World War, passed without much of significance in the way of substantial developments
within football and refereeing. However, before the onset of war in 1914 there were at least discussions regarding improvements that might be made to both the assessment of referees and their training, though it should be noted that the literature is particularly sparse regarding the training and assessment of referees throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

However, there were still some pertinent developments during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. FIFA established a Rules and Regulations committee in 1927 (Rous, 1978, p. 35) which was later renamed the Referees’ Committee in 1946. One of the major issues related to English influence upon the game of football around the world and also on refereeing from 1928-1946 was the fact that the FA withdrew from FIFA for this time period following a dispute over the definition of amateurism (Green, 1954, p. 89). Relations between the two bodies healed over time and the FA were readmitted to FIFA in 1946. Following this readmission, an international conference on refereeing was organised in 1948 by the FA and FIFA in London with 28 delegates attending from countries affiliated to FIFA. This conference with its focus on refereeing at an international level provided a useful platform and represented a definitive step forward, (Green, 1954, p. 92). This represented undoubtedly a shift from the FIFA meeting in 1913, where the need for such a conference was openly questioned by the English representative.

Domestically the FA was becoming aware of the need to exert some form of control over refereeing and, with that in mind, issued a memorandum in January 1935 (figure 10) that went into detail regarding the referees’ responsibilities and clearly defined what was expected of them. The memorandum also mentioned the physical fitness expected of referees at this time. This was, in fact, the first mention of physical fitness in relation to the referee from any FA directive or guidance (although it was a very brief section in the memorandum). It is certainly worth further consideration of the memorandum, given the great significance of its content with regard to changing attitudes and expectations in respect of the referee.
The FA Memorandum, 1935 – for the Guidance of Referees and Linesmen

Figure 10, Memorandum issued by the FA for the guidance of referees and linesmen
(Adapted from an FA Memorandum, 1935)
The memorandum (figure 10) detailed 11 points in total, and is as comprehensive as any piece of guidance for referees. Prior to this guidance the Referees’ Chart, listing the Laws of the Game, and produced every year since 1895 was the only regular direction referees were given. Figure 11 shows two older examples of the Referees’ Chart and figure 12 shows a more recent publication from the FA.

Figure 11, Referees’ Charts 1929-1930 & 1970-1971

Figure 12, Laws of Association Football 2007-2008

The 1935 memorandum highlights ‘work of the referee’ and ‘judging intention’ as well as ‘physical fitness’ and provides expectations of the referee in terms of fitness. It must be noted, however, that this section of the memorandum comprises merely one paragraph and, aside from the suggestion that Football League clubs should allow referees to utilise their facilities the guidance on physical fitness is somewhat vague:
'Every referee should train so as to be physically fit for his work. A player out of condition may prove to be a handicap for his team, but a referee out of condition may spoil the game for both teams. Leagues should encourage the physically fit Referee and should arrange for training facilities on the grounds of their clubs. Co-operation for this purpose should not be difficult. If a Referee is “up with the play” when infringements occur, players will seldom argue. His presence “on the spot” will prevent fouls and misconduct.’

(FA memorandum for the guidance of referees and linesmen, January 1935)

The mention of fitness and training in the memorandum demonstrates that referees had been given some direction as to what was expected of them. Nevertheless, there is little guidance as to exactly how referees were supposed to achieve what was required. Aside from being directed to join local referee associations and advised that ‘instructional classes should be held and lectures given’ on the game generally, there was minimal provision for referee training:

‘Referees should form themselves into National or Local Associations for mutual help, and every referee should join an Association. Instructional classes should be held and lectures given on points of interest in the control and conduct of the game. Mental fitness is just as important as physical fitness, and attendance at meetings may be very helpful in giving a referee confidence and courage. Classes and lectures help a referee to study carefully, and to learn to act quickly. He is bound to glean something from the experiences – happy or otherwise – of his colleagues that will help him to arrive at a right and sensible interpretation of any problems put forward for solution.

If Clubs have no one on their staff competent to instruct the players, any experienced local referee would willingly meet the players in order to teach and advise them as to the correct
interpretation of the Laws of the Game and as to the legality of various methods of play’

(FA memorandum for the guidance of referees and linesmen, January 1935)

Also worthy of attention in the memorandum, alongside the promotion of lectures and classes for referees, is the role that clubs were asked to play. Clubs were asked to instruct their players on the Laws of the Game and if they were unable to do so it was suggested that a referee could do this for them. This was a clear indication and acknowledgement of the expertise and authority required of the referee, something which is expected of referees to this day.

The attention afforded to the training of referees by the aforementioned memorandum prefigured further thought about the guidance and support referees were receiving\(^2\). There were discussions related to the promotion structure through County FAs, with the Vice Chairman of the London Society, T. W. Annal, arguing that the FA, alongside the County FAs, should identify promising referees ‘with the same keenness as clubs exercise for playing talent’ (Annal, 1938, p. 7). The article continues to argue just how important the referee is within the game, stating that ‘...his office is worthy of consideration and support in his work. Times change, and even football must change with them’ (Annal, 1938, p. 7).

Changes were moving closer with developments in the relationship between the FA and the RA. 1945 saw a momentous meeting arranged between the FA and the RA to discuss core issues related to refereeing (“Brief account of the conference”, 1945, p. 2). The RA had been attempting to gain representation on the FA Referees’ Committee over a prolonged period of time (discussed in detail in a subsequent section in this chapter). However, this initial meeting, convened on 24\(^{th}\) August 1945, after a number of cancellations, included reference to a number of pressing issues related to the training, grading and classification of referees.

The pressing issues related to refereeing were revisited with the organisation of ‘The National Referees’ Conference’ held in 1946 which offered further evidence that
more consideration was being afforded to referee training, examination and promotion.

**The National Referees Conference 1946 – A Concerted Focus on Referee Training, Examination and Promotion**

The realisation that refereeing was not keeping up with professional players at the elite end of the game was beginning to become a concern for the FA, FIFA and other governing bodies. However, the RA had understood this much earlier, indeed the formation of the national RA was in response to difficulties that referees were experiencing and some exposure of these issues in national and regional newspapers assisted in raising the profile of the problems. The issue was not confined to the lack of directed training that referees were receiving, rather the fact that during the RA conference in Cheltenham in 1946 Stanley Rous, who was then Secretary of the Football Association, urged the Referees’ Association to focus on the recruitment of referees and also stated that it was the ‘*duty of the Association to find [these referees] and train them*’ (Rous, 1946, p. 3).

The FA believed that it was the responsibility of the RA to provide and organise referee training. But the RA had little money or resources to be able to take on this responsibility and the organisations were still no nearer a uniform approach to referee training, classification and assessment. The RA did want some form of ownership over the training and coaching of referees. An article by W. S. Turnbull Vice Secretary of the Northern division of the RA, writing in *The Football Referee* (Turnbull, 1947, p. 2) argued that this should be the role of the RA and that such training should be delivered through the various Referees’ Societies around England. However, there was no mention of how this might be achieved, or how it could be funded.

The conference concluded with a number of recommendations and agreements, all of which helped to shape the approach towards refereeing by both the FA and the RA. All of the recommendations were relevant\(^3\); however, those most related to the training and assessment of referees were as follows:
1. That instructional classes for candidates and referees should be established throughout the country, and the help of the R.A. be accepted in this. County Associations to be urged to afford the opportunity to candidates to officiate in junior matches prior to examination.

2. That a uniform system of examination be evolved and prepared by a Central body appointed by the F.A. on which the R.A. should be represented.

3. That the grading of a referee by a County Association should be accepted by all other Associations throughout the country.

4. That worthy referees be offered accelerated promotion whether or not they apply for same.

(“Brief account of the conference”, 1946, p. 2)

The conference was a vital step forward in the relationship between the FA and RA and also in terms of identifying some of the areas of improvement necessary in refereeing. For example, there was recognition that a uniform exam system was needed for referees, that the grading of a referee should be the same throughout the country and that there should be some consideration of accelerated promotion, where appropriate. Nevertheless, by December 1947 a uniform examination for referees was still not a reality (“More from Lancaster Gate”, 1947, p. 7; Figure 13). Amongst various proposed changes in refereeing it is worth noting that the conference abolished the starring of Class 1 referees, something which had been implemented in 1931 by the FA as a suggested method of identifying the best referees nominated on the lists submitted to them by the County FAs (FA Referees Committee minutes, 01/06/1931).
Figure 13, An FA directive related to a uniform approach for referee examinations – (Adapted from, “More from Lancaster Gate”, 1947, p. 7).

The National Referees Conference of 1946 does provide a focusing event or focal point in terms of the way the FA viewed refereeing. There was considerable emphasis placed on training, examination and grading of referees, something which had historically been lacking. Alongside, and even prior to this conference, it is worth considering other developments and changes related to referees and the approach to their training, assessment and promotion. The 1946 national conference had served a distinct purpose; it had been a forum that allowed a concerted focus of the footballing community, and particularly the FA in England on refereeing.

Referee Training, Assessment, and Promotion 1945-1950
By the end of the Second World War in 1945 the game had been professional for over 60 years. The quality of the training that players were receiving, along with their wages, was steadily increasing and referees and their supporting organisations should have been ensuring that they were keeping pace. However, the reality was very different. By the end of the Second World War the amateur ideal, upon which the FA was founded appeared an antiquated notion. But this outmoded approach was still taken towards refereeing and training. For example, training courses were a relatively new addition to referee development and therefore were scarce. But despite the scarcity of these courses at least they were beginning to be organised,
such as the course run by the FA for County FA representatives in 1947 related to the recruitment, training and examination of referees (“A kindly gesture”, 1953, p. 1).

As training courses were beginning to develop, further consideration was also being given to referee assessment. A proposal put forward by the FA on refereeing and referee assessment recommended that each League Management committee, at whatever level of football, would adopt a system of reporting on referees (“The appointment and promotion of referees”, 1948, p. 8). This meant the FA was introducing assessment for referees by clubs, in the form of a numerical score, at all levels of the game. This was intended to identify the best referees and also track progress and highlight any potential issues arising over the course of a season. The FA argued that it would be useful for referees to be judged by assessors at their matches, however this was still some way from application. Before this could become commonplace, club assessment was the most viable form of assessment, ‘...later on, it might be possible to provide “assessors” of referees, but reports in the form now favoured by the Football League should normally give fair assessment of a Referees’ ability’ (“The appointment and promotion of referees”, 1948, p. 8).

A related issue being considered by the FA in 1948 was the appointment and promotion of referees and a subsequent memorandum was issued to consider career pathways, with draft proposals listed for consideration by the FA, the Football League and other senior leagues. Prior to this proposal, which was subsequently accepted, there was a fragmented system in place with little transparency in terms of referee promotion. Indeed, the memorandum itself recognises this fact and states the need to ‘...outline a new procedure of the appointment and advancement of Referees, which will overcome weaknesses in the present method’ (FA Council minutes, 13/12/1947). Questions over how referees were graded, and inconsistencies over their subsequent promotion and placement at matches, were starting to be addressed.

Although issues related to referee promotion were being considered, at this point there was very little in the form of guidance over referee’s training and how they
might improve their performance in a practical way. An address given by A. W. Barton at the Referees’ Association conference in 1949, identified issues concerning promotion, assessment and quality of performance by referees. Barton (a former FA Cup final referee himself) was sent as a representative of the FA Secretary. Barton outlined four main points in his address relating to refereeing; he asked the question whether a referee should remain in Class 1 even after giving up officiating in Senior County matches, he also stated that a better method of promotion was needed, a better method of assessing the ability of the individual referee, and perhaps, most crucially, given the context of this chapter, Barton stated that there needed to be an improvement in the standard of refereeing (Barton, 1949, p. 4). The issues raised by Barton in 1949 had been considered earlier by refereeing authorities, but they became more central to the thinking of governing bodies as the twentieth century progressed.

In order for these changes to be effected within refereeing, the FA were promoting the need for representatives from the RA to become members of County FAs. Stanley Rous (then Secretary of the FA) confirmed this in a letter to J.C. Durman the Honourable General Secretary of the RA in 1948, when he asked that RA members volunteer to become members of County FAs, ‘...in order that the interests of referees…is being watched’ (Rous, 1948, p. 7). However, the RA wanted to be represented at the FA and on the Referees’ Committee of the FA, rather than just County FA boards. The RA believed that such a representation would give them a greater influence over decision making. Although the FA acknowledged this request from the RA, it was not accepted and therefore led to the RA feeling that they did not have a voice or any significant influence at the FA (Colwell, 2004, p. 202).

But this did not prevent the FA from entering into a dialogue with the RA over the training of referees. Stanley Rous wrote to the RA in 1950, stating that there needed to be a move to ensure more uniformity in referee promotion and classification, something which all County Associations could follow to reduce variation in standards (Rous, 1950, p. 6). Evidence that these issues were being considered within the FA, something which Rous’ letter alludes to, also shows some movement regarding what may previously have seemed an entrenched view of the FA on
referees. Reports were being submitted to the FA from the Football League and others on the performance of referees and some consideration was also being given to assessors of referees and a uniform template was provided from the FA and Southern League, for them to use in order to report their findings⁶ ("Promotion of officials", 1950, p. 7).

**Referee Grading, Assessment, and Appointments 1950-1960**

Alongside developments in the club-led assessment system for referees, adaptations were made to the grading of referees. These re-classifications were not dissimilar to those proposed in 1895 and covered in Chapter 3. It was suggested that referees were split into Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 categories (figure 14) with the lists submitted by the County FA to the FA annually (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 26/02/1951). However, the RA wanted a more detailed approach to this matter and submitted their own recommendations to the FA regarding referee promotion.

---

*30.—REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL OF REFEREES. It was decided to recommend to the Council that clause (a) of regulation 3 be amended as follows:—

(a) Each County Association shall, on or before 1st day of August in each year, revise its Register of Referees, and classify them as follows:—

Class 1. Referees whose ages do not exceed 50, and whose competence is guaranteed by the County Association concerned.

Class 2. Other senior Referees between the ages of 17 and 50.

Class 3. Junior Referees.

A complete list showing the ages of Class 1 and Class 2 Referees shall be forwarded to The Football Association annually.

County Associations may compile a special list of Referees over the age of 50, previously registered Class 1 or 2, such Referees to be classified as 1x or 2x but their names should not be included in the annual return to The Football Association.

(N.B.—The grading of a Referee by a County Association must be accepted by all other associations throughout the country—see Clause 3(b)).

---

Figure 14, A Copy of the FA minutes related to the classification of referees (Adapted from FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 26/02/1951).

The FA held conferences throughout England during the summer of 1951 to examine the views of County FAs and the different leagues in England regarding the introduction of a uniform system of grading and promotion for referees. The RA was
asked for its views on these proposed changes and subsequently submitted their views to the FA. The RA suggested more categories than the Classes 1, 2 and 3 proposed initially by the FA. The RA included an additional 2x grade, which was intended to identify referees over the age of 50 that were previously registered as Class 2 referees, but who were not part of the annual list submitted to the FA due to their age. These proposals were considered, although the Referees’ Committee at the FA believed that the regulations already adequately covered the points raised by the RA and that ‘local conditions required that the regulations should be flexible’ (Rous, 1953, p. 3).

The achievement of reaching the Class 1 banding did not necessarily mean that a referee would take charge of a Football League match after promotion. Referees were further graded through a scheme that the FA had negotiated with the senior leagues in England. The FA decided that a Class 1 referee would act as a referee in certain types of matches at level D initially, approximately twice a month, and then as a linesman in matches at the next higher level, C, on alternate Saturdays. The structure then suggests that the referee progressed by achieving referee appointments at level C and, subsequently, acting as a linesman at level B. When the individual achieved appointments as a referee at level B, which covered leagues such as the Southern or Central League and comparable leagues in different regions, he could then be selected as a linesman in Football League matches. Furthermore, any vacancies on the Football League list of referees were filled from the linesman’s list, the referee would then achieve movement up to level A (Witty, 1960c, p. 202).

Despite the introduction of this pathway for referee promotion, there were signs that referees generally were not enamoured with the method of assessing their performances. The Blackburn Referees’ Association stated, through the RA, that they wanted the FA to ‘...consider the abolition of reports on referees by clubs and to consider a scheme whereby ex-referees shall be appointed to this duty’ (Blackburn Referees’ Association, 1953, p. 5). These were the beginnings of a system of assessment; Essex County FA commended the Referees’ Associations within the county in their annual report for their ‘Coaching classes, to help prospective
candidates prepare for the examination’ and ‘...the panel of Referee Assessors – men who spend their Saturday afternoons in the open, whatever the weather, watching matches in which the referee is a candidate for promotion – has again been in action’ (Essex County F. A., 1953, p. 1).

The description of referee assessment above from the Blackburn Referees’ Association demonstrates that promotion was not achieved through assessment by an ex-referee or qualified assessor at every match at this time, instead it was a suggestion that ‘ex-referees shall be appointed to this duty’. The observation of matches was sporadic, ad-hoc and dependent on the stage or level of promotion a referee was attempting. However, there was an understanding of the virtues of assessment within refereeing. At the same time questions were being raised regarding the validity of the existing promotion of referees, with misgivings being expressed over whether an examination on the Laws of the Game was enough. In fact the concept of a personality test for referees was discussed by referees themselves (‘Some thoughts...systems”, May 1955, p. 1). Prior to this concerns were expressed about the range and stringency of the examinations that referees were required to undertake in order to move through the system. It was also argued that since the war, due primarily to a shortage of candidates, the initial examination for referees had been little more than an enquiry into the candidates’ knowledge of the Laws of the Game and it was stressed that ‘...this course, if pursued, will do no good to anyone’ (“The examination”, 1951, p. 2).

Referees were calling for greater stringency and a more transparent structure around the recruitment and examination process. But despite the introduction of some courses for referees, the training offered was all at the elite level and there was little for referees trying to move through the system. The FA were running refresher courses in other areas related to football, such as coaching, but crucially not in refereeing. This led the RA to ask whether, ‘...the Football Association might be persuaded to put up a thousand or two for running courses, on a county basis with nominations from County F.A.s and Referees’ Societies, particularly for instructors, for it is not everyone, even the most knowledgeable, who can impart instruction that will strike home’ (“Certificated instructors”, 1951, p. 3). By 1951 referees were
beginning to question the provision of training and support that they were receiving and the RA was at the forefront. In 1952 the FA was not instigating any form of training for those who trained the referees throughout the country. The courses that were run were only at ‘tip-top level – nothing for the average man. Nothing for the painstaking people who, all over the country, are handling coaching and instructional classes’ ("Certificated instructors", 1951, p. 3).

There had been courses nationally for a minimal number of referee instructors. A letter written by the then Honourable General Secretary of the RA, W. R. Rodgers, suggests that although the instructional courses organised by the FA at Bisham Abbey in 1947 and 1957 and at Lilleshall in 1953 were welcome and well received the courses also revealed ‘...a serious lack of uniformity in the examination of candidates and also in the promotion and classification of referees’ (Rogers, 1958, p. 11). These were all matters that required attention as refereeing developed in the late 1950s.

Assessors, Training Courses, and Referee Fitness
Despite the lack of direct provision of training for referees and referee instructors in the early 1950s the FA was, nonetheless, sending individuals from their Referees’ Committee to view referee performances in the FA Cup. A total of four members of the committee were appointed to undertake this duty. The members were asked to attend and view the games in the sixth round proper of the Challenge Cup and report back on the handling of the game by the referees in question (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 03/05/1957). In addition to this scrutiny there is also the first mention in the FA minutes (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 9/12/1957) of the first of what were to become annual courses for referee instructors that began in 1958, although there had been a FIFA organised Referee Instructor course in Macolin in 1957, which a delegate from the FA attended (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 03/05/1957). The fact that these instructor courses had now become a regular event was an important milestone in terms of refereeing in England. It meant that referees were being guided by instructors who were themselves being trained for the first time to deliver educational content to referees at varying levels. This also meant that by
the late 1950s the FA through trained instructors was giving explicit direction to referees, concerning how they should govern the game.

There is further evidence that the FA was beginning to consider the training, assessment and instruction of referees more rigorously. Following the first international conference on refereeing in 1948, there were mentions of further international conferences in the FA minutes. A report on referees’ courses/conferences in 1957 noted that there were the FA Regional Referees’ Conferences, the FA Referees’ Course at Bisham Abbey from 28th July - 2nd August, the French FA Summer School for Referees from 5th - 7th July and the FIFA Referees’ Course at Macolin from 5th-7th August (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 03/05/1957 & 23/09/1957). The number of courses and the breadth of coverage in terms of referee delegates both across the country and internationally was something that was new within refereeing.

A further referee’s course organised at Bisham Abbey in 1958, which was attended by 31 delegates from County FAs and Service Associations, was intended for those who wanted to instruct new referee candidates – in effect ‘teaching the teachers’. The course utilised practical demonstration and also BBC films of international and domestic matches and incidents therein to assist the instruction of the candidates (Rae, 1958, pp. 6-7). A further course was scheduled for representatives of County FAs and the Referees’ Association in 1959 after the success of the course in 1958 (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 09/12/1957). However, a cursory glance at the FA Instructional Committee minutes from 1957 and the summer programme of courses, demonstrates that refereeing was still some way behind coaching courses in terms of the frequency of training that was being offered. Inspection of the training delivered in the summer of 1957 reveals an Administrative Conference for Secretarial Staff, coaching related courses (Trainers and Coaches, Qualifying Course and Youth Course), a Senior Players and Schoolmasters Course, a C.C.P.R. Course and a Course and Conference for Referees (FA Instructional Committee minutes, 03/05/1957). Of all the courses delivered in that summer period refereeing accounted for only one, whereas coaching and related areas accounted for five of the courses delivered.
At approximately the same time as these referee courses, clear instruction was being given from the RA to their members regarding the importance of attendance at physical training and instructional meetings. Little attention had been paid to the fitness and physical capabilities of a referee up to this point. The game at the professional level was developing rapidly and there were signs of a reaction to this from the RA, the FA and also FIFA. Moreover, the RA went further and warned that ‘...some referees have not done their duty in this respect which is so important towards ensuring uniformity of actions and decisions. The Board, realising the importance of this, are determined to ensure that ALL referees attend at these sessions and a record will be kept of the attendance of each referee. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against offending referees’ (“Physical training and instructional meetings”, 1957, pp. 16-17).

Belatedly there was a reaction to the training requirements of referees from the FA and FIFA. The FA began arranging courses intended to improve the provision of training for referees and FIFA started to organise referee instructor courses as an initial attempt at standardising refereeing in different countries. Despite such developments in training provision, referee training courses were still some way behind the number of other courses run by the FA in the summer of 1957. These initial moves into the instruction and training of referees were 70-75 years after the professionalisation of Association Football and players, who had been professional for the majority of those 70-75 years, had a considerable head-start on referees in respect of the level and intensity of the training they were receiving. This meant that any steps forward in referee training would need to be maintained in order to keep up with the professional game.

The popularity of football and its subsequent global development led to numerous developments in the sport from the 1940’s to 1970’s, a period which Taylor refers to as football’s boom period (2008, p. 192). Some of the pertinent milestones are the rise in the maximum wage for professional footballers from £8 a week in 1945 to £20 a week during the season and £17 a week during the summer in 1961, as well as the eventual abolition of the maximum wage for professional footballers, following strike action organised by Jimmy Hill, the then chairman of the Professional Footballers’
Association, also in 1961, and the abolition of the retain and transfer system in 1963 (Mason, 1980, pp. 160-162). These changes that irrevocably altered football had implications for the referee. For example, the abolition of the maximum wage for professional players and the removal of the retain and transfer system meant that over time there would be more money in football. As wages and transfer fees increased, alongside television payments and investment, there was increasing pressure on the decision making of the referee, as winning and losing became worth more financially. Changes were not solely restricted to the increased sums of money that players were earning or that clubs were paying for players, technological advancements were also having an impact on football and, consequently, the referee.

The Relationship between the FA and the RA

Alongside all of these changes that were occurring in football and also gradually in refereeing, the RA was striving for greater recognition within the game and for the job that they were doing in terms of representing their members and working with the FA. The RA wanted to gain some form of representation on the FA Referees’ Committee, which they had been attempting to achieve since the formation of the RA (“Representation: Further approach to F. A.”, 1959, p. 5), although this was something to which the FA were not receptive. Letters dated 22nd March 1958 written by W.R. Rogers to Stanley Rous at the FA and published in ‘The Football Referee’, were requesting representation on the Referees’ Committee (Rogers, 1958, September, p. 10). The RA believed that this would serve the good of the game and also help in the movement to improve standards of refereeing as well as the recruitment and training of match officials.

The request from the RA, to join the FA committee was rejected by the FA and it was pointed out to the RA that ‘...The Football Association Articles of Association do not provide for organisations other than the Football Association to be directly represented on the Council’ (Rous, 1958, p. 11). Furthermore, Stanley Rous, through the FA, also stated that they believed ‘...that little purpose would be served in
arranging for members of The Football Association to meet a deputation of the Referees’ Association to discuss the matter’ (Rous, 1958, p. 11).

Requests for representation by the RA continued. The RA believed that a more prominent representative profile was vitally important for the future of refereeing. Another approach was made to the FA towards the end of 1958 regarding representation on the FA Referees’ Committee. The requests for representation and subsequent responses from the FA in 1959 reveal a growing frustration from the RA because ‘many approaches have been made’ and that ‘always the answer has been, no!’ (“Representation: Further approach to F. A.,” 1959, p. 5). Despite encouragement for the RA in terms of representation on some County FA boards (although not all at this point, it should be stressed), as an organisation they were starting to ‘...become tired of peaceful penetration and at several conferences where the matter has been raised and discussed, the Council of the Referees’ Association has been asked to pursue a more vigorous policy in the matter’ (“Representation: Further approach to F. A.”, 1959, p. 5).

A further request was made to the FA on 2nd January 1959 which was subsequently rejected for the same reason as the previous request relating to the Football Association Articles of Association (“Report on a meeting with the FA”, 1959, p. 2). However, these approaches and continuing dialogue, initiated through the RA, did, eventually, have an effect. The RA was invited on 20th February 1961, through a joint FA and RA Consultative Committee, to meet and discuss, ‘...all matters appertaining to referees’ (“Joint FA and RA committee”, 1961, p. 11). Perhaps, however, this committee was not seen in the same positive way by the FA, as there was no mention within the FA minutes or FA handbook of such a committee or indeed of a meeting taking place, something which the RA saw as an important issue in their pursuit of recognition from the FA (“From council minutes”, 1963, p. 20). Nevertheless, it was still a substantial breakthrough in terms of refereeing and the representation of referees generally on a national committee.

Reports of cordial relationships with the FA continued (“Relationship with governing bodies”, 1965, p. 10) and these relationships brought a breakthrough on 7th
December 1965, when the FA, through D. Follows, the Secretary, invited a member of the RA to attend meetings of the FA Referees’ Committee as a co-opted member, something which the RA had been striving towards for a considerable time (Follows, 1966, pp. 2-3). From the RA perspective, the co-opting of their representative onto the FA Referees’ Committee constituted a major advance in their quest to represent referees throughout the game. Indeed, during the first full year after the co-opting of the RA member was introduced by the FA the RA in their annual report stated that ‘...nothing but good can come from such relationships, and it is confidently predicted that this will become more so as the years progress’ (“Annual report”, 1967, p. 13).

The importance of this relationship to the RA should not be underestimated, although there remained some major obstacles related to referee assessment, promotion and training, that required attention.

**Further Training, Promotion, and Assessment: 1960-1980**

As the 1960s approached the increased attention that referee training, promotion and assessment had received was becoming more evident. 1958 had seen an FA instructor’s course for those involved in training referees that had included a basic syllabus, which had been put together and subsequently circulated to all County FAs and many referees’ societies (“Referee instructors course”, 1959, p. 18). A course for instructors was held in 1959, which considered the improvement in the standard of the syllabus delivery for referee training and also addressed concerns about uniformity regarding the delivery of the content to referees (“Referee instructors course”, 1959, p. 18). These courses were organised by the FA and presided over by Walter Winterbottom, the FA Director of Coaching. The focus of the FA in the early 1960s was on uniformity of decisions amongst referees. This was something which was obviously important in terms of the professional game, but also across all other levels of football in order to facilitate a more standardised game at whatever level a match was being officiated.

This focus on the uniformity of decision making and therefore the standardisation of referee decisions was undeniably necessary. There were also other areas that required attention regarding uniformity, such as examination, classification and also
promotion ("Promotion etc", 1963, p.3), which was still the case in 1968 ‘...whenever referees have gathered this season’ (Page, 1968, p. 15). Despite the recognition that further training was required in order to improve these issues within refereeing, in 1968 referees were still undergoing minimal formal training (Hopcraft, 1968). Furthermore, the publication of the ‘Chester Report’ in 1968 recommended that The Football League should appoint a director of referees, ‘responsible for the training and selection of match officials’ (Inglis, 1988, p. 254). The recommendation in the ‘Chester Report’ suggests that referee training still required further consideration.

The courses taking place at a national level related to refereeing, were principally aimed at referee instructors. But in the summer of 1969 of the 26 national courses that were administered by the FA, only one was for referee instructors (FA Instructional Committee minutes, 22/04/1970). Also taking place in 1969 was the first UEFA course for referees in Florence (FA Referees’ Committee minutes, 15/04/1970), a reminder that UEFA and FIFA were beginning to focus more sharply on refereeing. Furthermore, courses for referee instructors continued to be held most summers after 1969, with a further course taking place in 1972 (Paine, 1972, p. 4).

Although there was recognition that referees needed support and training domestically, there was some way to go before the provision satisfied the demand. Furthermore, it was still left to the County FAs to administer training for referees locally and this continued to create issues regarding the standardisation of the delivery of training across England.

Information published in ‘The Football Referee’ traced the pathway that referees had to tread before becoming a Class 1 referee. Responsibility was given to the County FA’s for recruiting, coaching and grading referees. The FA had regulations for the guidance of the County FA’s, although the associations were given ‘...wide discretion’ and their practices varied (”Referees”, 1968, p. 16). It was also pointed out that there was a ‘...good deal of dissatisfaction among referees because of the widely differing proportions of referees graded in the three classes by the various County Associations’ ("Referees", 1968, p. 17). There was evidently some considerable unrest related to the perception of an uneven and unfair system of assessment and promotion at varying levels of refereeing in England. The issue
appears to lie with the application of relevant processes by the County FAs. Although
the County FAs were given guidance related to the training and assessment they
should administer, there were still large discrepancies between the different counties
in terms of what was actually delivered.

By the early 1970s the RA had achieved representation on the FA Referees’
Committee, although the argument that was put forward by some members of the
RA (in an article by A. Ryland) centred on the fact the FA was still working as before,
but was affording the secretary of the RA the opportunity to raise concerns or issues
in person rather than by mail. The argument was also made by RA members in
some quarters that the Referees’ Association ‘...has achieved little in the 60 years’
since its formation (Ryland, 1970, p. 9). Indeed, there was an acceptance in the
publication that ‘Training, examination, assessment and promotion vary
tremendously between county and county and a universal, standardised system
applicable to every prospective referee irrespective of geographical location, has
become imperative’ (Ryland, 1970, p. 9).

In addition, the same issues that had been discussed formerly were as yet
unresolved in the 1970s. The training, assessment, and promotion of referees, at all
levels, still required modernisation. Discussions had taken place between the FA,
RA, Football League and FIFA concerning the subject of refereeing, and some
progress had been achieved in training and assessment due to the willingness of
these organisations to promote refereeing.

Administration of Training and Referee Fitness from the 1970s
Before the 1970s, there was little mention of the physical training of referees. There
were no courses and there was certainly very little guidance at the turn of the 1970s
with reference to referees being ‘match fit’ and able to officiate effectively in relation
to their physical fitness. In effect there was scant information regarding the fitness
required for referees, although by 1973 sections of ‘The Football Referee’ were
directly related to referee fitness (Figure 15), as fitness training was beginning to be
considered in more detail.
Referees were starting to understand the need to be physically fit and able to keep up with the game, but the information that would enable them to do this was not as readily available as perhaps it should have been, ‘Although we all recognise the value of physical fitness to a referee there is very little information available which is specifically for referees’ (Stockdale, 1974, p. 16). The article, entitled ‘Physical Training for Referees’, also suggested a potential physical workout for a referee.
However, this physical training bore little resemblance to what a referee actually does on the field of play, in terms of specific physical movement required during a match.

There was still work on referee training that required further input from governing bodies. The FA, through their Referee Secretary, Reg Paine, writing in ‘The Football Referee’ argued ‘...that the methods of training referees, and the updating of their outlook, have not progressed as they should have done’ (Paine, 1973, p. 14). Despite this, attention was being focused on referee training, both domestically and internationally, yet the lack of a standardised approach was something which meant that referees were being assessed differently in England compared to in other European competition.

From December 1973 FIFA referees were assessed on their match performance, utilising a report form which the Inspectors (those that assessed the referee) completed with details of the referees’ performance after each game. This form listed five grades from four to zero depending on how well the referee performed and each mark was then divided into three sub-marks. But as was the case with many factors related to refereeing practices at this time there was no standardised instruction on how the forms should be completed and so whether a performance was regarded as ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ was dependent on the particular interpretation or otherwise of the ‘inspector’ (Szilagyi (Member of the FIFA Referees’ Committee), 1973, p. 15). The assessment form considered such areas related to performance as appearance, fitness, personality, impartiality, control, and correctness in decisions, which was a very different structure to that employed in the Football League at the same time (examples of these forms can be seen in the Preston North End case study in appendix A). Further developments internationally relating to elite referee fitness, were introduced in 1974 amid concerns over the level of fitness of the referees that officiated at the FIFA World Cup\(^{10}\) (Evans & Bellion, 2005; Thomson, 1998).

The requirement for referees to be physically ready for matches was being shared with a wider refereeing population by 1985. There was guidance through ‘The
Football Referee’ from UEFA instructors directing referees towards competent and specific warm-ups prior to matches. This information was printed following a UEFA course for ‘Top-class referees’ in Hungary in August 1982 (Hevizi & Szilagyi, 1985, pp. 7-8). 1988 saw guidance published regarding fitness and nutrition (Martin, 1988, p. 6), while 1990 saw information published regarding assessors marking guidelines concerning the fitness of a Football League referee (“How assessors assess fitness”, October, 1990, p. 7). Despite this tangible increase in fitness related information available for referees, by 1991 elite referee training was still something that was largely self-governed, and therefore reliant on the diligence and dedication of the individual referee (“George Courtney speaks at North Middlesex”, March 1991, p. 2).

Despite the reliance on individual diligence when training, the accountability of referees was increasing with the onset of assessment and subsequent developments in assessment processes. But there were, nevertheless, real concerns that the training received by referees at all levels was not adequately preparing them to officiate effectively in elite matches. Relationships between the RA and the FA had been central to the developing training and assessment frameworks for referees. The relationship between the RA and FA provided a lack of clarity regarding the sourcing and training of referees, and also to which organisation these referees were accountable. Training guidance and information had improved as refereeing developed during the 1900s. But despite these improvements there was still concern, even at FIFA, that referees were not physically fit enough and that there was still much that needed to be achieved in the education of those in refereeing regarding the benefits of training and preparation for matches.

It was the aim of this chapter to further chart the increasing importance attached to referee training and assessments as the 1900s progressed. In order to achieve this aim attention was paid to the settings and organisations that were instigating changes in referee training and assessment, and in particular the inter-relationships between organisations such as the FA and RA. This chapter has identified the improvements that were still required in refereeing, in spite of the increased attention paid to referee, their training and assessment.
The first example pertaining to the explanation of rules can be found in 1881 when The ‘National Football Calender’ was produced by the FA (Mason, 1980, p. 20). William Pickford, a Vice President of the London Referees’ Society, was instrumental in the Society producing the first “Referees’ Chart, in1895-96” (York Referees’ Association, n.d. Para. 3). Furthermore, the first guidance for umpires and referees was issued by the FA via a memorandum in 1886 which contained nine points of advice (Green 1953, p. 73; Mason 1980, p. 160) and reminded referees that they “...have great powers entrusted to them, and they should fearlessly use such powers, more particularly in the case of ungentlemanly conduct”(Witty, 1960c, p. 198).

In 1935, after its introduction, (‘Looker-on’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 19/09/1936), there were discussions around the suitability of the diagonal system of refereeing that had been introduced in England as a uniform method of policing the football pitch. This method is still used to this day, but the effectiveness of this system was a source for debate from 1935. Writing in the Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) J. T. Howcroft, a well-known FA Cup final referee of the time, published various articles on the subject. Howcroft initially raised doubts over the system with an article entitled ‘Why brand referees with the “L” sign’ (Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 17/10/1936); further articles followed, ‘Diagonal system of control made to look silly’ (Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 02/01/1937), ‘Present-day referees lack courage: Diagonal system making weak officials weaker’ (Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 10/04/1937).

Also being trialled before and also after the introduction of the diagonal system for refereeing, there were experiments surrounding the use of two referees. The first trial match was officiated by Dr. Barton and Mr E. Wood and was an England trial match, watched by the FA Council (‘Looker-on’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 16/03/1935). Views on this system were mixed and there were reports that the trial match had been ‘too easy’ and therefore did not elucidate the authorities concerning the validity of this approach (‘Looker-on’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 30/03/1935), and there was still opposition to the two referees scheme after the introduction of the diagonal system of control as late as 1937 (‘Looker-on’, Sheffield Telegraph and Star Sports Special (Green’Un) 30/01/1937), although by this point the diagonal system of control had begun to establish itself within refereeing practice.

Further recommendations from the conference were as follows:

1. That a uniform fee for the respective grades be fixed. It was suggested that these be 7/6d. for Class 1, and 5/- for Classes 2 and 3. It was agreed too, that only one compulsory registration fee paid by a referee should be necessary.

2. As at the moment the articles of the F.A. did not permit of direct representation of referees on the F.A. Councils, it was agreed that County Associations asking the co-operation of county associations or societies of referees, should co-opt a representative of the association or society on its council.

3. That professional players be encouraged to become candidates for examination.

(“Brief account of the conference”, 1946, p. 2)

The abolition of the ‘star’ system was part of the proposals, but there were also some further issues related to referees applying independently as an individual for any form of promotion at any grade of refereeing. Moreover, this application process was also in place for a referee to be included on the list of Match Officials of any league or competition.

Focusing events are generally linked to national sporting performance; however, the concept is that something happens or occurs to influence either a change in policy or a refocus in terms of attention in redressing a particular issue. For more information see De Bosscher et al (2008) and Augestad and Bergsgard (2008).

A case study of Preston North End referee assessment reports can be found in Appendix A. These reports starting from the 1924-1925 season and continuing until the 1971-1972 season, demonstrate how referees
were being assessed during this time period and the changes and modifications to this assessment process over time.

7 There was mention in the same minutes of a drive to recruit professional players as referees, and to that effect a letter was sent out to the secretaries of the clubs in the Football League detailing the opportunities available in terms of registering to become a referee (FA Referee’s Committee minutes, 23/09/1957).

8 1937 saw the first pictures of sport in Great Britain broadcast and by 1938 the first pictures of an international football match were televised, England versus Scotland (Helland, 2007, p. 109). This proved to be the first step towards the highly financed, entirely globalised version of football that can now be found in England. Television was fully launched in 1946, and by 1950 television was being received in 340,000 households (Whannel, 2008, p. 71). The impact and influence that television was to have on football had begun, although it is difficult to imagine at this stage that anyone involved in either football or the media could predict the sheer enormity of this impact.

9 Subsequent meetings of this committee were also held, such as on 18th April 1963 (“Joint F. A. and R. A. meeting”, 1963, p. 20).

10 The two principal developments were the FIFA fitness test and the minimum standards of fitness for FIFA referees.
Chapter 5 – Research Design and Methods

Introduction
The initial stimulus for this research project was the growing list of important international and European competitions, such as the World Cup, European Championships, Champions League and Europa League that referees from across the world are recruited to officiate. The referees that officiate in these tournaments and indeed at the highest level in their national leagues, are expected to referee and apply the laws of the game in the same way, in a standardised fashion. Constantly, calls are heard for standardisation of decision making and equality in terms of the treatment and punishment of players. The referees officiating in international tournaments are drawn from different national leagues, leagues in which standards of play may vary, where cultural values may differ and affect player conduct and referee responses. In short, the experiences of referees, their interpretation of player conduct, and decision making may vary. This raises questions about the measures designed to achieve greater standardisation in referees’ officiating, and the training, guidance and assessment which they are encouraged to embrace.

The empirical research this chapter describes, is used to contextualise much of this information in terms of the referee in the present day. Semi-structured interviews were utilised to collect the empirical data. The interview process began in England and was then expanded into Spain and Italy in order to comparatively analyse referee responses in other comparable European leagues. The purpose of the comparative analysis was to compare and contrast referee responses, thoughts and interpretations concerning referee development structures, training, preparation, performance, assessment and support networks that they are involved with and undertake in their domestic countries and in European and international competition. In effect, given the importance of European and international competition, and the focus of both UEFA and FIFA upon uniformity across refereeing, the comparative analysis was utilised to examine how standardised elite refereeing actually was in practice.

The precise structure and composition of the interview process is discussed later in this chapter. However, interview participants included current elite referees, ex-elite
referees and individuals involved in the management, training and administration of referees in England, Spain and Italy. The interview process also identified ex-referees in England in order to investigate further the changing structure and training in elite refereeing over time. It should also be noted that for the purposes of this research elite and ex-elite referees are defined as referees that officiate or have officiated in the top league in their country. Additionally, many of these referees also officiate or have officiated in European and international competition. These ex-referees gave detailed and structured responses to questions and issues related to their training, assessment, and promotion over time and, therefore, their experiences of these areas are essential to develop understanding of any changing practices.

**Conducting the Research Process: Strengths, Weaknesses and Limitations**

As with any research process there are challenges and obstacles that are faced when collecting the data before any analysis takes place. This research was conceived through conversations with individuals involved in refereeing and contacts that had been developed over a period of time in football in England. This gave instant access to individuals that were connected with the management, administration, and training of referees, although not referees and ex-referees directly. Access to referees, ex-referees and those in positions of influence in governing bodies was considered essential in order to explore the research area fully and in the detail required.

Meetings were arranged with a member of the FA who was known before this research process started. This individual was closely connected with refereeing and the contact was made in order to begin the process of recruiting participants willing to be involved in the research and participate in the interview process. This contact provided a number of links with County FA Referee Development officers as a starting point. These development officers were then contacted by telephone and email to arrange meetings. This was an important part of the process because it allowed more informal, pilot interviews with County FA Referee Development Officers and also served as a fact finding meeting as the research crystallised. In total six pilot interviews were conducted.
After these meetings with the County FA Referee Development Officers, further meetings were arranged with the individual at the FA. It was hoped that given their influential position and network of contacts they would be able to facilitate contact with elite referees, ex elite referees and those in managerial and administration roles within refereeing in England. However, as time elapsed it became clear that this individual would not have as much impact and influence as originally hoped and therefore it was decided to begin contacting individuals directly. This delayed the research process, although the decision was made quickly to begin contacting individuals independently of the contact within the FA. The FA contact initially gave information about a friend who then gave the contact details of another individual, an elite ex-referee, who could contribute to the interviews. This individual became the first interview participant and subsequently provided additional contacts for the research and interviews.

The first interview was immediately transcribed verbatim, analysed and reviewed using qualitative content analysis. This allowed the data gathered to be digested and the material generated informed the subsequent development of the interview themes for the remainder of the ex-referee interviews in England. The additional contacts from the first interviewee were ex-referees and referee coaches and they also contributed to the interview process. Alongside these interviews contact was made with other individuals through subjects who had been interviewed, and they provided additional contact details for relevant individuals to contribute to the interviews. This process yielded details of current elite referees as well as individuals who were a part of the FA and other organisations connected with refereeing in England all of whom were potential subjects for interviews.

At this point very few individuals approached rejected the opportunity to be involved in the research. However, after initial contact was made one individual involved with the management, training and administration of elite referees was not receptive. Despite agreeing to an interview, it became clear that the interview would be brief and would add little to the content of the other interviews that already had been conducted. This individual expressed reservations about the research being conducted, and doubted whether there would be many respondents willing to take part in the research process. The reasons for reservations given were that UEFA and
FIFA were already considering the standardisation of refereeing in different countries around the world. It was explained that the present research would be taking a different and independent view of refereeing practices, however the participant remained sceptical and unwilling to assist further at this stage.

Notwithstanding the reservations expressed the interview process continued effectively and interview participants continued to volunteer further names and contact details of other possible participants. When an appropriate number of interviews had been conducted, namely 18 at this point, the interview comments were transcribed and analysed using qualitative content analysis. Other potential methods including grounded theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278) were considered at the outset of this research process, although content analysis was decided as the most appropriate due to the large amount of qualitative data generated (Biddle et al, 2001, p. 795). Following this process initial coding of the interview themes was undertaken. The generation of the initial themes was an essential part of the process because it allowed immersion in the interview material prior to the interview focus and data collection process in Spain and Italy. As the analysis of the interview material was being conducted, contact was being made with individuals in Spain and Italy in an attempt to gain access to the elite refereeing systems in those countries.

The contact with individuals in both Spain and Italy was relatively quick; within a six-month period journeys to both Spain and Italy were arranged and completed. The Referees’ Departments arranged the visits during the elite referee training camps in both Spain and Italy. This gave access to the elite referee group, as well as relevant individuals involved in the referees’ management, training and development. Contact was also made with UEFA and FIFA at this time and a visit to FIFA’s headquarters in Zurich was conducted.

Access to elite referees in Spain and Italy was facilitated by the individual contacts, cultivated and developed over a period of time prior to the visits. Access to the elite referees was unrestricted and the interviews were all completed privately in both Spain and Italy. The visit to Spain resulted in 11 interviews, of which six were elite referees and the remaining five were from the managerial, administration and training
category. The visit to Italy contained 10 interviews, of which seven were elite referees and the remaining three were from the managerial, administration and training category. Once the visits to Spain and Italy had been conducted further contact with UEFA and FIFA referees was made in order to gather additional information and understanding regarding the operations of UEFA and FIFA. This decision was made once it became clear through the interviews undertaken in England, Spain and Italy that UEFA and FIFA had an impact on refereeing at a national level. In total five interviews took place with elite referees who represent both UEFA and FIFA and also individuals connected with referee management, training and administration at UEFA.

Once conducted, the interviews with members of UEFA and FIFA were transcribed and analysed. Further to this, contact was made with an individual at the League Managers Association in order to obtain access to professional football managers who had knowledge of the refereeing system in England and also managers that had experience of managing in different countries and cultures.

Given how successfully the research process had developed, it was decided to make further contact with the individual in England in a managerial, training and administration role who had been reluctant to be involved in the research. This decision was taken in order to explain how the research had developed, and to ascertain, given the number of individuals interviewed, whether this individual would give another interview. This request was accepted and the interview took place in greater depth and detail than the initial interview, potentially due to the advanced stage of the research and the number of individuals that had been involved.

The final list of respondents has been sourced from all the major governing bodies and associated organisations connected with elite refereeing in the leading leagues in European and world football. This includes FIFA and members of their refereeing department, as well as people connected to UEFA; ex-elite referees and current elite referees in England, various figures in the FA, the Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL), individuals connected with refereeing at the League Managers’ Association (LMA), professional football managers in England, and particularly the Premier League. When considering Spain and Italy, individuals from their Referees’
Commission and also their elite referees have contributed. With this in mind, the research findings and conclusions provide a well documented account of the views of key figures/participants (both past and present), and of the standard, training and development of refereeing in the countries involved, namely England, Spain and Italy.

**Participants and Sample**

The individuals involved in the research were selected through the use of purposive sampling or a judgement sample, a non-probability sampling method involving the selection and involvement of a particular societal group or sample because of their unique position related to the research (Schutt, 2009, p 173; Byrne, 2004, p 199; Marshall, 1996, p. 523). The research also utilised snowball sampling (or chain referral sampling), a form of purposive sampling often used to find and recruit “hidden populations” or difficult to reach samples. The intended population group had to have particular professional knowledge and experience in order to respond accurately to the questions and themes raised. The population that was recruited came from relatively small sample pools but due to the nature of the research and the topics being considered there were only certain respondents who could have been considered viable or qualified to take part and to give their views and opinions.

The respondents were assured of anonymity when they were contacted and also when they gave their consent for the interview process. Ensuring anonymity was a challenging aspect of the research and something which required detailed thought. The issue of anonymity was considered during the design of the interviews, during the pilot phase of the interview process and before potential interview respondents were contacted. Because of the nature of some of the topics that were covered and the possible inflammatory nature of some comments made by particular individuals, anonymity had to be protected to ensure that any interview responses could have no adverse or negative effects on their careers.

It was decided that to maintain anonymity interview respondents should be arranged into specific categories. The quotations that the respondents gave were attributed to their category and subsequently to individuals within these categories through the
use of pseudonyms. Information on individuals, such as length of time spent refereeing at elite level, length of time on the UEFA or FIFA list, or other comparable information, could provide details from which the identities of respondents might be deduced and so these facts were omitted. The categories developed were designed to give an appropriate representation of the level and quality of the respondents within the research process but equally and just as importantly, to maintain anonymity. Table 2 demonstrates the different categories of respondents that were devised for the purposes of this research.

**Table 2, Categorisation of Interview Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Roles and responsibilities</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. England</td>
<td>Elite and ex elite referees</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managerial, administration, technical and training</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Association football managers</td>
<td>C International/European experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>League and related organisations</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Spain</td>
<td>Elite Referees</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managerial, administration, technical and training</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Italy</td>
<td>Elite Referees</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managerial, administration, technical and training</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. UEFA/FIFA</td>
<td>Associated managerial, administration, technical and training</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other FIFA list elite referees</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A total of 58 interviews were conducted. Of the 58 interviews that took place, five interviews have not been utilised within the final results, giving a total of 53 interviews that have been utilised. Three respondents are from the UEFA and FIFA categories; a total of six from the elite and ex-elite referee category in England, ten from the managerial, administration, technical and training category and two from the leagues and related organisations in England. It should be noted here that there are also six ex-elite referees that have been included in the managerial administration, technical and training category due to their current roles within refereeing. Additionally, there are four responses from domestic professional football managers and five responses from professional football managers with international experience in England. There were 10 interviews conducted in Italy, of which seven were elite referees and the remaining three were from the managerial, administration, technical and training category. There were 11 interviews conducted in Spain, of which six were elite referees and the remaining five were from the managerial, administration, technical and training category. Finally, there were two interviews conducted with other FIFA and UEFA list referees from other European countries.

Research Design, Methods, and Choice of Analysis
The study utilised Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, 2009) to guide the research approach, employing content analysis as part of this process to analyse the interview transcripts. IPA is described as:

“….having three broad elements. It represents an epistemological position, offers a set of guidelines for conducting research, and describes a corpus of empirical research. In terms of its theoretical position, IPA aims to explore in detail participants’ personal lived experience and how participants make sense of that personal experience.”

(Smith, 2004, p. 40)

IPA involves exploring in detail how participants make sense of their experiences within the personal and social world to which they belong (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 53). The use of this method involves an inductive approach, and is strongly ideographic (Smith, 2004, p. 41) with a focus on the individual within the process
being examined (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006, p. 103). An advantage of IPA is that it is particularly useful if the area of investigation is under-researched or new, as is the case with the investigation of elite refereeing in this project. The accepted method for much qualitative IPA based research is semi-structured interviews and these were employed to collect the data for this project (Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005, p. 22; Smith 2004, p. 50). Generally IPA research employs flexible techniques to encourage the raising of unexpected themes and topic areas and this is a method that has previously been used in a sports-related research project on the coaching relationship (Gyllensten & Palmer 2007, p. 170; Smith 2004, p. 43).

IPA embodied many of the components that the type of research conducted here required; the importance of the individual and their views, an inductive and ideographic approach, the use of semi-structured interviews and flexibility, lending itself to research which is explorative in nature.

In order to achieve personal responses, accounts and interpretation based on experience and knowledge of the respondents, semi-structured interviews were employed. Other potential methods were considered, such as focus groups, unstructured interviews and structured interviews. However, focus groups were considered problematic because of the difficulty in arranging for potential respondents to be available at the same time and place in all cases; unstructured interviews were rejected as a potential method because, after the initial pilot interviews and meetings with the County Football Associations in England, some general themes emerged and it was felt that these were a solid foundation with which to start.

The interview data was analysed in accordance with the principles of IPA, and the step by step approach suggested (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p.66). The interviews utilised provisional themes and topics which were prepared beforehand following the pilot interviews, as opposed to a rigid interview schedule. This approach was fostered in order to encourage respondents to talk about any areas which they viewed as important. Furthermore, because the research was explorative and therefore responses and emergent themes were difficult to predict, this way of working ensured
that emergent themes and concepts could be discussed within the interview framework.

After the initial interview was conducted in England it was subsequently transcribed immediately. This is in accordance with IPA in that it is recommended to begin by looking in detail at the transcript of one interview before moving on to examine others, on a case by case basis (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 67). Once this transcript was analysed, themes were developed after interrogation of the initial data and this informed the construction of further interviews. Smith (2004, p. 42) argues that it should be possible to learn something about both the important generic themes in the analysis, but also about the life world of the participants who have told their stories. The aim is to focus on the participants’ experiences of a specific event, process or relationship. In this case the focus was on the participants’ experiences of the processes that they have gone through and go through on a day to day basis in the area of elite refereeing. The interview structure was sufficiently flexible in order to allow for unanticipated topics and themes to emerge (Larkin et al, 2006, p. 104).

An important commitment of IPA is that analysis should be developed around substantial verbatim excerpts from the data. This is achieved through inductive and iterative procedures, and an insider perspective should be cultivated fully to understand the topic (Reid et al 2005, p. 22). To achieve this end the data was coded and organised initially into wider themes (figure 16), utilising content analysis.
This initial analysis involved the reading of the recorded interviews that had been previously transcribed in order to identify the most important aspects of the participants’ responses (Faulkner & Sparkes, 1999, p. 56). Following this analysis and engagement with the data, higher and lower order themes were identified as well as the general dimensions under which the raw data was organised and structured (figure 17).
Domestic officiating
European officiating
Relationships between leagues

Differences in approach

Cultural diversity

General Dimension 1

Domestic and European Diversity

Referee performance
Difference in application of rules
Variation of leagues
Players
Training
Ability
Support

Standardisation

Impact of UEFA and FIFA

General Dimension 2

Organisational Structure and governance of competition

Leagues
Clubs
Referees Association
Players
Referees

Interpersonal and working relationships

Development pathways
Promotion
Regional variations

Development and career progression
The higher order themes were generated from the inductive analysis of the data after a process of data reduction was undertaken. This was essential in order to understand further the interview data and to reduce quotations of the raw data to a manageable size (Thelwell, Weston, Greenlees & Hutchings, 2008, pp. 907-909). Data reduction was handled in a manner similar to that outlined in figure 18; raw data was analysed, giving general dimensions, under which first and second order themes were then grouped. These processes involved the manipulation of a large amount of data and information and therefore the formation of an analysis plan before the data collection and analysis process had begun.
Figure 18, Management and Organisation of Data (Adapted from Biddle, Markland, Gilbourne, Chatzisarantis, & Sparkes, 2001, p. 797).

This analysis plan included guidelines for data reduction, which can also include whether all the data will first be coded in an exploratory analysis, whether it will be partitioned in a way appropriate for theoretical analysis, or whether some data will not be included in specific analyses (Namey, Guest, Thairu, & Johnson, 2008, p. 139). This was something that was decided at a very early stage in the design of the data collection methods and the data analysis that was employed.

Data reduction is not something separate from analysis; it is fundamentally part of the analysis. The researcher’s decisions, including which data to code and which to remove, are all analytic choices. Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that “final” conclusions
can be drawn and verified (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11). In order to get to the point in the data analysis process that required reduction of the key quotations taken from the interview transcripts, a method to analyse the data was required. Content analysis was selected as the preferred method for this research process.

**Content Analysis**

This research had adopted a qualitative basis and the themes have been identified as a means of understanding their interrelations, rather than capturing their frequency (or relative frequency). To that end the content analysis employed in this research is qualitative rather than quantitative, and the coding is a means of reducing complexity as a precursor to the IPA employed. The selection of content analysis as a means of analysing the themes through the data gathered during the interview process was principally due to the large amount of qualitative data generated and the need to classify the common themes that could be identified through the analysis of the data (Biddle et al, 2001, p. 795). Content analysis affords the researcher a coherent method of data presentation to colleagues for peer dissemination; this type of dissemination can lead to verification of the data analysis process and give the research added ‘trustworthiness’ through the concept of ‘critical friends’ (Sparkes, 1995).

To add further credibility to the findings of the research, it is worthwhile to involve other researchers in the process. This can not only verify and inform the data collection and analysis that has already occurred, but also assist the researcher in terms of support and suggestions that otherwise may not have been considered. In the case of this research, members of the supervisory panel for the thesis were asked to perform roles in order to give triangular consensus in the form of “critical friends” (Faulkner & Sparkes, 1999). After the initial higher and lower order themes had been identified, the transcribed interview quotations were read and re-read by two members of the supervisory panel. Each researcher then viewed the higher and lower order themes and independently identified and verified the phrases, quotations and themes that they had been asked to consider. These themes and quotations were independently grouped and compared to the initial themes that had been
generated; these themes were then placed into general dimensions, above which no general meaning could be identified.

The analytical process begins during data collection as the data that has been gathered is analysed and helps to shape on-going data collection (Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000, p. 114). Therefore the interviews were adapted after the pilot interviews and this process produced a rigorous set of themes and generated interview questions. Initial interviews were conducted within the elite English refereeing system, and before the commencement of the interview process in both Spain and Italy. Before attempting to conduct interviews in either Spain or Italy a detailed grasp of elite refereeing in England was required. Therefore, some of the initial interviews in England helped inform and construct the interview process in both Spain and Italy. Understanding of the subject area was necessary to provide trustworthiness and credibility in the research process; without this trust it would have been difficult to encourage respondents to share their experiences. Because of the need for trust and credibility the use of ‘critical friends’ was important in order to guard against bias when analysing data from Italy and Spain.

**Building Trust/Trustworthiness and Credibility**

An issue such as trust requires consideration, particularly when related to IPA. There is some dispute as to what extent trust is the guarantor of accuracy, the underwriter of ‘truth’, ‘honesty’, ‘reality’ and ‘objectivity’ (Barbour & Schostak, 2005, p. 42). The notion of ‘reflexivity’ can be briefly visited here; ‘reflexivity’ is the notion that affords the researcher in question the ability to be self-consciously aware in relation to the production of knowledge about the research topics which they are involved in investigating (Roulston, 2010, p. 117). Moreover, this notion is linked to the idea of ‘reflexive objectivity’ and this requires objectivity in qualitative enquiry in order to strive for subjectivity (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 242). Subjectivity was important when dealing with potential interview respondents. Knowledge had to be demonstrated, prior judgements and personal viewpoints had to be understood and subsequently removed from the line of interview questioning in order to facilitate honest and personal responses from the participants.
There is also the trust that must be garnered between interviewer and interviewee before the actual interview takes place. This trust initially enables the interview to be conducted, it puts the respondent at ease during the interview and, consequently, they are more likely to provide candid responses to interview questions, rather than more guarded answers. Finally, there is the element of trust that exists once the interview has taken place. This can produce further contacts with the original interviewee acting as a ‘gatekeeper’ (Cassell & Symon, 2004, p. 501) who can then act as a medium between the researcher and other potential contacts. This is something that was employed extensively and successfully in this research.

Gatekeepers were a requirement within the English system, after the initial interviews, to propose further interview participants and also provide contact details for these potential respondents, as many of these contact details are not available in the public domain. Therefore, the trust and relationships cultivated with these gatekeepers was considered all the more important. This is especially true when taking into account the fact that purposive sampling was used as well as snowball sampling and in addition there was the issue of only a small pool of potential respondents being available and relevant for this research. The fact that the potential sample of respondents was small meant that initial impressions were extremely important, as was demonstration of understanding of the subject area, which enabled crucial relationships to be fostered with respondents. The ‘gatekeepers’ who emerged from the interviews were essential in order to gain access to relevant organisations and individuals in the other two European countries (Spain and Italy) involved in the comparative research. Without these gatekeepers access to some of the elite referees and to the individuals involved in the training and management of referees would have been far more difficult, if not impossible.

Confidentiality and Ethics
Two ethical proposals were submitted for this research. The first ethical proposal covered the collection of data in England with the second proposal submitted to cover the data collection in Spain and Italy. Any interviews that have taken place in a face to face format have required the participant to sign a form to state that they are happy to partake in the interview. This form is signed after the participant has read
the information sheet outlining the research and is happy to proceed. For interviews that have been conducted over the telephone, subjects had given prior consent before the arranged interview took place and were therefore happy to proceed.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has sought to identify and explain the research design employed in this thesis. Up to this point chapters have focused upon the historical evolution of refereeing, and the referee’s development within the game of Association Football. It has been the intention of this chapter to outline the methods employed regarding data collection. Chapter six utilises responses from individuals involved in the interview process. The chapter concentrates upon the structures and pathways concerning refereeing currently employed in England, Spain and Italy, utilising responses from the interviews to consider current refereeing structures and processes.

Developments in referee training in England are also considered in Chapter six. As part of this analysis there is a consideration of the improvements in referee fitness, as well as the management of elite referees and some of the challenges involved in their management. After consideration of the English system, the structures and pathways in both Italy and Spain are discussed in relation to the aspects already considered within the English system.

---

1 Interviews were disregarded for this process because of the narrative focus of the final thesis. The interviews conducted were with members of the written and visual media in England and it was considered that these interviews did not focus on the critical elements of referee training, development and performance in terms of the respondents’ experience and dealings with referees in a working capacity.

2 This approach has been followed previously in terms of a content analysis by researchers such as Cote, Salmela, Baria and Russell (1993), who identified this method of working with data as a strong approach.
Chapter 6 – Refereeing Structures and Support: The Modern Game of Association Football

The structure of refereeing in England has developed markedly from that described and evaluated in the opening chapters of this thesis. There are various catalysts of change that have been discussed in previous chapters such as the evolution of the FA, the relationship between the RA and the FA, and the development of referee training. There are other developments which can be identified specifically relating to football and inextricably linked to refereeing, such as the formation of the Premier League, the money associated with its development, and the relationships this has fostered between football and media/television companies. There are also specific referee-related occurrences which have shaped the landscape in England more recently, particularly the advent and introduction of ‘full time’ or ‘professional’ referees who operate predominantly in the Premier League but also in The Championship when required.

There is little doubt that refereeing evolved at a different rate to the rest of the game; there is also a substantive link between changes in refereeing more recently and some of the developments that have influenced referees over the past 150 years. This chapter considers these milestones in relation to the effect they have had on the current structure of refereeing in England; this structure is then compared, and contrasted to those currently evident in Spain and Italy with the aim to contextualise the current pathways, structure and management of elite referees in each of the countries. The chapter draws on some of the historical material related to the current structure and provision in England as well as relevant material from the interview process, and the views of individuals from England, Spain and Italy, and UEFA and FIFA, where appropriate.

Refereeing in England in 2014 – Current Development Pathways
In order to fully comprehend the training, performance, and current standard of elite level referees the pathways these elite referees have followed to reach the Premier
League and Football League require consideration. As a means to achieve this some consideration of the developmental pathway for referees in England can give further understanding of provision and structure in Spain and Italy at a later point in this chapter.

The onset of referee classifications has been discussed previously in this thesis (Chapters three and four); the structure used by the Football Association came into force from the 2001/2002 season. Previously the levels were classified as Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 referees. As of 1st June each year Referees in England are classified as follows;

- International Level:
- Level 1 National List (Football League and Premier League)
- Level 2a Panel Select (Conference Premier)
- Level 2b Panel (Conference North and south)
- Level 3 Contributory (Contributory Leagues)
- Level 4 Supply (Supply Leagues)
- Level 5 Senior County (County Leagues)
- Level 6 County (County Leagues)
- Level 7 Junior (Amateur Leagues)
- Level 8 Youth (Junior Referee below age of 16)
- Level 9 Trainee
- Level 10 Declared non-active Referees

Figure 19, Current Levels of Referee Progression (Adapted from The FA, Take Part in football: Frequently asked questions, n.d. a)

This classification process is still conducted by the County FA’s on behalf of the FA, something which has been in operation since the initial classification of referees (FA Referees’ Commission minutes, 5/02/1902; Durham FA, 1927, p. 64). The different levels refer to referees’ current rank in terms of their progression within the pathway and determines the level of match they can officiate - there is also promotion and demotion between the levels. Figure 20 outlines the current promotion system:
Figure 20, Basic Referee Training Course Pathway (Personal Communication, 5 March 2009)
All new referees must undertake the initial referee course (the ‘Basic Referee Training Course’) which is currently separated into 2 tiers. Completion of the 1st tier allows a trainee referee to register with the local County FA as a level 9 trainee referee. They routinely become a level 7 referee on successful completion of the 2nd tier of the basic qualification providing they are over 16 years of age. A level 8 referee has completed the ‘Basic Referee Training Course’ but is between 14 and 16 years of age; they automatically attain level 7 status when they reach 16 if they have completed the ‘Basic Referee Training Course’. From that point, levels 6 and 5 require an application process and completion of service training, a written exam, a minimum of 3 assessments undertaken by referees assessors appointed by the FA and an adequate level of club marks from 20 games.

Club marks are the marks on the referee’s performance entered by both teams after the game and have been evident since the introduction of regular match assessments for referees. The mark is cross referenced with assessors’ marks for the referee when considering referee promotion. After level 5 of the promotion pathway progression is by invitation only; however, the same contributory factors, such as club marks, assessment, in service training and a written exam must have been undertaken and completed satisfactorily. Once an invitation to become a Contributory referee is extended there is an expectation of physical fitness, which is ascertained through fitness tests. The minimum of three written assessments is reduced to two at this point with the third replaced by a fitness test. This invitational process remains constant up to national list level and subsequent promotion to either the National List or the Select Group who are effectively ‘full time’ referees who officiate in the Premier League; indeed, only Select Group Referees, National List Referees and Assistant Referees can officiate in the Premier League.

Referees are not governed by an upper age limit in England. The abolition of the maximum age for referees before retirement from the Select Group and National List was introduced in 2006. Referees no longer have to retire when stipulated by UEFA or FIFA, although the recognised retirement age is currently 49 in England, 45 in Spain and 46 in Italy. However, in England provided they pass the standard fitness test that is required of them prior to the season, and are performing well in the
technical sessions, they can continue refereeing at the elite level, on occasion beyond 49 years of age\(^3\).

**The National Referee Development Programme**

In order to oversee a more coherent promotion system, in 2011 the Football Association introduced the National Referee Development Programme following consultation with County FA's and other stakeholders ("National referee development programme", n.d., para. 2), designed to retain and develop match officials to ensure the FA achieved the self-imposed target of 8000 new active referees by the end of 2012. The development programme is applied to all County FAs and is expected to have an impact in terms of identification and development of referees with the most potential. These individuals are then allocated to refereeing academies or schools of excellence and, if appropriate, the 'Fast Track' programme. The culmination of this pathway is progression onto the National List and eventually, for the top 16 referees, the Select Group and officiating in the Premier League.
National Referee Development Programme (NRDP) Process

The FA National Referee Development Programme has been designed to ensure that all referees are supported in completing their initial 6 games and are retained through the early stages of their refereeing career. Beyond this stage, once they have finished their basic training, those demonstrating further potential and commitment after their first season are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and develop onto the later stages of the programme.

**Stage 1: Entry to the Programme**
RDD/CTO & Referee Tutor to allocate Level 9 referee to Partner League/Club to complete initial 6 games and allocate mentor.
Stage 1 completed when referee completes Module 5 and is reclassified to Level 8 or 7.

**Stage 2: Support and Retention**
RDD/CTO oversees placement of Level 8 or 7 referees with Partner League(s) or Partner Club and reaffirms mentor allocation. Mentor to establish goals/targets for referee. Referees will stay in Stage 2 for a maximum of 1 playing season however referees can be accelerated to Stage 3 if identified as having potential to progress more quickly.

**Stage 3: Development & Progression**
Referee invited to join County FA Referee Academy/School of Excellence or similar set up. RDD oversees/co-ordinates and ensures that all referees are allocated a Coach. This stage supports referees to reach Level 5/4.

**Stage 4: Further Development & Progression**
Referees who display exceptional potential during Stage 3 will be nominated for and be part of a Regional Development Group and may attend the Young Referees Conference (if aged 18-25) exchange programmes etc. They will have reached Level 4 or an exceptional level 5.

Figure 21, National Referee Development Programme (Personal communication, 29 June, 2010).
The fact that the FA deemed it necessary to alter the promotion pathway for referees demonstrates that training, assessment and promotion is still something worthy of discussion and adaptation for those at the FA.

The ‘Fast Track’ Programme
The Football Association, through the County FAs have implemented the referee academies or schools of excellence, outlined in the National Referee Development Programme (Figure 21), designed to identify and nurture talented referees from an early age. The intended outcome of these schools or centres is eventual progression up the league structure and, for some referees, entry onto the ‘Fast Track’ programme, intended to elevate talented referees to the top of the game through an accelerated promotion scheme. The programme is designed to ease pressure on the referees at the top level and increase the number of the Select Group referees, which in the 2013-2014 season was 18, compared to 24 when professional referees were first introduced in 2001 (Personal communication, 11 August, 2010). The ‘Fast Track’ programme is partially a method to address this decline in numbers; however, there are complicated inter-related aspects that mean the rapid promotion of young, talented referees is not always straight forward.

There are critical questions about the ‘Fast Track’ programme related to the quality of the officials that it produces and the experience these officials are given before they are rapidly promoted, in some cases as far as the Select Group and the Premier League. Stuart Attwell is one example of this rapid promotion. Attwell was 25 years old when he officiated in the Premier League and was first promoted to the Football League in the 2007-2008 season when he was 24. The accusation that referees who come through the ‘Fast Track’ programme are pushed through too quickly does have some resonance in this case and is an argument made routinely within football, “…where we haven’t got the nucleus of good referees underneath them you are trying to rush people through…the younger that they get to the top the better of course because of the simple fact that they can then be a top referee for longer, but we have got to be careful how quickly we push it and that we don’t try and push it too quickly. With age comes experience…” (Eric, category 1e). Some of Attwell’s
decisions attracted controversy during his tenure in the Football League. On his Football League debut Attwell controversially sent off a Blackpool player after eight minutes play and during the 2008-9 season awarded a goal in a match between Watford and Crystal Palace when the ball had missed the goal by some distance (Brown 2009, para. 11).

Stuart Attwell is not the only young referee in the Premier League that has been identified when decisions have been made incorrectly. Anthony Taylor, on the first weekend of the Barclays Premier League season in 2010-2011, caused controversy when he sent off the Sunderland captain Lee Cattermole for two yellow card offences in the match against Birmingham City. The then Sunderland manager Steve Bruce confronted Taylor on his decision and questioned the system that had allowed a relatively young referee to achieve that position in the professional game. Bruce claimed he was too inexperienced at Premier League level, that Chris Foy (who was the fourth official for this match) should have been officiating the game and that Taylor had only been refereeing for four years and “looked like it” (Taylor, 2010, para. 6).

There is a potential lack of relevant experience within refereeing for these young officials. Bernard (category 1b) suggests that players are more likely to accept perceived mistakes from a referee who is more established or more accepted, “Premier league players will accept some wrong decisions from referees who they think are credible. If you are Howard Webb or Martin Atkinson they know generally you are a very good ref, so they will accept that you will make mistakes. One thing that Stuart Attwell or Michael Oliver will get if they make the same mistake is, ‘this is a young referee therefore we don’t accept his error’”.

Attempts are made to give these referees the support and training they require in order for them to develop into the best referees they can be. Although, there is a point where it can be argued that training is not enough and these referees must experience more live game situations. A lack of time developing refereeing skills in live game situations can be detrimental to referee performance if they are pushed through the system at an advanced rate, “...you can go the other way and promote
people too quickly...you see some young referees coming through that are promoted quickly that haven’t got those management skills and the ability to communicate with players. One, because they’ve never played themselves, and two, I personally think, because they have come through too quickly” (Frank, category 1f).

It is not dissimilar to the scenario of a football player coming back from injury; they can train, run and simulate game situations, but there is no substitute for the player gaining match fitness in order to reach their optimal performance level. The game situation offers much which training cannot emulate and this is the same for referees. It is not possible to describe to a referee how a crowd will react to a given incident on a pitch that may occur or how you prepare a referee for being in that situation with 70,000 people voicing their displeasure at a decision. The ability and experience to make those judgements are achieved through training and match experience for these referees. Training is vitally important for referees on the ‘Fast-track’ programme. This training, in part, has to replace the role more commonly filled by experience gained through a larger number of officiated matches. Therefore, the balance between training and experience as part of the ‘Fast-track’ scheme is crucial.

Managing the ‘Fast-track’ Programme
Referees are selected to be ‘Fast Tracked’ because of the attributes they possess. The initial phase begins with the County FA identifying a young referee with potential and directing them to a referee academy or school of excellence. The National Referee Development Programme assists the County FA at the start of this ‘Fast Tracking’, because it can be argued that, to date, the qualities that are required from individuals to be involved within this process are somewhat discretionary depending on the County FA or Referee Development Officer involved. The role of the County FA’s identifying and training referees regionally is something which has occurred historically when considering the organisation of refereeing in England. The National Referee Development Programme is an attempt to remove some of the subjective judgement; it gives a direction for talented referees, provides person specifications
for the roles that are involved in this process and states key attributes needed in order for referees to reach the Football League or the Select Group.

Some of the skills needed to be ‘Fast Tracked’ are not decision making skills or standard refereeing skills that are taught on the basic referee course, or in seminars and workshops. It is arguable whether these skills can be taught at all, or, as has been intimated previously, whether they are learned and can only manifest themselves through personal experience. The National Referee Development Programme does give several aspects (listed below) of focus for the Referee Coaches to address with referees:

- Pitch inspection
- Pre-match instructions
- Pre-match protocol
- Path of patrol
- Body language
- Application of Law
- Signals
- Decision-making (recognition)
- Fitness
- Control
- Player management

These matters are important for all referees, especially those referees with the talent and aspiration to officiate at the top level. The danger here is that technically extremely proficient referees are being created and trained, but this does not prepare them any more than it did 15 or 20 years ago for the exposure they will receive if they officiate in the Premier League. To an increasing extent, it is not so much the decision-making that is the problem as the consequences of those decisions. Consequences increase with the higher profile matches; for example, if a referee sends off a player in a Sunday league match there might be a report in the local newspaper on Monday about the incident; if a referee sends a player off in the Conference there is more made of the incident, it will certainly make the local paper
sports pages and possibly some of the national papers, depending on the nature of the decision/incident. If a referee sends off a Chelsea player at Stamford Bridge against Manchester United and Chelsea lose the game, that decision makes national and possibly international news and is scrutinised for the validity of the decision, often sparking debate and consternation (Taylor, 2001; White, 2012; Wilson, 2012).

It is this focus and attention that referees have to accept at the elite level. There is an argument to suggest that referees at the top level only have a “shelf life” of ten years. The debate centres on the intensity of training, psychological focus and pressure from various areas of the media and it is suggested that this combination of factors can only be tolerated for a ten year period, ‘...you can only referee at that level, at the very very top level, Champions’ League games, Premier League games, Manchester United, Arsenal every other week doing all the big games...it is about 10 years, its’ the maximum you can deal with that exposure, that pressure on a week in week out basis’ (Alan, category 1a). If this is the case, it is incidental whether a referee progresses onto the Select Group list at 25 or 35 years of age, given that the 10 year period would still fall before the recognised retirement age if the referee came into the select group at 35 years of age.

If this view is correct, there seems little sense in forcing talented referees through the ‘Fast track’ programme at an early age. If there is a 10 year window of opportunity at the elite level, then younger referees can spend more time accumulating experience and benefit from a steadier rise up the Football League structure. But with the numbers of referees in the Select Group at the lowest point since the inception of professional referees, there could well be another influx of young referees promoted to the select group list in the next two years. This could mean that the Select Group would contain five or six referees at the very least who would be new to or inexperienced at Premier League level.

A further interrelated issue is the contract situations of these referees who get promoted quickly, or get demoted. Referees promoted to the Select Group are given a professional contract for that season; if these referees then get demoted they lose
that professional contract after the initial season. Some of these referees are not fortunate enough to be able to take career breaks or sabbaticals from their regular positions of employment and therefore they are placed back on the National List, searching for a full time job alongside their refereeing career. This does not happen in other comparable European countries, mainly due to the fact that referees are not under professional contract in these countries and therefore still maintain employment in other areas alongside refereeing. Therefore, if they were to be demoted from the top division in their domestic league they would still have employment outside refereeing to rely upon.

**Elite Structure of Refereeing in England**

The Select Group referees are controlled by four different bodies namely the Football Association, The Premier League, the Football League and the organisation that was formed to provide match officials for all professional football matches played in England, the Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL). The PGMOL has a board which consists of the chief executives of the Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League, with a Non-Executive Chairman also in attendance. This is a different structure to leagues in Spain and Italy as well as other leagues, where the respective Football Associations control the referees and there is no separate body that controls professional and National List referees. The PGMOL, in the 2013/2014 season, had a total of 77 referees, of which 18 were professional, as well as 231 assistant referees, although this is not a fixed figure and is subject to change, depending on individual performances. The PGMOL are responsible for the training development and monitoring of these referees (“About PGMOL”, para. 1-4).

At the elite level, professional referees are allocated to league matches by the PGMOL. When the PGMOL makes these appointments several aspects are considered including the current form of the official, the position on the Merit Table (something which is calculated after each assessed game, taking into account marks received by the referee for their performance), the exposure to clubs with regard to frequency of appointment, the proximity to the ground or city in which they were born or live, any previous history with the clubs involved in the matches, the team that
they personally support, international appointments (Referees who have a UEFA game on Thursday will only be available for a Sunday or Monday game) and experience.

‘Professional’ or ‘Full-Time’ Referees
The move towards the professionalisation of referees, in terms of the ‘full-time’, paid, official, who considers refereeing as a career, was not something that occurred quickly. As has already been noted in Chapter 3, it had been a part of a dialogue over a period of almost 40 years with the first mention of ‘professional’ referees in ‘The Football Referee’ publication coming in the May 1964 issue (Bullard, 1964, p. 20). Further publications and debate followed throughout the remainder of the twentieth century until professionalisation occurred in 2001.

Professionalisation has arguably been a major influence on the improvements in the training of referees in England. England is the only country in Europe that has embraced the concept of full time referees, (Webb, 2014; Nevill, Webb, & Watts, 2013, p. 226; “Football referees turn professional”, 2001) although it is somewhat debateable whether all referees in the Select Group who officiate predominantly in Premier League matches are indeed full time, professional referees; “…we’re not all full time. There’s 16 [sic] on the list and I guess half of us don’t have any other form of employment…other guys maybe hold down 10 or 20 hours per week in another job” (Aaron, category 1a).

The perception that English referees, in the Select Group, are all full time, professional referees is evidently far from the truth, neither is this the system currently employed in Spain and Italy. Clarification is also needed at this point in terms of what “professional” actually means in this context. It can mean referees are full time and refereeing is their only form of employment. “Professional” can also mean the approach of an individual, how they perceive their application to a profession and the pride and general demeanour with which this profession or job role is undertaken. Referees who practice in other countries and who in some
contexts may not be regarded as ‘full time’ referees may not consider themselves to be any less professional than referees in England.

The formation of the PGMOL and the management of the Select and National Group officials were inaugurated for the start of the 2002/2003 season. The inception of professional referees was something which occurred over time and there were initial issues with contracts, the demotion of referees and the remuneration these officials were receiving;

“We selected the top 19/20 referees and we offered them a package which was a commitment of 145 days a year and for that in 99/00 they were getting just over £30,000 as a retainer plus match fees plus expenses and obviously those on the international list were picking up fees as well. And then that went up to around £45,000, the top ones were getting plus other bits and pieces. So...they were probably earning between £60-70,000 a year from refereeing...a lot of the referees, were still working part time because at the end of the day they had a one year contract...and they could have been shifted down to the Football League so they would just be on match fees, although from 2002/2003 onwards if a referee would go down he would be on a retainer simply to soften the blow financially.”

(Barney, category 1b)

Despite the introduction of ‘full time’ referees, and although referees were now contracted on an annual basis, individuals still continued other employment, ‘a lot of the referees were still working part time’ (Barney, category 1b) in other occupations. Select Group and National Group referees are selected through the promotional structure the Football Association in England has put in place and as a consequence of talent identification methods employed within referee academies. The FA also has a support network for referees. Referee Development Officers work at every County FA; Referee Tutors deliver training and education to referees; Grassroots Mentors
offer guidance and support to newly qualified referees; Referee Coaches have a refereeing background and work with referees to develop their skills; Development Coaches, who have substantial refereeing or assistant refereeing experience at a high level, work with Level 2a and Level 2b referees in order to raise standards at these levels and identify talented referees at an early age; Level 3 Mentors work with all first and second year Level 3 referees as a point of contact to offer guidance and support as well as identifying strengths, goals and development opportunities for the referees that they work with; and, finally, Regional Referee Coaches deal with a selected group of potentially talented referees on a regional basis (“Meet our workforce”, n.d. paras. 6-13).

This support network can differ from county to county and is dependent on the County FAs that oversee the work. This is something which has been evident throughout the evolution of referee training, assessment and promotion and has been examined in Chapters 3 and 4. Some recognition of the symbiotic relationship between the wider national game in England, the importance of referees’ early development, the identification for potential referee advancement and the professional game with bodies such as the PGMOL, entrusted with overseeing football at the highest level, is necessary. These elite level referees have originated from a County FA; they have refereed at local levels and worked their way through the league structure to become Select Group or National Group referees.

The pinnacle of this pathway is the possibility of a career in refereeing as a ‘full time’ or ‘professional’ referee. The nature of the structure in England and the fact that it is different to that employed in other countries means that there are opposing views on the merits of this organisation. Some referees express concerns and identify particular issues and difficulties associated with the framework employed in England and the money, groups and individuals involved in the organisation and management of elite referees:

“It doesn’t work and I made the point very early on when it first got set up...the problem is who’s paying the money – if you are a professional referee you are beholden to whoever that is and
therefore with the Premier League Richard Scudamore holds sway. Richard Scudamore is chief exec of the Premier League, he reports to the 20 chairmen, they are his bosses, if he doesn’t satisfy them, if he doesn’t bring in enough TV revenues.... they sack him. Mike Riley who is in the job right now has to keep Scudamore happy, the fact that it is set up as a PGMOL board is nonsense because the Premier League puts the money in, Scudamore dominates, that’s how it works.”

(Alan, category 1a)

There are genuine misgivings about this structure. Much of the debate revolves around the growing presence of the money in the game, who pays the professional referees and where this money comes from, “...the Premier League have a massive say...I think realistically we have to accept that the Premier League is the biggest player and they put in most of the funding to PGMOL” (Aaron, category 1a). In addition to the issue of funding, another area of concern relates to the structure of the management of elite referees in England. The structure in England is different to that found in other leagues and countries, such as Spain and Italy, “The problem is, England is totally different to virtually all the other countries in terms of how they manage and are governed, there is a refereeing statute which says referees are controlled by the national federation...but the point is the clubs, through the Premier Leagues, were paying the referees” (Barney, category 2a).

The allocation and distribution of funding, identified in the comments from the respondents, suggests a significant influence on elite refereeing from the Premier League. This influence is attributed to the amount of money that the Premier League is paying towards refereeing. As a consequence of the move to professional referees the PGMOL was created, and this meant a move away from the traditional structures associated with the organisation and management of referees domestically. To achieve these changes, stakeholders had to invest financially. Comments from Alan and Aaron suggest that the majority of this funding comes from the Premier League, with a more minor investment attributable to the FA and Football League.
Because of the structure created in England, there is a necessity for The Premier League, the FA, The Football League and the tri-partite body created by these organisations to manage elite referees, the PGMOL, to work harmoniously. These relationships also extend to other areas of the referee development pathway. This pathway requires a particular working relationship between the PGMOL and the FA given that County FAs are responsible for referees up to level five, and then hand these referees over to the FA and, latterly, the PGMOL at level two.

Interview respondents have stated that this relationship between the PGMOL and the FA has been fraught, ‘There have been struggles in the past with the relationship between the different bodies’ (Bradley, category 1b), although there is also recognition that the relationship has improved since there have been changes in management at both the FA and the PGMOL. However, there are still issues surrounding the funding from the different organisations connected with elite refereeing, ‘The working relationship with the people who have to make it work is good. Therefore it is not really an issue for the people involved in it...the issue is about who is going to pay for things’ (Frank, category 1f).

The provision of funding for elite referees has been raised as a particular issue both with the elite referees and also further down the referee pathway. These financial issues are affecting the relationships of the organisations involved in the management of elite referees and the development of referees prior to the elite level. In particular the difference in the level of funding from the Premier League compared to the FA and The Football League has meant different levels of influence upon elite referee provision. Additionally, the relationship between the PGMOL and The FA further down the referee developmental pathway has been variable, with some problems again linked to the monetary input from the different organisations.

**Physical Training and Fitness**

There is strong recognition from respondents that refereeing at the elite level has developed significantly over the past twenty years. One area that has improved considerably is physical training and the physical level that referees are now
achieving. The guidance and education regarding physical fitness given to referees is something that has improved significantly over time. Training has, in the past, been reliant on self-discipline and much was left to the referees’ own volition, “It was self-regulated, I would train four days a week and probably have two matches a week, if I had two [matches] I would only train three days, so I would do a match and have a day’s rest afterwards, train the following day and then whatever match on the Tuesday night. It varied the training – from running, which I hated, to playing squash...that was where I got my peak fitness from…because when you are self-disciplined for training it is easy to stop half way through or a quarter of the way through” (Ben category 1b).

There has been an increase in the level of intensity of referee physical training, something which Ken (Category 3b) confirms when he explains the change in mentality of referees in the modern game, “It is not like in the past they have to force them; about 15 years ago you had to check if they actually trained during the week. Now they feel professional and they are aware that the training is important for them to be confident during the game.” The reference to improved awareness and the benefits of increased physical training is clearly evident here. Previously referees were very much self-regulated when it came to their fitness and little guidance was given to them about fitness improvement, or how to prepare adequately for matches

The introduction in 1974 of the FIFA fitness test and minimum standards of fitness for FIFA referees (Evans & Bellion, 2005; Thomson, 1998), coupled with the improvement of information for referees domestically in England, assisted in the raising of fitness standards. These improvements to the amount and quality of educational information meant that there was an improved understanding of the necessity for referees to be physically fit in order to perform effectively. Despite these realisations, referee training at the elite level was still reliant on the individual, even though the FA encouraged elite referees to meet as the following comment suggests, “...at national level they would offer advice on training, fitness, diet and nutrition and they would encourage you to get together with fellow top referees in the area- but in practice it was still left to the individual to train” (Adrian, category 1a).
The self-regulation of training was part of the training regime of elite referees. However, the solitary nature of this training was being supported by increased information for elite referees which in turn meant marked improvements in fitness standards and training quality from the late 1980s to the modern day, “...from when I started back in 1988 to now, I think referees probably get 100 times more support and have a lot more information and guidance than they've ever had” (Adam, category 1a). This additional support now extends to a network which attempts to mirror that found at professional football clubs, including individuals that specialise in areas such as sports science, sports psychology, physiotherapy, sprint coaching, podiatry and vision science. Modern technology is utilised to assist the development of the elite referees, in areas such as detailed performance analysis, providing statistical data on each match and the use of heart rate monitors to track and measure training and match performance (“What we do”, para. 7-8).

Referees in the Select Group have individualised fitness programmes tailored for them throughout the football season by the Head of Sports Science at the PGMOL, assisted by another sports scientist who designs more generic fitness plans for the National Group referees to follow as well as assistant referees. An example of these individual programmes can be seen in figure 22 as well as an example of a month long training programme outlined in figure 23.
Figure 22, PGMOL Personal Fitness Programme (Personal communication, August 23, 2010)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 Sep</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 Oct</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20min cross-training C 0.19&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>West Brom v Coventry City H 3-1&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20min in exercise bike/stair C 0.25&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>20min cross-training C 0.19&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Speed Agility Training R 0.40&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td>Everton v Stoke City H 1-0&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25min in exercise bike/stair C 0.40&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>High Intensity Aerobic Training R 0.17&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Speed Agility Training R 1.00&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Core Weights R 1.00&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Core Weights/Stretching R 0.25&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>High Intensity Aerobic Training R 0.25&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm up/Core Weights/Core Weights/Stretching C 0.14&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Travelling to Germany</td>
<td>4th Official</td>
<td>High Intensity Aerobic Training R 0.17&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2nd Smog game R 0.12&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4th Official</td>
<td>Speed Training R 0.29&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulham v Hull City H 1-1&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25min in exercise bike/stair C 0.25&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Core Weights R 1.10&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5th official in Bruges R 0.12&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Speed Training R 0.20&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td>Liverpool v Manchester United H 1-4&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20min in exercise bike/stair C 0.25&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Core Weights R 1.10&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Chelsea v Bolton Wanderers H 1-2&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td>Speed Agility Training R 0.36&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Sunderland v West Ham United H 1-0&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>28min in exercise bike/stair C 0.25&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td>Speed Endurance Training R 0.36&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Core Weights R 1.10&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5th official in Zagreb H 1-1&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Travelled back from Croatia R 0.16&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Blackburn Rovers v Preston H 1-0&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4th Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
<td>TOR-17 RPE-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 23, PGMOL Personal Monthly Fitness Plan (Personal communication, August 23, 2010)
The Sports Science information utilised at the PGMOL is designed to ensure Select Group referees have support in relation to their physical fitness. Referees download heart rate information from their training, recorded by a heart rate monitor (which is also used during matches) and send this information to the sports scientists at the PGMOL. Figure 24 demonstrates an average match with a referee’s physical performance and exertion measured. The average percentage of the referee’s work rate is given at the bottom of each half of the graph. In this example the referee worked at an average of 81% of their maximal effort in the first half and 78% of their maximal effort in the second half. Referees also receive reports after every match in which they officiate in the Premier League, as detailed in figure 25.
Figure 24, Referee Match Heart Rate (Personal communication, August 23, 2010)
Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance (m)</th>
<th>1st Half</th>
<th>2nd Half</th>
<th>Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Speed (m.s⁻¹)</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Speed Running (m)</td>
<td>585.1</td>
<td>435.5</td>
<td>1622.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players Average</td>
<td>252.2</td>
<td>192.3</td>
<td>774.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Sprint Distance (m)</td>
<td>176.5</td>
<td>128.1</td>
<td>298.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High intensity Running (m)</td>
<td>752.3</td>
<td>538.7</td>
<td>1321.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players Average</td>
<td>554.7</td>
<td>559.2</td>
<td>1113.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' High Speed Running (m)</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' Sprinting (m)</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' High intensity Running (m)</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>110.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Sprint Length (m)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Half</th>
<th>2nd Half</th>
<th>Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average HR Length (m)**

| 6.5 | 5.1 | 5.7 |

**No. of Sprints**

| 27 | 21 | 48 |

**No. of HI Runs**

| 99 | 29 | 179 |

**Top Speed (m.s⁻¹)**

| 8.42 | 8.47 | 9.42 |

**Leading (%)**

| 58 | 71 | 63 |

**Explosive Sprints (%)**

| 44 | 28 | 38 |

**Players HIR (km)**

| 11.09 | 11.18 | 22.28 |

**Distance from ball (m)**

| 20.1 | 16.1 | 19.6 |

**Distance from ball (m)**

| 17.1 | 12.2 | 14.3 |

**Comments:**

- The tempo of this game was a touch higher than most of the games you have refereed this season.
- Although the players' work rate was consistent across the halves, you worked harder in the 1st half. Your work rate was particularly high in the opening 20 minutes of the game.
- Your total distance covered was 0.4km lower than average but your high speed running was pretty much as high as usual (1321m) i.e. 30% higher than the 5G average.
- Your sprinting distance covered (299m) was 50% higher than the 5G average per match yet lower than your own average for the season (320m).
- Despite working harder in the 1st half, you were significantly closer to fouls and the ball in the 2nd half. Your average distance to play was average for you for the season.

Figure 25, Personalised Referee Performance Report Following a Match (Personal communication, August 23, 2010)
Figure 25 demonstrates information deemed as important by the sports scientists at the PGMOL for referees’ performance and training. Referee and player physical performance is compared, and the intensity of referee running during the game is also reported. Data generated from a particular game is then compared to the season average for the referee, and other referees, as a benchmarking exercise. This gives the referee important information about their performance and the intensity of the game they have just officiated. Technological advances have assisted improvements in refereeing in recent years and elite refereeing in particular has embraced new technology and new methods of working.
Current Referees: A Physical Comparison with Players

Further information on the performance of referees, mapped from the 2003/2004 season up until the 2009/2010 season, demonstrates the increase in referee fitness. This increase in physical fitness is compared to Premier League footballers, and shows that referees have been improving exponentially from season to season when compared to players.

As Figure 26 displays, during the Premier League 2003-2004 season on average referees sprinted 19 times during a game compared to an average of 32 sprints per game for midfield players. In contrast, during the 2009-2010 season referees sprinted 41 times, the same number, on average, during a game as midfield players. The speed of the game in England is increasing, with figures detailing an increase in speed of up to 20% over the past five years (Lawton, 2012, para. 1) putting increased pressure on referee decision-making.
Figure 26, Number of Premier League Referee and Central Midfielder Sprints per Match (Personal Communication, August 23, 2010)
Figure 27 examines high speed distance, as an average during a game, covered in the Premier League by midfield players and referees. During the 2003-2004 season referees were covering 714 metres at high speed on average during a game, compared to 964 metres by Premier League midfield players. Conversely, by the 2009-2010 season, referees were covering 1005 metres at high speed, on average, compared to 1019 metres by Premier League midfield players.
Figure 27, High Speed Distance Covered for Premier League Referees and Central Midfielders per Match (Personal Communication, August 23, 2010)
Figures 26 and 27 show the advances made in referee fitness and associated training. Differences between the current provision of training and that which has been examined historically within this thesis are illustrated further by these figures. The improvements in referee training and the quality of provision now in place are attributable, in part, to the increased availability of information and the acknowledgement of the importance of fitness in FA minutes and publications of ‘The Football Referee’ outlined in Chapters 3 and 4.

**Improvement in Fitness Levels – An English Example**

The PGMOL utilise various methods to track and control the fitness of the Select and National Group referees. The use of Prozone, a platform which offers tracking of the referees alongside physical, tactical and technical data on performance, is currently particularly important in giving detailed information on training and performance. The package the PGMOL use ‘Prozone Referee Analysis’ has been specifically developed for refereeing (Prozone, n.d., para, 1). During a match the referee is also tracked, and their movement is then analysed. Much of this movement depends on the type of game, whether there have been long balls for example, which require the referee to undertake more running, or whether the game is played in the middle of the pitch predominantly, with two fairly evenly matched teams, such as in figure 28. This demonstrates two different types of match. The referee would run further in the match movement detailed at the bottom of Figure 28, with the different colour lines in each diagram representing the first and second half of the match.
Figure 28, Referee Movement during a match tracked by Prozone (Personal Communication, August 23, 2010).
The more even the game, with each team sharing an amount of possession and the possession of the ball switching between the two teams fairly regularly, the more the referee is required to move and find relevant positions related to the play that is developing. Figure 29 shows the blue team having the majority of the ball and therefore there is less movement required from the referee. The second example in figure 29 demonstrates the opposite. The ball is evenly possessed by both teams, the whole pitch is used by both teams, and both teams are attacking and defending relatively comparably. Therefore the referee is required to move more than in the first example graph.
Figure 29, Player Passing During a Match Demonstrating an Easier and More Difficult Match to Referee Physically (Personal Communication, August 23, 2010).
Alongside this, analysis of the player action zones (figure 30), can give a comprehensive overview of the match itself, and the physical performance of the referee. Referees are more physically fit now than in 2001, something which the evidence supports. This view is reinforced by the interviewees, many of whom talk about the self imposed training they had to do previously and how this has improved, as well as the current levels of referee fitness evident in England which Aaron (category 1a) outlines, “...I don’t think the fitness levels of referees are a problem in the slightest; they might have been in years gone by but I think we’re at the level now where we have taken massive strides forwards and I don’t think there is much more we can do in terms of levels of fitness.”
Figure 30, Player Action Zones for a Physically Easier Match and a Physically more Demanding Match to Referee (Personal Communication, August 23, 2010).
Managing Elite Referees in England

The structure examined thus far concerns referees at the pinnacle of the referee pathway; however, there is a challenge in managing a team of people within the Select Group, to say nothing additionally of referees and assistant referees within the National Group. The matters that constitute a challenge are as follows:

- Geographical location
- Administration of training
- Ensuring/attempting standardisation across performance and application of these principles in respect of the Select Group and National Group

The Select and National Group referees are from different parts and regions of England, and this, therefore, presents a challenge when attempting to manage them as a group, “There is a physical challenge with the national guys because they’re all disparate, you don’t see them as often. So it is how you can cascade training information, performance analysis throughout the country in a cost-effective way. With the Select Group the challenge is the degree of scrutiny that they are under and enabling them to keep developing in that environment. So...constantly, providing support mechanisms, trying to improve performance” (Brian, category 1b).

The ‘full time’ referees in England generally work from their home base, train from there and travel to games and therefore the ‘support’ that Brian mentions is vitally important. Because these referees are ‘full time’ they need to provide some form of evidence that they are undertaking the training required of them. Due to the money in the game, and the finance committed to ‘full time’ referees, there has to be some form of tangible evidence of structure, training and outcome of results wherever possible. For example, the Select Group referees meet every two weeks at St. George’s Park for two days, but other than that period of time they are largely based at home. Interviews indicated that there are few alternatives to this way of managing the process. Indeed, there seems to be little in the way of directives from organisations such as FIFA and UEFA concerning a preferred approach, “There are FIFA regulations regarding refereeing, but they are not exactly terribly directive in exactly how refereeing should be managed” (Barry, category 1b).
The lack of specified direction from international bodies such as UEFA and FIFA ensures that countries can have some form of ownership over the structure and management of their ‘Select’ and ‘National’ Group referees, or equivalent. This has been utilised in England with the creation of the PGMOL as part of the management of elite referees. The management of these elite referees is unique compared to other forms of personnel management. Figure 31 demonstrates emerging trends related to the management of individuals and identifies the growing influence and development of technology and location as two important areas in the management of people that work remotely. These two areas are also essential in the management of elite referees in England. The ability of referees to work and train remotely is essential given geographical constraints. The use of technology is imperative to confirm the fact that referees are undertaking their training programmes remotely and also to monitor the effectiveness of these training programmes. In order to further ensure that this remote training is completed there are sanctions in place, such as being taken off the fixture list for upcoming matches, or being overlooked for games, if referees do not send their heart rate data to the Sport Science support staff.

Figure 31, Workplace Trends, British Council for Offices survey (Adapted from Steiner, 2005, p. 8).
There is, additionally, an element of trust assumed when managing people from a distance, who are effectively ‘home working’ for the majority of the working week over a two week cycle, as is the case with the Select Group referees. The ability to track performance through matches and training provides a management tool, as does the fact that Select Group referees meet every two weeks.

Ensuring elite level referees are sufficiently motivated is important if optimal benefit, such as appropriate preparation for performance, is to be achieved from their training. Individuals within refereeing believe motivation is central to the thinking of those in managerial, training and administration positions. Referees have to realise potential each time they officiate a match in the Premier League and therefore their motivation, happiness and reason for training, is vitally important (Gee & Burke, 2001):

“In terms of training it was keeping the referees motivated...there was always a video analysis session and we obviously had the physical training...we would bring in dieticians, we would try and get people from the PFA to come in, we even asked managers to come along to talk to us...it was justifying the expense of those fortnightly meetings because clearly when you bring 20 guys together from a Wednesday to a Friday you’ve got two nights’ accommodation, you’ve got all the travel expenses and everything else.”

(Barney, category 1b)

Barney also identifies the requirement from the funding bodies to justify the expense of the training meetings at St. George’s Park. The investment in elite refereeing necessitates accountability, especially given the level of expense that Barney refers to when bringing 20 referees together from all over the country for a two day training event. The structure and support around these elite referees is essential to deliver effective training that increases excellence in performance and allows personal, professional development. There is in-depth analysis and discussion of referee reflections on training, assessment and match preparation in Chapter 7, however, firstly some consideration is given to the structures in place in other comparable European countries. To that end, referee systems in Spain and Italy are considered
here in order to compare the system, pathways and support networks between the three countries.

**Refereeing Structures in Italy**

The structure at the elite level in England is different to Spain and Italy. Further down the developmental pathway Spain and Italy break down the control of referees to regions, with the Football Association overseeing those regions. For example, in Italy it is broken down into various Regional Committees, such as Abruzzo, Lazio and Calabria (there are 19 Regional Committees in total); these Regional Committees are further broken down into sections within the Regions (for example Abruzzo has eight sections) and there are 212 sections in total (See tables 3 and 4).

Each Regional Committee varies in the number of sections it controls. Table 3 shows the Regional Committees in Italy, the number of referees each committee oversees, and the percentage of total referees each committee has currently affiliated. This demonstrates the size of the regions and provides a comparison between the larger and smaller regions in terms of the number of referees. Table 3 shows that the biggest regions in terms of referees in Italy in 2012 were Lombardy (12.9% of all referees), Campania (9.9% of all referees) and Lazio (9.2% of all referees). Also shown in this table are several much smaller regions such as Bolzano, Trent and Mollse, which have 0.7%, 1% and 1.2% of all referees respectively. It is evident the Regional Committees vary greatly in size and in the number of sections each region controls. These sections are controlled by the General Assembly, which sits in the Associazione Italiana Arbitri, or the Italian Association of Referees, which is part of the Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio, or Italian Football Federation. The General Assembly has various components that oversee refereeing from the elite level, Serie A and B, to the lower league levels.
Table 3, Regions in Italy (Adapted from Comitati Regionali from the Italian FA website, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Associates</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzo</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,231</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basilicata</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabria</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campania</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3,433</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emilia Romagna</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2,393</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friuli Venezia Giulia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazio</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2,914</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liguria</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>982</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lombardy</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4,270</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marches</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,217</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molise</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont and Val d’Aosta</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puglia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,774</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardinia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicily</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscany</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2,349</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trentino Alto Adige</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbria</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneto</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2,822</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total (31/01/2011): 212 33,113
Table 4, Breakdown of the Sections within the Regions in Italy (Adapted from Sezioni from the Italian FA website, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzo</td>
<td>Avezzano, Chieti, Lanciano, L’Aquila, Pescara and Sulmona, Teramo, Comprehensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basilicata</td>
<td>Bernaldia Matera, Moliterno, Power, Venosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabria</td>
<td>Cetanzaro, Cosenza, Crotone and Lamezia Terme, Locri, Paola, Reggio Calabria, Rossano, Soverato, Taurango, Vibo Valentia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campania</td>
<td>Agropoli, Ariano Irpino, Avellino, Benevento, Benevento, Caserta Castellanmare di Stabiae, Herculanum, Frattamaggiore, Naples, Lower Nocera, Nola Hall Consilina, Salerno, Sapienza, Torre Annunziata, Torre del Greco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emilia Romagna</td>
<td>Bologna, Cesena, Faenza, Ferrara, Finale Emilia and Forlì, Imola, Lugo di Romagna, Modena, Parma, Piacenza and Ravenna, Reggio Emilia, Rimini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friuli Venezia Giulia</td>
<td>Cervignano of Friuli, Cormons, Gorizia, Latisana, Manifattura, Monfalcone, Pordenone, Tolmezzo, Trieste, Udine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liguria</td>
<td>Alberga, Chiavari, Genoa, Imperia, La Spezia, Novi Ligure, Savona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazio</td>
<td>Related Categories: Aprilia, Cassino, Rome Clamplino, Civitavecchia, Formia Fresnac, Latina, Ostia Lido, Rieti, Roma 1, Roma 2, Trevi, Viterbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lombardy</td>
<td>Albenga, Chiavari, Genoa, Imperia, La Spezia, Novi Ligure, Savona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marches</td>
<td>Ancona, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo, Jesi, Macerata, Pesaro, San Benedetto del Tronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molise</td>
<td>Alessandria, Asti, Biella, Bi, Casale Monferrato, Chivasso Collegno, Cuneo, Domodossola, Ivrea, Nicholls Ville, Novara, Pinerolo, Turin, Verbano, Vercelli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puglia</td>
<td>Bari, Barletta, Brindisi, Casarano, Foggia, Lecco, Molfetta, Taranto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardinia</td>
<td>Alghero, Cagliari, Carbonia, Nuoro and Oliena, Orissa, Ozieri, Sassari, Tortoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicily</td>
<td>Acireale Agrigento, Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Cantonissita, Catania, Enna, Marsala, Messina, Palermo, Ragusa, Siracusa and Trapani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toscana</td>
<td>Arezzo, Carrara, Empoli, Florence, Livorno, Lucca, Pescia, Pisa, Pistoia and Pontedera, Lucca, S. Giovanni Valdarno, Siena, Viareggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trentino Alto Adige</td>
<td>Arch Riva, Bolzano, Merano, Rovereto, Trento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbria</td>
<td>Città di Castello, Follina, Gabalino, Orvieto, Perugia, Terni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneto</td>
<td>Adria, Bassano del Grappa, Belluno, Castelfranco Veneto, Chievizia, Conegliano, Este, Legnago, Mestre, Padua, Portsmouth, Rovigo, San Dona di Piave, Schio, Treviso, Venice, Verona, Vicenza</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pathways and Promotion in the Italian System

The largest Regional Committees do not necessarily have the most sections under their control (Tables 3 and 4), although there is some correlation between the number of sections and the numbers of referees in each region, with regions with more sections generally having more referees. The distribution of these regions and, subsequently sections has meant a difference between the Regional Committees and the standard of refereeing in the south of Italy and in the north of Italy. Justin (category 3a) states that his region, Lazio, and the area that he has officiated, namely Rome, has a lot of referees, but that matches do not test the referees as much as they do in the south of the country. Elaborating on the regional differences Justin comments that in the north ‘...the matches are very quiet. So in the south of Italy and Sicily, Calabria, there are very difficult matches for us. In the north of Italy in Milan, Turin, Florence the matches are very quiet.’

The differences in Italy, and in particular between the north and south of the country with regard to referee pathways, experience and promotion is something commented on further by the referees, “It [promotion] is very difficult; for example, my region, Tuscany, for the referee, it is excellent. Because we have a good quality of football…” (Jack, category 3a). The strength of the football played in the south of the country is something referees link to the experience and quality of officials when they get to Serie A. The promotion process to Serie A is naturally competitive, given that 20 referees officiate at the top level and there are approximately 33,000 referees that are part of the system. The promotional structure and the opportunities for promotion are linked to the developmental pathways and also the variations evident in the different regions. Josh elaborates on the benefits that referees from the south of Italy experience in this promotion up the league structure because “the referees that go up from South Italy have more experience and it is more easy [sic]…to arrive in Serie A is very, very difficult. 20 [referees in Serie A] in 33,000 [total referees in Italy], and in the 20 there are only 10 international [referees].” (Josh, category 3a).

In an attempt to deal with the differences that exist in the north and south of Italy a referee ‘exchange’ within the country and from territory to territory is in place. Further to the differences identified in the development pathway and the standard of matches in the north and south of Italy, referees also comment upon the quality of
the leagues that they are required to officiate within. Different qualities and intensities of matches have been cited as a particular issue for referee development, with Jack (category 3a) recognising there are “…two kinds of Serie C, one is high-level, a good level but C2 now is very down…the best solution in my opinion in Italy will be to only have one Serie C. So then you have a smaller number of referees...”. The quality of the league is something considered in greater detail in relation to Serie A in Chapter 9. Referees show concern regarding the lower levels of the development pathway and the quality of the lower leagues in Italy.

Football and refereeing in the north of Italy is not perceived as being as demanding as that in the south, hence the exchange programmes that have been introduced so referees can experience officiating in other sometimes more difficult areas of the country. These exchanges ensure, potentially, that referees are getting a different experience, depending on the region to which they are affiliated. The structure of refereeing pathways is broadly similar to the English system. England has County FA’s which, although they have similar roles to the regions in Italy, are more of an extension of the Football Association and, therefore, have less control over certain aspects of referee training, assessment and promotion than the regions in Spain for example; a matter to be considered in the following section.

**Refereeing Structures in Spain**

Spain operates a similar system to that evident in Italy; nevertheless there are differences in the organisational framework. The Real Federacion Espanola de Futbol, (Royal Federation of Spanish Football), has a Escuela Nacional de Arbitros de Futbol (National School of Football Referees) and a Comite Tecnico de Arbitros (Referees Technical Committee) which has various board members that oversee refereeing in Spanish football at the elite level. The development of referees from grassroots level nationally is delegated to the regions, of which there are 20. Each region is then responsible for different towns and cities that come under their geographic reach and every region has a president, a secretary, and each of these cities or towns has delegates or officers (See table 5).
Elite level Spanish football is primarily organised with 20 teams forming the first division or *Primera Liga* and 22 teams forming a second division. Below the second division, there exists a lower division divided into four geographical sectors, namely, second ‘A’, second ‘B’, second ‘C’ and second ‘D’. Under this, there exists a third division which is divided into 16 regional leagues and below this, leagues are provincial. Promotion and relegation exists between all the divisions but, in practice, the *Primera Liga* has tended to be dominated by teams from the bigger urban centres. Grassroots involvement in football as experienced in the British model, is quite rare in Spain and there are few ‘pub’ teams or local leagues'.
Table 5, Breakdown of the Regions within the Territorial Committees in Spain (Adapted from Comité Técnico Árbitros from the Spanish FA website, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teritorial Committees</th>
<th>Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andalucían</td>
<td>Cádiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Málaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Algeciras-Subdelegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Granada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Huelva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jerez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Line-Subdelegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Málaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Murcia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura-Subdelegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santa Cruz de la Victoria-Subdelegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aragón</td>
<td>Huesca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zaragoza-Subdelegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asturias</td>
<td>Asturias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avilés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ourense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peñíscola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mieres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balearic</td>
<td>Ibiza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Menorca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formentera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Menorca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castilla-León</td>
<td>Burgos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>León</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Segovia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zamora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salamanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valladolid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castilla-La Mancha</td>
<td>Albacete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ciudad Real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>detectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Badajoz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caceres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Castellón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Benito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Badajoz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extremadura</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The control of referees in Spain is initially the responsibility of the regions until referees reach the third division, then responsibility transfers to the National Committee. However, referees have identified a lack of control exercised by the
National Committee over the referees before they reach the National Committee’s jurisdiction:

“...communities have one official federation and they are responsible for the referees until the third division. After the third division, the second division A and B and first division, the referees are the responsibility of the National Committee. But the young referees are the responsibility of the different regions...we have little control but our instructions for the first division and second division A and B we give to the regional areas. We give them access to the videos, the FIFA instruction and we advise to follow those models. But the regions have the control.”

(Howard, category 2b)

Howard discusses concerns over the control and input the National Committee can exert over the different regions in Spain. The National Committee gives training material and instruction to regions, although Howard is clear that the regions have the control over how they use the resources given to them. The lack of direct control of the National Committee over the regions is considered in further detail in the following section.

Pathways and Promotion in the Spanish System
The regional structure for refereeing currently operational in Spain means that reaching the top of the pathway is dependent on the number of referees in the region a referee is affiliated to; in other words, it may be possible to get to the top in one region more easily than another. Andalucía has a competitive process due to the considerable size of the population and therefore, number of referees in the region. Referees look at this in two ways; firstly, it is difficult to get to the top in Andalucía because of the number of referees; secondly, due to the selection process and inherent competition, referees believe they have a better education or starting point than referees from a smaller region. George (category 2a) explains how progression through the system in Spain and Andalucía influenced his development:
‘...I think in my region we have very good competition and categories...a lot of referees, maybe 3000 referees in my region. I think that is good, because if you have a lot of referees it is more difficult to progress...all my colleagues are from different regions in Spain and always say the Andalucía referees are lucky because our competitions are very strong...it means it is competitive and ensures that the referees are good, especially if it is a good competition and the teams are good that you are refereeing.’

Referees recognise that some regions are stronger than others in Spain and see competition as a good thing, assisting improvements in their performance. The rapidity of this development and improvement in performance differs depending on the individual referee and their ability. However, other external factors can also impact on development such as the strength of the leagues in certain regions, geographical regional differences or historical, traditional differences. There is also a National Referee programme which is intended to select the most promising referees from across Spain. The Territorial Committees are there to serve the local refereeing population, whilst The National School for Referees selects the best young referees from across Spain, who are invited into the national setup and league structure in order to progress further in a more competitive environment and league. Recently the presidents of the Territorial Committees have decided that they want this power back, “...in terms of talent in the regions this [agreement] was only valid for three years, that the National School did the selection. But then the presidents of the Territorial Committees decided that they preferred to make the choices and not the school... Each classification and category [of referee] is established by the observers in each territorial region” (Harry, category 2b).

Harry explains how the regions have reassumed control of the selection process for the classification of referees. Referees are categorised by the observers in each Territorial Region, although this arrangement is a cause for concern within Spanish refereeing circles, “Both the President and the school said that they are interested in retaking this way of acting [resuming control of referee classification in the regions]. But it is not an easy question and for a moment is still in standby, the National
School want to take the decisions for themselves, but the weight of the Territorial Regions is big and they feel that they were ignored” (Harry, category 2b.). This raises some internal issues unique to the Spanish system. The individuals in control of the national referees, and the President in particular, want control of the selection, training and assessment of the referees at the Territorial Committee level; however, because the Territorial Committees felt they were ignored when this control was initially taken from them, they have exercised a right to take this power back.

This decentralisation can be successful if the same training, development and support are available to referees irrespective of the region to which they are affiliated. Problems emerge when the training and support is different depending on the region, something which is already evident in the regional developmental framework in Spain, “I think in the region, your local federation, it is very amateur. There are people there loving referees, loving the football but it is very amateur...it can be improved at local level...there are two or three important regions; Catalonia, Andalucía and Madrid so I came from Madrid and the opportunities are much more difficult to get” (Geoff, category 2a). There are similarities between the Spanish and Italian development systems. The differences in training provision and support structures for referees between some regions in Spain and the structural tensions between the National School and the Territorial Committees means differences in the training, support and promotion of referees depending on the region to which they belong. The Italian system also demonstrates differences in referee experiences when officiating in the north or south of the country, and depending on the strength of the leagues in which referees regularly officiate. Indeed, the issues raised here have implications for uniformity or standardisation of promotion and training, something that is considered further in Chapter 8.

Promotion of Referees
The promotion of referees from the second division to the first division every season, and the subsequent relegation of two referees from the first division to the second division, ensures that there is a constant turnover of referees in the top leagues in Spain. There are leagues below these top divisions, through which the elite referees must navigate in order to officiate at the top level. The difficulty of achieving
promotion increases as referees move up the league structure, as might be expected, “In the lowest divisions it is quite easy to promote...when you are refereeing under 15, under 16, it is quite easy if you pass the exam, it is enough to get promoted. The biggest step is from the third division to Second B; of course Second division B to Second A, that is the most difficult step in Spain...because in the Second division B there are 120 referees and just two or three are promoted and in Second division A we have 22 referees” (Gordon, category 2a).

The number of referees operating in the Second Division B, 120, and the number of referees that operate in the Second Division A, 22, suggests a high level of competition to gain promotion to the Second Division A. Nevertheless the biggest challenge with reference to promotion is the step from the third category up to the second category in the Spanish league system, “It is not so easy because once they are in the second division B, which is the third category, it is the most difficult step because they are getting towards professional football and there are 120 in the second division B and probably not many places” (Harry, category 2b).

The step up to professional football for any referee is difficult; the main area of concern is whether referees are given the same opportunity in terms of training, development opportunities and promotion pathways irrespective of the region within which they happen to operate. There are guidelines given to the regions from the National Referees’ Committee. However, as has been documented, the power of the regions and the control they hold over the classification and promotion of referees, the difference between regions in terms of the quality of provision they provide, and the fact that some of the regions are ‘very amateur’, means that referees experience different training and promotion depending on their regional affiliations.

The organisation of refereeing in Spain and Italy shares some common themes with the English system. There are regions in all three systems that are utilised as the initial point of contact for referee training; referees develop in these regions and officiate matches within their regions whilst progressing through the development framework in place. Once a referee achieves a certain level or standard they are elevated from their region into the national set up; this is similar in all three systems. But the referee will always belong to the region where they live, and therefore the
system through which they have progressed. However, as their level of officiating and competition advances, so their refereeing contacts become, initially more regional, and then more national as they rise through their respective systems.

This chapter has sought to identify, contextualise and examine the current development pathways that exist principally in England, but also Spain and Italy in order to initiate comparisons between these three countries. As a means of considering the systems that exist particular attention has been paid to the pathways of referees in England, Spain and Italy in order to give an understanding of the structures in place that facilitate referee promotion and management.

1 The classification system was introduced in 1902, as previously documented (see chapter two), and by 1912 the Football League had introduced a satisfactory performance level in lower grade matches for referees to progress to league level (Vamplew, 1988, p. 261). However, there were also calls for the marking of referees by the clubs to be abolished, with ex-referees instead introduced to perform this role (Blackburn Referees’ Association, 1953, p. 5), something which did later come into force. The marking of referees by the clubs progressed from the 0-4 scale to the 0-10 scale, introduced in the 1970-1971 season (Nevil et al, 2013, p. 226), and this mark given by the clubs still utilised the 0-10 scale for both teams.

2 Referees removed from the Select Group or National group due to European legislation introduced in 2006 that prevents employers forcing employees to resign on the grounds of age (Taylor, 2009, para. 5)

3 For example, in the 2011-2012 season Peter Walton was still refereeing at 52.
Chapter 7 - Referees Reflections on Training, Preparation and Officiating

The present chapter utilises the reflections of referees in England, as a means of comparison, with referees from Spain and Italy, related to their experiences of training, match preparation, and match officiating in elite level refereeing. More specifically the chapter considers the following areas around referees’ reflections and experiences regarding their training and preparation:

- Elite referee training
  - Physical training
  - Technical training
  - Psychological training
- Match preparation
  - Focus upon preparation in England, Spain and Italy

The different components that make up the training that elite referees currently experience in England, Spain and Italy are considered here. Referees from all three countries identified these constituents of their training as the most important. The chapter then focuses on referee preparation for matches and the differences and similarities between the three countries within this preparation. The overriding aim of this chapter is to identify, referee thoughts, interpretations and responses to their experiences regarding their match preparation and training as well performance.
Elite Referee Training

Referees today focus on physiological, psychological and technical training, to differing degrees of intensity. The Football Associations in the specific countries under consideration provide this training (in England at the elite level this is undertaken by the PGMOL) through their referees’ departments, also called referee committees (Spain) and referee commissions (Italy). Referees selected to represent their country on the UEFA and FIFA lists also have training delivered to them by these organisations in addition to their national referee organisations.

Physical Training and Testing in England

The provision for the physical training of referees in England has advanced considerably in recent years. Physical training has two main purposes for elite referees; the first objective is to ensure that referees are prepared to officiate the matches to which they are assigned, in effect to ensure ‘match fitness’. The second function of physical training is to guarantee referees pass the physical tests which are required of them in order to officiate in the Premier League and Football League. These physical tests have developed since the initial FIFA fitness test was introduced. There is a FIFA standard fitness test as well as a UEFA standard test that countries have adopted and, in some cases, adapted for their purposes.

Despite the adoption of these fitness tests referees express reservations about training exclusively for the tests, “If you constantly do the UEFA test, all people do is train for that test, which is a lot more match specific than the old Cooper test’ used to be, but it is still not the ideal thing to do” (Adrian, category 1a). Although Adrian believes that the current tests employed are superior to the old Cooper test, he states that training solely for the fitness test is not the best way of achieving optimal fitness. In England the official UEFA test is utilised to ensure referee fitness and readiness for match competition, however it is also acknowledged that the test is not the ideal discriminator in terms of referee match preparation.
Improvements have been made following introduction of UEFA and FIFA fitness tests. The changes from the Cooper fitness test, which asked referees to run as far as possible in 12 minutes, with the distance covered indicating an estimated level of fitness, (“Want to see how fit you really are?”, n.d., para. 1), have meant the adoption of more match specific methods of testing fitness. The difficulty in passing these fitness tests is carefully considered in order to maintain and improve referee fitness, and to ensure that referees are comparable in their fitness and prepared for the requirements of the modern game. Despite the careful construction of the fitness tests referees do not see the tests as particularly difficult, providing they train and prepare effectively, “the actual tests themselves are not particularly onerous if you are fit...if you’ve got a VO2 max of 50 then you will comfortably pass the test. Whether it is the Cooper test, the shuttle run test – if you are fit you will pass it. You have to train to do it; you can’t just rock up and do it unless you are a real natural athlete” (Adrian, category 1a). It should also be noted that the physical tests required at national level, including in England, Spain and Italy, can be different to those taken when refereeing under the jurisdiction of UEFA and FIFA, something considered in greater detail in Chapter 8.

Physical Training and Testing in Spain and Italy
The physical training of referees in England has developed markedly since their professionalisation in 2001 and the systems in Spain and Italy have also developed in this time frame. Referee managers, administrators and support staff emphasise the changes in provision in respect of physical training for referees in Spain and Italy. The physical tests provided in Spain, that referees have to pass before officiating matches during a season, require the referees to complete the tests in less time than the tests in European and world competition. This makes the tests more difficult to pass in Spain than the tests administered by UEFA and FIFA that referees are also required to pass in order to officiate in European and world competitions.

Both Spain and Italy have moved to the UEFA standard physiological tests and, in the case of Spain their referees are asked to perform to a higher standard than that required by UEFA and FIFA, “It is higher than the FIFA times. The interval test is a
different time in Spain, in Spain it is 30-30 [seconds] for the referees and 30-35 [seconds] for the assistant referees, in FIFA it is different it is 30-35 [seconds] for the referee and 35-40 [seconds] for the assistant referees” (Hugh, category 2b). The Italian managerial, administration and training support category also discussed the fitness tests they require the referees to complete. Although there was no mention of a higher standard time referees were asked to achieve, several of the respondents and referees also mentioned an additional test required of referees that is more suited to game situations and match fitness.

The ‘yo yo fitness test’ is implemented in Italy as part of their measurement and tracking of referee fitness because “…it is scientifically based on evidence” (Ken, category 3b). The test is included in the fitness regime for referees and has to be passed in order for referees to officiate in Serie A, alongside an additional sprint test. Within the Italian system the UEFA and FIFA tests are taken but only by the referees on the UEFA and FIFA lists. It is a requirement of the governing bodies and not due to any support for these tests from within the Italian system, “…only the international level referees do that because FIFA and UEFA ask us to do that” (Ken, category 3b).

Several referees made reference to the ‘yo yo’ test as relevant and applicable to their match training and preparation. Referees recognised the benefits and merits of the ‘yo yo’ test employed within the Italian system, and also the relative ease of the FIFA fitness test, “…the yo-yo test, because the test is stronger...you know it is similar to moments during the match. The FIFA test is easy, it’s easy, easier than the yo yo test” (Jack, category 3a). The applicability to game situations is something referees appreciate because they can utilise the test within their training regimes and measure their physical capabilities, “…for the referees, in my opinion, the yo-yo test is better...the FIFA test is more easy, when I make the FIFA test my heart rate is lower. When I do the yo-yo test my heart rate is quicker” (Josh, category 3a). The ‘yo-yo’ test is also used in England, although it is not a formal assessment indicator rather an additional measurement of fitness.

The use of an additional fitness test is not unique to Italy. The Spanish managerial, administration and training support system employs a field test, which they utilise in
a similar way to that deployed in Italy, although they argue that this test is different to
the Italian model, “The third test is just in Spain, the field test. There is only one
similar test in Italy, but in the rest of the countries they only have two tests” (Hugh,
category 2b). Referees and those in management, training and administration roles
in Spain also make reference to the level of physical training provided for them as a
positive element of their system, describing the past 20 years in referee fitness and
training as a ‘revolution’. Their views of the improvements in referee fitness reveal a
consensus of opinion across England, Spain, and Italy, “the Spanish referees 20
years ago and all the referees of the world didn’t look like an athlete; they looked like
normal people who work and sometimes is a referee’ (Harvey, category 2b).

The tests in Spain are adapted from the UEFA and FIFA standard tests, with the
interval test and speed test times being decreased to make the tests more difficult for
the referees. This can have a positive effect when Spanish referees are moved on to
UEFA and FIFA lists as their performance in the physical tests, due to domestic
demands and expectations, ensures that they are well prepared for the qualifying
times required, although this does also mean a lack of comparability with the UEFA
and FIFA tests due to the reduced times in Spain.

The Italian system has introduced personal fitness trainers for referees in Italy to try
and increase further the physical performance of their referees. The personal fitness
trainers assist referees in their training and physical preparation for matches.
Referees comment that they train with their personal trainer in their home city or
town for a proportion of the week and also on their own for a quantity of time during
the week, “I do three days with the coach or the trainer and two days alone so six
days a week, with one day off, and after the match, perhaps no training” (Justin,
category 3a). The benefit of the personalised fitness coach in their home town for the
Italian referees is similar to the situation for English referees and their Referee
Coaches who assist with the more technical aspects of their performance
improvement. There is clearly an opportunity to have a more personalised approach
to referee physical fitness with the use of individual referee fitness trainers.
Some of the referees in Spain also have a personal fitness coach, similar to those provided in Italy, although this is not the case for all elite referees. Referees are sent their programmes in the same way as referees in England and Italy; this training is often undertaken independently with heart rate monitors recording data in a similar fashion in all three countries. However, referees in Spain, as in England, do not believe that the fitness tests are the best preparation for a match, “...we have a special test on the field, so I think it is good, it tests for your physical condition but not the preparation for a game” (Geoff, category 2a). Despite the recognition that the physical tests do not prepare referees for a game necessarily, referees do recognise that the fitness tests they must undertake are sufficiently difficult and therefore must be prepared for adequately.

The most significant preparation and pre-season screening is undertaken in Italy. The system requires referees to undertake a pre-season screening as part of their fitness assessment. The Italian sporting system requires all participants in sport to undergo a medical that passes the individual as competent to compete in competitive sport3. Referees in Italy are not excluded from this testing, even within the elite group:

“...at the beginning of the season we have a lab assessment of the referees and basically we go to the Institute of Sport in Rome and we have all the referees run on the treadmill for the maximum oxygen uptake and the maximum heart rate. In Italy it is mandatory that you have clearance from the medical in order to do competitive sport...if you don't have the medical certificate from the specialised medicals you can't do competitive games or sport all over Italy...also we make them have physiological tests and then we have test batteries that they have to pass in order to get the clearance to be appointed.”

(Ken, category 3b)

This physical testing regime undoubtedly ensures that the Italian referees must stay physically fit. Not only do they have the national fitness tests, they also have ‘test batteries’ that must be passed in order for them to attain clearance for appointment
to matches. This is something which is unique to the Italian system. The requirement for physical training in order for referees to perform satisfactorily in matches is important, however, there are other elements of training which referees are required to complete that are also important to both their performance and their development.

Physical testing has been undertaken in a similar fashion in all three countries, nonetheless, there are substantial differences regarding the implementation of some of the physical training and physical tests referees are required to do. The remote management of officials and the necessity to train independently has meant that similar methods and monitoring of training are in place in each of the countries. Referees train from their home location and use heart rate monitors to track their training. This information is then sent back to the sports science support staff who monitor referees and adjust training programmes and levels of intensity where appropriate.

The physical component of referee training is the aspect that referees have been undertaking for the longest period of time. It was the first part of formal pre-match training that was introduced, and is the easiest to govern and complete for a referee. Other aspects of training, such as the technical and psychological components are arguably more difficult to deliver, and require greater resources. Technical training utilises electronic resources to observe, record and critique decisions in a match situation. However, the delivery of technical training has also developed in recent years.

**Technical training in England**

The support afforded to referees during the technical aspects of their training has greatly increased over the past 20 years since their professionalisation. The mapping of this evolution in training in England reveals developments that have assisted referees in their training and therefore, subsequently, match performance. Technical training often involves the use of DVD’s to observe contentious decisions made by referees in matches. These decisions do not have to be termed ‘wrong’ they can simply be questionable or debatable. The scenarios are subsequently played on a
large screen during a meeting with all of the referees. The decisions are then debated and a general comment and discussion session commonly follows. Any changes in the delivery of the technical sessions have been linked to the different managers who have taken the sessions over time. Alan, an elite/ex elite referee from category 1a, outlines how the technical training can change:

“...you had to do what he said – when he showed you a DVD of an incident you had to stand up, describe it to everyone, disseminate that and come up with the best solution going forward. Then when it went to [name removed] – he would tell you what you should have done and then when it went to [name removed] he wouldn’t even look at the DVD. There was so little analysis on stuff – it was just crazy and it baffled me...the development of the young referees coming through...they get taken to the Premier League...and they do not get anything – they do not get any guidance nothing – and you think that’s the key time because it’s that transition period where they need that help.”

The styles of these individual managers or trainers and how they tackle the technical session requirements is something that Alan sees as affecting technical training delivery. That there can be such differences in the delivery of the training when a change of personnel occurs ensures that it is difficult to achieve standardisation within the domestic system, let alone with other countries. It can generally be seen as good practice to review past performances as well as key and contentious decisions to determine whether an incident under review has been dealt with appropriately. There is a desire for uniformity in decision-making both domestically and at European and world level. Contentious decisions require discussion between referees, they need to be considered to ensure that if a similar situation occurs again, a referee will, in theory, respond according to the training and guidance they have been given. If this occurs the referee will be moving towards a more uniform and consistent interpretation of the laws. Something which is a primary aim of standardisation.
The video sessions used to review decision making have been in place for a number of years and require the attendance of all Select Group officials, usually during their scheduled “meet time” every two weeks. These sessions consider what referee Aaron described as “topical trends” (Aaron, elite/ex elite referee, category 1a), such as simulation or holding at corners and referees then move into smaller group sessions. The groups feed back their discussions into the larger forum of the whole group. When the sessions occur attention is also drawn to areas of good practice rather than just errors or wrongdoing. So referees “…will look at the weekend’s action and highlight some good practice or maybe some areas that could have been handled better and discuss and talk about the actual incidents themselves…we can look at the analysis of the positions and the movement but we can also use it as a video” (Aaron, category 1a).

Referees described the technical DVD sessions that took place as something positive in their personal development process. The outcomes of these meetings, as well as their match assessment reports, are drawn together as areas of training for the referees and their Referee Coach. Further down the pathway from the Select Group there is investment in Referee Coaches and teams of people supporting referees, “we have Referee Coaches. We now have over £350,000 a year into the semi-professional and professional coaching scheme in developing referees…We know from the statistics that one-to-one coaching works” (Bernard, category 1b). These Referee Coaches work with the elite referees as well as referees lower down the pathway. Referees see the benefit of having a designated Referee Coach who can work alongside them on areas of improvement. Identification and implementation of training needs would be more difficult to achieve by the individual referee without the support of a Referee Coach.

The use of Referee Coaches facilitates self-analysis and without such support from the Referee Coach referees (no matter how good) would have to effect any changes to their performance by themselves\(^6\). This requires the referee to understand what they need to improve, the training they need to undertake in order to correct a particular issue, and subsequently complete the training and correct the matter
identified in the technical sessions. But the individual referee in question may not have all the requisite skills to be able to carry out these steps in isolation.

One respondent involved in referee management, administration and training, outlined the particular benefit that a Referee Coach can bring to the technical training. Barry (category 1b) identified the way that a referee would utilise a Referee Coach and how any particular issues are tackled by the referee and their coach, “If there is something in their positioning, then yes something will go in the debrief...and the referees’ coach will also see that and they will be able to work on that between them.” Support during the technical element of training has developed in recent years. This has also included some consideration of the mentoring of younger referees, which now involves placing younger referees with more experienced referees and Referee Coaches in the Select and National group in an attempt to provide additional support during their development.

Technical Training in Spain and Italy

As in England the technical training in Spain and Italy utilises DVD and group sessions to analyse referee decisions and generate discussion around these decisions. In Spain a similar importance is attached to the technical element as to the physical aspect of referee training. Different groups or committees contribute toward the development and match preparation of the referee, “each committee, technical, sport and physical, psychological and clinical. All of it is given the same importance, one is not more important than the other” (Harry, category 2b). Referees also discussed the use of technical training in Spain, how this works in practice and the benefits this gives them, “...with the video, the most important thing is to improve but to improve the mistake, everyday, one less, one less. The preparation and physical mentality of the referee is important and to try every day to make less mistakes” (Hugh, category 2b). The approach in Spain is to attempt, where possible, to eliminate mistakes made within the confines of a match situation. The use of the technical training element is designed to assist in this regard, as is the case in England and Italy.
The importance placed on technical training in Spain is emphasised through the referee responses, and the responses from the ‘Management, administration, and training’ category; the technical training is completed during the four meetings held throughout the season in Spain, and they are content with the standard of the referees, “I think in Spain the level of this is top, the referees must be in perfect physical condition – and technical. In Spain there are four meetings during the season” (Hugh, category 2b). The meetings in England are more frequent throughout the season and during these meetings the technical analysis is completed. That is not to say that referees in Spain have little additional contact with the Referees’ Committee during the season, although some of these discussions occur outside of the technical meetings due to the lower number of meetings that the referees in Spain have during the season.

The Italian system employs a similar structural format as that in Spain and England, notably with regard to technical group meetings with referees and management staff, “We have a lot of meetings in Coverciano, one every two weeks...after the game I watch my game, I used to watch my colleagues to improve my technical [ability] but also to see every situation that can happen, so I used to watch every match” (John, category 3a). Although the referees meet every two weeks throughout the football season, referees have asked for, “more DVD reviews” (Jack, category 3a), so that further improvement in their performance might be achieved. Additionally, some referees want to be more certain of an outcome from the technical DVD sessions. Comments made during the interview process identified the need to be specific when discussing certain decisions and situations that had been reviewed, “…we have video and we analyse referee by referee, and match by match and situations and penalties together in the room. But not if it was a penalty or not a penalty. It is better for us to know” (James, category 3a).

The most important aspect of the training is the support network around the individual engaging in the learning experience. In other words, to maximise learning through experience referees should be supported throughout the process (Smith, Clegg, Lawrence, & Todd, 2007, p. 140). This point is further discussed in Chapter 10, in relation to England, Spain, and Italy, where policy implications are considered
in relation to referee training and performance. However, referees in Italy felt that the sessions could focus more on outcomes to some of the discussions between referees in the technical sessions, in order to provide a definitive answer to a contentious decision and to ensure a similar situation does not occur again for the same referee. Individuals from the ‘managerial, administration and training’ category believed that referees in Italy actually knew the best course of action already, and, the issue was rather that they had to divorce their personal opinion from certain situations, “Technically they know what they have to do, they know what to do” (Kevin, category 3b). Kevin believes that the elite referees in Italy are experienced enough to know how to correct any particular issues or mistakes in their performance. Kevin also states that despite referees understanding how to correct and change performance, they have a pre-existing opinion on specific incidents “the problem is that they try to transfer their own opinion on something”. Whether referees do actually understand their technical failings, realise that they are using their own opinion in certain situations rather than simply interpreting the laws of the game, or are in a position to affect any change on these failings without specific individualised training support, is debateable.

The technical element of training has been identified as being as important as the physical aspect of training for referees and resources have been directed to technical training to reflect this in all three countries. There are also other parts of their training that were raised by referees, for example psychological support is something that referees consider as important as physiological and technical training.

**Psychological Training in England, Spain and Italy**

Psychological training was viewed differently in each of the countries. There has, historically, been differing provision in this area of training in all three countries, and referees’ views and responses reflect this. Referees, and those involved with referee management administration and training in England, did not include as much information on the psychological element of training as those responding from Spain and Italy. Referees in England did recognise the importance of psychological
support, although there was a voluntary aspect associated to it within the English system. In the English system referees do not have to attend psychological sessions; it is an individual choice rather than an integral part of the training process, “we also have access to a sports psychologist. Some of us use it to a greater extent. I’ll meet quite often...I get some benefit from chatting with him. He also comes to our group session and talks about psychology” (Aaron, category 1a).

Some referees do access the psychological training opportunities offered, and there was acknowledgement of the benefits that this can provide. The continued stress that comes with officiating in the Premier League, the associated media exposure and scrutiny of performance has put more pressure on the shoulders of elite referees. Some referees identified the use of psychological support as useful in dealing with some of these issues, “I think there was a fear factor and that would affect performance, if you thought “if I don't get everything right today, if I upset too many people my job could be on the line here”, this is where having a psychologist on board was very helpful, certainly for some people” (Arthur, category 1a).

The English system also incorporates some psychological support into the group meetings. This is different from Spain where a psychologist will intermittently attend the group sessions, with no specified number of sessions scheduled throughout a season. Within the Spanish system “Psychology is not done individually; it is done more in the group” (Graham, category 2a), it is part of the training process in Spain and is something which referees believe is useful for their training and match preparation. Despite the recognition that psychological support is constructive, group based applications can have varying results and most psychologists do not conduct group-based work without associated individual sessions. Rather, psychologists will initiate a group-based intervention, followed by a more individualised approach, due to the individual personality differences involved7 (Slack, Butt, Maynard, & Olusoga, 2014; Slack, Maynard, Butt, & Olusoga, 2012; Thelwell, Greenlees, & Weston, 2006).

Harvey, an individual from the managerial, administration and training category in Spain (2b) states that psychological support is there for referees if they need it, “...
for psychology we usually have one psychologist that comes here sometimes, not
every day...sometimes, if the referees need psychology support we get in contact.”
Referees in Spain generally recognise the benefits that psychological support can
bring to training and match preparation although they believe that psychological
training and support in Spain requires greater training focus, “I think out of everything
we could use some coaching in psychology...in psychology it [the training] is not
enough” (Gordon, category 2a).

The issues raised by Gordon show that a psychologist is not always employed in
Spain for the referees, the provision is more sporadic. This matter is not unique to
Spain. In Italy there is no recognised psychologist for the referees to consult, and
they use the Technical Director as their means of addressing this aspect of training
and support:

“...about 10 years ago, we also had a psychologist that helped
us...the psychologist was something that was not very
functional to the team. At the end of the day it was an extra
expense that didn't work...we have the Technical Director who
himself has the ability to provide psychological support in terms
of motivation.”

(Keith, category 3b)

The need for a psychologist for the referees in Italy is not viewed as being as
important as some other aspects of training and support by those in managerial
roles. The fact that a psychologist was employed, and the managerial staff did not
see the benefit of continuing with this indicates that there was some reservations
about the effectiveness of this form of support, although the exact reasons for this
were not forthcoming from managerial staff. Money was argued to be better invested
elsewhere, and the use of an untrained psychologist, the Technical Director, who
delivers the training indicates that within the Italian system they do not see the
benefit of continuing investment in psychological support. However, referees need to
feel involved in the training process. The removal of a service that they believe is of
value to them can affect the partnership between referees and those in managerial,
training and administrative roles. There is evidence to suggest that partnerships
between those involved in the delivery of training and those completing the training, the referees in this case, is important in order to optimise effective delivery. To achieve these ends, a culture should be fostered that involves all parties fully subscribing to the training processes and, therefore, sharing common goals and intended outcomes, as well as routinely evaluating the training provision and support (Donovan, Hannigan, & Crowe, 2001, p. 221).

The decision to remove professional psychological support and training for the referees in Italy and to replace it with ad-hoc access to psychological support is not something the referees support. Joe, a referee in category 3a, believes professional psychological support is something that is very important for referees in Italy, “For me it is very, very important to have normal training because in the week I do 5 fitness training [sessions], but it is very important to have psychological training…before the match.”

Psychological support is varied in England, Spain and Italy, which means that there is no uniformity of psychological training or provision. Referees, from each of the countries, have identified the importance of psychological support for match preparation. Despite the importance of this training and provision being acknowledged by the referees, they also believe that organised psychological training could offer more support, particularly in Spain and Italy. Attention now turns to the individual referee and their preparation for matches, the processes referees go through and the procedures taken when preparing for matches in their respective domestic leagues, and also in European competition.
Match preparation

Match Preparation and Referees’ Approaches in England
Correct pre-match preparation is essential for referees to ensure that they are ready for the match they are about to officiate and capable of producing their optimum performance on the pitch. Match preparation in England tended to differ from referee to referee, something confirmed by Bill, commenting on match preparation, from category 1b:

“...different referees prepare in different ways, some go to the nth degree, some are happy to have the basic amount of knowledge and just going out there and see how it goes. Never take away from a referee the art of weighing up a game in the first ten minutes of each half because that is such an important part of refereeing.”

The form and extent of preparation depends on the priorities of the individual referee. There is not a particular directive for referees on how they should prepare, or guidance on what constitutes the correct amount of preparation and research. In consequence, “different referees have different ways of preparing for games” (Boris, category 1b). Bill, in the quotation above, places importance on the referee ‘weighing up a game’ after the match has started, something he views as ‘such an important part of refereeing’. This suggests that some other officials evaluate a match before it starts based on prior experiences and the research they conduct and that subsequent evaluation and re-evaluation occurs during the early stages of a match to determine how they might officiate the fixture.10

Evaluation and re-evaluation in sport is referenced in other academic disciplines, and is referred to within sport psychology literature as ‘calibration’.11 When related to elite refereeing the argument can be made that referees are consistently ‘calibrating’. Calibration depends on things such as time of the match and aspects related to external control, such as crowd noise/behaviour and also player actions and behaviour. Referees assess performances differently depending on circumstance.
such as time of the season and what is ‘at stake’ for the teams and players they are officiating (Fasold, Memmert, & Unkelbach, 2013, p. 488).

There are two types of referee preparation for games, referees that ‘treat every game the same’ (Adam, category 1a) and referees that are ‘aware of where their problems lie’ (Arthur, category 1a) before and during a match. Referees that are aware of where their problems lie utilise some form of pre-judgement before they get onto the pitch. This judgement can be formed through the use of research, taking stock of previous matches and the referees' own experiences with certain teams and players:

“...we would see which players, which clubs, have patterns across the games. So where players were standing at corner kicks, blocking that goes on in the penalty area, also not only about individuals that we know and have seen it in each game, also past meetings between clubs or indeed between players...We knew the history, we knew the problems that were likely to occur...now, if somebody calls that prejudging, they are entitled to use their choice of words.”

(Arthur, category 1a)

Arthur explains that the analyses of some of these player and club patterns of play was conducted at the referee meetings and his mention of 'prejudging' suggests that this was something he had previously considered. There appears to be a fine line or distinction between referees actively researching in order to be ready for a match, and the possibility of doing too much research and therefore prejudging both players before they are on the pitch and potential incidents prior to their occurrence. Aaron, a referee in category 1a, believes that research and preparation is important, but that it is also important to begin matches with an open mind:

“...it is important to try to enter the game with an open mind...when I travel to a Champions League game I make sure that I do some research on both of the teams; who are the participating teams? Who are their players? Who is the manager? Which nationality the players are from? How many of
them will speak English, might affect the way I communicate with them. Have I been to that stadium before? Have I refereed those teams before? What are my previous experiences with those teams? Have I seen them on TV? Has anything stood out when I have seen them before? Where are they in their domestic league? Are they flying high or are they struggling? What are their expectations for this particular game? Are they going to be happy with a one-nil defeat away from home in the first leg? Will there be an element of time wasting late on in the game that I need to clamp down on? I need to understand the mentality of the players to be able to manage the game.”

It is debateable how much of an open mind referees can have if they enter a match with pre-conceived ideas about certain players or situations. The level of research Aaron conducts is detailed and focuses on a number of potential matters that may influence player behaviour as well as his own behaviour during a match. Aaron also considers his surroundings, aspects such as the stadium, as well as whether he has had experience of refereeing particular teams before. Ben a former referee, now involved with the management, administration and training of referees from category 1b, believes certain stadia and surroundings are more daunting initially for the referee, “It was more intimidating when you went to Anfield or Old Trafford than when you went to Coventry or Aston Villa...it’s a little bit different when you have 65,000 people against 25,000 but once you are actually out there you’re shutting that off” (Ben, category 1b).

Research can help referees prepare for eventualities such as stadium size, number of spectators and also behaviour of teams and players. Nevertheless, referees have different levels of pre-match research, and there are differing views regarding the amount of detail a referee should go into when researching teams and players prior to a match, “I think now it is a matter of course that referees do their homework on players and they do their homework on the league. They do their homework on clubs because basically referees do not like surprises” (Boris, category 1b).
Match Preparation and Referees’ Approaches in Spain

Referees in Spain recognised the need to prepare before a match. Gravity of occasion or importance of fixtures had little impact on referee match preparation which remains the same for the majority of occasions throughout a season. The utilisation of research and knowledge regarding teams and more specifically, player behaviour takes a similar form to that in England. As with England, the challenge for referees is to understand and comprehend the depth of detail that should be sought and when research or evaluation becomes prejudgment rather than a match preparation exercise. Gary, a referee in category 2a, identifies information he prefers to know prior to a match, “...it is very important to know the style of the team...because it is important to know what players can commit problems and it is important to know as much of the information as you can.”

Gary believes aspects such as the ‘style of the team’ and ‘what players can commit problems’ is information that is important for referees to be aware of before a match begins. This view is supported by other referees in Spain, although there is also some acceptance that the evaluative approach to pre-game preparation should be tempered, “it’s a balance...I think if you are a good referee you have to know the behaviour of the players. [But] you have to give the decision in the moment, with the information that you have...but, if something happens with the defender and the use of the elbows...and suddenly the attacker is on the floor and you see blood, with the reputation of the defender, for sure it is a card, so it helps” (Geoff, category 2a). Geoff’s comments emphasise the importance attached to prejudging situations, that it is useful for a referee to have particular information prior to a match. One implication of his comments is that if a referee does not see an incident clearly, information gathered prior to a match allows the referee to make a judgement based on previous reputation and incidents.

Referees in Spain identified simulation, or diving when discussing preparation for matches. An awareness of players that dive, or simulate fouls is viewed as important, “the referee must know all the players. Maybe the player all the time is simulating, it is quite positive before something happens that you are ready, you are prepared, that they are going to cheat you” (Gordon, category 2a). The issue of
player deception in particular is considered in Chapter 9 however, Gordon’s views illustrate the preparation referees believe is required in order to be equipped to deal with some of the player behaviour on the pitch, “I try to watch TV and matches of the team. So in the case of a very important team you know when they get possession of the ball…I try to change some small things on the pitch to look at special players, how they play, the tactical situation” (Geoff, category 2a). The use of information in this way is widely accepted in Spain and referees suggest that research prior to a match in order to prepare is essential to their performance and control of the players.

Although in England referees generally did engage in research in order to prepare for matches more caution is expressed more caution is expressed. Similarly responses from within the Spanish system identified the use of research to prepare for games and referees stated that this research increased their confidence and assurance on the pitch.

**Match Preparation and Referees’ Approaches in Italy**

Italian referees’ identified similar methods of match preparation to referees in England, although there was more similarity with the referee responses from Spain overall. For example, the match preparation of referees in Italy generally remained the same in terms of their organisation irrespective of the match, although there were specific parts of the preparation that were changeable depending on teams and players, “the organisation is the same but the technical [preparation] depends on the match. It depends on the team” (James, category 3a). James recognises that he prepares differently depending on the teams that he is officiating. Similarly, John a referee in category 3a, also describes the importance he attaches to understanding as much as possible about the teams and players before he referees a match, “I want to know everything, much more than is possible to research, to be aware not afraid. But I want to be prepared, to know the way they usually take a corner kick, which are their problem players, which are the difficult situations. It is very important, so I can focus on the game.”
Responses from the Spanish and Italian referees indicate that they like having detailed information on the teams and players they are officiating. The English responses confirmed that although this is similarly the case, there are also those referees who do not want such comprehensive information in order to avoid the prejudgment of situations during a match. Reservations surrounding the approach to matches also arise in the Italian interview process; “You have to referee as the teams are all the same, there are no colours, there are no particular players all the people in the game are the same” (John, category 3a). There are mixed messages apparent from referees in Italy regarding their preparation, similar to the responses from referees in England. The information from the three countries demonstrates that much of this preparation is dependent on the individual referee and is, in fact, irrespective of their country of origin. If this is the case across England, Spain and Italy, referees can be considered to be acting autonomously in other countries as well, with regard to their pre match research.

Despite the lack of clarity and standardisation in respect of pre-match preparation and research, and the differing views from within the Italian system on these matters, referees are encouraged by their referees’ committee/commission to be fully prepared and are provided with videos of matches at their training bases when they meet. In addition, they can log on remotely to the intranet to access previous matches and incidents. This technology can also be used for referees to scrutinise their previous performances, as well as to view teams and players they will officiate. Some of the referees believe that the essential element of viewing was the ability to evaluate their previous performances, “...in the meetings at Coverciano I watch on TV the last match – it is very important to know the team, the players, the tactics, it is important to watch the last match for my decisions, my mistake, my red card, yellow card” (Joe, category 3a). The importance attached to personal development and match preparation is something that other referees have commented upon in Italy.

Justin, a referee in category 3a, believes in the importance of pre-match preparation, and also identifies specific uses for this preparation, such as in pre-match routines, to ensure that he is in the best possible condition to officiate:
“I think it is very important to see many matches on TV, to know and understand the movement of the players on the pitch. I think it is very important at these meetings to see on DVD the many situations, simulations, falls and also the tactics of the players and of the teams...I can prepare for the match with the knowledge of the players with the knowledge of the public, with the help of DVDs, with our Observer.”

Although referees are watching videos and DVD’s of matches in England, Spain and Italy, their training has a specific focus on the physical, technical and psychological aspects, there have been questions concerning the relevance of the training in preparation for matches. Comments regarding referee training have identified a lack of actual match practice, i.e. the only time that referees practice is when they are actually out in the middle of a game:

“...referees have not got a culture of practice...the only practice they get is on a Saturday. They do have to get fit and keep up their fitness regimes which is fine and good, that is great, but that does not make them better decision-makers...we are saying that they should be giving themselves repetitive practice in simulated situations.”

(Fred, category 1f)

Other respondents in England believe that on pitch training is taking place, as Brian, an ex-referee from category 1b involved with the management, administration and training of referees explains;

“...we do on pitch practice. A football club will come in and we use their academy players and we simulate incidents on the field...we looked at penalty incidents and the management of defenders and attackers at corner kicks and free kicks. So the on field stuff we do...simulated practice is a lot better way of doing it...the corner kick one that we did, we had something like 30 corner kicks, all videoed, so you can look at your position, what you saw, which bits you missed, what tactics players are
using and because you are repeating it time and time again, people look at your performance and what other people are doing, there are greater learning points to come out of it.”

On-field practice is something that exists within the English system, although this was not the case in either Spain or Italy. Referees and managerial, training and administration staff in Spain and Italy have not referred to on-field practice when discussing the training provided domestically and it is unclear whether this type of training is in operation. In England, the composition of this training is something that is a subject of contention, although the importance of specific match practice is clearly recognised. Respondents commented that training ‘in-situ’ can improve performance through the learning points that come from this type of training. Clearly repetitive practice in simulated situations is a beneficial way of applying theoretical principles learned through technical training, match performance feedback and work with referee coaches. However, it is also difficult to organise such sessions. In the statement above Brian explains the involvement of the academy players from professional clubs, and how these players are required to replicate game situations for referees to practice. This takes a significant amount of organisation and compliance from clubs, something that would not be at the top of the agenda of these professional clubs.

**Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has considered referee reflections related to their training, match preparation and officiating. Some of these findings are explored in further detail in Chapter 10, where pertinent issues are considered concerning policy implications and the raising of standards in refereeing. The level of research that referees now undertake in order to feel confident for a match has developed rapidly in recent years.

The Italian referees commented on the need to use videos and DVDs of matches to improve their own performance, rather more than to rely on this medium for pre-match information on teams and players. The guidance for referees on this form of preparation is fairly sporadic and what occurs depends on the individual and their
preferred method of preparation. Individual referees have commented on how they prefer to prepare for matches, but there is no guidance for referees from the authorities regarding the amount or form of pre-match research that should be conducted. English and Italian referee responses identified the need to officiate teams and players in the same way in order to avoid any pre-judgement of incidents during a match and careful management of pre-match research and effective guidance from the authorities, at domestic, European and world level is required for this to occur.

The purpose of any referee training is to prepare the official in question adequately for the matches to which they are assigned. Training should be targeted, focused and relevant to refereeing a match in order to prepare referees to be able to officiate effectively. The aim of this chapter has been to consider and analyse referee experiences and interpretations of their training, preparation and performance in England, Spain and Italy. The subsequent chapter considers refereeing at national and international level, the implementation of UEFA and FIFA policy guidelines and standardisation in refereeing practices and decision-making.

1 The Cooper test was initially suggested in 1968 and therefore the lack of specificity for refereeing in the modern game is perhaps to be expected (Cooper, 1968)

The Cooper test measured against norms and recommendations for age groups, these are listed below (Cooper, 1968);

12 Minute Run Fitness Test Results

Table 6, The Cooper test measurement against norms and recommendations for age groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male 20-29</td>
<td>&gt;2800m</td>
<td>2400-2800m</td>
<td>2200-2399m</td>
<td>1600-2199m</td>
<td>&lt;1600m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females 20-29</td>
<td>&gt;2700m</td>
<td>2200-2700m</td>
<td>1800-2199m</td>
<td>1500-1799m</td>
<td>&lt;1500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males 30-39</td>
<td>&gt;2700m</td>
<td>2300-2700m</td>
<td>1900-2299m</td>
<td>1500-1999m</td>
<td>&lt;1500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females 30-39</td>
<td>&gt;2500m</td>
<td>2000-2500m</td>
<td>1700-1999m</td>
<td>1400-1699m</td>
<td>&lt;1400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males 40-49</td>
<td>&gt;2500m</td>
<td>2100-2500m</td>
<td>1700-2099m</td>
<td>1400-1699m</td>
<td>&lt;1400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females 40-49</td>
<td>&gt;2300m</td>
<td>1900-2300m</td>
<td>1500-1899m</td>
<td>1200-1499m</td>
<td>&lt;1200m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males 50</td>
<td>&gt;2400m</td>
<td>2000-2400m</td>
<td>1600-1999m</td>
<td>1300-1599m</td>
<td>&lt;1300m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The application of the ‘yo yo test’ is explained by Ken (category 3b), ‘It is 30 metres running they have to cover and many have 50 metres rest so this is done 20 times, so it is intermittent and you can easily understand that the referee never does 150 metres and then 30 seconds in a game and also it is done on a track. It is good training for us. For example I did a lot of studies, and I want to publish, Italian referees work at 85% of their maximum doing their test so is quite submaximal, so it is good training for us.’

This law, passed in 1971, and entitled “Medical Protection of Athletic Activities” is intended to provide a degree of medical protection to people, irrespective of age, participating in organised competitive athletic events. The overriding concept is for these screenings to work towards a preventive medical evaluation, with the rationale intended to identify potentially deleterious disease (Pelliccia & Maron, 1995, p. 827)

The use of video to review decision making is not something that is new in terms of sport related practices, Baker, Cote and Abernethy (2003) considered the use of video to examine the performance and training of elite performers whereas Lives, Straub and Shelley (2002) studied the enhancement of performance utilising digital video where the use of video was examined in relation to the improvement of player, coach and team performance. Furthermore, we can look back to 1988 and see the work of Franks, Johnson, and Sinclair (1988) who considered the use and development of a computerised analysis system for the recording of behaviour in sporting environments or the work of Starkes and Lindley (1994) who discussed the use of video simulation in order to improve performance.

This leadership can depend on the individual in charge. More specifically whether this individual adopts a more democratic or autocratic style, as described by Alan in his observations, is important. Martens (2001, p. 12) outlines the qualities required to adopt an autocratic and democratic style of approach in sports leadership. We can see some of the traits described by Alan related to the command, and outcome-centred traits required, other traits suggested are independence in decision-making and stressing authority as a leader (Harris & Ostrow, 2008, p. 146).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autocratic style</th>
<th>Democratic style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome-centered</td>
<td>Athlete-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-oriented</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless, defining what makes effective leadership in sport is not a simple procedure (Weinberg & Gould, 2003, p. 213).

The impact of referee coaches within English refereeing has been noted by referees and those involved with referee management and administration. The extent of the referee coach network extends beyond the Select Group of officials, ‘... at all levels of the national list, in the premier league, even at semi-professional level, the majority have got coaches, so at least they’ve got a shoulder to cry on basically” Boris, category 1b).

Generally literature acknowledges that group based approaches are most effective when followed up by individual, tailored interventions. The ability to improve performance is something which requires direction and guidance, athletes benefit from the use of cognitive strategies employed by psychologists, and it appears effectiveness increases with the addition of multiple mental skills within a package when the intervention begins with a group and is subsequently followed by individual interventions (Thelwell & Greenlees, 2001; Allen, 2007, p. 21).
Research has been published regarding elite sporting organisations providing a duty of care for their employees by protecting and supporting their mental well-being. This is often a major omission in the training and development of those working in elite sport, and may partly explain why sport psychology remains generally undervalued and poorly received at the highest levels (Fletcher & Wagstaff, 2009, p. 432).

See Holton’s updated HRD Evaluation and Research model (Holton, 2005, p.51).

![Updated HRD Evaluation and Research Model](image)

The model is holistic in approach and is concerned with how training works and how factors that make it work can be enhanced in the organisation rather than being outcome-driven from the outset. That is not to say that outcomes and performance are not important in the model, rather that to achieve optimum training and performance other factors must be considered initially.

There has been psychological literature which has attempted to examine some of these matters. Plessner and Betsch (2001) found that referees made decisions that were relative to the context of the match. They found that penalty kicks were awarded or not awarded depending if a team had already been awarded a penalty kick or not in the match. Furthermore, Unkelbach and Memmert (2008) focused on referees’ yellow card decisions and whether their decisions were related to ‘game management’ or ‘calibration’ depending on the nature of the game, judgement of the referee and, most importantly, the time of the offence. The study found that referees avoid extreme judgments of a yellow card at the beginning of matches. Indeed, the study found that yellow cards issued by referees in the “early” (1-15 min) and “late” (75-90 min) stages of a match were greatly increased when removed from the context of the match – in other words, referees saw the incidents, but did not know at which point in the match the incidents occurred. The study postulates that calibration effects do occur dependent on the stage of the game and that wilful control plays a part as referees are free individuals who try to direct a game to the best of their competence.
Sport psychology literature refers to ‘calibration’ as the concept of human decision-making under conditions of uncertainty, and the accuracy with which one can rate or predict one’s own performance (Fogarty & Else, 2005, p. 42).
Chapter 8 - The Influence and Impact of UEFA and FIFA Policies on the Standardisation of Refereeing

The desire to create a standardised system of refereeing has meant that guidance has been issued to national associations and directives have been given to referees through UEFA and FIFA training events. The subsequent responses and reaction to these UEFA and FIFA directives and their success in the view of national associations and elite referees are considered in this chapter. The intention of these UEFA and FIFA guidelines, including the direction given to national associations and the training events organised, is to promote greater standardisation of practices and uniformity in associated training programmes for elite referees. In this chapter the responses from referees and those in managerial, training and administrative roles in England, Spain and Italy on UEFA and FIFA attempts to standardise refereeing are considered.

Policies and measures designed to achieve standardisation in respect of refereeing practices will be considered in respect of the following:

(i) Historical development focusing on England and then "abroad".
(ii) The role of international governing bodies: UEFA and FIFA.
(iii) European and international tournaments and the differences between such competitions and domestic leagues.
(iv) Anomalies and their impact on standardisation.

It is the aim of this chapter to chart the introduction and consideration of standardisation as a concept across national and international borders, as well as the roles of UEFA and FIFA in the implementation and management of this uniformity.
The History of Standardisation in England

Decision Making, Pathways and Administration

The importance of uniformity in refereeing was mentioned in England as early as 1938 when an argument was put forward in ‘The Football Referee’ under the subheading ‘One System Best’, in a section reporting on proceedings from the Kent County Referees’ Society Conference. The article stated that a uniform system needed to be in place across England in order to train referees to the same standard (“One system best”, 1938, p. 4). This was also raised as a motion at the annual RA conference in June 1957, where it was noted that there should be a ‘scheme by which there would be uniformity in the admission and promotion of all referees under the jurisdiction of the Football Association’ (“Motions for debate”, June 1957, p. 10).

This quest for greater standardisation continued. In 1960 an article written by L. C. Mott considering the aspect of uniformity was submitted to ‘The Football Referee’; the article focused on laws, rules and regulations and on keeping these elements as uniform as possible. The article also suggested that uniformity in controlling a game was less possible to oversee given that ‘...footballers do not play a game which conforms to a set pattern’ (Mott, 1960, p. 15) and also that ‘uniformity of decision on the field, depends to a large extent upon the attitude of the football administration towards referees’ (Mott, 1960, p. 16).

In 1962 in an article in ‘The Football Referee’ by W.D. Stones entitled ‘Uniformity in the Administration, Classification and Promotion of Referees’ there were calls for the FA regulations on the classification and promotion of referees in differing County FA’s to be widened to include ‘...items which will give uniformity’. The aim was to ensure that the County FA’s were all operating in the same manner when promoting and classifying their referees in order to try to make certain that the best referees were being promoted across the counties (Stone, 1962, pp. 4-5). The fact that County FA’s were operating referee classification and promotion differently meant there was little guarantee that each referee was being given the same opportunity or guidance, or that the best referees were being promoted.
Standardisation and Referee ing `Abroad`

There are examples of an interest in refereeing matters `abroad` as early as December 1913, notably an article in ‘The Football Referee’ which focuses on ‘Referees and Refereeing Abroad’. The article, written by J. C. Stark, Vice-President of the southern section of the Referees’ Union, examines the origin of refereeing unions in Germany. ‘The Football Referee’ publication was also sent to Belgium, and information regarding the Italian FA introducing a form of referee punishment for errors of judgement (Stark, 1913, p. 10) was discussed in the periodical.

Further evidence, from within English refereeing, compares the methods and performance of referees in other countries. In 1936 a section in ‘The Football Referee’ entitled ‘Continental tit-bits’ considered developments in Spain and the adoption of the diagonal system in Europe (“Continental tit-bits”, 1936, p. 9). There have also been articles submitted to ‘The Football Referee’ by Endre Tabak, who was a member of the Hungarian Referees’ Board, on how Hungarian referees were trained (Tabak, 1955, p. 12), evidencing some interest within England about the systems employed around Europe. In 1959 an article focused on the laws being international and suggested that the application should be internationally consistent (“The laws are international”, 1959, p. 15) and by 1967 there were comparisons drawn between refereeing systems operating in Switzerland and Scotland (Stone, 1967, pp. 6-11).

By 1980 submissions to ‘The Football Referee’ were regularly discussing refereeing and standardisation `abroad`. Indeed, an article by L. A. Wilson entitled ‘Uniformity in decisions: Just dreams’ posed the question of the impossible dream of standardisation and what it meant, arguing that ultimately the achievement of standardisation is not practical (Wilson, 1980, p. 14). In 1984 there were continuing concerns over the standardisation and quality of refereeing in England as well as within European and world football which led UEFA to issue a memorandum to all its referees instructing them to be ‘stricter’ and stating that “successful control of European competition matches will depend…upon the quality of refereeing” (“UEFA instruction”, 1984, p. 5). The impetus for the release of the memorandum was an attempt to improve performances by referees in European fixtures.
Following the World Cup in 1990 questions were raised in ‘The Football Referee’ in an article entitled ‘World Cup Reflections’ by A. Robinson who commented that despite being brought together by FIFA in March of 1990 to train for the tournament ‘...we saw different styles of refereeing’ (Robinson, 1990, p. 3) displayed by referees from the different countries from which they were drawn. Clearly there was a concern that a lack of standardisation in refereeing practices between countries was a problem and warranted further consideration.

The development of refereeing in any country is not a simple matter, just as the evolution of football in any country is not uniform. With the formation of the laws of the game, the referee was expected to interpret and apply these laws. It became apparent that these laws, and especially their interpretation and application, differed depending on the referee and the country in which they officiated. However, the increasingly globalised nature of the game meant that uniformity of both referee systems in different countries and decision making by referees became increasingly important to bodies such as UEFA and FIFA.

**UEFA and FIFA and the Drive for ‘Top-Down’ Standardisation of Refereeing in Football**

UEFA and FIFA believe refereeing should be standardised in Europe and across the world. In their ‘Referees’ Convention’ publication UEFA discuss the aim of the convention along with the role of education and training programmes that they oversee. The position UEFA takes demonstrates a belief that standardisation is an achievable outcome in elite refereeing, whatever the country from which the referee originates, “In an effort to standardise the way refereeing is organised in the different national associations, UEFA has issued clear guidelines as to how refereeing should be organised at this level” UEFA (2006, p. 3).

The aims and objectives of the convention are clear from the guidelines given. However, the responses from those interviewed as part of this research have been mixed regarding standardisation, in particular whether uniformity of referee performance can be achieved at all given cultural and historical differences in the
leagues in Europe and more specifically, in respect of the leagues in England, Spain and Italy. The UEFA Refereeing Convention clearly articulates the need to work towards standardisation (2006, p. 3). The Convention outlines a number of refereeing aims and objectives, and makes reference to the rights and duties of UEFA. To be able to fulfil the aims established in the convention, there is a perceived need to concentrate on referee and referee association education, support and training.

The influence of UEFA and FIFA on refereeing will be considered in terms of the following:

i) Structure and organisation

ii) Training, performance and assessment

iii) Officiating in UEFA and FIFA tournaments

Firstly, UEFA and FIFA can have an impact on the structure and organisation of refereeing within a national association through the guidance they give to the association. UEFA in their ‘Refereeing Convention on Referee Education and Organisation’ state that domestic associations should organise their referees in a particular way:

“The referees committee must be an integral part of the national association structure and be given exclusive responsibility for all matters related to refereeing in the territory of the national association, totally independent of the leagues, clubs and government.” (UEFA, 2012, p. 5)

The effectiveness of the guidance is subject to the willingness of the national association to comply with UEFA and FIFA and form a coherent working relationship. Relationships differ from country to country and are affected by the attitude of the country in question.

Secondly, there is the impact that UEFA and FIFA can have on training, performance and assessment of referees in the domestic leagues that they attempt to govern and
influence. UEFA state that domestic associations must include specific training programmes into their provision, “…programmes must be incorporated into the overarching strategic education and development plan adopted by the referees committee” (UEFA, 2012, p. 15).

Similarly FIFA also deliver educational courses in member associations aimed at increasing the quality of training, support and assessment in refereeing:

“Refereeing courses in the member associations focus on the education and instruction of member associations’ top referees, assistant referees, referee instructors and referee assessors.

In principle the member associations may apply for one of the…courses. However, a second course may be approved depending on the circumstances: size of the country, level of refereeing, level of the competitions etc.”

(FIFA, 2014, p. 5)

The courses that UEFA and FIFA offer to member associations are outlined in table 8. There are similarities in the target audience of these courses and therefore referees, and those in managerial, training and administrations roles, are subject to direct influence through guidance, training and workshops delivered by UEFA and FIFA.

Table 8, courses delivered to member associations by UEFA and FIFA (Adapted from UEFA, 2012, pp. 15-21; FIFA, 2014, p. 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UEFA courses</th>
<th>FIFA courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructors education programme</td>
<td>Course for top referees and assistant referees (male and/or female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee recruitment programme</td>
<td>Course for referee instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee retention programme</td>
<td>Course for referee assessors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassroots referee education programme</td>
<td>Course for a combination of the above,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talents and mentors programme</td>
<td>Course for top futsal referees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite referee education programme</td>
<td>Course for top beach soccer referees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee observer education programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirdly, UEFA and FIFA can have an impact on how referees officiate in the matches that are under their jurisdiction (eg, the Champions League, Europa League and international competitions such as the European Championships or the World Cup), through the use of specific directives and the level of support afforded to ensure a consistency of decision making. For example, referees who officiate on the UEFA and FIFA lists have to fulfil training requirements ranging from attendance at educational seminars to participation in physical and technical training sessions.

The management and delivery of standardised officiating sessions organised by UEFA and FIFA have been prioritised in order to improve refereeing standards. These sessions are co-ordinated by the confederations such as UEFA, and other confederations such as the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF), the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC), Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF), Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol (CSF), and are designed to improve standardisation across countries. Describing the FIFA sessions Luke, from category 4a, involved with the management, administration and training of referees at UEFA/FIFA states:

“...we have referee development officers, we have technical instructors and we have fitness instructors. Then we have 12 development officers in FIFA...and the development officer is in charge of the whole region and maybe 10 to 15 countries but it depends on the region...now we are in the third year of this programme, every year we cover almost all countries, so we invite the technical instructors, and one fitness instructor to courses. The first course in the first year we had the technical instructors, the head of technical instructors, in the second year
we had fitness instructors and this year is the first year we are having the referee managers. This is working very well because we provide material, we provide information.”

FIFA employs a cascading programme of information from the top down in the different confederations. As Luke explains, there are 12 development officers that oversee each of the confederations (UEFA in the case of this thesis) and they have responsibility towards a number of countries within the confederation to which they are assigned. Furthermore, FIFA arranges training for each confederation and the countries that are within that particular confederation. This training has, to date, been delivered to a range of individuals associated with refereeing in the respective countries, in the expectation that these individuals then return to their countries and disseminate the information amongst their peers. The overriding intention of this training is to improve standards, enhance understanding and induce greater consistency in decision making.

Given the number of confederations and nations affiliated to FIFA (a total of 209 member associations or countries) it is a challenging process to attempt to deliver comparable referee training guidance to each country. As Luke explains, the training is delivered over three years with each year of the schedule targeting different job roles and levels of responsibility. There has been a shift in the outlook taken by FIFA towards refereeing across the confederations, “Before in FIFA we did a bit of development but not much because we thought that was the role of the federations” (Luke, category 4a). Historically refereeing has been neglected and unsupported in comparison with other areas of Association Football, and FIFA’s change in stance towards a more developmental role in refereeing represents an acknowledgment that more needs to be done in order to improve standardisation.

The comments offered by Luke in the previous paragraph identify a step change from within FIFA following the governing body’s acknowledgement that refereeing had improved, although not uniformly, in all member associations, “…with a move to more professionalism and preparation of referees from FIFA and member associations, we realised that really we need to go there and help them prepare...”
because we are referees from different confederations and different countries” (Luke, category 4a). The action of FIFA, alongside the support for confederations and member countries, demonstrates a change in attitude towards the development of referees as well as the assistance given to member associations. Luke believes that these changes were influenced by developments in refereeing such as a more professional approach by referees and also because FIFA recognised the need to assist the confederations and countries in order to facilitate greater standardisation.

FIFA delegates authority for the development of referees to confederations and countries and ensures this development is the responsibility of individual nations, “the role of the referees’ committee is that we ask these associations to create a referees department. They must organise what it takes to become a referee and they must have instructors within the referees department and they must have a referees’ development programme” (Luke, category 4a).

The added help more recently given by the FIFA Referees’ Committee supports the targeting of talent identification within refereeing, encapsulated in a programme FIFA have entitled the Refereeing Assistance Programme (RAP)\(^2\). The RAP is the umbrella term for many of the current delivery and support networks FIFA offers confederations and federations around the world; “…coaches from these countries come to the courses, we supply them with the material and then they take it back and it is a sort of top to bottom education programme” (Lee, category 4a).

In order to achieve greater consistency of refereeing FIFA and UEFA are attempting to move towards a more standardised programme of training and guidance for referees. FIFA have launched the RAP in an attempt to standardise the selection and training of young referees more effectively across the various confederations. The overarching aim is greater consistency in refereeing to which end guidance is given to countries concerning the expected structure of referee training supported with appropriate information delivered through seminars and workshops. The intention is to provide clear pathways for referees through the provision of a top down education programme. The impact of these programmes is important to UEFA and FIFA as they attempt to standardise refereeing in countries across Europe and
world football as a whole respectively. However, in order for any of these programmes to succeed cooperation is required from the domestic associations.

### The Implementation of ‘Top-Down’ Standardisation in Domestic Leagues

The relationships that exist between UEFA and FIFA and the national football associations are vitally important if a more uniform standard and structure in refereeing is to be achieved. Without some form of effective relationship between UEFA and FIFA and the associations in each member country, the dissemination and application of structures and training programmes can differ markedly. Howard, a member of the managerial, administration and training staff from Spain (category 2b), believes the way that football, and more importantly refereeing is now structured, renders it virtually “…impossible to work outside of the FIFA guidelines” and that “…the law of FIFA and UEFA is the law.”

The views of referees from the Spanish system make clear that they believe there is a need to follow guidance from both UEFA and FIFA. This is illustrated by the nature of the fitness tests undertaken in Spain, and the fact that they mirror the tests introduced and utilised by UEFA and FIFA in virtually all ways the exception being the more demanding reduced qualifying times required of the Spanish referees. The overriding attitude in Spain is to follow to the letter the guidelines laid down for referees by those in UEFA and FIFA. Harvey (category 2b) states that he has “…a good relationship with people from UEFA and FIFA but not directly”. Harvey’s comments indicate that correspondence with these bodies is not always direct. The lack of a clear structure to the relationship between the Spanish Referees’ Commission and UEFA/FIFA is not necessarily an issue if the Spanish Referees’ Committee are content with the guidance they are given. However, any complications in the relationship between UEFA and FIFA and the referee committees/commissions in domestic leagues could result in misinterpretation of any directives the referee commissions are given. This, in turn, might have potential implications for any move towards uniformity that UEFA and FIFA directives are designed to achieve.
Referees in Italy, however, based on research conducted by individuals within the Italian system, refer to the importance of individual approaches by each country concerning referee training, “Every country has its own experience with referees…so I think that through the years we have matured in our ideas about fitness training” (Ken, category 3b). Views from Italy regarding the training of referees are relatively dismissive of the structures and provision suggested by UEFA and FIFA, principally due to the perceived expertise that already exists within the Italian system. Those working within the Italian system have identified a research-led approach to referee training, which appears to have been effective, given the number of research papers published involving input from Italy or the involvement of Italian referees (Rampinini, Impellizzeri, Castagna, Coutts & Wisløf, 2009; Castagna, Abt & D’Ottavio, 2007; Rampinini et al, 2007; Castagna, Abt, D’Ottavio & Weston, 2005; Castagna, Abt & D’Ottavio, 2004; Castagna & D’Ottavio, 2001).

This research-based expertise within the Italian system has led to a dysfunctional relationship with UEFA and FIFA. Keith, from the managerial, administration and training category 3b, summarises the relationship between FIFA in particular and those working with referees in Italy, “They do not provide information or advice on what to do or how to do it…there is no relationship with FIFA and other governing bodies since 2008 when I approached the F-Marc for the injury prevention programme”. While there has been some collaboration between FIFA and the Italian Referees’ Commission related to the F-Marc programme, this is directly related to medicine and injury prevention, rather than any form of guidance regarding training and structural support for referees. Moreover, views from the Italian system suggest that the relationship with UEFA is also not overly productive. For example, when setting up the system of fitness training for referees in Europe, Ken, (from the managerial, administration and training category 3b) asserted that there was little consultation with the national associations on the subject of experience and expertise:

“My opinion is that UEFA and FIFA, but UEFA because we are in Europe and therefore that Confederation, made a big mistake because they tried to develop the system centrally and say to the nations that you have to do it that way. It is not good
because from a strategic point of view if I was in UEFA and I was the head of the fitness training, first of all I would listen to the countries in terms of experience of refereeing and try to ask for the help or ideas from the leading countries in order to develop a system....”

There are clear tensions between those within the Italian system and UEFA and FIFA. Responses from referees in the research conducted demonstrate that there is greater articulation and understanding between the Spanish system and individuals within UEFA and FIFA. This could be a result of the respective level of contact that each of the associations has with both UEFA and FIFA, which the Italian referees’ commission explicitly identifies as minimal.

The nominal nature of this communication with domestic leagues and associations can in part be attributed to UEFA and FIFA’s decision to adopt a form of top down governance in order to move towards greater uniformity in referee training. The fact that there was a perceived lack of consultation with those in the Italian system regarding the implementation of a central system by UEFA and FIFA explains the absence of an effective working relationship at the managerial, technical and training level in Italy, “...to be honest, we don’t have a close connection with UEFA and FIFA” (Ken, category 3b). This lack of ‘connection’ which Ken refers to extends to the technical training delivered in Italy. For example, those within the Italian system organising technical training are given guidance on the delivery of the sessions by UEFA and FIFA, but they also intimate that they make their own decisions on the provision of technical training depending on the resources available, “…on the technical training, there are rules from FIFA and UEFA, but I am the manager and I try to do the best depending on what I have” (Kevin, category 3b). The guidance on the organisation of technical training delivery can be viewed as particularly prescriptive from UEFA and FIFA although, as with the physical training, such a prescriptive approach is difficult if not impossible to successfully implement if the involvement and engagement of the national associations is not forthcoming.
The impact of UEFA and FIFA on the English system is different again to that evident in the Italian and Spanish systems. As has been noted, the involvement with the Italian Referees’ Commission and the Spanish Referees’ Committee is at different levels, as is the engagement and acceptance of UEFA and FIFA guidelines by the different national associations.

Comments from English referees were made regarding the fact that UEFA, in particular, is keen to listen to referees and those involved with refereeing, “...at the top level we try to be quite consistent. We meet together once every 6 months...I think that is something that UEFA are very keen on. They're also very keen on listening to our point of view” (Aaron, category 1a). Referees within England acknowledged the work that UEFA undertakes on uniformity and standardisation and the difficulties that this work can present when working across different countries. These difficulties can be historical, organisational or involve the training delivered and the cultural differences that exist between countries and also the football leagues in operation in those countries. There was also some recognition that this work on uniformity and standardisation was mostly undertaken in UEFA training events with UEFA referees, rather than in the countries themselves with a wider population of referees. As has been demonstrated, FIFA, in particular, run courses for national associations but these courses are generally limited to one per year and the association must apply for the courses in the first instance.

Others within the English system perceive that as a direct result of their training events with UEFA information is being cascaded back to the domestic leagues through the elite referees. However, the level of standardisation achievable, utilising referee training by UEFA across nations, is something which has been a controversial matter of discussion within the refereeing community. Some referees believe that the training “...is probably as standardised as you can realistically expect. You have to allow for cultural differences and the types of football. This is one of the good things about UEFA, you have your UEFA guys been trained by UEFA to a common theme and a common standard, they then come back to their own nationalities and cascade that training” (Brian, category 1b). Standardising referee training through the use of a cascading system in theory can ensure that a
common message can be delivered to particular referees' national colleagues. However, despite the assertion that cascading training can be a positive way of distributing information and training ideas to move towards more uniformity, there is also some disagreement over whether training across countries can ever be standardised, “The whole thing about the training is that it can't be that regulated” (Barry, category 1b).

**Standardisation within European and International Tournaments**

As this thesis has demonstrated, referees today undertake physiological, psychological and technical training, albeit to differing degrees of intensity, all focused on performance and improvement to performance. The football associations in the various leagues provide this training but referees who are selected to go on the UEFA and FIFA lists also have training and development delivered to them by UEFA and FIFA in addition to their national associations.

Referee views of the training UEFA and FIFA provide and the strength of the views articulated depend on the quality of training delivered by the national association to which the referee in question is affiliated. The opinions expressed by referees at UEFA and FIFA level is generally positive when discussing the physical training delivered, “...the training that we got from UEFA and FIFA, was very good so I was quite happy with that and the kind of advice that we got from them” (Martin, category 4b). The training that Martin discusses is delivered to referees on the UEFA and FIFA lists and referees acknowledged that UEFA and FIFA work hard to achieve uniformity with the top referees in their training and decision-making. But it was also made clear that referees are not taking this information into their domestic matches. Adrian, a referee from England in category 1a offers an assessment from the English system, “They work incredibly hard in their top referee seminars in getting uniformity of decision-making, but only in UEFA matches. What they don't do is tell you to go back and referee that way in your country because every country is unique, and you could not possibly come and referee a Premier League Match the way that you referee a Champions League Match”.

191
There are two salient points evident in the comments from Adrian above. Firstly, it is suggested that referees are in fact not cascading the information they receive from UEFA and FIFA training events back to those within their national leagues despite apparent direction and guidance from UEFA and FIFA to do so. Secondly, the information and training that referees are receiving whilst at UEFA events and training seminars is considered to be delivered specifically for UEFA matches and there is still a strong belief that every country is unique in their referee organisation and training, and that uniformity and standardisation is not being more widely addressed in the domestic leagues through this training. Further issues with uniformity arise when differences in the quality of the training delivered by UEFA and FIFA are identified by referees. Referees in Spain believe the information and training they receive from FIFA is superior to that received from UEFA. There is UEFA support for referee training, but Geoff (category 2a) believes that, “...FIFA give more information...you get more information, more training...but I don't have any special training from UEFA”.

This is a view shared by referees in Italy, who believe that meetings between the referees and the UEFA Referees' Committee are infrequent when they are on the UEFA list, “In UEFA we don't have many meetings between referees and the committee. We are e-mailed the video, they send referees the clips of the matches” (James, category 3a). Although the meetings between the referees and the Referees' Committee in UEFA are infrequent, referees are sent clips of the matches and their performances to review. Despite the fact that this is not ‘in person contact', referees in Italy recognise the value of their experiences with UEFA commenting that, “I love the system in UEFA” (Jack, category 3a).

The assessment by referees in this study of the quality of the training delivered by UEFA and FIFA compared to the national associations has been mixed. Referees have stated that UEFA and FIFA work hard attempting to achieve uniformity within the competitions for which they are responsible. It has also been commented that whilst this hard work in standardisation is apparent in UEFA and FIFA competitions, referees are not taking this information and training back to their national associations. Despite both UEFA and FIFA attempting to standardise refereeing in
European and world football, referees have also cited variation in the training information and delivery between the two organisations. Consideration now turns to differences identified between officiating in a domestic league and in European or international tournaments.

**Differences between Leagues and European/International Tournaments**

One considerable difference in training provision for elite referees is the growth of distance learning provision, with UEFA moving towards greater use of distance learning. The fact that referees are having fewer meetings with UEFA, something identified previously, is partially explained through the use of distance learning, “UEFA have a very good referee training website. So they have a distance learning facility, which probably, bearing in mind distances...is probably the cost efficient method of being able to distribute the training” (Barry, category 1b). The main concern regarding the use of distance learning is the monitoring of referee use of this learning facility and evidencing proof of learning and development. It is technologically and financially advisable to use these tools; nonetheless, it could be argued that there should be some demonstration of a facility to track learning and personal development for each referee if this is the course to be taken.

Those involved with refereeing, such as Barry above, comment favourably on the use of distance learning and the website created by UEFA, as well as the resources that are sent electronically for referees’ use. This change in policy has also been embraced by FIFA, which has altered its view and delivery of training over time. Martin, an elite UEFA/FIFA list referee from category 4b, believes that there is now much more discussion with elite referees during their training courses and more debate with the elite referees over some of the topical issues and trends they are dealing with in their matches;

“...on my first FIFA course back in 1994, it was more lectures and the members of the referee committee would give lectures and guidelines very clearly and then in that period it changed a little bit and involved the referees in discussions, what do you
Despite variable views on the dissemination of information from UEFA, English referees also tend to see UEFA and FIFA positively. Referees believe that when officiating for UEFA and FIFA you are well supported, more so than if you are refereeing in England, “I think they [referees] know that UEFA are a much stronger governing body than the FA” (Alan, category 1a). The views of referees in Spain and Italy concerning the training delivered by UEFA and FIFA and the support they receive are comparable to the views outlined in the English system, although there are differences in opinion from those in managerial, technical and training roles in the countries. Indeed the attitude in Spain has already been discussed in this chapter, regarding the closeness with which they follow UEFA and FIFA guidelines. Referee responses from Spain indicate that the information they are receiving from both the national association and from UEFA and FIFA is now very similar, “In Spain and in UEFA and FIFA there is more and more information and more and more support. Now in UEFA and FIFA and in the Primera División in competition they are very, very similar, almost the same” (Gary, category 2a). The referees interviewed in Spain believe that this ensures some standardisation is being achieved, particularly with regard to the information and support afforded.

Some level of standardisation has been evidenced in the training and support delivered in Spain and at UEFA and FIFA level this still depends on the relationship between the national associations and UEFA and FIFA. Spain has embraced the ideas of UEFA and FIFA and therefore has adopted many of the recommendations in their domestic training for elite referees. The nature of the training delivered by UEFA and FIFA is changing for referees that officiate in European and international football to a more distance learning method of delivery, and there are differences in support when compared to their domestic associations that referees in England believe is more apparent at European and international level.
Continuing Anomalies: Difficulties with Standardisation

Given the scrutiny and attention their decisions now attract the support that referees are given by those who manage and organise them is essential. The intense exposure to which referees’ decision-making is subjected as a consequence of the television coverage that is now concentrated upon Association Football ensures that there is a requirement to pay careful attention to the views on training, guidance and support of elite referees. Referees, and others involved in refereeing at the elite level are critical of a perceived, if intermittent, lack of support for officials.

Geoff, a referee in Spain from category 2a, believes that player behaviour is one of the biggest challenges facing referees and governing bodies in Association Football, and that there are differences between the treatments and punishment players receive from officials in Spain and at European level. Geoff recalls an incident regarding a goalkeeper whistling to disorientate an opposition player and receiving minimal punishment from the authorities in Spain, “...the behaviour of the players [in European football] is much better for sure; you know that UEFA punish…there was a special case two or three weeks ago, the goalkeeper for Barcelona whistled to a player [to disorientate the player and mimic the referees whistle]...in Spain it doesn't happen [players getting banned], but in UEFA – 2 matches.” The threat of punishment seems to be a deterrent. Geoff refers to an incident in a match that he was refereeing and infers that if a similar incident occurred in a UEFA controlled match or competition the player would have received a two match ban. These perceived differences in the level of support for referees between domestic associations and UEFA influence the behaviour of referees on the pitch and how they deal with certain situations and decisions. For example, referees from the Italian system believe there are certain expectations when officiating for UEFA that are not necessarily applied in the same manner domestically. Josh is referring to player perceptions of referee performance in European competition in comparison with domestic officiating, comments “When I referee in Italy I approach some situations [on the pitch] in a different way. In UEFA I must be in a straight line because the player expects UEFA referees to be straight [always give the same decision]” (Josh, category 3a).
Josh, in the quote above, believes that referees are utilising judgement less often and are being asked to follow a more stringent set of rules and guidelines because the players expect that of referees in UEFA competition. There is some perception from referees in Italy that they have to follow set rules in UEFA competitions, although in similar situations in Italy they might behave differently, “...UEFA rules are the same for all referees and you must follow. In Italy in some situations we have a different approach” (James, category 3a). Referees in Italy believe that there is a difference in procedure when compared to European football. This means there are questions regarding standardisation and the level to which this can be achieved, “the main problem is that in refereeing there is always non-uniformity...it is difficult to be uniform and assured in terms of a result, there is a philosophy, we have a common philosophy” (Kevin, category 3b). This notion of a ‘common philosophy’ is something that is arguably easier to achieve with a national association than a Europe-wide system particularly given cultural and historical differences.

As a result of the outlook adopted by UEFA concerning the application of rules and the clarity of the consequence that follow should these rules be broken by a player, the referees feel well supported by UEFA and FIFA, “UEFA I would say 100% supported. I have only good experiences together with UEFA (Matthew, category 4b). This level of support can also be linked to the authority held by UEFA and FIFA in world football. Adrian, a referee in England from category 1a, believes that this makes a significant difference to the referee’s confidence when making a decision, as there is a belief that decisions will be supported and upheld by UEFA and FIFA:

“I refereed for FIFA and I refereed for UEFA – when I refereed for those 2 organisations players would look at me and they wouldn’t see Adrian the referee they would see UEFA or FIFA the organisation, the institution and what I represented. Because if they overstepped the mark with me UEFA or FIFA would be very quickly and very sternly down on them. You referee in England they see you as an individual; they don’t see the Football Association behind you.”

196
Adrian comments above that he did not see the FA in England in the same way as either UEFA and FIFA, and he also does not believe players see the FA in the same way that they see UEFA and FIFA. Referees clearly feel they are well supported when refereeing for UEFA and FIFA. There is also a perception that referees should be “...far more strict with discipline [in European and world football]...than...refereeing West Ham versus Man City in the Premier League, because there will be an expectation in UEFA that the referees are strong, there is an expectation in FIFA that the referees are strong” (Bernard, category 1b). There is less room for interpretation and discretion in UEFA and FIFA competitions, and therefore this poses an interrelated standardisation question. If referees are expected to officiate in European competition in a less flexible manner than in their national leagues, this is, in effect, a different modus operandi to refereeing than they would usually adopt. Therefore, this means that referees are operating differently depending on the competition, and the way that the particular governing body wants them to perform.

Referees are confident in the backing they receive from both UEFA and FIFA although referees are not as complimentary about the support they receive from the FA in their national leagues. UEFA and FIFA offer support on and off the pitch for referees. They give stricter guidelines and have expectations regarding the implementation and application of rules in matches. In turn, they support referees’ on-field decisions and also after the match, by upholding decisions made on the pitch and through the severity of the punishments subsequently issued to players.

The direction taken towards a more standardised approach in refereeing across Europe and international boundaries has undoubtedly affected the provision, training and support of elite referees. Changes have been tracked historically and discussed with reference to the ‘top-down’ method of dissemination of training practices and information favoured by UEFA and FIFA. Associated differences in application of these procedures within national leagues have also been considered. Differences within and between domestic leagues as well as in European and international competition have created some issues concerning the implementation of a standardised framework for elite refereeing. These anomalies are often complex in
nature and differ from country to country, competition to competition and referee to
referee, effectively meaning that any move towards uniformity is ultimately difficult to
facilitate.

The principal aim of this chapter has been to consider the viability of standardisation
and uniformity in refereeing, both in terms of the structures in different countries and
the performance of referees. In order to achieve this the impact and influence of
UEFA and FIFA on domestic associations have been considered, as have the
differences that exist when referees officiate in different European and international
tournaments.

1 Further to this A. Robinson continued to describe the specific officiating of referees from different countries. Robinson outlined the errors in approach of several 1990 World Cup officials, “We saw different styles of refereeing, from the arrogant dictatorship of Helmut Kohl (Austria), lack of consistency with Carlos Silva Valente (Portugal), to the weakness of Elias Guerrero (Ecuador) that contributed to common mistakes in Law” (Robinson, 1990, p. 3).

2 For more information on the FIFA Refereeing Assistance Programme see FIFA (2007).

3 The F-Marc programme was launched in 1994 with an independent research unit established by members of the Medical Committee entitled the FIFA Medical and Research Centre (F-MARC).

   The objective was for F-MARC to develop the scientific basis to protect the health of all players and promote football as a healthy leisure activity. The injury prevention area was something that latterly related to referees (FIFA, 2010, paras. 1-2).

4 In England at the elite level this is undertaken by PGMOL, similar organisations do not exist in Spain and Italy
Chapter 9 – Referee Performance and Practice: Cultural Factors

There are commonly held beliefs that the leagues in England, Spain and Italy are different. A view of the English Leagues and football played by English teams is generally considered to be more physical, faster with fewer stoppages and also fewer interruptions from referees; the view of Italian football is that of a slower more tactical game, with more technical fouls and a greater focus on defending; the generalised perception of Spanish football is of a game that is quicker than that found in Italy, but also very technical with a focus on player skill and flair. With this in mind it is the aim of this chapter to consider, analyse and deconstruct particular concepts and issues related to the impact of culture on referee performance. This chapter begins with a discussion related to these perceptions of the leagues and particular associated cultural differences. Consideration will be given to the following matters:

- Cultural differences that exist between the Premier League, Serie A and the Primera División
- Differences between domestic and European/international refereeing
- Refereeing and the impact of the media
- Referees dealing with error
- Assessment systems and processes
Culture and Cultural Comparisons

Before addressing specific indicators of difference between the leagues in England, Spain and Italy, brief consideration is given to the study and application of cultural theory in order to further understand responses from referees regarding their interpretation of differences between the respective leagues under consideration in this thesis and player behaviour. Recognised theories such as Ronen and Shenkar’s ‘cultural country classification’ (1985), Hofstede’s ‘dimensions of national culture’ (1983a), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner’s ‘seven dimensions of culture’ (1997) and Giulianotti and Robertson’s adaptation of the ‘universalism and particularism’ dimension (2009 and 2004), can facilitate understanding of the impact of culture and differences across international boundaries.

Establishing a precise definition of ‘culture’ can be problematic given the complexities associated with the intricate and detailed layers and influences on conduct connected with the term. In terms of application to this research and the behaviour of referees, culture can be considered as routine ways of behaving, taken for granted assumptions, and ways of understanding situations, as well as, “…information capable of affecting individuals’ behaviour…through teaching, imitation, and other forms of social transmission” (Richerson and Boyd, 2005, p. 8). Culture is represented in people’s minds as well as expressed in their behaviour and interactions (Sperber and Hirschfeld, 2004, p. 40). Culture is learned, frequently unconsciously, it is not biologically based. Culture is acquired through learning and experience, it is shared by people as members of a group, organisation, or society. Culture is transgenerational, and therefore cumulatively passed down from generation to generation (Hodgetts, Luthans and Doh, 2003, p. 94).

National culture might be described as the shaping and influencing of the ideas, values, assumptions and mundane forms of conduct integral to everyday life, virtually a form of collective programming of the human mind which may distinguish one group or category of people from another. Cultural differences between nations are especially found at the deepest level, for example, on the value level (Figure 33; Hofstede, 2001, p. 11). Nationality is identified as particularly important, with our thinking in part conditioned by national cultural factors, influenced by life
experiences, the family, and later educational experiences in schools and organisations which may differ across national boundaries (Hofstede, 1983b, p. 76). With that in mind, the application of sporting rules and laws across national boundaries in any given sport are not only open to interpretation, but also subject to cultural influence. This influence is dependent on individuals, their interpretation of laws and regulations and the influence of cultural factors which differ from country to country. For the purposes of this research, these matters can be considered through the application of the laws of the game of Association Football by referees in different leagues and competitions.

Figure 33, the “Onion Diagram”: Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth, adapted from Hofstede (2001, p. 11).

It is possible to classify countries, and therefore individuals within those countries, according to cultural and attitudinal dimensions (Ronen and Shenkar, 1985). The clusters are principally organised in terms of certain cultural dimensions, namely, the measurement of work goals, values, needs, and job attitudes. For example, the ‘Latin European’ cluster includes Spain and Italy (Figure 34), and the countries grouped in this cluster demonstrate specific cultural characteristics. Whereas countries grouped in the ‘Anglo’ cluster, such as the United Kingdom, are believed to have different cultural characteristics.
The ‘universalism versus particularism’ dimension of the ‘Seven Dimensions of Culture’ (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2012) can be directly related to Association Football and refereeing. Universalism is the belief that ideas and practices can be applied everywhere without modification irrespective of cultural differences. Particularism, on the other hand is defined as the belief that cultural circumstances dictate how ideas and practices are interpreted and applied, with the ‘spirit of the law’ being regarded as more important than the ‘letter of the law’, with each circumstance and relationship being dictated by the rules that people live by.

Due to the increasingly globalised world in which we live there is an increased interdependency between countries and people, with the cross-border flow of goods, money, and more importantly here cultural events and decisions, in one country
potentially affecting other countries and possibly in unpredictable ways. Cultures differ in very specific ways with each culture having its own way of thinking, values and beliefs and decisions made by individuals can be affected by these cultural traits (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997). There are significant cultural differences between nations and difficulties may arise in respect of interpretation and conduct associated with events, competitions, tournaments and related governing practices, rules and regulations that transcend or overflow national boundaries or cultural borders (Trompenaars and Woolliams, 2003; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2004). In respect of this study it is a question of the possible impact of cultural differences between nations and the associated difficulties that arise in respect of the training, preparation, performance and decisions of referees.

It is possible to adapt some of the concepts and ideas identified above specifically to Association Football (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009 & 2004). Giulianotti and Robertson have identified the ‘globewide nexus’ of the particular and the universal which has given rise to the ‘universalization of particularism’ and the ‘particularization of universalism’. The ‘universalization of particularism’ involves the view that the extensive diffusion of particularity, uniqueness, difference and otherness is limitless. The global nature of identities has intensified since the late nineteenth century, through national identity underpinned by international systems. As a consequence, international tournaments, such as the World Cup and European competitions such as the Champions League, provide cultural settings and arenas for the interplay and complex articulation of national-societal particularities. Giulianotti and Robertson (2009, p. 32) recognise that different national supporter groups are part of this process, however for the purposes of this research this thesis can be extended to referees, who are also exposed to national-societal particularities.

The ‘particularization of universalism’ is characterised by forms of ‘global standardisation and integration that differentiate societies along objective lines’ (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009, p. 32). The increase in intensified forms of global social interconnectedness has accelerated the ‘particularization of universalism’. Specifically related to Association Football, this is exemplified by the ‘engagement of all institutions and actors within a world pyramid system’ (Giulianotti and Robertson,
FIFA is at the top of this pyramid and the assumption is that global standardisation is achieved through the multiplicity of local football associations that have jurisdiction over national teams and are effectively charged by FIFA to implement in a standardised and uniform manner the game’s rules and procedures (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009, p. 33). A principal aim of both UEFA (2012) and FIFA (2012) in respect of referees is that officiating involves the application of standardised and uniform rules and laws in a consistent manner in the course of on-field decision making. But such aims are not always realised in match situations as cultural factors may lead to differences in respect of interpretation and practice by referees.

**Differences between Leagues**

A possible indicator of cultural differences between the different leagues under consideration is the way the game is played or refereed. One measurement of this is the number of fouls per game and the number of yellow and red cards issued. Analysis of differences between the leagues can be attempted initially through an examination of statistics related to the number of fouls per game and the number of yellow and red cards issued by referees. Statistics released by the Premier League in 2013 indicate a markedly lower number of free kicks per game in England compared to other comparable leagues in Europe (table 9). The average fouls per game in England has decreased since the 2005-2006 season from 28.6 to 22.5 per game in the 2012/2013 season, a 22% drop.

Table 9, Number of fouls per game in the major European Leagues in the 2012/2013 season (Adapted from Jurejko, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>League</th>
<th>Fouls per game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>Premier League</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Primera Division</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Ligue One</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Serie A</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Bundesliga</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further analysis of the differences between the leagues can be undertaken through a consideration of the yellow and red card statistics. For example, the Premier League has shown a decrease in the total number of yellow cards since the 1998/99 season from 1403 yellow cards (3.69 yellow cards per match) to 1222 yellow cards (3.22 yellow cards per match) in the 2010/11 season. In comparison the red card rate has remained generally static in the same time period with an average per match of 0.19 up until the 2011/12 season where there has been a slight increase to an average red card count of 0.22 per match (Magowan, 2011). Furthermore, by 20th April 2013, in the 2012/13 season, there had been 38 red cards in the Premier League from 327 matches, which equates to a red card shown every 8.6 matches. Whereas, the Primera División, had red cards shown during the 2012/13 season every 2.6 matches, with 63% of the 121 red cards by 20th April 2013 as a result of accumulating two yellow cards (Moore, 2013, para. 2).

In the above differences between the leagues have been considered in terms of the number of yellow and red cards shown and the foul count per game. However, there are also other factors such as cultural differences, differences in the style of play and the notion of a ‘Latin mentality’ which is associated with a lack of respect for the laws and spirit of the game (Howard, Management, administration and training, category 2b) in the leagues in Spain and Italy. There are suggestions from both elite and ex-elite referees and also those in managerial, administration and training roles in England that differences are inherently cultural despite each league containing players from a variety of nationalities, “The differences are ethnic, cultural, interaction between players and referees” (Adrian, category 1a). Because differences between the leagues are described by some as ‘cultural’, there are challenges in overcoming them and therefore standardising across national boundaries. Additionally, cultural differences can be allied to the style and manner in which referees approach their vocation. For example, Adrian identifies one major variable as the particular demeanour of officials depending on the country they officiate within, “...they manifest themselves in different ways culturally. You watch the Japanese referees, they are very regimented, very stiff; you watch an English referee, an Italian referee they are a little bit more laid back, but then the Italian referee suddenly becomes very demonstrative. All of that is culturally different” (Adrian, category 1a).
The perception of a different style of refereeing being associated with the country to which a referee belongs is echoed in views expressed by referees from the Spanish system. Spanish referees see themselves as stricter than English officials, “...referees in Spain are harder disciplinarians. They punish, referees don’t allow one protest...the referees in England permit the difference in behaviour in the players because in England it’s totally different” (Hugh, category 2b). Furthermore, Hugh also argues that there is not much respect for referees in Italy and that respect is more evident for referees in England than either Spain or Italy, “The respect in England in our opinion, the public, the players to the referee is better than in Spain and Italy. In Italy there is not a lot of respect about the performance of the referee because the media and the journalists and commentators are very critical on the performance of the referee. I think that in England there is more respect.”

Referees within the Spanish system believe it is uncomplicated to officiate in England compared to Spain and Italy, they also believe there are differences concerning the interpretation and application of rules in Spain as opposed to in England and in European competition, “...in England it is very normal that a player challenges the ball with a foot up, in Spain it is not possible, I think in Europe it is not possible, or in Italy or in France. So, if you referee an English team you have to know that happens, so it is not possible to give a red card, maybe a yellow card” (Geoff, category 2a). There is some comprehension that differences exist in the application of rules between leagues, with the example of the raised foot indicated here and Geoff stating that he would give a yellow card instead of a red card, evidencing a change in performance and behaviour. Furthermore, referees in Spain accept that officiating in a similar fashion across Europe is difficult to achieve, given the idiosyncrasies that exist, “I think the work in the last season was very good in order to treat and get all the referees refereeing in the same way. Of course refereeing in the same way in all the countries 100% is very difficult” (Gary, category 2a).

Referees in the Premier League in England employ something entitled ‘game management’, rather than utilising yellow and red cards as a deterrent for bad challenges or inappropriate behaviour. “Game management” is a method of refereeing or an overarching way of officiating, that involves referees managing the
game by speaking to the players and trying to use mediation before issuing yellow and red cards as a deterrent. “Game management” is seen as something prevalent and even encouraged in England. But encouragement of “game management”, as an alternative to the use of yellow and red cards, can also be seen to exacerbate differences in officiating between the different leagues, “there are different ways of refereeing in the different countries...but in England it is manage, manage, manage and in Spain it is yellow card, yellow card. I think that is a difficulty...it would be almost impossible for our referees go to Spain or Italy referee there and for them to come over here and referee” (Bernard, category 1b). The notion of ‘game management’ is something unique to the English game, and was frequently commented upon by referees and those associated with refereeing in England.

These distinctions within refereeing are linked to cultural differences between the countries, something which UEFA and FIFA are attempting to overcome by standardising refereeing across continents and countries respectively. Referees identify particular issues when they train together in attempting to apply standardisation across European and world football. For example, consistency is difficult to achieve even when dealing with the elite referees in European football according to Aaron, an elite referee from category 1a:

“We went to Slovenia last week and we looked at 20 video clips, and these were the top referees, the elite and premier referees in Europe and top 40 referees in Europe and we’re all very experienced guys, all been on the scene for a long, long time, all been refereeing at the top level in their own leagues and internationally as well. You have referees from the 5 big nations but also from all the other footballing nations and there were some clips where we were split 50/50 on incidents on the video. So that is how inexact a science it can be in terms of trying to gain consistency; it is not all black and white.”

Aaron infers that cultural differences, although relevant to consider when looking at referees’ performances in domestic competition compared to those in European competition, are not the only factors that should be considered. Consistency of
decision-making is also a factor worthy of greater focus. The fact that the best elite referees in Europe are split on procedural matters related to consistency on specific decisions suggests that achieving a consistency of decision-making is going to prove difficult.

The belief is that any moves towards standardisation must start at home; the domestic approach to refereeing must be uniform before there can be further progress towards standardisation across European and international football. Thus, Bill, a referee coach from the managerial, administration and training category 1b, believes that standardisation in Europe should be an aim, but that it is not something particularly achievable with the current systems and referee performances in place in England particularly:

“...consistency starts with an individual referee refereeing the same way in the first minute of the game as he does in the 90th minute of a game and once he achieves that he needs to take his consistency from his game one week to his game the next week and beyond that. We then need to try and make him consistent with his colleagues at the level that he is officiating at and then we take it wider and say, ‘There is a consistency between all our Football League referees and our Premier League referees’. And it’s not until we have achieved all of that that I think we would be in a position to try and extend that beyond our boundaries.”

Bill, in the quote above, believes that work is required in order to standardise further in England. Until this happens any standardisation in the consistency of decision-making across national boundaries is likely to be impossible to achieve. Furthermore, referees from England argue that. “...our referees that referee abroad referee differently than they do in this country...I think the expectations of the footballing world in this country is that referees let a bit go and we can have some physical contact, which if it happens abroad, it would be an automatic freekick, whereas we accept it a bit more. That can become a bit of a difficult balancing act when you referee abroad that’s for sure” (Adam, category 1a)\(^1\). As a consequence of different
interpretations and expectations in other countries, when offences are committed by players, decisions are given that suggest English referees are operating differently in European and international competition. Adam believes that this is due to differences which are a distinctive feature of English football, such as the acceptance of greater levels of physical contact compared to other countries. Referees in Spain and Italy also believe that they officiate differently in domestic competition compared to European and international competition.

‘It’s Easier to Referee in Europe’: Domestic and European Differences

The challenges being faced in respect of the standardisation of refereeing both domestically and in European/international football have created different expectations of the performance of elite referees. There has been admission from a number of referees during the interview process that officiating in European and international football is actually easier than refereeing in their own domestic leagues. The reasons for these views vary. However; aside from the support referees indicate that they receive from UEFA and FIFA, there are other factors that lead them to express a preference for officiating in European and international matches.

Those involved with elite refereeing in England identify aspects such as the level of respect they receive from fans, players and managers as a central reason for their preference for officiating outside England, “...outside of England both on and off the pitch a referee is treated with a much higher regard than in England” (Alan, category 1a). This preference for European officiating also extends to the effort that referees believe they expend during a match. Fitness levels are believed to be greater in the Premier League, compared to European and international football where there is a reduction in the pace of the game, “Most European games I put the same amount of mental effort in, I didn’t need to put quite as much physical effort in because it wasn’t as fast, and came off the pitch feeling actually I could do another 90 min. With a Premier League game I used to be absolutely completely drained every single time” (Barry, category 1b).
Additional comments concern a reduction in pressure that some referees have felt whilst officiating abroad; this reduction in pressure also contributes to the impression that it is easier than refereeing in the Premier League because referees find it, “...slightly easier...to referee abroad, there was less pressure on me...it is different, it is how you interpret those laws” (Bill, category 1b). This difference in the interpretation of the laws when officiating in European competition means that referees are operating differently in two competitions and therefore there is a lack of uniformity in their performances. It is generally accepted that there are contrasting cultures evident in the different countries around Europe, and that referees are altering their performances when officiating in European and international football. English referees are not alone in their estimation that it is easier to officiate outside their domestic league.

Spanish referees suggest that the players are the main reason for the preference expressed for officiating in European and international football. Gary and Geoff, elite referees from category 2a in Spain, both elaborate on the issues they have with players, “the behaviour of the players is worse in Spain than in Europe, in Spain they [the players] don’t have the same behaviour as in Europe” (Geoff, category 2a). Whilst Geoff maintains that the primary reason for his preference for officiating in European and international football is the improved behaviour of the players, Gary identifies, as is the case in England, that it is the reduced media attention in Europe that is more of a benefit. Gary discusses the build up to a match and the interviews with players conducted in the media, “I think it is easier refereeing UEFA and FIFA competition. The problem in your [own] country is everyone knows you, and perhaps a player in an important match can speak and speak and speak about the referee. I find it better refereeing in UEFA.”

Interview respondents from the Italian system believe that any problems they face domestically are partly attributable to a league currently lacking in quality. Referees believe that Serie A is not as competitive as the Premier League or the Primera División and that there are more fouls, more technical fouls and that the behaviour of the players has deteriorated². Some referees believe this deterioration is affecting
their control of matches. As the quality of the league diminishes, so the referees believe their problems grow:

“I think that in Serie A at this moment the quality of football is very down in my opinion. So, when the quality is not very high the problems for us are more. There are a lot of fouls, more falls, a lot of yellow cards a lot of red cards…I think that in this moment we have a problem because we don't have a very important league. In Italy I think that we have a problem with atmosphere because stadiums are very old and have a running track and we don't have a lot of spectators at the matches…”

(Jack, category 3a)

Because of some of the problems identified above, officiating in European competition is regarded as preferential to refereeing in Serie A. John, an elite referee in Italy from category 3a, believes supporters are a problem in Italy, and that his experiences when refereeing in England exemplify how supporters should behave, “the supporters here in Italy are crazy, not like in England. I have been in England many times and the supporters in England are fantastic they support the team all the time...the mentality of the Italians is different from the mentality of the English.” Italian referees acknowledged that they feel more respected in European competition, not solely when officiating in England, “When you go in Europe you receive much more respect from players and teams” (John, category 3a). This feeling of a sense of worth in Europe compared to domestically was not something unique to Italy.

The preference to officiate in European competition is replicated in Spain and England. Referees in England state that they find it ‘easier’ to officiate in European and international competition because referees are treated with more respect and there is less pressure on them, whilst referees from Spain and Italy identify the behaviour of the players and the supporters as reasons why they prefer to referee outside their home country. There are certainly challenges that Italian referees face domestically, and there is agreement with many of the points made in Spain, in particular, and in England concerning the media and player behaviour. Henry from category 2b, the managerial, administration and training category, believes that the
Spanish league is the most difficult to referee, followed by Italy with the English league identified as ‘different’ due to the perception that the players and coaches behave differently, “as far as I’m concerned, the Spanish league is the most difficult to referee, second is Italy and the English league is different. The behaviour of players and coaches is different.”

The behaviour of players is something which is considered further by referees, in Spain and Italy, and also England. Referees believe that they are dealing with a serious issue concerning simulation or ‘diving’ and players cheating to gain advantage during a match. During the interview process referees and those associated with refereeing discussed these issues predominantly in relation to their domestic leagues rather than European or international competition, where simulation and cheating is not considered to be as much of a problem.

Players, ‘Cheating’ – The Struggle with Simulation: An International Issue?

Referees in Spain believe that the behaviour of the players is a particular issue that can negatively affect their refereeing performance. Referees state that “there is more simulation in the Spanish league than in European competition” (George, category 2a). There is also a view that this is not the case in English competition by virtue of an innate respect for the laws of the game, although there is an understanding that simulation is increasing (Kelso, 2013; Rich & Aarons, 2013; Ingle, 2012). Howard involved with the management, administration and training of elite referees in Spain (category 2b), believes that this is predominantly a result of the foreign influence on the game in England, and in particular the imported Spanish or Latin players who do not follow the rules;

“In England until now you have no problem with the simulation because English players respect the law. But, when you began to have players going to play in England with another culture, you have a new problem. In England now you have a big problem with players falling.....now in England, Chelsea the coach is foreign, Arsenal the coach is foreign, this is a big problem. We have to think about these cultures….the Spanish
players or Latin players they don’t have the respect for the law or the spirit of the play.”

This argument has also been made in England, with the identification of foreign players and managers and the cultures that these individuals bring with them as one of the reasons behind an increase in simulation (Smith & Ornstein, 2012; Hunter, 2013).

As with the Spanish responses, simulation has been a practice recognised as particularly problematic for Italian referees when officiating in Serie A. Italian referees acknowledged simulation was affecting their image in Italy, “it is different to England because the fans boo when there is simulation. In Italy you are clever when you get a penalty for simulation, it’s incredible” (Josh, category 3a). Referees are blamed in Italy if they get the decision involving an incident of simulation wrong, and there is awareness amongst Italian referees that it is their fault, “not the players that gain an advantage by cheating” (John, category 3a).

Italian referees believe it would be extremely difficult for English referees to officiate in Serie A for a period of time. This is because English referees are not used to the behaviour of the players and the particular climate of football found in Italy, “I think for an English referee it is the most difficult to referee in Italy because of the contact [Joel is referring to player physical contact] in Italy, there is much more than in England and in the Championship. In UEFA the Italian teams are very difficult when they get a referee from Northern Europe with the mentality to play. One simple touch in Italy is a fall” (Joel, category 3a). The reason for this has been linked to the fair play ethos that Italian and Spanish referees believe is more evident in English football, “…the football in England is more physical, but there is more respect between players. Like I think I saw a rugby mentality” (James, category 3a).

There is a supposition that simulation is more prevalent in Spain and Italy, and referees argue that this is due to a Latin mentality. Whatever the reasoning behind these assertions, referees view the action of the players as something which can affect their own performance. The impact of the erosion of cultural practices and fair
play as well as the increased speed of the game means that referees are required to make a split-second decision after an incident occurs, and the arguments made by referees suggest that players are not helping them in this decision-making process. It is when a referee is perceived to have made a significant error in their decision-making that there is an increase in attention from the media.

Refereeing and the Impact of the Media

The Increased Scrutiny of Referees’ Decision Making

Because refereeing decisions are crucial to match outcome and a single refereeing mistake can affect the outcomes of a game dramatically (Halsey, 2007, pp. 68-69) referees’ decision making has become subject to increasing scrutiny. A growing focus on referee decision-making is something that is cited as increasing within the English game and therefore increasing pressure on referees as a consequence. There is an argument to suggest that given the number of matches shown, as well as the time and technology devoted to the analysis of matches, it is unsurprising that refereeing mistakes are being more and more exposed to review and criticism (Colwell, 2000, p. 209). Televised coverage and increased financial investment, coupled with technological improvements have increased the pressure on referees, with their decisions often scrutinised at great length.

Criticism of referees can often be found in television, radio, and print media. The effect of the media was a significant theme regularly raised by referees throughout the data collection process. The increase in media pressure has been closely aligned with the growing prominence of the financial aspect, which is now an integral part of the game. As money has flowed into the accounts of national leagues and football clubs, there has been a consistently growing interest in the game of Association Football. The Premier League in England, for example, is now broadcast by 80 different networks, watched in 212 countries by 4.7 billion people in 643 million homes (“What we do”, paras. 2-3). The financial status of the Premier League has been boosted by the rapid increase in televised football that has been brokered.
ostensibly by the Premier League itself. The latest domestic Premier League broadcasting deal with BSkyB (2010–2013) is worth £1.782bn, compared with £1.7bn over the period 2007–2010 (Hamil & Walters (2010, p. 358)\(^6\), and BT has recently acquired the rights for 38 matches for £738 million (Scott-Elliot, 2013)\(^7\).

Given the finances that are now an essential part of the association code of football, an increased level of attention and analysis from the media is not unexpected. This has, in turn, elevated some of the top elite referees to a much higher status than they have previously been afforded, “The guys now are under such scrutiny. The top guys, the Clattenburgs, the Webbs, they are as big characters in our game as our major players and the people’s knowledge about them is quite frightening in its own way as is just how big their profiles now are” (Bill, category 1b). Referees and referee appointments to matches are now under more rigid media examination (Crafton, 2013; Fifield, 2013a; Sharma, 2012), this is a development which referees in England acknowledge they have to accept because “…the appointments of the Premier League games now are under greater scrutiny from the press etc than we have seen before” (Bill, category 1b)\(^8\).

Refereeing controversies are an increasingly prominent constituent of television sports channels and the sports pages of tabloid and broadsheet newspapers. This elevation in profile has amplified the pressure on elite referees to an unprecedented level. This situation is not only a consideration for those involved with elite referees in the Premier League in England; referees in Italy have also had to deal with concerted media pressure and often general hostility from football fans and the media.

**Italian Referees and the Media Relationship**

The media relationship with referees in Italy is unique, especially when compared to the relationship found in either England or Spain\(^8\). There is undoubtedly a significant and concerted media focus on referees’ decisions, past performances and errors. This media interest has been the case for a number of years, and much of the effect on referees can be attributable to historical occurrences in Italy such as the ‘Calciopoli’ match fixing scandal\(^10\).
Previous match fixing scandals in Italy have influenced the views held by supporters, and these views can be influenced and guided by the media representation of referees and the associated constant analysis and discussion of referees’ decisions generated on television. Both public and private Italian TV channels offer a variety of football-focused shows. The most important and successful among these shows are *Il Processo del Lunedì* (‘Monday Trial’), and *Controcampo* (‘Counter-pitch’). The shows often degenerate into a verbal skirmish involving the guests as video footage related to alleged mistakes of referees are repeatedly shown and discussed.

The fact that referee decisions are scrutinised at such length has led to the role of the *moviola* (replay) being highlighted as a major reason for discontent and destabilisation of referees in Italy (Scalia, 2009, p. 51). Referees are well aware of these shows in Italy and Joe, an elite referee in category 3a, identifies newspapers and television, as the main areas of concern for referees, “*Media, media, media. There are 3 newspapers that speak about only football. 3 newspapers, only in Italy – the TV is a very, very big problem because many ex-referees speak every week, every Sunday.*” Referees within the Italian system are conscious that they “*don’t get help from the media...it is not like other jobs in Italy, with referees the media have dissent with our matches. But it is normal*” (Justin, category 3a). Referees refer to the attitude of the media towards them as a problematic matter, but it is also something that they have grown accustomed to dealing with. Despite the pressure and scrutiny exerted by the media in Italy, there are also others, such as club presidents, who apply pressure on match officials through the media in Italy.

John, an elite referee in category 3a, believes the owners of football clubs in Italy appropriate the media for their own gains and, as a consequence, increase the pressure on match officials, “*The pressure of the media, the pressure of the team, the president also of the team, who speaks a lot and that is no good for us because they make a lot of pressure for a match and it is much more difficult*” (John, category 3a). Certainly the pressure generated by the media, and utilised by the presidents of the teams amongst others, has developed a strong culture of questioning referee decisions that potentially affects referees in Serie A. There are also comparable issues that affect referees in Spain, albeit not to the same degree.
Spanish Referees and the Media Relationship

Spanish football is afforded almost three quarters (70.3%) of the total content of all sports reported in newspapers, on the radio and television (Gonzalez-Ramallal, 2008, p. 221). Additionally, the number of televised games has significantly increased in Europe and in Spanish football in particular (Garcia & Rodriguez, 2006, p. 147). Referee’s views in Spain demonstrate that media attention is one of the most difficult matters for referees to deal with, “it is really difficult sometimes because it is more and more difficult to control the media than the match” (Gary, category 2a).

Referees are aware of newspapers and other media and in particular how their performances are reported\(^\text{12}\). Despite this awareness, George, an elite referee in Spain from category 2a, believes it is best for referees not to read newspapers, “...don't read anything in a newspaper, but the people around you will talk to you about incidents...you go to the match, hear important information about the match”. George believes the primary issue with the media attention is that “it is possible that it affects you when you referee.” Being able to disassociate themselves from the media is something that referees attempt to achieve, although this is difficult due to the pressure created around certain high profile matches, for example games such as ‘El Classico’ between Barcelona and Real Madrid.

Important matches in any country draw an inordinate amount of media attention. The view in Spain is that referees are used to this pressure being applied; it is something they have come through the system being aware of and so, when they officiate a big game, they realise there will be pressure, but they view this pressure as a normal facet of their careers;

“....the Spanish appointments committee are appointing the referee for Barcelona versus Real Madrid and tomorrow morning all newspapers will write about the referee. For example, one referee takes three games of Real Madrid so two years or three years ago, they speak about that performance in that game. The pressure is normal, in Spain it is a very important league and it is normal.”

(Hugh, category 2b)
There is a recognition and acceptance of the pressure that referees experience as a consequence of media interest and involvement. This pressure from the media has engendered different outcomes in England, Spain and Italy. The level of media involvement and comment has been explained as more of an issue in Spain and Italy as a result of the cultural differences evident in each country. For example, referees have identified differences in Italy as being related to recent scandals involving bribery, and as a consequence they believe a distrust of referees has developed. Referees allude to the fact that the English media is more reserved than the media outlets in Spain and, in particular, those in Italian society. This is not to say that referees do not make reference to problematic issues regarding the relationship with the media in England\textsuperscript{13}, but that this relationship and the problems associated have been identified as more of a concern in Spain and Italy.

**Referees' Errors and Dealing with Errors**

With referees admitting that pressure has increased in domestic competition, how they deal with this pressure, particularly when they are perceived to have made an error, is especially important. The English system makes provision for referees to deal with errors that they may make. The level of support that referees are afforded becomes even more crucial when errors of judgement are made\textsuperscript{14}. Generally referees in England do feel supported and do not necessarily want unequivocal support even if they are wrong:

"I would say that I feel supported. I mean there have been occasions in the past where I felt a right to reply would have been nice, it is not always the right thing to do, to comment on situations, but on selected occasions I think there is a benefit to commenting or for people to come out and support us...I don't want people to protect the referee every time something happens, I don't want them to say we're right when we're not, and I'm big enough to be able to accept criticism when it comes our way."

(Aaron, category 1a)
That fact that referees are not permitted to speak to the media in England, Spain or Italy after a match, does mean that they are not able to respond personally to criticism. This is not the case in every country. For example in Norwegian football referees are allowed to speak to the media after they finish a match to explain certain decisions and matters of contention arising from the game.

In England there is an acceptance from referees that mistakes will occur, they are seen as part of the game, and it is how these mistakes are dealt with that is viewed as important. Referees in England are philosophical about mistakes they might make, “...it's a blame culture....we are human beings and there's going to be an element of mistakes and I think we've got to accept that, there is only so much we can see as referees really” (Adam, category 1a). According to those involved with refereeing in England the pressure to which referees are subjected should be understood to a greater degree by others within the game. Authorities want to avoid referees making errors in what they term ‘key decisions’. An acceptance that errors will occur is tolerated, as long as they do not involve ‘key decisions’, decisions that dramatically affect the game, such as an incorrectly awarded goal, penalty or offside that leads to a goal, “…there are key errors that referees shouldn't make.... there is an expectation that you have to get the key decisions right...particularly the decisions that change games...you've then got to move onto the next game, you mustn't dwell too much”(Boris, category 1b). This advice for referees concerning moving onto the next game, and not dwelling on mistakes that they might have made in a particular match is precisely where there is a need for psychological support.

Referees acknowledge that they need more support. As has been articulated in the English responses, referees recognise that it is almost impossible for mistakes to be eradicated from refereeing, “we are human, we make mistakes...that is the professional and the most important thing about referees, that the referee must concentrate on each action and don't think about previous performance or matches just keep concentrating” (Gordon, category, 2a). It could be argued that in order to achieve this end, referees require the psychological training and support necessary to move on effectively from any errors that are made. Referees in Spain, believe that greater importance should be attached to the education of people involved in football
to facilitate understanding that referees will make errors, but that these errors are part of the game, “People make mistakes…when a forward player goes to deliver the ball, it is possible he found the goalkeeper or sends the ball out, it is a mistake. It is important to prepare people, and everybody to know that there will be mistakes from the referee, but it is a mistake” (George, category 2a). Referees believe that if football commentators, pundits and supporters understand why they give decisions and therefore why they might make a certain error, there will be more acceptance that sometimes mistakes will occur.

Italian responses regarding error are similar to those elicited from Spanish referees. Josh an elite referee in Italy from category 3a, refers to the prospect of a reduction in error as a change that would decrease the pressure on referees, “the objective is always the same, to make less mistakes as possible. The trainer must be correct because when I take a decision I must be fresh and to be fresh I must train well.” The level and quality of training is identified by Josh as being important, particularly the physical training to ensure referees are in the optimum condition to make decisions. Josh believes that if this part of his training is organised correctly, the number of mistakes will be minimised. However, if a mistake occurs Italian referees believe that “…it is important to erase the mistake because it is normal to erase the mistake mentally, it is very important” (Justin, category 3a). Referees believe that it is important how they deal with the mistakes that are made and that they focus upon reducing the number of errors as much as possible.

In common with Spanish and English referees, Italian referees are aware that mistakes happen in matches and are part of the game, “the referees must live together with their mistake, because it is impossible that you don’t make mistakes. My work must be each day towards not making a mistake; better is to be perfect but this is not possible” (Josh, category 3a). There is recognition that striving towards perfection in training and in match situations should be part of a referee’s objectives, but also that this is problematic if not impossible to achieve.

Dealing with errors in the light of the insatiable interest of the media in such matters and the pressure that this interest exerts is becoming an increasingly important
feature of a referee’s key set of skills. With that in mind, the support referees receive from their national associations is important, and in particular, psychological support, especially when dealing with a significant error or in the build-up to a match. Another matter also linked to referee improvement is that of assessment. The quality of assessment and the way that this is introduced into referee training is, arguably, vital to the improvement of officials. If administered correctly valid assessment can lead to the identification of training points and is a part of training and performance that has become an integral part of refereeing in elite level Association Football.

Referee Assessment

Referees’ Assessment in England
The development of assessment in England can be charted from the turn of the twentieth century. The case study of Preston North End referee reports in Appendix A, gives an insight into the changing nature of referee assessment and the potential use of these assessments as a training tool for referees. Historically many of these assessments were not particularly useful as training prompts. The current system in the Premier League utilises an assessor from the PGMOL and there is also an additional assessor from the Premier League, entitled the Match Delegate. The Match Delegate’s report is sent back to the clubs and the only element of the report of which the clubs are not made aware is the mark given to the official by the Match Delegate.

Assessors from the PGMOL concentrate on technical elements of the referee’s performance, whereas Premier League Delegates direct attention to aspects that, although related to a referee’s overall performance, are wider ranging than those considered by the assessor from the PGMOL, although both assessments are worth 50% of the referees final mark. This assessment concentrates on three areas in particular, “the referee assessor has got a more technical view. We look at three main areas which is the major decisions that the referee is making...consistency of decision-making...and how he manages players which is a key thing at this level”
(Frank, category 1f). The Premier League delegates in effect focus on assessment surrounding the key or major decisions, how often the referee gets these decisions consistently correct, and how they manage the players in the Premier League, which Frank believes is a key aspect of a referees’ role on the pitch. This idea of the ‘management’ of players is something which has been considered in this thesis and is a significant part of the match day performance of referees in England.

The assessment process in the Premier League, with the involvement of two assessors in the stands, is different to that found in both Spain and Italy. Some referees and those involved with refereeing in England believe that the assessment process needs to be refined. Criticisms of the current system are related primarily to the structure of the assessment on match day, and the roles of the two assessors, “frankly, the system on the Premier League is pretty farcical, simply because there is no clarity in how we debrief after the game; sometimes the delegate goes in followed by the assessor, sometimes it’s the other way round, sometimes you go in together; it is a pretty painful process” (Brett, category 1b). There is a lack of clarity surrounding how the two assessors debrief the referee after the match, and this means that referees will not always receive the feedback that they require in order to improve.

The significance of the assessment process has been accentuated with the addition of Referee Coaches in England at all levels of the referee continuum. Adam, an elite referee from category 1a, believes that Referee Coaches attending matches is a useful development because it can generate productive feedback on performance, “when the coach comes to your game that's obviously a little different because you'll still get your assessment but you will also get your coach giving you things that perhaps the assessor doesn't really look for...he will tell you it as it is, rather than the assessor having to write on a report and be a bit more political with it”. Adam also states that politics can be a factor in assessor reports, specifically that assessors do not want to mark referees too harshly due to the impact this may have on referees’ careers.

Criticism of the current system suggests that referees seem to ‘look after their own’. Assessors are steeped in the culture of refereeing and have a natural affinity with the referee, “The assessors are supportive of the referee come what may. They are
Clearly if assessors are not criticising errors or not reporting them because of their support for referees, the assessment system is not being as effective or accurately representative of the performances of the referees as it might, indeed should, be.

Positive elements of the assessor system in England are believed to be the potential development tools that an effective assessment can give a referee. Barry, involved in referee management, administration and training in England (category 1b), outlines areas of development for referees and also identifies issues around the appointment and value of some referee assessors, “I felt very well supported by the assessors. One or two of them gave me some very, very useful points, which helped me progress...but if you found that the assessor had not refereed at that level, there were a number of them who clearly were not understanding what was happening on the other side of that white line. Consequently their assessments won’t necessarily have the same value as somebody who had refereed at that level or higher” (Barry, category 1b).

Barry believes that if assessors have not officiated at the same level as the elite referees they will not have the requisite experience to assess these referees, and therefore referees will not attach as much importance to their assessment reports, “...there’s quite a lot of assessors on the national list panel who didn’t referee on the national list” (Brett, category 1b). This will be a particular problem if referees end up identifying reports by their assessors as less significant. Bill, involved with referee management, administration and training in category 1b, believes that attention needs to be given to assessor reports to ensure that referees can obtain more useful information from them, “there is work to do in improving the debriefs of some of the assessors...there is work still to be done on some of the match officials being more receptive of some of the advice that is being offered to them.”

An argument can be constructed to suggest that the qualitative comments in assessment reports are more constructive for referees than the mark they receive for their performance. Adrian (category 1a) believes that, “In England we are completely statistically obsessed” because “every game is marked.” These marks that referees
receive are employed to create an order of merit for referees, to establish accountability and a measurement of referee performance over a season. This raises potential development issues if referees are prioritising the mark over other information concerning their performance, something which Bill believes routinely occurs:

“I think the trouble with assessment reports is that they contain a mark and in my experience when you open the e mail and the attachment the first thing you look at is the box with the mark in, rather than the narrative which is there to assist you. If it’s a good mark you probably go on and read the narrative in a constructive way, if it’s not such a good mark I’m not sure that the reaction actually is other than one of perhaps being slightly defensive.”

(Bill, category 1b)

Bill also believes that teaching and development points arising from assessments are essential in order for referees to progress in England, especially given how the support system for elite referees is structured with the use of Referee Coaches to assist referees in specific areas of development. Bill explains how assessment reports are evaluated and implemented by referee coaches in England:

“Part of the coaching role is to identify trends, and if I’ve got one of my referees and I’ve got his last 10 assessment reports in front of me and one says he needs to improve his sprinting, another 5 say “one of the aspects of your performance that I was pleased with was your ability to move around the field of play quickly”, and the other 4 don’t mention it, then we’re not going to be looking at sprinting. But, if 5 of the last 10 are telling me that there are issues with positional play in the centre of the park or whatever, then we will be looking to do some work on that.”

There is an acceptance that assessment reports are useful for referees in their development process. Referees discuss the need for a trend to become evident
before specific training points and interventions are introduced. There is also acceptance that referees must be accountable for their decision making and performance. However, there is also a level of subjectivity within refereeing and consequently, the assessment of referees:

“...they are penalised if the error is “clear and obvious”....we had a big discussion at a conference about, should you use, Premier League games, the 6 camera angles, that the replays give you, as an assessor, and the slow motion replays, to prove that the referee was wrong and we were told that “we want you as assessors to get to the truth of the matter”. But, there is still a very fine distinction between clear and obvious. We were shown some clips without going into detail, there were about 18 of us, Premier League assessors sat in a room...one of the clips involved a tackle in the penalty area where a penalty was given and we were asked to say on the basis of video evidence, “do you think the decision was right or wrong?” and we were split 50/50.”

(Brett, category 1b)

Brett’s comments revolve around the definition of the phrase ‘clear and obvious’, and suggests that how referees are penalised is subjective, and connected to an assessor’s particular perspective. The importance attached to the assessment reports means that a lack of consensus between referee assessors can potentially have serious implications on the uniformity of assessment reports, and the effectiveness of information that referees are receiving from these reports in the Premier League.

Spanish and Italian Assessment Reports

There are evident differences concerning referee assessment in England compared to processes operational in Spain and Italy. One variation for Spanish referees is that they do not receive the mark awarded by the observer for the match. Referees only receive the comments on their performance, although the comments may give referees an indication of the mark they have been awarded, “the referees know the report of the Observer – every Wednesday I send them the report by e-mail without
the mark (Hugh, category 2b). This is a similar approach to that employed in Italy; Italian referees also see the observers' report, not the mark they have been awarded for their performance, “...the precise mark we don't know...nothing after the match, I speak with the Observer and then it finishes. I know if the match is good...there is only one situation when they tell the referees, when we finish the year they take the award for the referees. Who takes the award will be the first referee” (Josh, category 3a).

Despite the mark not being disclosed in either Spain or Italy, referees understand the importance of the assessments. However, in Spain referees raised questions about the quality of the Referee Observers and the feedback they are given by these observers, “50% of the Referee Observers try to help...they give you some information and you can say okay maybe it is important” (Geoff, category 2a). The majority of observers in both Spain and Italy are ex-elite referees, as they are in England, and this is something that lends credibility to the assessments for referees in Italy, “it is an important point of view of the Observer...the Observer is an ex-referee so he can view me with the eyes of the referee, so it’s very important” (Justin, category 3a).

This view is also replicated in Spain. Referees understand the importance of the assessment and that these assessments are delivered by ex-referees, although Gordon, an elite referee in Spain from category 2a, states that he does not always agree with these assessments and the view of the observer, “...it is a former referee so you must respect because it is his opinion. Maybe I don't share his opinion but it is another opinion and is an opinion of maybe an ex-international referee so it is important.” Value is placed upon the assessments delivered by the referee observers in Italy as well as in Spain. In Italy, the referees only know if there is an issue with their performance when they receive communication from the Referees’ Commission, although referees may have an expectation that they will receive some correspondence if they perceive their performance to be below standard, “I know when I receive an e-mail from my commission then it is a problem. Because I only receive the mail if I have a big mistake or a bad match, in other cases I receive nothing” (Jack, category 3a).
There are no specific technical Referee Coaches in Spain or Italy; nevertheless, referees still believe that if a number of assessment reports signify similar aspects of a referees’ performance that require training, that is something that should be worked on. Gary, an elite referee in Spain from category 2a outlines how he might use the feedback from assessments to improve performance, “...after one match if one referee observer gives you five points to improve you might not agree with all of them but imagine if one day one referee observer says your position at the corner kicks are not correct, you can say I don’t agree, but the next day two or three or four assessors say the same thing probably they are right.” This method of dealing with reports from assessors and observers is similar to England, although how these points for improvement are practically implemented in Spain and Italy is something considered further in Chapter 10.

Directly related to referee performance is the promotion and demotion of referees in both Spain and Italy to and from either the Primera Division or Serie A. This is comparable in both countries, which also have a mandatory promotion and demotion system from their top divisions (something which does not automatically occur in England). Hugh, involved in referee management, administration and training from category 2b, details the operational system in Spain, “at the end of every season. In the first division two referees go down…and two referees in the second division go up, they are promoted.” This demotion occurs every season, as does the promotion of two officials from the second tier in place of the demoted officials. The Italian system also sees the mandatory promotion and demotion of referees at the culmination of the season, although the Italian system completely removes referees from active service in the professional game if they are demoted from Serie A, “the risk is that by splitting we can lose a very young referee this way. Because when he goes away from here he goes home, because there is no relegation.... Serie A referees are very good but you have the group and maybe what comes up is not at the same level as those that have gone away, so you have a problem” (Kevin, category 3b).

The Italian Referees Commission has introduced a system that involves referees only refereeing in Serie A or Serie B during a season. There is no movement between the two divisions during the course of a season once referees have been
allocated to either of the divisions prior to the start of the season. The Referees Commission have determined that once the lists are finalised for the season they must remain the same. There are reservations about the system due to the potential impact it may have on retaining and promoting young referees, alongside the fact there is no guarantee that promoted referees are superior to referees demoted after concluding the season at the bottom of the merit table. There is also a related concern identified in Italy regarding referee performance. If a referee delivers a deficient performance, or suffers an unsatisfactory run of form, there is no provision for that referee to officiate in Serie B to regain form and confidence.

Promotion and relegation of referees is something that is utilised in both Spain and Italy, whereas the system in England employs elite referees predominantly in the Premier League, but also in the Championship if necessary for injury rehabilitation or due to a lack of form. Whatever the structures that these referees work to domestically, there are clearly problems related to the quality of the debrief of some of the assessors, as well as the past competition level at which the assessor/observer used to officiate. If this previous level of performance is deemed to be below what a current elite referee would expect, the assessment reports are not treated in the same way as those from ex-elite, international referees.

This chapter has considered the impact of culture and values on the referees. In particular the cultural differences between leagues have been discussed in relation to the relationship that exists with the players and the media in the domestic leagues in England, Spain and Italy. Furthermore, differences were explored in relation to referees dealing with and moving on from errors that they might make and also in relation to the assessment of referees within the domestic leagues.

---

1 A primary example given during the interview process concerning these differences in officiating domestically, as opposed to European football, was the acceptance of the raised foot challenge in England. Aaron (Category 1a) explains how this can be construed as an issue when English referees officiate in European and international football;

“I remember doing a game early on in my international career where a player won the ball with a slightly raised foot and in England; generally speaking, there is not an issue with that. If you win the ball with your foot raised then that’s fine as long as you don’t make contact with an opponent. However, on the continent and other parts of the world it is seen as not a fair way to win the ball, if you show the bottom
of your foot and raise your foot. I allowed play to continue in such a circumstance and everybody stopped and I was clearly out of line with everybody else.”

2 The decline of Serie A as a league in the standing of European football has been covered academically (Boeri & Severgnini, 2012). Primary reasons for this decline are identified as the revenues of teams in Serie A being too low and too closely linked to TV rights, and therefore vulnerable to the changing conditions of the mass media in Italy. Also identified are the growth in player salaries to unsustainable levels and the lack of credibility of the competition due to the scandals that have engulfed the game in Italy (Boeri & Severgnini, 2012). The decline of the league has also been documented in the media, as the deterioration has been charted through performances in European competition (McMahon, 2012; McCarra, 2010).

3 There is an argument to suggest that critical refereeing decisions can be pivotal to a team’s prospects of winning championships, qualifying for lucrative European competition or avoiding relegation. Therefore, as revenue streams and sales of broadcast rights have grown in football, criticism of referee behaviour has intensified (Buraimo et al, 2007, p. 2).

4 As early as 1978 there were calls for referees to be given technology available at the time as electronic aids to assist their performance and decision making (Rous, 1978, p. 219).

5 Sharon Colwell’s paper entitled “‘Public enemy no. 1!’ Television commentators and our perception of referees” (2001), examines a number of incidents from televised matches during the 2000-01 season, and considers the effect this coverage has had on the popular perception of referees. Colwell discusses the roles and influence commentators can have upon how people discern referees, utilising the case of Martin Tyler and Andy Gray and their match commentary and remarks concerning referees. Colwell surmises that Gray claimed he was making a split-second judgement during his commentary or analysis, similar to the referee, and therefore could criticise the match official for making a ‘wrong’ decision on an incident. Colwell affirms that Gray claimed he called the action ‘as it happens’, ‘first time’, reacting to incidents ‘in the same way as the referee’ (2001, para 5). However, the viewer and the pundits may then see the incident replayed, and become absolutely certain that the referee has made a ‘wrong’ decision. Colwell questions the accuracy of Gray’s decision making in ‘real time’ during the match, when referring to refereeing decisions. Furthermore, Colwell questions his claim to be ‘reacting in the same way as the referee’, due to his use of slow motion replays and the qualification of his views on the incidents highlighted in the research.

6 In 1997 the Premier League television rights were sold for over £647m for four years and in 2002 for £1.6 billion for four years (Nauright & Ramfjord, 2010, p. 431) . Furthermore, in the three years from 2010/11 the Premier League broadcast rights values had increased to around £3.6 billion from £2.8 billion. This increase can be primarily attributed to overseas rights values which are shared equally amongst the 20 clubs in the division, they forecast that the benefit will be evenly distributed with each club receiving around £6m in additional revenue each year (Deloitte, 2011a, p. 9).

8 There has been an increase in journalistic speculation and criticism of the performances of referees (Baldwin, 2008, p. 3) with the role of the referee and their decisions during a match scrutinised by media (Mason & Lovell, 2000, p. 89).

9 The referee in Italy is often referred to by the media as a bastard (a cornuto). Other descriptions of referees by the media in Italy often assert that referees are venduti, which, when translated, means they are sold, corrupt or a crook (Foot, 2006, p. 47).

10 For example, the match fixing scandal Calciopoli, (Distaso, Leonida, Maimone, Patti & Navarra, 2008, p. 2) among others, has, arguably, created a general distrust between supporters and those involved with football, such as team owners, players and also referees, as all were implicated. Referees also recognise this as an issue “in Italy five years ago there were situations that involved many players, referees....... there were many players that have a particular situation or mental situation, so you have to be aware but not afraid” (John, category 3a).
The concept of corruption is not a new phenomenon in Serie A and scandals have been evident over a protracted period of time (Hamil, Morrow, Idle, Rossi and Faccendini, 2010, p. 381). In 1927 the Italian football Federation revoked the championship won by Torino Calcio after its managers bribed a Juventus soccer player before the Turin derby. In 1980 A.C. Milan and Lazio were relegated to the second division after fixing a match and some of their players were found guilty of illegal gambling on soccer games (Boeri & Severgnini, 2008, p. 4).

11 The television shows involve a public of ordinary supporters and ultras that either cheer or boo at comments regarding football-related topics made by guests on the stage. Guests are chosen from current and ex-footballers, current and ex-football managers, ex-referees, journalists, intellectuals, showgirls and politicians most typically. In order to become popular or maintain popularity, politicians are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of the issues or to insult guests who stand for teams other than their own (Scalia, 2009, p. 51)

12 Academic studies have identified the media as a factor that can influence sporting performance. For example, Greenleaf, Gould and Dieffenbach (2001, pp. 173-174) considered Olympic performance with US Olympians that competed in Atlanta and Negano. There were 15 factors identified by the athletes that affected performance, and of the 15 athletes interviewed 8 athletes identified the media as a particular issue. Furthermore, Gould and Maynard (2009, p. 1403) considered the media as a particular issue, among a range of other factors, in their research concerning psychological preparation for the Olympic Games. The amount of media attention received was perceived by athletes to affect their performance, as did whether the athlete or team had media training and a coordinated media plan. Moreover, Pensgaard and Roberts (2000, p. 195) highlight the media as a source of distress for elite athletes; nonetheless, the impact of the media was rated as the lowest form of distress by elite athletes that participated in the research.

13 Referees stated that they are often portrayed negatively during television coverage of matches in England, and that they feel they are constantly on trial, “...every decision is wrong, you’re guilty until proven innocent really....the referee is a man out there to be hated and castigated and criticised....I sadly think that is never going to change” (Arthur, category 1a). There is also a resignation that this view of referees within the media will not change, and therefore in order to deal with this attention referees are given some guidance and training in dealing with the media, “we are given media training every couple of years....we had members of the press come one day and we all sat down with them and talked about what we did and some would stop you and say don’t say that to the media because of this and that and the other” (Adam, category 1a). Despite this training and even during their media training, referees are still very guarded in their dealings with the media in England, something which perhaps allows some form of relationship, albeit at a distance.

14 There has been research related to stress in sport and the support that athletes receive is linked to the levels of stress that they may feel (Olusoga, Butt, Hays & Maynard, 2009, pp. 453-454). More specifically, athletes have identified work-related support s one of the most important aspects in the management of stress and coping with performance (Olusoga, Butt, Maynard & Hays, 2010, pp. 285-286).

15 The position of Match Delegate does not exist in other leagues around Europe and was introduced in 2003, closely following the professionalisation of refereeing in England.

16 It should be noted that referees in Spain and Italy refer to Referee Assessors as Referee Observers, and therefore that is the title that will be used in this section.
Chapter 10 – Policy Implications: Raising Standards and Reducing Differences in Referee Training, Preparation and Performance

The focus of this chapter is on the policy implications related to matters of Footballing authorities demand consistency, and UEFA and FIFA have aims and objectives that are designed to standardise refereeing. Currently there are concerns abroad in different leagues, and within UEFA and FIFA about the comparability of refereeing standards. Referees should, ideally, be officiating the same way in all games, in whatever league they officiate domestically. Therefore when referees reach the UEFA and FIFA lists they should all be refereeing in the same way. Consistency in the application of the Laws of the Game are what UEFA and FIFA are working towards, as are the various Football Associations and the refereeing bodies in each domestic league. However, whether greater standardisation can be achieved at all is in itself a debateable issue. Therefore it is the aim of this chapter to consider and analyse the implications of current policy in place in national associations and at European and international level.

This chapter reconsiders the following matters which affect referee training, preparation and performance in England, Spain and Italy:

- Differences in systems and implications for Standardisation
- Training and Support Networks: Preparation and Performance
- Relationships with UEFA and FIFA: A Lack of Engagement?
- Pre-Match Preparation becoming Pre-Match Judgement
- Referees Under Pressure –Dealing with Media Attention
- Problems with Player Behaviour
- Referee Assessment: A Comparative Summation
Differences in Systems: Implications for Standardisation

Initially under consideration here are the differences between the accelerated promotion of younger referees within the English system and the promotion structures in Spain and Italy. The ‘fast track’ scheme utilised in England is a means of progressing talented referees through the system more quickly than would usually be the case. Historically, referees have had to complete their qualifications, exams and observed matches in a specific period of time and this brought progression to the next level of the refereeing continuum providing that the performances and exams were acceptable. Progress, traditionally, would take time as individuals worked their way through the league system in England. However, it is now the case that the matches and experience young, talented referees would have obtained over time are being replaced by more training-based activities, classroom work and subsequent acceleration through the pathways. This accelerated promotion scheme is not present in Spain or Italy, in fact the ‘fast track’ scheme is not considered viable within either country.

The ‘Fast Track’ Programme and the Opposition

The ‘fast track’ programme was introduced into the English referee development pathway in 2006 (Biggs & Taylor, 2004). The programme seems to have had mixed results when consideration is given to the officials who have come through. Questions have been raised whether the rapid acceleration of young, talented officials is a good idea, or whether they require the experience of more games at lower league level before they are promoted. The ‘fast track’ programme attempts to substitute some of the learned ‘in game’ experience with theory and additional training and support. Interview respondents in Spain and Italy believe the requirement for experience and learning through officiating matches is far more important, and that replacing experience of match practice with additional training is not as effective, “...it is very important to arrive in Serie A with a lot of experience. Our championship is a difficult championship…maybe it’s possible to arrive in Serie B at 27 or 26 and arrive in the first division at 29 but not like in England at 25, 26. I think that if you arrive at 25 years old in Serie A it is impossible to get to 45 years old” (Jack, category 3a).
The importance attached to experience here is clear. The belief is that if referees reach Serie A at an earlier age they will not be ready for the rigours of the top division. Spanish referees and those involved within the Spanish system also identify the importance of experience for referees before they reach the Primera División. However, it is acknowledged in Spain that referees are officiating in the Primera División at a more advanced age than in England in order to prepare them thoroughly, “...the referees arrive in the top division very late. We need to prepare the referees before...he must be in the second division B in the semi-professional league, between 23 and 24 years...they have to have two or three years in semi-professional football, to adapt to condition, to pressure...” (Howard, category 2b).

The difference between the ages accepted in England for referees to officiate in the Premier League and those for referees reaching Serie A and the Primera División in both Italy and Spain are significant. This also has a residual effect in respect of the ages that referees are promoted onto the UEFA and FIFA lists. Because referees in Italy and Spain generally achieve promotion to their top leagues at a later point in their career, they also, as an inter-related effect, are promoted onto the UEFA and FIFA lists later (through nominations from the national association initially), as Geoff a referee in Spain from category 2a explains, “...we arrive on FIFA lists very late. I arrived and I was 37...I know in some countries they are very, very young on the FIFA list, in Spain we are very late. Always more than 35. So when you see a young referee who is 25, it is not possible in Spain, at 25 you might be in the third division or a local division, you need to get experience in local matches and lower league matches.”

These differences outlined by referees show that in Spain and Italy referees are getting to the top leagues later in age than in England. There are also particular issues regarding the age officials from Italy and Spain get onto the UEFA and FIFA lists. The differences concerning the promotion of officials is also considerable; Spanish and Italian responses indicate that earlier promotion for their referees is not something that is plausible. There are significant operational differences concerning the structure of the pathways at certain points in Spain and England.
Differences in the Structure and Organisation of Referee Training and Support Networks

At first glance the systems in each of the countries are broadly similar, with regions (in Spain and Italy) or County FAs in England responsible for the identification, recruitment and training of referees until they progress further along the development pathway. Responsibilities then shift to a larger geographical network in each of the three countries and referees are brought together in regional leagues and subsequently national leagues. Once this begins to occur and referees start to reach national league level they are guided by the Referees commissions/committees¹ which are supposed to be under the control of the FA in each of the countries concerned. However, there are some differences in delivery at a regional level in Spain.

The Spanish system has Territorial Committees that manage provision for localised referee recruitment and training. The Territorial Committees in Spain have taken back the power to promote the talented referees in the regions from the centralised National Referees’ Committee. But issues have emerged concerning the delivery of training and resources by the Territorial Committees. As a consequence of the current arrangement in Spain individual Territorial Committees can deliver different training content to referees. Geoff, an elite referee from category 2a in Spain, states that provision in the regional areas requires some attention, “I think in the region, your local federation, it is very amateur.” The National Referees’ Committee in Spain therefore has potentially little say over the recruitment, retention and promotion of talented referees at regional level. It also may have minimal impact on the delivery of training material to these referees. The National Referees’ Committee can advise the Territorial Committees over the content delivered, however, this does not have to be accepted or, ultimately, utilised by the territories².

The nature of the recruitment of referees as well as the delivery of training by the territories presents difficulties as far as the achievement of greater uniformity of referee training and the selection and promotion of talented officials is concerned in Spain. The fact that the national Referees' Committee does not have control in these areas, and that the Territorial Committees are free to accept or reject their guidance, ensures that a standardised approach from territory to territory in Spain is
unachievable. Therefore, although the system is organised in a broadly similar way
to that in Italy, the crucial difference is the disjointed relationship between the
National Referees’ Committee and the Territorial Committees in Spain.

The difficulty identified in England, regarding the structure of refereeing, is the
existence of the PGMOL as a tripartite body that trains, supports and controls the
Premier League and Football League referees and assistant referees. Opinion is
divided over the relative importance of this body in the development framework in
England, and also how this body manages the inter-relationships between the
Premier League, Football League and FA. Responses during the interview process
indicated concern that the PGMOL exists at all. However, there were some
comments that suggested the PGMOL was successful in its operation, although the
belief was that in England the system itself is flawed and therefore difficult to
manage.

FIFA statutes state that referees should be “directly subordinate to the member”
(FIFA, 2012, p. 12) association, which in England is the FA. Luke, an individual
involved with UEFA and FIFA explains how FIFA statutes regarding refereeing
structures should be interpreted, “in the FIFA statutes the referee must be under the
control of the federations….I know more or less in England that there is another
body, but I don’t know what they do, I don’t even know what the program is that they
follow. But the refereeing all must be in the Football Association, in any Football
Association in the world…we consider that the chairman of the referees committee
must be in the association.” English referees are aware that the organisational
system for managing elite referees in England is not the standard approach taken in
other countries, “when you go abroad you represent your country you represent the
FA, you don’t represent PGMOL and that is drummed into us. That is very, very
important” (Adam, category 1a). The requirement to represent The FA in European
or international meetings signifies that people who are part of the system in England
acknowledge that the existence of the PGMOL is not in line with FIFA guidelines or
the system that operates in other countries.

The structure of elite refereeing in England does involve the FA as part of the
development pathway. However, the FA did not have the finances in place to fund
fully professional referees when they were introduced in 2001. Accordingly the FA have become marginalised in the organisational framework of referees at the elite level, “the introduction of the Professional Game Match Officials board was at the demise of the association…so the association more or less went out the window…the Football Association pleaded poverty, they wanted control of the referees they wanted a hand on the referees clearly because of the UEFA/FIFA issues but they didn’t have the funding to run it” (Barney, category 1b). The marginalisation of the FA in elite level refereeing in England was partly due to the move to professional referees, because there was a need for money to be introduced from elsewhere in order to fund professional referees. The Football League and Premier League were required to provide this money, with the Premier League contributing the majority of the funding required. Because of this directed funding from the Premier League, the accusation is that the league and its members (the Premier League clubs) have too much influence over refereeing in England:

“….regrettably clubs have too much influence over the recruitment, retention, promotion and appointment of referees. It’s all subliminal, it’s all implicit as opposed to explicit, it’s all whisper and phone calls and all that sort of stuff and if you upset one of the big clubs you are not appointed there for a period of time and it’s dressed up like “well, it wouldn’t do you any good Adrian would it to go back there. Why should we expose you to the stick you are going to get from the fans and the media intrusion?” Well, that’s how they dress it up and there is a little bit of truth in that, but the truth is that the clubs have too much influence”

(Adrian, category 1a).

Certainly the implied influence of the Premier League and Premier League clubs is something unique among the three countries, perhaps because of the reduced influence of the FA in England compared to comparable bodies in Spain and Italy. The use of a tri-partite body to govern and train elite referees is also something unique to England and does not exist in Spain or Italy. The construction of the PGMOL has led to varying responses on the effectiveness of the current referee development pathway and it is unclear how the PGMOL as an organisation are permitted to operate. UEFA and FIFA do not recognise the organisational structure in place in England, and the FIFA statutes state that the home association should control the referees. In Italy and Spain referees are the sole responsibility of the FAs, and this is the case in the majority of countries in world football.
**Physical Training and Standardisation**

Aspects of the physical training provision are standardised across leagues in Europe with leagues in England, Spain and Italy approaching physical training in a similar way. All three leagues utilise individuals who design training programmes for referees and in each of the leagues physical training support is in place for referees. However, despite the similarities in the provision of training programmes for referees, there are also substantial differences in the delivery of these programmes within the national organisations.

The English system employs central sports science support, similar to provision evident in Spain. This is also the case in Italy, although, the system in Italy assigns personal referee trainers to the elite referees. These personal referee trainers often work on a one to one basis with the referees and are commonly based in the home city of the referee. This facilitates a more personalised relationship for referees in Italy and ensures that they are conducting the specific training required of them, "Three days per week I have the personal trainer and he runs with me because I have three obligatory days to train. Two days I prepare alone" (Josh, category 3a). As part of this additional support the personal trainers are permitted to alter the training programmes of the elite referees. Ken an individual from the management, administration and training category 3b in Italy, explains how this support system operates, “…It is very difficult to develop every referee and that is the job of the personal trainer…they have to change the programmes and be flexible. It is quite impossible to deal with all these guys all over Italy. They have a programme of course, but they can change it according to the condition of the referee.”

This additional support essentially signifies that elite referees in Italy are receiving bespoke, individualised, adapted fitness programmes, something which does not occur in the same fashion in England or Spain. Also ingrained into the Italian system, are the obligatory fitness tests that all sports personnel are required to complete before the season starts. Referees have to do this assessment as part of national governance, and the sports science team within the Italian Referees’ Commission utilise the opportunity to further test and develop the referees prior to the start of the season, “In Italy it is mandatory that you have clearance from the medical in order to do competitive sport…If you are enrolled in a federation…you need the medical
assessment” (Ken, category 3b). Neither the English or Spanish system has the personal referee trainers or the additional physical assessment that is required in Italy. Therefore, despite a superficially similar structure, once the delivery of physical training is considered further differences between the countries become evident.

These differences also apply to the physical testing that elite referees are required to undertake. UEFA and FIFA require a certain level of fitness of the referees on their lists; nevertheless, these fitness tests differ in time, type and structure between each of the three countries. For example, in Spain the fitness tests utilised by UEFA and FIFA are followed, although the managerial, administration and training staff in Spain reduce the allotted time permitted for referees to complete the tests, therefore making them more difficult to pass and, in theory, raising the baseline of fitness. These tests are completed as well as a ‘field test’, which involves referee movement around the penalty area, in an attempt to replicate movement encountered in a match situation. Tests undertaken in England are the same as tests administered by UEFA and FIFA, whereas the Italian system utilises an additional test, the yo-yo recovery test, as well as the standard tests UEFA and FIFA operate³. As part of their training and physical assessment, referees also gather together every two weeks in England and Italy and four times a season in Spain.

There are differences in the application of physical testing and physical training across the three countries. These differences extend to how frequent the meetings between the elite referees occur, which is more often in England and Italy. The fact that these meetings occur less frequently in Spain raises questions about uniformity, fitness levels and technical improvements. Because referees are not meeting as often it is more difficult to monitor standardised decision making, fitness and any individual technical improvements that referees might be required to make. It is a further indication of the way in which the provision of training and support differs between England, Spain and Italy.
Psychological Support

The absence of a unified system of fitness training and testing extends to psychological support for referees. The level of support offered differs between England, Spain and Italy. Referees from England indicated that they do utilise the psychological support available; Spanish interviewees reported that there is little psychological support available and the psychological content delivered is generally administered in large group sessions rather than individually; whereas in Italy after a decision was taken in 2002 that money could be better spent elsewhere, respondents indicated that there is now no professional psychological support for referees. Referees, particularly in Spain and Italy, reported that more psychological support was required. There is a lack of support and guidance for referees both for when they make an error in a match, and when they have to cope with the pressure of a high-profile match. Referees and those connected with refereeing in Italy, do recognise the benefits that psychological support can bring, “my ideas about referee training is that it is very demanding, from a physiology point of view but even more from a psychological point of view” (Ken, category 3b). In order for referees to be able to receive the psychological provision they believe is necessary, there is a requirement for a change in the attitudes of those in managerial, administration and training positions.

Provision of psychological support in England occurs more often and is more organised than that evident in Spain and Italy. Nevertheless, this support is largely voluntary and depends on the willingness of referees to access provision. The reasons for and benefits associated with the employment of a sports psychologist are explained by Arthur, an elite referee in England from category 1a, “...there was a fear factor...you thought "if I don't get everything right today, if I upset too many people my job could be on the line here"...having a psychologist on board was very helpful.” Despite referee support for psychological provision within the English system, and the fact that referees see psychological provision as something that should be a necessity, there are significant discrepancies between the three countries in the level of psychological support available to referees.
These differences also apply to the support received from UEFA and FIFA. Both of these bodies place more importance on psychological support than the systems in Spain and Italy. Gordon, an elite referee from category 2a in Spain, compares psychological training and provision in Spain to that of UEFA, “...in Spain the psychology part is the poor part...because in Spain at this moment we don't have the psychology part; in UEFA, yes.” Evidently referees across all three countries would like more psychological support, and calls for this support to be increased are greater in Spain and Italy.

Therefore, although there is some level of psychological support evident in the three countries, and also within UEFA training, this is not made routine. UEFA are providing psychological support whereas domestic referee committees/commissions, such as the committee in Italy, are not. Elite referees do not regularly receive recognised accredited psychological support in their own country. This can be rectified through investment and greater direction from UEFA and FIFA. Referees view psychological support as essential in order to manage errors and mistakes. Psychological support can also be utilised by referees to move on from any errors they might make. However, the current psychological provision across England, Spain and Italy and also at UEFA and FIFA level demonstrates that there is no uniform structure of psychological provision in place.

**Technical Training: Dealing with Errors and Changing Performance**

In contrast to the level of psychological support, technical training demonstrates a greater level of standardisation across England, Spain and Italy and also within UEFA and FIFA. Usually a DVD session is convened with elite referees in attendance, alongside managerial, administration and training staff in a particular country or at UEFA and FIFA level. The DVD session revisits contentious incidents that have been observed, generally over a period of two weeks domestically (although as has been stated this is more infrequent in Spain), and there is subsequent discussion on the action of the referee in question and whether rules were correctly applied.
Differences begin to emerge upon further scrutiny of these sessions. Refereeing authorities consider it good practice to review, reflect and discuss referee performance. The referee commissions and committees in England, Spain and Italy, as well as UEFA and FIFA hold feedback and technical meetings focused on controversial decisions, or decisions that require further discussion and consensus from the referees. The technical sessions employ a DVD of the incidents those in managerial and training roles deem as important. Discussion is then initiated between the referees and the management to determine the appropriate interpretation of rules for each particular incident. The identification of areas for improvement following the use of video evidence and subsequent deliberation with peers and management is something that is considered best practice in England, Spain, Italy and UEFA and FIFA. It is, however, the use of this information by the referees following the DVD meetings that requires careful management and guided training for referees to effectively implement any changes to their performance.

As an example, a referee may have one incident in a particular match scrutinised at a technical DVD meeting; the referee in question might have made an incorrect decision; the reason for this incorrect decision could be identified as an issue with their positioning when giving the decision. Josh, an elite referee in Italy from category 3a, explains how he utilises the findings from the DVD sessions to assist his development:

“It's difficult because I must know that position because further action might be needed and my last position can be bad, but in the same position the different action could be correct. I must understand that for any situation there is different positions…I review the clear mistake myself. I think why on the pitch were you sure, because my position is too much, my angle of vision is too much behind….and the next time you must stay more to the left or more to the right, my diagonal must be closer.”

Josh discusses the implications of an incorrect decision and the self-reflection that he retrospectively applies in order to understand why he got a particular decision wrong. Identification of the reason for the error should be the start of a training intervention involving the referee and their coaches. Questions begin to arise when the referee attempts to change practice. Firstly it is important to discuss whether the individual referee in question has the requisite skills required in order to change performance.
In other words, is the practice they are undertaking actually changing performance? Secondly, there must be a dialogue so a referee can understand how they might train to change performance, although if the referee is not capable of implementing this into their training, discussion and subsequent teaching points become superfluous. In order to change practice referees require coaching and support alongside the information they already receive. Coaching could be similar in delivery to that utilised in Italy with the personal fitness trainers, or the system that is currently employed in England, where referees are allocated a Referee Coach who works on their technical performance and training with them. Currently there is no individualised provision such as a personal fitness trainer or a Referee Coach employed in Spain.

The English system utilises Referee Coaches who work with referees, and also act as mentors for the younger referees where appropriate. Coaching is often delivered on a one to one basis, in order to focus specifically on training points, outcomes of match reports and also feedback from training sessions. These training points become more nuanced as referees graduate through the development pathways and into the elite lists domestically and internationally. However, personal development consistently requires attention, and asking referees to implement these changes in their own training can be challenging. Similarly, dealing with specific performance issues for any one referee in group training sessions during the elite referee meetings can be intrinsically problematic. The needs of individuals can clearly be different to the requirements of the group more generally.

During the DVD sessions a referee might be notified of a specific action that requires training as a result of their performances. The referee then attempts to implement the suggested changes in performance through training. However, how the referees' committees/commissions track these changes to referee performance and, alongside the referee, ensure that the same error does not occur again are unclear. In Italy and Spain, a training need can be identified, the referee then attempts to work on this training need. Whether the referee then changes their performance or, in time, makes a similar error of judgement is not effectively monitored. In England Referee Coaches assist referees when they attempt to change performance through training. Referee Coaches can encourage the identification of trends in assessment reports, and through DVD sessions, the Referee Coach can then work with the referee to
implement change in their training. This is an individualised approach with the support of a Referee Coach who has officiated at the elite end of the game.

That is not to say that this structure can eradicate all problems. There is reliance on the quality of the match reports, the DVD sessions, and the technical discussion with other referees, in order to identify aspects that require referees to change practice. Nevertheless, the Referee Coach system arguably does give referees a greater chance to change performance⁴.

**Relationships with UEFA and FIFA: A Lack of Engagement?**

The Spanish and Italian referee committees/commissions have different relationships and different levels of engagement with UEFA and FIFA. Spanish respondents believe that it is important to follow the guidance given by UEFA and FIFA domestically, “we go the same way as FIFA, we are very, very happy with the mentality of UEFA and FIFA rules” (Hugh, category 2b). Within Spain there is a strong identification with the guidance set down by UEFA and FIFA. The argument for this degree of compliance is to benefit the Spanish referees when they reach the UEFA and FIFA lists because they will, in theory, be used to the requirements and demands of UEFA and FIFA. When an elite referee achieves UEFA and FIFA list status the expectation is that they are fully prepared for the requirements because their domestic structure has equipped them adequately using the guidance UEFA and FIFA suggest. The Spanish Referees’ Committee follows these rules of guidance and referees recognise the importance of aligning the domestic Spanish system with that of UEFA and FIFA.

Despite this positive relationship and similarities in the delivery of training between Spain and UEFA and FIFA, there were respondents who identified problems with current practice. For example, Harvey (category 2b) believes that he has “…a good relationship with people from UEFA and FIFA but not directly”. There is a willingness within Spain to work together with UEFA and FIFA, and they adopt practices suggested by the governing bodies. Despite this, relationships could be more regular
and involve more consistent dialogue than is currently the case. The development of this relationship and any increased dialogue should be initiated by UEFA and FIFA.

In contrast, there is a lack of engagement with both UEFA and FIFA from within the Italian system, this lack of engagement is related to physical training predominantly. Those in managerial, administration and training roles have identified a defective relationship with little engagement with UEFA and FIFA. Italian respondents have stated that they have very little contact with UEFA and FIFA, and they do not particularly value the input that UEFA and FIFA have given them regarding instructions to organise and train elite referees. Despite the perceived level of expertise in both training and support in Italy the Italian respondents argue that UEFA and FIFA have not sought their opinion in the development of any structures or the suggested training delivered to elite referees. Keith (category 3b) believes that “there is no relationship with FIFA”, whilst Ken (category 3b) agrees that they “…don’t have a close connection with UEFA and FIFA”. Those within the Italian system are disappointed that they have not been consulted by UEFA or FIFA when they developed the elite referee training and the relationship has suffered because of this.

UEFA and FIFA are working towards uniformity in refereeing, they want standardised structures, training programmes, preparation, performance and decision making. In order to achieve this level of uniformity they also require the support and cooperation of the associations in each country. If this level of cooperation is not being achieved, and domestic referee committees/commissions are disregarding guidelines from UEFA and FIFA the process of standardisation becomes far more difficult to implement.

UEFA and FIFA are attempting to standardise elite refereeing through a variety of measures including the practices employed domestically by countries, as well as through the dissemination of information from those referees who are on the UEFA and FIFA lists. The assumption behind this dissemination is that those referees employed on the lists return to their national associations and impart the knowledge gained at UEFA and FIFA training sessions to referees in their home country. However, it is not clear if dissemination of information is occurring at a level significant enough for it to work. For example, when asked whether referees are
encouraged to bring information back from UEFA and FIFA events John, an elite referee from Italy in category 3a, responded, “no, I never do.” Despite this view in Italy, those in the English system believe that UEFA and FIFA have made significant progress with the cascading of information when referees return to their domestic leagues from UEFA and FIFA training events, “I think UEFA and FIFA have made great strides cascading their training and information” (Bernard, category 1b). Adrian, an elite referee in England from category 1a, believes that UEFA and FIFA have undertaken a significant amount of work in their attempt to standardise refereeing. Although Adrian also indicates that this work is only being completed for UEFA and FIFA matches and therefore for those referees on the UEFA and FIFA lists who, “work incredibly hard in their top referee seminars…but only in UEFA matches.”

There is a conflict of opinion regarding the impact that UEFA and FIFA are making in their attempts to standardise refereeing in the domestic associations. Referees believe that the organisations are working hard to try and achieve some level of uniformity, although referees also state that despite the work of UEFA and FIFA they are not taking the information from the training events back to their domestic leagues. The dissemination of the information delivered at training seminars is part of the strategy UEFA and FIFA are taking to try and implement their ideas and influence the domestic associations. If this information is not being delivered standardisation will be difficult to achieve.

Neither referees nor those in managerial, administration or training roles in England commented specifically on the relationship with either UEFA or FIFA. Aside from comments related to the structure in England and concerns with this system being recognised by UEFA and FIFA, respondents did not indicate any issues or problems with the relationship with UEFA and FIFA. The lack of any discussion regarding a relationship between the referees association and UEFA and FIFA suggests a lack of engagement with these authorities, although there is not such strong feeling surrounding this apparent lack of engagement in England. The reason for the ambivalence towards UEFA and FIFA in England is perhaps the difference in the structures governing elite referees. If the working relationship was too close there might be further questions asked about the system employed in England and the existence of the PGMOL as an organisation that is not in line with FIFA statutes. This
also raises questions about how the system has been in place for such a prolonged period of time given the lack of understanding and support for this system from UEFA and FIFA.

There is evidence of considerable challenges for both UEFA and FIFA as far as the standardisation of referee systems and training is concerned. There is recognition that UEFA and FIFA work hard to try and standardise refereeing, although responses indicate that further work is needed if the desired results are to be achieved. An aspect that requires further consideration is that concerning referee research into players and teams prior to matches. This level of research has substantially increased in recent years as referees have become more professional and have been placed under greater scrutiny. Despite increased and widespread research routinely conducted by referees, little has been done to guide or regulate their preparation. Some referees want to know everything they can about teams and players they will be officiating, other referees want to know as little as possible. This does create a disparity between referees and also a lack of uniformity in preparation.

**Pre-Match Preparation becoming Pre-Match Judgement**

Guidelines to which referees may adhere when conducting research into players and teams are notably absent. Rather, referees undertake this research individually, and the level differs from referee to referee, irrespective of the country. Some elite referees prefer to complete a large amount of research into the players and team they are officiating, whereas other referees undertake less research. One constant is that referees all prepare for matches, it is the level of this preparation that varies.

There is insufficient guidance for referees concerning the amount of research they should complete prior to a match. At some point questions pertaining to the acceptable level of preparation a referee should complete prior to a match require consideration. In short, how much research is too much? At what point does the research and knowledge gleaned by a referee before a match equate to pre-judgment of situations? Generally, intensive research is seen as something positive.
within refereeing. Referees preparing for a match are seen as, “...more professional in the manner of doing homework” (Boris, category 1b). But referees do recognise the potential problem of pre-judging teams and players, although Barry, an individual involved in the management, administration and training of referees in England from category 1b, does not believe that pre-match research should be considered in that way, “you are not prejudging anything you're just raising your awareness of the potential issues.” This notion was commented upon by Alan, an elite referee from England (category 1a), who believes that there is an element of ‘tactical refereeing’ involved in pre-match preparation, research and knowledge of players. This ‘tactical refereeing’ is utilised in England with referees working together to ensure players behave;

“I was more in favour of being more tactical in the way we referee and I’ve had these discussions many a time, if you’ve got a player like [player name omitted] or whatever, the best way of dealing with that is you actually target – so you say let’s get [player name omitted] to behave properly. So I’ll referee him first week and send him off because he’ll always offer you something to send him off with, so you send him off, he gets suspended for three matches, he comes back, Adrian [another referee] does him, he goes again, three weeks later, comes back again someone else does him. The manager goes ‘[player name omitted] you have to stop because they’ve got your number sorted.’ He would then focus his energies, play better, he would improve and make it better for him, his behaviour would then improve towards referees so referees would benefit from it – so tactical refereeing.”

Such comments suggest a significant level of ‘pre-judgment’ of players by some referees. ‘Targeting’ individual players is evidently something which does transpire, although there is nothing to suggest that this occurrence is a regularity within elite refereeing in England. Targeting specific players goes beyond any management and becomes something that is organised by the referees themselves. The level of research referees complete prior to matches requires some form of governance to ensure that all referees are doing the same thing.

The issue of referee research and pre-match planning is not confined to England. Referee research and pre-match planning can be extremely detailed in Spain and Italy; referees in Spain also recognise that dealing with players effectively is essential, “...it is important that the referee knows the players, because players like
[player name omitted] in Spain, they are more popular, they are more known so we must be more aware of this kind of situation" (Gordon, category 2a). Similar concerns clearly also apply to pre-match preparation and judgement of players and teams by referees in Italy.

Technological developments, such as DVD’s, the internet and the intranet of referee organisations, have given referees extensive access to previous matches and key incidents. This technology has continued to evolve, but there has not been a regulatory framework that has developed at the same time. James, an elite referee in Italy from category 3a, explains how technology is ingrained into elite level refereeing today, “...with the Internet we have all the matches for Serie A. Before our match we can see all the matches of the team we are refereeing.”

The evolution of technology within football and subsequently refereeing, has given elite referees access to new tools which can assist their preparation for matches. Referees can research matches, players and teams in great depth from a variety of information sources accessible to them. It is the increasing level of scrutiny referees find themselves under in Association Football that leads them to believe a significant level of research and preparation is necessary. Referees want to feel as prepared as possible, although preparation differs from referee to referee. It is undertaken to try and reduce errors and remove or manage potentially controversial issues that might occur during the course of a game.

Referees under Pressure: Dealing with Media Attention

Historically, referees have been subjected to crowd and player abuse, in both verbal and physical forms. Although incidents have been more violent in the past, referees at the elite level today are under a different type of pressure, caused predominantly by increasing media attention. The pressure exerted on referees is linked inextricably to finance and media exposure. As football players and the clubs they play for are given more money, more financial power, and the results of the matches with which they are associated are placed under greater financial pressure, referees are
implicated, by association, and the significance of their decision making is amplified. The current pressure on referees to arrive at correct decisions, especially in the ‘big’ games, is unparalleled. For example, in England the Championship playoff final to secure a place in the Premier League, is worth an increase in revenue of at least £140 million to the winning team (Fifield, 2013, para. 1). Despite the financial implications of this particular match, there are arguably far greater pressures applied to referees in Italy, where television shows reporting on incidents and performances of the referees in Serie A are commonplace, and the referee is seen as an individual who can be mocked, attacked and vilified.

Perception of referees has been tainted by scandals in Italian football and this means that referees find officiating in Serie A very challenging. Referees in Italy find officiating in European competition easier because they experience less pressure from fans and the media. Referees express similar views in Spain, and although the level of media scrutiny is perhaps not of the same level as that in Italy, referees still prefer to officiate in European competition and, as with Italy, believe that it is easier to officiate in Europe than in the Primera División.

A significant issue created by the level of media attention is the effect this attention can have on referee performance. Every decision can be scrutinised at length, and in Italy there is a significant presence of television and also print media, all with a concerted focus on refereeing performance, decision making and the impact that these decisions can have on a match. John (category 3a) believes that there are certain matches, because of their history, that produce more media pressure for referees, “…in Italy one of the most difficult matches is Roma versus Inter Milan for the pressure, the team, the history of the team, and also the papers because one is Milan and one is Roma and every time it is a war”.

Referees find that dealing with the media is something they have very little control over. It is a particularly difficult matter for domestic referee associations to moderate. In order to help alleviate the pressure created by the media, especially when a referee is perceived to have made a mistake or given an incorrect decision, there are often suggestions that referees should talk to the media after a match, something that routinely does not happen in England, Spain or Italy. However, this does occur
in other countries, such as Norway. UEFA and FIFA referees from other nations have commented that on occasion explaining to the media why a decision has been given after a match may then prevent any further debate. Matthew, a UEFA and FIFA elite referee from category 4b, explains how this can work positively, “when you can speak your own language, then I prefer to speak [to the media]. It is very important I think that the referee speaks about what he sees, about the distance, about the angle, about the laws of the game, about what he is thinking and that way the people can learn the laws of the game and how a referee thinks.”

Whether there is an appetite to understand the judgements and decisions referees make depends on the particular country. Arthur (category 1a) believes that the current media outlook in England is impacting negatively on officials before an incorrect decision is even proven, because fans are used to:

“....hysterical broadcasting and expert punditry that every decision is wrong, you're guilty until proven innocent really in terms of referees making decisions. I would love someone to work out the number of decisions throughout the course of 90 minutes or indeed the course of the tournament, made by officials that there is a knee-jerk reaction to, that they are actually right. In football human error plays as much a part as skill. When you look at it a referee might make a mistake...in any game of football from a throw in, to a push, to a freekick referees make hundreds of decisions from a percentage point of view of what is right and wrong. I think you would be in the high 90s that were probably correct decisions, but those are the ones that don't get the headlines and the commentators, and the experts, and the pundits add to this fervour that the referee is a man out there to be hated, and castigated, and criticised...I sadly think that is never going to change.”

How pressure is dealt with depends on the character or personality of the individual concerned but support and psychological training/therapy can provide assistance. Referees are aware that given the competitiveness and the money that is currently in the game there is not going to be a sea change in the growing pressure being applied on them at any point in the near future. This pressure and fascination with refereeing decisions is not entirely new. Referees have had to deal with this pressure in other eras. But what has changed has been the intensity of the media focus. With the increase in television coverage and the ability to analyse decisions from different camera angles, in slow motion and also utilising computer generated
match situations, referees’ decisions have become a regular constituent of live football debate, as well as highlight shows.

Mistakes and technical skill are what make Association Football popular and exciting, and if those mistakes are removed arguably the game loses its appeal. To help alleviate the pressure referees are under they could be allowed to discuss salient points with the media more readily and therefore elucidate further understanding of the laws of the game and the complexity of the decision making process in which they are involved. This already occurs in Norway, and it is something that referees believe helps them to explain their decisions. In Norway the referee does not speak to the media directly after the final whistle, rather there is a 30 minute gap and they then answer questions on specific decisions that were given. This is something that used to happen in the Premier League in England; however, even when referees were permitted to speak to the media, it was not encouraged by the PGMOL (“Swansea v Stoke, 2013).

At present it is clear that refereeing committees/commissions in England, and also in Italy and Spain, do not want referees to speak to the media after a match. Other possible ways for referees to explain decisions could be for them to be invited more regularly onto football highlight shows to discuss the role of the referee, decision-making and why possible decisions have been given. Interviews with referees could be conducted from a more positive media viewpoint rather than consistently looking for error. Finally there could be more training for the media, to enhance understanding of referees’ roles and problems. Some media training already exists, however this could be more widespread, delivered by referees or those in managerial, training and administrative roles, and focus upon increasing media understanding about the role, and function of the referee and the challenges they face. It is recognised that media training has increased in recent years, however there could be more clarity about how referees train, prepare for matches and are assessed in England, Spain and Italy.
Problems with Player Behaviour

Player behaviour is something which has concerned referees, and those associated with refereeing for a considerable period of time. The payment of wages to players, and in particular the increase in their wages was cited as a reason for the escalation in gamesmanship in 1961\(^8\). Following further substantial increases in player wages over time\(^9\), the demand for success has increased as the difference between winning and losing becomes greater. With the amount of money paid to players in the Premier League, the Primera División and Serie A, there is more incentive for players to adapt their behaviour to gain an advantage on the field of play.

Referees have to deal with the behaviour of well-paid players. In England referees have stated that they coerce players in order to control and ‘manage’ them, which has meant that they “do not apply the law. It means you go out there, you try and cajole players, you try and please players and encourage them...you have to try and plead with them to behave themselves, otherwise you have to send them off...it’s to manage the event to get the best out of it – it’s a game – it’s a sport and the arbiter is there not to make it a great game, that’s the players’ job” (Alan, category 1a). Alan raises questions about the role of the referee and whether it is part of the referee’s remit to try and get players to behave. There is nothing in the laws of the game that state that this should be the case. Referees are present to uphold and administer the laws of the game, not to cajole players into behaving on the field of play.

Player behaviour is something which is a concern across England, Spain and Italy. Questionable player behaviour can affect referees’ decision making, “there’s been instances where a penalty should have been given but because of the theatrics of a particular player I didn’t give a penalty” (Boris, category 1b). In this example described by Boris, he argues that a player behaving in an inappropriate way actually decreases their chance of winning a penalty. Boris refers to simulation and this aspect of player behaviour is seen as more of an issue in Spain and Italy, than in England. Referees in both Spain and Italy believe that simulation is their biggest problem, and that it is something that requires action by the authorities.
Gary, an elite referee from category 2a in Spain, comments that there are many players who attempt to dive to win free kicks and penalties and adds that players even train during the week in order to deceive the referee, “I think the situation is a problem, not just one player, it is one of the most difficult problems for us because there are players that are very good actors and I think they train during the week to confuse the referee at the weekend.” This mentality has been described as a cultural phenomenon by individuals in both Spain and Italy, as something that is ingrained in domestic players from those countries. Joe, an elite referee from category 3a in Italy, believes Italian players have gained notoriety for cheating, “Italian players are famous in the world for simulation” and do not have any inclination to help the referee, “…there is no cooperation from the player with the referee, because it is very, very difficult in Italy.”

The observations from Joe in the quotation above are confirmed by David, a professional football manager from category 1d, who has international and European experience, and who argues that there are particular challenges Spanish referees have to deal with domestically regarding simulation and players ‘cheating’:

“It used to drive me mad, the simulation, it used to absolutely drive me bananas honestly…it was part of the Spanish game but I didn't enjoy it. Some of the players were excellent, the standard of play was superb, some of the referees were fairly good, but everyone thinks about the Spanish league being fantastic but there's another side to it which is not so fantastic…the games I found in Spain – the players were more willing to cheat, take a dive – trying to get people sent off, more cynical in the fouls and I think predominantly in this country [England] it's more honest. Especially the British boys here, the majority of the time won't take a dive, won't try and get somebody sent off – so I think it was harder for the referees in Spain.”

One possibility is for authorities to further employ technology to assist referees with decision making where players may be simulating or diving. Technology does not have to be utilised during a game, there could be retrospective punishment
administered, even if the referee saw the incident during the game\textsuperscript{10}. Currently, if an official deals with an incident during a match by making a decision retrospective punishment cannot be considered by the FA.

**Referee Assessment: A Comparative Summation**

Assessment is approached in a similar manner in England, Spain and Italy. There is the employment of Referee Assessors/Observers who produce reports on each domestic match that a referee officiates. Referee Assessors in the English system convey the mark to the referees, whereas referees in the Spanish and Italian systems are unaware of the mark for individual matches, although they do receive the Referee Observer's views, thoughts and interpretations on their performance, as is also the case in England. Furthermore, Referee Assessors are in place for European and international matches, and reports are compiled in a similar fashion to those in domestic leagues.

Differences exist in the use of a Match Delegate in the Premier League\textsuperscript{11}. The Match Delegate system, introduced in 2003, closely following the professionalisation of refereeing in England, requires the Match Delegate to report back to the clubs. The only element of the report of which the clubs are not made aware is the mark given to the official by the Match Delegate. The argument put forward in favour of the Match Delegate system is that previously there was a feeling that referees were being assessed by referees and hence there was an inclination to favour the side of the referee when assessing performance. With the introduction of the Match Delegate system neutral observers were put in place who had the interests of the clubs as a central part of their remit.

Match Delegates, appointed by the Premier League, are generally chosen from a pool of individuals and on the basis of their regional location. Many of these individuals have been involved in football as coaches, managers, players and administrators and they are recruited “to give their view of how players see the role of the referee. What gets up the noses of players, what annoys them” (Frank,
Match Delegates are recruited at different times of the season and receive an individual training programme when they start. In addition to the individualised, introductory programme the delegates receive, “a disc which covers all the issues in terms of their responsibilities, marking, fairplay, marking criteria etc…they will observe someone doing debriefs, I will then go and see them do a debrief, and we will talk it through” (Frank, category 1f).

Despite the information delivered when Match Delegates become a part of the programme, there is an importance attached to individuality in the reporting process. Frank states that, “I didn’t want a tick box exercise, I wanted that personal view of the guy who has played and managed to come through the report…the actual way people report is different in some ways.” This ‘personal view’ that Frank identifies as important in the feedback process, may lead to different ways of reporting and recording assessments, and there is a danger that there is a lack of uniformity in this reporting procedure.

Opponents of the Match Delegate scheme argue that it causes confusion on match days for the referee in the Premier League, that there is a lack of clarity in the debrief to the referee and that the Match Delegates do not understand the finer intricacies of a referee’s roles and responsibilities, never mind the laws of the game. Regardless of the debate in respect of the introduction of the scheme, it is now an integral part of the match day routine of an elite referee in England, “we came to the process because the three bodies, which was the Premier League, the PFA and the LMA, had a discussion through the General Secretary of the Premier League and said these are the sort of areas we want to look at…major decisions, the management of the game by the referee” (Frank, category 1f). Within this Match Delegate process club managers are also required to give the referee a mark from 1-100 and to comment on the performance of the referee as part of the form they are asked to complete. The mark and comments are included as part of the Match Delegate’s report to the Premier League. Managers and the referee can also request feedback on the assessment process.

Although the feedback is available to managers, there are continuing questions regarding how much value the refereeing authorities place in their feedback. In
practice managers regard the feedback process as an inconvenience and operate a tactical method of awarding marks to the officials:

“if you speak to managers in general they get fed up of these things...you're giving marks out 100...you know if you're going to give a low one then you have to put a letter in there and I reckon the percentages sticking together is 90%, I really do. Sometimes you hear managers saying “what's the point, what is the point?” They always take the side of the referee and for the manager, we can't change the result, we can't change that we have lost the points or whatever, but at least be honest or take our points on board...you just do it to do it sometimes, to tot up to enough to give them the lowest mark you can give without having to put a report in”

(Elliott, category 1e).

Managers feel a detachment with the referee assessment process. They do not believe their views and interpretations of a referee’s performance are taken into account. Elliott states that he will give a referee a low mark for a poor performance, but a mark that is not low enough for the Premier League to ask him to submit a report regarding his concerns. Managers do not see the point of giving a mark that they believe accurately reflects the performance of a referee because they do not feel valued in the assessment process. Because managers do not see a value in completing the forms correctly, the mark arrived at by the Referee Assessor and the Match Delegate is not an accurate reflection of a referee’s performance. Managers’ comments and marks are included on the Match Delegate’s reports and therefore, in so far as it is flawed, it is a system which requires adaptation to operate effectively.

There are differences in the forms and reports used by Referee Assessors/Observers in England, Spain and Italy. In Italy there have been adaptations made to the marking sheet and referee assessment where it is argued that, “The UEFA system is more schematic, there is a mark that they provide to the referee for each game by the commission and another one that comes from the Observer...you have 2 assessments and then divide [in UEFA]” (Kevin, category 3b).
The assessment form in England has also been modified from that used by UEFA and FIFA and therefore the marking system is different to that employed in European competition, “we are different to the UEFA one [marking sheet]. What it does, in each of the areas it focuses on your core skills, so identifies your strengths and weaknesses” (Brian, category 1b). Concerns have been raised concerning the structure of the referee assessment process in England, which has been described as, “…pretty farcical, simply because there is no clarity in how we debrief after the game” (Brett, category 1b). As a result it is questionable how effective these debriefs are as part of the assessment process in England.

Despite the similarities in structure there are distinct differences in the way that the referees are assessed, as the information on the Match Delegate system has identified. Both Spain and Italy have one form of referee marking, the Referee Observer, they do not employ an additional person from the league to pass comment on the referee. There is, therefore, no standardised form of marking domestically across England, Spain and Italy.

There are substantial differences in the assessment of referees domestically and within UEFA and FIFA. There are also conflicting relationships between countries and UEFA and FIFA, as well as the disparities in psychological training and support. Furthermore, referees are experiencing extreme pressure domestically through the influence of the media. All of this means that referees are facing challenges that affect their preparation and performance and UEFA and FIFA are facing significant barriers to their attempts to standardise refereeing systems, training and decision making.

The primary concern is that referees should be refereeing in a comparable manner in all games, in whatever league they operate. UEFA and FIFA are trying to achieve consistency in the laws of the game, as are the national associations. Despite these aims and objectives this chapter has identified some meaningful differences in the support structures, training, preparation and performance of match officials both domestically and at European and international level. Any uniformity or standardisation in elite refereeing across national boundaries still has considerable ground to cover before it is anything more than an aim of refereeing authorities.
The aim of this chapter was to analyse the implications of the areas of policy identified throughout this thesis. In particular this chapter has considered matters related to the disparities identified in systems and structures within the domestic leagues, the differences associated with the training of elite referees, the associated relationships with UEFA and FIFA and the impact that these issues have regarding uniformity. Furthermore, an overriding notion of standardisation was applied to areas such as pre match research, preparation, player behaviour and assessment through comparative analysis of refereeing in the three countries.

1 The organisations are called the Referees’ Committee in Spain, the Referees’ Commission in Italy and PGMOL in England.

2 Referees are selected from all over Spain. The size of the Territorial Committees and the regions that are controlled by these committees can be found in Chapter six, p. 143. In the 2013/2014 season referees in the Primera División in Spain came from the following committees: Three from Valencian, two from Catalan, two from Andalusian, two from Madrid, two from Cantabrian, two from Navarrese and one referee from Aragonese, Biscay, Extremadura, Castilian-Leonese, Las Palmas, Galician and Asturian (Comité Técnico de Árbitros, Árbitros 1ª División, 2013).

3 It should be noted that within the English system the yo yo recovery test is used as a training aid rather than a specific physical test for referees.

4 It is acknowledged that this is more difficult to achieve at UEFA and FIFA level, given that time spent with referees is much less frequent and there may also, if this was introduced at European and International level, be conflicts between the domestic Referee Coaches and those employed by UEFA and FIFA.

5 Referees in Italy have not been assisted in changing this perception by the scandals that have engulfed Italian football and at times implicated referees in wrongdoing, although it should be noted that since the Calciopoli scandal in 2006 (Distaso et al, 2008, p. 2) no referees have been named in subsequent investigations or charges brought concerning match-fixing or bribery.

6 Performance under pressure can often depend on the particular individual; some individuals react well and demonstrate an ability to countenance adversity (Jones, Hanton and Connaughton, 2002; Goldberg, 1998), other individuals discover cognitive anxiety and self-confidence can negatively affect their performance (Woodman & Hardy, 2003).

7 See appendix C for newspaper reports regarding the FA Cup Final match between Arsenal and Newcastle and a contentious winning goal awarded to Arsenal in 1932.

8 Issues related to player gamesmanship were being raised as early as November 1961 in The Football Referee, with an editorial piece discussing the concept of gamesmanship in professional football, with one reason for this increase cited as being, “...the increased wages demanded and paid to players” with club directors then, “....demanding success; and if success does not come then heads begin to fall” (“Gamesmanship”, 1961, p. 2)

9 Footballers at the top clubs can now earn upwards of £200,000 per week. An article in The Daily Telegraph outlined the changes to footballers’ wages over time and the transfer fees paid for them (How footballers wages have changed over the years: in numbers, 2011).

10 Retrospective action or ‘citations’ is something which occurs routinely in rugby union (Baldock, 2012).
The position of Match Delegate does not exist in other leagues around Europe. Match Delegates for the Premier League are generally an ex-player, manager, coach, administrators or people that have been secretaries of professional clubs.
Chapter 11 – Conclusion: Future Directions for Elite Refereeing

The focus of this chapter initially reconsiders the similarities and differences in elite referee structures and provision in England, Spain, Italy and also UEFA and FIFA. The chapter also discusses possible adaptations that could occur in refereeing as the game of Association Football continues to evolve. These matters, alongside some of those considered in the previous chapter, all have the possibility to affect refereeing and the governance of the game. The chapter documents a number of recommendations of this research and the major findings that require attention in order for elite refereeing to develop. Finally, as a means of completing the research process potential areas of further research are proposed. The overarching aim of this chapter is to specifically identify the similarities and differences between the leagues under consideration, the input and impact of UEFA and FIFA upon elite refereeing provision and suggest potential recommendations designed to improve elite refereeing.

Before considering possible future developments in refereeing and the recommendations that have emerged from this research, it is appropriate to first reconsider the similarities and differences between England, Spain and Italy as well as the policies of UEFA and FIFA. Table 10 lists the general and specific points of comparison, and how these points of comparison relate to the current elite referee structures and provision in England, Spain, Italy, UEFA and FIFA.
Table 10, Similarities and differences between referee provision in England, Spain, Italy, UEFA and FIFA in respect of refereeing provision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of comparison</th>
<th>Specific area</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>UEFA and FIFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pathway structures</td>
<td>Organisations controlling referees</td>
<td>County FA’s, The FA, the PGMOL. Questions surrounding the relationship between the bodies involved and the influence of particular stakeholders such as the Premier League.</td>
<td>Cities and towns (with a president and secretary), Regions, Territorial Committees, National School of Football Referees, National Referees Technical Committee (both part of the Spanish FA). The relationship between the Referees Committee and the Territorial Committees can be strained.</td>
<td>Regional Sections, Regional Committees, Italian Association of Referees (part of Italian FA), National Referees Commission.</td>
<td>Referees must be controlled by the association in their country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange programmes</td>
<td>No domestic referee exchanges between counties.</td>
<td>No domestic referee exchanges.</td>
<td>Exchanges occur between regions in the north and south of Italy.</td>
<td>Exchange programmes exist between minor leagues in Europe.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion structures</td>
<td>Accelerated promotion</td>
<td>The use of a ‘fast track’ programme to accelerate talented, young officials.</td>
<td>Referees are not ‘fast tracked’. There is a belief that referees require significant experience in lower leagues to prepare them for the Primera División.</td>
<td>Referees are not ‘fast tracked’. There is a belief, particularly from those in managerial positions, that referees require significant experience in lower leagues to prepare them for Serie A.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA have their own individualised promotion systems. There are guidelines pertaining to referee promotion structures and also how associations work with young referees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional referees</td>
<td>‘Professional’ or ‘full time’ referees predominantly operating in the Premier League and the Championship.</td>
<td>Referees are not ‘full time’.</td>
<td>Referees are not ‘full time’.</td>
<td>Referees are not ‘full time’.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA do not recognise the existence of the PGMOL but do support the concept of ‘full time’ referees. No other ‘professional’ or ‘full time’ referees exist in European leagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Frequency of training events</td>
<td>Meet every 2 weeks during the season.</td>
<td>Meet 4 times a season.</td>
<td>Meet every 2 weeks during a season.</td>
<td>Specific training events organised for referees that are on the UEFA and FIFA lists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical training</td>
<td>Increased physical fitness over time.</td>
<td>Increased physical fitness over time.</td>
<td>Increased physical fitness over time.</td>
<td>Increased physical fitness over time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional referees</td>
<td>Remote training and management</td>
<td>Remote training and</td>
<td>Remote training</td>
<td>Remote training and management of referees accompanied by specific</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Referees</td>
<td>Management of Referees</td>
<td>Management of Referees</td>
<td>Training Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No individualised physical training support.</td>
<td>Some individualised physical training support but not for all referees and not organised by Spanish FA.</td>
<td>Referee Physical Coaches employed – focused on individualised physical support.</td>
<td>Physical training support is given through UEFA and FIFA and both organisations have dedicated Sports Science support. No individualised support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Technical Training

| Use of DVD incidents to highlight best practice and contentious decisions. This training is undertaken in group sessions. | Use of DVD incidents to highlight best practice and contentious decisions. This training is undertaken in group sessions. | Use of DVD incidents to highlight best practice and contentious decisions. This training is undertaken in group sessions. | Use of DVD incidents to highlight best practice and contentious decisions. This training is undertaken in group sessions. |

### ’Referee Coach’ works with referees on technical training

| No individualised technical referee coach. | No individualised technical referee coach. | No individualised technical referee coach. | |

### ’In situ’ training and practice

| Varying reports on whether this takes place routinely. Some ’in situ’ training occurs. | No ’in situ’ training. | No ’in situ’ training. | Some ’in situ’ training occurs – dependent on the training focus of the meetings. Ad-hoc and sporadic provision. |

### Psychological Training

| Psychologist available if referees want to use their services. This is an optional service. | Psychology is undertaken through in-group sessions with all referees. No specified number of sessions. | No specific psychological support. Support given by the Technical Director who is not a qualified psychologist. | No specific routine psychological provision available to referees. |

### Assessment

| Use of the UEFA and FIFA tests – same measurements for referees to pass. | Reduced times for referees to pass the tests than UEFA and FIFA demand. Additional ‘field test’ for referees. | Additional yo-yo’ test for referees. National fitness testing. Must have clearance in order to do competitive sport. | Both UEFA and FIFA have specific tests referees must pass to officiate European and international matches. |

### Assessor Reports

| Used to give a mark for performance, as well as feedback. Used to inform future training supported by Referee Coach. Assessors cannot always agree on interpretation of incidents. | Used to give feedback on performance. No mark is given. Informs training, no specific referee coach. | Used to give feedback on performance. No mark is given. Informs training, no specific referee coach. | Used to give feedback on performance. Also utilised for the appointment to future matches in later rounds of the competition. |

### Assessment Structure

| Two assessors in Premier League matches. Match | One assessor from the Referees | One assessor from the Referees | UEFA employ Referee observers. National associations propose these |
Delegates appointed by the Premier League and a Referee Assessor appointed by the PGMOL. Criticism of the structure of the assessment system. Referees do not take the opinion of assessor who was not an elite referee as seriously. Committee. Referees do not take the opinion of assessor who was not an elite referee as seriously. Committee. Referees do not take the opinion of assessor who was not an elite referee as seriously. Observers.

| The Media | Engagement | Not permitted to speak to the media after a match. | Not permitted to speak to the media after a match. | Not permitted to speak to the media after a match. | Referees do not speak to the media after a match. Some countries, such as Norway, permit referees to speak to the media. |
| Relationship with the media | Media pressure is normal. Referees are used to scrutiny. | Media induce pressure. Referees used to the pressure. | Great pressure from written and visual media. No help for referees from the media and the media induce pressure. | Referees indicate less pressure in European/international matches. |

| Technology | Goal line technology. Hawkeye supplies the goal-line technology. | No goal line technology, or additional officials. | Use of additional officials, no goal line technology. | UEFA – use of additional officials. FIFA – no additional officials – use of goal line technology. GoalControl supplies the goal line technology. |
| Preparation | Pre match research | Differs between individual referees rather than by country. | Differs between individual referees rather than by country. | Differs between individual referees rather than by country. | No guidance given to referees on the amount of pre match research to undertake. |

<p>| UEFA and FIFA engagement | Engagement with the organisations | No specific relationship outlined. Issue with the existence of PGMOL. | Follow all guidelines and adopt policies required. | Minimal relationship. Antipathy towards perceived lack of engagement of UEFA and FIFA. | Both offer courses to member associations as well as guidance aimed at uniformity. |
| Standardisation in European and international competition | Do not take refereeing practices back to the Premier League. | Differences identified between training quality of UEFA and FIFA. | Varied view of the training provision offered by UEFA. | Ask referees to disseminate good practice/information to their countries. This does not always occur. Referees from other countries are pleased with the training and support. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect of the strength of support for referees in the organisations</th>
<th>Belief that UEFA and FIFA support more than the home association. Expectation that referees are ‘strong’ in their decision making.</th>
<th>Players behave better in UEFA and FIFA competitions due to strength of the organisations.</th>
<th>Referees give different decisions at times in UEFA and FIFA matches.</th>
<th>Offer strong support for referees and the decisions they make on the pitch. Referees believe that UEFA and FIFA offer more support than their national associations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional leagues</td>
<td>Differences between national leagues</td>
<td>Identification of ethnic and cultural differences between leagues.</td>
<td>Differences in some of the decisions given in the leagues.</td>
<td>More respect for referees in England from players rather than Italy or Spain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee performance</td>
<td>Culturally different in their approach to the game. Referees ‘manage’ the game.</td>
<td>See themselves as harder disciplinarians. Use of yellow/red cards more as a deterrent.</td>
<td>Use of yellow/red cards more as a deterrent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European and international competition</td>
<td>Referees treated with more respect outside England. Less pressure on referees.</td>
<td>Behaviour of players is better than domestic games. Prefer refereeing outside Spain. Less pressure on referees.</td>
<td>Domestic league is lacking in quality, which means more fouls and yellow/red cards. Fans put pressure on referees, more respect in Europe.</td>
<td>Players behave better in European and international competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players cheating</td>
<td>Although simulation is a growing concern in England, referees believe that it is more of an issue in other countries.</td>
<td>More simulation in Spain than European/international competition. Identification of players having a ‘Latin mentality’. ‘Latin’ players and their mentality causing issues in England.</td>
<td>Simulation is accepted by fans and the media – perception that England is different. Identification of players having a ‘Latin mentality’. Referees’ fault if they do not detect simulation/cheating.</td>
<td>Referees identify simulation as a problem in European and international competition as well as domestically. Referees deal with certain situations differently and give different decisions in European and international football than they would domestically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 highlights the similarities and differences between the countries and organisations identified throughout this thesis. These matters are considered further towards the end of this chapter as specific recommendations aimed at enhancing future practice across refereeing are identified. Before possible future areas of change are explored current adaptions and changes to Association Football and their implications for the referee today are discussed.

The Introduction and Further use of Technology in Football – Implications for Referees

Goal-line technology was introduced by FIFA for the World Cup in Brazil in 2014 (‘Goal-line technology gets 2014 World Cup go-ahead’, 2013; ‘Goal-line technology to be used at 2014 World Cup’, 2013) and was in place for the start of the English Premier League season in 2013-2014 (Gibson, 2013; Rumsby, 2013). Additionally, the Primera División in Spain is considering whether to introduce the goal-line technology as well as technology to assist referees in making offside decisions (Warshaw, 2013).

Despite backing from FIFA and many others within the game, Michel Platini, the president of UEFA, is opposed to the introduction of goal-line technology, indeed technology generally within the game of football (Fifield, 2012). Platini does not believe that technology should be introduced further into the game and argues that the additional referee system is better as it maintains the principles of the Laws of the Game. This has meant that within Serie A the 5 official method is utilised in every match, whereas the English Premier League uses goal-line technology and the Primera División in Spain has, to date, implemented neither of these changes. Given the resistance to goal-line technology by UEFA, there is little chance that it will be utilised in the Champions League or Europa League in the near future, the preference being for the five referee system. The five referee system operates with one additional official stationed on each goal line at either end of the pitch. They work as a team with the referee and the other assistant referees positioned on the sidelines. The additional officials on the goal line are there to assist the referee with incidents in the penalty area. The variable use of additional officials or goal line
technology creates levels of difference between the leagues and competitions that referees have to contend with. In consequence referees have to contend with and accommodate to the different systems (additional officials; goal-line technology) employed in the leagues and international competitions.

An official in the Premier League could prepare for and referee an FA Cup match on a Saturday at a lower league ground with no technological support, and no additional officials; the same referee could then have a Champions’ League match to officiate on Wednesday, with the five official system in operation requiring a change in preparation; this same official could then return to the Premier League for a match the following Saturday where goal-line technology would be employed and a further change in preparation would be necessary. Essentially, the referee in question is being asked to officiate in three different ways, utilise different tools and methods in order to do their job, and be able to switch between these different methods with no disruption to performance. If standardisation truly is a core aim of both UEFA and FIFA, there must be some movement towards common practices in games under their jurisdiction in order to offer greater support to elite referees.

Referees are in favour of the introduction of goal-line technology, although they are also reticent for any other technology to be introduced, “I think goal-line technology is the one that is really crying out to be used. For me I think that would be the only one that I would like to see used in football” (Adam, category 1a). Referees seem to welcome this form of assistance, although there is some concern over the possible further use of technology if goal-line technology proves successful. Technology has not necessarily been an unqualified success in sports such as cricket and rugby union. Indeed, in cricket, the referral system is not used in test matches involving India, and inclusion of this system for an international series depends on the views of the home country, and the overall agreement of both competing nations.

Brian, an individual involved with the management, administration and training of referees from category 1b in England, believes that the argument supporting the use of technology in other sports does not necessarily relate to Association Football;
“In other sports often making decisions is a fact. In rugby has the ball been grounded, is anybody offside at the point the try was scored? In cricket, was it a run out, whether it’s LBW? That is an interesting parallel because now they have had to redefine the law to make it fit what was seen on TV. Football is not black and white. The vast majority of decisions in a football match are subjective...so I’m not so sure technology is the panacea that people think it is...the beauty of football is that it is a game that flows. The more intervention you have, the more you will detract from the product I think.”

Whether the view that Brian states above can be considered correct is debateable. There is clearly a resistance to change within football. Brian uses other sports as an example of how being a referee in those sports is different, although interpretation of incidents in both rugby and cricket are also subjective and are subject to the interpretation of the official/s in charge. Brian focuses on the potentially negative aspects of the further use of technological innovations, and comparable reservations can be found in Spain and Italy. Referees in Spain and Italy are concerned that the introduction of further technology will reduce their responsibility on the pitch and also increase delays in the game. Such arguments against the deployment of technology suggest that there are few natural breaks in football that would enable officials to consult technological devices without affecting the flow of the match, “It is impossible. Stopping to watch the TV, it is impossible” (Joe, category 3a). Comments such as this suggest that football is conservative and resistant to change, whereas other sports, such as cricket and rugby, have embraced the possible improvements that technology can offer for umpires and referees when they are required to make difficult decisions.

The opposition to the introduction of technology in Italy is not unexpected given the support that referees have demonstrated for the additional officials on the goal line. Additional officials have been considered previously in Association Football. Experiments took place in 1935, initially with two referees; although the trials were reasonably successful, the additional officials were not accepted at the time. The use
of additional referees has received mixed reviews from individuals in the media and also from within football more widely, but it is a system UEFA prefer rather than the further introduction of technology and therefore the additional official system is something that European referees have to embrace.

The Five Official System
Referees are generally accepting of the five official system, although the level of acceptance differs from country to country. UEFA have introduced the system into the Champions League and Europa League, and the system is being adopted in domestic leagues, such as in Serie A. In many ways the introduction of additional officials is the biggest change for decades to the way the game is governed on the field of play. However, the use of officials on the goal-line is not something new in Association Football as the game developed in the public schools these embryonic rules of football included reference to arbitrators and umpires. For example the Eton rules stipulated two club nominated umpires placed by the goals of their respective teams (Pickford, 1940, p. 80) and the rules employed at Winchester placed umpires at opposite corners of the ground (Gibson & Pickford, 1906, p. 25). In effect umpires undertook similar positions and roles of responsibility to the additional officials stationed on the goal line today.

Comments from referees on the additional officials in place today in some competitions reveal reservations about what is being asked of the referees. It has been suggested that the extra officials can impede the referee’s presence on the pitch. In Spain they are not enamoured with the additional referees, “there are times that the additional referees are impeding the referees presence…the solution is to demand more of the referees on the pitch. The referee must take over more space on the pitch, control the whole penalty area. At the moment the referees are not going into the penalty area” (Howard, category 2b).

The impression that referees do not do their job as effectively when the additional officials are in place is supported by the views of Brian, from the managerial, administration and training category in England (1b). Brian acknowledges that by
introducing the additional officials authorities are asking referees to operate differently, and move differently during a match, “you are asking referees not only to adapt to a different style of football, but you are asking them to do something different in terms of the pattern and patrol. I think initially, the first game or two games, it takes a while to acclimatise...there is too large an area of the pitch that goes unsupervised. It is too remote from the referee and too remote from the additional officials.” Other criticisms of the system revolve around the number of officials that would be required if the system is used in all domestic leagues. In order to operate the additional officials system effectively there would need to be some increase in the number of elite officials in the game at the top level, and by extension an increase in refereeing numbers at all levels. Despite some reservations, others support the system, although there are doubts about the implementation of the scheme:

“I think there are numerous advantages in having the extra officials and I think that is possibly the way it will go. The only problem you get is that because you then need an extra two or three officials for every game, then you can see Europa league, Champions League, World Cups possibly even the Premier League and the premier competitions in other countries, purely because of the number of match officials...if you want to push more officials up to the highest level it would leave a shortage further down.”

(Arthur, category 1a)

There are no conflicting messages within the Italian system. Referees and those in managerial, administration and training roles believe the additional officials system for referees delivers benefits in particular a reduction in mistakes, “I think another important thing is that UEFA make the additional referees…I like it because I think there are four eyes more so it is very important, and I think that they can help the referee for goal or no goal” (Justin, category 3a). Referees realise the use of extra officials will not necessarily ensure there are no mistakes made during the course of a match. But this is also true of the use of technology. The use of technology does not guarantee that there will be no errors; other sports that have embraced more
technological support for match officials can demonstrate this. For example, in an international cricket test-match between England and Australia in July 2013 the Decision Review System (DRS) was called into question, with some arguing that the opening test of the 2013 Ashes series in England would become known as ‘The Technology Test’ due to the number and resonance of the contentious decisions made with the “help” of technology during the match (Collomosse, 2013, para. 1).

The assumption that technology will solve all goal-line problems is misguided given previous examples in other sports as is recognised by James, a referee from category 3a in Italy, who believes that the introduction of goal-line technology rather than the continuation of the additional referees experiment will inevitably mean a clamour for further technology to be introduced. The argument is made in Italy that additional referees should be used in preference to technology, “I refereed some matches [with the additional referees] and I think it is a good system, because if we have a camera for goal or no goal and then after two years we have the camera inside the pitch, this is not football.” Any changes to the laws of the game in future have to involve some consultation of referees. If referees are to enforce any new rules they must be fully compliant in the introduction and governance of these laws.

**Recommendations, Actions and Outcomes from the Research**

As football continues to develop referees need to adapt and change with the game. Despite the efforts of governing bodies, confederations and national associations, there are still significant differences evident in the management, preparation, training and performance of elite referees across European and world football.

In order to move towards greater uniformity and improvements in refereeing the following recommendations, based on a detailed sample of elite referees, and those involved with the management, training and administration of these elite referees, from the three main leagues in European football, as well as UEFA and FIFA, have been collated (Table 11). This is presently the largest study on elite refereeing, with elite referees providing the evidence that these recommendations are based upon.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of comparison</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion structures</td>
<td>The ‘fast track’ system producing young referees into the Premier League. This ‘fast tracking’ does not occur in Spain and Italy.</td>
<td>Mixed success from the process. Those within the English system to investigate whether the system is sustainable, given the 10-year theory of referees operating at the top level. Those within Spain and Italy need to consider whether a similar system could be introduced. Because this has not been done previously, this does not mean it would not work.</td>
<td>The PGMOL and the FA thoroughly review the system, provision of training and amount of experience referees require. Referee Committees/Commissions in Spain and Italy review the promotion of young referees and the amount of time it takes for referees to reach the top leagues.</td>
<td>Evaluation and feedback procedures to take place in each of the countries. Reports to be submitted to UEFA and FIFA and a consensus reached to ensure there is uniformity concerning the promotion of young referees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway structures</td>
<td>Existence of the PGMOL in England is at odds with the systems employed at the elite level in Spain and Italy.</td>
<td>Review the introduction of ‘full time’ referees in Spain and Italy. Referee physical performance has increased with professionalisation. This has also been the case in other leagues but other areas of training, such as ‘in situ’ training could be conducted more often if referees had more time to devote to training.</td>
<td>Italian and Spanish systems, as well as other leagues in Europe, to learn from the system in place in England and decide whether this is viable in their countries.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA to engage and fully understand the existence of the PGMOL and existence of professional referees. UEFA and FIFA to support the introduction of ‘full time’ referees in other leagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of the PGMOL has led to accusations that the Premier League has too much influence over refereeing in England. This is not the case in Spain or Italy.</td>
<td>The PGMOL to consider moving offices out of the Premier League headquarters and either to Wembley (the FA) or St. George’s Park.</td>
<td>The PGMOL, The FA and The Premier League to consider structure of elite referees system, location of offices, and influence of the Premier League on refereeing.</td>
<td>The PGMOL to remove question of any interference by the Premier League.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The regional Territorial Committees in the Spanish system are organising different training content – they do not have to follow any guidelines from the National Referees’ Committee.</td>
<td>The National Referees’ Committee have to take control of the Territorial Committees in order to ensure that the same training and promotion is in place across the country.</td>
<td>Spanish Referees’ Committee to audit current training and promotion strategies in the territories. Information requires cross-referencing to understand the training and structural needs to standardise provision.</td>
<td>A database of current training provision, as well as current promotion procedures. Action plan to change current structures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre match research</td>
<td>Referees, irrespective of the country, are conducting varying levels of research prior to matches.</td>
<td>A set of guidelines and a level of uniformity has to be put in place and disseminated to referees in order to guide their pre match research and preparation.</td>
<td>Further research to be undertaken regarding referee preparation. Upon the culmination of this research, a set of guidelines should be produced to ensure referees are doing the same preparation.</td>
<td>National associations, as well as UEFA and FIFA to follow the guidelines given. All referees acting in the same way prior to a match.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Existence of personalised physical trainers in Italy.</td>
<td>This more personalised system should be introduced in other countries to compliment and support the existing Sports Science provision.</td>
<td>Referees Committees/Commissions to investigate the financial implications of introducing personal referee fitness coaches for elite referees.</td>
<td>More personalised fitness trainers for elite referees across domestic leagues, given the geographical issues when managing elite referees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Existence of personalised Referee Coaches in England.</td>
<td>A personalised referee technical coach system should be introduced in other countries to compliment the existing technical training provision. This would improve the outcomes from the assessments and technical training sessions. Currently there is no system in place to check that change has occurred when referees are asked to change practice.</td>
<td>Referees Committees/Commissions investigate the financial implications of introducing personal referee coaches for elite referees.</td>
<td>More personalised referee technical coaches for elite referees across domestic leagues. A monitoring and evaluation system developed to ensure improvements in referee performance/decision making where identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological training provision.</td>
<td>Psychological provision to be introduced in countries where there is no qualified provision. Referees have requested psychological support in order to deal with pressure and to deal with any errors that they might make.</td>
<td>Referees’ Committees/Commissions as well as UEFA and FIFA to investigate the introduction of psychological provision. If there is psychological provision (this varies in terms of quality and amount from country to country) consider the current provision and how this can be improved.</td>
<td>Increase the provision of psychological support for referees. Increase in personalised provision rather than group based interventions. This provision should be mandatory for all associations and confederations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Professional football managers in England not taking the marking and grading of referees seriously because they do not feel their comments are being listened to.</td>
<td>A review of the grading by clubs and managers and also how the PGMOL uses this information. This process should be more transparent to allow managers to see that their views/comments are being considered.</td>
<td>The PGMOL to discuss with clubs and the LMA the best way for clubs to give marks and feedback on referees. New system for the grading of referees by the clubs. The PGMOL to decide whether this system is still fit for purpose.</td>
<td>Referees to receive a more accurate mark from the assessment process. The PGMOL will be able to more accurately review referee performance. At present, these assessment marks are potentially skewed and do not give an accurate reflection of performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referees viewing assessment reports from assessors/observers that were not at the same level as them as less important.</td>
<td>Referee Committees/Commissions to decide on future appointments of assessors/observers.</td>
<td>Either educate referees to apportion equal importance to the assessment reports from all assessors/observers or to appoint only ex-elite level referees to these roles.</td>
<td>Reconsidered list of both referee assessors/observers and match delegates. A designated, pre-determined set of minimum criteria used to appoint to these positions in future.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness testing</td>
<td>Different countries utilise different fitness tests and require different pass marks for the tests they use.</td>
<td>Consultation with all leagues, research led agreement of the test batteries that should be employed across leagues.</td>
<td>All Referees’ Committees/Commissions to discuss the fitness tests that are in place. UEFA and FIFA to review the fitness tests employed and enforce the selected tests across domestic leagues.</td>
<td>Standardised fitness tests across all countries and in European and international competition. These tests should also ask for the same pass marks rather than any differences being employed to ensure uniformity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships between UEFA and FIFA and the Referees’ Commissions/Associations</td>
<td>Lack/strained relationship with UEFA and/or FIFA.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA to revisit how they deal with member associations and the training delivered to referees and staff in those member associations. Evidence suggests that the current method is not working.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA should have more contact with countries such as Italy who have a strained relationship with them. UEFA and FIFA to involve referee commissions/associations in future developments in the training/structure of elite referees.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA to improve relationships with referee commissions/associations that are disengaged. This would improve uniformity in the management and performance of elite referees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination of good practice/training and match preparation not being cascaded by referees.</td>
<td>The importance of the dissemination of good practice through the cascading of information from UEFA and FIFA referees should be reinforced.</td>
<td>UEFA and FIFA to reinforce the importance of the dissemination of good practice through communication with referees and referee commissions/associations.</td>
<td>Improve the standardisation of training and match preparation. Communication with referee commissions/associations would help encourage specific sessions focusing on what UEFA/FIFA referees have covered in seminars/training.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media engagement</td>
<td>Hysteria surrounding refereeing decisions. Perceived lack of understanding of refereeing decisions within the media.</td>
<td>Referees to talk to the media after matches. This has happened previously and also happens in other countries, such as Norway, and it has been very successful.</td>
<td>The PGMOL, and the Referees’ Committees/Commissions in Spain and Italy to investigate how this process can be managed.</td>
<td>Ease player/manager/supporter unrest. Reduce pressure on referees and allow referees a right to replay over criticism. Also, praise referee decision making and performance where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Player behaviour</td>
<td>Simulation and players attempting to gain an advantage is negatively affecting preparation and performance of referees.</td>
<td>Authorities in Europe and internationally, as well as domestically, require an agreed approach. Referees are currently not giving decisions because of the behaviour of players and are giving different decisions depending on the competition in which they are officiating.</td>
<td>Investigate the further use of technology to assist referees in dealing with negative player behaviour. Authorities, clubs and leagues to increase punishments for cheating.</td>
<td>Reduction in players simulating, and cheating more generally to deceive the referee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There have been some specific areas of difference identified between England, Spain and Italy and also the practices of UEFA and FIFA. Whilst it is difficult to promote any of the recommendations above others, there are five headline recommendations that are considered the most pressing. These recommendations are:

1. A set of guidelines and a level of uniformity to be introduced and disseminated to referees in order to guide their pre match research and preparation. Due to the fact that referee research is dependent on individual referee preferences and irrespective of the country that the referee officiates within, any changes, developments or instruction should be considered from an international, European and domestic viewpoint. There must be a unified response.

2. A more personalised referee coach system introduced in other countries (this system is in place in England) to compliment the existing technical training provision. This would improve the outcomes from the assessments and technical training sessions. A monitoring and evaluation system should be developed to ensure improvements in referee performance/decision making when identified as part of the technical training requirements.

3. Psychological training support and provision to be introduced in countries where there is no qualified provision. There should be an increase in personalised provision rather than group based interventions. This should be mandatory for all associations and confederations. The particular structures should be agreed at European and world level and implemented in domestic leagues.

4. A review of the grading by clubs, managers, the Match Delegate and the Referee Assessor, and how the PGMOL uses this information. This process should be more transparent allowing managers to see that their views/comments are being considered. This review should lead to referees receiving a more accurate mark from the assessment process. The PGMOL will then be able to more accurately review referee performance.
This recommendation can also be extended to the leagues in Spain and Italy. A thorough review of the assessment process in each country is required including who assesses referees and how this assessment is conducted and recorded, the involvement of clubs and managers in the assessment process and the role of the referee in being assessed.

5. Authorities in Europe, internationally, as well as domestically, require an agreed approach to player behaviour. Referees are currently not giving decisions because of the behaviour of players and are also giving different decisions depending on the competition in which they are officiating. A more coordinated approach internationally, in European competition and domestically would lead to a reduction in players deceiving the referees irrespective of the league and culture to which the player belongs. This would in turn improve the uniformity of referee performance.

Further Research

Alongside the specific recommendations and possible courses of action this thesis has identified, there are also areas of potential further research that warrant brief consideration. These areas of potential further research are detailed below:

- Additional countries in Europe should be researched to obtain further information on other comparable leagues, structures of refereeing and elite referee provision. Potential comparable leagues to the Premier League, Serie A and the Primera División are the Bundesliga (Germany), Eredivisie (Holland) and Ligue 1 (France).
- Further investigation of possible cultural differences affecting referee performance in different leagues.
- What do managers/clubs expect from referees in the major European leagues?
- Referee retirement ages are variable. Why are there differences between countries? Retirement ages should be uniform, however there is no consensus regarding the appropriate age. Further investigation might also be
conducted on the age that referees are promoted to the top leagues and how long they can officiate at that level.

- What have been the benefits of the referee exchanges in Italy between the north and south of the country? Is this a policy that could be applied in other European leagues?
- A sample of leagues from other confederations beyond UEFA should be investigated in order to determine the specific features of their referee training systems and policies and make comparisons with the major European leagues.

The focus of this research has been to document, report, discuss and analyse the training, preparation, and performance of the referee since before codification in 1863 until the present day through a comparative analysis of refereeing practices in the three leading European leagues in England, Spain and Italy. There are significant elements of training, preparation and performance, as well as refereeing structures, which are different between the leagues in England, Spain and Italy. As a consequence referees are operating differently in domestic leagues and also in European and international matches. UEFA and FIFA are working towards achieving greater uniformity in refereeing, and the structures, training and decision making are supposed to be standardised across different leagues. The overarching aim is to ensure that players receive the same refereeing performance in domestic, European and international competition irrespective of the country that the referee originates from. This thesis has provided an analysis of the current situation in respect of refereeing at the highest level in the three major European leagues and in identifying and analysing the associated difficulties FIFA and UEFA face in their attempts to attain consistency in refereeing practice it constitutes a major contribution to the achievement of their objective.
References


FIFA. (2014). *Referee assistance programme: Course catalogue*. Zurich, Switzerland: FIFA.


How footballers wages have changed over the years: In numbers. (2011, Jan 18).
The Guardian, Retrieved 11 June, 2013, from The Telegraph website
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/competitions/premier-league/8265851/How-footballers-wages-have-changed-over-the-years-in-numbers.html

How to play the game, a referees’ view of how to play the game (1913, January 17).


http://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2012/oct/08/football-diving-referees-problem


Want to see how fit you really are? (n.d.) Retrieved May 15, 2013, from the BBC Sport website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/sportacademy/hi/sa/in_the_gym/features/newsid_2143000/2143178.stm


Appendix A

Club Assessments – A Case Study of Preston North End

The 0-4 Scale of Assessment for Referees and PNE

The 1931-1932 season brought a change in to the assessment of Football League and FA Cup referees. A score of 0-4 was introduced in an attempt to quantify some of these performances, give the FA the ability to track performance of their match officials over the course of a season, and have a measurement of competence for the Football League. Prior to the introduction of the 0-4 point method of assessing referees the authorities, including the FA and the Football League, were reliant on club feedback without a numerical mark accompanying it. Referees were not assessed by an independent assessor at this point, they were given their scores by the clubs they officiated. An insight into these reports submitted by the clubs from the 1924-1925 season and also the 1931-1932 season and the introduction of the scoring system for referees’ performances can give a detailed view of how referees were assessed. Records from the Preston North End archives give an opportunity to track this feedback and also chart the evolution of the system over time.

Early examples of comments made about the referee are not particularly helpful in terms of charting performance. Figure A1 shows a report from the 1924-1925 season with the referee’s performance described as ‘satisfactory’. There are many more comments of this nature throughout the records and words such as ‘good’ and ‘satisfactory’ were quite common. There are also more specific comments relating to the performance of the referee. The report from 28th February 1925 (figure A2) on the match between PNE and Sheffield United which Sheffield United won 0-1 had the following comment, ‘Fair. We do not like to see a match refereed from the centre of the field’, insinuating that there may have been issues with the referees’ physical fitness on this occasion. Another report details a match between PNE and Huddersfield Town on 25th April 1925, which Huddersfield Town won 1-4 with the comments from PNE stating that the performance of the referee was ‘Very poor. Did not have authority and command of the game.’
Figure A1, PNE referees’ report versus Sunderland, 03/09/1924
Figure A2, PNE referees’ report versus Sheffield United, 28/02/1925
The comments should also be contextualised. For example, if PNE had lost a match the temptation to criticise the referee and their performance may have been greater than if a match had been won. These reports do give an insight into how referees' performances were reported during the 1924-1925 season. There is little change in the reporting and the comments made during the 1929-1930 season. Comments such as ‘good’ for the PNE versus Bradford City match on 5th October 1929 which ended 2-2 and ‘very poor’ for the match between Chelsea and PNE, which ended 5-0 to Chelsea on 21st December 1929, were evident throughout the season. There is also a comment of ‘Poor. Too much home tendency’ made on the performance of the referee in the match between Reading and PNE on 31st August 1929 which Reading won 2-0.

The introduction of the marking system for clubs brought with it a change to the comment and match sheet to include the marking system. The comments system and, latterly, the introduction of the 0-4 marking system were the start of a level of accountability for the referee that was at this time alien to the players. The system for assessing referee performance was not perfect. As has already been discussed, the score line of a match had the potential to affect comments prior to the introduction of the scoring system, but there was at least some form of feedback on performance. There was, however, little opportunity for the referee to act on this feedback through training. The overarching issue with the club comment system was the subsequent lack of support and guidance for the referee following submission of the report. It is one thing to comment on a performance, it is something entirely different to act on those comments by providing a structured approach to training and development, something which was, at best, embryonic in the 1930s.

The marking system for referees introduced in the 1931-1932 season did bring changes. There was now a quantifiable average over a season against which referees could be judged, something which had not previously been in evidence. A report sheet submitted on 29th August 1931 for the match between Oldham Athletic and PNE which finished 2-2, gives an insight into the new form in operation.
Figure A3, PNE referees’ report versus Oldham Athletic, 29/08/1931

Figure A3 is taken from the same report card as figure A4 and gives a more detailed view of the referee grading and comment section of the form. This particular example had no comment but the referee in question (J. E. Mellor) was given a mark of 4, which is classified as ‘very good’ in the newly introduced grading system.
As figure A4 shows, the grading system included 0 – bad, incompetent; 1 – poor; 2 – fair, average; 3 – Satisfactory; 4 – Very good. The form also included the opportunity to comment on the performance of the linesmen, although this was not utilised often upon scrutiny of the archived forms. The form identifies how marks will be used by the league, stating that ‘reports on the conduct of the game must be sent by both clubs to the league secretary within six days of each match’. Another example from this season was the match between PNE and Burnley (Figure A5) on the 26th December 1931. The match ended 2-1 to PNE, a score of 1 was given to the referee (J. H. Perks) and a comment was made which observed that he ‘Did not keep up with the game’, possibly relating to issues connected with the referees’ fitness.
The feedback form remained the same throughout the 1930s and into the 1950s with further guidance for completing the form administered in the 1951-1952. The result was a direct focus for club representatives, usually the club secretaries, on three areas of referees' performance on which they should comment; namely, appearance, fitness and control. This added information was designed to encourage comments on particular parts of the referees' performance. Comments tended to be made following a poor or indifferent performance, but more rarely on a good performance. A referee would typically receive a mark of 4, but no additional comments. If a referee received a mark of 0 or 1 there were more often comments made to support why that score was given, although this was not always the case. It also did not appear at PNE that they were utilising the guidance on reporting the referees' performance. Figure A6 outlines the report on the referee from the Arsenal versus PNE match on 20th December 1958 which ended 1-2. The referee (R. M. Jordan) was accused of favouring the home team and therefore received a mark of 1, despite the fact that PNE actually won the match.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Club</th>
<th>Visiting Club</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preston North End</td>
<td>Burnley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result:</td>
<td>Date of Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>20th Dec 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee</td>
<td>Index Figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Harker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments (if any)</td>
<td>Poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Better kept up with the game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lineman</td>
<td>J. F. Ankers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments (if any)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lineman</td>
<td>W. Horne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments (if any)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed</td>
<td>R. M. Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
<td>PNE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A5, PNE referees' report versus Burnley, 26/12/1931
Figure A6, PNE referees’ report versus Arsenal, 20/12/1958

The guidance on appearance, fitness and control have been ignored and the comments revolved around refusing a penalty for PNE ‘...the official, along with his two linesmen, showed marked tendencies to favour the home team’. However, despite subtle changes to the form and the introduction of the 0-4 marking scheme, the “Report on Officials” section of the form stayed largely the same until the introduction of the 0-10 marking scale in the 1970-1971 season (Nevil et al, 2013, p. 226), first minuted as a suggestion in 1969 (FA Referee Committee minutes, 18/04/1969) replacing the 0-4 system which had been in operation for almost 40 years. Alongside the introduction of this new marking scale, the form was also completely redesigned to incorporate these changes (figure A7).

In addition to the changes in these forms that clubs were required to complete, 1970 also saw a comprehensive independent referee assessment system introduced, involving ex-referees assessing current officials (Thomson, 1998, p. 244). This change meant referees were now being independently assessed and were more accountable for their performances than at any point previously.
Figure A7, PNE referees’ report versus Barnsley, 20/02/1971
The form in operation now required completion by the Board of Directors at each club, under Regulation 30 of the FA rules, explained on the form (see Figure A7).

The marks, awarded out of 10, focused on far more specific elements of the referees’ performance. The officials were marked out of 5 for their ‘General Control’ and this section included a further breakdown and form of guidance for club officials completing the form. The sub-sections considered were:

(a) Did he face up to difficulties or was he influenced by the crowd?

(b) Were his decisions given clearly?

(c) Did he make effective use of his linesmen?

(d) Was his positioning satisfactory?

The referee was also assessed utilising further sections, including the ‘Application of Laws’, where the referee was marked out of a possible 3 marks and finally his ‘Personality and Personal Appearance’, for which he could be awarded a maximum of 2 marks. The ‘Personality and Personal Appearance’ section was also broken down into 2 sub-sections:

(a) Was the referee confident and quick thinking?

(b) Did his appearance and personality inspire confidence?

The updated form still included a section for comments made by clubs. The example in figure A8, from the PNE versus Sheffield Wednesday match on 4th March 1972 demonstrates these comment sections, although the comments for the referee (Mr. T. W. Dawes) in this example relate to the fact that PNE considered him to be ‘...physically unfit and in our opinion lacked the courage of his own convictions, often allowing the red flag linesmen to assume too much control.’ a ‘...homer, lacking control. Interpretations of laws of game were generally very poor.’
The reports demonstrate some areas of concern regarding the performance of referees. Comments are directly related to referees’ physical fitness and also to wider training-oriented issues, such as working with linesmen, interpretations of the Laws of the Game and also favouring the home team over the away team. The questions that must be posed at this point concern the training referees’ were undertaking.

The changes in the assessment system up until 1972 have been documented here and these changes consistently and progressively made both the referee and linesmen more accountable for performances. Until 1970 clubs and their
representatives were the only form of formalised match assessment for referees. However, how much training these employees of clubs actually had, and therefore how qualified they were to give their opinion on the performance of the referee with reference to their understanding of the Laws of the Game is unclear and undocumented.
Please complete and return the form to Research Section, Quality Management Division, Academic Registry, University House, with your thesis, prior to examination.

### Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID:</th>
<th>425243</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Name:</td>
<td>Thomas Webb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>DSES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Supervisor:</td>
<td>Professor Barry Smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date:</td>
<td>September 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Study Mode and Route:

- Part-time
- Full-time
- MPhil
- MD
- PhD
- Integrated Doctorate (NewRoute)
- Prof Doc (PD)

#### Title of Thesis:

 Elite Association Football Referee Training: A Comparative Analysis of Refereeing Practices in Three European Leagues

#### Thesis Word Count:

80,095 (excluding ancillary data)

---

If you are unsure about any of the following, please contact the local representative on your Faculty Ethics Committee for advice. Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University’s Ethics Policy and any relevant University, academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study.

Although the Ethics Committee may have given your study a favourable opinion, the final responsibility for the ethical conduct of this work lies with the researcher(s).

---

### UKRIO Finished Research Checklist:

(If you would like to know more about the checklist, please see your Faculty or Departmental Ethics Committee rep or see the online version of the full checklist at: [http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/](http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/))

- **a)** Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame? **YES**

- **b)** Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged? **YES**

- **c)** Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship? **YES**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Delete as appropriate*

**Candidate Statement:**

I have considered the ethical dimensions of the above named research project, and have successfully obtained the necessary ethical approval(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical review number(s) from Faculty Ethics Committee (or from NRES/SCREC):</th>
<th>BSREC09/038 &amp; BSREC10/077</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Signed:  
(Student)  
Date: 11/11/2014

If you have *not* submitted your work for ethical review, and/or you have answered ‘No’ to one or more of questions a) to e), please explain why this is so:

Signed:  
(Student)  
Date: