

Black (Yellow or Green) Bastards: Soccer Refereeing in Australia: A Much Maligned Profession.

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The history of Australian soccer is beginning to take shape thanks to the work of Phil Mosely, Bill Murray and a new generation of younger academic historians who are building on the earlier efforts of journalists and club historians.¹ This article is a first attempt to fill one of the current gaps in the story, the role of referees in the evolution of the game.² It is divided into three main sections: the first examining the early period up to World War I; the second covering the inter-war years when the game was gradually established as one of Australia's football codes; and the third covers the very different circumstances of the immediate post World War II period. The more recent history of refereeing deserves separate treatment. Since referees come in for a fair bit of criticism, anyone trying to disentangle their history must expect the same, and critical reactions to this preliminary study will be welcomed.

As with most of my work, the bulk of the evidence is drawn from Victoria. The numbers involved in playing and officiating were, and are, lower than in New South Wales, though spectator numbers were often on a par. Most of the issues dealt with seem to have been fairly common, even if there were some local variations. The coverage will be extended gradually.

History of Soccer Refereeing: Early Days

In his brilliant pioneering study of English Association football, Tony Mason says 'We do not know much about referees' and then characteristically proceeds to tell us a great deal.³ Early games were played without officials, relying on a democratic decision among the players to determine infringements, something that persisted in scratch matches in Scotland in my youth and continues in training games to this day, on the beaches of Brazil and the dustbowls of Africa. In the 1860s and 1870s with disputes about rules and infringements becoming more common on and off the field, umpires emerged, one nominated by each

side, who made decisions when appealed to by the players, as for many decisions in contemporary and modern cricket.⁴ The growth of the game and the appearance of professionalism inevitably meant that disputes over interpretation of the rules in the heat of a match would become more common. A third, more objective official, the referee, appeared some time in the 1870s and gradually assumed greater influence.⁵ The Football Association had a code of guidance for referees and umpires by the start of the 1885 season and, in 1891, the referee was made the sole judge of fair play and the umpires became linesmen and clearly demarcated as the referee's assistants. Neutral linesmen for important games followed from around 1898-9.

At the start of the 1889-90 season the necessity for an appeal was removed and the referee could award free kicks at discretion. As Mason points out the increasing powers of the officials indicated that intentional foul play had become part of the game. Penalty kicks were introduced for serious breaches of the rules in the attacking zone in the 1890s.⁶ The officials' tasks were made easier by the introduction of a cross-bar rather than a tape strung between posts and goal nets mentioned in 1877 when the Football Association and the Sheffield Association agreed to a common set of rules.⁷ The umpires had carried flags to indicate decisions, which they retained when they were banished once again to the touchlines. Referees used whistles to control play from the 1870s.⁸

Discontent with the decisions of the officials was a regular if not frequent occurrence in those early days, according to Mason. He quotes extensively from a letter by W Pierce Dix replying to critics of his performance during the Lancashire Cup Final of 1881, which is a pure delight. (The referee put up his umbrella, he did not expose himself too much to the elements because he had only one outfit and did not have time to change before a subsequent engagement, he deliberately kept out of the way, yet claimed he was in good position to see the game, and even was charged a couple of times accidentally). More serious were attacks on referees at or after games, which resulted in ground closures, the setting up of a Referees' Union to protect its members in 1908-9, and attempts by the Football Association to raise standards among officials, reflected in a Referees' Association of 1893-4 and the Referees' Committee in 1899.

Early referees and umpires were members, usually (but not always) non-playing members, of clubs or Associations. Gradually they became a separate corps of independent officials. One hesitates to describe them as

professionals since the payment for officiating, one guinea for a match within 80 miles of home, £1 11s 6d plus a third class rail fare for travelling over that distance was hardly princely. As Mason says the League List of 1890 has a very middle class look about it, consisting of the professional classes and the self-employed who could get the time off to officiate. The players called for professional referees as their own livelihoods came to depend more and more on the game.

These developments seem to have been picked up very quickly in Australia and the mode of transmission of new ideas is well worth exploring. Obviously new immigrants, the bulk of participants in this country, would have brought the latest ideas with them. The English press, non-sporting and sporting, was regularly quoted in Australian publications. One presumes that Australians involved in the game were in correspondence with soccer people back home and with the Football Association on occasion. But the speed of take up remains impressive.⁹ The first inter-state matches in 1883 had the two umpire and referee system, with W Bisiker as referee and W Niven and L Schuler as umpires. 'All of them follow and watch play as necessary.'¹⁰ Our source is not precise enough to determine whether the following was done on the pitch or on the sidelines, though the indication is that the former was the practice. In 1885, the *Argus* recommended the use of a whistle by the referee to make himself heard as something which might be incorporated into Victorian Rules.¹¹ Two years later the Victorian umpire is Arthur E Gibbs of the Prahran Club, Secretary of the Anglo-Australian Football Association, and who was later to be the Australasian representative on the FA Council from 1910 to 1928.¹² The cross-bar, rather than the tape, was in use for the interstate matches that year.¹³ As we have seen its introduction into the English Laws of the game dates from the 1870s, though it was not compulsory at this stage.

Early match officials in Australia seem to have met with a reasonably favourable press, at least in Victoria. After the Victoria-New South Wales match in 1887, the teams repaired to the Cathedral Hotel in Swanston Street, where 'The healths of the referee, the umpires and the press were drunk and the proceedings lapsed into the convivial'.¹⁴ By 1909 with referees in sole charge, J Lyons was congratulated for efficient control and refereeing by the *Argus*, while the disallowance of a Scottish goal for off side in front of 4000 people at the England-Scotland match in Melbourne, did not appear to give rise to protest. Goal nets were specifically mentioned

as being in use.¹⁵

Can we rely on these accounts of referees in action? Early newspaper soccer reports are interesting documents. Sometimes papers would send a reporter to cover a big soccer match who had no knowledge of the game and wrote from an Australian Rules perspective. At other times papers would rely, as they often still do, on unpaid or paid contributors who were involved in the sport. I suspect that many of the early complimentary reports on refereeing performance were written by club officials who did some refereeing themselves.¹⁶ Later, when professional journalists take over, criticism of officiating becomes more common.

In New South Wales there were problems with behaviour particularly it seems in the mining areas where the game developed precociously and in Sydney.¹⁷ Mosely mentions the formation of a Referees Association within the Southern British Football Association in 1897 to reduce troubles that stemmed from inconsistent refereeing. The Association operated from Sports House for several years. The Association may have ended when its secretary, Jack Logan, departed for Queensland.¹⁸ A second refereeing body, known as NSW Referees, was established in Sydney in 1901 by a Scot James F Black who arrived in Australia around 1885.

Another referees' association — erroneously claimed to be the first — was probably founded in Newcastle by Tom Crawford in 1912 (and not 1910). Crawford who came from the North of England via the United States instituted a training and assessment system which included field testing and a written exam. His methods were picked up and followed in the other states.¹⁹ A Referees Association was operating in Victoria by 1914.

The South Australian Soccer Referees Association was founded in 1912 by William Ashworth, J D Stewart and E Nightingale. Ashworth was an all-rounder, officiating in water polo, a member of the South Australian Olympic Council and the North Adelaide Amateur Swimming Club. He was Secretary of the South Australian Soccer Association from 1913 to 1920. Ashworth refereed many of the top games in South Australia including the first Test between China (represented by a team from the South China Athletic Association, Hong Kong) and Australia in Adelaide before a crowd of 23 000 in 1923 and Canada versus Australia in 1924. He also controlled the international matches between South Australia and England in 1923 and against Czechoslovakia (represented by Prague's Bohemians Club) and China (a mixed team of graduates from colleges in

Hong Kong and Shanghai and three members of the 1923 team) in 1927. Former players were strongly represented among the South Australia referees including J D Stewart, a life member, often referred to as the 'Father of Soccer in South Australia', Andy Scott, Bob Ormrod, Tom Acres, Arthur Maton and W S Day, Vice-Chairman of the Association in 1933. W Watt became Secretary in 1930 after a distinguished career as a referee.²⁰

Refereeing between the Wars

Soccer refereeing in the inter-war period continued for much of the time to be a less specialised occupation than it is today. Many officials were involved with clubs or associations though a cadre of independent officials was being built up. The sport continued to be amateur and participatory, though crowds for top matches increased and fully competitive leagues existed in most states.

Media criticism of refereeing performance became more evident. The report on the Geelong United versus Albert Park game in 1925 included the comment, when the referee gave a penalty to the visiting team, 'It appeared to be a wrong decision'. The match also brought forth a more extended reflection on refereeing:

It is unfortunate the game is short of good referees. Trouble has arisen in Melbourne between the League and the Referees' Association and consequently many of the men offering have not the complete knowledge which is necessary to control the game. The second half of the game on Saturday was continued eight minutes longer than it should have been [— shades of Leslie Mottram at the World Cup in the USA in 1994].²¹

In 1927 the referees were caught up in the split in Victorian soccer over the district system of club allocation, which paralleled developments in other states. For a couple of seasons there were two organisations running soccer in Victoria, and the referees' body divided, with one half joining one group and one half the other.²² Published appointments lists enable the officials to be identified and allocated between the two associations.²³

Trouble off the field was mirrored by trouble on it. In 1926 Referee Scott was assaulted at the conclusion of the Footscray Thistle versus Melbourne Thistle match. It was described by Gwen Wilshaw as:

one of the worst incidents that has marred the game in Victoria for some years. Drastic action should be taken as well as a

special enquiry by the governing body. The home club are responsible for the safety of the referee, but the assault was so unexpected that it took place before anyone could intervene. Several Footscray players declare they will not take the field again unless the player who committed the offence is put out of the game forever. This is the least punishment that should be meted out ...²⁴

Footscray was again in trouble in 1934. 'Ignorance of the Laws of the Game does not justify players and spectators from interfering with the conduct of the game at Footscray last Saturday.' Frank McIvor scored for Hakoah from an offside position, but he had been the recipient of a pass-back by Footscray defender Hughes, which the crowd and players had not appreciated. 'This is not the first time similar things have happened at Footscray and report should be called for.'²⁵ Later that year the Rough Play and Disqualifications Board (the very title is evocative) upheld a protest by Heidelberg against the result of their game with Footscray Thistle and ordered a replay.²⁶ In 1928, Box Hill walked off in protest at the referee, after a player on each side in the match against South Melbourne had been sent off.²⁷ In 1933, seven Hakoah players were reported for ungentlemanly conduct and Campbell charged with assaulting the referee.²⁸ The preponderance of Scots in this list of violent incidents is worrying!

So attacks on referees did happen in the inter-war years, but probably infrequently enough to cause the sort of outrage indicated in these reports. Crowd trouble also occurred in the 1930s but often this was largely a matter of encroachment on to the field of play, the result of playing matches on unenclosed grounds.²⁹ So far I have found nothing in soccer to compare with the incidents at Australian Rules football matches in Geelong and Port Melbourne in 1920, the latter of which led to a policeman drawing his revolver to prevent an attack on the umpire and later a ban by the umpires on officiating unless police protection was available.³⁰ It has to be said that football crowds were significantly larger than those for soccer throughout the inter-war period.³¹

The major alteration in the laws in those years came in 1925 when the offside law was changed so that only two defenders instead of three needed to be between the attacking player and the goal to avoid an offside decision. This had the effect of opening up the game and making the referee's task a little more difficult. It should eventually be possible to build up a list of practising officials for the 1930s from newspaper sources

and hence to follow referees' careers in broad terms. One or two of the referees who had significant experience include J B Scott, W E Wolstenholme and J Omesher.³² The little group of Geelong referees in the inter-war period seem to have been very closely connected with the clubs in the area.

By the end of the inter-war period the game had been established as a significant if minor part of the Australian sporting menu. Its referees had become a cadre of dedicated officials without whom the game could not have grown to the extent that it did. The challenges which were to occur in the post-war years were of a different order of magnitude.

The Post-War Period

The period after 1945 was by far the most difficult for referees in the history of Australian soccer. The game was expanding in numbers of teams and players, in spectator interest and involvement and beyond the bounds of adequate facilities. It was changing completely in character from being primarily an amateur and recreational activity into a semi-professional sport at its highest levels. The standard of play on the field was also rising significantly. Many of the immigrants were international standard players from a range of countries. This would have placed enormous strains on officials even without the other major ingredient, the fact that the players and spectators were now drawn from a much wider and different set of cultures from that which had been common down till that time. It is important to make these points, for much of the writing on this period has seized on the novelty of ethnic involvement as if it were the only and sufficient explanation of the problems confronting the game and its officials at this time.

In 1945 the Victorian Soccer Referees Association was asked to provide referees for the Dockerty Cup final and semi-final on an honorary basis as soccer began to reorganise in the aftermath of war.³³ In 1948 there were only 28 senior clubs taking part in the two divisions of the Victorian League, with sixteen in the Reserve Divisions.³⁴ Even with this number of teams, the Victorian Soccer Referees Association had to put out an 'SOS for more officials.'³⁵ Ten years later there were 62 senior teams, plus Reserves and a growing number of juniors, all requiring competent officials to control their matches. The growth was even more rapid in New South Wales.

While international and representative matches had drawn substantial crowds in the inter-war years, few club sides could attract significant

numbers of spectators. Within fifteen years after the war crowds numbering in their thousands were common, with major club games at enclosed grounds like the Showgrounds and Olympic Park drawing nearly 20 000 on occasion.³⁶ Big crowds did more than change the noise level at matches, they put pressure on players and officials to perform. Composed of a spectrum ranging from soccer experts to neophytes they subjected the actions of participants to intense and vocal scrutiny, if not worse.

The growth in the number of games played meant that existing facilities for soccer were quickly overloaded and the search for additional grounds was ceaseless. One of the attractions of soccer has always been the simplicity of its demands for a playing surface, and while a paddock may have been adequate for scratch matches, training and friendly games, there were serious problems when clubs tried to play competitive league and cup games in such surroundings.³⁷ Ropes around the ground were not much use for spectator control, while club stewards found maintaining order increasingly difficult. Encroachment had been an incipient problem in the 1930s as we have seen, but by the 1950s it was endemic, except at the very ends of the spectrum — elite level matches on enclosed grounds on the one hand, reserve and junior games where spectators were few on the other.

It was not only the players who came from a variety of different countries but the referees themselves, bringing subtly different interpretations of the laws and refereeing styles, which sometimes worked and sometimes did not. Many came qualified and experienced at high levels, others did not.³⁸ A few pretended to qualifications they did not have, causing chaos when appointed to games above their capacity. As Bob Randall remembers:

The referees from Italy and Greece, their styles amazed us. Their treatment of the goalkeepers as crystal glass. British blokes ironed them out. This made a great deal of problems for the players. They would have a referee one week where the goalkeeper was treated like a fairy. The next week he was fair game. This was the sort of thing which created the riots. The British style of tackle, low and hard going for the ball head on. Other nationalities did not like it at all. Just liked to intercept passes. So it took time to get a blend. They were screaming inconsistency and it was quite right. Players must have had a hard time as well as us. It was great fun. It was a

great challenge. Every week was an international game, of very poor standard. That's what kept me in the game.³⁹

Refereeing in this period produced its characters. Jeff Harrison was a policeman and a personality referee, who was made Grade One before examinations came in, which he admitted he would never have passed. But his man-management was good. Roger Lamb was a much less visible but very efficient referee, who became Secretary of the Victorian Referees Association. Luigi Cadelli was an imposing figure in Victorian soccer.⁴⁰ A former Grade Three referee in Italy he came to Australia in 1955 and was for a period coach of JUST as well as becoming the first 'continental' (European) referee selected for international matches in Australia.⁴¹ He had his own approach to the game as Bob Randall remembers. If a defending team did not retreat the required ten yards at a free kick, Cadelli might pick up the ball and take it back a few steps to gain the appropriate distance. This manoeuvre was not covered in the laws of the game and as Randall says, 'Not many referees could get away with that'.⁴²

The treatment of goalkeepers was a particularly contentious matter at this time, with the players of British background retaining the view that a keeper with the ball in his hands and feet on the ground was fair game for a ferocious shoulder charge which might carry keeper and ball into the net. Continental players and referees preferred to leave the keeper untouched in his goal area, so the opportunity for different interpretations and outcomes was considerable.⁴³ This was not a unique Australian problem, of course, with major incidents occurring in internationals between the home countries and European teams in the 1950s and 1960s.⁴⁴ Charles Buchan suggested that the keeper's privileges of handling the ball and being unchallenged should be restricted to the goal area, not the penalty area, but this idea did not meet International Board approval.⁴⁵

More generally, as has been often pointed out, the styles of play of those of British and Australian background and many of those brought up on southern European traditions differed considerably. Bodily contact, hard tackling, slide tackling and an expectation that the game would be allowed to flow with advantage allowed, characterised the British approach. Its overt violence often intimidated more skilled, if more delicate, talents. Continental players infuriated the British when they resorted to sly ankle tapping, shirt-tugging, tackling from behind or spitting in response.⁴⁶

Above all soccer meant far more to the immigrant generations after

the war than it had to earlier groups.⁴⁷ Its salience was social, personal and familial as well as political. The combustible mixture would have tested the most proficient, well-organised and stable system of officiating. Australian refereeing at this stage hardly lived up to these criteria. It is very hard to avoid a charge of blaming the victim if one suggests that referees brought some of the problems of the 1950s and 1960s on their own heads. Yet while one stands appalled at the wanton attacks on officials which characterised much of this period, it seems arguable that the demand for competent referees had outstripped the supply.⁴⁸ While complaints of inconsistency, failure to apply the rules, remoteness from decision points through lack of fitness are endemic in the history of refereeing in Australia, as elsewhere, there does seem to be some special warrant for considering them at this time.⁴⁹ Training of referees in Victoria was limited, if Bob Randall's experience is typical. Having given up playing he went with a friend who was a referee to a meeting of the Association in 1955. Introduced to the members under any other business, he was presented with a copy of the 1947 issue of the laws of the game and invited to return the following week. There he and two others were quizzed by a member on their knowledge. He remembers answering three questions put to him. Next week he was in charge of his first game.⁵⁰

Roger Lamb remembers the 1950s and early 1960s as follows:

the game was far ahead of the standard of refereeing and of the administration ... we had to get organised. We had to drag the referees up by their bootstraps. We thought we were organised, but the standard, the gap was so wide between the actual play and the refereeing.⁵¹

According to Fred Hutchison:

It (the standard of refereeing) was low really. I was a Class Two when I came here from the UK ... I virtually had the match of the day the first game. I think they recognised my experience, let's give him something decent. From then on I refereed top games. I did lead up games for Olympic Games ... No referees in Australia were recognised as FIFA referees at this time.⁵²

Bob Randall also raises another issue which has not been seriously discussed in the context of the 1950s and 1960s. He argues that gambling on matches contributed to the passionate involvement in outcomes. He noticed this particularly in non-metropolitan games. What he had in

mind was betting on one's team. Hence a financial element might be added to other loyalties. The referee, as one of the major Influences on results, was thus a target if the favoured team lost. Other participants to whom I have spoken tend to discount gambling as a serious issue. More nefarious were attempts to influence outcomes directly through bribery, which could also put further illegitimate pressure on the officials. This suggestion remains to be properly explored, though examples do exist.⁵³ Roger Lamb emphasises that individuals and groups had invested so much time, effort, money and Indeed their lives in their clubs, that they found it intolerable to have all that put in jeopardy by Inadequate refereeing.⁵⁴

So the ambience in which soccer was played was probably the most testing it had ever been in Australia. Referees had to learn man-management fast in this cauldron, and even with good skills it was not always possible to avoid trouble. As we have seen, assaults on referees did not begin in the post-war period, but the overwhelming body of evidence suggests that they became more common. Most incidents never got beyond the tribunals of the soccer bodies, if they were reported at all, but others reached the courts. Bob Randall was assaulted twice and had his assailants prosecuted on both occasions. Some incidents became nationally known issues, as when David Yelland had his jaw broken by a supporter at a National Soccer League match at Middle Park.⁵⁵ The death of a referee after a match at Moreland led to the Referees suing the Victorian Soccer Federation as employer. The referee died of a heart attack, but had indicated at half-time that he was in fear for his safety and wanted police summoned.⁵⁶ The Federation lost the case and Roger Lamb remembers changes in the Workmen's Compensation Act following as a result.⁵⁷

We cannot be very precise about the level of violence offered to referees in this period. For some years in the late 1950s and early 1960s it appears that the tribunal had to deal with at least one attack on a referee every other week. I have tried to do some elementary quantification but even with the good run of the soccer and mainstream press which is now available for much of the period since 1950 there is no chance of creating a consistent series, which would indicate the extent of attacks on referees. I am only now, for the first time, obtaining records of the referees associations thanks to Roger Lamb and his colleagues.

The administration of refereeing and the relationships between referees

and the bodies in charge of soccer in Australia in the post-war period need to be studied further than I can do in this article. The question of who should appoint referees was argued back and forward between the referees associations and the state soccer bodies.⁵⁸ Legally referees were employees of the associations and later federations, so ultimate power was always going to rest there. In 1962 it was reported to the Australian Soccer Federation that the Queensland Referees — Brisbane Section had disaffiliated from the Association and joined the Federation and agreed that the Federation should have the right of appointment.⁵⁹ After attending a General Meeting of the Victorian Referees on 11 October 1962, Don Sutherland reported on discussion on future policy on appointments. The VSF Executive Committee recommended that a Referees Appointments Committee of three independent members be incorporated in the Constitution.⁶⁰

The Referees met the Executive of newly formed Victorian Soccer Federation in April 1962 and sought an increase from £5 to £8 for State League matches and from £2 to £5 for First Division games. The President of the Victorian Referees, George Pedler emphasised his members concern about the clubs responsibility for the safety of referees and that disciplinary action should be taken against clubs ordered to provide police at matches who failed to do so. The Executive agreed to both requests about safety but referred the fees to the VSF Council.⁶¹ The referees had earlier expressed concern about cases in which players sent off had begun playing again before a tribunal decision had been made.⁶² Eventually relations between the referees and the VSF reached the point where the Referees Association banned their members from attending meetings of the Disciplinary Committee of the Federation. Given the indications of concern about safety the Executive agreed to consider lifting the ban, while the VSF sought a better standard of reports from the referees. The Referees now had a panel of non-playing selectors carrying out inspections of referees.⁶³ They suggested that the VSF set up a sub-committee to receive and vet complaints from clubs about referees and pass on those they considered 'reasonable' to the Referee Selectors. The referees stated their case for greater recognition within the Federation and clubs.⁶⁴

There were still not enough referees to cover junior matches, though the VRA wanted a junior fixture list with a view to supplying referees on occasions and when possible. In April, Don Joiner, the Secretary of the Junior Management Committee could report that there were sufficient

referees to cover A grade matches in the junior age groups, but appealed for Under-16s and Under-18s to train as referees for the younger age-groups. The circular in which this was reported also contained the plea, 'Clubs are urged to see that when they provide a referee he is a capable person who will be FAIR TO BOTH SIDES (capitals in the original).'⁶⁵ By August, Joiner reported that there were 27 junior referees and argued for the starting of a coaching camp for referees.⁶⁶ The referees had their own radio program on 3KZ at this time, something which has not happened before or since in Victoria to my knowledge.

At its next meeting the State League Management Committee of the VSF requested a copy of the Referees grading list, obviously concerned about the quality of appointments to matches. The Council decided it was impractical to issue free passes to venues for referees, and only the referee would get a car pass for Olympic Park, not the linesmen.⁶⁷ The SLMC was asked to consider nominating a member to sit on the referees' selection panel, while other states, including New South Wales were to be contacted to see how they dealt with referees' selection.⁶⁸ Later in May the SLMC agreed to appoint Andy Kun, Fred Hutchinson and Lou de Bono as a Sub-Committee to investigate all aspects of refereeing with the Victorian Referees Association, with power to make decisions. They also wanted Roger Lamb, Luigi Cadelli, George Harrison, Joe Bartolo, Lou Stafrace and George Yelland appointed to State League matches at the earliest possible date, with Kaniadakis, Brown and Hecht as emergencies. The VRA was to be asked to affiliate legally with the VSF.⁶⁹

Problems of referee safety continued, however, with the VRA ruling that police protection must be assured at all matches where a player of a club has at some previous date assaulted a referee. The Investigation and Disciplinary (I and D) Committee refused to make such a ruling. Its then chair, P J O'Connor, SM advised that as an employee of the Federation a referee could not demand police protection if it were not a condition of employment:

The mere presence of police does not provide referees with much protection against players, if they decided to do so, players could seriously deal with a referee while the police were moving from outside the playing area to his assistance. The principal value of police is to escort referees and players on and off the pitch. Club officials could combine to do that almost as effectively as policemen.⁷⁰

At the following Council meeting the matter was discussed at length with Roger Lamb, Secretary of the Victorian Referees Association. The I and D Committee was empowered to order clubs to provide police for a limited period not exceeding one season.⁷¹ Trouble had arisen at a match between Austria and Richmond at Elwood on 12 May 1962, when referee Del-Colle was struck by an Austrian player. After an abortive tribunal at which the clubs would not identify the offender, a second meeting resulted in the player being suspended for life. Over the next three months the referees tried to enforce a demand for Austria to supply police protection at its home games, and on 3 August the referees association members decided unanimously not to referee Austrian games until police were in attendance.⁷² On 19 May 1962 referee E Grinpukel set some sort of record when he booked the entire Trident team for foul and abusive language and ungentlemanly conduct in the match against Yallourn.⁷³

From this low point refereeing in Australia gradually began to improve. Training and grading were introduced. The Management Committee of the ASF resolved in July 1962 to proceed with the formation of an Australian Federation of Soccer Referees, with a constitution prepared by the Secretary in accordance with the rules of the ASF.⁷⁴ The national body was created following the visit to Australia by Sir Stanley Rous *en route* to the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.⁷⁵ Rous had made it clear when he was in Australia for the 1956 Olympic Games that refereeing in Australia would not make progress until it had been unified under a single national body.

As part of the negotiations for the ending of Australia's suspension by FIFA a teaching seminar for referees was organised in 1964. Thereafter Bob Clark and Randall took up the running to establish a national refereeing body with the encouragement of George Pedler. The Australian Soccer Referees Federation was set up in Melbourne in 1968, with Pedler as first President.⁷⁶ After a few months the first secretary was replaced by Wally Bates, who held the position for seventeen years.⁷⁷ Leo Wilson was appointed National Director of Referees Coaching and in 1975 the first national meeting of Laws Tutors was held. Regional associations were gradually brought under the ASRF umbrella by Pedler and the dynamic Doug Rennie. First in New South Wales and then in Victoria, what eventually became the Australian Affiliated Soccer Referees Federation was instituted.

The aim was uniformity of refereeing interpretation throughout Australia and adherence to FIFA Directives. Australian referees gradually

began to raise their standards and in 1974 Tony Boskovic joined the Socceroos for the World Cup in West Germany.⁷⁸ Boskovic also officiated at Spain in 1982, and Chris Bambridge gained notoriety for a critical decision during the World Cup in Mexico in 1986. In 1994 I watched two Australian linesmen in action during the opening match in the World Cup in the USA as Germany played Bolivia.

Notes:

- 1 Philip Mosely, 'A Social History of Soccer in New South Wales, 1880-1956', unpub. PhD thesis, Uni. of Sydney, 1987; Philip Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History, 1950-1990*, Australian Sports Commission, Canberra, 1995; Bill Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1994; Philip Mosely and Bill Murray, 'Soccer', in Wray Vamplew and Brian Stoddart, eds, *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, CUP, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 213-30; Roy Hay, 'British Football, Wogball or the World Game?' Towards a Social History of Victorian Soccer', in John O'Hara, ed., *Ethnicity and Soccer in Australia*, Studies in Sports History no. 10, ASSH, Campbelltown, 1994, pp. 44-79; see also papers at the Xth Sporting Traditions Conference, Uni. of Queensland, June 1995 by Philip Mosely, Steve Georgakis and Bob Petersen; Johnny Warren and Andrew Dettre, *Soccer: The Australian Way*, Summit Books, Dee Why West, 1974; Sid Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, North Sydney, n. d., Egilberto Martin, *Juve! Juve!*, Elabor Helena Nominees, Brooklyn, 1990. I was encouraged to continue this work after hearing a stimulating talk to the Melbourne chapter of ASSH on football umpiring by Robin Grow. This article has also benefited from Philip Mosely's critical suggestions.
- 2 Don Campbell published the first autobiography of an Australian soccer referee in 1995, *The Campbell Files*, Adelaide, Margaret Bowden, 1995.
- 3 Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, Harvester, Sussex, 1980.
- 4 Umpires were first mentioned in laws of football in 1874, referees in 1881, Geoffrey Green, *History of the Football Association*, 1953, p. 61; see also Sheffield FA Variation of Rules, 1870, reproduced in Green, p. 94.
- 5 The Cheltenham Rules refer to a referee elected by the two umpires, Green, *History of the Football Association*, p. 15.
- 6 In 1882 referees were given power to award a goal for wilful handling of the ball to prevent a goal, but this was rescinded the following year. Green, *History of the Football Association*, p. 61.
- 7 Green, *History of the Football Association*, pp. 94 and 564.
- 8 A whistle was used to control the Nottingham Forest v Sheffield Wednesday match in 1878, *Four-Four-Two*, 7 Mar. 1995, p. 41.
- 9 Philip Mosely 'The Game: Early Soccer Scenery in New South Wales', *Sporting Traditions*, vol. 8 no. 2, May 1992, pp. 135-51 gives a fine account of the early phases of the game, including some discussion of changes in laws and officiating.
- 10 *Age*, 16 Aug. 1883.
- 11 *Argus*, 17 July 1885. According to Robin Grow, Australian Rules adopted the whistle in 1886, Notes on Paper to ASSH Melbourne Seminar, 27 Feb. 1995. The Victorian captain in 1885 was Gibbs of Prahran, *Argus*, 11 and 25 July 1885.
- 12 *Argus*, 16 July 1887, The *Argus* gives the umpire's initials as A E. See also, Sid Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, North Sydney, n. d., pp. 113-4. Grant says A A Gibb(s) was captain of the Victorian team in the first interstate match in 1883, but contemporary newspaper reports refer to Kier as the captain. *Age*, 17 Aug. 1883,

- Argus*, 17 Aug. 1883. The Victorians played in light blue, the New South Welshmen in dark blue! See also *Australasian*, 26 Apr. 1884, p. 526, for reference to A E Gibbs; Gibbs played and scored for a combined Prahran/South Melbourne team against NSW in 1887, *Argus*, 19 July 1887.
- 13 *Age*, 19 July 1887.
 - 14 *Age*, 19 July 1887.
 - 15 *Argus*, 14 July 1913.
 - 16 Charles Stephens wrote on soccer for the *Sydney Morning Herald* under the pseudonym of 'Caledonian', Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, p. 266. He was Secretary of the Caledonian Club and of New South Wales. The referee for the intercolonial game in 1887 was Mr A Parkinson, President of the Melbourne Rovers Club, *Argus*, 16 July 1887, p. 12.
 - 17 Mosely, 'The Game', p. 140.
 - 18 Mosely, 'The Game', p. 141.
 - 19 Grant, *Jack Pollard's Soccer Records*, pp. 230-1; Grant includes a selection of Australian referees pre- and post-Federation on these pages.
 - 20 *Sporting Globe*, 24 May 1933.
 - 21 *Geelong Advertiser*, 4 May 1925.
 - 22 Hay, 'British Football', p. 54; *Sporting Globe*, 3 Aug. 1927.
 - 23 *Sporting Globe*, 18 Apr. 1928.
 - 24 *Sporting Globe*, 9 June 1926.
 - 25 *Sporting Globe*, 25 July 1934.
 - 26 *Sporting Globe*, 29 Aug. 1934.
 - 27 *Sporting Globe*, 4 July 1928.
 - 28 *Sporting Globe*, 23 Aug. 1933.
 - 29 *Sporting Globe*, 21 June 1933. Owen Wilshaw reckoned that the referees were in part to blame for allowing the games to continue under such conditions. Police were present at the Hakoah match mentioned above, *Sporting Globe*, 23 Aug. 1933.
 - 30 *Geelong Advertiser*, 16 Aug. 1920; *Argus*, 12 July 1920: see also *Sporting Globe*, 30 Sept. 1933, for police intervention after a fight at Dandenong.
 - 31 The average crowd for VFL matches in 1936 was 15 674, while the attendance at the soccer Test match in Melbourne in 1939 was 14 896. *Geelong Advertiser*, 13 July 1936: *Argus*, 10 July 1939.
 - 32 See, for example, *Sporting Globe*, 18 Apr. 1928; 3 and 17 May 1933.
 - 33 Notes on VSFA Minutes in possession of Merv Green, Geelong.
 - 34 *Soccer News*, 1 May 1948, pp. 2-3.
 - 35 *Soccer News*, 1 May 1948, p. 5. Harry Armstrong, Secretary of VASFA, made the appeal.
 - 36 The double-header involving Juventus v Hellas and Wilhelmina v George Cross drew 18 738 on 1 July 1962. The average crowd at Olympic Park in Melbourne in the first half of 1962 was 5723, VSF Olympic Park Statistics, 17 July 1962, DSC. I am indebted to Don Sutherland, Vice-Chairman of the VSF in 1962 and currently a Trustee of the Federation, for giving me a chance to consult his collection of documents, which includes records of meetings prior to the establishment of the VSF and the minutes of the meetings of the first year of the Federation. Items from this source are indicated in footnotes by DSC. Copies of all these items are in the possession of the author. For crowds generally see Mosely and Murray, 'Soccer', p. 223.
 - 37 VASFA passed up the chance to use Toorak Park for Juventus home games on Sundays as a dangerous precedent. If other teams did so then the traditional Saturday fixture list would be upset. An enclosed ground was described as 'a rarity in soccer', *Sporting Globe*, 13 Apr. 1955.
 - 38 Fred Hutchison arrived in 1952 with English qualifications and his first game was at

- Olympic Park with a match between Juventus and Box Hill. Juventus was on its way to the top in Victorian soccer. It won the league that year. Interview with Fred Hutchison, 23 June 1992, tape recording in the possession of the author. Hutchison set up a training scheme for referees in Victoria. It was very basic in those days, but it was a start.
- 39 Interview with Bob Randall, 29 May 1995, tape recording in possession of the author.
- 40 Some members of the Victorian Soccer Federation Council wanted to know why he did not officiate at a State League match every Saturday, VSF Minutes of Council meeting, 1 May 1962, DSC.
- 41 *Soccer News*, 8 July 1961, p. 2.
- 42 *Soccer News*, 18 May 1959; p. iii, 25 May 1959, p. 5; Interview with Bob Randall, 29 May 1995.
- 43 Mosely and Murray, 'Soccer', p. 225.
- 44 Rous, *Football Worlds*, pp. 37-8.
- 45 *Soccer News*, 17 May 1958, p. 1.
- 46 See the various contributions to *Soccer News*, 2 Aug. 1958, pp. 4-5, including J H Donaldson, 'A Referee's Reflections', Don Sutherland's letter calling for sportsmanship and acceptance of decisions, Gino Santi, 'Give New Australians a Go', A Soccer Fan, 'Spitnicks'. The last of these being a reference to the launch of the first Soviet space satellite, Sputnik One.
- 47 Hay, 'British Football', for expansion of this point.
- 48 'The selection of referees for State League matches has caused great concern in the last few weeks. The Council (of VASFA), who once controlled the appointment of referees, and club officials have advocated drastic action. The present selection with the co-operation of the Referees' Association, the Council, State League and Metropolitan clubs is expected to bring a "temporary" solution to a "major" problem.' *Soccer News*, 28 May 1960, front page. See below footnote 58 for further discussion.
- 49 That most moderate of men Don Sutherland was moved to criticise the referees appointed to First Division matches in Victoria in 1961 and to suggest that the Metropolitan League Management Committee might have to approve referees in the same way as the State League Management Committee (SLMC) did, *Soccer News*, 6 May 1961, p. 4; See also Geoff Dobb, 'Oh, the Poor Ref', *Soccer News*, 27 May 1961, p. 1, criticising poor refereeing from the standpoint of someone who refereed both senior and junior matches and admitted to mistakes in both.
- 50 Interview with Bob Randall, 29 May 1995, tape recording in possession of the author. His referee's number was 34. On the assumption that a new referee would receive the highest registration number, this may give an indication of how few trained referees there were in 1955, a year before the Olympics came to Melbourne. By 1961 there were 66 referees available to cover 60 senior matches, Bob Lamb, 'Referee's Report', *Soccer News*, 20 May 1961, p. 4. Bob Lamb was actually Roger Lamb of the Victorian Soccer Referees Association.
- 51 Interview with Roger Lamb, 21 June 1995, tape recording in possession of the author.
- 52 Interview with Fred Hutchison, 23 June 1992, tape recording in the possession of the author; see also *Sporting Globe*, 1 June 1955, for praise by Geoff Bardsley for Hutchison's handling of the difficult JUST v Polonia game at the Showgrounds the previous Saturday. Bardsley was very critical of players who did not accept referees' decisions and his article is headed 'Wreckers Must Go!' Hutchison had abandoned the game after sending off the JUST centre forward Virba. Several players had to restrain Virba and Hutchison had to be escorted off by mounted police, *Sporting Globe*, 28 May 1955.

- 53 Roy Hay, "Making Aussies" or "What Soccer is all about": Soccer and European Migrants to Australia, 1945-93', Bradman, Balmain, Barellean and Bocce, Australian Culture and Sport Conference, Australian Sports Commission/ Australian Defence Force Academy conference at the Australian Institute of Sport, Canberra, 8-9 Oct. 1993.
- 54 Interview, Lamb, 21 June 1995.
- 55 The match was between Fitzroy Alexander and West Adelaide Hellas, both teams supported by the Greek community. The crowd was given as 3500. Laurie Schwab, 'Alexander in Strife over Mob Attack', *Age*, 10 Apr. 1978 p. 37.
- 56 The VSF opened a fund for the wife and three year old son of referee Ken Bailey who died while in charge of a first division match. The VSF donation was \$100. *Sporting Globe*, 24 June 1967.
- 57 Interview, Lamb, 21 June 1995.
- 58 'Sixty-one Refs. under Scrutiny', *Soccer News*, 28 May 1960. The VSRA submitted 13 Grade One, 22 Grade Two and 26 Grade Three referees to the VASFA Council. Nine of the first 13 were to be selected to officiate at State League matches.
- 59 Australian Soccer Federation, Minutes of Management Committee meeting, 7-8 July 1962, p. 1, DSC.
- 60 VSF Minutes of Executive meeting, 15 Oct. 1962, DSC. Approximately 40 referees attended the meeting of the VSRA. The referees agreed to the appointments being made by the VSF for the remainder of the season. Roger Lamb to VSF, 17 Oct. 1962, DSC. There had been mix-up over officials during the Dockerty Cup. The referee's fee was eventually paid by the VSF, but not those of the linesmen, VSF, Minutes of Executive meeting, 23 Oct. 1962, DSC.
- 61 VSF Minutes of Executive meeting, 10 Apr. 1962, pp. 1-2, DSC.
- 62 VSF Minutes of meeting, 8 Feb. 1962, p. 2, DSC.
- 63 It consisted of Bates, Curran, Hardwick, Hookings and MacDonald, VSF, Minutes of Executive meeting, 26 Apr. 1962, DSC.
- 64 VSF, Minutes of Executive meeting, 26 Apr. 1962. They sought passes to the official car park for games at Olympic Park.
- 65 VSF Junior Management Committee, Circular A/2, n.d., but late April 1962, DSC.
- 66 VSF Minutes of Council meeting, 21 August 1962, p. 2, DSC.
- 67 See also *Soccer Weekly*, 17 May 1962, p. 5.
- 68 VSF Minutes of Council meeting, 8 May 1962, DSC.
- 69 VSF, Minutes of SLMC meeting, 21 May 1962, DSC.
- 70 VSF, Stuart Beaton to Council members, 7 Aug. 1962, quoting the advice of the Chair of the I and D Committee, P J O'Connor, SM, DSC.
- 71 VSF, Minutes of Council meeting, 13 Aug. 1962, DSC.
- 72 Notes by Roger Lamb, 12 Aug. 1962 for Council meeting on 13 Aug. 1962, DSC.
- 73 *Soccer Weekly*, 24 May 1962, p. 1.
- 74 Australian Soccer Federation, Minutes of Management Committee meeting, 7-8 July 1962, p. 7, DSC.
- 75 Sir Stanley Rous, *Football Worlds: A Lifetime in Sport*, Faber, London, 1978, p. 183.
- 76 Minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Australian Soccer Referees Federation, Soccer House, Melbourne, 29-30 June 1968, p. 9. I am indebted to Roger Lamb for a copy of this document. Lamb was Minute Secretary of the Federation.
- 77 Wally Bates, Treasurer and Chairman of Selectors of VSRA, former player with Prahran and Victorian and Australian representative, both as player and referee, *Soccer News*, 6 May 1961, p. 4.
- 78 Boskovic was inducted into the Soccer Hall of Fame in 1999.