

TO FAIL TO PREPARE IS TO PREPARE TO FAIL!

A referee's performance for 80 minutes on a Saturday afternoon is dependant upon many factors:

- knowledge and interpretation of the laws
- experience
- fitness
- empathy
- etc.

However, no matter what grade a referee is, he can improve his performance by ensuring that his preparation and conditioning are appropriate.

This document covers two areas of peripheral activity which assist in bringing out the best from the referee, and players, for the crucial 80 minutes of play

Part One: From Reaching the Ground to Kick Off

The objective is to get the pre match activities completed as efficiently as possible and to ensure that responsibilities are delegated to the relevant persons.

Note: The following activities and sequence must be flexible to cater for the many exceptions and / or troublesome occurrences that may arise.

Lock valuables in car or remember to leave them with a trusted person

Make contact with (appointed) touch judges and agree responsibilities and timing for briefing

Make contact with home team skipper (or coach)

Make contact with advisor (if appointed) and agree procedures with him

Establish changing rooms for referee and both teams

Establish and inspect pitch (markings, flags, post paddings, cordoned off) and request remedial work if necessary

Make contact with away team skipper

Get skippers together as early as possible:

- toss (make a note of winner)

Discuss

- kick off time
- half time policy

- colours of shirts, shorts and socks
- replacements including front row capability
- touch judges (if club), who they are and what time you want to talk to them
- medical facilities and whether or not to stop play for injuries
- timings and locations for boot inspections and pre match briefings with teams
- what time you will want both teams to be on the pitch
- for a cup game, discuss repercussions of equal scores at full time.

After the discussion with the skippers

Change and dress appropriately for colour and temperature (physical discomfort will lead to mental discomfort)

Conduct boot inspection and pre match briefings with teams

Check watches and pens / pencils

Test whistles

Make out score card

Attend to bodily functions, including hydration

Warm up but acclimatise: don't spend too much time in a warm dressing room on freezing day

Set up comms kit with advisor

Advise teams of timing, at say, 10 minutes to kick off

Talk to club touch judges: when to flag, to be decisive (especially on touch near goal line), to agree between themselves before allowing or disallowing goal kicks

Talk to medical personnel

Ensure match balls available

Get teams on to the pitch at the agreed time

Give TJ flags to skippers if appropriate

Obtain decision on kick or end from skipper who won toss

Check touch judges/ assistant referees in position

Make a note of time and team kicking off

Check both teams ready

Start stop watch and blow whistle for start of game

Part Two: After the Match

Thank touch judges and medical personnel

Cool down by jogging and / or stretching

Rehydrate

Shower and dress

Have pleasant, open discussion with the advisor

Sign results cards

Discuss game, incidents (but not red cards) and laws with players and spectators in a friendly manner

Don't drink too much

Say goodbyes to skippers and to others with whom you have had interaction

Drive home safely

SUMMARY

You never get a second chance to make a first impression.

On the day of the match you are the manager – demonstrate your managerial ability from the first contact with the club (and others), but especially when you arrive at the club until the time you leave.

The preparation should give you confidence and that, hopefully, will be reciprocated in the confidence players and others will then have in you.

The impression you have given can have lasting benefits when you come across these teams in the future.

Get the admin out of the way as soon as possible after arriving at the ground

Whenever possible, give the responsibility to the captains or other appropriate persons

*Mike Jacques
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