

Dear Fellow Referee

First of all my thanks on behalf of the Management Committee of the EOFL for registering with the league for the season 2016-17. We are anticipating another challenging yet enjoyable season and hope to be able to support you in your refereeing throughout the year whether as a referee or an assistant or both.

For those of you that have chosen the route of promotion in the new season - we are here to support you achieving your goal - if you have any questions, particular issues or challenges with the games you officiate on - be aware that the league is here to support you - Alan Romain, Bernie Oram, Mark Irvine and myself have our details in the league handbook and we are all here to provide support to all our referees - whether going for promotion or to just officiate on the league - feel free to contact any of us if we can assist you with any aspect of your game.

The season will begin on Saturday 27 August 2016, details of the matches for this date along with the appointments of the officials will be sent out as soon as the Hon Fixtures Secretary has completed the match details. The fixtures for the month of September will also be compiled as soon as possible and again the appointments will be advised to you all when known. Please note that the EOFL website will be regularly updated with information on referees throughout the season, please ensure you visit the website for these updates.

This will be my first season as Referee Appointments Officer for the EOFL - so I will ask for your patience and understanding if in the early stages I make the odd error - please bear with me - together with the support of my fellow officers - I am sure I will get into gear - but it may take a couple of months !

Now a couple of very important points ahead of the season start:

1) Referee Administration

Regarding the administration for referees, you are all aware of the need to complete the match result form which is available to you on the web site via the menu at the bottom of each page - please ensure it is completed correctly and on time on every occasion and returned as required to the e-mail address, results@eofl.co.uk , shown at the bottom of the form - no later than 48 hours after the match - the league fines the member clubs for incorrect administration - we expect therefore that our registered referees will complete all administration on time in full. The officers involved also appreciate the timely return of the match result forms to be able to complete the league administration. Please support Bernie throughout the season and complete all match reports on time with all the relevant boxes complete.

Of particular note is the reporting of member clubs or players who fail to adhere to the requirements of the league rule on Technical Areas. For clarification on this rule please visit the EOFL website or read Rule 10(L) in the handbook. Please ensure you advise the member clubs of this instruction at ALL your matches and report any breach of the rule on the result sheet. It is important that we all adhere to the rule for consistency and support to fellow referees throughout the season.

2) Discipline

Every referee is also required to fully report any match misconduct in the form of a red/yellow card to the ECFA, AND for reporting a member of a club or the club itself for any misconduct during or after the match - there are no exceptions to this - and I am sure you all understand the consequences on you personally if you fail to report any misconduct. If you experience any incidence of verbal or physical abuse it must be reported to the league and the ECFA and you must make the Referee Appointments Office aware immediately after the match. Remember the league officers are here to help and will do everything possible to support you in such cases, **they must never go unreported.**

3) Standard Requirement

I request that all of the referees take note of and read Rule 13 in the EOFL handbook, it provides you with important information for the season ahead and the standard requirements of our match day officials. Please arrive at your allocated match on time, adhere to our dress code requirements and ensure you communicate with both teams on your arrival to ensure they know you are there and ready to officiate.

If any of you require a league tie please contact me and I will arrange delivery.

4) Laws of the game Update Training

I am sure you are all aware of the amendments and changes to the Laws of the Game that have been implemented for the new season. The County FA and your local Referee Association have arranged a number of training sessions to be held at various locations. It is important that you take advantage of the opportunity to attend one of these sessions and I encourage you to do so. At the same time if you are not already a member of the local referee association this may provide you the opportunity to do so. Please contact James Lisher by email at James.Lisher@essexfa.com directly if you require any further information on the dates of these sessions.

Finally, in this first newsletter, let me take the opportunity to personally thank John Cook for establishing an excellent standard of refereeing on the league, I trust I will be able to build on the success with the team I have involved in referring and with all of your individual support throughout the season.

I am looking forward to being of service in the season and I hope seeing a number of you progress in your refereeing in the year.

Yours in Sport

Kevin Pratt
Hon Referee Appointments Officer
Essex Olympian Football League