

Referee Committee's Report to the Central Board Meeting, January 2008

International affairs

The new ranking system of the IFF's RC with the new experience classifications (levels 1 to 3) constitutes a significant step in the right direction. Today, as needed referees, with the appropriate level of experience can now be specifically deployed at each of the growing number of international tournaments. At various tournaments the Committee has tried to combine experienced international IFF referee pairings with other less experienced referees who come from newer IFF member countries. The mutual exchange of experience further reinforced by the presence of international observers had a positive effect on the development of all concerned.

The growing number of tournaments could be more or less always covered as desired. Today, both teams and referees cooperate well, so there are now few problems during international matches. Respect and mutual acceptance now prevail between referees and teams so from the RC's standpoint the number of high-risk games has been reduced. The clear rules, international exchange of experience in the field of refereeing, and the CB's support are important contributory components to this situation.

Since summer 2007, the Committee has been able to assign IFF tournament referees even earlier (in some cases 12 weeks before the actual games). Because there is now a larger choice of referees on various levels in different countries last-minute indisposition or injury can be coped with successfully without causing enormous additional costs. For example, due to teamwork between the Swiss Unihockey RC and Stefan Kratz at the U19 World Championships in Switzerland, the Norwegian referees (injury) could be replaced with a pair of Swiss referees at extremely short notice.

Referee observation

Well-qualified observers could be assigned to cover all IFF tournaments, however, there are still too few international observers with refereeing experience. Here, in cooperation with the Associations, the IFF RC has to meet the challenge of training further individuals who will be able to provide competent support in the field of international observation.

Happily, the RC management can count on people like Klaus Koskela and Thomas Thim. Their experience and their flexibility with respect to days in attendance are the most important components in actively implementing the IFF RC's tasks. In addition, both contribute to international training days as part of the IFF's Development Programme. I would like to thank both them and their Associations (FIN, SWE) very much for their assistance.

Ideas for the future

In view of the fact that such international expertise among observers can be built up at tournaments other than international ones, the RC will once again have to go into this question more deeply. For example, international exchanges could take place during the championship—at least with neighbouring countries. New solutions need to be created in this field. Such should ensure that IFF observer know how is maintained in the future without putting too great a strain on the Associations' budgets. (Such models are already in function for the exchange of international referees.)

Thanks

Finally, to close my report, I would also like to express my thanks. Recently, the CB decided that those in Referee Management would also receive a daily allowance (CHF 50 per competition day). This is most welcome and shows that the work in the IFF refereeing sector is appreciated and is politically acceptable to the Associations.

On behalf of all referees, observers and the RC management, I would also like to thank both the CB and the RACC for their constant and good cooperation during tournaments.

My thanks go to all member Associations for their work in the field of refereeing and referee observation and I am looking forward to next year with all the challenges it will bring in refereeing as well as internationally in tournaments and the World Championships.

I would like to thank Stefan Kratz and the members of the Referee Commission for their loyal support and the CB for the understanding shown to the international commission, which I chair.

Thomas Gilardi
Chairman IFF RC