

**RESEARCH
AND
REPORTS**



REVIEW OF CONDUCT IN TECHNICAL AREAS

**Report by the
League Managers Association**

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**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE PREMIER LEAGUE**



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01

INTRODUCTION



In late 2010 the League Managers Association (LMA) commissioned the Lawrie McMenemy Centre for Football Research (LMCFR) to conduct a review of technical areas. The review included analyses of the rules and regulations as they relate to technical areas, the physical dimensions of technical areas at Premier League and Football League stadia, and Football Association disciplinary data. It also included the perspectives of managers from the Premier League and the Football Leagues, and the Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL) in respect of working in, and managing, technical areas. The report highlighted a number of potential issues and made a number of recommendations, some which were addressed relatively quickly including a change to Premier League rules and others that require ongoing dialogue between the games key stakeholders.

The intention of this update to the original review is to focus exclusively on the conduct of personnel in technical areas. To this end the update includes a new review of disciplinary data provided by The Football Association. This data can now be traced across a number of seasons and, therefore, provides a more meaningful dataset for the analysis of technical area conduct. Select Group and National List match officials were also questioned as part of this update. Match officials were provided with a questionnaire that was used to capture their perceptions of conduct in technical areas and the management of personnel within them. The update also includes an analysis of the rules relating to technical area conduct in a range of other sports leagues. Here, there may be value in considering the management of conduct in a number of American professional sports leagues where, arguably, the sanctions for conduct are more clearly defined.

I would like to thank all of the match officials who took the time to respond when questioned for this update. Thanks also go to The Football Association for providing disciplinary data, and to the LMA for their help and support.

Dr Richard Elliott

Director

Lawrie McMenemy Centre for Football Research

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OVERVIEW



This update has been commissioned by the League Managers Association (LMA) to better understand conduct within technical areas, that being the marked area adjacent to the pitch in which a manager and coaching staff are permitted to stand, and the 'dugout', in whatever form that might take.

The intention of the report is to provide:

- An analysis of the rules as they relate to technical area conduct in the Premier League and Football Leagues.
- An analysis of Football Association disciplinary data as it relates to conduct within technical areas.
- Analysis of match officials' perceptions of conduct and its management within technical areas.
- An examination of the management of conduct in other professional sports leagues.

Rules and regulations as they relate to conduct in technical areas are derived from FIFA, Premier League, Football League and Professional Game Match Officials Ltd (PGMOL) documentation.

The disciplinary data published within this report has been provided by The Football Association from the Casetracker database.

The report reflects the views of PGMOL match officials. PGMOL was formed in 2001 to provide match officials for all professional football matches played in England.

Rules and regulations as they relate to conduct in other sports leagues have been obtained from official league documentation.

03

SUMMARY



Following an analysis of conduct in technical areas, this update has identified a number of findings that should be read in conjunction with the reports Recommendations in section 4.0. In summary, the analysis has identified that:

- The rules relating to technical area conduct and its management could be more specific.
- Whilst there was an increase in technical area offences during the 2013/14 season, it is too early to identify any real trends in respect of technical area conduct.
- The majority of technical area offences are charged to managers.
- The majority of technical area offences occur in League One and League Two.
- The most common offence is verbal abuse of match officials.
- Match officials believe that the introduction of a clearly defined code of conduct for technical area occupants could improve behaviour.
- Match officials believe that the introduction of a warning system used during matches could help to improve the behaviour of technical area occupants.
- A number of match officials are unsure of the rules dictating what is/ is not deemed responsible behaviour in technical areas.
- Match officials would benefit from improved training to manage conduct within the technical areas.
- American professional sports leagues would appear to have the most specific sanctions for the management of behaviour in bench areas. Of these leagues the National Basketball Association (NBA) would seem to provide the best example.
- This update should be read in conjunction with the full LMA Review of Technical Areas available at: www.leaguemanagers.com/news/news-7002.html.

04

RECOMMENDATIONS



As a result of the various analyses that have been conducted as part of this update, it is possible to make a series of recommendations that can, potentially, enhance the behaviour of technical area personnel and improve officiating practices for match officials. The recommendations of this update are as follows:

4.1

The LMA in conjunction with PGMOL, The Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League should consider the development of a clearly defined technical area 'code of conduct' for managers (and other technical area occupants). This code of conduct should explicitly state the behaviours that are considered irresponsible. It should be distributed to, and discussed with, all managers (and associated technical area occupants) and should be used by match officials as the basis by which they objectively judge the behaviour of technical area personnel. It should be noted that the current PGMOL directives provide a sound base from which to develop a code of conduct. These directives should, however, be redrafted with enhanced specificity and promoted to both technical area occupants (managers specifically) and match officials (specifically those who are currently unclear of the directives relating to what is/is not deemed to be irresponsible behaviour).

4.2

The LMA in conjunction with PGMOL, The Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League should consider the introduction of a warning system to be used during matches in respect of technical area behaviour. The system should be used for conduct that is deemed irresponsible, but short of dismissible.

4.3

PGMOL, in conjunction with the LMA, should devise a training programme for fourth officials specifically in respect of managing technical areas. The LMA should support this initiative by providing opportunities for match officials and managers to engage positively in dialogue in respect to technical area behaviour.

4.4

The LMA, PFA and PGMOL may wish to consider opening a series of dialogues with other professional sports leagues and officials groups, particularly those in the United States, to discuss management of bench personnel and to share best practice.

05

RULES RELATING TO TECHNICAL AREA CONDUCT



The rules relating to technical areas and their use are set out in a number of documents including FIFA's Laws of the Game, the Premier League handbook and the Football League regulations. These rules cover the dimensions of technical areas, the persons permitted to occupy them, the role of the fourth official and protocols for the dismissal of technical area occupants. Interestingly the rules as they relate to the conduct of technical area occupants are relatively sparse with only three specific references being made:

- The FIFA Laws of the Game state that: "The coach and other occupants of the technical area must behave in a responsible manner."
- The Premier League code of conduct for managers (Appendix 5 to the rules) states (without specific reference to technical areas) that: "A manager shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that Players and other employees under his control accept and observe the authority and decisions of Match Officials and to promote the highest standards on the field of play generally."
- The Football League regulations state that: "Clubs must clearly indicate on the team sheet the team official responsible for the conduct of personnel on the trainers' bench." Additionally, the regulations state that: "All such personnel must comply with any instruction under this Regulation from any Match Officials, including the reserve/fourth official."

A further reference to the management of technical area conduct is made in the FIFA Laws of the Game in respect of the role of the Fourth Official. These rules state:

- He [the fourth official] has the authority to inform the referee of irresponsible behaviour by any occupant of the technical area.

More detailed directives issued by PGMOL provide greater specificity with respect to the management of conduct in technical areas. These directives dictate that, before the match, the fourth official:

- shall remind the coaches that they must remain within the confines of the technical area during the match.
- shall instruct the physio/doctor that they must not enter the field of play without first receiving the permission of the referee.

Additionally, the directives dictate that, during the match, the fourth official:

- will supervise the technical area to maintain order and inform the referee of **irresponsible** behaviour by any occupant of the technical area. **Irresponsible behaviour** may be defined as, but not exclusive to:
 - any person who leaves the technical area to remonstrate with the Referee, an Assistant Referee, opponents or members of the opposition technical area
 - any act of abusive, insulting, offensive or threatening language and/or gesture
 - persistently failing to comply with the Laws of the Game, League Regulations, Competition Rules or the request of the Fourth Official
 - shall ensure that only those personnel named on the official team sheet occupy the technical area and, should advise the Referee of any verbal abuse from occupants within the technical area
 - is expected to control the technical area in a preventative rather than confrontational manner. If the occupants of the technical area indulge in serious misconduct the Fourth Official must inform the referee immediately.

06

DISCIPLINARY DATA ANALYSIS

>> Before the 2010/11 season, The Football Association did not specify within disciplinary data if an E3 offence (behavioural misconduct) occurred within or around the technical area. In this respect, it was difficult to determine if an offence occurred within the technical area, or was, for example, related to a media comment. Since the 2010/11 season The Football Association has added technical area offences to their fast-track system meaning that it is easier to identify them. The following data, derived from The Football Association's Casetracker database, provides an overview of technical area disciplinary offences recorded since the 2010/11 season.

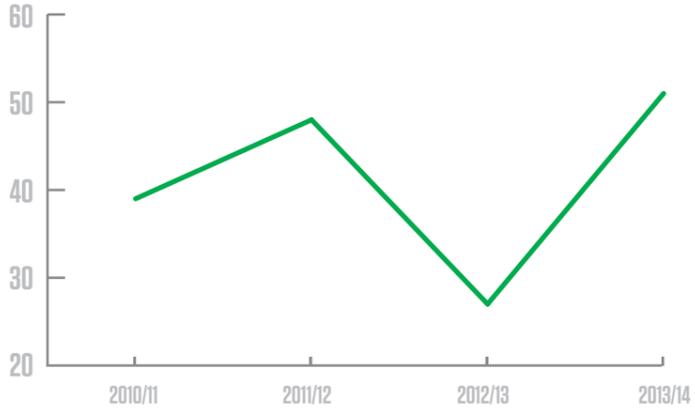


Figure 1 shows the total number of technical area offences for the last four seasons. Whilst there was an increase in offences during the 2013/14 season, no specific trends can be identified.

FIGURE 1:
NUMBER OF OFFENCES BY SEASON

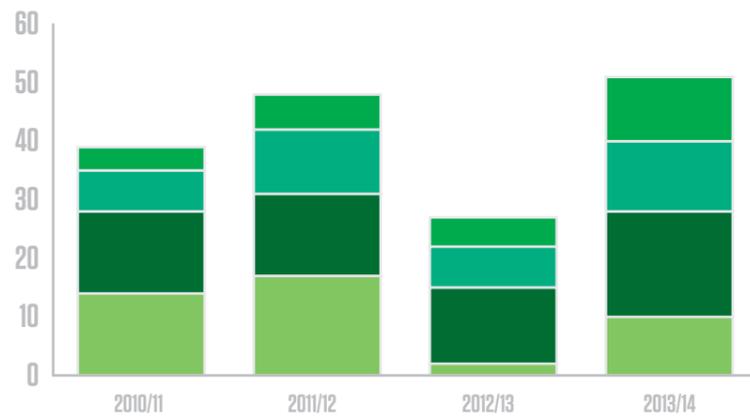


Figure 2 shows the distribution of offences by league. The data show that the majority of offences occur in League One and League Two. Fewer offences occur in the Championship and fewer still in the Premier League.

FIGURE 2:
DISTRIBUTION OF OFFENCES BY LEAGUE

■ Premier League ■ Championship ■ League 1 ■ League 2

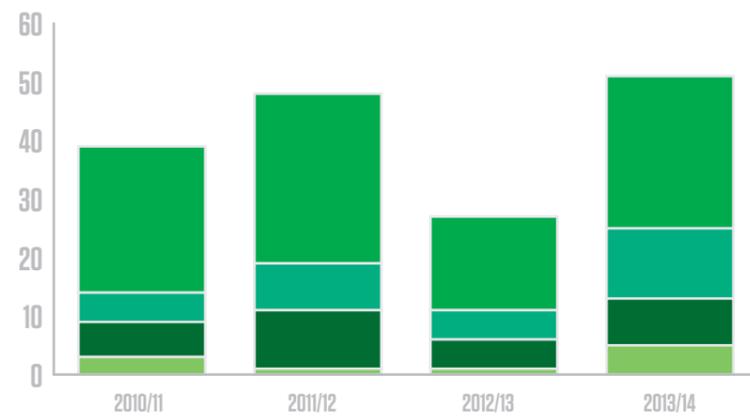


Figure 3 shows the distribution of offences based on technical area personnel type. These data have been split to show offences recorded to managers, assistant managers, coaches, and others including Club Officials (recorded as such by The FA), and physiotherapists. The data show that the majority of offences were recorded to managers, with assistant managers and coaches being recorded for similar numbers of offences. Offences recorded to other personnel were minimal.

FIGURE 3:
DISTRIBUTION BY PERSONNEL

■ Managers ■ Assistant Managers ■ Coaches ■ Other

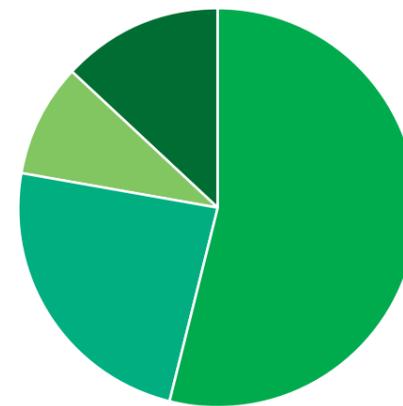


Figure 4 shows the data breakdown by type of offence. Whilst The FA don't specify particular types of offences when recording them, it was possible to categorise offences into one of four types: verbal abuse of match officials, abuse of opposing staff, deliberately leaving the technical area (most commonly to coach) and other offences which included acts such as kicking the ball away, holding up play or kicking/throwing water bottles or other equipment. The data show that the majority of offences related to the verbal abuse of match officials. Additionally, a number of offences related to the abuse of opposing club staff within technical areas. A minority of offences were recorded for deliberately leaving the technical area and other irresponsible behaviours.

FIGURE 4:
COMBINED OFFENCES 2010/11-2013/14

■ Verbal abuse of match officials ■ Abuse of opposing staff ■ Deliberately leaving technical area ■ Other

SUMMARY

- It is too early to identify any real trends in the volume of technical area offences. The data do show an increase in the 2013/14 season. However, this follows a low in the previous season.
- More offences are recorded in League One and League Two than they are in the Championship and Premier League.
- The majority of offences are recorded to managers.
- The most common offence is verbal abuse of match officials.

07

THE MATCH OFFICIALS' PERSPECTIVE



As part of this update match officials were questioned in respect to conduct in technical areas and its management. In total 75 match officials returned data; the following is an analysis of that data.

Q1: IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR BY STAFF IN TECHNICAL AREAS IS COMMON:

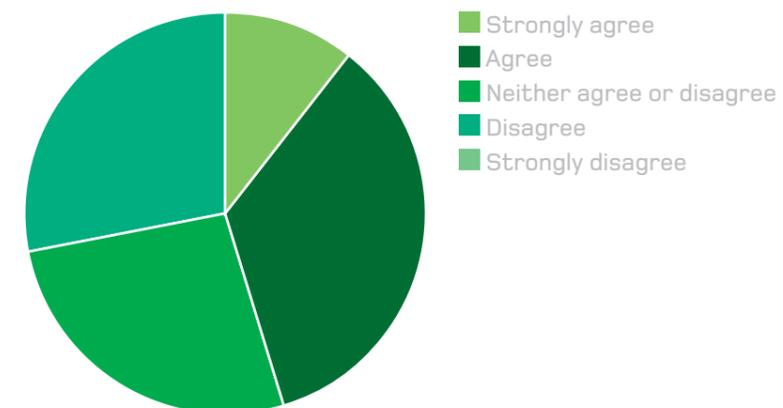


FIGURE 5:

The first question match officials were asked was whether they thought that irresponsible behaviour in technical areas was common. The responses were mixed. 34 of the 75 match officials either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, whilst 20 neither agreed or disagreed and 21 disagreed.

Q2: WHEN IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR DOES OCCUR IT IS MOST LIKELY TO BE MANIFESTED AS:

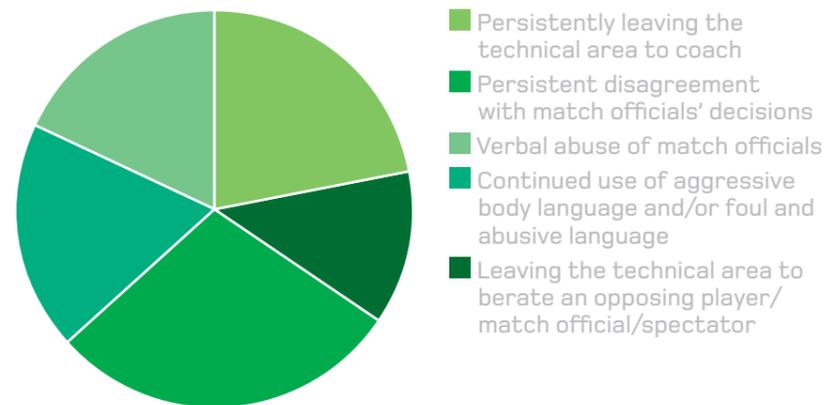


FIGURE 6:

Question two asked match officials to categorise the sorts of irresponsible behaviour that was manifested when it did occur. Figure 6 shows that the most common problem was technical area staff persistently disagreeing with match officials' decisions. This was followed by persistently leaving the technical area to coach, use of aggressive body language and/or foul and abusive language and verbal abuse of match officials.

Q3: IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR IN TECHNICAL AREA IS LIKELY TO BE BORNE OF FRUSTRATION WITH TEAM/PLAYER PERFORMANCE:

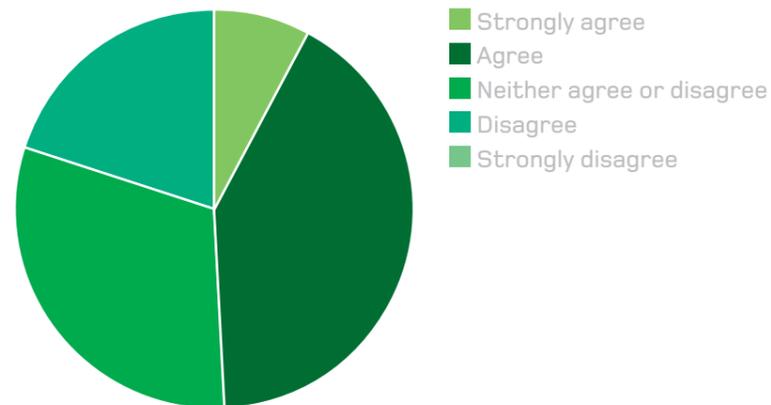


FIGURE 7:

Question three sought to establish if the match officials believed that irresponsible behaviour was borne of frustration. The response here was largely split. Some officials did believe this to be the case, whilst others did not.

Q4: IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR IN TECHNICAL AREAS IS LIKELY TO BE BORNE OF FRUSTRATION WITH OFFICIALS' DECISIONS:

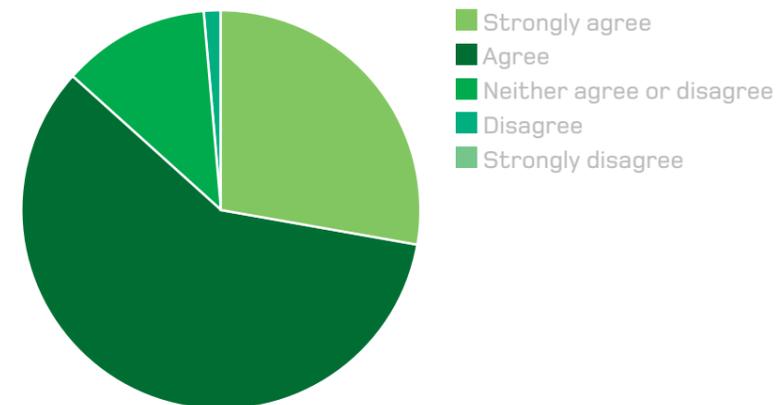


FIGURE 8:

However, when match officials were asked if they felt that irresponsible behaviour in technical areas was borne of frustration with match officials' decisions, the response was far clearer with the majority either strongly agreeing or agreeing.

Q5: MANAGERS AND COACHES ARE MORE LIKELY TO BEHAVE IRRESPONSIBLY COMPARED TO OTHER STAFF IN TECHNICAL AREAS:

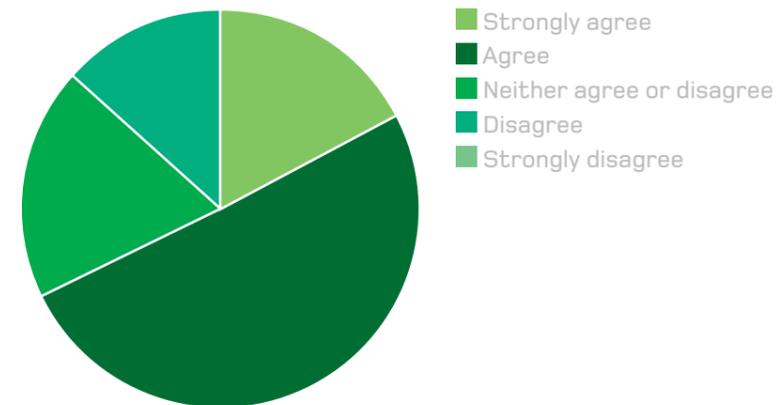


FIGURE 9:

The match officials were then asked if they thought that managers and coaches were more likely to behave irresponsibly compared to other technical area occupants. Figure 9 shows that the match officials largely believed this to be the case.

Q6: ARE THE RULES IN RESPECT OF WHAT IS/IS NOT RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR IN TECHNICAL AREAS CLEAR?:

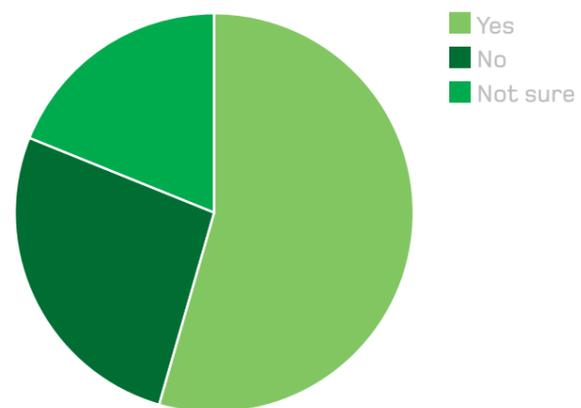


FIGURE 10:

Match officials were asked if the rules in respect of what is/is not deemed to be responsible behaviour in technical areas are clear. Interestingly whilst 41 of the officials said that they were, 34 officials were either unsure or responded that they felt the rules are not clear.

Q7: CAN THESE RULES BE MEASURED OBJECTIVELY OR DO YOU USE YOUR OWN SUBJECTIVE JUDGEMENT TO DETERMINE WHAT IS / IS NOT RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR IN TECHNICAL AREAS?:

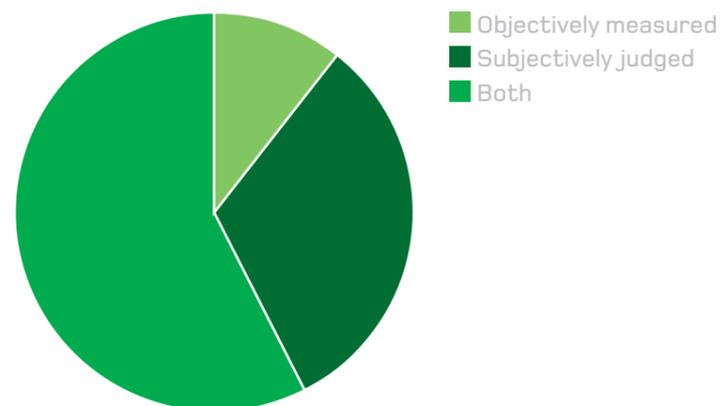


FIGURE 11:

The following question then asked the match officials if they used objective measures by which to judge technical area behaviour, their own subjective judgement or both. The majority of the match officials believed that they used both; some subjectively judged behaviour, whilst a minority believed that their judgement was based on objective measures alone.

Q8: WOULD THE INTRODUCTION OF A CLEARLY DEFINED 'CODE OF CONDUCT' FOR TECHNICAL AREA OCCUPANTS MAKE MANAGING BEHAVIOUR IN THIS AREA EASIER?:

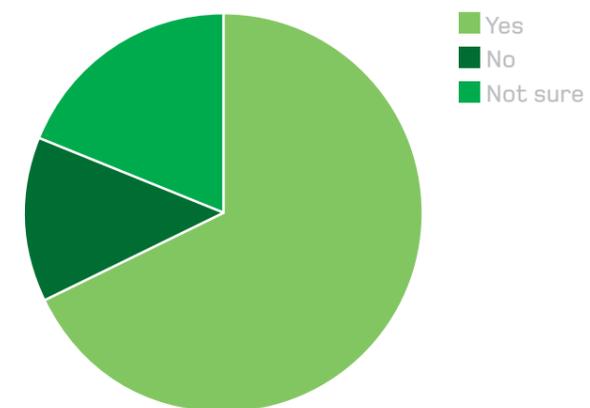


FIGURE 12:

The match officials were asked if they felt that the introduction of a clearly defined 'code of conduct' for technical area occupants could help to improve behaviour. Nearly three quarters of the respondents felt that the introduction of such a code could be beneficial.

Q9: COULD THE INTRODUCTION OF A WARNING SYSTEM USED DURING THE MATCH IMPROVE BEHAVIOUR IN TECHNICAL AREAS?:

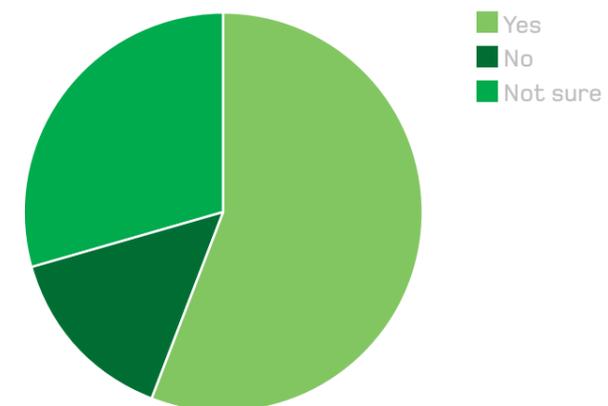


FIGURE 13:

Match officials were also asked if the introduction of a warning system used during matches could help to improve behaviour. Whilst not viewed as positively as the introduction of a code of conduct, a majority of match officials still felt that this could be valuable.

Q10: FOURTH OFFICIALS SHOULD BE GIVEN MORE POWERS TO MANAGE THE TECHNICAL AREA EFFECTIVELY:

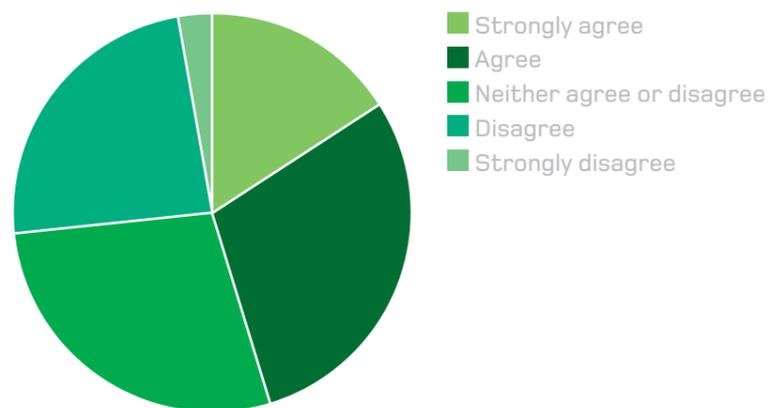


FIGURE 14:

The final three questions related specifically to the fourth official. Match officials were asked if the fourth official should (if possible) be given more power to manage the technical area. Here the responses were mixed. Whilst some officials thought that fourth officials should be given more powers, others felt that they should not.

Q11: ARE FOURTH OFFICIALS GIVEN ADEQUATE TRAINING TO MANAGE TECHNICAL AREAS?:

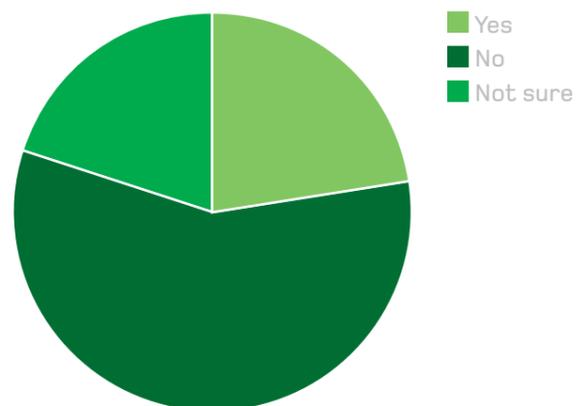


FIGURE 15:

However, when the match officials were asked if fourth officials were given adequate training to manage technical areas, the majority of respondents said no.

Q12: SHOULD FOURTH OFFICIALS IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE AND FOOTBALL LEAGUE BE NATIONAL LIST REFEREES?:

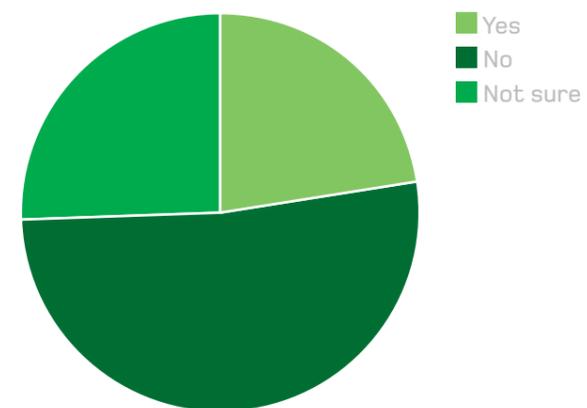


FIGURE 16:

Finally, match officials were asked if fourth officials officiating at Premier League and Football League matches should be National List referees. The majority of respondents suggested that this should not be the case.

SUMMARY

The majority of match officials felt that the introduction of a clearly defined code of conduct for technical area occupants could improve behaviour.

The majority of match officials believed that the introduction of a warning system used during matches could help to improve the behaviour of technical area occupants.

Match officials believed that irresponsible behaviour in technical areas is likely borne of frustration with officials' decisions.

A number of the respondents were unsure of the rules dictating what is/ is not deemed responsible behaviour in technical areas.

Match officials would benefit from improved training to manage conduct within the technical areas.

08

MANAGEMENT OF CONDUCT
IN OTHER SPORTS LEAGUES

Benches and technical areas are commonplace in many team sports. The initial review of technical areas includes an analysis of the rules and regulations as they relate to these areas in a number of sports and leagues. This update focuses specifically on the rules and regulations as they relate to conduct in technical areas. In this respect, the most clearly defined rules and regulations in respect of conduct are to be found within the rule structures of the four main North American sports leagues. Rules and regulations relating to conduct in technical areas are far less clearly defined in English sports leagues.

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (NBA)

>> Team benches are a fundamental part of basketball where rapid and multiple substitutions occur throughout the game. In this respect, the rules governing the conduct of personnel using them are specific.

>> A 'technical area' exists in front of the bench that extends from a 28' hash mark to the courts baseline. The penalties for stepping outside of this predetermined area are clearly stated in NBA rule 3 section IV (a) which states:

The coaches position may be on or off the bench from the 28' hash mark to the baseline. They are permitted between the 28' hash mark and the midcourt line to relay information to players but must return to the bench side of the 28' hash mark immediately or be called for a non-unsportsmanlike technical foul. A coach is not permitted to cross the midcourt line and violators will be assessed an unsportsmanlike technical foul immediately.

>> Penalties for technical fouls vary in the NBA but include uncontested free throws (shots at the basket from the free throw line), ejection from the game and fines.

- >> Technical fouls can also be awarded for improper conduct of bench personnel. NBA rule 12 section V (a) states:

An official may assess a technical foul, without prior warning, at any time. A technical foul(s) may be assessed to any player on the court or anyone seated on the bench for conduct which, in the opinion of an official, is detrimental to the game.

- >> To assist officials in determining what is/is not appropriate conduct the NBA sets out a series of guidelines in section (d) of rule 12. These state:

A technical foul shall be assessed for unsportsmanlike tactics such as:

- (1) Disrespectfully addressing an official
- (2) Physically contacting an official
- (3) Overt actions indicating resentment to a call
- (4) Use of profanity
- (5) A coach entering onto the court without permission of an official
- (6) A deliberately thrown elbow or any attempted physical act with no contact involved
- (7) Taunting

Cursing or blaspheming an official shall not be considered the only cause for imposing technical fouls. Running tirades, continuous criticism or griping may be sufficient cause to assess a technical. Excessive misconduct shall result in ejection from the game.

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE (NHL)

- >> Similarly to the NBA, the NHL rules include specific references to conduct. These are set out in rule 39 – Abuse of Officials, and include penalties that result in one active player being removed from the ice for a period of 2 minutes. Rule 39.1 states:

General description – A player, goalkeeper, Coach or non-playing person shall not challenge or dispute the rulings of an official before, during or after the game. A player, goalkeeper, Coach or non-playing person shall not display unsportsmanlike conduct including, but not limited to, obscene, profane or abusive language or gestures, comments of a personal nature intended to degrade an official, or persist in disputing a ruling after being told to stop or after being penalized for such behavior.

- >> A more specific set of rulings set out in rule 39.3 are used to regulate the behaviour of bench personnel. These infractions carry a bench minor penalty that, again, results in a player being removed from the ice:

A bench minor penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be assessed under this rule for the following infractions:

- (i) Any Coach or non-playing person who bangs the boards with a stick or other object at any time, showing disrespect for an officials' decision
- (ii) Any unidentifiable player or a Coach or non-playing person who uses obscene, profane or abusive language or gesture directed at on or off-ice officials or uses the name of any official coupled with any vociferous remarks
- (iii) Any player, Coach or non-playing person interferes in any manner with any official including the Referees, Linesmen, Game or Penalty Timekeepers or Goal Judges in the performance of their duties.

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE (NFL)

>> The rules governing the conduct of personnel on sidelines and bench areas for American Football are extensive. This might be expected given the numbers of players and team officials who are involved in the game at any one time. The majority of these rules relate to who can access the bench area and field of play, however. Rules specifically in respect to conduct are more limited. Rule 13, Article 8 states that:

Non-player personnel of a club (e.g., management personnel, coaches, trainers, equipment men) are prohibited from making unnecessary physical contact with or directing abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures at opponents, game officials, or representatives of the League.

>> Any offence that breaches rule 3 article 8 is deemed to be unsportsmanlike conduct; an infraction that carries the penalty of a 15 yard loss.

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL (MLB)

>> The rules of Major League Baseball (MLB) provide provisions for both benches and the behaviour of managers, coaches and players. These include one specific reference in respect of the managers' responsibility for his team's conduct. Rule 2.00 section (b) states:

The manager shall always be responsible for his team's conduct, observance of the official rules, and deference to the umpires.

>> More detail in regards to conduct is provided in rule 4.06 section (a) that states:

No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer or batboy shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box or on the playing field, or elsewhere –

- (1) Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign a demonstration by spectators;
- (2) Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, an umpire, or any spectator;

(3) Call "Time" or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive.

(4) Make intentional contact with the umpire in any manner.

>> Further sanctions in regards to conduct are set out in the duties of the umpire. Rule 9.01 section (d) states:

Each umpire has the authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified persons from the playing field.

>> Additionally, rule 9.05 section (b) states:

When any trainer, manager, coach or player is disqualified for a flagrant offence such as the use of obscene or indecent language, or an assault upon an umpire, trainer, manager, coach or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the league president within four hours after the end of the game.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The rules governing conduct in the NBA would seem to be the most specific in terms of what conduct is/is not permitted
- However, all of the major American sports leagues have reasonably clear guidelines in respect of bench conduct
- In some cases, conduct infractions result in in-game penalties (e.g. free throws, player penalties and yardage losses)
- These examples should not be viewed as 'best-practice', rather, a series of potentially appropriate benchmarks for comparative purposes.

