

Whether it's in the Premier League or local Sunday league, there's one person every player, manager and fan needs for a game to go ahead: the referee! It's one of football's hardest jobs, but it's also a lot of fun!

Kickaround: When did you first get interested in football?

Charlie: I got the football bug when I was four and my Dad took me to West Ham. I started playing at school and joined my local Sunday team when I was eight.

K: When did you start refereeing?

C: I was 14, which is the minimum age required to become a referee. A couple of reasons attracted me, one was the money! You get paid £10 to £40 per game depending on the level. Secondly, I realised that I was not going to make it as a player but I wanted to be involved in football, so I gave refereeing a go!

K: Do you remember the first game you refereed?

C: It was my younger sister's team and I awarded a penalty against her for handball! I don't think she's ever forgiven me.

I was nervous but you use all the training from the referee course. You will make mistakes but don't worry, just learn from them!

K: What's the best part of being a referee?

C: Being part of the game and getting up close to the action. It's the best seat in the stadium!



Charlie explains his decision to a protesting player



Charlie Roberts started refereeing when he was just 14

K: What about the hardest part?

C: Making a wrong decision that affects the game. It happens, even in the Premier League. Don't be hard on yourself, learn from it.

K: Which decisions are the toughest ones to make?

C: When you have to apply the Laws of the Game and caution a player for excessively celebrating a goal.

K: Is getting a tough decision right the same feeling as scoring?

C: Absolutely, when you

correctly play advantage in a move that results in a goal, it is a great feeling!

K: Was it scary the first time you had to give a red card?

C: Yes it was but it was for a dangerous tackle and serious foul play – the offending player knew he had done it.

K: What is your aim as a referee?

C: I plan each season at a time but the ambition is to go as far as I can, hopefully to the Premier League!

K: If our readers want to try out refereeing, what should they do?


C: Go for it! You do have to be 14 to attend the course so contact your local County FA and they will provide you with all the information.

HOW TO BE A... REFEREE!

PREMIER LEAGUE REFEREE CHRIS KAVANAGH ON BEING THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE...

BEST PART OF THE JOB

"You get to travel the world and go to some of the best stadiums. You also get to be on the same pitch as some of the best players in the world. It's a fantastic place to be."




Chris Kavanagh stays calm during Watford v Palace

MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE JOB

"The key for us is that if we referee a football match, no one is talking about us afterwards. We know it's not about us, it's about the players, managers and the enjoyment of the spectators. So where we can take a step back, that's what we want to do."

THE REFEREEING FAMILY

"There's a huge support network and refereeing is like a big family. As soon as something happens, everyone comes around you to support you. The positives always outweigh the negatives and that family that you become involved in is a special one."



David Luiz asks what he did wrong

HARDEST PART OF THE JOB

"When you've made a big decision wrong and you have that media focus. It's the sense of disappointment you feel in making that mistake. But obviously you need to then learn from that and try to not make the same mistake again."

A REF'S KEY SKILLS

"It's all about the 'three Cs'. Calm, composed and confident. There are other more technical skills you need, but those three personality traits are key because if you have them, no matter what's happening, you can give really strong decisions, keep a level head and keep control of the game."

ADVICE FOR YOUNG REFS

"At all levels of the game there are times when you might get some abuse from spectators or players about a decision. We have to keep working to reduce those incidents but it doesn't happen as much as you would think, and there are many, many more good times in football than bad."



Top referees must keep an eye on the world's best players!

