

MINUTES



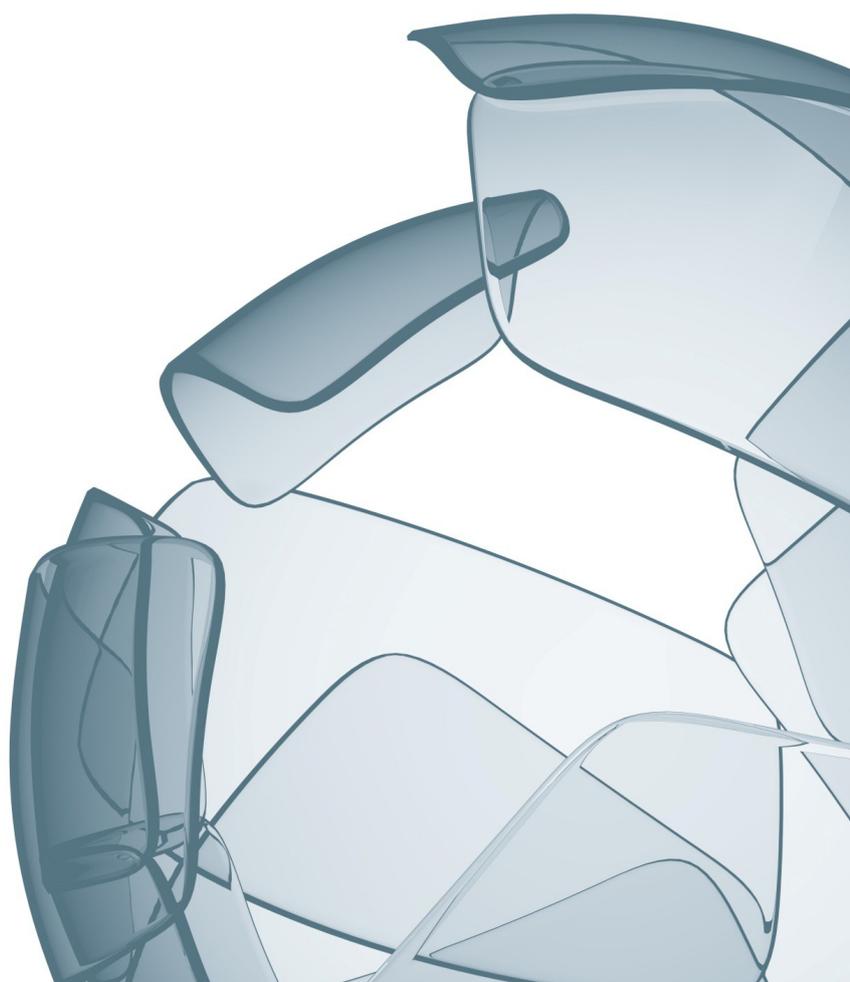
133rd Annual General Meeting

of The International Football Association Board



Hosted by:
Scottish Football Association
Marcliffe Hotel, Aberdeen

Saturday 2 March 2019 9.00 - 12.15



Attendees:

Scottish FA

Alan McRae (President)
Rod Petrie (Vice President)
Thomas McKeown (Board Member)
Ian Maxwell (Chief Executive)
William Young (Referee Committee Chairman)
John Fleming (Head of Referee Operations)

Irish FA

David Martin (President)
Jack Grundie (First Deputy President)
Crawford Wilson (Second Deputy President)
Patrick Nelson (Chief Executive)
William Campbell (Head of CEO Office)

FA of Wales

Kieran O'Connor (President)
Steve Williams (Vice President)
Jonathan Ford (Chief Executive)
Andrew Howard (Director of Competitions)

FIFA

Gianni Infantino (President)
Alejandro Dominguez (Vice President)
Vittorio Montagliana (Vice President)
Hany Abu Rida (Council Member)
Fatma Samoura (Secretary General)
Zvonimir Boban (Deputy General Secretary)
Pierluigi Collina (Referee Committee Chairman)
Massimo Busacca (Head of Refereeing)
Johannes Holzmüller (Head of Football
Technology Innovation)

The FA

Greg Clarke (Chairman)
Martin Glenn (Chief Executive)
Peter Elsworth (Senior Referee Manager)

The IFAB

Lukas Brud (Secretary)
David Elleray (Technical Director)

Other attendees

Cinzia Miotto (FIFA)
Giancarlo Dapoto (FIFA)
Naoise King (FIFA)
Mattias Grafstrom (FIFA)
Arturo Montero (FIFA)
Alberto Fernandez (FIFA)
Gonzalo Belloso (FIFA)
Marco Leal (FIFA)
Simone Studer (The IFAB)
Drew Herbertson (Scottish FA,
minute-taker)

I. WELCOME

Lukas Brud(LB) (Secretary, The IFAB) welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all present to sign the attendance register.

II. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Alan McRae (AMcR)(President, Scottish FA) extended a warm welcome to everyone to Aberdeen. Before commencing the meeting, he asked all present to stand for a moment to reflect on those members of the football family who had died since the last meeting.

He expressed how much of a privilege it was for him, on behalf of the Scottish FA, to chair the meeting in Aberdeen. He thanked and congratulated the members of the two Advisory Panels, and the Technical Sub-Committee, chaired by David Ellerary (DE) for their efforts.

AMcR thanked FIFA President Gianni Infantino for hosting last year's AGM in spite of the weather and travel difficulties which had disrupted arrangements. He also congratulated the President on his three years work in the role and expressed his delight at his pending re-election in June as President for a further four year term to carry on his good work.

III. ROLL CALL

AMcR introduced the Scottish FA delegation and LB introduced the other delegations.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The members unanimously approved the agenda of the meeting.

V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last AGM on 3 March 2018 were approved.

VI. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION AND ENCLOSURES

1. Laws of the Game 2018/19

DE reminded those present that last year was the third year of the large scale revision to the Laws of the Game and, whilst it was not intended to review every single change, it was appropriate to highlight a number in regard to their impact. All the Law changes had been well received (as in previous years) with almost no negative comment. Two changes in particular were mentioned:

- i) The option of an additional substitute being used in extra time in cup ties, and
- ii) The limitation of 12 substitutes being named in International Challenge matches which was accepted as proving to be a challenge for FIFA to deal with as some National Associations were still seeking to nominate more than 12 substitutes for such matches

In regard to Players' Equipment, DE conveyed that any concerns which may have been held in regard to potential problems caused by coaches being able to have access to electronic equipment in the Technical Area had proved unfounded as virtually no incidents or problems had arisen, and coaches should be congratulated for respecting this provision and using it sensibly. Similarly, the use of EPTS information going to and from the Technical Area had also been well used. These have been positive moves which have not caused significant problems.

DE reminded the members that any requests made for referees to be permitted to wear cameras during matches are rejected and that this strong approach will be maintained by The IFAB.

2. Laws of the Game 2019/20

a. Current Experiments

DE indicated that the current experiments would be considered followed by the proposed changes to the Laws of the Game and that this would happen in the context of The IFAB's *Play Fair!* structure, and its underlying philosophy which covers the following three pillars:

- Improving player behaviour and increasing respect
- Increasing playing time
- Increasing fairness and attractiveness

DE advised that each change should be making a contribution to at least one, if not more, of these areas.

i. Substituted players leaving the field of play

DE reviewed the experiment which has been conducted over the last two years to counter players taking their time to leave the field of play when being substituted by enabling the player to leave by the nearest point on the boundary line, unless there are exceptions due to injury or safety concerns. DE indicated that the experiment had been trialled successfully in various competitions with a reduction in time taken to put the substitution into effect.

It was recommended that this proposed amendment(s) should be adopted for season 2019/20

No comments from members

VOTE on the approval of amended wording in Law 3 in regard to a substituted player leaving the field of play.

All members unanimously approved.

ii. Yellow and red cards for team officials

DE conveyed the rationale of the experiment of referees using red and yellow cards for team officials, providing examples, and reported that it had proved successful and had brought benefits at all levels, including for young referees dealing with "difficult" adult coaches. It was indicated that the proposed

amendment sets out:

- That if the offender cannot be identified, the senior team official (usually the main coach) will receive the YC/RC as the person responsible for the other team officials, and
- A list of yellow and red card offences for team officials

DE suggested that there were two aspects to this discussion, namely:

- i) Considering the recommendation that the amendment(s) be incorporated into the Laws of the Game for season 2019/20, and
- ii) Discussing the subsequent disciplinary procedures linked to coaches receiving red and yellow cards

AMcR invited comment.

The FA: no comment.

Irish FA: no comment.

FIFA: GI considered that it was important to stress the particular issue of the automatic suspension of a coach who receives a red card, acknowledging that it was not a matter for the Laws of the Game but for disciplinary procedures. It was his view that the disciplinary consequences should be based on the same principles as for a player i.e. an automatic suspension (at least) for a red card. If IFAB can recommend this, it will be easier for FIFA to make a recommendation to National Associations and competition organisers.

Greg Clarke (GC) conveyed that the FA shared FIFA's concerns about automatic suspensions.

FA of Wales: No comment.

Scottish FA: Rod Petrie (RP) considered that the proposal would be welcomed by coaches.

VOTE on the approval of amended wording in Law 5, Law 12 and VAR Protocol in regard to red and yellow cards being shown to coaches by referees.

All members unanimously approved.

LB conveyed that, further to GI's comments, The IFAB was already in dialogue with FIFA in regard to the potential changes needed to be made to FIFA's Disciplinary Code to reflect the incorporation of red and yellow cards for coaches into the Laws of the Game and to clearly set out how such matters should be dealt with.

DE added that one of the recommendations is that a similar system to that of players receiving a suspension for an accumulation of yellow cards should apply to coaches and that it was a strongly held view that the threshold for a coach incurring a suspension should be lower than that for players given the expectation is that coaches should be more controlled in their behaviour during matches.

There were no further comments from the members.

iii. Defending team **free kicks in their own penalty area** and goal kicks

DE reviewed the rationale for the proposal and indicated that the ball not having to leave the penalty area from such a free kick before being in play was an experiment which had worked very well and had brought about a more dynamic and constructive restart to play.

No comments from members

Vote on the proposed amendments to revise the wording in Law 13.

All members unanimously approved.

iv. Defending team free kicks in their own penalty area and **goal kicks**

The rationale for the amendment was explained by DE and it was noted that, with the ball not having to leave the penalty area before being in play, the outcomes of the experiment were similar to the preceding item on free kicks and, in particular, defenders were being required to be alert. It was anticipated that more playing time would be gained by the amendment which would also assist young players who at times can struggle to kick the ball out of the penalty area.

No comments from members

Vote on the proposed amendments to revise the wording in Law 16.

All members unanimously approved.

v. Kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM)

DE indicated that not all experiments conducted with the Laws of the Game are successful and referred, in this respect, to the experiment with an alternative order to the taking of kicks from the penalty mark. The experiment had brought varying degrees of success and, after the topic had been debated within FAP and TAP, it was considered that, although it had been worth trying, it was appropriate to discontinue the experiment and to maintain the traditional AB-AB order rather than the AB-BA method of the experiment. DE indicated that those competitions presently using the AB-BA method should be allowed to continue with that only until the end of the current competition.

No comments from members

Vote on the proposal to remain with the current KFPM procedure as the only option.

All members unanimously approved.

b. Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Dropped Ball

DE prefaced his comments by indicating that in this section of the agenda is intended to deal with issues which would improve the image of the game, improve behaviour and potentially increase playing time.

In regard to the dropped ball scenario, he highlighted the various issues which exist in the game and which can present problems for referees and referred to the benefits which would be brought about by the changes.

DE explained further issues which would be better served by changing the drop ball procedure to restart play, particularly in circumstances when the ball hits the referee and a team directly benefits from that.

No comments from members

Vote on the proposed amendments to revise the wording in Law 8 and Law 9.

All members unanimously approved.

ci. Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Handball

DE introduced consideration of this proposal by suggesting that handball offences are the probably the most contentious area of football currently with a degree of inconsistency leading to confusion and controversy in regard to interpretation. It was considered that part of the issue stems from the interpretation of “deliberate” actions of players. DE referred to the comparable approach taken in recent years by the removal of “intent” from the Laws of the Game in regard to assessing fouls and also in offside situations.

DE explained that the proposal being considered is based on a similar approach being taken with handball, albeit retaining deliberate handball as an offence but taking into account the impact of the ball touching an arm or a hand and particularly in attacking situations when a team gains an unfair advantage as a result of such contact. There is a desire to move away from decisions which are subjective in interpretation (e.g. when an arm is in a natural or unnatural position) and to bring clarity to when an offence is committed and to when an offence is not committed. It was accepted that handball is a significant grey area which will never be black or white and suggested that the proposal seeks to give clarity in regard to such situations.

DE reviewed each element of the proposed amendment and utilised examples of match situations to illustrate the expected outcomes in accordance with the proposals to determine if it is a handball offence or not. He indicated that the proposal had the support of the Advisory Panels.

To summarise the proposal, DE indicated that it was hoped that greater clarity would be brought to the offence of handball and that players should have a greater understanding of when they can expect to be penalised and when they would not to be penalised, with the emphasis being moved away from determining intent to physical outcome. He suggested that, apart from offside, a distinction was being made for the first time between offences committed by attacking players and defending players. In essence, he suggested that the proposal reflects what happens in football at the moment and what people expect to happen.

AMcR invited comment.

Scottish FA: RP considered that it was a very thorough presentation but was of the view that the topic would still remain a contentious area in football.

The FA: No comment

FIFA: GI said handball is the most contentious area in football and that the correct strategy was required to communicate to referees, players coaches and the football public to explain as clearly as possible the changes which are effectively a clarification of the Law.

LB advised that it was clearly recognised that a communications strategy was required to explain the changes in regard to this Law and that this is already being worked upon between The IFAB and FIFA and would be addressed by the time the changes to the Laws of the Game come into force on 1st June 2019.

FA of Wales: Jonathan Ford (JF) echoed the sentiments already expressed and supported the need to clearly communicate the change to educate and inform so that the issue would become a less contentious one.

Irish FA: David Martin (DM) accepted that the perfect solution to the issue might never be achieved but the proposal is supported. He agreed with the comments made about the need to clearly communicate the changes.

VOTE on the proposed amendments to revise the wording in Law 12.

All members unanimously approved.

cii. Associated Changes (handball)

DE indicated that following the approval of the prior proposal, a number of associated changes to wording in other parts of the following Laws of the Game (including the VAR Protocol) require to be approved:

Law 8 – Fouls and Misconduct
Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match
Law 12 – The Start and Restart of Play
Law 13 - Free Kicks
Law 14 – The Penalty Kick
Law 15 – The Throw-in
Law 16 – The Goal Kick
Law 17 – The Corner Kick
VAR Protocol

It was noted that existing wording such as “deliberate handball” and “deliberately handles” will be replaced by “handball offence”.

It was agreed that these items should be taken *en bloc*.

No comments from members

Vote on the proposed associated amendments to the Laws of the Game.

All members unanimously approved.

8 d. Other Changes

DE indicated that some of these proposed changes are small but relate to fairness and others are of some significance. It was noted that the proposals had received support at the Advisory Panels and subsequently at the ABM and that it was not considered that experiments are necessary before they are implemented. DE proposed that each item be taken one by one and that, if there are no objections, to vote upon them *en bloc* but, if there any objections, that they would each have to be voted upon individually.

i. Injured penalty taker

DE explained the rationale for introducing an exception into the Laws of the Game by allowing an injured player who is the team's penalty kick taker to be treated on the field of play when a penalty kick has been awarded and that player has been injured, rather than having to leave the field of play for treatment and only being permitted to re-enter after play has restarted.

No comments from members

ii. Winning the toss and choosing kick-off

The rationale for adjusting the wording of the kick-off procedure to enable the team winning the toss to take either the kick-off or choose which end to attack was explained by DE.

No comments from members

iii. Delaying a YC/RC

DE explained the rationale for a referee, unless the sanctioning procedure has commenced, being permitted to delay the issue of a yellow or red card to a player when the attacking team chooses to take a quick free kick which creates a goal scoring opportunity.

iv. The defensive "wall"

DE provided the rationale for a proposal for attacking players to be at least 1 metre away from a defensive wall comprising at least three defending players, explaining that there was no legitimate tactical reason for attacking players to be part of a wall, that management problems for referees would be eliminated and that the image of the game would be improved as a consequence. He indicated that an attacking player would be penalised by an Indirect Free Kick for encroachment.

AMcR invited comment.

Vittorio Montagliana (VM), whilst supportive of the intent of the proposal, raised for consideration the complications which could arise if there was a break in the formation of the defensive wall, or rather, the formation of a second wall. He suggested that adding the word “continuous” into the text describing the wall would cure any potential problem.

Pierluigi Collina (PC) understood the point raised and reviewed various potential scenarios, being mindful of the possibilities of the Law being counteracted by coaches.

Zvonimir Boban (ZB) suggested that wall is intended to be a compact barrier and that it would be appropriate for this to be reflected in the wording.

DE agreed that the “continuous” could be incorporated into the proposed wording and that this would reflect the spirit of the Law and the proposal more clearly.

AMcR enquired if there were any further comments.

No comments from members

Penalty kick – goalkeeper encroachment

DE explained that the proposal was intended to enable a more practical approach to be adopted by referees in considering encroachment by goalkeepers by their being required to have only one foot touching the goal line when a penalty kick is being taken. He indicated that the current practices were being negatively highlighted by VAR and that the proposal would have benefits in grassroots football where it would be easier for referees to spot when both feet of goalkeepers were off the goal line.

No comments from members

AMcR indicated that the voting on all these foregoing amendments would be taken *en bloc*.

Vote on the proposed amendments to the Laws of the Game.

All members unanimously approved.

e. Clarifications

DE referred to the various proposed clarifications in regard to the Laws of the Game and which should be regarded as a “tidying up exercise” to make the Laws of the Game clearer.

He made reference to each of the clarifications and the reason for each being proposed:

- i. Multi-coloured undershirts
- ii. Referee’s authority (physical/time limits)
- iii. “Medical” and “drinks” break
- iv. Handling offences by goalkeepers
- v. “Illegal” goal celebrations

- vi. Verbal offences
- vii. Kicking an object on to the field
- viii. Off-field offence by a player against a team-mate etc.
- ix. Indirect free kick signal
- x. Offences off the field of play
- xi. Penalty kick – goals and nets
- xii. Offence at a penalty but the kick is not taken
- xiii. Position of opponent at a throw-in
- xiv. VAR Protocol

AMcR invited comment.

No comments from members

Vote on the proposed clarifications to the Laws of the Game.

All members unanimously approved.

f. Communication and Law Education

DE conveyed that after significant and radical changes to the Laws of the Game over the previous four years, and in anticipation that few changes would be brought forward for consideration at the next AGM, focus should now be given in the coming years to engage with the football community and the wider public so that they better understand the Laws of the Game. He suggested that resources should be devoted to increasing knowledge and understanding of the Laws of the Game, the objective of which would be to help the image of the game, help match officials and help the behaviour of players and coaches.

He indicated that LB would provide information in the next section of the agenda in regard to developing particular strategies to increase public understanding, particularly in respect of understanding the spirit, purpose and intention of the Law.

AMcR invited comment.

No comments from members

3. Future Developments

a. *Play Fair!* next stages

DE provided an update on the *Play Fair!* initiative and indicated the two areas which will now be focused upon, namely players' behaviour, particularly in relation to the lack of respect for referees and the Laws of the Game, and the role of a team captain, with the possibilities of increasing their responsibility to lead with a proper influence to the betterment of the game.

He indicated that these two areas would be explored by the Advisory Panels to try to identify the means of addressing these issues to improve the enjoyment of the game.

AMcR invited comment.

No comments from members

b. Digitilisation: content and processes

LB reviewed the desire of The IFAB in recent years to harness new technology to digitilise the content of the IFAB and the Laws of the Game and so make them more accessible by people than ever before, remarking how difficult it had been for the public to access the Laws of the Game until five years ago when the IFAB website was introduced. He demonstrated a Laws of the Game App which The IFAB and FIFA have produced, to be launched on 1st June 2019, and which would be easily accessible and, importantly, easily maintained and updated.

It was also reported that an existing training tool, the Trivia, is being significantly updated by The IFAB and FIFA to deal with all the Laws of the Game changes in recent years and, further, that it is being developed for Law education purposes and the application of the Laws of the Game for referees and referee instructors . It was noted that this learning tool, providing questions, quizzes and presentations, would also be easily accessible and shared.

In respect of the approval of VAR and the vast amount of data which requires to be processed, LB indicated that a VAR Approval Tool is being developed by The IFAB and FIFA as a management resource to assist in the approval and monitoring of the operation of VAR. The Tool, to be operated by FIFA would be part of an envisioned general refereeing platform for referees, refereeing, competitions, National Associations and Confederations.

4. Video Assistant Referees (VARs)

a. Current situation, including participating countries and competitions and update on implementation of IAAP

LB provided a review of the current position of the operation of VAR, providing statistics on its rapid growth since its approval by The IFAB at the previous AGM, with enormous interest being expressed, in large part due to the success of its use in the FIFA 2108 World Cup.

He indicated that this growth has required huge resources and much work to get to the point where a VAR system can be introduced and supported into competitions. He said that these processes can be very complex before approval can be given, with much preparation required. There has been very close collaboration by The IFAB with FIFA and its relevant Departments to ensure that the various processes for the implementation of VAR are complied with before approval can be given and that has demanded a great deal of resources, time and expertise.

He indicated that much work was required to manage the expectations of competition organisers wishing to introduce VAR and that a range of issues were having to be addressed in various National Associations in regard to its introduction. As an indication of the level of interest in VAR, LB said that 20 enquiries had been received by The IFAB in the last 6 weeks.

He invited DE and Johannes Holzmüller (JH) to summarise refereeing training and technology, respectively, in relation to VAR.

DE said that the great success of VAR in the FIFA 2018 World Cup was all down to preparation, and that this had taken two years. He outlined that there were three stages to the training of referees:

- Theoretical training, using the VAR Protocol as the foundation
- Training off line, without contact between the VAR and the referee on the field
- Live training, not at the highest level, using simulated match situations and then practising in lower level football to allow referees to be accustomed to the actual operation of VAR

It was noted that training of referees could take up to 6 months or more depending on the availability of referees, and that National Associations and Confederations were having to face up to challenges to conduct training.

JH said that FIFA's Technology Department was fully supporting the competition organisers' introduction of VAR and that a major challenge was presented following the success of the FIFA 2018 World Cup, as many competition organisers wished to have the same set up as operated in the World Cup but it was not possible for this to be introduced in many cases.

He said that the task was to analyse the context of each situation and to recommend the most appropriate solution to the introduction of VAR, bearing in mind the key elements such as the actual technology system itself, the use of a virtual offside line and the replay operator and, prior to final approval, a test with the competition organiser at a match to ensure that everything functions correctly.

He also conveyed that work continues to happen to improve the technology involved and to simplify the use and application of VAR.

AMcR invited comment.

GC suggested that communication was vitally important, referring to the digital platform mentioned in the previous item, and that it was important to capitalise on the use of such media platforms, by way of explanatory videos for example, to explain directly on how things work with VAR to the participants of football, as well as to the media and the public.

LB reviewed statistical data compiled by KU Leuven University up to 12th February 2019 on the use of VAR, which is summarised as follows:

Total Number of matches: 3477

Total Number of Reviews: 1275 (396 VAR only reviews/879 On-field reviews)

1 review every 2.7 matches

Total Number of Reviews (1275) by Category:

Penalty Kick: 43%

Goals scored: 33%

Red Cards: 23%

Mistaken Identity: 1%

Initial Clear and Wrong Decisions (Before): 1067 – 1 error every 3.3 matches

Initial Clear and Wrong Decisions (After): Remaining Errors: 232 – 1 error every 3.3 matches

Importance of the changed decisions based on number of reviews

Direct impact on Final result: 307

No direct impact on the final result: 499

More than 45 minutes with 10 players: 71

Less than 45 minutes with 10 players: 90

The VAR had a decisive impact on the final outcome of about 9% of the matches.

Direction of change by VAR

Penalty Kicks directly related to goals: 256 awarded – 86 cancelled

Red cards directly punished on the field: 194 awarded – 13 cancelled

Goals: 91 awarded – 264 cancelled

Time taken for reviews: The time loss due to VAR reviews is relatively low compared to other reasons of time loss (free kicks, Goal kicks, corner kicks substitutions etc.)

Number of reviews per match

Number of matches: 3477

Number of matches without a review: 2426

Number of matches with 1 review: 857

Number of matches with 2 reviews: 171 matches

Number of matches with 3 reviews: 18

Number of matches with 4 reviews: 3

Number of matches with 5 reviews: 2

Comparison of most experienced countries in the first matches of season 2017/18 v. last matches/end of season 2018/19:

	First 50 matches of each competition	Last 50 matches of each competition
Number of reviews	1 review every 2.5 matches	1 review every 2.5 matches
Review time (med.)	55 seconds	72 seconds
Remaining errors	21	18

AMcR thanked LB for the provision of the statistics.

b. Summary of VARs at the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia

As an introductory comment related to the previous item, PC emphasised that the usage of VAR cannot be fast and accurate as time is required to make a good decision and that this requires to be explained to the footballing community as it will not be realised how long it can take to review all possible angles of a match incident before arriving at a decision.

PC provided a summary of the operation of VAR in the World Cup, commencing with an acknowledgement of the FIFA President's comments at the end of the competition that the referees were the team of the tournament. He was very happy as a referee for such a comment to have been made and conveyed his thanks to GI for this recognition.

He cited the importance of the training and preparation of referees in advance of the World Cup and the need to continue on such a basis as it would be wrong to rely wholly on VAR without continuing to develop referees. The format used for training for the World Cup was now being used as a basis for the training of match officials for future competitions.

PC acknowledged that a major contributory factor to the success of VAR in the World Cup was the outstanding contribution made by the FIFA Football Technology Department and he expressed his thanks to JH and his team. Without the use of technology and the relevant support, the success of VAR would not have been achieved.

He reviewed the arrangements in place at each match which included, on average, 42 cameras, and referred to the following statistics arising from the competition:

- 64 matches played
- 20 reviews
- 1 review every 3.2 matches on average
- 455 incidents checked on all areas of VAR concern: an average of 7 checks per match
- Of the 20 reviews, 17 were on-field decisions with the remaining 3 being factual decisions

PC suggested that the checks made during matches neutralises any argument which suggests that the coaches should be permitted to make a "challenge" to a match incident as the checking process accommodates a review of every incident.

PC said that it was realised during the World Cup that it was important for referees to be seen to be taking the final decision and that the referees were recommended to check at the monitor as this helped demonstrate the correct procedure and to better "sell" the decision being arrived at.

The following statistics were reviewed:

455 incidents checked

95.61% correct before VAR intervention

99.34% correct after VAR intervention

100% offside decisions correct (due to technology)

Penalty kicks: increased from 13 to 29, with 9 of 16 awarded due to VAR intervention

Yellow and red cards: players behaved better due to monitoring by VAR with a resultant reduction in sanctions compared to the previous World Cup

Playing time: there was an increased playing time compared to the previous World Cup

PC concluded his presentation by making reference to statistics on the use of VAR in Serie A in Italy with the information demonstrating that almost all disciplinary sanctions were reduced compared to the season prior to the introduction of VAR into the competition.

AMcR invited comment.

JF extended his congratulations to PC for the successful use of VAR in the World Cup, commenting that following the approval of VAR by the IFAB it had been essential for VAR to have been correctly implemented to demonstrate its validity, given the scrutiny that was being placed upon it.

GI echoed JF's comments and extended his own congratulations to the members for the introduction of VAR into the Laws of the Game which, he reminded everyone, was only approved one year ago. In the twelve months since, he indicated over 70 National Associations, Confederations and competition organisers had introduced VAR and that it had received widely positive comment. As FIFA President, he commended the members for being brave enough to embrace this change and its implementation.

AMcR thanked GI for his comments and said that these were appreciated. He agreed that it had been a brave decision and said that it had proved to be a correct one. He conveyed his own thanks to all involved.

DE informed the members that cognisance had to be taken of the growing pressure and demand, because of the success of VAR, to extend its use into other areas of the game. It was his view that the principal reason of the success of VAR is due to there only being 1 intervention every 3 matches and the philosophy of "minimum interference – maximum benefit" had to be strongly adhered to, with no encroaching into reviewing cautions and other areas of the game, as is being suggested by coaches who have become used to the operation of VAR. It should be accepted that VAR is not disrupting or changing the game of football, but rather "cleaning" it in some respects, and the principal benefits of VAR should continue to be extolled to maintain the advantage currently held.

VII. FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS MATTERS

5. Financial Matters

a. Audit Report 2017

LB reported that the 2017 audit report was completed by PwC in July 2018 and must therefore be approved retrospectively. He commented that the overrun of CHF 185,000 was covered by FIFA as the costs are directly related to the VAR project, a project which was not budgeted for.

Vote on the approval of the Audit report 2017.

All members unanimously approved.

b. Audit Report 2018 and detailed financial statements

LB stated that with the assistance of PwC and the FIFA Finance Department it had been possible to complete the audit process before the AGM. It was reported that the negative result of CHF 540,000 was directly as a consequence of the costs of the VAR project. He indicated that The IFAB had in recent weeks received notification that FIFA would cover this loss.

AMcR expressed his grateful thanks to FIFA.

Vote on the approval of the Audit report 2018 and detailed financial statements.

All members unanimously approved.

c. Proposed budget 2019-2022

In regard to the proposed budget, LB indicated that due to the recent increase and further requirements for staffing, the number and importance of the various projects (in particular VAR) and in order to avoid possible budget overruns in the future, FIFA has agreed to provide The IFAB with an increased operational annual budget for 2019-2022 of CHF 2,050,000 per annum.

Additionally, it was reported that The IFAB will be involved in the development of the FIFA Global Refereeing Platform project and will be responsible for the management of the respective budget related to VAR and Law education interfaces. Further, FIFA has agreed to subsidise The IFAB's part of the project with an additional budget of CHF 1,200,000 (2019) and CHF 500,000 (2020). It was explained that this investment will ultimately reduce operational costs.

Vote on the approval of the proposed budget 2019-2022.

All members unanimously approved.

LB thanked FIFA for the support and trust given to The IFAB in regard to the co-operation on the projects and the joint target to achieve success.

6. Governance and Administration

a. Proposed amendments to The IFAB Statutes

LB commented on the reasons for the various proposed amendments to The IFAB Statutes. He invited Simone Struder to explain matters in more detail in regard to:

- i. Amendments regarding representation of a member of the Board of Directors
- ii. Amendments regarding voting via telephone conference call
- iii. Amendments regarding voting by letter/fax/email
- iv. Amendments regarding dispatching meeting documents
- v. Amendments regarding submission of proposals for agenda items
- vi. Amendments regarding designation of the chairman
- vii. Further necessary amendments

No comments from members

Vote on the proposed amendments to the IFAB Statutes.

All members unanimously approved.

b. Other regulations

LB stated that the drafting of the Organisational Regulations of The IFAB were almost complete and that it was intended that a draft version will be issued to the Board of Directors for review prior to submission to the next Annual Business Meeting for approval.

It was noted that The IFAB Organisational Regulations (IFAB OR) shall govern the organisation of the IFAB, based on The IFAB Statutes, and regulate the composition of The IFAB's bodies (as listed in art. 6 of The IFAB Statutes), the function, duties, powers and responsibilities of The IFAB's administration and bodies as well as of the functions of those bodies and the employees of The IFAB.

No comments from members

7. Composition of Advisory Panels (TAP+FAP)

LB indicated the the two year term of service for the members of Football Advisory Panel (FAP) and the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) had come to a close at the last meetings on 4th and 5th November 2018 and that FIFA, the Confederations and the member bodies of the IFAB had been invited to propose names to replace or confirm the members on the Panels.

He reviewed the proposals received in regard to the membership of the Football Advisory Panel.

There were no comments from members.

The composition of the FAP was agreed based on the proposals, pending the submission of names from CAF and OFC.

In regard to the TAP, LB indicated that the Heads of Refereeing from the Confederations are members and that the one new nominee was from UEFA, and that the Panel is completed by the members of The IFAB Technical Subcommittee.

PC considered that it was important to discuss, as a matter of principle, what is expected in terms of the background of the members of the Panel and that such a point should be clearly understood and established. It was noted that The IFAB had requested that the nominees be either the Head of Refereeing or the Chairman of the Referee Committee of each Confederation. It was his view that it was intended that the nominee should be the leader of refereeing in a Confederation and that it was therefore extremely important for each nominee to have refereeing knowledge, given the importance of the business conducted, and that a member should be able to take an informed decision, rather than have as a member someone who is not a former referee. He wished to know if such a view should be respected, given the two positions set out by The IFAB from which nominations could be made, or whether the view should be that the Confederations should have the flexibility to nominate someone who does not occupy either position .

He reviewed the nominations which had been submitted and noted that AFC, Concacaf, Conmebol and OFC had nominated their Heads of Refereeing, and that UEFA had nominated its Deputy Chairman of its Referee Committee rather than its Head of Refereeing.

AMcR invited comment.

PC indicated, for clarity, that the nominees should be the Confederation's Chairman of the Referee Committee or, if the Chairman is not a former referee, its Head of Refereeing.

FA: GC said that PC's views were supported and that referees should be members of the Panel.

FA of Wales: Kieran O'Connor (KO'C) supported PC's views

Irish FA: David Martin (DM) indicated that it might be appropriate, in light of PC's comments, for the Board of Directors to seek UEFA's comments on its nomination.

Scottish FA: RP commented that PC had raised a serious point and that, as the nominations had been provided for guidance and did not require to be approved at this meeting, the Scottish FA would be content to await a revised or confirmed list being produced in due course.

FIFA: GI supported the comments which had been made and considered it was important that a clear signal required to be sent to reinforce that The IFAB, and its Panels, is a serious organisation and that it was important to have the highest level of representation as possible for the members of its Panels.

LB took the point which had been made and considered that an informal vote may be taken regarding the overall composition of the FAP and TAP Panels.

VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a. Thanks

GI took the opportunity of extending his thanks and those of the FIFA Delegation to AMcR for the Scottish FA's hosting the meeting in his home city, for the warm welcome received, and for the manner by which he chaired the meeting and how smoothly it had been conducted.

GC extended the FA's thanks and appreciating of the hosting of the meeting.

KO'C reiterated the points made and offered his congratulations for an excellent meeting.

DM concurred with the comments already made and extend his congratulations to AMcR and to the Scottish FA for the arrangements made for a successful meeting and weekend.

AMcR expressed his thanks for the comments made.

b. Appointment to Board of Directors

LB indicated that it required to be formally recorded that Ian Maxwell had become a member of the Board of Directors, following his appointment as the Chief Executive of the Scottish FA in 2018 and that this was required to satisfy The IFAB's records and also the legal requirements of the Commercial Registry of the Canton of Zurich.

This appointment was agreed by the members.

IX. NEXT MEETINGS

DM indicated that the 134th AGM would be held on 29th February and 1st March 2020 in the Culloden Hotel, Holywood, Northern Ireland.

In closing the meeting, AMcR paid tribute to the hard work contributed by the staffs of all the Associations, the staff of The IFAB, and LB and DE in particular, and that this should be appreciated by everyone. He indicated that as his twelfth and final AGM he was attending and that it had been a privilege playing a part over those years. He extended his best wishes for a safe journey home to everyone once proceedings had been concluded.

LB invited the members to congratulate AMcR and the Scottish FA for the organisation and arrangements made for the meeting.
