



Merseyside Police

Chief Constable: J. Haughton, C.B.E., Q.P.M.

Divisional Police H.Q.

" " Division

Telephone 051-709 6010

Extn.

YOUR REF.

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F.W.C. Pennington, Esq., O.B.E., Q.P.M.,
General Secretary,
A.C.P.O.,
New Scotland Yard,
Broadway,
LONDON, SW1H 0BG.

DATE 28th May,
1974.

Dear Mr. Pennington,

I am enclosing a letter which has been received from Messrs. McDonnell & Hughes, 46, Christchurch Road, Oxton, Birkenhead, regarding a scheme which they have devised for discouraging spectators from entering on the playing field during football matches.

Basically the scheme consists of the installation of a sprinkler system located between the spectators on the terraces and the playing field, which would spray a dye in the event of any attempt to invade the pitch.

Whilst this is a matter that might be considered by the A.C.P.O. General Purposes Committee, I do not feel that such a device would be acceptable to football clubs or the supporters at large. There are also a number of difficulties in the scheme which are not covered in the brochure, as follows:-

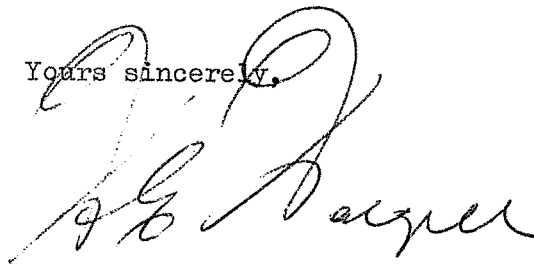
- (1) There is no indication of the lasting effects of the dye. It could ruin the clothes, it could have adverse effects on the skin etc. giving rise to claims against police and/or clubs.
- (2) Pitch invaders returning to terraces could and would transfer the dye to others in the terraces.
- (3) In wind, particularly the swirling effect created inside a stadium, the degree of control of the spray could not be achieved as claimed.
- (4) Presence of the dye on a person would not be acceptable as 'evidence' of any offence.

(2)

- (5) In these days the dye would probably be carried as a 'badge of honour' by the hooligan.
- (6) Referees, linesmen and players must be able to avoid the spray dye but I doubt that police, press, ambulancemen and stewards would be as fortunate.
- (7) The proposition sounds at least as 'barbaric' as the simple proposition of fencing in and is likely to provoke re-action.
- (8) Installation space and freezing winter operation have not been dealt with.

I have informed the writers of this this transmission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G. G. Harper'. The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Deputy Chief Constable.