

## Jon's goal to become Premiership referee

A former Bredon School pupil is well on the way to achieving his goal of becoming a football referee in the Premiership division.

Jon Livingston, 24, has qualified as an assistant referee and is already entitled to assist at all Football League games, including Championship matches.

He has already helped make crucial decisions in games featuring Newcastle United, Sheffield Wednesday, and even Manchester United.

And he has run up and down the pitch just yards from some of football's greatest players, including Cristiano Ronaldo and Wayne Rooney.

Jon, who works as a tennis coach, now hopes to go on to qualify as a Premiership Referee. He decided to try to become a referee whilst he was still at Bredon School.

"I was always interested in football but realised I wasn't good enough to be a professional footballer so this was the next best thing," he said.

"I took a course and passed my basic referees exam, then I worked my way up from grass-roots football through semi-professional games until I made the Football League Assistant Referee list.

"I really enjoy it but you have to learn to be strong, to stick with decisions and not to try to compensate or even things out. Two wrongs don't make a right."

Competition amongst assistant referees for games is intense. Each referee is assessed during each game and has to achieve a certain average to maintain their place on the list and to qualify for subsequent positions.

Jon's biggest match to date was a pre-season friendly between Oxford United and Manchester United, but the one he most enjoyed was a recent FA Cup fourth round qualifier between Nuneaton Town and Kendall simply because the result was so important to both teams. Jon lives in Bicester, Oxfordshire

Premiership referees earn very good money and are given special training to help them cope with negative comments, but those in Jon's position have to learn to block out the opinions of supporters and players.

Jon was a pupil at Bredon School, at Bushley near Tewkesbury, from 1999 to 2004 and enjoyed playing rugby and tennis as well as football.

"When I came to Bredon I was shy, but the school gave me the confidence to do what I'm doing now," he said. "I was always encouraged to believe I could do anything if I set my mind to it."

The School's Principal, David Keyte, said: "Jon deserves our congratulations not only for becoming an Assistant Referee at such a high level, but also for the perseverance he has shown in working towards this target."

Bredon is an independent, day and boarding school welcoming boys and girls of all abilities aged from seven to 18. The school campus is based around Pull Court mansion, set in 84 acres of landscaped grounds close to the Gloucestershire market town of Tewkesbury.

ENDS

Issued on behalf of Bredon School by Edge Media

MEDIA CONTACTS: Principal Mr David Keyte on 01684 293156 or Paul Herbert at Edge Media on 01453 544900