

# Safe environment for both players and supporters at a football match stadium essa...

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Football](#)



Stewards are at Football matches to offer general assistance. They also have a main roll in controlling the crowd. As well as that they look after the safety of the players by stopping angry supporters getting onto the pitch. Just think what a football match would be like without them. Fist fights on the pitch and in the stands. There certainly wouldn't be a game.

Police do the same jobs as stewards but have a lot more power. They have the power of arrest. Any fans fighting or causing trouble the police can arrest them and take them to the prison cells within the stadium until the game is finished then they are taken to the nearest police station. The police also segregate the crowd. This means standing in between the supporters of each team. This is to stop fights both physically and verbally breaking out between the supporters

At any football stadium there will be CCTV cameras at every entrance. This is to keep an eye out for trouble and supporters trying to enter without tickets. When lots of supporters enter the stadium without tickets tragedies like the Hillsborough Disaster occur. On match day there are at least fifteen people employed to sit and watch screens showing CCTV footage. With these measures it is easy to stop fights and disasters before they happen.

St John's ambulance is a voluntary ambulance service. They are at a football match to help any injured person whether it's the players for a muscle injury or a spectator after having a fit. The St Johns ambulance will help.

As I mentioned before, crowd segregation is really important at a football match. The segregation is carried out by the police. Police officers surround

the supporters to stop any physical or verbal abuse between rival supporters. Without crowd segregation there would be fights in the stadium all the way through the game.

A turnstile is a big gate that only allows one ticket holder into the stadium at a time, . it also counts how many people go through. This is very useful incase of a fire as officials will know exactly how many people are in the building. So it's kind of like a register being called at a fire drill. Another upside of turnstiles is it only allows ticket holders to get to see the match. The Hillsborough disaster was caused by loads of ticketless supporters entering the stadium through a broken turnstile; this resulted in 96 supporters being crushed to death (more about the Hillsborough disaster later on.).

Like in many other enclosed public places it is against the law to smoke in football grounds on both match days and non-match days. If you remember the events that took place on the 11th may 1985, you will recall the tragedy of the Bradford fire. 56 people died that day, and what was the cause? One cigarette falling on a pile of old rubbish. Football grounds are a lot safer now than back then but if smoking was banned in 1985 56 people wouldn't have lost their lives. Also no smoking in football grounds puts children out of the risk of passive smoking.

The capacity of St James's Park is 52, 387 where as the capacity of the Stadium of light is 49, 000. If more supporters than the capacity were let into the stadium there wouldn't be enough seats. Capacity means the number of

people the stadium can hold. The bigger the stadium, the bigger the capacity. Turnstiles assist with knowing when the stadium is full.

If you want to attend a football game all tickets must be bought in advance before the day of the match. This means that there can be no tickets bought on match day. The importance of this is that there won't be crowds of people trying to get into the stadium causing a stampede, which would result in another disaster like the " Hillsborough disaster", where 96 people were killed by being crushed to death.

Alcohol is not allowed in the main seating area in any football stadium. But it is allowed in the private boxes and at the bar. People, who order drinks from the bar, must stay at the bar and are not permitted to take it through to the seating area of the stadium. The importance of not having alcohol in the seating area is, so glass bottles or tin cans are not thrown onto the pitch or at other supporters. Glass on the pitch would result in many injuries to the players and also the pitch. Too much alcohol causes rowdy behavior, and in a place where two rival teams play against each other, rowdy behavior is the last thing you need.

What rules are in place to prevent certain players competing against each other?

Age categories are in place to basically stop children playing against adults. Adults usually are much stronger than children and if say a 25 year old man tackled a 13 year old boy, the 13 year old boy would probably get injured. Usually you are allowed to play in one age category above your own, this

could be someone who is playing in the under 18 category and would be allowed to play in the under 21 category.

All the way through primary school girls are allowed to play football with boys, but after the age of eleven they can't do that any more. This is because the development of the body is different causing injury to the weaker person to be likely. Physical strength, stamina or physique of the average woman puts her at a disadvantage to the average man. The female's injuries would be far more severe than the males.

What safety rules are in place during the game to stop people getting injured?

Players are not allowed to wear jewelry at any time during a match. This is to stop injuries to themselves or other players. Wearing a necklace while playing football could end up in fatality. The player wearing the necklace could be strangled to death or the necklace could cut their neck. Wearing a ring could scratch another player badly. Other forms of jewelry have other risks. So for that reason jewelry is banned from players during play.

You can't enjoy a good game of football injured, and knocks to the shins are unavoidable. Therefore, you should always wear a good quality pair of shin pads. Shin pads have to be worn, by the rules of the game. A full forced blow to the shin without any protection would snap the shin straight away. Shin pads prevent accidents like that happening so should always be worn.

A high foot is when a footballer lifts their leg up at a dangerous height that could hurt another player. It is up to the referee to spot this. If a referee spots it a free kick is given to the opposition.

The rules do not indicate exactly what “ dangerous play” is. It is up to the referee at the time to decide. Commonly recognized areas are high kicking near other players, kicking wildly with other players nearby and tackling with the studs on the football boot exposed.

On the 15th April 1989, 96 supporters died and over 700 were injured. This was the result of the Hillsborough disaster. The disaster occurred in the Leppings lane stand. The number of supporters in the central pens shortly before kick off is estimated to be 3000. HSE found this should have been reduced to 1600 as it didn't meet safety standards. It is common practice for police to take full responsibility for match day crowd management. It is police procedure to direct the flow and volume of fans ahead of the turnstiles. The HSE found no pre-turnstile filtering occurred ahead of the turnstiles. It is the responsibility of the police to monitor when the pens have reached capacity and close access to them. Police noticed that the central pens were nearly full. Over the loud speaker system police requested fans to move forward to make room for others. At no point was the access to the central pens closed. Also at no point were incoming fans directed to an emptier wing, and against protocol an exit gate was opened by the police to let fans in. Police officers outside the turnstiles requested the gate open to relieve the pressure. The build up of supporters, trapped in a bottle neck before the turnstiles had reached a dangerous level.

Police claim numerous ticketless fans made the situation worse, but there is evidence to disagree with this theory. Officers outside the ground deny there was a significant number of ticketless fans.\*Taylor in his report also dismisses the theory.

If each pen was near full it can be assumed that those out side were without tickets. SWFC admission system shows fewer than 10, 100 people entered the terraces. HSE analysis also concludes the number of supporters entering the ground did not exceed allocation. HSE say the fact that 24000 Liverpool fans had to enter the ground via the Leppings lane end caused the congestion. With only 23 turnstiles to enter and no filtering, the admission rates fell and the build up of fans grew considerably . At 2: 52 pm police opened gate c allowing 2000 fans into the ground. With the tunnel open and no directions to go any where else, the fans headed straight for the central pens. The addition of these supporters to an already over crowded terrace led to the fatal crush. It is believed that supporters rushed into the terraces crushing those at the front. Crushing in the pens was vice like ; increasing intensity with the swell of fans coming in.

Doctors, medics and St Johns ambulance all criticized the lack of co-ordination and effort to treat those injured. Supporters in the upper tier pulled people up from the pens. They used advertising boards as make shift stretchers and tried to resuscitate the injured. Only 14 out of the 96 victims made it to a hospital.

Afterwards both police and fans were accused of causing the disaster.

## The Police View

South Yorkshire police blamed fans for being late, ticketless and unruly as the cause for their decision to open gate C. Police federation officer Paul Middup told ITV news “ more than 500 ticketless fans were hell bent on getting in.” Bernard Ingham, press secretary to the prime minister also accused Liverpool fans. He said “ there would have been no disaster if a mob hadn’t tried to force their way into the ground.” The allegations were based on comments made in the midst of the tragedy. Chief superintendant David Duckenfield said supporters forced open the gate. BBC TV recording outside the ground proved police opened the gate. Duckenfield had lied !

## The Supporters View

The supporters blame the disaster on the lack of police control. Fans refer to the findings in the Taylor report which dismisses all allegations against them. The report also criticizes the FA and SWFC for the ill suited ground with poor signposts and a confusing layout. SWFC were also criticised for not keeping an up-to-date safety certificate for the ground. The Taylor report main findings are one of police responsibility for not taking effective control.

\* 94 people died on the day of the disaster.

\* Four days later, the death toll reached 95 when 14-year-old Lee Nicol died in hospital from his injuries.

\* The final death toll became 96 in March 1993, when Tony Bland died after remaining in a coma for nearly four years.



\*In August 1989 Lord Justice Taylor's interim report was published.

The main recommendations of the report were:-

- \* The closure of terraces and introduction of seating in all football grounds.
- \* New safety measures imposed on exits and entrances.
- \* A new advisory to be Committee be set up to ensure best stadium design.

Which were all implemented in the top two divisions by may 1994.

On the 11th May, 1985, 56 people lost their lives as a result of the Bradford fire. The fire occurred when the home team, Bradford city were playing against Lincoln City. On the day that Bradford City was supposed to have celebrated their winning the Football League Third Division trophy.

The Fire is believed to have been started unintentionally by a supporter who dropped smoking materials down a gap at the back of a terrace seat. The smoking materials landed on a pile of old rubbish that had sat there for at least 20 years. Five minutes before half-time, white smoke was seen rising from the rear of the 77-year-old wooden stand. People started evacuating the stands onto the pitch, it was all orderly to start with, people were climbing over the fence onto the pitch and others were helping. Some people started heading towards the turnstiles, unfortunately these were locked and the people that headed towards the turnstiles suffered the most.

After a while supporters helping others realised how bad the fire was. People at the back of the stands were literally on fire with flames coming off them.

Within four minutes of a small fire noticed three rows from the back of G block the whole stand including its roof was on fire. Police officers and supporters tried desperately to save people but ones that were either too weak or stunned wouldn't move. Many people were badly burnt and had to be taken to hospital. Most of the 56 people who died were either elderly or children as they were weaker than the rest. It was the most tragic fire in British football history.

The inquiry into the disaster, chaired by Sir Oliver Popplewell and known as the Popplewell Inquiry, led to the introduction of new legislation to improve safety at the UK's football grounds. One of the main outcomes of the inquiry was prohibiting the construction of new wooden grandstands at all UK sports grounds. He also mentioned in his report that the distinction between sports stadium and sports Ground should be abolished and sports ground be the overall term used. Also all sports grounds with the capacity of over 500 spectators, (this included indoor grounds) should come under the fire precautions act, Popplewell found out that the main hazards at football grounds were fire structural failure and crowd control. As well as this The Popplewell Inquiry found that the club had been warned about the fire risk that the rubbish accumulating under the stand had posed.

Within 48 hours of the disaster the Bradford Disaster Appeal fund was set up. This fund eventually raised over £3.5 million. A capacity 6,000 crowd attended a multi-denominational memorial service, held on the pitch in the sunny shadow of the burnt out stand at Valley Parade in July 1985. A giant Christian cross, made up of two large charred wooden members that had

once been part of the stand was constructed in front of the middle of the stand and behind the pitch side speaker's platform.

At Valley Parade, where the disaster occurred there are now two memorials to remember those innocent people who died in the Bradford fire.

### The Health and Safety Act

The health and safety act of 1994 states that your employer is committed to making your workplace safe and without risks to your health. As well as ensuring plant and machinery are safe and that safe systems of work are set and followed. Your employer must also ensure articles and substances are moved, stored and used safely. Providing adequate welfare facilities is required. And finally giving you the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary for your health and safety.

The act also states that employees have legal duties too. These include, taking reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what you do or what you don't do. Also correctly using work items provided by your employer, including personal

Protective equipment, in accordance with training or instructions; and not interfering with or misusing anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.

This effects a match day at St James' Park as all employees of NUFC have to be safe and with out risks to their health as they carry out their job. This

includes stewards, and any one else who works in the stadium. Also employees have to respect personal safety and that of their colleges.

### Health and Safety (First aid) Regulations 1981

The health and safety (first aid) regulations of 1981 places a duty on employers to supply satisfactory first aid equipment , facilities and personnel to their employees. The act also states that employers in work places where there is a large public presence like football grounds should make requirements to provide first aid facilities for the public.

This effects a match day at St James' Park as first aid facilities have to be available to the supporters in many cases this is the voluntary St Johns ambulance who are at a football match to provide first aid on either a player or a supporter.

### Safety at Sports grounds Act 1975

After the Bradford Fire in 1985, ten years after it was written, the safety at Sports grounds Act 1975 was condemned to be too limited by lord Popplewell in his report.

### RIDDOR

RIDDOR stands for Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. If you are either an employer, self employed or someone in control of work premises you have legal duties to report injuries,

diseases and dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR on the quickest way possible.

## Deaths

If an employee, a self employed person or a member of the public is killed in a work place, the enforcing authority must be notified without delay by either ringing the Incident Contact Centre or filling in a form online.