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OFFICERS REPORT NUMBER R260

Station

Surname TOMLINSON

Forenames

Age Date of birth

Address

Occupation POL DC40

Telephone

Number of Pages

Dated 020589

Signed

I commenced duty on Saturday, 15 April, 1989 (150489) at 8.30am (0830) engaged on uniform duties for the Liverpool/Nottingham Forest FA Cup Semi Final match at Hillsborough Football Ground, Sheffield. I was detailed to serial 28 i/c Police Sergeant Wilson from A1 Doncaster.

We arrived at Hillsborough at 9.40am (0940) and paraded in the North stand for briefing at 10am (1000).

On completion of the briefing we remained in the North stand where we consumed a packed meal.

At 11am (1100) I commenced duty at the junction of Leake Road and Leppings Lane in company with DC 2399 Wren. The purpose of our duty was to prevent non-residents from entering Leake Road and non-residents cars from parking in this street. Barriers were placed across the junction to restrict access.

For the first hour or so things were quiet but by about 12.30pm (1230) fans mostly Liverpool were walking along Leppings Lane towards the ground. The fans were well behaved but a significant number were carrying cans of beer, bottles of wine or cider. Some were standing in small groups on Leppings Lane drinking.

It was also noticeable that many having reached the ground were

walking back along Leppings Lane asking directions for the coach parks. These fans were wanting tickets. They were also approaching other fans asking for 'spares'.

By 20'clock (1400) the flow of fans along Leppings Lane was continuous and traffic was having difficulty making progress. I could see from the faces of the fans as they passed that many were the worse for drink. They weren't falling down drunk but had obviously been drinking. I thought to myself at the time it seemed that many of these supporters had tried to get 'as much ale' as possible down their necks before the start of the match.

Opposite the junction of Leake Road and Leppings Lane is a small alleyway that leads to some bungalows and following a complaint that supporters were using the alleyway as a toilet, I positioned myself at the mouth of it to prevent further nuisance. Whilst I was standing here I saw one youth stop in Leppings Lane and he began to urinate openly in full view of everyone. I moved towards him but he ran off his actions cheered by other supporters.

During my time at this location I was visited by my serial sergeant Police Sergeant Wilson and also my serial Inspector whose name I do not know except that he was based at Woodseats. He spent a fair amount of time in company with us.

I was not in possession of a radio and was surprised to see Special Constables who were patrolling in pairs each with the latest personal radio.

At 30'clock (1500) the crowd had dwindled to just a few but up to 3pm (1500) the flow of supporters had remained continuous.

At 3.05pm (1505) together with my serial Inspector I began to walk to Claywheels Lane for lunch leaving DC Wren on the junction.

As we walked along Leppings Lane I could hear messages on his Police radio but couldn't hear what was being said but it was obvious by the

tone of what was being said that there were problems somewhere and we listened carefully. We then heard a message to the effect that everyone was required on the running track.

On hearing this we immediately turned round and began to walk quickly back to the Leppings Lane end of the ground. Whilst we were making our way back the Inspector attempted to contact Police control for instructions but could not get through. The messages that were being transmitted sounded to me to be very badly garbled. I saw that other officers were also hurrying along Leppings Lane on foot and in vans. On reaching the Leppings Lane end of the ground I saw a large number of officers waiting. Instructions were given to form a cordon across the Leppings Lane entrance.

There were very few supporters about at this time outside the ground. These supporters were ushered outside the cordon line. At this time no one knew what was happening or what had happened, some officers knew that the game had been stopped as I heard them tell supporters this.

Whilst I was standing on this cordon I overheard a conversation to the effect that there were casualties inside the ground and even people dead. As I seemed to be serving no useful purpose together with PC 2127 Smart I made my way into the Leppings Lane end of the ground by way of the turnstiles. On making my way across the open concrete area I saw people lying on the ground apparently unconscious being tended by others, also others who appeared to be injured sitting up.

It was my impression that there had been some sort of fight between rival fans.

I made my way onto the terracing by way of the tunnel under the West stand. This tunnel was clear. Together with PC Smart I cleared a way down the terracing to the fence, dividing paddock 41 from the



pitch. I saw no casualties in this paddock but was subject to a certain amount of abuse from the crowd.

On reaching the area at the rear of the goalmouth in front of the West Stand, I saw that there were a number of bodies lying all over this area. I realised then that something of an extremely serious nature had happened.

There were a large number of civilians on the playing area, some attempting to resuscitate unconscious people, other evacuating people by using boards torn from the edge of pitch.

The situation was absolute chaos. I saw at this time approximately 15 bodies lying in the area at the rear of the goalmouth. I then went to the gate that gives access from the pitch to paddock 31 where I could see bodies lying towards the bottom of the terracing. Together with other officers I helped to remove these bodies through the gate onto the running track. This evacuation was done by officers carrying the body to the gate where myself and some other policemen took the body and manoeuvred it through the gate. The body was then removed by others away onto the pitch.

Whilst this was going on civilians were screaming abuse at some officers, others were just wandering about clearly distressed.

There was no direction or control at this end of the ground, the whole thing was just out of control with people picking up bodies, putting them onto boards and carrying them away. We had no idea where the casualties were being taken to.

There was a point when the spectators in the West Stand began jeering and roaring and I feared that there would be a full scale pitch invasion.

