

SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE

Ref:

From: Detective Sergeant 829 Oughton

Station/Dept: F1 CID

To: Detective Chief Superintendent Addis

Date: 10 May 1989

SUBJECT: HILLSBOROUGH DISASTER

I have to report that on Monday, 17 April 1989, at Hammerton Road Police Station I was given an action no. A39 raised by Detective Chief Superintendent Addis, to recover the video recordings from Sheffield Wednesday Football Club for 15 April 1989.

I telephoned the football ground and spoke to the secretary, Mr. Mackrell, and told him that I wanted the video tapes. He immediately gave the telephone to the solicitor for Sheffield Wednesday Football Club's insurance company - a Mr. Vincent O'Callaghan. Mr. O'Callaghan informed me that the tapes were in a locked safe at the ground, but that he was unwilling to release them until it had been decided who would have precedence - either the Police or the judicial enquiry. He said that a decision was to be made later that day with regard to the judicial enquiry. I completed A39 and returned it to the Incident Room.

At 1.35 p.m. the same day Mr. O'Callaghan telephoned me at Hammerton Road Police Station and stated that two of the video tapes were missing. He stated that they had apparently gone missing on Saturday, 15, but that they were not relevant to the Leppings Lane end. I informed him that it may be that all the tapes may prove to be relevant as the enquiry progressed and that I would no doubt have to speak to him again. He assured me that the remainder of the tapes were locked in a safe at S.W.F.C. I asked Mr. O'Callaghan if I could see Roger Holdsworth, the video operator. He told me that he would be seeing Mr. Holdsworth later that day for probably 2 hours and that he would tell him to contact me when they had finished. Mr. Holdsworth did not contact me and when I contacted S.W.F.C. later that date I was informed that he had gone home.

I saw Roger Holdsworth the following date at S.W.F.C. He showed me the room where the video screens were kept and a cupboard in that room where the actual videos recorders were kept.

He stated that on Saturday, 15 April 1989, he had been in the room with P.C. Harold Guest. Once the incident at the Leppings Lane end began, he left the room and went on to the pitch to give assistance. P.C. Guest remained in the room. He returned to the room later and estimates that P.C. Guest left at about 5.35 p.m. Realising that the tapes would probably be required at a later date, he physically 'ejected' the tapes from the recorders, although they remained partially in the recorders in order that they would not be accidentally erased. He then locked the cupboard and when he left the room, locked the door. The room is on alarm and this was set.

On returning to the room the following morning, Sunday, 16 April 1989, to collect the tapes for Mr. Mackrell, he found that two of the tapes were missing. There were no signs of forced entry to the room or the cupboard. The cupboard doors, however, are not entirely secure when locked and appear to be quite easily opened without the key.

He showed me the layout of the screens and the video recorders. One of the missing tapes shows a view of Gate B, and the other one is blank due to the camera involved facing a newly erected wall.

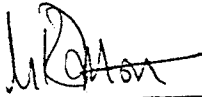
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As far as I am aware, the video recorders are not numbered to match the screens and it appears that whoever is responsible for taking the tapes was conversant with the layout of the system.

Mr. Holdsworth stated that over a period of weeks prior to the incident of the 15, several members of the media had been shown the layout of the room and the system.

He also stated that he had locked the cupboard and the room with Mr. Mackrell's keys. I seem to recollect, but I am not certain, that Mr. Holdsworth said that there was a second set of keys in existence. He went on to say that as soon as he had discovered the tapes missing he had informed Mr. Mackrell.



Detective Sergeant 829