

Mr R Asprey
Chairman
Millwall Supporters Club

21st September 2009

Dear Mr Asprey

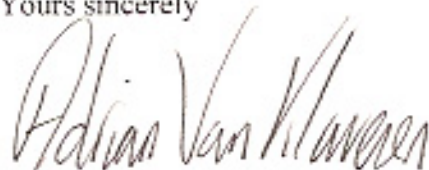
Thank your letter of 2nd September about Radio 5 live's coverage of the incidents surrounding the West Ham v Millwall Carling Cup tie.

I am glad you feel the news coverage reported the events accurately and thank you for taking part in our programmes.

I am sorry that you found our interview with the person known as "Tony" inappropriate. Covering football hooliganism is clearly a sensitive issue and we have to strike a difficult balance. In no way do we want to condone criminal activity and I think the questioning during the interview made clear that we did not do so. However, I think there is a value in allowing people to understand better the mentality of those who cause such violence – that is what the interview was designed to do. It was certainly not broadcast in pursuit of an anti-Millwall agenda and I am sorry if you felt it came across that way. However, I am glad that you had an opportunity to make your points about this on air and I think our coverage as a whole made the overall picture clear.

I think the events of 25th August were significant and justified us raising questions about the level and nature of football hooliganism in 2009. However, I can assure you that we will strive to make sure we cover all clubs fairly and not to prejudge stories involving any particular team.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Van Klaveren
Controller, BBC Radio 5 live & 5 live sports extra