



The Flag and Whistle

Newsletter of the South Bay Soccer Referee Association

Serving the Soccer Community since 1976



Written by: Jonny Joseph
Edited by: Alan Siegel

November 2025

Are we properly equipped for our games?

On page 2, we share “**Professional Appearance**” requirements, but this goes beyond the clothing that we wear and the tools that we carry (whistles, flags, cards, watches, coins, pens, etc.).

Being properly equipped includes the requirements of certification – training, testing and registration. We are required to register with USSF annually, which includes taking a laws test. Cal South provides monthly online training and we at SBSRA hold monthly training at our membership meetings. The SBSRA training courses are designed to address issues noted at our fields or from other experiences. They are designed specifically to meet the needs of our members and the association.

Recently, we have noted that service failures, like not adhering to the latest Laws of the Game and not following requirements of the leagues or SBSRA, can be traced to members who do not attend monthly meetings. We feel that keeping current, by attending monthly meetings (and reading *The Flag and Whistle!*) are very important for us to provide great service to our customers.

While there is a shortage of referees, there are several referee associations in Southern California. This means that our leagues and other customers have choices where they can obtain referees. Service failures on the part of just one referee can present a threat to our customer relationship and ultimately a risk of losing business for all of us. This is something we can address on a proactive basis. Preventing failures may be more successful and less damaging to our reputation than trying to manage these failures after the fact.

So how do we address this risk? We need members to attend monthly meetings. Attendance is defined as being at the meeting for the vast majority of each meeting. Arriving substantially late or leaving substantially early will not count as attendance at the meeting. Through four meetings so far this membership year, we have approximately 50 members who have attended less than two meetings. The Board is considering financial incentives to address the issue of non-attendance at meetings also.

So how do we incentivize members to attend and receive the training necessary to serve our customers and the game of soccer? Please bring your ideas to the November membership meeting. We need to hear from the membership on this very important issue.

Website

Having problems signing into our website with your password? Getting a “Can’t find php template” error?

Step 1 – clear the cache on your device

Step 2 – try logging in again

Step 3 - if that doesn’t work, reach out to our webmaster Rick Roberts, at web@sbsra.org.

Board of Directors

President: Jonny Joseph

Vice-President: Steve Brandon

Secretary: Kiku Annon

Treasurer: Bruce Ashton

Member-At-Large: Tony Calandra

Assignor: Gabriel Goldsman



New Webpage

Thank you to Rick Roberts for creating a new [Field Map Directory](#) page. Some of our assigned field locations contain multiple fields. To assist us in locating our assigned fields, a new page was created with aerial shots of these locations and the field identifier, usually a number or letter. If you are assigned to a location with multiple fields that is not already included, please let us know so we can add it.

Parking at Games

SBSRA has increased the amount of parking reimbursements. We have a limited number of locations that charge for parking, most notably Historic Belmar Park in Santa Monica. Please be reminded

- Always use free parking when available even if it means walking an extra block or two,
- Send a copy of your parking receipt to our treasurer within 7 days of the game.

Professional Appearance

Please be reminded to avoid the following non-compliance with uniform standards:

- Long-sleeve undershirts, of any color, are unacceptable under short-sleeve referee shirts
- The only acceptable socks are black with two stripes above the shin, around the calves
- Shorts and socks that are not quite black
- Desert style, or any other floppy style, hats with neck flaps.

DO NOT EXPOSE bare skin or underwear at the fields. Please wear an appropriate undershirt to and from the field!

Jersey Badges

We have 4 alternatives:

- USSF Soccer
- USSF Futsal
- SBSRA
- CSL "5 Star Referee" (for CSL games only)

Please ensure you wear the correct one for each game. Generally, most youth games require a USSF badge (current year or next year's badges only), middle school and most adult games require an SBSRA badge.

League Rules

Please be reminded to visit each league's dedicated page on our website, which can be found at <https://www.sbsra.org/competitions> before going to the fields to officiate their games. If you have any questions about a league, please check the website before asking an assignor or anyone else.

A variety of problems on and off the pitch occur when members are not familiar with the rules of the league in which they officiate and are easily avoided with just a few minutes of research on our part.

Certified Athletic Trainers

The Elite Academy (EA) requires the presence of a certified athletic trainer at all of their matches other than U11 and U12 (not required but considered best practice) and is optional for EA2 matches.



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The EA Standards & Rules (2025-2026) state:

- *Matches are instructed to not start without a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) and*
- *If a club does not provide ATC the game will go down as forfeit and all referee expenses will still need to be paid for by the home team.*

Other leagues may have similar requirements, and we need to enforce them as appropriate.

Single Referee Call-In Procedures

Please be reminded of our day of game single referee call-in procedures as follows:

- Weekday games – continue to call into our SBSRA hotline, (310) 955 9905, and select 1 to leave a message,
- Weekend games – send a text message to the Assignor, (213) 220 3580 and include the following:
 - Your Name,
 - Field Location,
 - Time of Game.

Speaking of Appearances

Please don't look like one of these guys out there (pictures taken earlier this year):



We lose credibility when our appearance conveys a message of not caring about what we do. This is easy to avoid, please be conscientious about your appearance.

Approval of Minutes

Included below are the General Membership Meeting Minutes for our most recent meeting for approval by the Membership at our next meeting.



SBSRA General Membership Meeting Minutes October 28, 2025

1. Call to order at 7:04pm.
2. Approval of September 2025 Meeting Minutes, motion made by Bill Yee, seconded by Steve McCall, approved by acclamation.
3. Monthly Training:
 - a) Gabriel Goldsman - Some Things to Think About: Whitepaper (Authoritative, in-depth, presenting problems and solutions)
 1. Situation 1: Referee leaves an ongoing game before it is done to get to the next game, discussion on why this would occur and how to address it.

No matter what may happen and what you do about the subsequent game,
DO NOT LEAVE THE ON-GOING GAME!

Bottom line is to call the assignor, and he will take care of it. When you get a multi-field assignment, check if you can make the transition on time when you receive your assignments. If it appears there may not be enough time to get from one location to the other, communicate with Gabriel right away. Once the assignments are finalized, inform your partners that you may arrive late at least 24 hours before your game. If the situation changes during game day, communicate with partners, and the assignors.

2. Situation 2: Referee accepts games from other associations/sport resulting in potential overlapping games accepted and leaving someone without coverage. Solutions depend on each situation and each referee. Some solutions: update blocks, communicate with assignor(s). Alert the assignor and teammates as soon as you realize you cannot arrive at your game at the required 30 minutes before kickoff.
3. Situation 3: Referee tried to stop a fight between players and ended up holding or dragging a player. Do not touch players, blow the whistle loudly! Use your voice! Try to get help from coaches and your partners.
4. Situation 4: Referee confronting a spectator during/after the game over abusive remarks. Ignore them, if at all possible, try not to engage, if you are an AR, call the referee over, the referee needs to back up the AR and address the issue with the coach, never directly with the spectator. Overall, back up each other whenever you can. Be a team, e.g. stay to cover games, check in teams, walk together as a team, especially when leaving after a contentious game.



4. Treasurer's Report:

- a) Financial Statements for the Quarter Ended September 30, 2025: Cash on hand is sufficient to cover any needs, one client wants billing done at the end of the season, resulting in an unbilled receivable balance. Late paying clubs last season were required to provide referee deposits which are included as a liability for SBSRA.

Referee and Admin billings are consistent and close to last year, although referee match fee revenues are down due to doing less leagues and fewer tournaments. Annual Dues are much higher than budgeted for new members and just \$200 less than budgeted for returning members.

Expenses are within 5% of the budgeted numbers.

See Treasurer's Report below.

- b) Checks for September games not yet handed out may be collected after the meeting from BA.

5. President's Report

a) Board Meeting - October 2025:

- i. 2026 is the 50th anniversary of the beginning of this Association. We are starting to talk about how we may celebrate this accomplishment. Any ideas? Larry Savell was the longest serving member present at the meeting
- ii. Change in renewing membership requirements. It has become evident that more issues seem to occur with referees who do not attend monthly meetings and presumably are not reading *The Flag and Whistle* newsletter. It seems we as an association are not serving our members well by putting them in situations to fail. How can anyone be effective without the monthly training? Starting with the next membership year, we intend to set a minimum requirement of attending 3 monthly membership meetings a year. Consideration will be given to members unable to attend due to valid circumstances, e.g., extended sentences in Siberian gulags, etc.
- iii. Members' transgressions (discussed in the training segment above) were discussed and appropriate sanctions determined

- b) Parking Reimbursement - increased from \$5.00 to \$10.00 when free parking is not reasonably available
- c) New Member Introductions - Douglas Almeida introduced himself as a potential member
- d) Field Permit Conflict Resolution - SOCAL and CSL have both directed us to ensure that subsequent games can start on schedule when the first game is delayed. Steps to be taken as soon as we identify a conflict are to inform the home team manager of the issue and notify the assignor. Inform both coaches of the need to decrease the playing time of both halves equally before the game begins.



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6. Vice President's Report - Steve Brandon not present, presented by the Secretary:
 - a) ROL Update and SafeSport 138 active on ROL and 7 inactive (primarily not on USSF ROL).

7. Secretary's Report
 - a) SBSRA Membership Report
 - i. Full Members 117
 - ii. Probationary Members 22
 - iii. New Member Applications:
 1. Approved this month 1
 2. In progress 6 (have not heard back from references).

8. Assignor's Report:
 - a) Cal South Update - no updates
 - b) Game Expectations for the Next Few Weeks: Most leagues, primarily CSL and SOCAL, will slow down in the second week of November, as older players turn their attention to high school games. EA and ECNL are expected to continue at a similar rate
 - c) CORE Training - Next training is scheduled for November 16, 2025.

9. Member-At-Large Report:
 - a) Supplemental Reports have been very timely this past month, Tony Calandra asked that referees spell check their reports before submitting their typed reports.

10. Other Business - caps and socks (XL only) are available for \$10 each, also IFAB 25/26 books and dry-fit shirts for those members who ordered them.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.

**Statement of Bruce Ashton, Treasurer of SBSRA for the quarter ending
September 30, 2025**

As one of the duties of treasurer, it is my pleasure to present, with comments, the financial statement of SBSRA as of September 30, 2025, and for the quarter then ended.

General and Accounting Comment - "Referee Billings" equals "Referee Payments" every month. When an invoice is sent to a client, the associated expenses are recognized as a payables to referees, assignors, and check preparer. These payables are paid in the subsequent month. Thus, the only 'income' that the Association receives is from member dues (new and returning) and new member fees. These are used to cover the administrative "expenses" of the Association.

Balance Sheet -- Our cash on hand is sufficient to cover the general business of the Association for the upcoming year and unforeseen, non-catastrophic cash flow problem (e.g., if several of our larger customers do not pay us in a timely manner), we will have funds on hand to pay the referees for 2 to 3 months. This balance is higher than in the prior year primarily due to 'Team Deposits' (explained below).

Accounts receivables are materially current with all balances in the 1 to 45-day outstanding category and are similar to the accounts payable balance, as expected.

Accounts payable are current and consist predominantly of referee payments for September games officiated and payable in October. There are two other items that deserve comment: (1) unbilled receivables, is attributable to one of our clients whom we bill at the end of their season which spans two months, and (2) 'Team Deposits' are monies we hold for teams that have a less than stellar payment history with us.

Statement of Profit & Loss - Income from games billed to customers decreased \$18,116 (25.4%) from last year primarily due to the LA Galaxy futsal decreases (\$5,315), tournament billings decrease (\$9,525) and the non-return of the YMCA at certain locations (\$5,610). Income from dues and new member fees increased by \$2,425 (19%). Total expenses increased \$2,867 (53%) due to the new board member stipend (\$1,000), timing of payment of member insurance (\$1,529) and member merchandise of IFAB law books and SBSRA dry-fit shirts (\$1,807). Additionally, 'net income' is materially similar to the prior year-to-date amount and within 5% of budget for this same time frame.

In conclusion our Association is financially very healthy and well positioned to continue to grow and flourish.