



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

April 2026

South Bay Sports

Despite our best efforts, with significant compromises offered, SBS has decided to not renew our referee services agreement with them. SBS refused to offer any improvement on their 7v7 referee fees, despite these fees being well below comparable leagues for 5 years now. The Board spent a lot of time trying to achieve a successful arrangement for our association and the referee community as a whole but was unsuccessful due to others willing to work for lower referee fees than deserved. As before, we appeal to all of our members to decline refereeing in this league with a goal of it returning to us in the future.

Annual General Meeting 2026

Our AGM is scheduled for June 30, 2026. As discussed at our last membership meeting, we need to choose a suitable venue for us to celebrate the 50th year of our association! Factors to consider include:

- Location – needs to be in close proximity to North High, our regular meeting place and center of the SBSRA universe,
- Size of location – needs to accommodate 70 – 80 attendees,
- Suitability for meeting – exclusive space for SBSRA, being separated from other customers would be ideal,
- Parking availability,
- Suitable menu – variety and desirability of menu items at a reasonable cost (\pm \$15 per member).

Several members offered suggestions which they were asked to check out. Please share your suggestions and evaluation of their suitability based on the above criteria.

Website

Having problems signing in to 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.

Spring Season

We are off to a very strong start with Spring games across multiple leagues. On some weekends we are experiencing a large imbalance between games and referees available to do them. Please check and ensure your blocks are updated periodically in Arbitrator.

Rules may differ from those in the regular season. Please ensure you check them in our Competitions section before going out to the field. In particular, pay attention to substitutions, check-in and reporting procedures. Ensure you have access to the required apps on your phone and websites for these purposes.

Board of Directors

President: Jonny Joseph

Vice-President: Steve Brandon

Secretary: Kiku Annon

Treasurer: Bruce Ashton

Member-At-Large: Tony Calandra

Assignor: Gabriel Goldsman



Parking at Games

SBSRA reimburses members for parking in limited cases. We have a small 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

It is important 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 ankle
- Shorts and socks that are excessively faded or worn (not quite black)
- Desert style, or any other floppy style, hats with neck flaps.

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

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.

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
- Whether you call or text, make sure you include the following:
 - Your Name,
 - Field Location,
 - Time of Game.

Referee Pet Peeves

Referees who do not contact the applicable assignor and partners upon receiving assignments with unrealistic or difficult gaps between games at different locations.

The assignors use Arbiter to assign games. As they work through the process, they often assign referees to more than one location on a day. Arbiter uses zip codes to calculate expected travel time. It does not take into account which side of each zip code the referee is coming from or going to. All that the assignors see is that a referee is available for a certain game, taking into account any blocks in place or an earlier game assignment. It is up to us to use a trip planning application to determine the time needed to get from one specific location to another one.

If the time frame is too tight, given the projected game end time and the time of the next game, we need to communicate that to the assignor. Once the assignments are accepted, if there is any possibility of a late arrival, please contact your partners as soon as this has been determined to alert them you may be late. Don't wait for the day of the game!

If we manage our assignments as above and communicate as needed with the assignor and referee partners, we can provide high quality and professional soccer referee services with less stress for all.

Do you have any referee pet peeves? What do fellow referees, coaches and players not like about referees? How do we do better?

Please share for inclusion here by email to president@sbsra.org.



Some Things to Think and Laugh about

"It's hard to beat somebody that never gives up." Megan Rapinoe.

"The secret is to believe in your dreams; in your potential that you can be like your star, keep searching, keep believing and don't lose faith in yourself." Neymar Jr.

"The fear of losing is sometimes greater than the will to win." Emma Hayes.

Don't be this referee!



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 March 31, 2026

1. Called to order at 7:04 pm
2. Approval of February 2026 Meeting Minutes, motion made by Steve Brandon, seconded by John Moody, approved by acclamation
3. Monthly Training - Gabriel Goldsman - Misconduct and Supplemental Reports:
 - a) Videos shown with discussion:
 - Need to recognize fouls and the severity of the foul - unsporting behavior, serious foul play, violent conduct
 - Dissent, USB, SFP, Abusive Language, Violent conduct
 - Must be able to recognize which is which and how to properly submit the supplemental report, using the correct language
 - Take time to do the reports properly, it only takes a few minutes to do it right!
 - Dissent is strong disagreement or dissatisfaction with a decision or opinion - be sure to know the difference between a small disagreement and public, personal, profane comments
 - Abusive language refers to harsh, insulting, or threatening words used to demean, intimidate, or control another person with the goal of causing emotional distress, e.g., racist, sexist comments
 - Unsporting Behavior or Serious Foul Play, videos were shown and various referees offered opinions. The trainer tried to build consensus and then revealed the actual call
 - Sometimes the center may not have the best view and should use the AR for help
 - If a player does a soccer move and an opponent tries to play the ball it is just a foul and a free kick
 - Must write a supplemental report for any serious injury or especially a head injury, send it within 24 hours to the applicable Assignor and Member-at-Large. Must write a supplemental report if the player does not return to play
 - Please inform your assignors that a supplemental report is coming, the MAL will send the paperwork to the leagues
 - Referees should NOT engage with spectators, etc. during the game. AR must engage with the referee to address sideline issues with the coach
 - At the end of the game, leave the field as quickly as possible. When leaving the venue, all 3 referees should leave together, if possible, avoiding contact with spectators
4. Treasurer's Report by JJ in the absence of BA:
 - a) Bi-annual financial review of SBSRA - the specific procedures to be performed are itemized in the Bylaws, we need a volunteer. The project pays a stipend.
 - b) Address Changes - in addition to changing your profile in Arbiter, please be reminded to notify the Treasurer so your checks can be mailed to you and be received



- c) Checks for games - for those who are at the meeting tonight, we have checks for you
5. President's Report
- a) Next president - JJ had received some interest from one member, but at this time there are no candidates with 61 days to go to nomination day. Please talk to JJ if you have any interest in becoming a candidate so we can continue as an association
- b) Board Meeting - March 2026 - the following matters were discussed:
- Board is currently working on creating a Board Member manual to document the duties and work of each Board Member,
 - Referee ratings were discussed at length, and we will be examining the ratings of all members over the next few weeks, with a possible change in our process for doing so to be presented shortly to the membership
- c) New Member Introductions - Joseph Ramirez, Patrick Shopbell, James Shopbell, Marco Alvarez
- d) Bylaw amendments passed last month. Updated Bylaws will be posted on our website soon. Website greeting page has been changed to inform potential new members of the minimum 3 meeting requirement
- e) AGM Locations - at our last meeting 3 or 4 members provided suggestions and promised to check them out. Please let JJ know what you were able to find out.
- f) Other:
- South Bay Sports - we sent SBS a proposal for a two-year agreement to continue providing referees for their 7v7 and 11v11 programs. We shared referee fee data from a sample of our leagues from 2021, when our prior fee agreement was made, and now. The league responded that they could not raise their fees and stated they would not renew our agreement. No offer to compromise or suggestion of an alternative fee agreement was made.

We constantly try to improve compensation for our members, and our offer would not have resulted in SBS paying the same amount as other leagues but was an attempt to close the 30-50% gap in 7v7 fees and 25% gap in the 11v11 fees.

We ask all of our members to support the association in our quest to obtain fair referee fees by not making ourselves available for these games after our agreement ends in mid-May.

- SoCal - at an assignors' meeting a couple of weeks ago, an increase in 3 referee fees to \$3/minute was announced. Nothing was announced for single referee fees. This is a significant increase from \$2/minute. In addition, SoCal has announced that it will offer in-person and online training. The first in-person trainings are scheduled for April at the Norco soccer fields. At this time, it does not appear necessary to attend these sessions, which they are charging for, but stay tuned as we learn more. We will soon learn how other leagues will react to this huge fee increase, but it appears we may be approaching a very good time to be a referee in



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Southern California from a financial perspective. Can we raise our levels of refereeing by such a large amount too?

6. Vice President's Report
 - a) ROL Update and SafeSport - 160 members, 18 not on ROL
7. Secretary's Report
 - a) SBSRA Membership Report
 - i. Total Members - Full 109, Probationary 33
 - ii. Number of New Member Applications this Month - 3

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm