



# The Flag and Whistle

Newsletter of the Soccer South Bay Referee Association

November 25, 2003

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[www.ssbra.org](http://www.ssbra.org)

President: Larry Stern; VP: Jon Ziegler; Secretary: Dick Eastman; Treasurer: Tom Mallen

Assignor: Bill Cook; Training & Membership: Keith Gendler; At Large: Warren Howell, Brian O'Donnell; Webmaster: Lee Jordan

## INSIGHTS ON HANDLING DISSENT; CSL SEASON OVER 12/6; CUP GAMES NEXT

A good turnout of 38 members heard an insightful talk by MLS referee **Jesse Johnson** on the subject of dissent; how to recognize its various levels, how and when to punish dissenters and when to overlook them.

Jesse is a young, self-deprecating official, given to criticize himself when he misses a call or overreacts to a situation.

Assignor **Bill Cook** said that the Coast League's season is essentially over, with only a handful of games left on December 6. He was proud of our record of refereeing over 1000 games from September through December with full 3-man crews; only three games were played with any club lines.

Some League Cup game are expected to be assigned to us.

### The Roster.

Secretary **Dick Eastman** indicated that we are still growing: there are now 104 names on the roster.

### Finances.

Treasurer **Tom Mallen** announced that the treasury balance is \$1926. He has yet to receive the fee checks for the Home Depot minigames.

He continues to work on the design of logos for SSBRA polo shirts.

### Availability Forms.

Webmaster **Lee Jordan** plans to have the monthly availability form on our Web site. Those who use the form can download it from the site, then fill it out and send it on to Bill Cook as usual.

### The President Speaks.

**Larry Stern** asked for applause for the great job our Webmaster, **Lee Jordan**, has done on the Web site, [www.ssbra.org](http://www.ssbra.org). Not only is it attractively designed, but its content is comprehensive. Descriptions of the association, its officers, operating methods, assignment systems, etc., are included, as well as the Laws, USSF memorandums, and much more. It more than fills the needs of newer members on how to navigate the organization, and also is a source of up-to-date information for everyone.

A reminder: there will be no monthly meeting in December, per our standard practice. The next membership get-together is on January 27, 2004.

### The Speaker.

Training director **Keith Gendler** introduced the evening's speaker, Jesse Johnson, who is originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and moved to California three years ago.

Jesse, 27, is a very youthful-looking referee who originally played soccer at the University of New Mexico, as well as some club soccer. When he told his coach that his goal was to make it in MLS as either a player or as a referee, the coach agreed to give him an evaluation in one month's time; at the end of the month he tells Jesse, it's as a referee.

He started his talk by asking rhetorically: "What is one of the hardest situations for a referee to deal with in a game?" [The audience: DISSENT.] He feels that dissent is hard to deal with for a couple of reasons, one being "Just between you and me, the players are right maybe 55% of the time. When they yell at you about a call, .....and the player jumps up and he shouts at you and says 'Referee, you're crazy, what game are you watching?' And you don't know how to respond, because you know that the odds are pretty good he's

right. And so you let it go. And then it happens again, a few plays later,... one that you know you're right. And now you can't go and give him a yellow card, because the other guy just said the same thing to you a few minutes earlier and you didn't punish him. The game from beginning to the end has these kinds of situations."

To set the basis for his talk, Jesse gave as a definition of dissent: misconduct involving language or gestures. From a further definition given to him by **Kevin Stott**, it's misconduct by a player that brings the referee's credibility into question.

He then broke it down into three levels: an emotional outburst by a player which is a borderline acceptable type of offense; something that borders on unsporting behavior where a caution would be given; and sometimes insulting or abusive language where a red card may be given.

Using video clips from MLS games refereed by various officials (**Brian Hall, Alex Prus**, Kevin Stott, and himself, among others), he demonstrated situations in which dissent fell into each one of these three categories, and the proper (and sometimes improper) ways of dealing with it.

In the first category, an acceptable response is a stern look or verbal admonishment.

In the second category, a caution is probably the right thing to do, but there are a number of considerations: whether the player already has a yellow and will sit out the next big game, or if you're not completely sure about the situation that led to the dissent, or conversely, "if the player has been bugging you the whole game." (More laughter.)

For the third category, other considerations than dissent must become involved to justify a red card. Jesse went into some rather humorous detail about his first ever MLS game in the center in which he sent off Preki.

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING,  
NOVEMBER 17, 2003**

- One application approved: **Christaan Wagener**.
- Donations to fire relief funds discussed.
- Received assessment reports.
- Expect to get 1 or 2 more fields from CSL next year.
- \$2079 in treasury.
- Again requested payment for McDonald's and Futbolito events at Home Depot Center.

- To obtain cell phone numbers for roster.

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING,  
DECEMBER 17, 2003**

- Directors insurance lapsed; to reinstate.
- Applications approved: **Dave Taylor** and **Eric Lee**.
- Collected \$298 for fire relief.
- Mallen showed polo shirt samples. More work.

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**NEXT MONTHLY MEETING**

**DATE:** *JANUARY 27, 2004*

**TIME:** *7:30 P.M.*

**PLACE:** *REDONDO BCH. CITY  
HALL EMPL. LOUNGE,  
CARNELIAN & B'WAY.*

**AGENDA:** *TOURNAMENTS,  
BUSINESS AND TRAINING*