



The Flag and Whistle

Newsletter of the Soccer South Bay Referee Association

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MEMBERS PURSUE CRIMINAL IN BAKERSFIELD HIGH-SPEED CAR CHASE; SSBRA REFEREES LET IT BE KNOWN WHAT THEY THINK OF FRANK; MEETING ATTENDEES REACT TO BOARD ACTION

In an attempt to get through the preliminaries as quickly as possible, President **Ed McClure** opened the monthly meeting of February 27 by having secretary **Warren Howell** address the 55 Members present on any topics of interest he cared to share. Warren had nothing memorable to say, and turned the floor back to Ed, who took the opportunity to introduce new Member and first time meeting attendee **Byron Eguchi** to the crowd. Though new to SSBRA, he had already covered a few games shortly after becoming a Member, and was given the traditional warm SSBRA welcome. Ed then reminded all of us that the “green card” deadline was coming up and encouraged referees to put in nominations when the opportunity allowed. Moving on to the next item, Ed announced that long-time Member **Frank Troeger** had won the nomination for referee of the year for Region 4. The crowd then stood to a man and gave Frank a thunderous standing ovation to show their pleasure and approval, Frank accepting their accolades with the good grace for which he is well known (details and a picture are available for viewing on the front page of ssbra.org). Turning from that happy moment, another pleasant time occurred as treasurer **Tom Mallen** was able to report that all was well with Association funds, there being \$5742.69 in the bank and no significant outstanding debts. Taking advantage of the prevailing good spirits, **Joe Robellotto** then asked for the floor, so he could pass out sign-up sheets for the June Watts games (contact him at gesep@aol.com or 310-540-

0545 if you want to volunteer). Joe also mentioned something about being a golf marshal in March – talk to him for more details. Ed then also stated, referring to the budget process, that the Board had done something for the Members, causing another round of applause to break out. After quickly mentioning that assignor **Bill Cook** was at the Spring League meeting and would therefore be late or absent altogether, and reminding us that the State Cup organization was looking for feedback on the job the field marshals were doing in Bakersfield and Lancaster, he turned over the meeting to Director of Training **Heidi Garlick**. Heidi then introduced the star of the evening, **Toros Kibritjian**. Among all American referees, Toros has spent the most time on the FIFA Panel of Referees. He was on the FIFA Panel continuously from 1968 through 1983. During his 15 years on the FIFA list, a run which began when he was 35 years old, Mr. Kibritjian officiated in:

- 1980 FIFA Junior World Cup
- 1979 and 1983 President's Cup, which were held in Korea
- 1981 FIFA World Youth Cup, held in Australia
- Numerous CONCACAF World Cup qualifying matches
- 1977 NASL Soccer Super Bowl between the New York Cosmos and Seattle Sounders in Portland, Oregon

Mr. Kibritjian refereed throughout the NASL's existence, from 1968 to 1984, and then in the Major Indoor Soccer League (MISL). Since the conclusion of his professional refereeing days, he has since gone on to become a USSF National Assessor, as well as one of the Federation's most-widely respected Instructors. Toros has written two books: *Quest for the Cup*, a story of a soccer referee (1986) and *In Search of A God*, an historical novel about his native Armenia (1990).

That all being said and an enthusiastic welcome being received (including greetings from some of his old friends in the audience), Toros began his remarks. He first observed that there were too few young referees at the meeting, and stated his opinion that high school soccer, both at the varsity level and otherwise, is where the most impact on the game can be made. The U11 – U15 levels are also important, so that the upcoming players can keep the game going in the future. In other remarks he reminded us that we always have something new to learn, referee teamwork should be stressed, try to start AND end the matches with 22 players, don't show your anger in stressful situations, isolate and talk to a player when giving a card, call the "first" foul, give the red card if you need to, and don't be overly "nice" to the losing team after a match. In the category of odd plays, he reminded us what the restart is for a PK that is kicked backwards (IFK), and that PKs to decide the winner of a match CAN continue with as few as one player left on a side. Some of those in the audience also spoke up during the presentation, including **Don Young, Alan Sampson, Derek Taylor, George Heggie, Gabriel Goldsman, Jon Ziegler, Tino Perone, Larry Savell, Dan Damian** and **Steve Elliott** (who also ran the video part of Toros' presentation).

At the end of the meeting, **Melanie Veintimilla** chose Larry Savell as the lucky winner of the raffle and a \$60 Soccer Central certificate. Most of the Members then called it a night, as did the Board after they approved the application for membership of returning Member **Adam Rose**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, February 21, 2007;

- Frank Troeger was nominated as referee of the year by Region 4
- A Member was fined for a SBS no-show incident
- A Member's problems with a league was discussed and resolved
- A league's concern about a Member was discussed
- A league's concern about another Member was discussed and resolved
- Recent problem game of a Member was discussed
- Another problem game/Member was discussed
- Insurance issues were talked about again
- Lee's rankings and process going well
- Welcome Wagon program not going well yet

- The issue of referees needing to own all 8 shirts was discussed
- Proposed budget was gone over line by line, some changes made
- Proposed SSBRA warm-up suits modeled and discussed
- Spring League is starting in March, Bill will go to the meeting

Electronic Arts (EALA) News (submitted by Ed McClure)

.....the EALA now has about 18 teams that have joined the league, and are looking forward to having SSBRA back. They would like for our referees to mark on a preprinted roster: who scored, who was carded and the final score. They asked the teams to put numbers on the jerseys, but that was not mandatory this go around. If we are unable to mark the cards with the proper information, the team managers will be responsible for filling in the missing information. The games will be 25 minute halves, and we have to keep them on the tight schedule. They mentioned that the league will try to carry more of a family atmosphere this season - bring the wife and kids, a little bit of food, and drinks (beer). For those that have done the Sunday games down in Whittier Narrows, you know all about that kind of family atmosphere. The league will start on Saturday, March 10th at 8:30 am. We will have the same format, no slide tackling, no offside and playing with a goalkeeper.

More S. Bay Sports Games – New Friday Night League at Aviation (announced by Dennis Fox)

....the Friday Night League will follow the 5 males/2 females team alignment. The rules are now posted at:

(<http://www.southbaysports.com/rule.asp>).

This is the same format as the Santa Monica Intermediate “A” league.

USSF Takes a Stand (recent position paper)



With the approach of the 2007 season, it is critical that all officials consider carefully how to maximize the effectiveness of their communications as a team. Only then will we best be able to serve both the game and the players. The effectiveness of the officiating team depends on all members understanding their respective responsibilities, tasks, and duties. Each official must rely upon the other members of the team to perform their duties in a timely, accurate, and responsible manner. Reviewing these responsibilities and clarifying how they are to be performed is one of the central purposes of the pre-game conference (*Guide to Procedures*, “General Mechanics”).

Before The Referee Has Made A Decision

This is the stage at which input from the officiating team can be most effective because it can *prevent rather than correct* problems. There is less damage done to the overall authority of the officiating team if the referee is able to gather as much relevant detail as possible before reaching a decision.

The pre-game conference must develop an understanding by all members of the team regarding the importance of making eye contact before any significant decision is made or announced and the specific signals by which the

assistant referees and fourth official can provide relevant information. Among the issues for which the referee may need assistance is the possibility of

- A second caution,
- The occurrence of misconduct in addition to a foul,
- The level of severity of the misconduct, or
- The unnoticed involvement of other persons in the foul or misconduct.

After The Referee Has Made A Decision But Not Yet Restarted Play

The major responsibility here is to prevent a serious error from occurring. Because a decision has already been reached, announced, and perhaps even partially implemented, the officiating team will likely encounter resistance if something different eventually needs to be done. Accordingly, an assistant referee or fourth official should act only if he or she has seen some element of the events on the field which there is strong reason to believe **would have likely resulted in a different decision if it had been seen**. The objective is to “get it right” while there is still time to correct matters. Among the potentially serious errors which the officiating team should prevent are:

- The failure to give a red card following the issuance of a second caution
- The display of a card to the wrong player
- The display of a wrong card to a player
- The failure to punish instigating behavior in addition to any retaliation
- An action which is contrary to the Laws of the Game or to local rules of competition
- An incorrect determination that a goal was scored or not
- Violent conduct has occurred which carries the threat of further serious misconduct

The pre-game conference needs to include a discussion of increasingly noticeable and varied means of gaining the attention of the referee, of how other members of the team can assist in redirecting attention to the official who has relevant information, and how the needed information can be conveyed as quickly, unobtrusively, and efficiently as possible. The longer this process takes, the greater is the possibility of resistance and eroded authority.

After A Decision Has Been Taken And Play Restarted

The only decision which can be corrected at this point is the failure to show a red card following a second caution. However, any of the errors listed above should be brought to the attention of the referee at the earliest possible opportunity as the information may be used by the referee to recover some measure of authority through player management strategies.

Because the most likely opportunity is the next stoppage, the pre-game should include an emphasis again of making eye contact at any stoppage as well as the means that could be employed to gain the referee’s attention if important information needs to be provided. The assistant referee or fourth official may decide that, under the circumstances, the better alternative might be to wait for the end of a period of play to discuss any of these matters with the referee.

Communications Procedures

When information must be conveyed, the first line of communication is the array of standard signals described in the ***Guide to Procedures***. If these are inadequate and direct communication is needed, assistant referees and fourth officials must compose their message quickly and focus on the essential facts needed by the referee – e.g., card color, team, player name or number, and reason under the Law for the recommendation (further detail should be at the request of the referee).

If it is necessary for members of the officiating team to confer directly, they must remember that they are doing so in an atmosphere of high tensions, considerable interest in the substance of the conversation, and the possibility of further misconduct. Accordingly, their attention must continue to focus on the field and players. *These conversations must be private* – the desire of others to participate or be nearby must be strongly discouraged. Further, officials should not allow themselves to be drawn into any subsequent statements or explanations of what was said.

Fourth officials should first seek to communicate with the referee through the near assistant referee but, if necessary, direct contact with the referee may be needed in order to ensure that all relevant information has been made available. The essence of the diagonal system of control is communication, including the sharing of relevant, accurate, and timely information. As a team, the officials must use all available techniques to make the right decision.

I Hope They Got a Raise (USSF news release)

CHICAGO (February 21, 2007) – In a move designed to continue the growth and progress of soccer officiating in the United States, U.S. Soccer has established a program to employ full-time referees for the first time in the organization's 95-year history. **Jair Marrufo, Ricardo Salazar, Baldomero Toledo** and **Terry Vaughn** will become full-time referees, enabling them to focus all of their professional abilities on practical on-field applications, as well as on off-the-field training.

“This new program will give our best referees the opportunity to focus all of their energies on enhancing the performance of our elite officials on the field,” said U.S. Soccer President **Sunil Gulati**. “The size and quality of U.S. Soccer’s referee program has garnered worldwide respect from the international soccer community over the years. With an increasing number of MLS and international matches being staged in the United States, there is no doubt that the opportunity to referee on a full-time, professional basis will continue to advance our growth as a soccer nation.” The new program is designed to enhance high-level performance, training and development opportunities for the sport’s elite officials in the United States. The United States is now just one of only a handful of countries with full-time professional referees (a list that includes England, France, Holland, Italy and Spain).

"The implementation of this program and the hiring of these four professional referees is an important first step," added Gulati. "Moving forward, I expect this program to continue to grow alongside the rest of the sport in the United States." American referees are playing an increasing role in CONCACAF and continue to get more and better appointments to work international matches worldwide. In 2006, U.S. Soccer referees worked 126 international matches in the United States alone, as well as officiating in numerous international tournaments outside of the country. Additionally, 23 U.S. Soccer referees also worked 182 games in Major League Soccer last year.

U.S. Soccer's Director of Advanced & International Referee Development **Esse Baharmast**, who refereed in the 1998 FIFA World Cup, will be heavily involved in the training aspects of the program and recently served as the lead Referee Instructor at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. "This is a wonderful progression for our referee program," said Baharmast. "We have made great strides as a soccer country through the years and a program like this will allow the elite professionals in this country to focus on the craft of being a referee." The four referees committed to the program are Jair Marrufo, Ricardo Salazar, Baldomero Toledo and Terry Vaughn. Marrufo currently resides in El Paso, Texas, and officiated the 2006 MLS Cup Final in Frisco, Texas, last year. He recently became a FIFA-certified official for the first time in 2007. Salazar, who lives in Elgin, Ill., joined the ranks of U.S. Soccer referees certified by FIFA in 2005 and has called numerous games at the elite level through the years. Toledo became a FIFA referee in 2006 after registering with U.S. Soccer originally in 1989. He recently called the championship of the 2007 Interliga in Carson, Calif. An official at the 2006 CONCACAF Champions Cup semifinal in Mexico, Vaughn is entering his fourth year as a FIFA-certified official in 2007. The Mount Vernon, Iowa, resident is slated to officiate at the Under-20 World Cup qualifiers in Mexico during the final week of February.

U.S. Soccer Federation’s Referee Membership has grown tremendously over the years and at the end of 2006 totaled more than 140,000 officials. The Federation originally began to comprehensively train and develop a large number of referees in the early 1970s, and courses are conducted by qualified state referee instructors in a consistent manner throughout the nation. U.S. Soccer’s referee organization is one of the largest among the 207 nations belonging to FIFA, with officials calling games at every level of the sport, including youth, amateur and professional games, as well as sanctioned international competitions.

I Knew It! (recent true on-field incident)

The referee known as the Large Member (L.M.) found himself at the 7v7 co-ed matches at Crossroads on a Sunday night. He went to check in the teams for the first match, and had the pleasure of meeting with one of the young female players to collect the ID cards:

Player: "Ref, could you do us a favor? As you see, our team is all in yellow, and the other side is all in red, so can you put on another shirt instead of the yellow one you are wearing?"

L.M.: "OK, no problem, that would help avoid confusion"

Player (after L.M. had changed to long-sleeve blue): "That's better, thank you for changing. And, you look better in blue anyway, it matches your eyes!"

L.M.: "Aw shucks (blushes)"

Hamm, Foudy Join Select Group (recent news article)

They have done everything else together — traveled the globe, won world championships and Olympic gold medals, founded a women's professional soccer league — so it was only fitting Tuesday that **Mia Hamm** and **Julie Foudy** together were elected to the U.S. Soccer Hall of Fame. The two became the sixth and seventh women to be so honored, following in the footsteps of their 1991 Women's World Cup-winning teammates **April Heinrichs**, **Carin Gabarra**, **Shannon Higgins**, **Michelle Akers** and **Carla Overbeck**.

Hamm, again setting records, was named on 97.16% of the ballots, bettering the previous high of 95.77% set by Akers two years ago. Foudy was named on 83.69% of the ballots. In winning, they edged out not only teammate **Joy Fawcett**, who finished third in the voting, but such former Major League Soccer stalwarts as **Marco Etcheverry**, **Carlos Valderrama**, **Peter Nowak** and **Mauricio Cienfuegos**.

Both women were in rare form for the presentation ceremony at the Home Depot Center. The formal induction takes place Aug. 26 at Oneonta, N.Y. "Oh, did I elbow you?" Foudy said to Hamm as she stood to receive her Hall of Fame jersey from **George Brown**, president of the hall. "I hope you got me an extra-large," joked Hamm, who is expecting twins in April. Foudy, who on Jan. 1 gave birth to her first child, a daughter named **Isabel**, had a little advice for Hamm: "Get some sleep now." Isabel, along with Foudy's husband, **Ian Sawyers**, attended Tuesday's ceremony. "She's of course passed out, slobbering," Foudy said, the pride obvious behind the wisecrack. Hamm and her husband, Dodgers infielder **Nomar Garciaparra**, who is at spring training in Florida, are still looking forward to the slobbering and so on. "We're excited," Hamm said. "We have no idea what we're in for. We can't wait." Do the twins have names yet?" It won't be Mia or Nomar backward or forward, that's for sure," Hamm said.

Kidding aside, there was a serious aspect to Tuesday's announcement. Foudy, 36, and Hamm, 34, are two of the pioneers not only of women's soccer in the U.S., but of women's sports in general. They and their former teammates blazed trails. It wasn't only about trophies, either, although the world titles they won in 1991 and 1999 and the Olympic gold medals they earned in Atlanta in 1996 and Athens in 2004 were certainly special. It was about empowerment for women. It was about social responsibility. It was about teamwork, sacrifice, friendship, patriotism, the list goes on and on. "We spent 18 years playing together with an incredible group of women, and the most important thing we always talked about was, 'What's the legacy we're leaving for the next generation? How are we making this sport better?'" Foudy said. "You want to walk away and feel as if you've done your part in making the sport better, and I think that's just what we did." Hamm, always the more shy of the two, was eloquent Tuesday. "I love following Julie," she deadpanned. "It's always so humbling." Hamm thanked the hall "for recognizing that we've made a positive impact in this game because we feel so strongly about it, we love it," adding that women's soccer "is something that we need to continue to nurture and grow and build."

Tuesday was also the day that a new women's professional league was launched with the announcement that it would begin play in 2008 in at least six U.S. cities, including Los Angeles. The league will be a revival, of sorts, of the Women's United Soccer Assn. that was founded by Foudy, Hamm and other U.S. national team veterans in

2000 and that lasted three seasons. "We've always said that there's a great fan base and product out there and that it was only a matter of time before it gets back," Foudy said. The league will work closely in tandem with MLS.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

THE NEXT MEETING IS ON TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2007, AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE LIBRARY OF NORTH TORRANCE HIGH SCHOOL, YUKON AND 182ND ST., WHEREIN BEVERAGES AND FOOD ARE PROHIBITED BY THE SCHOOL. AGENDA IS TO BE DETERMINED.

Fun with Foreigners (submitted by **Dan Damian**)

Referees are long-suffering mortals. Being constantly exposed to danger, criticism and hostility, they sometimes lose their composure. German sports magazine *kicker* recently published a number of extraordinary incidents involving referees, some of which proved to be tragic. In South Africa's provincial Kenton-on-Sea, a referee drew out a gun and shot the away team's coach, whom he felt was threatening him after accusing him of making the wrong decision. In Moldova, AC Roso Floreni's president decided that the referee was not officiating the match against AC Politehnica Chisinau to his liking. Suspecting a conspiracy, the president jumped into his jeep and chased the referee around the pitch in his 4-wheel drive, whereupon the referee abandoned the match. The ballboys at the match between Real Betis and Atletico Madrid also thought they were being bullied. The referee showed eight of them the red card and the 10 to 12-year-olds left the stadium in tears. The referee claimed that the ballboys had deliberately tried to delay play after the home team had taken the lead. The Belgian referee of a Young Start Eeklo v. Zelzate game was equally annoyed when a would-be fan rushed onto the pitch and pulled the referee's shorts and pants down. In the Netherlands, a referee caused the crowd to burst out laughing and shake their heads during a Twente Enschede v. Feyernoord match. After a controversial penalty that resulted in a goal for Feyernoord, the beaten goalkeeper handed the ball to the referee with the words: "This is your ball; it's obviously also your game." The referee reacted by sticking out his tongue - not once, but seven times!

More Fun with Foreigners (translated from the Finnish by W. Howell)

After the end of a match in Finland the captain of the losing side stepped up to shake the hand of the referee:

Captain: "Say 'hello' to your wife and kids for me" he said

Referee: "Thank you, thank you"

Captain: "Convey greetings to your dog also"

Referee: "But I don't have a dog"

Captain: "How odd! A blind man that does not own a dog!"

FIFA Stands Firm (submitted by **Lee Jordan**)

Soccer officials fail to change rules about wearing hijab

An 11-year-old Ottawa soccer player said Saturday she will continue to fight for her right to wear her hijab, even though the world's top soccer association has refused to change its rules on the issue. "I thought it was disappointing because I thought I would actually make a difference, but I didn't," **Asmahan Mansour** told CBC News from Ottawa. "I'm proud that my team was there with me and my coach." Mansour had been hoping that the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, or FIFA, would produce a ruling in her favor on the matter as it held its annual general meeting in Manchester, England.

Instead, FIFA officials remained firm in their intention to not change the regulations. "If you play football there's a set of laws and rules, and law four outlines the basic equipment," **Brian Barwick**, chief executive of the English football Association, told reporters. "It's absolutely right to be sensitive to people's thoughts and philosophies, but equally there has to be a set of laws that are adhered to," he said. In particular, FIFA said it would not alter the law dealing with items that a player is entitled to wear. Head scarves are not mentioned in that law.

On Feb. 25, Mansour was not allowed to participate in a soccer game in Laval, Que., because she was wearing a hijab, a headscarf worn by many Muslim women. The Quebec Soccer Association said the ban on hijabs is to protect children from being accidentally strangled. FIFA officials made it clear they were not going to change the existing rules — or explain them, the CBC's **Adrienne Arsenault** reported from Manchester. "We understand from people who were in or near the meeting that it was quite a heated discussion," Arsenault said. "Do the rules mean a hijab is or is not allowed? The answer kept coming back that the laws are what the laws are," she said. "Obviously, it's a disappointing decision. It's very difficult for us as a team," coach **Louis Maneiro** told CBC News. "I, for one, am in agreement that there have to be rules to protect the children," he said. "If it had been a safety issue and the referee could clearly demonstrate that was the case then I wouldn't have had any problem with that. I hope Quebec can see that." After Mansour was ejected from the game on Feb. 25, her team withdrew from the tournament saying they won't come back until the rules are changed. "I just hope that one day Quebec will change the rules and I'll be able to play," Mansour told CBC News.

As if Going After the Referees Wasn't Bad Enough (recent news article)

LONDON (AP) -- Liverpool striker **Craig Bellamy** added a new twist to the problem of soccer violence last week when he attacked a teammate. The Wales forward allegedly hit **John Arne Riise** in the legs with a golf club while Liverpool was in Portugal at a training camp preparing for a Champions League match against defending champion FC Barcelona. Bellamy now faces a fine of \$155,000 and an uncertain future with the 18-time English league champions. If teammates whacking each other with golf clubs after a night out isn't absurd enough, consider the reason for the fight -- they were arguing about a karaoke competition.

The news of the fracas definitely wasn't music to the ears of **George Gillett Jr.** and **Tom Hicks**, Liverpool's new American owners. The pair supposedly heard about the fight in Portugal and ordered Liverpool manager **Rafa Benitez** to issue a statement saying that players who misbehaved would be punished. "We will take disciplinary action and fine any of them who are found to have breached club rules during our stay in Portugal," Benitez said in Sunday's statement.

Bellamy, who has a history of losing his temper, looks to be the first casualty of the dictum -- something not exactly alien to him. When he played for Newcastle in 2004, Bellamy threw a chair at assistant manager **John Carver**. He was then heavily fined for calling manager **Graeme Souness** a liar in 2005. Bellamy has also spent some time in court. In 2003, he was charged with three racism offenses after a night out in Cardiff, Wales. He admitted to using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behavior and was fined \$1,252. The charge of "racially aggravated" abuse was dropped. And late last year, Bellamy was cleared of assaulting two women in a nightclub. But Bellamy can't be singled out as the team's lone troublemaker in Portugal. Other Liverpool players, including **Jerzy Dudek**, **Jermaine Pennant** and **Robbie Fowler**, were also said to have been drunk and acting up.

There have been worse crimes committed by professional athletes, however, and plenty of unruly behavior has come from overly aggressive sportsmen over the years. Teammates have fought before in the English league. Newcastle players **Lee Bowyer** and **Kieron Dyer** exchanged punches on the field during a game in 2005. Bowyer was later suspended for seven games and Dyer banned for three. The team also fined Bowyer.

....soccer -- and Liverpool -- has had an ugly past when it comes to violence. At the 1985 European Cup final at the Heysel stadium in Brussels. 39 people were killed when Liverpool fans charged their Juventus counterparts

and a stadium wall collapsed. Four years later, 96 Liverpool fans were crushed to death at the FA Cup semifinal match against Nottingham Forest at Hillsborough Stadium. Hooliganism in soccer hasn't been confined to just Liverpool, of course. On Feb. 2, 38-year-old policeman **Filippo Raciti** was killed by rioting fans after Catania played Palermo in the Italian league. That incident led to the suspension of league play for a week and security measures that have forced some teams to play in empty stadiums until standards are met.

The Keystone Cops have Nothing Over These Guys (by Bill Cook as told to W. Howell)

No less than 15 referees converged at the famous Noriega eatery in Bakersfield on a Saturday night in February to unwind and chow-down during a State Cup week-end – as near as I can tell the group included **Michael, Paul and Lauren Copley, Kiku Annon, Marty Jeffers, Scott Ziegler, Steve Fox, Michael, Eric and Stuart Winter, Gabriel “Mario” Goldsman, Amanda and Rudy “Wet-Chair” Chavez, Melanie Veintimilla, Eric “Slammer” Takaki, Alan Sampson, Ed Beverly, Steve Brandon** and Bill Cook (is that more than 15? Oh well, you can ask them yourself). Anyway, after a long evening of enjoying such dishes as smoked tongue and oxtail soup (some enjoying them more than others), the group piled into 3 cars after dinner for the drive back to the motel, with Stu taking over the wheel for Ed B., as Ed was, uh, temporarily incapacitated after indulging in Noriega's mystery red wine. Almost immediately upon leaving, the group witnessed a hit-and-run accident, with a pedestrian being hit and thrown across the road (it was later determined that her injuries were minor). Taking matters into their own hands, our band of Members gave chase. Alas, things did not go well in the pursuit, as Stu immediately cut-off Rudy (driving his own car), causing Rudy to do a quick maneuver to avoid another accident. Mario, at the wheel of his own vehicle, also gave chase, with speeds reportedly reaching 95 MPH, or at least that is what he claimed. Our Members, taking advantage of available technology, then started calling each other on their cell phones to coordinate the chase, leaving a number of messages on Bill's phone (he was in Ed's car), which had, regrettably, been left back at the motel. Despite all these efforts, the wrong-doer escaped anyway, after a chase that lasted about 2 blocks as far as can be determined. All three vehicles then circled back to the scene of the crime to give their statements to the police. Being careful, trained observers all, it was determined that:

- if the getaway car had a license plate at all, no one noticed the number
- regardless, the car was white
- or, maybe it was black
- in any case, it was definitely a BMW
- or, maybe it was some other make

Not believing his good fortune in having so many witnesses to the crime, the police officer taking statements questioned everybody again, with the same results. Thanking our Members, he sent them on their way, no doubt hoping to never have to see them again. Too excited to sleep, the group retired to a Denny's for coffee and conversation, with “Slammer” taking advantage of the opportunity to down his fourth grand slam breakfast of the day and having another one packaged up for a snack later. Finally, the Members returned to the motel and retired to their rooms. The night was not over yet however, as a male Member was detected knocking on the door of a female Member's room at about 2:30 AM, leading several Members to come out and see what (scandalous) things were going on now. The male Member, however, claimed that he was only delivering an innocent message from someone else, which the female Member claimed to have no #\$\$%^%\$ interest in anyway. Honor restored, everyone went back to sleep.