



The Flag and Whistle

Newsletter of the Soccer South Bay Referee Association

September 30, 2007

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www.ssbra.org

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SSBRA MEMBERS PUT TO THE TEST AND THEN RELIEVED OF THEIR CASH ASTONISHING LOCAL SOCCER FACTS REVEALED DIRE PREDICTION PROVES TO BE INACCURATE

In anticipation of a special meeting, enough SSBRA Members showed up to fill the library at North High School on September 25. Hoping to get the preliminaries over with quickly so we could get on to the main event, President **Ed McClure** opened the proceedings by turning the floor over to Secretary **Warren Howell** for what he hoped would be a very short report. Alas, it was not to be, as Warren started to do some pontificating, a habit of which the Members have become accustomed to. The current secretary said that new Member **Scott Jarus** and **Kiku Annon** had complained about misspelled names and poor punctuation in the last newsletter, but Warren appeared to not be overly concerned with such matters. He then went into a longer speech, explaining that a number of Members had not paid their dues yet, and so he and Treasurer **Tom Mallen** were in the process of contacting them individually and trying to determine their status. Since there are currently 75 Members in this group, it will take another month or two before everyone can be contacted and their statuses determined.

Ed was quick to take back the floor after all that, and recognized that long-time Member, friend and former President **Larry Stern** was present at the meeting after a lengthy absence for reasons that Ed did not wish to

disclose. This resulted in a round of applause and a lot of shouting, which seemed to both please and embarrass Larry.

It was then Tom Mallen's turn to take a break from passing out checks to inform us there is \$6500 in the bank, and two tournaments have still not paid us so those checks are pending, all of which inspired **Stu Winter** to say something to the group.

Webmaster **Lee Jordan** then spoke briefly, encouraging everyone to report any problems with the web-site, so that they can be corrected. Assignor **Bill Cook** was almost as brief as Lee, reminding the Members to inform him of any changes made to game assignments that are made on the field so his records will be accurate, and to check the mud-lines when it rains. Ed M. also asked the group to remember to hand out "green cards" for sportsmanship at any game where you see deserving behavior, and told us that the negotiations with South Bay Sports were still ongoing.

After **Rick Roberts** made some brief comment about the mentoring program, **Tom Bobadilla** from the local USSF chapter took the floor for the main events of the evening. Showing his willingness to take full credit for the work of Registrar **Penny Rehm** as she labored tirelessly in the back of the room processing applications and collecting fees, Tom thanked the group for being there, and made several points:

- He is a sometime reader of the Flag and Whistle (Oops! Sorry about the "taking credit" remark, Tom)
- About 43% of the local USSF referees have been whistling games for 10 years or more
- Constant training for experienced referees is still vital, otherwise we could let our guard down at a bad time
- Such training for veterans should therefore aim to be both fun and stimulating
- Two or more training speakers are available for SSBRA use every year, which we have max'ed out on
- Required and other assessments are going well
- He had no answer for a question about the rumored new green referee shirts
- Led a discussion on how the various associations could work together to get all the referees from the various groups covering/officiating games in the best way for the program as a whole. **Dan Damian, Derek Taylor** and **Alan Sampson** shared their thoughts and ideas with the group, while Ed McClure pointed out that SSBRA often does games as "sub-contractors" for other Associations to help with tournaments

The written test was given, with the Members answering the even questions only. They were then corrected and commented on as a group. The Members were surprisingly subdued in comparison to years gone by in their comments and objections through all this, possibly because they had gone through it all before or because of the high scores they received (see below). Nonetheless, there was plenty of give and take, and exploring other options/answers to the questions and situations they suggested, with **Keith Sena**, Derek Taylor, **Vince Delmonico**, **Dan Ayala**, **Russell Stern**, Warren Howell, Lee Jordan, **Rudy Chavez**, Ed McClure, **George Heggie**, Dan Damian, Alan Sampson, **Alvar Kabe**, **Ed Beverly**, **Bob Hildereth**, **Suzanne Johnson** and others all voicing their views. Since most of the Members were talked out and the hour was getting late, the meeting was adjourned for another month.

The complete results of the USSF certification written test taken at the meeting were shared with the Board later, and the Members distinguished themselves with high marks (see below – there were 50 questions answered on the test). One Member even got all the questions correct and was so acknowledged at the meeting, and those present duly congratulated.wait a minute, if you missed the meeting and want to know who got the perfect score, send an Email to ssbrasecretary@aol.com and we will let you know the secret.

Number Missed	Percentage Correct	Number of Persons	Percentage of Group	Total Percentage
0	100.0%	1	1.6%	1.6%
1	98.0%	11	17.2%	18.8%
2	96.0%	11	17.2%	35.9%
3	94.0%	9	14.1%	50.0%
4	92.0%	6	9.4%	59.4%
5	90.0%	16	25.0%	84.4%
7	86.0%	2	3.1%	87.5%
9	82.0%	2	3.1%	90.6%
10	80.0%	2	3.1%	93.8%
11	78.0%	2	3.1%	96.9%
15	70.0%	1	1.6%	98.4%
16	68.0%	1	1.6%	100.0%
	50	64	100.0%	

If you did not attend the September meeting and need to register with USSF for 2008, there is a white sheet in the envelope that you should have received in the mail with the registration form. If you follow the directions, it tells you how to mail in the paperwork. The Coast Soccer League, tournaments sanctioned by CSL, State Cup, National Cup, and other affiliated matches are very specific in their requirement that SSBRA assign only referees that are USSF certified for the current year. Please see the registration page at casreferee.com for more info. Make sure that:

- The form has your USSF number written in the correct field.
- Fill in all the proper information.
- The proper box is checked off about any felony charges.
- The form is signed.
- Sign the check, made out to SRC/RD.
- The Form, and a check, should go to Penny Rehm, CAS Registrar, 385 South Lemon Ave., Suite E-390 Walnut, CA 91789

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, September 18, 2007

- A local referee whose application was rejected some years ago was discussed
- Many Members have not yet paid their dues for the current year. Warren to follow-up
- Applications for Membership of **Andrezej Kmita** and **Mark Stapke** were accepted
- Another application was rejected, Warren to make the notification
- September is all set for the USSF recertification meeting
- It was decided to fine a Member for a missed/late assignment
- Two referees and other near-late incidents were discussed
- Nothing definite yet on meeting instruction after September
- The status of Larry Stern was shared with the group
- Tom reported \$6919 in the bank, Blues tournament checks are ready, two tournaments have not paid SSBRA yet, and some Members are \$10 short on dues payments
- The actions of a Member and resulting team protest were discussed, no action to be taken by SSBRA
- An accusation that SSBRA used a two-whistle system at a CSL game was discussed. Further investigation revealed that the described incident did not, in fact, happen at all
- Bill discussed the Coast Soccer League meeting. SSBRA is rated very highly by CSL and the other groups, and we were given about 11% more games in the upcoming year than last
- A fee structure and proposed contract points were decided on for the new Manhattan Beach 7v7 league, whose start has been delayed due to the next turf field not being ready
- There was a long discussion on the status of the SBS ongoing contract negotiations
- A general meeting will take place tomorrow to go over rankings and the ranking system
- There was no interest by the Members in the Scores tournament
- A Member who has been put on limited duty has been, and will further be, counseled by Board Members
- It was announced that a long-time Member is back doing games again after being out of action for awhile

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, September 25, 2007

- An incident of referee abuse was discussed, follow-up to take place with CSL
- A referee was a no-show at an ANA match due to a family emergency
- The need for a more formal system to cover when the regular assignor is not available was discussed

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

THE NEXT MEETING IS ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2007, AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE LIBRARY OF NORTH TORRANCE HIGH SCHOOL, 3620 182ND ST. (AT YUKON - SEE SSBRA.ORG FOR DETAILED MAPS), WHEREIN BEVERAGES AND FOOD ARE PROHIBITED BY THE SCHOOL. AGENDA TO INCLUDE ASSOCIATION BUSINESS, TRAINING, SPEECHES BY THE BOARD, THE PASSING OUT OF CHECKS, AND THE SHARING OF OPINIONS BY THE SAGE AND WISE MEMBERS.

That's a Lot of Soccer (submitted by Bill Cook)

At the Coast Soccer League assignors meeting this month, the state of the league was shared from a numbers perspective for the year 2006 (except where noted - see below). A quick glance at these statistics shows the strong growth in popularity and success of our local youth club soccer program and the Beautiful Game:

- Number of CSL players: **31,748**
- Number of CSL teams: **2,046** (2,178 teams in 2007)
- Number of Games Assigned: **15,920**

- Number of Referees: **4,179**
- Number of Assignors: **21**
- Number of Fields: **616**

- Number of Head Coaches: **2,042**, including **Jim Lilly**
- Number of Assistant Coaches: **1,247**
- Number of Team Administrators: **2,029**

- Number of CSL Clubs: **172**
- Number of Club Presidents: **155**
- Number of bracket and League Cup Scorekeepers: **285**

- Number of CSL Teams in 1989: **288**
- Number of CSL Teams in 1993: **384**
- Number of CSL Teams in 1998: **899**
- Number of CSL Teams in 2003: **1,696**
- Number of CSL Teams in 2006: **2,046**
- Number of CSL Teams in 2007: **2,178**

A Trifling Advantage (submitted by Gene Ogle)

By **Doug Smith**

I recently overheard a referee say: "'Trifling' and 'advantage' are related in many ways. Certainly the result is the same: no whistle." Many new and not-so-new referees struggle with understanding those two concepts, especially the contrast between them. Let's define the two terms.

Trifling. "Trifling" derives from a no-longer-included (but still very much in force) International Board Decision following Law 5, which said, in part: "Constant whistling for trifling and doubtful breaches produces bad feeling on the part of the players and spoils the pleasure of spectators."

In short, referees are instructed to only whistle infringements that matter — to not be overly picky about the exact spot of a throw-in or a free kick 70 yards from goal or whether the keeper carries the ball two inches outside the penalty area when punting the ball. Players may be momentarily and ineffectively held, pushed or charged, but that contact may have so little impact on their ability to continue the attack that the referee should do nothing more than silently congratulate the attacker on playing through.

The concept of a trifling offense is never a reason to ignore nasty play, because it often escalates. A slightly bad tackle, that is also late, may not affect the scoring chance in the next few seconds, but the pain from it will be remembered. That contact may distract the recipient during a similar play 10 minutes later. Referees need to keep track of the giving and receiving of such "gifts," and make sure players are aware that the guilty acts are noted.

It's good refereeing to swing by and tell any benefactor that, the moment the contact affects play, the whistle blows. Or, more succinctly, "Don't hold!"

The boundary between what is trifling and a foul that is whistled depends on the demonstrated skill and physical play of the players, the importance of the match and minor factors like slippery footing and poor lighting. Experienced players expect to give and receive more personal attention. Managing contests involving teams that have different expectations of allowable physical play is an advanced skill. The line the referee draws will almost certainly be higher than one team thinks fair, and lower than the other wants.

Advantage. The advantage clause of Law 5 reads: "... Allow play to continue when the team against which an offense was committed will benefit from such an advantage. ..." A consequence of that is that advantage is never applied to situations in which no foul has occurred. In a nutshell, the advantage signal announces to all, "I saw that foul, but not stopping play for it."

If the foul also merits a caution, the referee can loudly say, "I'll be back for you, number 6." That lets opponents know they need not plan to even the score, because the referee will take care of it. A foul deserving a send-off should only have advantage applied if the offended team is almost certain to score in the next few seconds. Not only does the immediate red card better serve the game, but the send-off is more easily "sold" if there is minimal time lag.

Finding the right psychological moment to announce advantage is another advanced skill. If advantage is signaled too soon, and the advantage dissipates, referees degrade their credibility by stopping play for an offense they said they weren't stopping play for. But it looks silly and self-serving to call, "Advantage!" after the shot has gone past the keeper into the net. Sometimes, especially around the penalty area, righteous advantage calls arrive and depart too quickly for the referee to get to savor them. The match has moved on, and yelling "Advantage!" late only confuses players.

The guideline is to wait no more than two to three seconds to decide whether the advantage remains. There are no silent advantage calls. You may have waited too long, but that's not an excuse to forgo giving the signal — it's just bad timing.

The Difference. Trifling and advantage have exactly one thing in common — the whistle isn't blown. The key tool at your disposal isn't your whistle, but your voice. Talking to the players helps manage both kinds of events. Advantage, of course, includes calling out "Play on!" or "Advantage!"

For situations where players suspect that a whistle is about to be blown (such as non-deliberate ball-to-hand contact), shout something like, "Keep going!" (It is amusing to see the ball short-hop off a player's elbow, followed one-third of a second later by the referee saying, "Keep going!" followed by the parents' shouts of "Handball!")

For situations in which players think an offense was committed, but you see it differently, it is useful to shout, "Nothing!" or "Nothing there!" to let everyone know: a) I saw the incident, b) I've decided there was no offense and c) keep playing. Years ago, some referees called out, "Play!" in those situations. Not only is "Play!" too close to "Play on!" but it's more effective to shout, "Nothing!" because it starts on a tower pitch. That keeps you from sounding overly excited, which helps manage the match tone.

Expand your vocabulary. Develop your own repertoire of words or phrases to consistently communicate non-offense and trifling contact. For advantage situations, yell out, "Play on. Advantage!" Make sure players understand when you are saying that you saw no offense (or at most, trifling contact), and when there was an offense, but they need to keep playing anyway. Like an orchestra conductor, it's your job to allow the players to play beautiful soccer, both by eliminating sour notes and letting them know when it sounds fine to you.



This is no Old Geezer Cart Pushing contest (Women's World Cup action this month in China - news photo)

I Hope I Don't Have to Deal With This in One of my Games (recent news article)

....19 year old Brazilian midfielder **Kerlon** repeatedly bounces the ball off his head like a seal as he darts around opponents ("seal dribble"), making it difficult to stop him without fouling him. You can find video of it on YouTube as Kerlon's Cruzeiro team defeated rival Atletico Mineiro this month. "It's a provocation," Atletico Mineiro Coach **Emerson Leao** said ... "He may have to be sidelined for several years if he gets kicked in the face. I hope that never happens" ... "I'll never stop doing the play" Kerlon said. "They'll need to create a new law if they want me to stop."

Sportsmanship Observed in the English League Cup Tournament (recent news article)

....Leicester City and Nottingham Forest were playing each other in the 92-team tournament. Nottingham Forest led 1 – 0 at halftime when Leicester City defender **Clive Clarke**, 27, collapsed in the locker room because of heart

failure and wound up in the hospital. After some deliberation, Nottingham Forest officials announced that the match would not proceed, drawing gratitude and praise from Leicester City. The match was scheduled to be replayed in its' entirety on Sept. 4. Leicester City Coach **Gary Megson** and his players made a singular decision for the rematch... They consulted Nottingham Forest beforehand, and kept things quiet..., but as the rematch began the Leicester City defenselet Nottingham Forest goalkeeper **Paul Smith** dribble down the pitch unopposed for a goal after 23 seconds. As he passed opposite number **Marton Fulop**, the two goalkeepers slapped hands before Smith kicked the ball into the net. That, Leicester City reckoned, replicated the score that had held before Nottingham Forest's gesture in suspending the previous match. Leicester City rallied for a 3 – 2 win.

SSBRA Youth Referee Does an Excellent Job under Trying Conditions (submitted by **Paul Kelly**)

The following entry was found on the internet this month. It refers to a September game that was covered by Members of SSBRA, and was written by a neutral, experienced observer of the match. It has been somewhat edited for the usual reasons:

“... I was watching a U12gold game. (The) center was a kid 14-15 max with an older woman and man (probably dad) on AR. The kid was keeping up enough that I didn't notice him much. He was where he was supposed to be and he wasn't afraid to make calls and even handed out some cautions. Team “A” seemed a half step slow on the day (Casimir is known in our area for its difficult conditions) and Team “B” certainly had the run of play.

The Team “A” parents started to turn on the kid. 250 lb men were screaming at him from the sidelines demanding that he call fouls I didn't even see. It felt like watching a bunch of bullies - almost like abuse. Eventually the AR (older man) on that side went ballistic, told everyone to shut up and threatened to send them all home. He called the boy over and to the boy's credit he didn't do what the AR said. Instead he moved all the parents to the other side of the half, had a talk with the coach and finished the game. Frankly there were a few parents that should have left and the coach, though not offensive himself, did little to try and control the parents....but it was the kid's call and he made it.

Team “B” eeked out a victory and it was a fair result, and no one was hurt except the poor ref, who I last saw slumped over in his chair. I don't know what he was thinking but my heart went out to him. If this is what young referees are subjected to.....”

Well, you get the idea...

First off, this writer and the Board want to congratulate the referee and ARs for a job well done – the AR was in fact the Dad of the referee, and so one can understand if he did come down too hard as described. As a Dad myself who some years ago saw his teenage daughter driven out of soccer refereeing by just this kind of abusive behavior, I can vouch that this kind of stuff has been going on for a long time. These bullies see someone younger and/or lacking in confidence, and go into a frenzy, trying to gain an advantage, or something. More than ever, this shows that the referee teams (and not just if there are youth Members present) need to support each other, as one never knows what will happen nor how the various parties will react. It is so hard for a teenage youth referee, well-raised to be respectful of and obey his elders, to be put in the new position of authority as a referee, and then be treated like this by so-called adults. All we can do as referees is encourage each other, and remind ourselves that, after all, it is only words, and those words do not deserve our respect nor being given a second thought after the match because of the temporary emotional state of those doing the talking..

Who's on First? Who Wants to Know, and Why? (news article submitted by **Lee Jordan**)

By **Ted Gup**

This summer Lt. Col. **Bryan Hilferty** of Alexandria got a glimpse of secrecy where he least expected it -- not at

the Pentagon but on a baseball diamond where his 8-year-old son, **Sam**, played Little League. A ball struck third base and rolled wide, and Hilferty, as acting umpire, was unsure what call to make. He declared it foul, then reversed himself when challenged by another dad. That's when he decided he'd better get a copy of the official Little League Rule Book. That evening he turned to the league's Web site. To his surprise, the rules were not to be found there. More surprising still, he learned that the official rule books were no longer made available to bookstores or sporting-goods stores. So the dogged lieutenant colonel contacted the league's regional office and asked for a copy of the rules. But a league official informed him that due to past litigation the league no longer makes the rules available to just anyone.

It seems that some years ago parents of players who were injured in non-league games where league rules were used had taken to suing Little League. So the league decided to restrict the circulation of its rules on a need-to-know basis, a concept with which Hilferty was intimately familiar. "I have a secret clearance," he mused, "I work in the E-ring of the Pentagon, but I don't have clearance for the Little League rules."

Little League told him that its rules were not secret, just restricted to those authorized to see them -- not the first time he'd heard that argument. An irritated Hilferty wrote a league official, "I am an Army officer stationed at the Pentagon and the Army has some secrets, but our 'rules' are published for the world to see."...

In the end, the league relented, offering to provide Hilferty with a rule book (at a fee of \$1.50), but Hilferty declined. "They did offer me a copy, but I said no. It's bigger than me. It's about the 50,000 dads across America who want to know the rules and about the dads on my team and the kids on my team who didn't know the rules." But Little League spokesman **Lance Van Auken** seemed unmoved by Hilferty's frustrations. "There is no way we can give special treatment to someone just because they are in the Pentagon," he said. "We don't give preferential treatment. Everybody has to abide by the same rules. The books are available through the proper channels -- someone in the military should know that.".....

In Corpus Christi Texas, the Laguna Little League rules related to selection for the All-Star Team note: "All personnel involved in the selection process shall be sworn to secrecy of all All-star announcements until given dates authorized by the board." The East Tonka Little League, in Minnetonka, Minn., provides that "at the start of the selection meeting, coaches will receive a copy of player evaluations for their use that evening. These evaluations will be collected and destroyed at the end of the meeting." (There was no reference to burn bags.) Arizona's Tempe South Little League in its 2007 playoff calendar notes that the location of the "Major Division Draft" and "Minor Division Draft" were to be considered "Top Secret." The Pacific Little League, in Lynnwood, Wash., has a section titled "Secrecy," which states that "players and parents are never told of the round in which candidates were drafted. All coaches' and managers' scoring sheets and draft notes are collected and destroyed at the end of the draft by the Player Agent." ... a few parents have come to view that rule as inviting nepotism and favoritism, particularly where they see the children of assistant coaches routinely making the team and the All-Star list.

More Baseball News (recent news article)

By **RONALD BLUM**

NEW YORK (Sept. 26) - Umpire **Mike Winters** was suspended by Major League Baseball for the remainder of the regular season on Wednesday because of his confrontation with San Diego's **Milton Bradley** last weekend. The Padres claimed Winters baited Bradley, who has a history of losing his temper. Winters was suspended because the commissioner's office concluded he had used a profanity aimed at Bradley, a baseball official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the reason for the suspension was not announced.

The 48-year-old Winters became a major league umpire in 1990 and worked the World Series in 2002 and last year. He will not work during the postseason, the baseball official said. Winters became the first umpire suspended since 2003, when the commissioner's office announced that **Bruce Froemming** and **John Hirschbeck** each were receiving 10-day penalties. Froemming made an anti-Semitic slur about an umpiring administrator and baseball said Hirschbeck threatened a senior official in the commissioner's office.

Referee Escapes Intact (submitted by W. Howell)

Whether by luck or fate, the SSBRA Member sometimes known as the Large Member found himself in the envious position of being assigned to 2 CSL GU10 matches, and then a CSL GU9 match, in Redondo Beach on a recent September Saturday. Knowing how coveted and enjoyable these 3 game sets are, he was at Begg field in plenty of time for the first match, and whistled the first game without a problem. The second GU10 match, however, proved to be a horse of a different color, with the coach and spectators of what turned out to be the losing side complaining about everything and nothing. Though the L.M. warned the coach to modify the behavior of his sideline, late in the first half the same coach started yelling about something or other again, and the L.M. returned to his side to inform him he had been booked for dissent and would have to quiet down or be gone. One of the nearby parents then decided to get in the L.M.'s face, yelling about whatever, and was sent-off, with the referee announcing that the game would not re-start until he was out of sight and sound of the field. Standing on the opposite side of the pitch, the L.M. watched as the banished parent made his slow walk into the sunset, gesturing and muttering as he went. Finally the game restarted, the end of the first half came, and the second half was played without further incident. Thinking nothing more of the matter, the L.M. did the usual end of game and beginning of the next game procedures, and enjoyed whistling the first half of the last game of the day, the GU9 match. Alas, returning to his chair at the halftime break, he found that someone had attached a torn piece of cardboard to his clipboard, with a message written on it with some kind of marker. The words were ungrammatical, but the meaning was clear enough – they warned the referee that he should not do any games of older players because if he did they would “kick his butt” (!) due to his bad calls. This caused the L.M. concern and tribulation, as he was indeed assigned to do older players the very next day, centering a GU17 match and assisting on a BU16 match. Being nervous and extra vigilant on Sunday, the L.M. got through those matches OK, and then at the end of the day did a careful exam of the, uh, body part in question to determine if any kicking had taken place. Finding no boot prints in the critical area, he breathed a sigh of relief and made his way home safely.