



The Flag and Whistle
Newsletter of the South Bay Soccer Referee Association
Serving the Soccer Community since 1976



Written by: Warren Howell and Jonny Joseph
Edited by: Jonny Joseph

June 2021

Notes from the Board

The End

We have reached the end of the SBSRA Membership Year, which culminates in our Annual General Meeting to be held on the last **Wednesday** of June - **June 30, 2021**. Although the day is a departure from our traditional Tuesday meeting day, we are pleased to announce that we will be returning to our home for many years – the **Library at North High School on 182nd Street in Torrance**.

The evening will begin with the business part of the AGM, including elections for 2 Board Positions – Vice President and Treasurer. As was mentioned at the May Membership meeting, see draft Meeting Minutes below, serving on the SBSRA Board is more than just a 2-hour commitment to attend board meetings and a 2-hour commitment to attend membership meetings each month. Each Board Member spends numerous hours each month on Association business between meetings. With respect to the two positions that will be voted on at the AGM, the Treasurer is constantly handling payments and receipts on behalf of the Association, and the Vice President is charged with maintaining the ratings of our members, a job that will require considerable time this upcoming year.

The following nominations have been received thus far:

- a. Vice President - Steve Morgan and Steve Resnick,
- b. Treasurer - Bruce Ashton.

Their Candidate Statements follow:

Vice President

Steve Morgan

I am Steve Morgan, your current Vice President. I would like to continue as your VP and Executive Board member and represent your ideas and thoughts at the Board meetings. As we come out of the lost Pandemic year, we have been busy as a Board. We have been meeting monthly and strategizing on how to hit the ground running. We may not always agree on everything but that drives discussions that are lively and thought provoking. At the end of the day we, the Board want to improve the Association and the members. It is important to have Members on the Board who have different thoughts and opinions and who are willing to stand up and express them, as a Board with only one thought pattern cannot properly serve the association.

Board of Directors

President: Jonny Joseph

Vice-President: Steve Morgan

Secretary: Jack Desemone

Treasurer: Bruce Ashton

Member-At-Large: Tim Martinez

Assignor: Gabriel Goldsman



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During the pandemic, I took it upon myself to keep on top of the Cal South ROL, helping members navigate the process to either maintain status or re-certify. As many of you can attest to in regards to the various emails that were sent and continue to be sent.

I also spend dozen of hours calling different members just to stay in contact and making sure our members were okay. In addition I scheduled and lead several “Talk Soccer” zoom meetings which were attended by 4-5 five dozen members to talk about soccer when we were not able to referee soccer.

I also helped save the Association a chunk of change by pushing Arbiter for a rebate for the year of inactivity. We rec’d a 25% reduction in costs from roughly \$1200 to \$780. I would like to continue to help get us back to “normal” which includes working with the different clients/leagues in their efforts to get their seasons running again and the restart of “RPD” now called CORE.

I also want to continue to work with our members to get them re certified and back on the pitch.

Steve Resnick

The duties of the Vice President as stated in the By-laws include managing the Member Ranking process; and to exercise the duties of the President (as appropriate).

Managing the Member Ranking process is a concern to all of us, and I want to join the board and see that the process is done the right way: objective and transparent. I pledge to the membership that I will take this process seriously and manage it accordingly. I will strive to have new rankings ready for the fall season.

Should it become necessary (and I hope it doesn’t), I am willing to step-in and perform the duties of the President in the manner that we have experienced in the last year. I have plenty of experience in this regard.

By way of background, I have been a member of this association for many years. I have seen it grow and become the top referee association in Southern California. This is as it should be, and credit goes to all of us and those who came before us. I have contributed to the association in various ways, including chair of the By-Law Committee. I am an AYSO National Referee (and instructor and assessor) and reached USSF grade of State 5 (before the grades were changed). I also was a NISOA National referee.

I am a Community Leader in the Westwood area of Los Angeles. I will bring my experience as homeowner association president, Neighborhood Council secretary, and membership in other boards to our Association’s Vice Presidential position. I have been considering the role of the Vice President for some time. It has become clear to me that our association deserves excellent leadership that will take their important roles seriously and conscientiously. I will do just that: perform all the duties of the Vice President in the same serious and professional manner.

At any time, I will be happy to hear from you on what you want to see as part of the Member Ranking process. Thanks for reading this and for your consideration of my candidacy.



Treasurer

Bruce R Ashton, CPA

Writing a statement for an un-opposed office appeared, at first, to be a waste of time. Then I thought about what I would include assuming there were other candidates for the office. My answer is nothing different.

I strive to uphold the highest standards for this office and as a board member. This includes my own moral standards, along with the professional standards of my profession. I consider my 1st and only 'job' is to protect the financial interest of your assets and the Association's integrity.

From a member standpoint, we have strived to have a transparent operation. The financials are posted, along with my quarterly statement, on the website. Additionally, from the beginning, I have maintained a cash balance sufficient to cover all referee payments in the month subsequent to the performance of the referee's game.

This is all I can do, and therefore can make no further promises. I again, ask for your vote.

Bylaws Amendment Proposal

The following Bylaw amendment proposal, received from Michael Hinz, was presented in writing to the May Membership Meeting, as provided for in our Bylaws (additional proposed language in red font and highlighted in yellow):

VII ELECTED OFFICERS

4. Secretary:

- c. Provide draft Membership Meeting minutes to the Board for approval no later than seventy-two (72) hours after each meeting and provide final draft minutes to the Membership no later than one (1) week before the subsequent Membership Meeting for approval by the Membership at that meeting. **If the minutes are not made available to the membership one (1) week before the meeting, the approval vote will be delayed until the next Membership meeting.**

Voting

As was done last year, we will be voting using an online system developed by our webmaster, Rick Roberts. This will allow members who are able to attend in person as well as those who attend by Zoom to vote, provided they have been determined to be in Good Standing following the May Membership Meeting. All members received an email earlier this month informing them of their voting status. Sixty One members were determined to be in Good Standing and thus we need 31 of these members to be in attendance at the AGM for us to have a quorum.

Following the conclusion of the business part of the meeting in the library, we will reconvene in the high school parking lot for dinner to be provided by the Chicken King Food Truck, proudly serving Krispy



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Krunchy Chicken. Please bring your own chair to sit and enjoy a serving of fried chicken, potato wedges and a cold drink. Please accept the Arbiter invitation you have received so we can ensure that we have the right amount of servings. If you have not accepted in Arbiter, we cannot guarantee that you will be fed!

If you are unable to attend in person, we regret that we will not be able to deliver your meal to you but you can attend by Zoom as follows:

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3195795900?pwd=dXZtV2NhdzJweUk4OFNQZDFzbGJ0QT09>
Meeting ID: 319 579 5900 Passcode: 894340
Phone: 1-669-900-6833 One Tap Mobile: +16699006833,,3195795900#,,, *894340#

We look forward to seeing you then! If you cannot make the meeting, in person or on Zoom, we will have a recording, as we do of the most recent meeting on our website at <https://sbsra.org/association/meetings/>.

Good News!

Although the AYSO summer program that we presented a proposal to did not end up taking place, we are excited to announce that the Manhattan Beach 7v7 league is resuming games on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning on June 29 with 6 games on Tuesdays (3 fields) and 4 games on Thursdays (2 fields).

El Segundo's fields have been used extensively by youth sports and they are hoping for a restart of their adult soccer leagues in August. South Bay Peninsula Soccer League (PSL) has set September 12 as their target date for restarting their leagues. PSL is holding a Managers' Meeting this Sunday and we have been invited to participate.

We are also in discussion with a tournament, which will hold games over two weekends in August. If successful, this will be a new tournament for SBSRA.

Despite reaching out to other adult and youth leagues, we have not heard back from any of the others that are not mentioned above. Nevertheless, we can expect to have many games throughout the next few weeks until the traditional youth season starts after Labor Day. Rest now!!

Supplemental Reports

- The **Cal South Supplemental report form**, on the SBSRA website, must be used,
- The report is required to be prepared ASAP, **within 24 hours** for **all serious situations**, including:
 - **Red cards, serious injuries** (paramedics called, player taken to emergency room/hospital), attended to by the trainer in some cases or **game terminations**, etc.,
- Take a **copy of the Match Report** to prepare the Cal South incident report,
- Use **simple language** and include the **facts of the incident** only:
 - **When** – date and time, point in the match.
 - **Where** – venue and specific location on the field.
 - **Who** was involved? The player's name, number and team.



- **What** happened? Don't speculate, just note what you saw.

Note there is no “**Why**.” Not our job to speculate on why someone did what they did and we should not include a diagnosis of the injury, even if we have the ability to do so.

- **Do not use abbreviations**, only use **language in the Laws of the Game** to describe the applicable misconduct.
- **Call the Assignor**, after any game that requires an incident report so he is informed when the league calls him.
- **Submit the supplemental report** to our Member-At-Large (MAL) and the Assignor (and Co-Assignor if the game was assigned by the Co-Assignor) who will review the report and possibly suggest edits.
- Following submission of the incident report to the MAL, please call him to ensure it has been received if you have not received an **acknowledgement of receipt within 2 hours**.
- **Following review and approval** of the report by the MAL and Assignor, the **Assignor submits the final report** to the applicable league.
- **If you have kept ID cards**, not required for all red cards, the card(s), together with copies of the match report and incident report must be sent to the applicable league administrator **by the end of the first business day (likely Monday)** following the game.
- The **importance of this process** cannot be stressed strongly enough! These reports are really needed by the leagues and everything we do needs to **reflect our professionalism** as individuals and as a referee association.

Covid Vaccination

It has been reported that 58% of Los Angeles residents have now received at least one Covid Vaccination shot. It is more than likely that a larger proportion of our membership has been vaccinated. One of our leagues that is about to return has expressed concern whether referees assigned to their games will be vaccinated. I expect they are taking measures to only allow vaccinated players to play.

To be clear – SBSRA is not contemplating vaccinations as a requirement to be a member. However, we are assessing the situation to enable us to continue to provide excellent service all of our customers.

Membership Meeting Minutes Approval

The draft May Membership Meeting minutes are included below and will be presented for approval at the July Membership Meeting. As is our custom, we do not approve minutes at the AGM.



SBSRA Monthly Membership Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 25, 2021 Via Zoom Conference

1. Call to order - the meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm.
2. Approval of March 2021 minutes - proposed by Sky Rosenstein, seconded by Sue Pascoe, approved by acclimation.
3. Treasurer's Report - BA reported that significant activity in April included the payment of the assignor's fees, billed to CSL and SoCal the previous month. BA also reported that he has spoken to the bank regarding the receipt of annual dues from members using Zelle, and is continuing to pursue this possibility to make it easier for members to make their payments.

BA spoke to the membership on what to expect when getting paid by SBSRA; BA strives to get the checks out within 30 days, and when the member receives the check to please cash it ASAP.

BA asked the members that have joined during the last two years to submit a W-9 form. BA suggested that members could submit two electronic copies - one with all details filled in without Social Security Number and a separate form with just the SSN to protect their data. BA reminded the membership that if their mailing address has changed, to send him the new address. Address changes in Arbiter are not communicated to him. Veto reinforced that it is up to the member to make sure that the Treasurer gets their updated addresses.

4. SBSRA training - Chris Nevil presented the following two topics:
 - Sideline Management - CN emphasized that it is up to the referee to ensure the coaches control the behavior of the sidelines. CN showed video clips of spectators' and coaches' behavior. The membership discussed various methods on how to handle such situations. A point of emphasis was when the AR has an issue with a spectator, the CR should be brought in immediately to speak to the coach calmly.
 - Mass Confrontation - CN showed video clips of players congregating with the potential of a fight breaking out. The main takeaways were for the referee team to remain calm, establish the triangle of control, deescalate the situation, and remember that player safety comes first. Handling mass confrontation must be discussed thoroughly by the referee team during their pre-game discussion.
5. Membership Applications - JJ reported that the updated Returning Membership Application is on the website, and everyone, who is planning on returning, needs to fill one out for consideration by no later than June 30. Membership in the Association is not automatically renewed - the Board considers and votes on all applications received. JJ also welcomed new member applicant Tyler Peltier, who introduced himself.
6. Respect for fellow referees - JJ reminded that everyone in the Association is to remain professional and should speak positive about fellow members only, or say nothing at all. This is really important when speaking with people outside of our association, especially coaches and club administrators.



7. The customer is (almost) always right - JJ brought up that we should be flexible when the coaches want to alter league rules (e.g., substitution rules). Michael Hinz and Servando Berna raised concerns that we are not fulfilling our duties by deliberately disregarding the league rules because the coaches agree on changing certain league rules. Opinions were shared that we need to respect the Laws of the Game and that making Laws of the Game changes at the field were not appropriate. It was noted that the current season is unique in that the leagues are being somewhat less formal and strict with their league rules (different to Laws of the Game) and that most variances related to player safety and an effort to reduce the physical stress on the players. Other modifications for duration of the game (minutes per half) and water breaks in hot conditions were discussed. In some cases the referee has the discretion to make changes and in other cases we want referees to exercise good judgement to work with coaches for the good of the game and the players, especially youth players. Player safety and welfare must always be the prevailing paradigm. A lengthy discussion ensued and JJ said that he would contact the applicable league (ECNL) to request clarification on what can be changed and what needs to be enforced.
8. Membership Dues - JJ reminded the members that no dues were charged for the 2020/21 season. For the 2021/22 the dues are \$100, the same as they were for the 2018/19 season. For members that joined after the 2019/20 season, an additional \$40 is due even though they only need to complete a Returning Member Application.
9. Board Meeting Report - May 2021-JJ reported that the board discussed items on the membership meeting agenda and the forthcoming SBS league which started between the board meeting and tonight's meeting.
10. Flag & Whistle - JJ encouraged the members to read it each month. JJ noted that it has answers to many questions that come up during the monthly membership meetings, which makes the meetings unnecessarily longer. The newsletter contains serious and humorous content for the pleasure and fun of the membership.
11. Annual General Meeting:
 - i. Date -JJ reported that the meeting is planned for the last Tuesday of June, June 29th, as is our custom.
 - ii. Location - Expected to be in-person, site to be determined with Zoom attendance offered also, if possible.
 - iii. Bylaw Amendments - Michael Hinz proposed a Bylaw change that was read out to the members and shared on the screen, as follows (additional proposed language in red font and highlighted in yellow):

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- iv. Board Nominations - JJ explained that serving on the SBSRA Board was more than just a 2 hour commitment to attend board meetings and a 2 hour commitment to attend membership meetings each month. Each Board Member spend numerous hours each month on Association business between meetings. With respect to the two positions that will be voted on at the AGM, the treasurer is constantly handling payments and receipts on behalf of the Association and the Vice President is charged with maintaining the ratings of our members, a job that will require considerable time this upcoming year. Having explained the commitment needed for these two board positions, JJ called for candidate nominations:
 - a. Treasurer - Veto Galati nominated Bruce Ashton, Tony Calandra seconded and Bruce accepted the nomination.
 - b. Vice President - Jack Desemone nominated Steve Morgan, Tim Martinez seconded and Steve accepted the nomination. Chris Nevil nominated Steve Resnick, Kiku Annon seconded and Steve accepted the nomination.
 - v. Michael Hinz noted that board candidates could be nominated right up until the voting begins. JJ emphasized that while this was accurate, the candidates benefited from being nominated ahead of the meeting as candidate statements would be included in the Flag & Whistle at least 1 week prior to the AGM. In addition, our webmaster, Rick Roberts, needed time to set up the electronic voting. Any late nominations would have to be included in the electronic vote as "write in" candidates. It was also noted that according to the Bylaws, proposed Bylaws' amendments have to be presented in writing at the prior Membership Meeting. Accordingly, no further Bylaws amendments could be submitted.
12. Other Business- JJ reported that a number of our members have received notification from Cal South that they need to complete SafeSport refresher before June 1st to remain on the ROL. Although the estimated time to complete the refresher was stated to be 15 minutes, it had taken him about 20 minutes to complete it earlier that week. Certain members had reported technical issues on the SafeSport site but others had completed it without any problems. A direct link to the SafeSport site has been added to our website home page for the ease of reference for our members.
13. Meeting adjourned at 9:11pm.



Stay on Script With Signals

As adapted from an article by Tim Sloan in Referee Magazine (May 5, 2021) to be more applicable to soccer.

Like it or not, we officials are on a stage of sorts, playing a role and contributing to the production. By that standard, we have something in common with real actors in how we ply our trade and involve the audience.

Many of us have some idea of how casting calls work for movie or TV parts. Candidates are competing for a role in a production and are given some portion of the script to read. Sometimes, they read the script “cold,” while other times they get it in advance and can work out how they wish to portray it. Either way, the producer is looking for the most compelling presentation of how he or she wants it to be viewed and selects the person best for the job, based on some expectations. Despite the fact everyone trying out has the same lines to read, each actor makes his or her own attempt to make it memorable and differentiate himself or herself from everyone else.

In all sports, officials are given the same script, too. There is text, diagrams and pictures in the law and rule books of various sports, including IFAB’s (International Football Association Board) Laws of the Game (from time to time, USSF has provided some nuances to the standard signals but are largely the same). Officials are expected to play the role as indistinguishably as they can. In order to portray their impartiality, they’re expected to apply the laws/rules and run the game the same as every other official, and the same in every game, as much as possible. There are tall and short, skinny and fat, male and female officials, of course, but beyond their physical traits, the game wants no inkling that they’re judging differently by behaving differently. A way of giving the impression that would be by going “off the script.”

Officials who manipulate signals to their own personal style don’t create a following like actors; more often, they create suspicion or confusion: Does the official want to be noticed, apply the rules differently, need to justify his or her actions more, or not care that much? Any time a participant can look at an official and ask, “What’s the deal?” it defeats the homogeneity of the crew, causes division and ultimately reduces the upward mobility of the person wearing the referee uniform.

A common aspect of the laws and rules of a number of sports is there are a limited number of violations and fouls, but many ways to commit each one. Nonetheless, there’s really only one signal for fouls in soccer – pointing in the direction that the team who has been awarded the restart is attacking. There is one exception, when a penalty kick is awarded, the referee points towards the penalty mark.

Why, then, do so many officials impart their own version of the various signals prescribed by the law book?



Another aspect, less often considered, is that improvised signals can be confused with one another. When an official's arm to signal a free kick is not at the desired 45 degree angle from the ground, it could be confused with a goal kick (arm pointed in a similar manner but parallel to the ground) or a penalty kick (arm pointed in a similar manner but downward to the penalty mark). In either case, we are reminded that the palm should be to the side, not down (as in the Nazi salute).

Is that an indirect free kick signal (arm pointed straight up in the air with fingers outstretched, together, palm facing one's head) or a signal to the players to wait (arm and fingers pointed in the same way but palm facing forwards)? If, as a player or a coach, I'm not sure what the referee is signaling, I could be at a disadvantage to prepare for the restart or to coach the players about what to do next. If I must follow up the indistinct signal with the genuine question, "What did he/she do, what's the call?" I might come across as a whiner who questions calls; that doesn't help anyone, either.

Clean, consistent, garden-variety signals are the great equalizer. Many center referees include "use standard USSF signals" in their pre-games but it may be necessary when the officials get together at half-time to share with each for a few minutes if their signals are a little different to the standard required. They're aiding communication, reducing confusion and evoking a greater impression of consistency. Then, when they blow the whistle and take that briefest of seconds to stop, compose themselves and deliberately make the signal, they buy a little bit of credibility. The officials who jog through their signals, don't make eye contact and aren't crisp about any of it make it harder on everyone, including themselves. Making a clear signal is your opportunity to rein in the game and tacitly communicate to everyone, "Take it easy; we've got this."

Warren's Howellers and Some Things to Think About

Warren returned in a BIG WAY – with 10 pages of material. After letting him know that his short absence did not require 4 – 5 months of material, we chose the following for this month:

Warren remembers....

GOAAAAL! Or maybe not.....

Some years ago, it was a typical Fall Sunday morning in Manhattan Beach. Even better, **Dick Lujan**, along with enthusiastic assistants **Mike Clifford** and the **Large Member**, had snagged the chance to officiate at a PSL O/40 match at the narrow but adequate Marine Park field.

Having arrived early enough before the match to dispense with the preliminary chores, it all got started reasonably close to on-time, and things went well in the first half, with everyone having a good time whether they wanted to admit it or not.

In the second half, the attacking team had a throw-in somewhat near the goal line in their opponent's half of the field, and made preparations to put the ball in a dangerous place for a



scoring opportunity. With a mighty toss, the ball went towards the goal area, and the players all started jostling for position. With all this movement going on, everyone forgot about the ball, which, after 2 bounces, went straight into the goal without being touched by anyone.

At this point everyone started voicing their opinion on the proper call, sharing their insights with Dick and everyone else in the neighborhood. Knowing that Dick is a little hard of hearing, the players and coaches were thoughtful enough to use their loud “outdoor” voices, and even made a point of all talking at once, repeatedly, so that they could be sure that Dick had the benefit of their points of view.

As Dick often says, there is nothing he likes better as a referee than unsolicited advice, and this day he was not disappointed in that regard. Showing the calmness and serenity in tense moments for which he is known, after awhile Dick correctly announced that there was no goal and that the restart was a goal kick. This brought down a new round of comments and thought-sharing from the same participants, but eventually, seeing that Dick was not going to change his mind no matter what was said, the game continued on to a fair conclusion.

Do you have a memory of a game that you officiated that makes you smile, that you learned something from or that reminds you of another member? Send it to either of us for inclusion in a future edition of this newsletter. Non-copyrighted pictures could make your memory even more vivid.

This is How They Did it in the Good Old Days (1981)

Greek soccer referee **Mikos Litsas** was jailed for sending off a player during a game. Litsas was sentenced by an Athens court to 40 days in jail and ordered to pay a \$100 fine after the player initiated legal action.

More jurisprudence:

In 2018, a Serbian court sentenced soccer referee **Srdjan Obradovic** to a 15-month jail term and a 10-year ban from the sport for awarding two contentious penalty kicks, both of which resulted in goals. Immediately following a Serbian top league match, the referee was arrested and the sentence was handed down by the Supreme Court in Novi Sad, Serbia.

A Good Idea (attributed to Yogi Berra)

“Give it 100% in the first half of the game. And if that is not enough, then in the second half give what you’ve got left.”

Thought of the Month (Bobby Robson, legendary English Manager, Coach)

“We didn’t underestimate them. They were just a lot better than we thought.”

----- Still  Smiling? -----