



# The Flag and Whistle

## Newsletter of the South Bay Soccer Referee Association

### Serving the Soccer Community since 1976



Written by: Jonny Joseph  
Edited by: Alan Siegel

August 2025

## A New Season

Every new season comes with a variety of emotions, including excitement, nervousness (the good type), trepidation, concerns about fitness and the fit of our uniforms. It goes without saying, so I will write it instead, we need to be confident about our knowledge of the laws of the game (IFAB) and rules of each league or competition.

At the July Membership Meeting, Gabriel reviewed the IFAB Law Changes and Clarifications for the 2025/2026 season. Attached to this newsletter is a summary of those changes which have also been shared with the clubs who have contracted us for our services, as well as SBPSL.

At our next meeting, August 26, 2025, Chris Nevil will review the specific rules and areas of emphasis for the handful of leagues that comprise about 70% of our games each year. This is one of the most important meetings of the year and everyone who can attend is encouraged to be there.

Chris will also discuss supplemental reports, an area which continues to provide us with opportunities for improvement. Your Board has discussed the timing requirement for the submission of these reports and shares the following information which will be included in updates to our guidelines and website:

Leagues depend on us to provide timely information regarding any serious incidents at their games so they can act before the next round of games takes place. To this end, it is critical for the applicable assignor and Member-at-Large to be notified by text message before the referee drives away from the field with the following information:

- Location and Time of Game
- Reason for report, e.g., Red Card
- Name, Number and team of Player sent off
- Code for Send Off, e.g., VC, SFP, AL, 2CT, etc.
- Your Name

The **typed**, two-page report must be sent to our Member-at-Large and the applicable assignor by the end of the day on which the incident (usually send-offs) took place but **no later than 12:00pm (noon) of the next day**. The draft report must be sent to the assistant referees on the game for their review and comment also to ensure that the report is prepared properly. They share responsibility to ensure reports are submitted and in a timely manner.

If the referee does not receive any response from the assignor within 3 hours, the referee must follow up to ensure the report was received.

Referees are asked to comply with the spirit of our goal of submitting these reports to the leagues as soon as possible and not to delay this very important task.

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### Board of Directors

**President:** Jonny Joseph      **Vice-President:** Steve Brandon      **Secretary:** Kiku Annon  
**Treasurer:** Bruce Ashton      **Member-At-Large:** Tony Calandra      **Assignor:** Gabriel Goldsman



## **Professional Appearance**

Please be reminded to avoid the following non-compliance with uniform standards:

- Long-sleeve undershirts, of any color, are unacceptable under short-sleeve referee shirts
- The only acceptable socks are black with two stripes in the ankle area
- Shorts and socks that are not quite black
- Desert style, or any other floppy style, hats with neck flaps.

## **Jersey Badges**

We have 4 alternatives:

- USSF Soccer
- USSF Futsal
- SBSRA
- CSL “5 Star Referee” (for CSL games only)

Please ensure you wear the correct one for each game. As a general rule, most youth games require a USSF badge (current year or next year badges only), middle school and most adult games require an SBSRA badge.

## **League Rules**

Please be reminded to visit each league’s dedicated page on our website, which can be found at <https://www.sbsra.org/competitions> before going to the fields to officiate their games. If you have any questions about a league, please check the website before asking an assignor or anyone else.

A variety of problems on and off the pitch occur when members are not familiar with the rules of the league in which they officiate and are easily avoided with just a few minutes of research on our part.

## **Single Referee Call-In Procedures**

Please be reminded that we have revised our day of game single referee call-in procedures as follows:

- Weekday games – continue to call into our SBSRA hotline, (310) 955 9905, and select 1 to leave a message,
- Weekend games – send a text message to the Assignor, (213) 220 3580 and include the following:
  - Your Name,
  - Field Location,
  - Time of Game.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Included below are the General Membership Meeting Minutes for approval by the Membership at our next meeting.



## SBSRA General Membership Meeting Minutes July 29, 2025

1. Call to order at 7:04pm
2. Approval of June 2025 Meeting Minutes, motion by Steve Brandon, seconded by Sky Rosenstein, approved by acclamation
3. Guest Presentation - Bernie Towers and Chris Price, Coast Soccer League:
  - a) Chris spoke about the critical role of referees, the referees' rating of teams, and CSL's commitment to creating a positive game day environment to keep and grow the game. He shared the following data points about the 2024 - 2025 season:
    - i. Overall, 1,503 teams were rated 4.1/5.0 (and two teams were removed and did not complete their season) over 10,455 games
    - ii. The average referee rating was 4.38/5.0 for approximately 1650 referees and 21 associations
    - iii. Winning teams rated referees an average of 4.52/5.0 and losing teams rated referees an average of 4.21/5.0
    - iv. SBSRA performed at a high level receiving an average rating of 4.54 (3<sup>rd</sup> of all groups) and we rated teams 78.95% of the time. Good but should be 100%! CSL needs us to help them identify problem teams
    - v. Eighteen SBSRA referee were rated "5 Star Referees" in the past year (21% of all SBSRA referees)
    - vi. Jonny Joseph and Craig Breitman were recognized as 5-star referees two years in a row (only 27 other referees in CSL)
    - vii. Bruce Ashton and Marlon Bailey were recognized as 5-star referees three years in a row (only 17 other referees in CSL)Chris also noted that nationwide 60% of referees quit in their first year and CSL is focused on referees having a positive experience, so they want to return season after season. CSL has raised fees for 3-referee crews for this year.
4. ODP Presentation - Zoe Schweitzer - spent time training with all female referees, spoke about mental resilience, spoke about how fellow referees can be an ally to a female referee
5. Monthly Training - Gabriel Goldsman on 2025-2026 IFAB Law Changes;
  - a) Law 3 - Each team must have a captain on the field who wears an identifying armband. Competitions can implement a "Speaking Captain" role, (if the captain is the keeper there will be a designated field player to speak)
  - b) Law 5 - Referees to use a visible and audible countdown for the last five seconds out of the eight sounds that the keeper can control the ball
  - c) Law 8 - Dropped ball to the keeper if the ball was in the penalty area when play was stopped, if the ball was outside the penalty area, the ball is dropped to the team that had control or last touched the ball, unless the ball would have gone to an opposing player. The restart (dropped ball) takes place where the ball was at the whistle. It is recommended that the referees blow the whistle before you drop the ball or otherwise indicate that play has started



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- d) Law 9 - Indirect free kick and no sanction if someone off the field touches the ball as it leaves the field and there was no intended interference. Caution if it appears that there was intentional interference with same restart
  - e) Law 11 - if the goalkeeper throws the ball, the last point of contact with the ball is the moment when offside is to be determined
  - f) Law 12 - Corner kick awarded to opposing team for 8 second goalkeeper violation
  - g) VAR Protocol - Competitions have the option for the referee to make an announcement after a VAR 'review' or lengthy VAR 'check'
6. Treasurer's Report:
- a) Financial Statements for the Year Ended June 30, 2025 - BA presented the Treasurer's review explaining the Surplus of \$2,900 was due to a higher number of members than budgeted for
  - b) Spoke about the change of banking to Chase to make it easier to receive electronic banking payments from customers
  - c) Membership Dues Owed - Returning Members need to make payment in July or incur \$20 late fee after August 1
  - d) Address Changes - Please tell Bruce to ensure checks and 1099s are sent to your correct address
7. President's Report:
- a) Timely Membership Renewals - Following the final written reminder, JJ asked if anyone had not yet submitted their RMA. Approximately 120 have already paid, late fees apply the day after tomorrow
  - b) Professionalism - JJ appealed to the membership to continue improving their professionalism with an emphasis on:
    - i. Appearance - clean and professional looking uniforms, correct socks, etc.
    - ii. Arbiter - recent headshot, no one else in the picture, mobile telephone number, address you want used for assigning as close to home as possible
    - iii. Behavior - at the fields, on the fields, on the sidelines. Interactions with coaches, managers, players and spectators
    - iv. Being Good Members - attending meetings, reading the newsletter, keeping current with Arbiter and Cal South renewal requirements, especially SafeSport which members tend to postpone and then forget about
  - c) Board Meeting - July 2025
    - i. Mostly about getting new board members oriented and discussing initiatives for this next year
  - d) Members' Merchandise
    - i. Long sleeved or short sleeved dry-fit shirts - 1 free, additional available for purchase, will be on website shortly with delivery at next Membership Meeting in August
    - ii. IFAB Law Books - cheaper to order in quantity from IFAB rather than a local printer, as in prior years. Will order for those who noted on their RMA that they wanted a hard copy
  - e) Other:
    - i. Ratification of Appointed Board Members: All were approved by acclamation
      - Assignor - Gabriel Goldsman



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- Co-Assignor - Veto Galati
  - Treasurer - Bruce Ashton
8. Vice President's Report:
    - a) ROL Update and Safe Sport - Working on getting into his new duties, especially with Arbiter
  9. Secretary's Report:
    - a) New Members, past month - 3 applications received since last meeting
    - b) SBSRA Membership Report
      - i. RMAs Approved - 106 (11 more to be approved)
      - ii. Membership Dues Paid/Match Fees Withheld/NMIs - 120
  10. Assignor's Report:
    - a) CORE Training - next one is August 12<sup>th</sup> with Tom Bobadilla
    - b) Cal South Update - we can expect some SBSRA referees in regionals and hope to go to Nationals next season
    - c) Game Expectations for the Next Few Weeks - not much until Sept. JJ urged everyone to start training to be fit and reduce the chance of injury in a few weeks' time. JJ also noted that the July Flag & Whistle included an article about Heat Stroke and how to manage it
  11. Member-At-Large Report:
    - a) Supplemental Reports - Please send in a timely manner, using the examples on our web site. TC reminded members to send a text to him and the applicable assignor letting them know one is coming. JJ noted a change in the naming convention for supplemental reports which is included on our website
  12. Other Business - NA

Meeting adjourned at 8:59pm



## The Best Pre-Match Warm Up for Referees

The best pre-match warm-up for referees is one that prepares you in the best way for your game. It should incorporate everything you are going to have to do in the game.

The total distance a referee covers in a typical 90-minute game that we referee can range from 4-5 miles per game, including:

- High-intensity activity for 4-18% of the total distance
- Sprinting 1-8% of the total distance
- Changes of direction >500 mostly 30-60 degrees
- Average Heart Rate (HR) is 85% of your Max HR

To make sure you properly prepare for your game a warm-up should look like the following:

### 1: LIGHT JOG

Cover one and a half to two laps of the field just running lightly to shake off any stiffness and tightness you may have. Think of it as an active massage for your body. Work out anything that doesn't feel right and just get to the point where you can keep a conversation whilst running.

### 2. DYNAMIC STRETCHING

This is a personal thing for you, but I do believe you should cover the hips, groin, lumbar spine and thoracic spine. Therefore, I would do 3 Sets x 10 Reps of any of these exercises that takes about 10 minutes to complete.

### 2. SHUTTLES

Next, you are going to want to do some dynamic shuttle work. Here I would normally line up on the touchline and perform a shuttle exercise until I am in line with the penalty area and then jog back. These shuttles are designed to cover mobility whilst moving:

- Open The Gate (Outward Hip Rotation)
- Close The Gate (Inward Hip Rotation)
- High Knees
- Bum Kicks
- High Kicks
- Sidestep One Way



- Sidestep Opposite Way
- Two to the Left, Two to the Right forwards and backwards
- Grapevine
- Backwards Jog
- Hamstring Walks

### 3. DYNAMIC HIGH-INTENSITY MOVEMENT

Next, you will want to add in some zigzag jumps up and down the touchline combined with running and jumping, some very short sprints, quick stops and some changes of direction.

Only spend a few minutes on this.

### 4. PROGRESSIVE RUNS

This is a gradual sprint that covers half of the field.

Start on the goal line, and start your run at 50% of max speed, as you exit the penalty area, increase to 70%, then when you are halfway between the halfway line and goal line, keep accelerating until you cross the halfway line at 100% speed.

Make sure you don't stop straight away, and that you then decelerate over 10-20 meters, walk through to the other goal line and repeat.

Do this 2-3 times.

Excerpted from "[The Best Pre-Match Warm Up For Football and Soccer Referees](#)" by Adam Berry

One must allow sufficient time to do this at each match. It is best to try this at home before trying it at your next game to know how much time you will need. It may be different for each of us.

Next month we will have an article on cooling down procedures after the game.



# IFAB Laws of the Game

## Changes and Clarifications

### 2025/26



### Law 3 - The Players

Each team must have a captain on the field of play who wears an identifying armband. The team captain has no special status or privileges but has a degree of responsibility for the behavior of the team.

**Change for 2025/26** - Competitions may implement the 'Only the captain' may speak to the referee.

### Law 5 - The Referee

**Change for 2025/26** - Referees will count down the last five seconds of the eight-second restriction on goalkeepers controlling the ball with their hand and voice. See Law 12 below.

### Law 8 - Drop Ball

Play is restarted with a dropped ball when:

- 1) The referee stops the game:
  - without a prescribed restart, e.g., injury,
  - due to outside interference,
  - deflated ball
- 2) The ball in play touches a match official, remains on the field of play and:
  - a team starts a promising attack or
  - the ball goes directly into the goal or
  - the team in possession of the ball changes.

The referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or, a match official

- All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play
- The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped:
  - the ball was in the penalty area or

# IFAB Laws of the Game

## Changes and Clarifications

### 2025/26



- the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area

If a dropped ball enters the goal without touching at least two players, play is restarted with:

- a goal kick if it enters the opponents' goal
- a corner kick if it enters the team's goal

**Change for 2025/26** - the ball is dropped for a player of the team that has or would have gained possession if this is clear to the referee.

#### **Law 9 - The Ball in and out of Play**

**Change for 2025/26** - indirect free kick when a team official, substitute, substituted or sent-off player or player who is temporarily off the field of play touches the ball as it is leaving the field of play and there is no intention to interfere unfairly.

If interfering with play, a caution!

#### **Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct**

**Change for 2025/26** - a goalkeeper who controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds will be penalized, with a corner kick being awarded to the other team.

#### **Video Assistant Referee (VAR) Protocol**

**Change for 2025/26** - Competitions have the option for the referee to make an announcement after a VAR 'review' or lengthy VAR 'check.'