



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

May 2026

The New Membership Year

At the May 2026 Board Meeting, a budget for the 2026 – 2027 season was approved. Pursuant to this budget, the following were determined:

- Annual Dues and New Member Fees will remain at \$100 and \$40, respectively
- The Board Stipend will continue at \$4,000 for the year. Pursuant to the Bylaws, this amount could have been increased but the Board decided to keep it at \$4,000 due to the loss of the South Bay Sports (SBS) account. To ensure that the stipend amount is below the Bylaws limit the following calculations were performed:
 - Stipend Limitation = 4% of the amounts billed to customers from July 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026
 - Amounts billed, without SBS = \$113,877
 - 4% of the amounts billed, without SBS = \$4,555
- Annual Dues are payable from June 1 – July 30, with a \$20 late fee if paid after July 30. The website will be updated with the appropriate forms and payment information after May 31
- Annual dues payments must be accompanied by a Returning Member Application for consideration. The form will be available after May 31 on our website
- Unless Members send an email to Treasurer@SBSRA.org, dues payments will be deducted from match fees for games in May and June which are payable in June and July, respectively
- The preferred method for all other payment is by Zelle to Treasurer@SBSRA.org

May 2026 Membership Meeting

Please be reminded that at this meeting, Members will:

- Have an opportunity to present proposed Bylaw Amendments which must be submitted in writing to the Secretary before the meeting,
- Nominate candidates for the President and Secretary Board positions.

Voting for Bylaws Amendments and Board Positions will take place at the AGM in June.

Our Secretary has reached out to all members who have attended 4 meetings or fewer than 3 meetings to make them aware of their need to attend this meeting to fulfill Association Membership and Members-in-Good Standing requirements. If you received one of these emails, we especially look forward to seeing you at this meeting.

Annual General Meeting 2026

Our AGM is scheduled for June 30, 2026, to be held at a restaurant near the Del Amo Fashion Center, thanks to the efforts of one of our Members. Standby for further details on the celebration of the 50th year of the Association! If anyone has pictures going back to the early days of the Association, please send them to President@SBSRA.org.

Board of Directors

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



Website

Having problems signing in to our website with your password? Getting a “Can’t find php template” error?

Step 1 – clear the cache on your device

Step 2 – try logging in again

Step 3 - if that doesn’t work, reach out to our webmaster Rick Roberts, at web@sbsra.org.

Parking at Games

SBSRA reimburses members for parking in limited cases. We have a small number of locations that charge for parking, most notably Historic Belmar Park in Santa Monica. Please be reminded:

- Always use free parking when available, even if it means walking an extra block or two,
- Send a copy of your parking receipt to our treasurer **within 7 days of the game**.

Professional Appearance

It is important 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 above the ankle
- Shorts and socks that are excessively faded or worn (not quite black)
- Desert style, or any other floppy style, hats with neck flaps.

DO NOT EXPOSE bodily bare skin or underwear at the fields. Please wear an appropriate undershirt to and from the field to avoid this unnecessary exposure!

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. Generally, most youth games require a USSF badge (current year or next year’s 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.



Certified Athletic Trainers

The Elite Academy (EA) requires the presence of a certified athletic trainer at all of their matches other than U11 and U12 (not required but considered best practice) and is optional for EA2 matches.

The EA Standards & Rules (2025-2026) state:

- *Matches are instructed to not start without a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) and*
- *If a club does not provide ATC the game will go down as forfeit and all referee expenses will still need to be paid for by the home team.*

Other leagues may have similar requirements, and we need to enforce them as appropriate.

Single Referee Call-In Procedures

Please be reminded of 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
- Whether you call or text, make sure you include the following:
 - Your Name,
 - Field Location,
 - Time of Game.

Referee Pet Peeves

Referees who leave immediately after their last game, leaving teammates to leave alone, without notice.

Unless one is assigned as a solo referee, we are assigned as a team of 3 referees. The operative word here is TEAM!

So how do we present ourselves as a team?

Consider the following:

- Are our **appearances consistent** – same, close-to-original, color shirts (not required, but same length sleeves are preferred), black, not brown shorts, similar two-stripe socks?
- Do you **enter the field area together** if you arrive at a similar time
- Do you **support your teammates** at all times?
- Do you **enter the field together** before Kick Off
- Do you **leave the field together** at Halftime and Fulltime
- After the last game is completed, do you **wait for the last Referee to complete the paperwork** so you can leave together?

If you have a commitment requiring you to leave in a hurry, inform your teammates early!

Do you have any referee pet peeves? What do fellow referees, coaches and players not like about referees? How do we do better?

Please share for inclusion here by email to President@sbsra.org.



Some Things to Think and Laugh about

These are some of the most inspirational referee quotes that truly capture the spirit of officiating the beautiful game. These words remind us that refereeing is not just about enforcing the Laws of the Game, but about leadership, integrity, courage, and respect—often under intense pressure and scrutiny.

Every referee will connect with a quote differently, depending on their journey, challenges, and experiences on the field. Some speak about authority, others about fairness, humility, or the importance of earning respect rather than demanding it.

☞ *“You have to be accepted on the field of play not because you are the referee, but because people trust you.”*

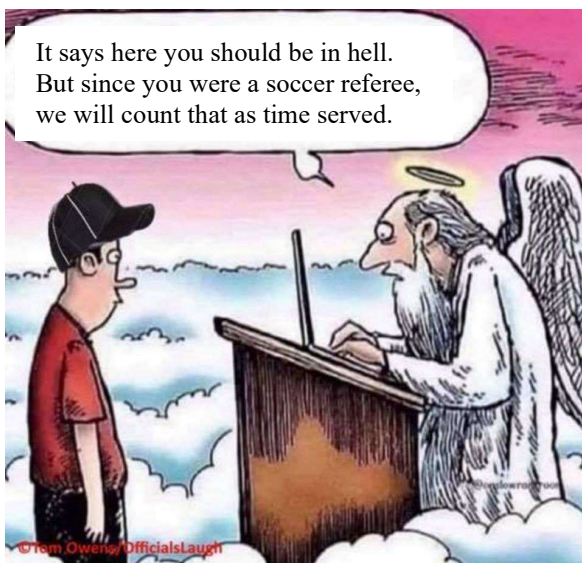
A timeless reminder that credibility is built through consistency and character.

☞ *“A referee’s best tool is not the whistle, but their personality.”*

Emphasizing communication and game management over punishment.

☞ *“Refereeing is about making decisions in a second that will be judged for a lifetime.”*

The reality every official understands.



Approval of Minutes

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



SBSRA General Membership Meeting Minutes April 28, 2026

1. Called to order at 7:06 pm
2. Approval of March 2026 Meeting Minutes, Motion made by Steve Brandon, seconded by Larry Savell, approved by acclamation
 - Monthly Training - Tom Bobadilla - How to be a Better Referee
 - Referees must always be thinking because not thinking can lead to bad decisions
 - Goals for the referee team; communication and focus of keeping the game safe and fair
 - To be a great referee you need to be accepted as a good referee by players, coaches, sidelines, other referees, and social media
 - Acceptance is defined as showing respect to those at the field, get there early, possibly try to help coaches prepare, try to connect with coaches, parents etc., dressed properly, communication should be pleasant, respectful, informative, respectful, firm but compassionate
 - Pre-game planning, develop chemistry and discuss game relevant information with the referee team
 - It helps to break down the game into manageable increments of time (5 - 15-minute intervals), videos were shown and discussed (being close to play, set the tone for fouls in the beginning, middle of first half should be able to continue the same but still manage to keep acceptance going (communication still a key)
3. Treasurer's Report:
 - a) Bi-annual financial review of SBSRA - We still need a reviewer, Bruce has a binder that contains all the documentation needed. This is an opportunity to see how the Association operates.
 - b) Financial review for the nine months ended March 2026 will be on the Website. Actual amounts include \$7,000 income over expenses, \$4,000 increase in expenses from last year (Board stipends \$3,000, members' merchandise \$1,900, decrease in NMI \$900), revenue is 23% higher than last year (\$20 increase in member dues, \$800 increase for new members). Budget was projected to be - \$900 (expenses over income) at this point, we are positive by +\$7,000 (New member dues higher by \$2,000, Other revenue higher by \$2,000, Members merchandise \$900 under budget but will be spent by year end, Website costs \$600 under budget) expenses are close to budget, but less than projected due to non-migration of website and email server which we budgeted for. Cash on hand can cover expenses even without immediate payments.
 - c) Address Changes - Please communicate directly to Bruce as he is not informed when members change their address in Arbiter
 - d) Checks for games - Available from Bruce for games refereed in March and not paid on the field



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- e) Let Gabriel or Veto and Bruce know about forfeits by email immediately. Cancellations are handled by the Assignors, no member action is needed

4. President's Report

- a) South Bay Sports - JJ shared the following communications with South Bay Sports in an effort to be transparent with the SBSRA membership:
- i. As our 5-year contract was nearing its end on May 15, the SBSRA Board discussed whether we should offer to continue our referee services to SBS. We discussed that many of our members decline to do these games, some like doing them and the fee structure which has fallen way behind all other leagues - adult and youth
 - ii. We decided to present a two-year offer including a fee structure that would approximate other fees currently being received, but over a two period. At the end of two years their fees would still be about 10% lower than current fees of other leagues. We shared the fees of multiple other leagues and their history over the last 5 years, noting what a great deal SBS has enjoyed over the last few years
 - iii. In response SBS stated "I really do not appreciate the tone of this email" and "This is really disappointing. This will be my notice not to renew, due to the increase that we cannot handle." No counter offer, no willingness to try to work things out
 - iv. A few days later, JJ received a call from Larry Yee at the Long Beach Referee Association. He stated that SBS had approached him and they had a tentative agreement to start providing referees effective June 1. He was calling to encourage us to try to work things out and keep the account. At JJ's request he shared the fees they agreed to for two years:
 - 7v7 - \$40 per game for both years (same as we have been receiving for the last two years)
 - 11v11 - \$160 in year one (same as we have been receiving for the last two years) and \$170 in year two
 - \$2 immediate increase in assigning fees, which was a good offer
 - v. The Board met to consider this new information and concluded that enough members like these games and we should go back and offer very small increases from current rates to hopefully retain the business for those who like doing these games. One Board member dissented saying we should accept no increases to keep the business,
 - vi. Our SBS email included "Long Beach has encouraged us to go back to you to reach an agreement for SBSRA and SBS to continue together so we can provide you with local referees." and "In that spirit, the SBSRA Board has voted to propose the following similar terms, as I understand them from Long Beach." Our proposal called for no increase in 7v7 for the next year and a \$5 increase the following year, and a \$10 increase in 11v11 in each year. We also asked for SBS to pay referees directly, every two weeks, as SBS agreed with Long Beach.



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- vii. SBS responded to our revised offer with “We have been talking to other associations not just Long Beach. If you want to keep our business, I propose the following:
- 7v7 - \$40 for 2 years, with a \$6 Admin fee, then the next 2 years we can go to \$45 \$7 Admin Fee
 - 11v11 - \$160 for 2 years \$8 Admin Fee, then to \$170 for the following 2 years, \$9 Admin Fee
 - We continue to pay the SBSRA each month, and SBSRA will pay the referees.
 - The one other thing I would like to add is we have the right to cancel the night of games in Stormy situations. Without Penalty
- viii. We responded as follows:

Dear Dennis,

After 5 years of providing you with excellent assigning and refereeing service at very favorable rates to you, we really hoped that we had won your trust, appreciation and respect for what we do and have done for you. We proposed rates that we thought would be fair to our referees and yet in 2-years’ time would be at least 10 - 20% below what others are paying now.

After Long Beach Referees approached us to encourage us to work with you, we revised our offer to meet theirs and to approach the rates you have been paying for the last 2 years.

As this is still not acceptable to you, it appears our collaboration will not continue at this time. We believe this is regrettable for both parties but things don't always work out in life.

On behalf of the SBSRA board and our members, we have enjoyed our association and hope to reestablish a mutually beneficial relationship in the future.

JJ stated that he was very disappointed that we have lost this business but that we all deserve to be respected and paid a fair fee. It was apparent that SBS did not share these sentiments and this left us with little choice.

SBS’s final words included “From my perspective, the proposed increases don’t reflect changes in the product itself—the structure, rules, and format of the game remain the same. This makes it difficult for us to justify passing along higher costs to our community.”



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- b) Next president - JJ invited members to talk to him about what the job involves, the time commitment and stipend the president will receive. Nominations must be made at the May Membership Meeting
 - c) Board Meeting - April 2026, the following was discussed:
 - i. SBS agreement - see above
 - ii. Minimum Attendance required at Membership Meetings and some of the reasons received for not attending meetings
 - iii. Proposed Budget for 2026 - 2027 - a \$20 increase in dues was discussed to enable an increase in the Board stipend. The calculation, based on prior year referee billings would support that but with the loss of SBS that will not be true for the 2026 - 2027 so dues likely will stay the same. We also need to budget for certain possible increases in expenses
 - iv. Referee conduct and reaction to harassment received at and after games
 - v. Referee ratings are being examined with potential changes to be made in advance of the 2026-2027 season
 - vi. Discussed dropping one of the clubs with whom we have an agreement to provide referees for next season. Challenges include the assigning of games, poor coach and player conduct and not paying SBSRA bills timely. This was communicated to the Elite Academy who shared concerns they have with this club
 - d) New Member Introductions - Javier Cervantes, Eddie Dominguez
 - e) AGM Locations - a couple of locations were considered but are either out of business or are no longer suitable. JJ requested members to provide suggested locations
 - f) Other - Gabriel to discuss field conditions and referee responsibilities
5. Vice President's Report
- a) ROL Update and SafeSport - 145 members, 18 inactive
6. Secretary's Report
- a) SBSRA Membership Report
 - i. Total Members 163
 - ii. Number of New Members this Month 1
7. Assignor's Report:
- a) Gabriel visited fields and viewed several games this past weekend. GG shared his impressions of the referees he observed. He reiterated that SBSRA cannot do two ref system EXCEPT for PSL. He requested members to note on the match reports or league apps/websites if there is a mismarked field or lack of flags etc.
8. Member-At-Large Report - Reports are coming in mostly on time and are acceptable, please wear the correct badge for the game you are officiating (see page 2). In the event that team/goalkeeper colors clash with referee colors, referees should change if possible. Referees should NEVER wear pinnies!

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm
