

United States Soccer Federation
Referee Committee Meeting
Chicago O'Hare Hilton
September 28, 2002

Members present: Fernando Alvarez, Ken Baldeosingh, John Bouda, Dan Christy, Wally Lyslo, Bill Mason, Brooks McCormick, David McKee, Paul Tamberino and Jef Thiffault (representing Joe Machnik)

Regrets: Marcelo Balboa, Joe Machnik and Christie Pearce

In Attendance: Esse Baharmast, Casey Frankewicz, Julie Ilacqua, Alfred Kleinaitis, Carol McGuire and Herb Silva

Guests: Secretary General Dan Flynn and Deputy Executive Director Jay Berhalter

Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 7:56 a.m. CDT.

Agenda: The agenda as presented in the committee packets was approved

Approval of minutes: **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of April 20.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Member reports:

Professional Leagues: Thiffault presented a written report from Machnik highlighting the season that is drawing to a close. The report commented on the pilot program designed to improve the assessment process. US Soccer and MLS must work together on improvements for the 2003 season. The report also discussed the Task Force that has reviewed the referee instruction, training and development programs. Also included in the report: the MLS disciplinary committee, quality of games and future considerations. Extensive discussion followed this report. In 2003 there will be a pre-season camp to be held from March 3 –13. All teams were given the new off side video for review by management, coaches and players

Adults: Baldeosingh reported on the tournaments conducted by USASA since the last committee meeting. The Adult Association will hold their mid-year meeting on February 21-23, 2003 in San Diego, CA. The Donnelly Cup competition will be held on January 18 – 20 in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

AYSO: Mason discussed his written report contained in the committee packets. The AYSO National Referee Commission Fall Workshop will be held October 11 – 13. It is anticipated that Bouda and Ilacqua will attend this meeting. The tribute booklet on the life of Ken Aston was distributed to the committee.

USYSA: Lyslo discussed recent events including the Snickers US Youth Soccer National Championships. This event required 48 referees from the 4 regions and 15 volunteer assessors. For the first time each region was asked to name 9 referees capable of officiating any match and 3 referees, preferably grade 7s that would only work as ARs or 4th officials. This system allowed upper level referees to be assessed on two preliminary matches and gave an opportunity for the grade 7s to see the potential for advancement within the National Program for Referee Development. Reports generated by the software system used in the tournament were distributed. In addition to tracking referee performance the reports also provided graphs of fouls in five minute increments and a bar chart showing fouls by teams winning, losing or being tied, also in 5 minute increments. A Recreational Youth Referee Instructor Course is planned for the Youth Workshop to be held in Indianapolis, IN on February 6 – 9.

Board of Directors: Bouda indicated that soccer has become a 24/7 job for him. He noted that communications throughout US Soccer have improved dramatically. He commented that it is incumbent on the youth to endorse and participate in the new Recreational Referee Course and actively recruit candidates for this additional entry-level course for beginning referees.

Business and Financial reports: Ilacqua reviewed in detail the 12 page financial report contained in the committee packets. She indicated that a new business model is being developed to better articulate the referee budget. Committee members then asked questions and discussed, in detail, the financial report.

Registration: Ilacqua discussed the year-end referee registration numbers and demographic report. There are 119,128 registered referees, 2,843 registered assignors, 1,701 registered assessors and 1,887 registered instructors. The recent changes implemented in the registration process have resulted in a significant decrease of phone calls to the referee department regarding registration problems. Included in the report was a detailed listing of the complimentary materials sent to individual state associations. The report also contained an outline of the referee training course material available for each referee grade and noted whether or not this material is available on the USSF web site. Material in production was also reviewed. The 2002/2003 project-planning schedule was also reviewed and discussed. It was mentioned that due to production problems the new Simplified Laws of the Game publication is somewhat behind schedule.

Recommendations of the Task Force Committee for the Review of Referee Training: Ilacqua presented the findings from the Task Force meeting held September 20 – 22. In addition to reviewing all the training materials used by the referee department the Task Force undertook a grade-by-grade review of the referee certification program. The recommendations of the Task Force will be reviewed and the decisions of this committee will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for final action. The minutes below reflect only the action taken by the referee committee to the proposals from the task force and not the entire recommendation.

Honorary Referee Grade (17); Task Force recommends the grade be omitted. Proposal; Change to Sustaining Member. John Motta, a member of the Task Force, will develop a Sustaining Member proposal for consideration by the referee committee. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve in concept the change to Sustaining Member and wait for a detailed description of this revised grade.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

State Referee Emeritus Grade (15 and 16); Task Force recommends retention with modifications. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to retain these grade with the following addition.** A State Emeritus Referee may reinstate as an active referee at the level that he or she retired from, providing the upgrade requirement for that grade are met. Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

National Referee Emeritus Grade (13 and 14); Task Force recommends retention with modifications. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to retain these grades with the following changes.** Registration fee will be \$40. National Emeritus Referees who wish to become active again may reinstate as a Referee grade 5 providing the upgrade requirements for that grade are met. Emeritus Referees who wish to qualify as National Referees after retiring must meet all the requirements to be reinstated as a grade referee and then meet all the requirements set for upgrade from Grade 5 to National Referee. Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Assistant Referee Grade 12; Task Force recommends retention with modifications. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to lower the age requirement to age 16.** Discussion. On a voice vote **the motion was denied.** Three yes, five no and one abstention. **Moved and seconded to adopt the recommendation of the Task Force with the following modifications;** Change the registration fee to \$20 and change the description to read: Minimum age 18. Must have played at least 3 years of adult, college or competitive youth soccer, or officiated at least three years as USSF grade 9 with a minimum of 50 games officiated at the grade 9 level. Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Recreational Referee Grade 9, Linesman Grade 10 and Associate Referee Grade 11; Task Force recommendation combines the three grades into one grade named, Recreational Youth Referee (Grade 9). Extensive discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve the proposal with a \$20 registration fee and authorize assignments as a Referee on U-14 or younger recreational games only and as an Assistant Referee on all youth games, U14 and younger.** Further discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Bridge course for upgrade from a Grade 9 to a Grade 8; The Task Force confirmed the need to offer a short course that would certify experienced Grade 9 referees as Grade 8 referees. The bridge course would be available in November 2002. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve the introduction of the bridge course in 2003.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Removal of "Class 2 or 1 from Referee Grades; The Task Force recommends omitting the word "Class" from all descriptions of grade. **Moved and seconded to adopt the Task Force recommendation.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

National Referee Grade 4; The Task Force recommends retaining this grade and making extensive changes to this grade and to Grade 3. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to remove all references to National Regional or National Professional Referee proposed by the Task Force.** Further discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. One no vote. **Moved and seconded to accept the recommendations as modified and amended** including: indicating that a candidate must be a USSF registered referee for a minimum of one year, this requirement to include referees formerly registered with a foreign federation; assignment level to include Senior Adult and expanded Professional list up to division 3 (all positions) and Assistant Referee and 4th official on division 2 men's professional games and division 1 women's professional games; candidates must take and pass a physical fitness test administered at the required certification session that meets US Soccer standards for Grade 4; candidates must pass a written exam. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

National Referee Grade 3; The Task Force recommends retaining this grade with modification. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to accept the recommendations as modified**; remove references to Regional or Professional referees as proposed by the Task Force. This grade is available only by invitation of USSF. Candidates must take and pass a physical fitness test administered at the required certification session that meets US Soccer standards for Grade 3. Add letter (L) to include the statement: Any other criteria determined by the USSF. Further discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

National Assessors: The Task Force recommends two levels of National Assessors – National Regional and National Professional. Discussion. The committee modified the recommendation to remove references to Regional and Professional, as proposed by the Task Force, and institute grades 4 and 3. A grade 4 assessor would be certified through the criteria now in place for National Assessors. Game assignments would be all men's and all referee levels except National Referees when working division 1 professional matches, or higher. A grade 3 assessor would be selected by invitation only and asked to attend a special National Assessor Certification Session. Assignment level would be all matches except formal FIFA International Matches. Implementation of both grades 3 and 4 would take place in 2004. **Moved and seconded to adopt the assessment proposal as amended.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Referee Training Courses (all levels): The Task Force recommendations were reviewed and **approved by consensus.**

Referee Instructor Training Courses (all levels): The Task Force recommendations were reviewed, including updating the criteria for National Instructors to be upgraded only by invitation of USSF. **Approved by consensus.**

Instructional Aids/Teaching Materials: The Task Force recommendations were reviewed, including a proposal that would require testing of assessors on the same materials & procedures that referees are expected to follow. **Approved by consensus.**

Recruiting and Training of professional players for officiating: The Task Force recommendations were reviewed and **approved by consensus.**

Old Business: Modifications to “approved other” games list. The format and listing of additional approved games was discussed. **Moved and seconded to revise the format by moving bottom sections ahead of the “Note” of the list and to include that the “Note” means all matches played in the U-19 or higher age groups.** Further discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Indoor Task Force; Silva presented a detailed report reviewing the existing rules and training for indoor referees. **Moved and seconded to establish registration for indoor referees** with a transition course at current grade level and to establish an entry level for new referees. All indoor referees would receive an indoor badge. Registration fee to be \$30. Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Consideration of hats for referees; a letter was received asking that the referee uniform policy be changed to encourage the wearing of hats. Discussion centered on; style of hat, color of hat, will hat only be worn if used for sun protection, number of hours on the field and in the sun, would all three officials wear a hat, the brim must be worn forward, would only the USSF logo be permitted if a logo is on the hat? **Moved and seconded to table.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Eddie Pearson Award: **Moved and seconded to accept the nomination** from the Pearsonian committee. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed

Referee uniform socks; Ilacqua presented and reviewed several designs from OSI for consideration by the committee. Discussion on the designs. **Moved and seconded that a recommendation be sent to the Board of Directors asking for adoption of a 3 ring stocking and/or the OSI stocking with dark top and the US Soccer logo as the official uniform stocking.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. Seven yes and two no.

Recreational Youth Referee Uniform; Ilacqua presented an inexpensive uniform jersey (V-neck T-shirt) for grade 9 referees designed by OSI. Cost for this jersey, including socks, would be in the \$19.95 range. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve the economy package proposed by OSI** to include a grade 9 jersey (gold with black lettering or black with white lettering) with the word RECREATION printed over the pocket and patch. Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

New Business:

Request for extension for physical fitness test; a request was received detailing extenuating circumstances that prevented a referee from testing on schedule. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve a waiver.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. McCormick abstains.

2003 FIFA Panel Selection: The Chair reminded the committee of the confidential nature of this discussion and explained the selection process followed by the sub-committee on nominations. Baharmast reviewed the criteria for nominations and the number of openings on each panel. Following discussion, votes were taken to approve the recommendations of the sub-committee and forward the names of the nominees to the Board of Directors for their action. The BOD will forward their selections to FIFA.

College games for maintenance of referee grades 5 and 6: A petition was received from the Oklahoma Soccer Association, signed by both the Youth and Senior Board presidents, requesting the use of collegiate games for maintenance assessments. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve college games played in Oklahoma to be used for maintenance of referee grades 5 and 6. USSF assessors must complete assessments and the referees must use the diagonal system on control.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

National Referees working as assignors: A letter was received proposing that a policy be established whereby national referees can not serve as assignors on professional or top level amateur matches. Discussion. It was the consensus of the committee that staff will send a letter to all national referees pointing out the ethical concerns of assigning matches in which they or their peers may officiate.

Job description for SRC: This item was for information only and re-states the former rule 3034.

Game priority: Bouda proposed to modify the game priority in referee appointments to clarify the definitions of the various games on the priority list. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to accept the proposed policy as amended.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Proposed changes to the US Soccer Policy Manual: Ilacqua presented proposed housekeeping and other changes to the manual. In all areas of the Bylaws and Policies of US Soccer where the words "National Referee Development Program" are used, change to the "National Program for Referee Development."

Policy 531-1 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to approve the changes.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-2, Section 1 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to table.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-9, Sections 2 and 3 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to approve the changes** and change terms to reflect current Law of the Game. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-9, Section 4 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to approve.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-9, Section 5 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to approve.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-9, Section 6 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to approve.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-10, Section 1 – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to table.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Policy 531-10, Section 2 sub (A) and (B) – Proposed changes were discussed. **Moved and seconded to table.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. Bouda and Ilacqua will develop language to clarify the intent of the above 2 tabled items. Revised sections will be sent to the committee via e-mail for a vote.

For the good of the game: Moved and seconded to extend a special thank you to Joe Machnik and the MLS for providing all stadium/match credential to members of the referee committee. **On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.**

Staff is continuing to review the issue of goalkeepers wearing helmets.

Ilacqua acknowledged the tremendous amount of work by staff in assembling the packets for the Task Force reviewing the training materials and for insuring that their recommendations were available for today's meeting. A special thank you to Adolfo Reginato and Kevin Yant for their initial work on the Recreational Youth Referee Instructor Program and compiling and implementing the corrections and additions suggested by attendees at the recent workshop.

Adjournment: Next committee meeting TBD. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Wally Lyslo, recording secretary