

United States Soccer Federation
Referee Committee Meeting
September 25, 2004
Soccer House, Chicago IL

Members present: Alvarez, Baldeosingh, Bouda, Hunt, Lyslo, Machnik, Mason, McCormick, McKee, Motta

Regrets: Balboa, Harkes,

In Attendance: Baharmast, Ilacqua, Garibay, McGuire, Tamberino

Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 08:35 a.m. CDT.

Agenda: The agenda is found in the member's packets. Due to the hurricane threat in Florida and the Southeastern Coast several members expressed their concern about having to leave the meeting early in order to get home before local airports were closed. The chair acknowledged this concern and indicated he would keep the agenda moving.

Approval of minutes: **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the July 10 meeting.** Discussion. It was pointed out that Mr. Eber was not in attendance and his name should be removed. On a voice vote the motion to accept the minutes as amended was affirmed. Motta abstains. **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the conference call on September 20.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Reports: Machnik distributed and discussed his written report. He spent some time reviewing the extensive officiating statistics (on all MLS officials) through September 1. Discussion. MLS is pleased with the officiating this season considering the number of new referees being assigned matches this year. This fact validates that the mentoring system is working in preparing officials for advanced assignments. Next year there will be 30 games added to the season due to new clubs entering the league. During the discussion it was pointed out by staff that 32 referees would be assigned to work the Nike Friendlies. National Camps in 2005 will be held January 13 – 16 and February 3 – 6. This first session presents a conflict with the NSCAA convention.

Motta and Baldeosingh reported on recent events in the Adult Association. They pointed out the need for more assessors to be assigned at the National Cup Finals. They need a minimum of 6. There was a brief discussion on how best to allocate resources to the adult events. The Soccer Festival will again be held in Milwaukee in 2005.

Lyslo reported that information on the 48 referees attending US Youth Soccer National Championships and the 68 referees attending the Director's Cup had been forwarded to the referee department. Several new officials were identified as having potential for being considered to attend referee academies. He indicated that he was replaced as chair of the youth referee committee, effective immediately.

Bouda reported on the August BOD meeting and commented on the marketing survey that was received by the board. He noted that the National Program for Referee Development was highlighted as the top program benefit by the membership of US Soccer. Details of this survey can be found at the US Soccer web site. He gave a brief update on the grievance filed by US Youth Soccer.

Mason commented on and highlighted items in his written report found in the packets. US Soccer will try to send a representative to the AYSO National Referee Commission Fall Workshop to be held October 22 – 24.

Registration Report: Garibay led the members through the final 2004 Referee Grade Demographics dated September 22. The report shows a registration total of 133,691 referees for '04. This figure is an increase of 3.9% over 2003. Include with the report is a graph indicating the average number of referee – new, returning and total – by age from 1999 to 2004. The graph shows a significant drop of returning referees from age 15 to about age 20. The question of why was brought up. Bouda indicated that North Carolina did a survey on why referees did not return and the top reason given was mobility (changing addresses) and the second reason was abuse. Ilacqua indicated that later in the agenda more time would be spent on this issue. There was also discussion on the assessor demographics especially on the number of grade 5 assessors in each state verses grade 3 assessors in each state.

Financial Report: Ilacqua presented and commented on the Revenue and Expense Summary for the five months ending August 31. Members asked detailed questions on the referee department categories R-01 through R-13. It was pointed out that these categories do not include G & A expenses. The proposed budget for 2006 was discussed. Members also asked about the progress of on-line registration. Garibay indicated that the prospective vendors are now down to four. Target dates are being met.

2005 International Panel: The names of the nominees were sent to the BOD for forwarding to FIFA. This information is still confidential. Letters will be sent to the nominees indicating their names have been sent to FIFA. There was discussion regarding future nominees. It was indicated that the sub-committee members have weekly conversations with those referees considered to be "on-the-bubble."

Hall of Fame Builder's Award: The nominating committee presented the criteria to be used in the selection of the final name to be submitted to the Hall of Fame. **Moved and seconded to accept the following statement:** The USSF Referee Committee will solicit nominations annually for the Hall of Fame Builders Ballot to determine a single nomination, to put forth, based on the following criteria; The nominee must have officiated with distinction at the highest level in the United States during the nominee's tenure. Consideration will be given for contributions in Assessing, Instructing and Mentoring. Discussion On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

2004 Eddie Pearson Award: The committee received a letter from the Pearsonians indicating their selection of an individual for the 2004 award. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to accept the selection.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. A letter will be sent to the recipient with an invitation to attend the national referee camp to receive the award.

Letter of Recognition: The committee was advised that a long time contributor to the National Program for Referee Development has been stricken with Alzheimer's disease and will no longer be able to participate in the program. **Moved and seconded that staff will prepare and send a letter** recognizing this individual's contribution to the referee program. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Job Descriptions: The positions of SRA, SYRA, SDI, SDA and the SRC will be reviewed in detail. **Moved and seconded to accept the SRA job description.** Discussion. All requirements for all job descriptions must conform to USSF Policy. An extensive review and re-write of some of the duties followed. Following this review staff was directed to incorporate the changes into a revised document. After this discussion a voice vote was taken and the motion to accept the job description for SRA as revised was affirmed.

Each of the following job descriptions were individually reviewed; SYRA, SDI, SDA and the SRC. The same policy standards that apply to the SRA job description will be adhered to. The duties as spelled out in the job descriptions were carefully reviewed and deletions or additions were made as deemed necessary by the committee. After consensus was reached on each job description the committee moved to the next one until all job descriptions were reviewed. **Moved and seconded to approve the changes to the job descriptions** for the SYRA, the SDA, the SDI and the Chairperson, State Referee Committee as modified and amended. Staff is instructed to incorporate these changes into the final documents. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

International Games – Approval for National Referee Maintenance or Upgrade; McKee presented the current statement concerning these games. Discussion. **Moved and seconded that games approved** and assigned by the National Referee Office (NRO) involving any international team(s) (club or national) may be assessed and counted for national referee (candidate) maintenance or upgrade requirements, but only with the prior approval of the NRO. Assessment fees will only be paid by the NRO if the assessor is assigned by the NRO. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

New Assessment forms; McKee presented new forms that will be used to give feedback to referees and assistant referees. The report of assessment of game officials that is sent to the national office is also being changed. Wording has been changed to more accurately reflect the duties required of the officials. The ultimate goal of these changes will to make the form web based. **Moved and seconded to accept the proposal.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. McCormick abstains. The assessment criteria – 2005 has also been revised to consolidate the original eight criteria into five.

Futsal Training Module: Ilacqua commented on the module and indicated it will be presented at the SDI Workshop.

Unauthorized manufacture of Referee badges: Ilacqua discussed being alerted to a US company that was producing and selling referee badges for sale to local customers. The matter was turned over to legal, as this is a serious infringement of the copyrighted trademark of US Soccer. All involved have been advised of the consequences if this illegal activity continues.

Retention Recommendation: Ilacqua referred to the age graph contained in the Registration Report and presented a recommendation that would attempt to capture the high school seniors that are going off to college by offering them a multi-year registration. Discussion. Some options presented included; web based information to the "mobile generation", use of a larger mail in card sent with registration that would be sent to the national office, surveying the drop outs. It was the consensus of the committee to hold off on this recommendation for 2 years and have a sub-committee study the issue. Hunt (Chair), Baldeosingh and Garibay were appointed as members of the sub committee.

Policy for issuing invitations to Foreign Referees and Instructors: The protocol policy for issuing invitations was presented by Ilacqua to be considered by the committee for inclusion in the manual of the referee program. **Moved and seconded to accept the policy as presented.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Business cards: Garibay passed around printer proofs of a card design that can be personalized for use by all USSF registered officials. Samples will be produced for the committee and after that pricing and quantity decisions can be made before making available to all officials for on-line ordering.

For the good of soccer: Mason indicated the appreciation of the committee to MLS and Machnik in providing credentials for this years MLS season.

At 2:30, Machnik, McCormick and Tamberino left to catch flights.

A general discussion was held concerning game fees paid to referees for international matches staged by private promoters. It was indicated that the office reviews annually the proposed fee structure.

Next meeting: It is tentatively proposed that the next meeting will be held April 16th. Location TBA.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Submitted by: Wally Lyslo. Recording secretary