

United States Soccer Federation  
Referee Committee Meeting  
Chicago O'Hare Hilton  
April 12, 2007

**CONFIRMED SEPTEMBER 26, 2007**

Members present: Baldeosingh, Bratsis, Collins, Hunt, Lyslo, Machnik, Mason, McCormick (Chair), McKee, Silva

Regrets: Burns, Lindsey

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

Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 7:50 a.m. CDT.

Agenda: The agenda was included in member's packets.

The Chair acknowledged the participation of committee and staff in the "brainstorming" session last evening. The outcome seemed very positive.

Approval of minutes: **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2005 conference call (inadvertently overlooked during last full meeting), the September 7, 2006 conference call and the March 14, 2007 conference call.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Reports: Machnik reviewed and his written report regarding the MLS Disciplinary Committee Actions taken in 2006. During the discussion it was agreed that, for consistency, the word "reckless" would be changed to Serious Foul Play. The report also included the MLS Referee Summary and the 2006-playoff statistics. The MLS Working Group on Officiating has made several recommendations including the use of fewer officials so as to gain consistency of officiating during this season. Other items of interest include: Adopting tougher standards against players who show dissent, time wasting or other gamesmanship issues, increasing the flow of the game by avoiding calling of trifling offenses and clamping down on bench behavior issues. The committee discussed these and other aspects of the report in length. MLS appreciates the initiative shown by US Soccer in the hiring of four full-time referees. Machnik took the opportunity to show the committee how one company, Match Analysis, can dissect a soccer game and classify the various aspects of the game into video clips that can be used to analyze player and/or team performance. It is possible that a referee component can be added to this software. Discussion. **Moved and seconded that the Referee Committee recommends that US Soccer enter into discussions with MLS to obtain cost estimates for the inclusion of a referee component in the Match Analysis software as an aid to help in referee development.** Further discussion. **On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.** USL and MISL have been contacted to submit material for inclusion in the Professional League Reports. USL did not submit any material.

Silva presented his written report concerning the on-going MISL season. It was noted that expansion for the 07-08 season is anticipated. The report also included referee statistics for the 06-07 season.

Mason discussed his written report regarding the activities of AYSO. The report included references to the AYSO Help web site and the online entry-level basic referee training program that is being developed.

Ilacqua reported that US Soccer Instructors/Assessors have been assigned to ODP training camps and Regional Tournaments. She also mentioned a pilot program called "Jump Start." This is an initiative to get registered referees into new and/or developing areas that have interest but no infrastructure to support the development of referees. The initial clinic was held in Brownsville, TX.

Registration and Financial Report: Garibay reviewed the April 10, 2007 printout of the Referee Grade and Demographic report that is sorted by state and lists referee registration, instructor registration, indoor registration, assignor registration and assessor registration. He noted that the "zeros" on the report come from the fact that many state associations are not turning in their registrations in a timely manner and that can lead to processing backlog in the department. There was discussion on the on-line registration process. Approximately 24 state associations are using some component of the system with approximately 12 or so using the full system. Some state associations refuse to use the system at all.

Ilacqua discussed the Financial report for the Department ending February 28, 2007. For the first time in quite some time the Department is showing a deficit when G & A expenses are included in the budget.

Old business: Referee exchange program. It was noted that this year we will be sending referees to Canada for MLS games as last year Canada sent referees to the US.

Hunt reported and discussed issues with the Regional Pro Clinics. She mentioned the varying degree or wide variations on criteria for attending the clinics, the content of the clinics and the capability of those referees attending the clinics in that attendees range from rank beginners to the very advanced and capable referee. In her opinion this is a lost opportunity on the part of the National Program for Referee Development to "capture" the "right" referees. It was noted there is a wide variation in fees for attending these clinics even though the clinics "belong to US Soccer." Questions were raised concerning who controls the list of invited referees? Who un-invites referees? Should US Soccer control the list? Discussion centered on should the Referee Department obtain a list of attendees prior to the clinic for review? Should minimum standards be established for fees and performance? Should a basic agenda be developed for use by all clinics that includes specific times for the fitness testing, time for instruction, priority of who is invited and the total number of hours to be set aside for the clinic. Should the total number of hours include a ½ day for physicals followed or preceded by a full day of instruction? Should the Pro clinic be separate from any other clinic being offered during the same time and what is the minimum requirement for the facility being used for instruction as well as the track being used for the fitness test. Hunt will prepare a proposal that will be sent to all committee members for review and possible action.

New Business: Ilacqua discussed the results of a videoconference presented by Adolfo Reginato regarding the potential for introduction of on-line training for use by the Referee Department. The results were very promising. Effort will go forward to establish a program for re-certifying referees this fall that would include modules on; Game reports, changes to the Laws of The Game and registration. Following that it is expected a module(s) would be prepared for entry-level courses. A source of funding will have to be acquired before a full effort is launched.

Recertification requirements for returning FIFA ARs: The Chair presented a letter received from five FIFA ARs regarding current and proposed requirement for Recertification of National Referees. Currently there is a requirement for obtaining assessments as Referees on professional games even though the FIFA ARs have agreed to limit their assignments as Referees to Adult and Youth games. Discussion. There was general agreement that the proposed changes are valid. **Moved and seconded to accept the proposal with minor word changes** (change "MLS" to Domestic Professional League and "assuming" to if they). Further discussion. **On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. There was then a motion to reconsider the above motion to add a section that addresses returning FIFA referees.** Discussion. **The motion to add a section was affirmed.** Staff will prepare a paper outlining these changes and send to the committee. The changes will apply to the current assessment period.

Proposal for Regional National Assessor Supervisor: Bratsis discussed his letter to the Chair regarding our obligation to provide the National Referees with the tools to improve their performance and meet their objectives to officiate at the professional level. He recommends the creation of a Regional National Assessor Supervisor to improve monitoring, mentoring and quality control as a means to help our service to the professional game. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to accept the proposal as modified** (remove the word Regional and change "supervisor" to supervisors). Further discussion. **On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.** After the vote the committee established a Task Force consisting of Hunt, Silva, Bratsis and Tamberino to work with McKee (NDA) to develop a job description. This task will be finalized by May 15.

Proposal to establish a Recertification requirement for Instructor/Assessor: The proposal would require that instructors/assessors take the same test as the peer group they will be working with. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to adopt the proposal with minor wording changes.** Further discussion. **On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.** Staff will incorporate the changes into the Referee Administrative Handbook.

National Referee Fitness Standards: US Soccer has been informed by FIFA of a change to the fitness standards for FIFA and National Member Referees that apply to both male and female referees. Six different fitness tests will be required to be administered at National Camp thus necessitating two camps will be needed in 2008. This also means that Regional Pro-Clinics will also have to adjust their administration of the fitness test or that only certain clinics (one West coast and one East Coast) will administer the new fitness test. Other clinics will continue to just offer the Cooper Test. Referees that fail to pass fitness tests at National Camp would then have to make a decision on what clinic to attend for re-testing. Discussion regarding accountability of referees relative to post testing physical training activities. Should additional testing (within

a state) be required? There is a possibility that mid-year testing for MLS Referees and Assistant Referees could be accomplished in July/August timeframe. It was **Moved and seconded that any referee or assistant referee assigned to MLS games must pass the male FIFA Fitness Standard.** Further Discussion. **On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.**

MINIMUM FITNESS STANDARDS EFFECTIVE 2008 CAMP

LEAGUE	APPLIES TO	FIFA FITNESS TEST STANDARDS
MLS/FIFA	MALE REFEREE	30sec – 35 recovery and 6.2
MLS/FIFA	MALE ASSISTANT REFEREE	30sec – 40 recovery and 6.0
MLS	FEMALE REFEREE and AR	Same as male standard above
	WOMAN FIFA REFEREE	35sec – 40 recovery and 6.6
	WOMAN FIFA ASSISTANT REF	35sec – 45 recovery and 6.4
	NATIONAL REFEREE	35sec – 40 recovery and 6.8
	NATIONAL ASSISTANT REFEREE	30sec – 45 recovery and 6.2
USL Div 1	Male/Female National Referee	30sec – 40 recovery and 6.4
USL Div 1	Male/Female Assistant Referee	30sec – 45 recovery and 6.2
W LEAGUE	M/F REFEREE OR AR	PASS/FAIL

Training guidelines will be sent to all referees eligible for the 2008 National Camp

International Referee Exchange Policy: Concern expressed over other national associations within CONCACAF that do not reciprocate after their referees work in the US. There will be upcoming games in July with 4 Mexican and 4 MLS teams. A request has gone to the Secretary General to make the assignments for these matches that involve Mexican v. Mexican teams and crossover matches between MLS and Mexican teams. MLS v. MLS would be officiated by US referees.

Emeritus Waiver request: A request was received to allow a National Referee to achieve Emeritus status without meeting the requirements of this grade. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to deny the request. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.**

Request to implement an Assigning Recertification Module: Collins presented the module that is being used in Minnesota for Recertification of Assignors. Discussion. Concern expressed that in many areas the assignors are truly volunteers and adding recertification requirements could have a negative impact on the assigning program. By consensus the module will be sent to Kleinaitis for review and comment. There is the possibility this could be offered as part of the on-line training proposal.

Registration fees for Assignors: A proposal was received to adjust the current assignor registration fees. Discussion. It was recommended to increase the registration fee for assignors into line with other registration fees. **Moved and seconded to increase the Assignor Registration Fee to \$30 with a 50 – 50 split between the state association and US Soccer. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.**

Process for selection of FIFA candidates: There was a general discussion with staff regarding the identification and recommendation process of FIFA candidates. It was decided to form a task force to discuss and develop a policy regarding this issue. Members of the task force are; Collins, Bratsis and Baldeosingh. Ilacqua will be staff liaison.

For the good of the game: Several of our FIFA referees have been out of the country on assignments. The nominee for the Pat Smith award has been determined.

Next meeting date: It is anticipated that the next meeting will take place in the August/early September time frame.

Adjournment: With no further business to conduct the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Submitted by: Wally Lyslo. Recording secretary