

United States Soccer Federation
Referee Committee Meeting
Chicago O'Hare Hilton
October 1, 2005

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

Regrets: Balboa, Harkes,

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

Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. CDT.

Agenda: The proposed agenda was distributed by e-mail and is in member's notebooks. Ilacqua introduced Asher Mendelsohn from the Membership Services Department.

Approval of minutes: **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the May 26 meeting and the tele-conference call of September 13.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Reports: Professional Leagues. Machnik reviewed his written report contained in member's packets. Key emphasis was placed on officiating statistics as the MLS enters the last two weeks of the season. Deferred until later is a proposal to waive time-in-grade criteria for professional players that wish to become certified referees. Also discussed was a health care proposal being developed to form a network of professional that can care for the needs for referees when they are "on the road". This is not an insurance package rather a service that would allow officials, when injured to find quality sports medicine care regardless of their location within the US. The main advantage to this proposal is that the referees would know where to go for help if help was needed. As the proposal is developed the committee will be kept informed. Machnik and Tamberino then discussed the difficulty in filling available positions because of a variety of situations (illness, injury, vacation, other commitments) that come up throughout the course of a season. The solution seems to be to increase the numbers in the pool of referees that can be considered for MLS matches. When the league expands to 12 teams in 2007 this problem will be exacerbated. It was the consensus of the committee that more top up-and-coming officials need to be identified. With referees needing three or more days to prepare for a match it becomes obvious that more officials are needed. The instructional videos being sent out by US Soccer are appreciably beneficial.

Contained in the written report were comments from the USL that summarizes the end of the season with a "solid sense" that the interaction with officials and US Soccer has improved.

The last item was an update from the MISL indicating that their season will begin on November 6 consisting of 90 regular season games and 6 playoff matches. There are presently six teams in the league. In cooperation with US Soccer, preseason seminars will be conducted in the host venues.

Adult leagues: Motta indicated that the assignment of Assessors and Instructors to the USASA tournaments was greatly appreciated. The Assessor Academy was a big plus to the National Cup Finals. The USASA fall Workshop will be held October 8 in Indianapolis.

AYSO: Mason discussed his written report and indicated that in 2006 section meetings will be held in Las Vegas, Chicago, Orlando, San Diego and Honolulu.

Board Representative: Bratsis discussed his attendance at the last two BOD meetings. He indicated the board is wrestling with the recommendations to significantly reduce its size. He indicated that a new women's league is prepared to start exhibition play in 2006 with a full league scheduled to start play in 2007. This could have an impact on the number of available referees as identified in the above MLS report. Bratsis also mentioned the hurricane relief effort being coordinated for referees affected in the Gulf States. He indicated that the sponsors cannot accept dollars but they can accept new or used clothing and equipment. E-mails have been sent to SRAs giving details of where items may be sent.

Registration Report: Garibay discussed the final 2005 summary of Grade Demographics report that showed total 2005 registrations of 135,927. Later in the day he will demonstrate the new on-line registration system that

was also demonstrated to the SRAs at their recent workshop. The system will be available on-line 24/7 and will significantly improve the integrity of the current database as individuals can enter and update their personal information (while going through their SRA to insure the validity that they are who they say they are). A Q & A session followed the presentation. It was pointed out that regardless of these advances in technology, paper registrations would always be accepted.

Financial Report: Ilacqua discussed and answered questions regarding the Revenue and Expense Summary for the Five Months Ending August 31, 2005

Administrative: Ilacqua noted that the BOD approved the nominations for the FIFA Panel of International Referees and Assistant Referees. Letters will be sent to each of the nominated referees and assistant referees. Policy 531-9: Ilacqua discussed the request from the Rules Committee that this committee review the wording of the current policy regarding Misconduct Toward Game Officials. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve the wording of Policy 531-9 and forward to the Rules Committee for action.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. The Legal department will be asked to clarify the meaning of the word "player". e.g. is a player a person currently registered as a player or is a player defined as a person listed on the formal roster for a particular match on a particular day. Fast Track Proposal: Machnik presented a proposal to consider waiving time-in-grade requirements for professional players that indicate a desire to become registered referees. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve the proposal as pilot program and have the MLS work with the Referee Department to develop the criteria necessary to fast track former MLS players toward their development as active referees assigned to MLS.** Additional discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Grade 12 referees: Ilacqua presented a proposal to remove the age requirements for Grade 12 referees. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to change Grade 12 Minimum age from 18 to: State may set minimum age requirement effective with the 2006 registration year.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Code of ethics for Assignors: Ilacqua presented a recommendation that two items be added to the Assignor's code of ethics. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to adopt proposed additions to the code of ethics: When assigning USSF Certified Referees, I must notify the referee when assignments are for non-members of US Soccer and the use of USSF affiliated game assignments shall not be used to persuade USSF Certified Referees to accept game assignments for non-members of US Soccer.** Additional discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Assessor grade criteria: McKee presented a recommendation received by US Soccer to make three changes in the selection process for state and national grade Assessors. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to deny the requested changes.** Further discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. Presenters of the recommendations will be notified of the decision.

Request for access to Data Base: Ilacqua presented a request that various Assignors have needs to verify if a referee is who (s)he says (s)he is. For example: many tournaments receive applications from referees from any one of the 55 state associations. How can they quickly verify the referee is registered and at what grade? Discussion. By consensus the committee agreed that Staff should look into ways to give Assignors read only access that would allow them to verify referee identity.

Minimum age for entry-level instructors: Staff proposes to add a minimum age for Associate Instructors. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to grandfather current Associate Instructors and make 18 years of age the minimum age for Associate Instructor.** Discussion. On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

For the good of the Game: Ilacqua indicated a request was received to include referee award information (International Panel and other awards) in the Law of The Game handbook similar to the way it was done years ago. Discussion. Does this information belong in the LOG? **Moved and seconded to create in the Administrative Handbook a section named Special Recognition.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed.

Eddie Person Award: The nomination from the Eddie Pearson Award Committee for the 2005 award was reviewed. By consensus the committee rejected the nominee as not meeting the published criteria for this prestigious award.

Hurricane relief: Ilacqua presented a request to grant assessment waivers for referees affected by the recent hurricanes. Discussion. By consensus the committee feels that state administrators may on a case-by-case basis grant individual waivers to be approved by the SRC if there is one.

Job Descriptions: Ilacqua presented the Final Job Descriptions for the State Referee Committee, Chair of the SRC, SRA, SYRA, SDA, SDI and State Assignor Coordinator. Discussion. **Moved and seconded to approve these job descriptions.** On a voice vote the motion was affirmed. Staff will so notify state associations of these approved job descriptions.

Next meeting date: The next meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2006. Staff will determine the time and place.

Adjournment: There being no further business (International Panel business was conducted via tele-conference) the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Submitted by: Wally Lyslo, Recording secretary