

FLAG & WHISTLE

Official Newsletter of the BC Soccer Referees Association – Winter 2011



FRIDAY NIGHT WHISTLES

BCSRA opens its arms to fellow referees on the North Shore of Vancouver

In conjunction with the North Shore Youth Soccer Association (NSYSA), the Association held a successful pilot education session on Friday, February 18th at the Delbrook Community Center in North Vancouver.

Led by newly crowned BC Soccer Instructor and BCSRA VP **Nick Hawley**, 30 referees were in attendance. The session also included a presentation by Canadian FIFA Referee and RA member **Michelle Pye** on her experiences over the course of her career and a statistical review of the refereeing fraternity by **Patrick Li**, assistant to the NSYSA Head Referee.

The main topic of discussion was centered on positioning, which is one of the first listed topics in BC Soccer's Head Referee Program.

The vast majority in attendance were not members of the BCSRA so, in holding such a session, allowed the Association to not only assist in the dissemination of

educational information but also to show our presence to other referees who may not have been aware of the Referee's Association's existence.

Participants were encouraged to ask questions and many were keen to do so. In all, people went away glad to have participated and better for the experience.

As the winter coastal season is now seriously into play and, by extension, quickly approaching the end of another 'league journey,' it goes without saying that attention will start to focus on preparations for the following season. Thumbs up for what will hopefully be a fruitful new venture! ■



Referees who officiated at the Provincial championship in Aldergrove last July. **Front row (L-R):** Evan Eadie, Chang Joo Jang, Ashley Corrigan, Art Bandeniaks, Robert Izett, Sarah Baldock, Charles Huang. **Middle row:** Cameron Johnston, Evan Fryer, Niko Jecanski, Jesse Ross, Rubin Smilev, Mladen Herceg, Brook Calibaba, Sasa Jecanski. **Back row:** Neil Farber, Dirk Lange, Jonathan Izett, Phil Barrington, Darnell Smith, Stefan Tanaka-Freundt.

(Photo courtesy of BC Soccer Referee Development Co-ordinator Jose Branco)

BC SOCCER KICKS OFF HEAD REFEREE AND MENTOR PROGRAMS

During the month of January, the BC Soccer Referees Committee (formerly known as the 'Referee Development Committee') held a series of sessions for its newly christened Head Referee and Provincial Mentor Programs.

Sessions were held in the Kelowna, Victoria, Cloverdale and Burnaby region. In some cases the Head Referee and Mentor Clinics took place on back-to-back nights.

During the Burnaby session, Head Referee course participants were given a background in the workings of the Referee's Committee.

This then led into those in attendance of a review of the Head Referee duties. Furthermore, Head Referees would be asked and encouraged to hold gatherings of referees that fall under their oversight to help educate them on various topics of refereeing (it was also mentioned that educational material would be provided to them in the future).

The Mentor Course was designed by Referee Committee members **Roy Branco** (a National Assessor and brother of BC Soccer Referee Development Coordinator **Jose Branco**); and Honourary National Referee and BCSRA Past President **Pat Harkness**, gentlemen who hold the Assessment Portfolio and Secretary positions of the Referee's Committee respectively.

The goal of the course was to officially certify individuals as mentors. Without taking the course, referees wishing to become mentors could not be certified as such.

The particulars for individuals were also taken down so that after the course the names of certified mentors would be given to Head Referees to contact to match with referees to mentor.

Such a certification would also be required by certified assessors if they wished to mentor a referee.

But can't an assessor be a mentor as well? In a word, no. During the Burnaby session, for example, it was mentioned that assessment and mentoring are two different functions.

While the two functions may appear similar the assessor fulfills the need to qualify a referee's performance for potential upgrading.

The mentor is on hand only to

provide encouragement and inspiration. Also, while each function would require filling out a form, the two forms are vastly different.

The assessor's form, which is standardized by the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA), is more detailed, covers more subjects (called "competencies") and includes scores.

The mentor's form is more simplified, and was created by BC Soccer

Participants were also given instruction on how to approach the 'mentée' (for example, introduce oneself and don't forget to ask for the referee's name), how to fill out the mentor form and practiced their mentoring skills.

Those wishing to become mentors, but missed out on the offered courses should keep on the lookout.

Future courses, as with all referee courses, will be listed on the BC Soccer website. ■

Thanks to the following contributors

Editor

Assistant Editor

Staff Writer

Research

Production

Jon C. Seeley

Elvio Chies

Tom Babic

Emil Udovich

Gene Nagy

Dieter Freundt

SHORT TAKES

Fraser Valley AGM set for March 7, 2011

All members affiliated with the **Fraser Valley Soccer Referees Association (FVSRA)** should be aware that the Area Association's **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Monday, March 7th** inside the meeting room of the Langley Legion.

The new location for the Legion is on 56th Avenue just west of 206th Street. Positions up for election are as follows: President and Secretary.

Start time for the meeting is 7:30 pm. ■

VASRA elects new Executive

Monday, January 31st saw the election of a new executive for the Vancouver Area Branch. The new executive is as follows:

President: **Marc Bowley**
(elected by acclamation)

1st Vice-President: **Philip Leung**

2nd Vice-President: **Art Duran**
(elected by acclamation)

Secretary: **Bill McNaughton**
(elected by acclamation)

Treasurer: **Ron Schaeffer**

Directors: **Jose Fraguas, Agostinho-Santos Claudio**
(elected to a 2 year term)

Congratulations to the new executive and wishes them the best in the pursuit of the RA's goals. ■

CSRA Annual General Meeting postponed

After a sudden pull-out by the host Regina Soccer Referees Association (RSRA), member associations of the Canadian Soccer Referees Association (CSRA) unanimously agreed to postpone the Annual General Meeting of the parent body.

The RSRA had agreed to host the 2011 AGM on February 12th and arrangements had been made with **Hector Vergara** to be the guest speaker for this year's event.

However, for reasons unknown at the time of this writing, the RSRA had informed the CSRA Executive of its decision to back away from hosting

the annual gathering.

In other news, member associations have agreed to allow a sub-committee to look for and research future mandates and report back later in March of this year.

The CSRA is composed of three provincial associations (BCSRA, Manitoba SRA, Ontario SRA) and one city/district association (Calgary District SRA).

The CSRA was initially formed in 1988 with BCSRA Founding and Life Member **John Meachin** as its first president. ■

Player 'shoved whistle down ref's throat'

An Italian amateur footballer has been banned for 20 months after a furious reaction to a red card. Andrea Biondi, who plays for Albereta 72 in Florence, saw red during his side's clash with Sancat in February this year.

After the red card - which itself was for insulting the referee - the player lost control, putting an arm around the official's neck and trying to force the whistle into his mouth using his hand, according to Italian news agency Ansa.

Biondi eventually left the field, continuing to hurl insults and threaten the referee.

Despite the extraordinary events, Albareta still managed to salvage a 2-2 draw from the match. ■

Tom speaks: *Les Incompitents*

Ed note: We are happy to announce the return of the stylistic referee musings of F&W Staff Writer Tom Babic. Here, Tom continues on where the article *'Confessions of an Amateur Referee'* (F&W Holiday 2010 edition) left off.

I'm up to bat. My turn to "speak." Sometimes I wish it was the bat that I had to work with rather than my pen. Ah, yes "the pen is mightier than the sword," they tell me. Quite rightly so; but just once perhaps, it would be a nice diversion to see what kind of influence I could sway with the bat.

You see, I'm writing the rebuttal to the article posted last time out in this publication. A piece written by Trevor Ward – one of the officiating brethren from the land that invented the beautiful game.

To be accurate, my rebuttal is not to the article itself. As I found the "salty" offering, as the editor described the piece, rather tasty. It was probably the tasteless topic that often prompts such a diatribe as Trevor's that really got me going. Then to add salt to the wound – I'm overplaying that seasoning's analogy potential aren't I? – the editor warns to not try Trevor's tactics at our local park.

I won't steal Trevor's material but I'll be entirely truthful, I have spent many a match playing out the same musings that Trevor so vividly voices. What would happen if I behaved like the loud mouth buffoons on the sidelines or better yet the "has been, not even close to being a somebody" or the "never was" that laces them up and saunters onto the park. Only to embarrass themselves with their inept athleticism (apologies for using this phrase in an oxymoronic manner – but the situation begs that I top the morons) and bring hilarity upon their feeble attempts to play. Yes I said it out loud; some of you that come out to play at the local park are a disgrace to the game.

You're now asking yourself what gives me the right to speak of any attempt to participate in the world's greatest game as anything less than just that – a great attempt. Something to applaud and cheer for with gusto. And

frankly I do. I relish the opportunity to come out to the park as a referee and be given the privilege of running with whoever loves the game, respects the game, respects his opponent, respects the supporters and respects me. But I have absolutely no regard for those that act repeatedly like they warrant a visit to the psych ward at the local jail. They have no right to walk onto the field and abuse anyone.

Why did I use bold type and an underline the word repeatedly? Because this is chronic folks. Some of the people we allow to play soccer have rap sheets longer than life long two bit criminals. Yet they are there week after week. They sit out a game, listen to the "tsk, tsk, tsk" from the discipline committee and once in a blue moon pay a fine. But no sooner does the ink dry on another referee's report on vehement verbal abuse and the ignorant idiots are back. Thousands of refs are subjected to this colourful and crude language everyday, every night, every weekend at the local park. "Women and children nearby?" Well of course the blockhead who is screaming is baby sitting his 5 year old daughter who is lambasted with the most vile language from the rest of the troops on the pitch. Please don't think that I'm suggesting that this scenario involves men only being the loud mouth louts. No being a jerk at the park is an equal opportunity – the women are often more revolting with their rancorous rants than the men.

And no I won't apologize for calling anyone that yells at a referee – yells at me – an ignorant idiot. Most of them won't spend five minutes learning the Laws of the Game but they'll spend hours on the sideline berating those of us who wholeheartedly will tell you several well know facts.

- Referees are learning the game and improving their knowledge of how to officiate each and every time they walk to the centre circle. I know I do.
- Referees – most times – give you everything they have. We are that guy or gal that you would vote your unsung hero on your team.
- Referees are fallible. This is not a bad

thing. In fact it assists in item number one above. We learn from our mistakes.

- Most of us know most of the Laws and even if we don't we know one thing for sure – we'll lose the privilege to officiate if we yell at players or coaches or supporters the way those people yell at us.
- Finally and I will apologize if this comes across as moderately condescending to the educated and informed – as with so many articles, I am preaching to the choir. But I would openly assert that referees are in a better position to see what the call is because we are actually out there participating in the activity while the armchair amateurs scream their obscenities from the sideline.

I know now you're saying, "Don't get carried away with exaggeration Tom"! But am I exaggerating? Think long and hard how many times a person has sullied themselves at a match versus how many times there is an honest appreciation for how lucky we are to be a part of this beautiful game. Get out and play. Run and enjoy the spirit of teamwork. Finish up with a hearty and heartfelt "thanks for the game."

So while it's sometimes difficult I will try to leave you with a positive thread. Unfortunately some of the cast of characters above won't see it as a positive but I'm not going to walk away from the game regardless of how many times I have to listen to the dolts scream their profanities and obscenities.

Trevor says he can't handle it. He's walking away from being a ref before he does something dastardly. I say I can last longer than the jerks who scream at me. "How will I accomplish that"? you ask.

Ear plugs – play on.

Next time... "Hey ref how come you're not wearing shin pads and other outlandish assertions of the profoundly dimwitted.



MLS referees directed to manage with personality in 2011

Source-Examiner.com Feb 3, 2011

(**Ed note:** as many peoples' eyes will be on the upcoming MLS season, due to the start of the Vancouver Whitecaps' inaugural season, we've presented this article.)

Peter Kokolski is a former MLS and WUSA referee currently serving as a state referee assessor, coach and communications director for the Massachusetts state referee committee. Kokolski dispenses information and opinions about officiating on his blog Kicking Back and in a separate story spoke with with me about why there are no women referees in MLS.

He is not affiliated with U.S. Soccer now, and his opinions are his alone based on his many years of work with U.S. Soccer.

LE: Do you think the quality of MLS officiating has progressed since 2002, when you last worked in the League?

Kokolski: In some areas the program has progressed. There are more referees who are better trained at the younger levels to be able to handle some of the stresses that are going to occur at the MLS level.

The directives that have been coming out for the last few years have been to manage with personality. It's understood at the professional level and the international level that you understand the laws of the game and how to mechanically apply the laws of the game.

The training that's happening is for referees to understand not how to manage the laws of the game per se, but how to manage the players who are playing the game within the construct of the laws of the game. This is something U.S. Soccer has done extraordinarily well, having national and FIFA referees take the message and push it down to the younger ranks.

At youth regionals this last year in Virginia in Region 1, Mark Geiger was a guest speaker and took these messages to younger referees, some of who are

getting very close to being ready to manage these matches, but some a bit further away. So here is one very positive way we see the messages that U.S. Soccer wants to get across getting pushed down.

On the flip side of the coin, we've seen stumbles from MLS referees and that could be for a variety of reasons, through consistency of training or just a bad day.

So while a lot of good things are happening, we still have a lack of consistency in MLS refereeing as a whole, which I'm sure frustrates MLS corporate, frustrates the players, and frustrates the folks at the US Soccer refereeing program because they want it to shine.

LE: What are some of the strategies U.S. Soccer wants referees to use to manage players?

Kokolski: It's as variable as the referee and the players themselves. For example, there are players quick to react to particular situations. A referee may employ tactics such as being close by to that player to deal with them on a more interpersonal level than letting that player rant and rave and explode and make a show of something that doesn't need to be a show, that isn't that big a deal.

It's employing tactics such as the quiet word or having a relationship with players – that's something at the highest level is incredibly important. To be able to talk to a player one-on-one and understand that there are going to be disagreements, but how those disagreements are sorted out inside the field could be having a discussion.

If that discussion isn't had, a player may choose to act out and then commit another foul that may be more serious and requires a more public display of punishment, such as a verbal admonition or even a caution or a send-off.

The referee has to understand what the player's position is and how best to handle that particular player in that situation. The intent now and what the referees are being trained to do is use their

personality to treat the players as people and deal with them and their emotions on that emotional level to help manage the situation without necessarily having to take more draconian action, such as a misconduct.

LE: In 2010, Freddie Ljungberg had a visible problem with MLS referees and was quite public about it. But there seemed to be some kind of dynamic where the referees just tired of his complaints so they didn't give him calls that sometimes appeared to be deserved.

Kokolski: If a player were to approach a referee in a more personable level, they may be able to get more done – speaking purely on a human nature level. I'm not saying there's any collusion or anything going on.

Would the quiet word or some discreet method have worked in that situation? Maybe or maybe not, it's as variable as the personalities involved themselves, but if you start at the first tackle – if the referee had been there or the player had been willing to communicate to the referee – “Hey, I didn't like that,” or if the referee said, “Hey, I missed that one, I'll get the next one,” that may have provided a different result.

LE: What are the 2011 directives to MLS referees?

Kokolski: The biggest one is to manage with personality, and it continues to be a pervasive theme.

LE: There could be others coming out?

Kokolski: There could be, but I'd be surprised if managing with personality took a back seat.

LE: Last year there was a directive about gamesmanship, but I didn't see that being enforced. There was a lot of time-wasting.

Kokolski: Gamesmanship to one may just be part of the game for another. One person's time-wasting is another person's tactic. The referees would have heard about it from MLS management, I think there's still a weekly conference call to discuss these things.

LE: How does this conference call work?

Cont'd on page 6

MLS Referee

Cont'd from page 5

Kokolski: I don't know what the current procedure is, but I'd be surprised if it changed. There was a weekly conference call and it would get the referees together and they'd go through incidents. The ARs would be involved too, usually.

LE: Who would be on the other end of that call?

Kokolski: It was Joe Machnik directing the officials and sometimes there were others like Paul Tamborino on the line.

LE: In 2010 there were more designated players, 14 at one time, so club owners were putting big investments on the field.

Last spring there was a flurry of real quick red cards – accurate, justifiable responses – and perhaps in accordance it seemed that there were less egregious fouls in 2010 than 2009.

Kokolski: I don't necessarily believe this was because of an increase in designated players. You have a pendulum of justice. When messages are very fresh in referee's heads, it's important for them to perform, because based on how they do in these matches will determine if they receive assignments later on. They may err towards sending a player off if that's the directive.

There was a phenomenon back in the day when I was refereeing called 'Red Sunday.' Red Sunday was the first set of Sunday matches after the All-Star break when the referees would be reminded that particular fouls are send-offs. It was a reinforcement of what the appropriate procedures were and what the appropriate interpretations of the laws were.

I don't think it's your imagination, you'll see the pendulum of justice go

one way shortly after everybody's being reminded. And the teams are reminded as well, they know that it's coming.

You see a flurry of send-offs – and you see it everywhere, it's not just MLS. You see it in the World Cup as well, where in the opening stages referees will get their directives and you'll see a lot of red and then later on in the tournament you'll see – as the desire for the entertainment value goes up – you'll see a relaxation, where something that was certainly a send-off earlier in the tournament is no longer a send-off.

So, I don't think it's unique to MLS, but it's a reminder that when the referees get the directive they usually implement it very sternly early on and it falls off a little bit as players get the message and things start to come into a little bit more balance.

I don't think any referee at any of these leagues comes off the field saying, 'Boy, I got everything right.' It's a question of, 'How much did I get wrong? Did I minimize the amount that I got wrong?'

LE: What does a referee assessor do?

Kokolski: When it's not part of a mentoring program, which is not done for compensation, we're assigned matches. Referees have assessments to maintain their grade or for an upgrade to advance, so I'm assigned to assess those matches. I hold my personal comments until after the match and then we go into the litany of match analysis.

The conversation itself is informal, but there are comments filed with the state association based on set criteria that U.S. Soccer provides. For assessments, there are comments and for upgrades there is a score assigned by the assessor and there are passing and failing scores.

LE: Last question: Goal line technology or not?

Kokolski: From a FIFA AR who just came off the panel, what they've experimented with at different tournaments around the world just isn't working. The technology aspect of it don't work, not so much from a philosophical standpoint.

Do I personally think goal line technology should be used? I do not. I take Sepp Blatter's opinion on this, not his new revised opinion of, 'Yeah, we should look at it and trials are set for the beginning of February.'

I'm more of a purist. Mistakes are going to happen inside the field. There's no getting around that, but it's a slippery slope where you stop. If goal line technology is used, then why not instant replay to determine if there was a penalty that would potentially result in a goal-scoring opportunity?

Or, how about if it should have been a send-off instead of just a caution on denying a goal-scoring opportunity? Technology is great – the microphones and the beeper flags are great advancements for referees, but to start using goal line technology is something that starts to cross the border on what a referee and assistant referee should naturally be able to do.

The human element is part of the game and it's in the fabric, the DNA. To start to even chip away at that a little bit with goal line technology, you lead to a very slippery slope of people saying when the next incident occurs inside the box, should it or should it have not been a penalty? They begin to cry for technology there. If the camel's nose gets under the tent with goal line stuff, I'm afraid to see what would come next.



Fastest send-off in professional Soccer

A striker for the minor English soccer team Chippenham Town made history for all the wrong reasons a short time ago, when he set a new world record for the quickest ever sending off.

David Pratt 21, received the red card from the referee after just 3 sec-

onds, having made a dangerous tackle in the match against Bashley.

The previous record for the quickest sending off in soccer history, was the 10 seconds it took for Bologna's Giuseppe Lorenzo to receive the red card back in 1990, when he struck an opponent in an Italian league game.

• Letters to the Editor •

are always welcome and should be directed to:

Lvo@direct.ca or stdy@shaw.ca

The material presented is from contributors. The BCSRA assumes no responsibility for its content.

**BC Soccer Referees Association
c/o 8130 Selkirk Street
Vancouver, BC, V6P 4H7**

Futbol y justicia (Football and Justice)

Juan Villoro, December 11, 2009

Ed note: This article originally appeared in the Mexican newspaper. The F&W gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Antonio Hurtado-Coll for the translation of this article.

Every time that a referee makes a mistake, the fans remember that gray haired lady who had the misfortune of giving him birth.

Football is the best spread form of passion in the world. The pressure that a referee is subjected to is huge. FIFA advises them to be 2 meters away of the play, but reality gives him sudden break-aways and parabolic rebounds.

In a split second, with his eyesight blurred by sweat, he has to impose justice. His decision will generate hate and insults. The most ingrained whim of soccer consists of asking objectivity to him, the referee, and valuing it with subjectivity.

Why does someone accept such an inclement office? The reason is simple: nobody is so fond of soccer as a referee. He is the most secret and resistant fan, the absolute fan who by love of the game does not show his love a team.

Obviously, it would be preferable to be a striker and to arrive at the field in a shining sports car. Unfortunately, his faculties let him follow plays not to invent them.

Thus, he is satisfied with being the nearest witness of the deed. It follows that the party would be impossible without his presence and supports commentaries that are not indebted of the reason, but of the sound and the fury.

As in life, soccer is put under an uncertainty principle. A referee gives a penalty kick to us while another one approaches our idol with executioner steps and extracts from his pocket the card of flesh color and ignominy.

The person in charge to enforce the Laws is the afflicted representative of the human factor. Soccer would be less funny and less ethical if the referee were not mistaken.

The recent elimination of Ireland reopened the controversy on the uncertainty of the arbitration. In unjust form, France qualified to the World Cup.

Everybody saw that Henry controlled the ball with the hand to give a pass that would finish in a goal. Everybody, except the referee.

To make matters worse, it was a standard error. The referees usually are mistaken in favour of the powerful teams that play in their home fields. Days later, Real Madrid faced in the Bernabau the weak Almeria of Hugo Sanchez.

The Andalusian team defended an heroic 2-2 when its goalkeeper sent himself to the feet of an attacker and he removed the ball from him. The Real Madrid player tripped himself and the referee gave a penalty kick.

Christiano Ronaldo took the kick and the goalie stopped the shot. The ball went to Benzema, that, illegally, was within the area at the time of the penalty kick being taken. The French scored and the illusions of the poor men vanished before the double misdeed of the millionaires.

An ignominy that forces to spend the night sleepless “en blanco” (additional punishment for which we detested that color in soccer).

Should this change? The television commentators ask that replay is used to review plays. It is a biased opinion that would give even more power to the broadcasting corporations.

The disadvantages of this method are many. To start with, the cameras are not objective: a TV shot can show that the play happens in offside and another one

to suggest the forward is onside. The machines also have ghosts. Furthermore, to review the play would interrupt a sport that runs parallel to life. In cases of much confusion the games would last like an opera of Wagner.

Soccer is the most democratic of sports. One just needs that the goals have nets to make the field in the park be under the same justice as Maracana.

If this is modified, then, in those fields covered by electronic devices, a different sport would be played.

It's obvious that referees must improve their performance and that their mistakes deserve a posterior sanction. The official who makes a mistake does not go to the World Cup; if he is already there, he does not go to the final match. Also, the players that cheat are suspended. The misdeeds are not completely unpunished and do receive the most important of all verdicts: the tribe's memory.

But the football justice cannot be perfect due to an even more important reason: the referee is not sent by God or the government.

He has a much more significant role: to uphold the Law. As the players, he uses the rules in the search of a higher performance. Sometimes he is right, sometimes he misses.

We are in front of a superior example of individual choice. Pressed by his circumstances, he acts accordingly to his conscience. He doesn't want to fail, but might do it. Under our fierce view, he improvises a verdict.

Football was born to excite a competitive species; it's winners become idols. But it's application of the law is dependant on someone like the rest of us.

Homer, the first sports commentator, left an epic definition of the human factor. When Hector faces Achilles he knows that he won't defeat the God's favourite. Conscientious of his own mortality, he accepts the challenge, the precarious gift of being man.

Football was invented so Achilles could score the goals and for Hector (ed note: the Greek god not Mr. Vergara) to decide if they were valid or not. There is no point to change such a unique dare: 22 players play to be gods and three judges play to be humans. ■

Want to ref in South Africa? In our refereeing careers we have to go through many harrowing and amusing moments. Maybe we can share these moments.

1997 - Local cup final, Reds vs Greens played at Royal Road Maitland, Cape Town. I was on the line for this match. Peter Walton was the referees guest at the match.

Five minutes before full time, Greens score from an off side position. I flag but the referee does not see me and awards the goal. Reds refuse to kick off indicating that I have my flag raised. The referee approaches me and after consultation, reverses the goal decision. Reds go on to win after a penalty shoot out.

Immediately after the match, Green supporters go on the rampage throwing every movable object at the officials. Together with Peter Walton, we manage to get to the relative safety of the dressing room with the understaffed and under-trained security officials panicking. The trophy awarding ceremony was also cancelled due to the violence. The Green supporters were getting more courageous by the minute threatening us with our lives. I requested the security to call the South African Police.

We, the referees, then opened our kit bags and removed our insurance, one 15 shot Beretta 9mm semi auto pistol, one .38 Special Smith & Wesson Revolver and one 7,65 Browning semi auto pistol. We maintained our position until it was safe to leave, which was not too long as the word got to the brave Green supporters that the referees were not helpless and that it would probably not be a good idea to breach the dressing room area with evil intentions.

This was probably one of my worst moments as my young son and daughter were with me at the time and also had to flee to the dressing room under the barrage of flying objects.

The amusing side was the expression on Peter Walton's face when we removed the hardware from our kit bags. Peter had never seen a real firearm before that moment.

PS. If anyone needs to know whether we would have used the weapons if needed, just ask, is the Pope a Catholic? ■

The Science of Soccer Substitutions

Jared Diamon, *The Wall Street Journal Sports*, February 9, 2011

Ed note: *Sometimes, a referee needs to be able to use his knowledge of the game itself. Here we present an article on a often overlooked subject: Substitutions*

Timing Is Everything

The minutes soccer managers should make their three substitutions to have the best chance of scoring at least one goal. The rule only applies to the team trailing in the score. It has no effect on the team ahead or if the score is tied.

Substitution time:

- First before 58th minute;
- Second before 73rd minute;
- Third before 79th minute

Chance of Scoring when followed: **36%**; Scoring when **not** followed: **18.5%**.

The pace and flow of soccer generally make it difficult for managers to affect the outcome of a match once it begins. Since soccer has almost no stoppages for coaches to draw on clipboards or strategize with their players, a manager's most critical in-game decision may be choosing when to utilize his three substitutions.

That's where Bret Myers, a professor of management and operations at the Villanova School of Business, comes in.

Hall named CONCACAF Director of Referee Administration

Source: Concacaf.com – Former World Cup veteran **Brian Hall** has been appointed to the newly created position of CONCACAF director of referee administration, and will assume his new post at the confederation's New York headquarters on Monday.

The 49-year-old Hall officiated matches at the amateur and professional level for more than 30 years and was a four-time recipient of U.S. Major League Soccer's Referee of the Year award. He will work in conjunction with the CONCACAF Referee Committee and the FIFA Referee Assistance Program on the appointment, scheduling and assessment of referees.

"We are thrilled to have Brian join CONCACAF," General Secretary Chuck Blazer said. "He is a trusted member of the refereeing community and brings a wealth of unique experience that will help us further improve our refereeing program throughout the region."

Hall was a FIFA international referee for 15 years, matching the longest period for any American, before retiring in 2007. His 60 international appointments include the 2002 World Cup, World Cup qualifying, Confederations Cup, Under-17 World Cup, Olympic qualifying, CONCACAF Gold Cup, CONCACAF Champions Cup and Asian Cup in addition to his work in the Major Indoor Soccer League and Major League Soccer, where he was the referee in two finals.

The California native, who was chosen by World Soccer magazine as one of the 10 best referees internationally in 2004, also will oversee planning and organization of the CONCACAF elite referee and assessor courses and develop video programming.

He arrives at CONCACAF after two-and-a-half years at the U.S. Soccer Federation, where he was responsible for training and assessment of referees. ■



A lifelong soccer player and fan, he sought to help coaches make their subs at exactly the right moment and discovered what he calls the "Decision Rule."

To determine this, Dr. Myers analyzed the substitutions and ensuing results of every game played during the 2009-10 season in the top English, Spanish, Italian and German professional leagues, as well as the 2010 Major League Soccer season and the 2010 World Cup.

He concluded that if their team is behind, managers should make the first substitution prior to the 58th minute, the second substitution prior to the 73rd minute and the third prior to the 79th minute.

Teams that follow these guidelines improve score at least one goal roughly 36% of the time. Teams that don't follow the rule improve about 18.5% of the time.

He noted 1,037 instances the rule could have been applied and found that managers abide by it a little less than half the time. He also found that the timing of subs has no effect on the team ahead in the score or if the match is tied.

Dr. Myers said the rule shows that coaches underestimate the significance of fatigue late in a match, which causes them to overvalue starters and undervalue substitutes. ■