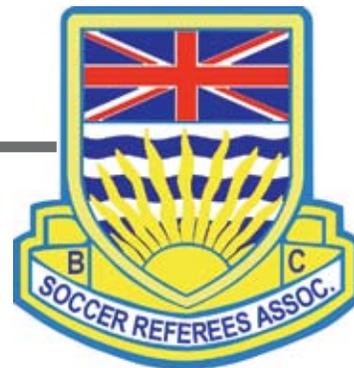


FLAG & WHISTLE

Official Newsletter of the BC Soccer Referees Association – Spring 2011



Is that Paul Ward?

March 19, 2011: Whitecaps v TFC at Empire Field

Although the Vancouver Whitecaps have been around since being re-incarnated as the Vancouver 86ers, arguably at no time have they received the hullabaloo as the announcement of their home opener at the temporary Empire Field facility against veteran, and the only other Canadian franchise then to date, Toronto FC (TFC). Given that many happy memories of past soccer glories were wrapped into the former Empire Stadium, which also saw the 1954 Miracle Mile and the Beatles, Elvis Presley and of course the “other” football team, the BC Lions play there, March 19th at temporary Empire Field came to be a date not to be missed.

From the refereeing side, the question arose – who would get to be in the middle? One could naturally expect, what with two Canadian teams involved, that an American referee would receive the honour (Ed note:pun intended!). Much to the surprise and perplex of many, the

assignment went to Canadian FIFA Referee **Paul Ward** of North Vancouver. Paul, who has officiated in the MLS for the past several seasons and last year became the first Canadian to referee an MLS playoff game, was only a little boy when the original Whitecaps first played at Old Empire.

“I did get to see one Whitecaps game at Empire in 1980,” recalls Paul vaguely. “I remember we were playing in the courtyard and my Mom came out yelling we won tickets to see the Whitecaps. But I was only 5 at the time so I don’t remember much of the game.”

Joining him for the game would be fellow Canadian FIFA Referee **Dave Gantar** of Edmonton as fourth official, newly appointed to the international list this year, Canadian FIFA Assistant **Joe Fletcher** from Toronto and US FIFA Assistant **Anthony Vasoli** of Chicago.

The four match officials are part of a

group of seven, teamed together by the League with a referee coach/assessor for the entire season. The MLS has divided the pool of match officials into “teams” with extra officials in each squad to help with the inevitable scheduling difficulties that arise. Paul was informed of the assignment about 3 weeks before, right in the middle of the Whitecaps’ marketing blitz. Being a local, this made preparation for the game challenging.

“I tried not to get caught up with the buzz that was going on,” Paul indicated, referring to the Whitecaps 30 day countdown. “Because this game would be shown nationally and would be seen by people I knew added to the pressure.”

And so it came – game-time. A bright sunny day, clear skies and almost 23,000 spectators – the largest crowd to see the Whitecaps play since they last graced the East Van site almost 30 years before.

Cont’d on page 2



Opening ceremony of Vancouver Whitecaps vs Toronto FC match at Empire Field

Paul Ward in the middle

Cont'd from page 1

The air had an aura of anticipation, literally two years and one day since the Whitecaps were awarded their franchise. Alas, Paul's father **Ron**, also a referee, would not be present owing to taking care of Paul's sick mother at his parents' home in the Okanagan. Furthermore, the game started a full 60 minutes earlier than all other games that day.

This meant the entire League Head Office in New York, not to mention the CSA, would be watching. And although Paul has done games in front as many or more people, in places as far as Central America, he couldn't help but feel nervous as he walked the teams onto the field.

This time, the game would be shown nationwide and many of Paul's friends and acquaintances would be watching his every move. Still, Paul kept coming back to basic principles.

"No matter how you feel you always have to remember to keep your focus and that you have a job to do."

The walk-out of the teams produced some rather strange reaction from some fans. As overheard by Canadian FIFA Referee and RA member **Michelle Pye**, who witnessed the game live, "There were players close by from the VMSL (Vancouver Metro Soccer League, the local amateur league that Paul officiates in) who looked down and said, "Is that Paul Ward?" one guy said, I hope he screws up, he gave me a yellow card once."

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Armed with headset and a special canister of evaporating foam, to be used by MLS referees to mark the ten yards on ceremonial free-kicks, Paul blows his whistle and the game starts.

Toronto has the early run of play. Two hard challenges, one by newly acquired striker **Eric Hassli** of the Whitecaps occurring in front of Joe Fletcher, occur early and would earn – much to the crew's chagrin – the wrath of their "coach" during the post-game tele-conference two days later.

A collision between Whitecap **Atiba Harris** on the TFC keeper forced Paul to call a foul against the tall striker especially after the look from a TFC defender close-by.

"The look on his face told me he wasn't too pleased with the contact," explained Paul. "So I called it. As we all know, fouls on the keeper can cause big problems."

Then the moment the crowd had waited for, the Whitecaps scored the game's and their first goal in the MLS.

Immediately, after signaling the count, Paul darted – not towards center – but towards the corner flag. Why?

"It certainly wasn't to celebrate with the players," Paul adds jokingly in describing the scene, "I wanted to prevent the player from having to get a yellow card for doing something stupid, like over celebrating."

A delay was necessary as the fans started raining the field with the promotional white ponchos given on each seat. The ponchos were given away in packages whose weight made them easy to reach the field when tossed.

The officials were asked by the Whitecaps to hold onto the ball used to score the team's first goal.

They were told by the League, there was a possibility the game would see the League's 8,000th goal, thus getting the ball which the League wanted to keep for posterity should the moment arise (going into the game, the total stood at 7,998).

Thus, Paul exchanged balls with Fourth Official Dave Gantar after the first two goals of the game, both occurring within minutes of each other.

However, Paul couldn't prevent the over-celebrating on the second Whitecaps goal by local boy **Terry Dunfield** as he raced off-the-field with a Lambeau-

style leap into the arms of celebrating fans.

After Dunfield came back onto the field, Paul coolly walked, yellow card displayed in his hand by his side, towards him and showed the yellow card.

"Unfortunately, this is one of the ones that the Laws say we have to give," Paul stated matter-of-factly. "I even told him, 'I know this sucks but I have to give it.'"

The half would end that way but not before Paul gave two more cautions, one after an advantage he played, producing a brilliant run up the wing by the home side, where he pointed back to the offending player to alert his assistants in case play continued for some time.

It did for about 2 minutes, and although they were ready to correct Paul if he forgot or cautioned the wrong player, neither Assistant nor the Fourth Official would require screaming into the headset to do so.

The second half produced 3 more goals, the most controversial being the last Whitecaps goal which appeared offside. Although even Paul had his doubts at first glance, the word "appears" is aptly used.

"Trust me," confided Paul, "We've looked at it every way, forwards and backwards, super slo-mo. We got it right."

The game ended without incident. The fact the teams decided the result is the biggest compliment a referee can have.

Paul's name and that of his crew are now part of the continuing history of the Beautiful Game in B.C. The game would open the eyes of many non-soccer people Paul had in contact with, informing them through his performance of the need for a referee to run and be fit (i.e. "I never knew referees had to run so much"), how Paul's "game-face" would be in contradiction to his usual persona.

There was even an email he received from someone he used to know and hadn't heard or seen since high school.

Given the league has grouped Paul and 6 other MLS list officials together means there is the off-chance Paul could be appointed to the Whitecaps' first game at BC Place in early October, even as Fourth Official.

Will that happen? Who knows. Perhaps next time the words out of those same local players' mouths will not be one of daze and confusion but instead be,

"Hey, it's Paul Ward!" ■

Annual General Meeting

Saturday, May 28, 2011

HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTRE

corner East Hastings/Lillooet Street

in conjunction with

Whitecaps vs New York Red Bull game

Members have a unique opportunity to mix business with pleasure.

The **42nd Annual General Meeting** of the BC Soccer Referees Association will be held on **Saturday May 28th** at the **Hasting Community Center**, corner of East Hastings Street and Lillooet Street in Vancouver.

The association has arranged for a limited number of group seats so that those attending the meeting can purchase a ticket at a **substantial discount** for the **Vancouver Whitecaps – NY Red Bull** MLS match at Empire Field in the afternoon of the same day, only two blocks away from the meeting site.

The match will feature NY Red Bull designated player **Thierry Henry** who have also recently acquired **Dwayne de Rosario** from Toronto FC.

Because the meeting will start in the morning, those attending can park their cars for free on the non-residential side-

streets that surround the meeting venue (details will be provided later).

A light lunch will be provided following the meeting. Those staying for the match will be welcomed to join together to a local establishment for a coffee, tea, pop or other beverage only a short walk away before heading to Empire for the match.

The meeting is being held to handle the business of the association, amend the Constitution and By-Laws and elect officers for the upcoming year.

The positions of **President, Vice-President, Treasurer/Registrar** and **two Area-appointed Director** positions will be up for grabs.

The position of President became open after current President **Elvio Chies** indicated he intention to step down with one year left in his term.

VASRA appointed-Director **Ron Schaeffer** is heading the Nominating

Committee and can be reached at **ron_schaeffer@hotmail.com**.

Tickets are limited

Tickets will require a nominal deposit and be available for pickup only at the Annual General Meeting. Full payment required at the meeting. Priority will be given to those living outside the mainland due to the travel distance they incur.

The discount will only be made available to members. Family and friends of members may be able to purchase tickets but only if tickets remain after members have accommodated.

Those wishing tickets for the match should contact either:

Elvio Chies (604-266-0741
or **Lvo@direct.ca)**

or

Robin Woods

(email only: **rlwoods@telus.net**)

to register your name. ■

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES BUT DON'T LOOK BACK

With the announcement that our Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 28th it's time to start the process of saying "Good bye." Although I have a year left in my current term, I have now been your President for nine years, longer than anyone before me and longer than even I had expected.

While I expect there will be somebody to take over the reins, I respect the need in any democratic society to leave that announcement for the Annual General Meeting.

This doesn't mean that I'm turning my back on the Association. Far from it! I will, for one year, be the BCSRA's Immediate Past President, to aid with the continuity of the new executive. I will still offer my services to the executive to per-

form tasks, as all members should, in whatever capacity and to the best their ability, for without the help of members there is no Referees Association. The Immediate Past President position also allows one to act as a quasi-ambassador, although aren't we all ambassadors?

But the time has come to get new blood into the veins of the BCSRA. In closing I would like to thank everyone who joins and/or renews. You have kept the dream alive of our founding and Life Members of a society of referees, for referees and created by referees. I would also ask that everyone start to turn their attention to the new executive. Give them your support. Show them that you care, about being a referee and about supporting fellow officials. **Onward and upward!**

NEW EXECUTIVE FOR FRASER VALLEY

The new executive elected at the March 7th Annual General Meeting of the Fraser Valley Area branch (FVSRA) of the BCSRA are as follows (terms of those elected show in parenthesis):

PRESIDENT: **Dave Miller**

(elected by acclamation)

VICE-PRESIDENT: **Martin Reid**

SECRETARY: **Paul Toop**

(elected by acclamation)

TREASURER: **Mike Perko**

DIRECTORS:

Hans Clodius

(elected by acclamation)

Graham Hill

(elected by acclamation)

Phil Fasciglione

Congratulations to all officers on their new post!

HOW MUCH DO MLS REFEREES MAKE?

By Bobbye Alley, eHow Contributor
updated: January 8, 2011

Officials who work Major League Soccer games are paid based on experience. Referee experience is based on the number of regular-season and playoff games worked, and is set in an MLS scale that is comprised of four levels. There are three additional pay brackets for officials in each game based on duty – referee, assistant referees and fourth official.

LEVEL 4 OFFICIALS

Level 4 officials are the most experienced officials on the field and have 76 or more games under their belts at the start of the MLS season; all FIFA officials have Level 4 status. According to the 2009 MLS Referee Manual, Level 4 referees earn \$875 per game, assistant referees earn \$495 and fourth officials earn \$285.

LEVELS 1-3

Level 3 officials have less experience, from 41 to 75 games, and earn less per game. Level 3 referees earn \$775 per game, assistant referees make \$360 and fourth officials make \$260, according to the MLS Referee Manual. Level 2 referees – 21 to 40 games – make \$670 per outing, assistant referees make \$310 and fourth officials earn \$230. Level 1 officials have 20 games or fewer experience; referees earn \$565 per game, assistant referees earn \$255 and fourth officials earn \$205.

PLAYOFFS

The per-game salary for officials during the playoffs and for the All-Star Game is higher than during the regular season. Referees earn \$1,000 per game in the first two rounds of the playoffs, assistant referees get \$520 and fourth officials earn \$350. In the second round of the playoffs and for the All-Star Game, referees earn \$1,200 per game, while assistant referees earn \$525 and fourth officials earn \$450. During the MLS Cup, referees earn \$1,500, assistant referees earn \$750 and fourth officials get \$600.

BONUSES

Officials who have worked at least five regular-season games before the All-Star Game are eligible to receive bonus pay, according to the MLS Referee Manual. The bonuses are determined from each official's U.S. Soccer and Canadian Soccer Association assessment scores.

The top five referees in the league get \$1,500 each, and the top five assistant referees get \$1,000. Another bonus is awarded under the same structure for those who work five games between the All-Star Game and the end of the season.

eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/info_7745898_much-do-mls-referees-make.html#ixzz1G901yh00

SB NATION MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

Don Garber: MLS wants Referees to better 'Reward Attacking Soccer'

By Jeremiah Oshan, March 11, 2011

MLS has long been a league with a reputation for physical play. Some would even call it a league that rewards thugs.

Commissioner **Don Garber** has heard the complaints, and is at least saying all the right things about addressing them.

On Friday during a conference call with reporters, Garber announced the technical and competition committees' formal instructions to referees to "reward attacking soccer."

To do this, Garber is not suggesting that the league is making formal rule changes, but rather instructing its referees to basically adhere more closely to the rules as written.

Here are some of the key areas where referees will be instructed to change the way they call games:

The off-side rule:

Referees will now be instructed to only call off-side if a player is clearly off and involved in the play.

Protecting players:

More attention will be paid to studs-up tackles, physical contact with players on the ball and challenges in general.

Repeated victims/aggressors:

Fouls that might otherwise not be caution worthy on their own, will now be considered in a greater context. Referees are being asked to pay attention to players being targeted for fouls, as well as players who repeatedly commit fouls.

Free kicks

Referees will be more diligent about marking the spot of a free kick and enforcing the distance that defending players can stand. He mentioned the possibility of using aerosol cans the way they do in Mexico. Garber also said the league wants to cut down on the pulling and tugging that goes on in the penalty area during free kicks and that referees are going to be more likely to award penalties on these kinds of transgressions.

How effective any of this will be will obviously have a lot to do with how serious MLS is in enforcing it. Will the league be willing to live with a spate of penalties and cards that are sure to be issued early in the season? The league has promised similar kinds of efforts in the past, but there's been little proof that anything changed.

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE: Former member okay

Many members may recall **Quentin O'Mahoney** who married a Japanese lady and is now living in the far East.

He wishes everyone to know that he is doing fine a currently in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where he was when the earthquake hit Japan in early March. Currently, Quentin shuttles between Malaysia and

Montreal where he finished some post-graduate studies.

His wife has no friends in that area anymore but Quentin's father-in-law did run a factory in Sendai, the epicenter of the earthquake.

The factory, which employed eighty people, was demolished. A search party has since turned up nothing. ■

MLS needs to step in and stop preseason ugliness

By Steven Sandor- 03/09/2011

<http://the11.ca/2011/03/09/mls-needs-to-step-in-and-stop-preseason-ugliness/>

About Steven Sandor – I've covered the Toronto FC beat for four years, worked for the Edmonton Aviators of the USL for a season, covered the Edmonton Drillers of the NPSL and started covering Canadian World Cup qualifiers in 1996. I've covered the CONCACAF Champions League and the U-20 World Cup. I'm passionate about soccer in North America.

Once again, MLS teams have lost their composure in a preseason game.

On Tuesday night, a preseason game between **Sporting Kansas City** and **Real Salt Lake** was abandoned in the second half because of what's being described as an ugly brawl.

Like most MLS preseason games, there wasn't video available of the game, so we have to go on eyewitness reports and, ahem, the Tweets of the players involved. The score was tied 2-2 at the time; there are reports that Real Salt Lake star **Javier Morales** was kicked in the head.

At one point, things were so out of control that players were slugging their own teammates by accident.

"Bench clearing brawl to end the game!!!" RSL defender **Robbie Russell** posted on Twitter. "Got clocked in the scrum! By my own player:). DAMN U (Jamison) OLAVE!!!"

"Good ol' fashion(ed) brawl," posted RSL defender **Rauwshan McKenzie**. "It was crazy."

Only SKC striker **Kei Kamara** seemed oblivious to the affair. "Was a physical game, score ended 2-2, had another goal, just getting myself ready for the season. I am very EXCITE(D)!!!"

Reports from the game suggest that things got out of hand after SKC defender **Roger Espinoza** unleashed a rash challenge on **Morales**, the second time the two had clashed in the game. **Will Johnson**, the Canadian RSL midfielder, rushed to the aid of his teammate and all hell broke loose.

Unfortunately, poor conduct in preseason play is commonplace with MLS teams. Because teams organize their own matches - and the games aren't sanctioned by the league in any way - they have become a no-man's-land of foul play

without fear of long-term retribution.

In 2010, MLS headquarters in New York was concerned about the number of straight red cards being issued in preseason games. One violent match between FC Dallas and the Philadelphia Union saw three Philly players sent off.

Toronto FC was averaging about a sending-off a game in the preseason, including a vicious tackle from behind on then-New York Red Bull **Juan Pablo Angel** by **Julian de Guzman**.

"Certainly we do not want MLS to be characterized by frequent violent conduct or serious foul play," said **Nelson Rodriguez**, the league's executive vice-president of competition, technical and game operations, last year when asked about the rash of red cards. "We are examining whether the cards being issued this pre-season are an anomaly or a pattern that we need to address."

The RSL-SKC brawl should have the league's discipline domo reopening his files.

Because the teams play so many of the preseason games in closed-door sessions, away from cameras, it's hard for fans or the league to judge who did what to whom. Because the games aren't sanctioned by MLS, there's no worry that a vicious incident in the preseason will earn a player a suspension that begins on day one of the regular season.

In fact, in the initial game reports on both the RSL and SKC websites, there was no mention of the brawl, but RSL did refer to it as a "chippy" affair in the headline.

To RSL's credit, the brawl was discussed on the team's official Twitter feed as more details became available - and unavoidable as so many RSL players were posting about it. RSL's public-

relations staff weren't on site, so they were working off the same drips and drabs of information the rest of us were.

Again, we are shown the need to have better policing of the games being played behind closed doors, or far away in Arizona. Sooner or later, a team is going to lose a star player thanks to reckless preseason play. And, in a league with a stringent salary cap, losing anyone in preseason is cruel, indeed.

If a player willfully tries to injure an opponent in preseason, there has to be a price to pay. MLS needs to show leadership, here. A game cannot be abandoned because of a brawl, and have no consequences.

Why did the referee lose control of the game? Why did players rush onto the field? So many questions. But MLS cannot stand pat. ■

Canadian appointed to Women's World Cup 2011

FIFA referee **Carol Anne Chenard** of Ottawa has been appointed to this year's Women's World Cup. The event is being held in Germany from June 26 to July 17. The opening match will see Canada play Germany in Berlin June 26

This will be Carol Anne Chenard's second trip to Germany in as many years. She took part in last year's U-20 World Cup where she was chosen to officiate the championship final.

The 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup will be hosted by Canada, while the U-20s set the stage a year earlier.

SOCCER TALK WITH PAUL GARDNER

Will refs respond to Garber's sensible request

By Paul Gardner

March 14th, 2011

MLS Commissioner **Don Garber** has recently had some pretty sensible things to say about the state of soccer within his league. He wants to encourage attacking play and he believes that some changes in the attitudes and actions of referees will help bring that about.

I wish him well. Of course referees should be harsher on studs-up tackles, of course they should not be so quick to make offside calls – and ditto with holding and shirt-tugging and persistent fouling. Garber is 100 percent correct in noticing that defending players get away with far too much. Referees do, definitely, need to adopt a sterner approach.

I fear that Garber's attention to refereeing will be taken by many as a sign that MLS referees are not doing a good job, that they are sub-standard.

That is not the case. As it happens, there is not a league anywhere in the world -- and that takes in England's EPL, the Italian Serie A, Spain's La Liga, and all of South American soccer -- where people are satisfied with the refereeing. How can they be, when everyone involved is a devotee of this or that club -- leading to the inevitable bias that makes objective judgment impossible.

MLS referees are neither the best nor the worst in the world. I think that, on the whole, they do a good job. But the comparison I've just made with the rest of the world, reveals a problem. I'm judging MLS referees by the standards that are adhered to globally -- those either set by, or permitted by, FIFA.

The problems that Garber, rightly, wants to address start there. The global standards are not strict enough. They vary, of course.

They are at their weakest, their most permissive, in England. They are probably at their strictest in South America.

But in all instances, they are too lenient, and the areas singled out by Garber should, indeed, be tightened up.

Will it be possible for MLS referees, then, to referee in a way that will be considerably more punitive than anywhere else in the world?

I have my doubts.

Referees see plenty of foreign games these days, they are bound to be influenced by what they see. It's decidedly unfortunate that the most frequently seen games are from the EPL, where the refereeing can often seem to be actively encouraging violent play.

Just this Saturday we had Manchester United's **Paul Scholes** committing a foul eminently worth a second yellow card – but referee **Chris Foy** merely administered a short talking-to. An approach that simply makes a mockery of the rules.

If there's one thing that MLS referees could be told not to do, it is to administer these little disciplinary chats, complete with the exaggerated arm gestures intended to make a feeble referee look tough.

If it's a foul, call it. If it's a yellow card, give it. The same with a red. There is no need for explanations or any words at all. The players know the rules ... or they are supposed to. If they don't, that is their problem.

Tactical fouling should be high up on Garber's list. That is defined on page 115 of the rule book, and calls for an obligatory yellow card.

Those yellows are usually not given. Even less frequently seen are yellow cards, also obligatory, for objecting to a referee's decision – “dissent by word or action” as the rulebook puts it.

Diving calls present a problem. Most of them, as currently called, are flat out wrong. If all of Garber's suggestions were adopted (which, of course, they will not be) then I'd probably agree that referees should be looking for divers.

But as long as the defenders are allowed great liberty to foul without punishment, my sympathies are with the divers.

There is also, on these calls, the unmistakable suggestion, that, when they occur in the penalty area, the referee is using

them as an excuse not to call a penalty kick.

Garber does not have direct control over the referees. They are assigned by the U.S. Soccer Federation, so Garber cannot simply tell them how they are to interpret the rules. That calls for close cooperation between MLS and USSF.

But Garber has at his disposal another way of encouraging attacking play, one that does not involve working with the USSF.

The most direct route to more attractive, attacking, goalscoring soccer is for MLS teams sign players who can provide it. Which, in turn, means MLS teams appointing coaches who understand and believe in that type of play.

At the moment, Garber's attitude is that the clubs can appoint any coach they like. He will not interfere.

That seems the correct way to do things, but it has led to some pretty awful appointments. Mostly because the league is full of ownership groups and general managers who simply do not understand the sport.

Dictating which coaches a club should sign, and then telling the coach which players he can sign, is clearly not a workable policy.

But the creation within MLS of an atmosphere favorable to attacking soccer and hostile to defensive play, the encouragement to search out attacking players, the provision of help in knowing where to look for them, even the creation of a centralized scouting system – these things are well within the power of Garber and his single-entity league.

It remains something of a mystery to me how easily MLS coaches find average defenders and midfielders to sign.

But what difficulties they have finding good attacking players! ■