

# FLAG & WHISTLE

Official Newsletter of the BC Soccer Referees Association – *Holiday Issue*



## The Darren Clark Experience

*Major League Ref* – “Kamloops This Week” newspaper by **Marty Hastings**

*This article has been edited for Flag & Whistle*

**David Beckham** is one of the best soccer players in the world. To **Darren Clark**, a 37-year-old assistant referee from Kamloops, the English footballing superstar was just No. 23 in white at the MLS Cup on Saturday, December 1, 2012.

“If somebody asks you, ‘How was that game from a fan’s perspective?’ and you can answer that question, you probably haven’t been concentrating,” said Clark, who patrolled the sidelines when the Los Angeles Galaxy downed the Houston Dynamo 3-1 at the Home Depot Centre in Carson, Calif.

The entire on-field officiating group at the championship final was Canadian – a Major League Soccer first. **Daniel Belleau** of Quebec was the game’s other assistant referee, while **Silviu Petrescu** of Ontario was the match referee.

“There’s that extra pressure,” said Clark, who found out minutes before the game it would be televised in 157 countries.

“They’re looking at us and saying, OK, we’ve decided to give you this game, now it’s up to you guys to perform.”

“We’re performing for ourselves, but also for the possibility of Canadians being appointed to a game like that in the future.”

Most of the final’s critical decisions – including a pair of disallowed **Robbie Keane** goals and the two penalty kicks awarded – were not made by Clark. “They were made at the other end,” he said.

“It turned out to be a very clean game for our team. The new guy in charge of our referee organization called PRO – Professional Referee Organization – is **Peter Walton**. He came to the room afterward and said, “That was an outstanding performance from all of you.”

Clark started refereeing in Kamloops when he was in Junior High School. He got serious about officiating in 1999, a year before he moved to Victoria for university.

It was on Vancouver Island where he began moving up the refereeing ranks, earning praise for his work on the sidelines



*Darren Clark of Kamloops watches closely as David Beckham bursts up the sideline during an exhibition match between the Los Angeles Galaxy and Vancouver Whitecaps at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton in 2008.*

*Walter Tychnowicz photo*

in a variety of different leagues and divisions. In 2006, Clark decided to take the assistant-refereeing path, feeling he was better suited to be a linesman (AR) than a referee.

The Canadian Soccer Association nominated Clark to the FIFA list of international officials in 2007 and, by 2008, he was a FIFA-certified Assistant Referee.

Clark said the Cup final – Beckham’s last MLS match – likely tops the list of high-profile games he has officiated. In 2010, Clark was on the pitch for a friendly between Mexico and New Zealand.

The international was played in front of

90,500 fans at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. A year later, he worked a game between Costa Rica, the home side, and Spain.

“There was basically the entire Spain team on the field that had won the World Cup in 2010,” said Clark, a teacher at Logan Lake secondary.

Clark, who started working MLS games in 2008, did 13 matches last season, including two playoff games and seven tilts featuring the **Vancouver Whitecaps**. An assistant referee of his calibre in MLS is paid \$720 per game. Travel and accommodation costs are also taken care of and a per diem is provided.

Clark’s Logan Lake students are aware of his activities away from school and occasionally find photos of their teacher online.

The Kamloops High School graduate posed for a picture at the Cup final alongside movie star Gerard Butler and Galaxy captain Landon Donovan, among others. Clark might see that one pop up in class in the near future.

“The ultimate goal is working a World Cup final or a FIFA tournament, but you need a lot of luck and a lot of people advocating for you,” Clark said.

Working high-profile matches is good for the resumé, no doubt, but that alone is not enough to earn the right to referee the world’s most prestigious tournaments.

“You also have to have a game that presents you with difficult decisions to get correct,” said Clark, president of the Kamloops Soccer Referees’ Association during the 2006-2007 campaign.

“You could have a game with no mistakes but, if there wasn’t a lot in it for you in terms of really, really difficult decisions, it’s hard to separate yourself from the rest.”

Perhaps Clark is just a few controversial calls away from reaching his goal.

Stay tuned.

**Read P-2: Canadian Referees honoured**

# President's Message

Members and referees; (and I hope that this F&W reaches many more referees than just our members) I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year, and a successful year in football for 2013. Make sure you set yourself a challenging resolution for the year: In December I scraped through the provincial level fitness test. I really hadn't thought I would make it at the age of 52, but with some serious training and a set of drills to improve my sprinting I did it.

I think I may be the oldest provincial referee in 2013! Now for next year – I think that I will also need to lose some weight if I want to succeed and get another year as a provincial.

As an executive, we have set ourselves another resolution – to increase the reach of the BCSRA. We lost Kamloops Area last year which was a great loss to us; and we realised that we need to do more for referees everywhere. We cannot grow without your help – we need you to let us know what you value from BCSRA, what you would like from BCSRA and we need

you to demonstrate to other referees the value of belonging to an organisation of your peers.

Every week I write a “*thought for the week*” on the BC Soccer Referees facebook page – I would love to see all of you adding your own comments and thoughts to that page.

We are also actively lobbying BC Soccer in many areas to encourage better support for referees and we are taking our famous education sessions out to any club or league that wants to better educate it's referees.

So, I wish you a prosperous 2013. A year where you develop further as a referee (even at 52!) and a year where you find friendship in other referees around the province.

**Nick Hawley**  
*President*



*Nick Hawley*

## New FIFA List

The new FIFA list is out!. The BC-based refs are as follows; **Michelle Pye** is one of two female refs for Canada, **Paul Ward** is one of three male refs and **Darren Clark** of Kamloops is one of the four male assistants.

The link to the FIFA website is [www.FIFA.com/associations/associations=can/footballofficials/referees/peoplekind=wor.html](http://www.FIFA.com/associations/associations=can/footballofficials/referees/peoplekind=wor.html)

## Fraser Valley Meeting Dates

The Executive of the Fraser Valley Area branch (FVSRA) has finalized monthly meeting dates for the first half of 2013.

They will be held on the first Wednesday of each month:

**January 9, February 6, March 6, April 3, and May 1st.**

All meetings will be take place on the Ground Floor Meeting Room of the Langley Legion. Start time is always 7:30 pm.

Address:  
20570 - 56 Avenue  
Langley.

## Canadian Referees honoured

The 2012 Major League Soccer (MLS) season has seen Canadian officials recognized with two major honours: Canadian FIFA Referee **Silviu Petrescu** was honoured by the League as the **2012 Referee-Of-The-Year**.

On the heels of this announcement, the MLS Cup final was officiated for the first time by an all-Canadian crew: Silviu as the center referee with Canadian FIFA Assistants **Darren Clarke** of Kamloops and **Daniel Belleau** of Quebec (see articles in this issue). The 2012 Referee-Of-The Year award is voted on by players, coaches, and members of the media.

Silviu is the first Canadian to be bestowed this honour. The MLS Cup final, played on December 1, 2012 between the Houston Dynamo and Los Angeles Galaxy, ended in a 3-1 win for Los Angeles and was the last MLS game for Galaxy midfielder **David Beckham**.

Congratulations to our fellow Canadian officiating colleagues!

## New Appointees to BC Soccer Board

(adapted from [www.bcsoccer.net](http://www.bcsoccer.net) article of Nov 1, 2012)

Fraser Valley Area Association (FVSRA) Life Member **Rob Brown** is one of two appointees to the BC Soccer Board of Directors. Rob, also a Life Member of BC Soccer, joins **Harjit Chima** as new members on the provincial governing body's board.

The appointments come after the death of 1st Vice-President **Les Sinnott** and Director **Peter Vrankjovic**, the latter who resigned in October 2012.

The positions are to fulfill the remainder of these former directors terms to June 2013, after which the positions are

up for election.

“As indicated in the article, *Previously a BC Soccer Board of Director, Rob rejoins the Board with a wealth of soccer experience.*”

Having participated in soccer as a player, coach, referee, board executive (including President of the Fraser Valley Soccer League).

Rob is also a Life Member of BC Soccer. In rejoining the Board Rob hopes to apply his knowledge and experience to help in the development of the sport and BC Soccer Association.”

## Yellow and Red, its Introduction

The initiative of **Yellow** and **Red** cards for player infractions started in 1966 but was only introduced by FIFA more than three years later at the 1970 World Cup in Mexico.

During the opening match between Mexico vs USSR, german referee **Kurt Tschenschner** made use of the first ever

**Yellow** card when he booked **Evgeni Lovchev**, USSR. 51 more yellow cards were handed out at World Cup matches before the first **Red** was shown.

This dubious honor fell to **Carlos Caszely** of Chile at their opening match against West Germany during the 1974 World Cup in West Germany.

# Imagine, a Soccer Referee who's well-liked

Waterloo's **Silviu Petrescu** is not only first Canadian to win MLS officiating award but he'll rule over league's championship as well

*ryoung@therecord.com*

Silviu Petrescu is the first Canadian to win Major League Soccer's referee of the year award and he'll become the first to officiate the league's championship game on Saturday. The 44-year-old Waterloo resident received a phone call on Nov. 20 informing him that he'd been voted the league's best official by MLS players, clubs, and media for the 2012 season.

A half hour later and his phone was ringing again, this time to offer him a spot refereeing the 16th MLS Cup between the Houston Dynamo and Los Angeles Galaxy at The Home Depot Center in Carson, California.

"I couldn't believe it, I was happier than the first call," Petrescu says. "I called my wife and was like 'I have more big news after another.' After so many years, all the travelling, weekends away from family, this is a great achievement as sort of a payback."

"I knew I had a great season but I didn't expect it to be this good."

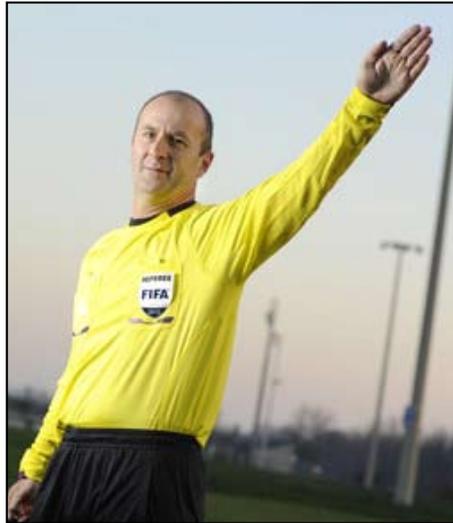
Petrescu earned more than 36 per cent of the players' vote, more than 34 per cent of club votes, and exactly half of the media vote en route to winning the award over American runner-up Baldomero Toledo. He refereed 20 regular season MLS matches this year and has been an official in the league since Toronto FC joined the MLS as its first Canadian team in 2007.

"I'm very happy to be the first Canadian

to win the award because there are so many good referees," Petrescu says. "But with hard work I was able to achieve it."

The Romanian-born Canuck also credits a strong support system at home for contributing to his on-field success.

"I've been away from home this year for almost four months. Three days here,



*Silviu Petrescu*

five days there," says Petrescu, father of two teenage girls. "I could have never done it without my wife, Antonela. She is the best."

It has been a year of firsts for the life-long referee, whose resume includes officiating at international matches, including the under-20 World Cup, CONCACAF Champions League, World Cup qualifiers and the Pan-American Games.

He officiated the first MLS postseason game involving a Canadian team when the Vancouver Whitecaps FC fell to the Galaxy 2-1 on Nov. 1 in the Western Conference knockout round at the same venue that hosts Saturday's final.

The game wasn't without controversy as Petrescu awarded a penalty kick to Los Angeles star player **Landon Donovan** in the 73rd minute with the game tied 1-1. Donovan converted the attempt to score the winning goal for the Galaxy.

"To call a penalty you have to be in the right position at the right angle at the right moment," Petrescu explains. "I was in the right position with the right view to see it and to me it was a clear penalty, 100 per cent."

"Its part of the game, it could have gone the other way and Vancouver could have had a penalty, but its all part of the game."

Petrescu believes his ability to make split-second decisions is a big part of why he'll be refereeing when the Galaxy (16-12-6) attempt to defend their league title against the Dynamo (14-9-11) this weekend.

He has worked an MLS Cup before, as the fourth official when the Colorado Rapids defeated FC Dallas at BMO Field in Toronto two years ago, but Saturday will be the first time he or any other Canadian will be the lead official on the pitch come game time.

With his international refereeing eligibility coming to an end with his 45th birthday next year, Petrescu would like to continue to officiate MLS matches for the next couple of years.

"I like refereeing, this is my hobby," says Petrescu, who is also a co-owner of United Taxi and spends up to 40 hours behind the wheel of a cab each week.

"If they don't ask me to return it's not the end of the world, I'm still going to be supporting the league and supporting the Canadian referees. I have a lot of experience and can help the younger referees."

Thanks to the MLS players, clubs, and media, he also has a new addition to his trophy case.

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## VASRA ELECTIONS

Members affiliated with the Vancouver Area branch (VASRA) should be aware that the following positions are up for election at the upcoming **AGM on Monday, January 28th, 2013.**

**President, Secretary, 2nd VP, and Director.** All are two year terms.

At press time, a nominating committee had not been announced. The meeting will be held at the **Bonsor Community Center** (South Burnaby Metro Club Room), located at the corner of Bonsor Ave and Central Boulevard in Metrotown.

Meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

# She-Referees in Victoria

by Laurie Miller, BCSRA VP

**Ed note:** A special symposium was held in conjunction with the CIS Women's Championships in Victoria this past November.

BCSRA Vice-President **Laurie Miller** was fortunate to attend this symposium. Here she gives us a synopsis of the proceedings.

The CIS (Canadian Interuniversity Sport) Soccer finals were held November 9 to 11 at the University of Victoria.

Select women referees from across the province and country were invited to officiate. During the competition UVic hosted a number of "SheKicks" events, aimed to help increase the involvement of women in all aspects of soccer: playing, coaching and officiating. The SheReferees component was led by our three Canadian FIFA referees: **Marie-Josée Charbonneau**, **Carol Anne Chenard** and **Michelle Pye**.

The session started with Marie-Josée describing how in her first year as a FIFA Assistant Referee she participated in the CONCACAF Women's Olympic qualifiers (Vancouver), Algarve Cup 2012 (Portugal), and 2012 Olympics (London).

Marie-Josée attributes her incredible year of officiating as being in the right place and the right time – but only two first-year FIFA referees were selected from a group of 37 referees – so I think she earned her spot!

Carol Anne Chenard has been a FIFA referee since 2006. Her Olympic highlight was being assigned to the England versus Brazil game at Wembley Stadium.

On every level this was the game to be assigned to: the host country versus the powerful team from Brazil at the most prestigious soccer venue in the world.

The game at Wembley set a British

record for attendance at a women's soccer match – the second only women's match to have ever been played in that facility! Any high-stakes match, from a referee's perspective, is a success when it ends without controversy.

Carol Anne and Marie-Josée, her assistant referee for the match, can be proud to have played a part in the 2012 Olympics and at Wembley.

The three Canadian FIFA referees gave generously of their time and attention to the women referees in the room. They then moved on to the field to give some tips on the practical aspects of refereeing. It was an excellent day for the women referees who attended.

Carol Anne offered sage advice: treat every game as "important;" by doing that you will be ready when you get the big assignments!



CIS Women's soccer final November 8-11, Victoria.  
**Front row L-R:** Roy Branco, Holly Teshune, MK Battle, Suzanne Morisset, Michelle Pye, Tiberio de Frias. **Back row:** Jean Thompson, Candace Brown, Alexis Vaughen, Brea Moore, Marie-Soleil Beaudoin, Martin Reid



**Championship match officials**  
Amanda Velutini, AR-2; Selenna C... 4th;  
Carol Anne Chenard, Referee;  
Marie-Josée Charbonneau, AR-1



Shereferees at Classroom session



**Officials for 3rd place match**  
MK Battle, AR-2; Marie-Soleil Beaudoin, 4th;  
Michelle Pye, Referee; Suzanne Morisset, AR-1.

all photos: Tiberio de Frias

# Officials for CCAA Men's Nationals

The CCAA Men's National Soccer Championship was held November 7-10, 2012 at Cunnings Field in Coquitlam, B.C. Douglas College hosted the tournament.

All preliminary matches took place under the watchful eyes of the four national referees: **Andy Foster**, **Rubin Smilev**, both BC; **J.P. Jalbert**, Quebec; and **Peter Manastyrsky**, Manitoba. The host province BCSA supplied the other 10 officials.

The Refereeing crews for Saturday, November 10 matches:

**Championship game:** Humber College vs VIU Mariners

**J.P. Jalbert**, Referee;

**A. Foster**, AR-1; **P. Manastyrsky**, AR-2; **S. Lebrechthausen**, 4th

**3rd place game:** Seneca College vs Xavier Garneau

**R. Smilev**, Referee;

**A. Kessler**, AR-1; **E. Fryer**, AR-2; **J. Marques**, 4th.

**5th place game:** Nait Ooks vs Douglas College

**S. Tanaka-Freundt**, Referee;

**A. Gubeli**, AR-1; **I. Andrews**, AR-2; **S. Lebrechthausen**, 4th.

**7th place game:** Sait Trojans vs Holland College

**J. Marques**, Referee;

**B. Hartman**, AR-1; **J. Parr**, AR-2; **T. Davies**, 4th.



**L-R:** Thomas Davies, AR-2, Jas Parr, 4th; Frank Major, National Assessor; Rubin Smilev, R; Juan Marques, AR-1  
photo: Dieter Freundt



**L-R:** Stephen Lebrechthausen, AR-2; Aaron Gubeli, 4th; JP Jalbert, R; Stefan Tanaka-Freundt, AR-1.  
photo: Dieter Freundt



**L-R:** Iain Andrews, AR-2; Evan Fryer, 4th; Peter Manastyrsky, R; Jas Parr, AR-1.  
photo: Dieter Freundt



**L-R:** Aaron Kessler, AR-2; Brett Hartman, 4th; Andy Foster, R; Iain Andrews, AR-1  
photo: Dieter Freundt

## CIS Western Championship

**Officials L-R:** Rachel Jacobs, AR-2; Michelle Pye, R; Thomas Davies, 4th; Troy Henke, AR-1.  
photo: Dieter Freundt



## Tom Speaks

The rain was relentless. It came on slowly and the pace and quantity of sky-sent water increased, as the minutes ticked away. It had been a long time coming this year. And now that it was here, I wasn't surprised. It was a common occurrence in my home town; often referred to as Rainy Haney.

The pleasantly lengthy summer had run a course, that some say had almost made them forget what rain felt like. The walks up to the park, even well into October, were frequently emphasized by the stark lack of water. The borders of the pitch – a dull brown that seemed to show a disregard for the beauty of the game.

The only thing that kept the grass green on the field after the long hot summer was its synthetic colour. Otherwise the surroundings lacked the respect for the game that mimicked the players' attitudes.

More often than not the only colour at the game, aside from the multihued spectrum of jerseys, was the language spouted off towards the officials. So much so that it became a staple of the exercise of the 90 minutes. Most of my colleagues, both well known and the ones I only know through our mutual employment in the world's most played game, seemed to have accepted the outcome. That the constant bickering, complaining, and foul mouthed attacks are just a given of the game.

Call me a renegade but no matter how many times someone calls into question my intelligence or ethics and begins to berate me at a volume and veracity that is not suitable for addressing their dog, simply because I stopped play for a very well deserved free kick. I do not accept it. I frequently find myself admonishing

players more for their verbal fouls on me rather than the physical ones they inflict on their opponents.

However many of my colleagues refuse to get caught up in the debate. "Part of the game. Gotta treat it as water off a duck's back," they claim.

Oh yes, it rained and rained. The repetitive patter of pathological players who know that if permitted their slurs would stain the game. The referees ran and ran. Game after game always the same, slurs raining down. Just like the weather produced deluge, a hail of hatred on the game. The fields soaked in sad acceptance that this was our game.

"Why do you do it?" A common lament of the die-hards.

So with the first wisps of my own breath becoming visible as the long hot summer now behind me. I ran a slow cool down. Truth be told, my post game sessions are often as much a practice to prevent physical cramping and spasms as they are to ward off the repetition of the question above. The rain pelting down could be another reason to be sombre. But tonight's after-run was not to be the usual.

The shirtless fellow approached in contradiction to the weather. He stuck his hand out in respect and offered a sincere apology for his previous attack on my authority. He had been convinced I had it out for him, simply because I called two fouls in short order. Having made a ridiculous accusation during the match, he now recanted.

He was not the first in recent weeks. In fact this was now the third such exchange after a game in successive weeks. "Could I take credit?" I hardly think so. However, one of the main reasons I referee is my subconscious propensity to teach. I won't accept that the game needs to remain polluted with disrespect. I will continue to remind players that the game can be played with intensity, passion and above all respect.

So as the long hot summer gives way to the inevitable fall and the rain streamed down, I ran on; confident that some of the ugliness of the game was washed away and well behind me.

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## U-15/16 Players charged over Linesman's Death

At exactly 5:30 pm Monday, December 4, forty-one-year old **Richard Nieuwenhuizen** of The Netherlands died in the Almere hospital. This was not only a tragic but utterly senseless death.

The son of Mr Nieuwenhuizen plays for the Buitenboys junior "B" youth team of Almere. The age of these players is between 15 and 16 years.

As a father and rabid soccer fan, Mr Nieuwenhuizen closely followed his son's matches, went to the practises 3three times a week, attended all games, and whenever possible volunteered as a linesman during the team's home games.

A day before his untimely death, the Buitenboys hosted the Nieuw-Sloten squad from Amsterdam, and as usual Mr. Nieuwenhuizen officiated this match as a volunteer linesman.

Shortly after the final whistle players from Nieuw-Sloten run over, confronted, mobbed and started physically assaulting him. He could momentarily run away but players quickly caught up, threw him to the ground and allegedly hit and kicked repeatedly to his body and head. The goalkeeper of Buitenboys, **Niels van Steen**, tried to help but was also beaten up.

After the attack Mr. Nieuwenhuizen went home by himself. Not realizing the severity of the injuries, he later returned to his club when he suddenly lost consciousness and collapsed.

An ambulance immediately took him to the Almere hospital where he died at 5:30 pm Monday afternoon. Though no official

statement was forthcoming, Dutch tv station RTL said that he had brain damage.

Following the incident, police immediately arrested two 15-year-olds and one 16-old player of the Nieuw Sloten team. The Dutch Football Association, KNVB, acted immediately and suspended all three players for life.

However, as of Friday, December 21 the number of arrests had increased to eight people – seven teenagers and a 50-year-old man. The youths are being held in an undisclosed youth detention centre. All these people face manslaughter, assault, and public violence charges.

It was not the first serious incident of this particular Nieuw Sloten "B"-team. Earlier in October, some members apparently had told the coach of FC Almere "...if you weren't over 50 years we would beat you to death." Right away the coach took refuge in the clubhouse. His team refused to play the return match.

This action is in stark contrast to the decision club officials of the Buitenboys and Nieuw Sloten teams made on Thursday, December 20. The two bosses agreed on a return match.

Buitenboys club director Marcel Oost told Almere radio station Omroep Flevoland "we will play against each other again." National broadcaster NOS said that the encounter between the two clubs would happen soon. No specific date was given.



*Richard Nieuwenhuizen*

# VASRA support Covenant House

Covenant House in Vancouver held a fund raiser *“Sleep with the Homeless”* last month. Well known sports figure and former soccer star **Bob Lenarduzzi**, President of Vancouver Whitecaps FC took part in this overnight venture.

The Vancouver Area Soccer Referees Association (VASRA) put its support behind Bob and donated \$200.00 to benefit Covenant House. Bob had attended numerous meetings of the VASRA as a guest speaker and also had assisted the association on other projects.

Covenant House Vancouver is a crisis center that takes in and helps local homeless youth that have nowhere else to turn. It has a 75% success rate of getting these youth back on their feet and into the community. The entire event was captured by the website ProstAmerika.com.

In an article posted November 16, 2012, Bob made specific reference to referees and the VASRA donation:

Such was Lenarduzzi's commitment to the cause, that he was even prepared to make peace with the refereeing community, in praising their contribution to the event:

“I’m very indebted. Throughout my years, my playing days and my coaching days, it’s always been a love/hate relationship with the officials. I’ve always respected what they do. Sometimes I’ve disagreed with the calls they make.

Even now, I sit and I’m sometimes critical of the officiating but the game needs officials obviously and we have a great group here in Vancouver so I’m really thankful to VASRA for providing this \$200 donation. It’s more than I ever would have expected so thank you very much VASRA.”

The entire article also includes pictures from ProstAmerika Vancouver correspondent and VASRA 2nd VP **Mynor Campos**.

It can be read at [www.prostamerika.com/2012/11/16/74476/74476](http://www.prostamerika.com/2012/11/16/74476/74476)



These three young referees get ready for a local U-14 match, on a cold November morning. L-R: **Brendan Jarvis, AR**; **Cassandra Wainwright Referee, Emma Fewings, AR**. photos: Dieter Freundt



**Kassi Kirlik** shows great hand signals

## Soccer “Shorts”

The word is derived from an abbreviation of association, as in Association Football. In 1890 it was spelt variously as socca and socker. It is said that upper class sportsman had a fad of adding “er” to everything. Rugby became rugger and socca became soccer.

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A medical professor had just finished a lecture on the subject of mental health and started to give an oral quiz to the first years. Speaking specifically about manic depression, the senior doctor asked, “How would you diagnose a patient who walks back and forth screaming at the top of his lungs one minute, then sits in a chair weeping uncontrollable the next?”

A young man in the rear of the room raised his hand and answered, ‘A Premiership football coach!???’

## Beautiful Games: Subbuteo memories by Terry Lee

(as appeared on [guardian.uk.co](http://guardian.uk.co))

**Ed note:** The Guardian newspaper has been running a weekly series called “Beautiful Games” about soccer-related toys. In their most recent installment, the website posted a series of photos of figures from a British table soccer game known as Subbuteo.

As the Guardian website put it: “...all nostalgic with these specially-crafted Subbuteo figures made by enthusiast Terry Lee. Using body parts salvaged from crushed players and with kit details painstakingly hand-painted, each model takes up to two days to create. The resulting figures, which depict classic moments from footballing history...”

Here we present some of the more infamous moments, the ones that were talking points to us as referees.



Maradona's “Hand of God”  
WC 1986



Zidane's “Headbutt”  
WC 2006 Final



De Jong's “Karate Kick” – WC 2010 Final

# Sorry Everyone, but it's Time to Respect Referees (and do it publicly)

**Ed note:** the following article appeared on Prostamerika.com on December 19, 2012. Due to the length of the article, an edited version appears here. For the full article, go to:

[www.prostamerika.com/2012/12/19/sorry-everyone-but-its-time-to-respect-referees/75600](http://www.prostamerika.com/2012/12/19/sorry-everyone-but-its-time-to-respect-referees/75600)



*Time to respect referees*

## Let's face it everyone hates referees.

Supporters only notice them when calls go against their side. The abuse referees take for those decisions is in no way comparable to any praise they may receive for awarding the same team a glut of penalties or sending off a succession of opponents. Besides, it is not even the core mission of the referee to assist one side's bid for victory but to interpret and apply the laws of the game. All too frequently however, we have seen verbal assaults on referees, even where they applied those rules absolutely correctly.

Fans are of course entitled both to their opinion and to voice it. They may object to receiving the same amount of abuse in their own workplace but they have no overriding obligation to the facts, or the good of the game. Nor have they any obligation to sit quietly at a match.

A higher standard applies to those involved in the game in a playing, coaching or ownership capacity.

The recent appalling events in the Netherlands are an extreme example. Four teenagers have been charged with manslaughter after a vicious assault on a linesman at a youth league game. There was a

far higher profile case recently in the English Premier League.

In a very tempestuous match between Chelsea and Manchester United, referee Mark Clattenburg **sent off two Chelsea** players. In the officials' locker room after the match, Chelsea midfielder **Jon Obi Mikel**, apparently threatened Clattenburg, for which he received a three match ban. Chelsea publicly accused Clattenburg of making racist remarks against Mikel, accusations which very soon proved to be totally unfounded. Yet, despite Clattenburg's obvious innocence in the matter, he missed four weeks of refereeing while the truth eventually surfaced.

MLS PRO General Manager **Peter Walton**, in an interview with Prost Amerika, cautions against drawing the wrong conclusions from recent events:

"What has shocked here is that you got two isolated incidents that have attracted far more media attention than they really should do. What we are endangering ourselves of doing is suggesting that we have an issue where an issue doesn't exist.

You do have an undercurrent of respect and that's important. But in terms of taking those two isolated incidents, it's just a coincidence as far as I am concerned which perhaps the media have built up more than they should have done."

Nowadays, it seems universally accepted that you may surround the referee to attempt to influence his decision using whatever physical presence or words that will influence him. To do so is to attempt to dissuade him out of using his judgment on the facts alone as a criterion.

## Football stands alone in this respect.

What is acceptable on the football field is completely unacceptable elsewhere – try surrounding the judge's bench with several bodies, yelling loudly, in a court of law or even at a workplace administrative tribunal, where far more important decisions than who gets a free kick are decided.

It isn't even acceptable in other sports. Rugby Union has a clear rule that only the captain and the scrum leader may approach the referee to inquire as to the thinking behind a decision. Even in cricket where appealing for a decision is part of the system, there are regulations and penalties for over appealing.

Major League Soccer has not escaped. Last season, all three Cascadian clubs were penalised for their own incidents regarding officials. Sounders head coach **Sigi Schmid** was fined \$2,000 and banned for a game for his live on air comments about referee **Ricardo Salazar**, Vancouver's **Barry Robson** was suspended for launching the ball at a referee and missed a Cascadian derby for his troubles, but the biggest fine was levied on Portland owner **Merritt Paulson** for 'inappropriate conduct directed at the officials, and through the use of social media, during and after the Timbers' match against D.C. United on September 29, 2012'

Paulson declined the opportunity to comment on the issue of respect for referees for this article. Schmid has used his press conference to attack referees more often than not when things don't go his way, occasionally straying well over the line of arguing a decision was wrong into the area of a personal attack.

Through the Sounders FC Press Office, he also declined to comment on the issue of respect for officials.

In our opinion both Cascadian clubs abrogated an opportunity to show leadership on this issue in the off season, after a year where they were both more than keen to publicly disrespect officials during it.

At the time of the Barry Robson ban, the club admitted the ban was deserved and they actually have a decent history in this respect. Former coach **Teitur Thordarson** refused to blame a referee after the club's elimination from the USL in 2010 despite being invited to do so by a journalist. Even in the case of the Robson suspension where they found out on the eve of an afternoon kick off, club President **Bob Lenarduzzi** refused to divert blame from their own performance on the timing of the news.

We also asked the Whitecaps for a quote on the issue and they were happy to point us to remarks Lenarduzzi made about officials at his sleep out for the homeless, where he affirmed his respect for what they do; and ask us to reaffirm them:

"Throughout my years, my playing days and my coaching days, it's always been a love/hate relationship with the officials. I've always respected what they do."

Once in a while, it is acceptable for a club to put the good of the game above the short term interest of controlling and manipulating fan opinion.

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## Time to respect

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We hope that as Paulson and Schmid chose not to speak on respect for referees for this article, they can perhaps at least be consistent and maintain that policy of silence on refereeing throughout next season. Sadly, the inference is that the both wish to reserve the right to continue to scapegoat officials for poor results in 2013. Fans should be well aware of this tactic by now and need to be getting smarter when it happens.

One recent case magnified the cynicism with which clubs do it. The pillorying and vilification of **Ricardo Salazar** by Seattle

fans continued online for days following Schmid's comments. GM **Adrian Hanauer** stirred the pot further when he told **Don Ruiz** of the *Tacoma News Tribune* he had expressed unhappiness at Salazar's appointment for the Salt Lake game.

That was public. Behind the scenes however, the club was apologising for Schmid's comments.

To have gone public with that apology would have helped de-escalate the situation immensely.

Did they want the best of both worlds; an angry fan base blaming Salazar for a disappointing result, but also contemporaneously trying to lessen the likely

punishment by apologising to the referee, hoping their fans would never find out?

Cynically one can conclude that keeping their fanbase once more feeling victimized (sic) met their immediate needs better than encouraging respect for an official who, by and large, had made the right calls – at least on that day. If not, why make the apology privately?

But does it matter? There is one argument that the level of abuse referees take actually worsens the standard.

As part of our effort to improve the situation, we would endorse that and Walton's ideas in the interview about better communication within the entire soccer community. Let's see Supporters Groups invited to attend functions where referees and administrators like Mr Walton can discuss issues informally. We would also add that club officials keep in check the understandable temptation to whip up fans' unhappiness with decisions and act with some sort of restraint.

Mr Walton believes that respect cascades down from players' attitude to referees, all the way to spectators.

These individuals who try and pin blame on referees may be making themselves feel better and may be courting popularity with the fans, but they also may want to consider the knock-on effect of those televised images and how many referees on the way up the system will be affected by their actions.

We are losing people who may have turned out to be the best referees. And the blame may partly lie with those moaning the loudest about the quality of those left.



Referee gets surrounded by DC United and Whitecaps player

## Life Of A Referee Not For The Faint Of Heart

By John Leceister, Associated Press (as appeared in National Post.com)

PARIS - The players were more boys than men, not yet 17. But they were furious. Mimicking the ugly behaviour of professionals seen on TV, they swarmed around the referee, haranguing him to disallow the goal just scored against them. One player was particularly aggressive, threatening violence. So **Nicolas Perron** did what any referee should do: He sent him off.

From there, it went from bad to worse. "He started coming toward me, I could see he wanted to hit me. I started to retreat. Then, I ran," Perron recalled in an interview. "The players followed me. The player I red-carded punched me in the face. I fell to the ground. The players hit me while I was on the ground, kicking me."

What the heck? This is sport? No matter which level of football you look at – from amateur games like those Perron

oversees in the Paris suburbs, to globally televised high-octane encounters in the English Premier League – there's a body of evidence to suggest that a person has to be a little mad, a bit of a masochist, to want to officiate in a sport where systematically tearing strips out of referees, verbally and physically, has become a sport in itself.

The career of **Mark Clattenburg**, one of England's top referees, who oversaw the men's final at the London Olympics, could be derailed if there's any truth to allegations in the British press that he may have called a black Chelsea player, **John Obi Mikel**, a "monkey."

Police are investigating. So is the Football Association. Regardless of the outcome, it's hard not to see the whole affair as yet another example of how refereeing high-stakes, tinderbox match-ups

like Chelsea vs. Manchester United – the game Clattenburg worked last Sunday – can place intolerable pressures on the officials in black.

Refereeing can be a pleasure for those who are passionate about it, a vocation for the luckiest and very best. While top players may earn in a week what top referees get in a year, the likes of Clattenburg still make a tidy living. They get to rub shoulders with stars, the ego tripping of world-wide exposure, the thrill of stepping out into famous arenas, Old Trafford, the Camp Nou. All referees share a common bond, even the vast majority who don't reach the heights, who aren't even salaried: The knowledge that they are indispensable, that football wouldn't be a sport loved and played by billions if they weren't there to keep the peace, enforce the rules.

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# Faint of Heart

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**Eddie Keogh/Reuters**

Striker **Fernando Torres**, was given a second yellow card, resulting in a red, for diving late in Chelsea's 3-2 loss to Manchester United on Sunday.

"On the pitch, you're, quote-unquote, the boss. It's another perspective on football that I really enjoy," said Perron, who officiates under-17 matches and hopes to make refereeing his career when he's completed his engineering degree.

"It's a passion. It's not because something happened to me once that I should give it up. In the immediate aftermath, I did think to myself that there's no point doing this if I'm going to get punched on a pitch. But it happened just once and, weighed against all the pleasure I get in all the other matches, I have no regrets about continuing."

Still, when was the last time you heard of a referee being thanked, warmly praised? In the era of instant Twitter-analysis, the job is only getting more difficult.

At the top, referees with one chance and one angle to see an action are instantly second-guessed and judged by television replays - which they don't have access to because football's rule-makers don't allow it.

They are policing players who deliberately try to hoodwink them, drilled to deceive and cheat - to dive for penalties, feign injury, sneakily tug shirts, waste time and otherwise bend rules but not get caught. And post-match, referees are meant to keep their opinions to themselves, while players and managers immediately complain about their decisions to the cameras.

Scorn for referees is handed down, father-to-son, from one generation of fans to another. Three years after he was picked apart in the court of public opinion and screamed at by Chelsea players for his decisions in a Champions League semi-final match against Barcelona, Norwegian referee **Tom Henning Ovrebo** told the Guardian this year that he still gets occasional abusive emails from the London club's supporters. To spare upset, he doesn't show them to his family.

"Irrespective of what you do out there, whether you smile, joke, laugh, have a great game or not, you've got to accept the fact that you're in a profession where nobody likes the referee," former Premier League and FIFA referee **Graham Barber** said in an interview. A football manager shared that somewhat depressing pearl of wisdom with him years ago, "and I never, ever forget it."

You cannot have somebody who's out

there in an authoritative position saying that

Dwindling respect for figures of authority; Foul language; Hair-trigger resort to violence. The bear-traps for referees are societal problems, too, not just restricted to football. Criminologists using data from the French Football Federation reported this July that 5,417 referees were victims of aggressive behaviour in the 2010-11 season in France. This from a total of 711,375 amateur matches.

That means such incidents are still quite rare - affecting just under eight out of every 1,000 matches. The vast majority of the affected referees, 86%, were on the receiving end of verbal, not physical, violence. Still, that's more than 100 referees verbally or physically roughed up each week. Mostly, the aggressors are players.

Two of the players who attacked Perron in December 2009, when he was 16, giving him a black eye and prompting his father to call police, were banned from football for 20 years, with six others banned for three years, and another for two. Perron said he was chased again



Photo: John May

by another angry player in a separate on-pitch brawl a few months later. "That time, I managed to get away," he said. "You have to know how to run."

At Chelsea's Stamford Bridge last Sunday, the challenge for Clattenburg was of a different magnitude entirely. This was two of England's richest teams in a game that, when points are totalled at season's end, could help determine whether either of them is crowned the Premier League champion.

"Those games, the referee, clearly - and I've been there - is under immense pressure," Barber noted.

Overall, Clattenburg did well. Showing a second yellow card to Fernando Torres, sending him off, for diving was questionable, because it was clear from video replays that United's **Jonny Evans**

touched the Chelsea striker before he flopped down too easily.

**Adrian Dennis/AFP/Getty Images**

If referee Mark Clattenburg is found guilty of directing a racial remark toward Chelsea's John Mikel Obi, it would likely signal the end of his career.

Still, football can't have it both ways. Fans, managers and administrators say they are sick of players diving. They look to referees to lay down the law. Given how hard it can be to tell a dive from a genuine fall, these are invariably tough calls.

There's since been scrutiny of Clattenburg's style, more chatty with players than strict disciplinarian. But, as Barber noted, "referees aren't all clones, they do it in their own way. As long as it works, there's not a right and there's not a wrong way."

If Clattenburg hadn't sent off Torres and Branislav Ivanovic, and if Chelsea hadn't lost 3-2 to a clearly offside winner by United's Javier Hernandez, would Chelsea have subsequently complained to the FA that the referee used "inappropriate language" with two players? That's an interesting hypothetical question.

One of the players was later reported to be Mikel, the Nigerian shown a yellow card by Clattenburg, apparently for talking back at him. Clattenburg hasn't responded publicly to the allegations. The national secretary of the referees' union, **Alan Leighton**, said in an interview it wouldn't help Clattenburg's defence to talk now. "I want Mark to have the best opportunity to present his case and the best way of doing that is by presenting it to the proper authority, not to have it rehearsed in the press," he said by phone.

If Clattenburg is found to have used racially abusive language, then it's hard to imagine a rosy future at the top of the game for the 37-year-old candidate to officiate at the 2014 World Cup.

"If that is proven, and it comes from a referee, I think potentially that's the end of his career," Barber said. "You cannot have somebody who's out there in an authoritative position saying that."

But what if Clattenburg said nothing abusive? What if this was just crossed wires in a noisy stadium between players from abroad and a referee who speaks in a broad northern English accent?

Well, again, there'll be those questions: Why would anyone volunteer to put themselves through such ordeals? Who, in their right mind, would be a referee?