



BC Soccer appoints nine Referee Development Officers

BC Soccer set to launch Grassroots Referee Development Program

as appeared on BC Soccer website

BC Soccer is set for the January launch of their *Grassroots Referee Development Program* with the recent appointment of nine Referee Development Officers.

They are: **Antonio Hurtado-Coll**, **Shannon Mazerreuw**, **Art Bandeniek**, **Dan Village Sr.**, **Harry Sommerfeld**, **Ken Sookero**, **Terry Carter**, **Neil Farber**, **Mark McNally-Dawes**.

“We are excited to have appointed these nine Referee Development Officers and look forward to launching the program in January,” said **Jose Branco**, BC Soccer Referee Coordinator.

“The program is designed to help create a solid foundation for new and established referees and we feel that these nine Referee Development Officers will do an incredible job of this by working with head referees, mentors, schedulers and by facilitating workshops across the province.”

Within their regions, the Referee Development Officers will host workshops to help ensure consistency amongst referee education, expectations and to help the growth of young and aspiring referees.

In the coming weeks the Referee Development Officers will be reaching out to youth districts and member soccer clubs within their region to bring local head referees, schedulers, and referee mentors together for a seamless launch of the program in January of 2014.

The Referee Development Officers and their Regions

ANTONIO HURTADO-COLL
Lower Mainland Zone 1

ART BANDENIEKS
Lower Mainland Zone 2

DAN VILLAGE SR.
Lower Mainland Zone 3

NEIL FARBER
Thompson

SHANNON MAZEREEUW
Okanagan

TERRY CARTER
North

KEN SOOKERO
Kootenay

HARRY SOMMERFELD
Upper Island

Mark McNally-Dawes
Lower Island

Grassroots Program Outline

BC Soccer's Grassroots Referee Development Program is an exciting new initiative which will be launched in January 2014 as per the BC Soccer Strategic Plan and is designed to better meet the needs of registered and potentially new referees at the grassroots level.

This will be done by training and supporting local Head Referees, Mentors, and Schedulers who oversee refereeing in their area. The training and support will be done by Referee Development Officers.

The goal of the Grassroots Referee Development Program is;

- To raise the level of competence of all registered referees at the grassroots level across the province,
- Provide support and foster recruitment, education, development and retention

of referees,

- Supply timely and relevant reporting about the referees to BC Soccer and the Referee Committee via the Referee Development Coordinator.

The province has been divided into geographic regions. A Referee Development Officer will be appointed to assist Head Referees, Referee Mentors, and Referee Schedulers in each region. This group will be led by and report to the Referee Development Coordinator.

The learning environment of the Grassroots Referee Development Program is one that is fun, challenging, and educational. These environments allow opportunities for registered and potentially new referees to develop a passion and love for refereeing while being supported by their Head Referee, Head Mentors, Schedulers and their local club/organization.

The program will educate and support Head Referees and Referee Mentors through theoretical and practical referee education sessions along with educating/training Referee Schedulers in 'best practices' within refereeing appointing to assist in building a solid foundation for the development of referees across the province at the grassroots level.

The Grassroots Referee Development Program needs to be a shared and cooperative program at the club, district and league levels with a proactive vision for the betterment of the game.

Its success will be measured by the numbers of these referees who are retained over the years and continue their personal development within the referee program and soccer in general.

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North Shore Youth Soccer Association and BCSRA partnership

The F&W thanks VASRA Secretary and NS Group Liaison Iain Andrews with assistance on this article

For the past three years your Referees Association has embarked on a novel way of reaching out to assist fellow referees. Because it's been found that many Head Referees need help reaching out to the referees that are under their care, a partnership has developed with the **North Shore Youth Soccer Association (NSYSA)** whereby the local Vancouver Area branch (**VASRA**) will assist the NSYSA Head Referee. VASRA Secretary **Iain Andrews** has been appointed the liaison to the NSYSA Head Referee

VASRA helps to put on education sessions and assists in the mentoring of referees. In order that those referees start to be initiated into the refereeing culture, meet fellow referees that they would not otherwise meet if left to their own devices, the NSYSA pays for those referees to become members of the Referees Association.

The highlights are as follows:

- Education sessions held on the last

Tuesday and Wednesday of the month from September to February (except in December). This is in addition to the regular monthly meetings held by VASRA.

- Both meetings will have the same content to maximize the number of officials that can go to the education.
- VASRA members who are certified instructors or participating in BC Soccer's Candidates Program lead the education sessions
- Between 60 to 80 referees attend the meetings each month
- Topics are based on the needs and challenges that are occurring on local parks
- Discussions are in a group format to allow the participants to learn from each other and get a greater understanding of the topic .
- VASRA members are scheduled by the

NSYSA's Head Referee for mentoring appointments, allowing coaching of specific individuals as needs arise.

Meetings encourage the new officials to talk and challenge what they know and to help educate the others. Clips that are used are generally at an amateur level content so that they can relate to what we are teaching and hopefully translate the knowledge into the games they do.

The meetings also allow the NSYSA to pass on any relevant information or issues that are happening and solve questions that may arise from that.

For example November's meetings talked about frozen fields and standing water on grass.

All in all, the partnership is working to the NSYSA's content. The goal is to use the experience as a model for future growth in helping officials and getting referees indoctrinated and exposed into the culture of refereeing.

Positions up for Election on Vancouver Area Branch Executive

(Food to be served at VASRA AGM on January 27th)

The positions of 1st Vice-President, Treasurer and one Director position are up for grabs at the Vancouver Area branch (VASRA) Annual General Meeting.

The meeting will be held on **Monday, January 27th** inside the South Burnaby Metro Club room of the Bonsor Community Center. Meeting start time is 7:00 pm.

At the November monthly meeting of VASRA it was also announced that an assortment of snacks and beverages would be made available after the meeting to all members attending. The Nominating Committee is comprised of:

Elvio Chies (Lvo@direct.ca),
Joe Ciresi (joeciresi@shaw.ca)
Ron Schaeffer (schaeffer.ron.d@gmail.com)

Those interested in running for a position should contact any member of the Nominating Committee.

Referees Committee of BC Soccer has a new Chairman

In a development that occurred after the Flag & Whistle October issue went to press, BC Soccer Director **Rob Brown** stepped down as Chairman of provincial governing body's Referees Committee. Taking his place is fellow BC Soccer Director **John Reed** from Prince George (BC Soccer rules governing committees dictate the chair of each

committee shall be a member of the BC Soccer Board of Directors).

Rob, a Life Member of both BC Soccer and the Fraser Valley Area branch (FVSRA) of your Referees Association cited personal reasons for stepping down. Rob will still participate on the BC Soccer Board and on another committee he is part of.

Referee Development Program *Continued from Page 1*

The Grassroots Development Officers will be trained by BC Soccer who will then reach out to the Head Referees, Mentors and Referee Schedulers within their assigned region to start setting the schedule for the required workshops.

These workshops will be designed to help the foundation and framework for the future development of Head Referees, Mentors and Schedulers who work with the current referees and potential new referees at the grassroots level in their region/club. The content will include:

- Present updated referee training material,
- Introduce fundamental refereeing skills,
- Provide small-sided referee training and support.

Head Referee

A Head Referee is an experienced referee who provides oversight to the referee program within a club/district environment. The primary objective is to work with referee to support a successful transition from the classroom to the field of play.

Mentor Referee

A Mentor Referee is an experienced referee who provides guidance, by way of on-field support and feedback to a targeted group of referees, normally within a club / district specific environment in collaboration with the Head Referee.

Referee Scheduler / Assigner

A Referee Scheduler/Assigner works in collaboration with the Head and Mentor Referee to ensure appropriate referees are assigned to matches.

2014 AGM Date to coincide with Whitecaps Home Game but not Provincial Cup

After double-checking the date of the 2014 Adult Provincial Cup Finals, to be held May 10/11, 2014, and with the release of the 2014 MLS schedule, the provincial executive of your Referees Association has announced the date of the the **2014 Annual General Meeting (AGM)** will be held again in conjunction with a Vancouver Whitecaps home match.

For the fourth year in a row, members will be able to literally mix business with pleasure by going to the meeting beforehand and also purchasing a group ticket at a discounted price.

Tentatively, two dates are penciled in for review: **Saturday, May 3rd** and **Saturday, May 24th**. Again, neither day falls of the date of the 2014 Adult Provincial Cup Final or the Victoria Day long weekend.

A final determination will be made in January after the TV schedule is released

for Whitecaps games. Also, because last year's AGM coincided with the finals of Adult Provincial Cup in Victoria, shutting out Vancouver Island-affiliated members, the executive of the Vancouver Island branch of your Referees Association (VISRA) has been offered their preference of dates as they have the farthest to travel.

The Whitecaps' opponent will be the San Jose Earthquakes (May 3rd) and Seattle Sounders (May 24th).

Group tickets will once again be purchased. The cost of tickets start at \$25 for the San Jose match and \$30 for the Seattle game (actual prices are \$26 and \$31 but the provincial executive has agreed in favour of subsidizing ticket purchases to round off the price for easier handling).

People interested in participating should contact **Elvio Chies**
email: Lvo@direct.ca
Tel: (604) 266-0741.

John Meachin Fund

The member associations of the CSRA have given the mandate to the CSRA Executive to look at ways of expanding the use of the **John Meachin Fund**. In a teleconference held in November, member association reps agreed to the expanded use of the fund, subject to the blessing of the Fund's founder, **Virginia Meachin**, widow of the late CSRA President, and former FIFA Referee.

Member associations were due to give their ideas to the Executive. A teleconference has been tentatively scheduled for mid-January for further discussion.

Fundraising Idea pursued

Members should be aware that a vehicle will be announced to help raise funds for the annual **Dan Kulai-Jack Tinnion Memorial Scholarship**.

Although members' fees support the issuing of the scholarship, there is a wish to provide more than the one scholarship given out each year. The goal is to create a contingency fund to be used to help cover the difference.

Interim Chair for BCSRA

Members should be aware that Vice-President **Bill McNaughton** will be the interim chair for the immediate future while President **Nick Hawley** is away in England to attend to details due to the death of his father.

Nick should arrive back by mid-January. Our condolences to Nick on the passing of his father.

DAN KULAI-JACK TINNION SCHOLARSHIP NEWS CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

With the coming of the new year, the call for submissions to the next offering of the **Dan Kulai-Jack Tinnion Memorial Scholarship** will commence again.

The scholarship, pegged at \$1000 and given out annually as part of the BC Soccer Scholarship and Awards Celebration, is open to all referees who aim for post-secondary school education.

To ensure potential recipients are actually taking part in the culture of refereeing, points area awarded for certain areas including, but limited to or solely a prerequisite, membership in the BCSRA and/or participation in the BC Soccer Candidates program.

Prospective recipients should consider the following BCSRA specific criteria when completing your Scholarship.

APPLICATION FORM

- Working to progress in refereeing
- Refereeing Experience; how many years refereeing? In what role - CR or AR?
- Contribution to Refereeing Community (ie mentoring, assigning, instructing SSG, organising referee awards etc.)
- Effort to self-improve (ie number of hours of education attended including candidates program, BCSRA meetings etc.)
- Level of professionalism applied to refereeing
- Reference letter from Club Head Referee; (please ensure one of your three reference letters is from your Club Head Referee)
- Evidence of good Communication
- Special qualities shown in the application, not covered above

An application form must be submitted to the BC Soccer office by March 31st in order to be eligible. The form can be downloaded from this link:

www.bcsoccer.net/files/MemberService/Scholarships/2012-2013BCSoccerScholarshipApplication_Feb2013.pdf

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Know Your Fellow Member

2013 U-18 Nationals in Newfoundland a Member's Report

Name: **Chris Wattam**
Residence: **Vancouver, BC**
Years Refereeing: **14 Years**
What made you take up refereeing?

I stopped playing soccer in high school but still wanted to stay involved in the game. A former coach thought I might want to give it a try.

What's your most memorable moment so far in refereeing?

Attending the Dallas Cup in 2008 and being appointed to the U16 final. I worked the match with referees from the US and Japan.

What advice would you give to someone starting to referee?

Control the things you can control, and don't worry about the rest.

Ed note: Chris Wattam was appointed to this year's U-18 Nationals. Here he gives us a synopsis of his experience on "The Rock."

This past summer I had the privilege of being nominated by BC Soccer to join the National Referee Program.

As part of the nomination process, I was appointed to the U18 National Championships in St. John's/Mt. Pearl, NL this past October.

Having never previously travelled to Newfoundland I felt very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to not only participate in a national championship, but to travel to a part of the country I had never experienced.

While at the tournament, I had the opportunity to meet officials from across the country. Many were from the local area, and it was a comfort to see that the refereeing community was as tight-knit and supportive in St. John's as I have experienced here in Vancouver.

Not only that, they were all extremely

welcoming of those of us from outside the province and you could immediately feel a sense of camaraderie and feel comfortable taking the field with them. In addition, I had the opportunity to meet and work with referees from Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, some of which were also nominated, while others were already on the National and FIFA lists.

Overall, I was appointed as referee or assistant referee to eight games over the six-day tournament, including both the boys' and girls' finals on the last day.

The girls' final was especially fun since the team representing Newfoundland had made it into the match.

Even though it was the Thanksgiving holiday and that morning was especially cold, close to a thousand people must have come out to cheer on their local team.

In the end, I came away from the experience with many pleasant memories and I look forward to the next time I have the privilege of working with referees from across the country.

CSL accepts Membership in newly formed Soccer Federation of Canada

Source: Off the Pitch Forum. (SFC) Offers opportunity for first entry professional soccer

The **Canadian Soccer League** has accepted membership in the newly-formed **Soccer Federation of Canada (SFC)** and as a first step *after removing itself from the Canadian Soccer Association* and provincial soccer jurisdiction is prepared to make it easier for teams and new groups to step into professional soccer for the first time. A newly structured CSL Second Division will provide an environment with ready-achievable semi-professional standards in which teams will have an opportunity to experience first entry pro soccer while playing in a highly competitive environment. The CSL Second Division was earlier approved for reserve teams only.

The CSL intends to introduce promotion and relegation between its two main divisions, a system rarely used in North America. Also, for new teams that apply for CSL First Division entry, they will have the option of playing their initial year in the Second Division, a first step that allows clubs to become accustomed to the disciplines and rigors of professional soccer.

The CSL First Division is considered in Canada's professional pyramid the next level below the top flight **Toronto FC**, **Montreal Impact** and **Vancouver Whitecaps** of Major League Soccer (MLS) and **FC Edmonton** of the North American Soccer League (NASL). Both of these leagues are U.S.-based.

The new Second Division will provide a member team with the opportunity to develop infrastructure, the team's player base and also develop a close relationship with the immediate community – including the local soccer community. The CSL team can be a focal point in the community for the development of young players considering an eventual higher level professional soccer career in North America or overseas.

The CSL will continue with its highly successful Reserve Division, which will drop down to a third level for an anticipated three divisions in 2014.

The CSL for some years has been disappointed by the number of Canadian women's teams entering the United States to

play first level women's professional soccer and considers a Canadian women's professional league long overdue. The CSL will now structure such a league and will be making an announcement in the near future.

At a recent league meeting, CSL club owners agreed the Canadian Soccer League should be a founding member of the newly-formed Soccer Federation of Canada (SFC), which provides private soccer entities, leagues and clubs in Canada with the necessary guidance and services needed to grow and develop within the Canadian soccer community.

SFC members will draw on the federation for the appropriate administration of players, non-playing personnel, including coaches, match officials and various peripheral needs such as insurance. The SFC will also provide non-intrusive oversight while encouraging its member leagues and clubs to be independently structured for local conditions within an affordable business plan.

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From Communist Romania to MLS Cup

Canadian referee Silviu Petrescu's interesting journey

By Nick Sabetti, Goal.com

Goal spoke with Canadian and MLS referee **Silviu Petrescu** on his life in soccer. He recently reached FIFA's mandatory retirement age. Amidst the boisterous atmosphere inside Rogers Centre in Toronto, Silviu Petrescu's excitement might not have been palpable, but November's international friendly match between Brazil and Chile was not an ordinary one for the veteran Canadian referee.

In October, Petrescu reached the mandatory retirement age of 45 for FIFA referees, meaning that the sprightly South American contest – which ended 2-1 in favour of Brazil – would be Petrescu's last on the international stage. It was the culmination of a long journey that began in Petrescu's native Romania 27 years ago.

Tough choices

When Petrescu was 18 he had a decision to make. Juggling between professional soccer and refereeing, he arrived at a point where he simply could no longer continue to do both.

"I started playing in one of the lower divisions, but as I was also moving up as a referee, I couldn't referee and play in the same division, so I had to decide what I wanted to do," Petrescu told Goal.

Helping him weigh the pros and cons of both choices, one night, Petrescu's father, Radu, who himself was a professional referee in Romania's top flight, suggested that Silviu become a referee as well, given the longer lifespan of the profession (a referee could officiate well into his 40s, whereas players rarely ever continued past 35).

Petrescu followed up on his father's advice.

"After we spoke - that was my moment; I just knew I had to quit playing and start refereeing," Petrescu said. "And it turned out to be a good move."

Under the guidance of his father, Petrescu flourished as a referee. By 26, he became the youngest referee in Romania's first division. The Romanian FA had quickly taken notice of Petrescu's talent. A bright future seemed assured.

But that was 1995, six years after the Romanian Revolution which saw the overthrow of **Nicolae Ceaușescu** and his Communist Party. Though a democracy had been subsequently formed, Romania's economy, with soaring inflation and rampant unemployment, drastically deteriorated in the fallout of the communist collapse.

Given the economic dependency of the country at the time, Petrescu decided that it would be best for him and his family to pack up and leave. "I was okay with my refereeing career," Petrescu explained. "But I was thinking about me and my wife and the future, and if I have a kid, and grow a family, is this where I want to be living?"

"At the time [the economy] was only getting worse and worse and I knew that that was the time to leave the country." A year later, he left for Canada. His sister, who had already immigrated there, was waiting for him in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario.

Moving to a new country would, however, mean having to start over again from nothing, but before leaving Romania, Petrescu made a promise to his father: that he would still one day become a FIFA referee.

Living the dream

In Canada, Petrescu's referee credentials were no longer valid. Driving taxicabs and refereeing local amateur soccer games became his new routine. Fortunately for him, **Tony Camacho**, one of Canada's FIFA referees at the time, was passing through

Kitchener-Waterloo one day and stumbled upon one of Petrescu's assignments. "What are you doing here?" Camacho asked Petrescu after the game, puzzled at how a referee of his calibre was officiating at such a low level.

Petrescu explained his situation.

"I said, look Tony, I came here from Romania and I don't know anybody." Petrescu recalled. "And I told him that I wanted to move up. He said okay and then I started to do the classes and different tournaments and moved my way up."

With the help of his new-found friend, Petrescu earned his referee badges once more and, in 2002, became a FIFA Pro referee, fulfilling the pledge he had made to his father. "He was so proud when I told him that I made it," Petrescu said. "He couldn't believe it."

Petrescu knows that had he stayed in Romania he could have become a FIFA referee much earlier, but he has no regrets over his decision to leave. "I came to Canada for a better life for my family," Petrescu said.

Petrescu is now one of ten full-time referees in Major League Soccer. He joined the league with three other Canadians in Toronto FC's expansion year in 2007. In 2012, Petrescu was named MLS Referee of the Year and was awarded the MLS Cup final between the LA Galaxy and the Houston Dynamo, which was also David Beckham's last game in the league.

On the international stage, the 2010 and 2014 World Cup qualifying matches provided Petrescu's with some of his fondest memories. Brazil's 2-0 loss to Mexico in June 2012 in front of 84,516 at the Cowboys Stadium in Dallas was another special occasion.

Then of course, there was his last international game in Toronto two weeks ago. "It was a great game, a great atmosphere, a great experience," Petrescu said. "I really enjoyed every moment." Though Petrescu will no longer be able to referee international matches, he can still work games in MLS and hopes to be able to do so for a few more years, provided that his body is still up for it.

This winter, Petrescu will be attending courses to become a FIFA referee instructor for when his on-field days are over. He wants to be able to give back what he received.

"When I finish I want to pull all of my experience in helping younger referees," Petrescu said. "Because somebody helped me, and I know what it means."

Canadian Soccer League *Continued from Page 4*

Vincent Ursini, chairman of the board and president of the CSL told an enthusiastic meeting of team owners: "This begins a new era for the Canadian Soccer League and for semi-professional soccer in Canada and we are excited at the prospect of working within the framework of the SFC, to do our part to strengthen soccer in Canada and provide many players with a higher level opportunity in which to play and further develop - an opportunity they may not otherwise get," he said.

Applications, together with policies and procedures for the new CSL Second Division will be available as of Monday, December 9, 2013. Interested teams and newly formed groups should contact the CSL for further information at: 905 564-2297 (toll free 1 888 216-9913) or email to info@canadiansoccerleague.ca

Peter Walton sets sights on further improvement

Source: PRO (as appeared on usrefereeconnection.com)

PRO General Manager **Peter Walton** believes the MLS Cup 2013 lived up to expectations and has praised the assigned PRO match officials.

Sporting Kansas City outscored **Real Salt Lake** 7-6 in the longest penalty shootout in MLS playoff history to lift the Cup, after the teams drew 1-1 in over 120 minutes of action.

It was a thrilling match at Sporting Park and Walton felt referee **Hilario Grajeda**, ARs **Bill Dittmar** and **Paul Scott**, 4th official **Ismail Elfath** and alternative assistant **Baboucarr Jallow**, represented the Organization well.

Walton told proreferees.com: "On the domestic scene, the MLS Cup is the biggest game in North American soccer, and this season I think the Cup stood up to the pedestal that it's put on." "Our officials who were assigned to the match made everybody in the Professional Referee Organization proud, with the game management that they adopted. Their performance reflects well on us all.

"The two teams that competed were probably the teams who deserved to be there through their record, and our team of officials were the team who deserved to be there because of their performances during the season.

"The exciting MLS Cup marked the end of the first full season of the Professional Referee Organization and Walton admitted the inaugural year had flown by. Reflecting on what he knew was going to be a difficult campaign, the General Manager insisted things are moving in the right direction for PRO and the officials of North American soccer. And he was quick to turn his attention to next year, when further improvement will be the target.

"When I look back to the game I attended in March in a very hot Houston — the

first game — it only seems a matter of days from that moment, to the MLS Cup in a very cold Kansas City. While we can sit



and bask in the success of the Cup for a day or two, we have to progress next season. We cannot afford to think that because we've had a reasonably successful year in terms of our development and exposure, accumulating in a terrific Cup final, that's it."

"The objective was to always fit in with our mission statement and vision — to be in

the world leaders of officials by 2022. That's always been our mandate and that's what we'll continue to work towards.

"In terms of specifics, the past year was always going to be difficult for us all, because it was the inaugural year — the first year of truly professional referees.

"That's with regards to their discipline for training, the number of matches to which they were assigned, the travel arrangements, and their family life.

"An aim of mine was to look at the perception of the officials from outside of our own group of people. It was important to see that the view in the media and in the public's eye was beginning to change in our favor.

"I don't have the data yet to prove that, but what I do have is the gut feeling that when I talk to fans, to coaches, and to other people connected to soccer, they have noticed the change for the better in the referees and assistant referees that are officiating our games.

"The more we improve, the more our stakeholders want us to improve; that's got to be the target for next year."

Grajeda named MLS Referee of the Year

Source: PRO (as appeared on usrefereeconnection.com)

Major League Soccer has announced **Hilario Grajeda** as the MLS Referee of the year for 2013, with **Kermit Quisenberry** receiving the Assistant Referee award.

Grajeda made his MLS officiating debut in 2004 and picks up the accolade for the first time in his career after a busy season. The 46-year-old officiated the MLS All Stars vs. AS Roma match in August and had been assigned as the CR for December's MLS Cup between Sporting Kansas City and Real Salt Lake.

The showpiece game was Grajeda's 24th in 2013. Ismail Elfath was second, while Baldomero Toledo, who has refereed 23 MLS matches this season, was

voted third.

Quisenberry who has been on the FIFA panel since 1994, picked up the AR title for the second time in his career having won the inaugural award in 2008.

The 45-year-old was an assistant on 18 occasions this season in what was his 19th MLS campaign. Frank Anderson came second, while Bill Dittmar was

third. PRO General Manager, **Peter Walton**, said: "While this is a great achievement and honor for the two individual officials to be recognized by the MLS in such a way, I would also like to recognize the great efforts and performances of all PRO's officials throughout a very pleasing season.



Many Fans don't understand the Laws of the Game

By JASON DEVOS, *tsn.ca*

Week 12 of the Barclays Premier League was full of controversial refereeing decisions. From Wes Brown's sending off for Sunderland to Kevin Mirallas' yellow card for Everton in the Merseyside derby, it wasn't a comfortable weekend to be a referee.

Whenever an incident happens on the field, every fan expects the referee to make the correct decision. Yet referees do not have the benefit of slow-motion instant replays, and have only their assistant referees with whom they can consult for input. Often times, the referee's view of an incident is not ideal, and can be blocked by other players. Yet they are expected to get decisions correct every time.

With the benefit of instant replays, it is often much easier to make those decisions. Should **Wes Brown** have been sent off for Sunderland? No. Should **Kevin Mirallas** have been red carded for his horrible tackle on **Luis Suarez**? Absolutely.

What makes a referee's job more difficult, though, is that the vast majority of fans (and even some professional players, coaches and analysts!) do not fully understand the laws of the game.

Case in point: Arsenal's penalty kick in their game against Southampton.

After a **Tomas Rosicky** corner kick was delivered into Southampton's penalty area, referee **Mark Clattenburg** blew his whistle and pointed to the penalty spot. His reason was that Southampton defender **Jose Fonte** pulled the jersey of Arsenal's Per **Mertesacker**.

Replays showed that Fonte did indeed have a handful of Mertesacker's jersey, that he impeded the German international from reaching the ball. Clattenburg was absolutely correct to award a penalty kick.

Yet it didn't stop the inevitable outcry on Twitter.

Fans voiced their opinions, which

ranged from "That's never a PK – referees always let that go!" to "The ball was behind Mertesacker – need to take that into account!" to "Glad to see a referee finally call that - happens all the time!"

Regardless of your opinion as a fan of the beautiful game, the *FIFA Laws of the Game* are very clear on what constitutes a foul, and in particular, a direct free kick.

The *Laws of the Game* are very clear. Pulling a jersey (holding an opponent) is not allowed and is punishable with a direct free kick, or a penalty kick if the offence occurs within the penalty area. Mark Clattenburg was absolutely spot on to call a penalty in Arsenal's favour.

Fans (as well as players, coaches and anyone else who watches the game) would do well to familiarize themselves with FIFA's *Laws of the Game*. Some of your preconceived ideas about how the game is officiated might actually turn out to be completely false.

Female Official to referee in FA Cup

BBC Sport

(*Ed note*: the *F&W* would like to thank resident FA Cup expert and RA Member **Eric Diver** for bringing this story to our attention).

On Saturday 09 November 2013 **Amy Fearn**, a 35 year old mother of two from Staffordshire, became the first woman to take charge of a match in the First Round Proper of the F.A.-CUP at Steel Park, home of **Corby Town** as they faced **Dover Athletic**.

Fearn had already written her name into the record books 3 years ago when she became first woman to take charge of a Football League game, when she stepped up from Senior Assistant Referee, to replace the injured **Tony Bates** with 19 minutes remaining in the Championship

match between Nottingham Forest and Coventry City.

History making Women Officials in England

- 1976: **Pat Dunn** becomes first woman to referee a competitive fixture in the Dorset County Sunday league.
- 1995/6: **Wendy Toms** is first woman Assistant Referee in a Premier League game.
- 2000: Toms is appointed Assistant Referee for the League Cup Final.
- 2004 Fearn is appointed first Woman Referee to the Conference (one Division below League Two)
- 2012: **Sian Massey** is Assistant Referee for the F.A. Trophy Final (top knock out Cup for Non League sides).



The Official Match Ball

www.usrefereeconnection.com

The adidas **brazuca**, the **Official Match Ball** for the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™, was given a fittingly spectacular launch on Tuesday 3 December.

The iconic Parque Lage in Rio de Janeiro provided a picturesque venue, while a breathtaking 3D light projection show wowed attendees including former Netherlands international **Clarence Seedorf** and Brazil great **Cafu**.

The **brazuca**, which means 'Brazilian' and refers to the Brazilian way of life, is the most-tested adidas ball in history. It was, over a two-and-a-half-year period, tried out by over 600 of the world's top players or former players including **Iker Casillas**, **Dani Alves**, **Lionel Messi**, **Bastian Schweinsteiger** and **Zinedine Zidane**, and 30 teams in ten countries across three continents. The **brazuca** was also used at a selection of international football matches, albeit with a different design, including a friendly between Sweden and Argentina last February.

Wedding Ring destroyed with Pliers

From Huffingtonpost.com Aug 31, 2013

Something tells us the referee at this soccer game in Venezuela is not a romantic.

In a video posted to YouTube, the referee orders midfielder **Rolando Escobar** to remove his wedding band with a pair of pliers after attempts to slide it off his finger proved futile.

Wearing jewelry is against the rules in many contact sports because it can be

dangerous and cause injuries. But wedding rings can be particularly difficult to take off, especially those that have stayed on the same finger for years.

Referees typically allow players to cover the ring with tape instead, according to Yahoo! Sport UK & Ireland. But it looks like this one was a real stickler!

We can't help but wonder how Escobar's wife feels about this.

UEFA Women's U-17 Euro Final 2013: Persson (SWE)

From UEFA as appeared on refereeingworld.com

The UEFA European Women's Under-17 Championship has provided an important daily learning curve for the match officials working at the final tournament in England.

Sara Persson is an international football referee and a mother of two – two very different roles which, as she recalls with a smile, once came together with amusing consequences. “There was one time I was angry with my son **Lucas**, who was five at the time. I sent him upstairs and the next thing he appeared with my whistle and he showed me a red card,” she says with a smile.

Fortunately Persson has had no need to use that red card at the UEFA European Women's Under-17 Championship, a tournament where the respect from the young players involved has been commendable and where UEFA's refereeing team have had the opportunity to gain some invaluable experience. “Being in a final tournament is a big difference,” says Persson, whose highest level matches to date had come in qualifying rounds for both the UEFA Women's Champions League and UEFA women's under-age tournaments.

“In the qualification rounds it is important but this is more intense,” adds the 37-year-old. “My colleagues and the games have been really good. My last game was Scotland-France and they are really technical these girls – they are tough and fast. I am really satisfied, also because it's gone really well in terms of respect from the players.”

Persson, an animal welfare officer from Gothenburg, is speaking at the refereeing team's base camp for the tournament in Derby, a short distance from St George's Park where the eight competing squads have been based.

A total of 16 match officials came to England for the tournament – six referees, eight assistant and two fourth officials – and Persson is one of two referees granted the honour of taking charge of a game on the last day of this tournament, either the final or play-off for third place.

Also on duty on Sunday will be assistant referee **Mathilde Abildgaard** from Denmark. The 26-year-old from Copenhagen postponed the completion of her MA thesis to be here and is delighted she did. Having attended a UEFA Centre of Refereeing Excellence course earlier this year, this has been another crucial step in her development. “We have been lucky to have very experienced observers,” says Abildgaard, whose father Bo has served as a FIFA-standard assistant referee.

“They have tried to teach us and give us good advice we can take into our next matches. We've also been lucky to be in good teams, reflecting together on how to do even better in the next matches. That has really helped me.”

For **Katalin Török**, another of the assistant referees staying until Sunday, working together with match officials from other countries – with “different personalities, different styles” – has been central to the learning experience. “Once we see the appointments we have time to prepare with our referee – we have pre-match discussion before the game so it is easier,” explains the Budapest-based economist, 28. “We receive the same guidelines from the observers so it helps a lot to really look like a team and work as a team on the pitch.”

What all three women have in common is they officiate both men's and women's matches back at home. “Back home I do most men's games and some of the top matches of the women's league – three games for men and then one women,” Persson explains.

This leads to an insightful discussion on the difference between refereeing men and women. “If you argue with a woman she will remember for a long time; with men you'll just fight and forget



about it,” suggests Abildgaard. “In women's matches sometimes they remember the whole match if you make a small mistake.” And do male players treat a woman referee differently? “For me I think I have some goodwill being a female,” she adds, “but then again maybe I have the opposite when I have females!”

One particular highlight of their stay was a surprise visit to the referees' hotel by Howard Webb, the English referee. “What a good surprise – it was a very big moment,” adds Abildgaard. Happily for all three women, one more big moment awaits on Sunday.

Ed note: On 8 December 2013 Sara was the referee for the UEFA U17 Women's match between Germany vs Spain. She officiated the match with fellow colleagues Assistant Referee 1: **Mathilde Abildgaard** (DEN), Assistant Referee 2: **Katalin Torok** (HUN). The Fourth Official was **Ana Minic** (SRB).

Rosetti resigned

As appeared on refereeingworld.com

Former top Italian referee **Roberto Rosetti** has resigned as head of the Russian referees department citing family reasons, the domestic football union (RFU) president said on Tuesday.

Rosetti, who was named best referee in Serie A four times in a row between 2006 and 2009 and officiated the Euro 2008 final between Spain and Germany, was hired by the RFU in 2011 in a bid to improve refereeing standards in Russia. “We received a request from Roberto Rosetti to release him from his post due to family reasons,” RFU's president **Nikolai Tolstykh** told reporters. His contract was due in 2015.

Rosetti, who retired after the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa, expressed his special thanks to the Russian soccer authorities and all the referees in a statement, published on the RFU's web site. “I chose Russia because I wanted to do something completely new, I was looking for a new challenge after officiating for 27 years in Italy,” the 46-year-old said. “My mission is accomplished and my family also needs me at this moment. The refereeing has improved during my stay. The Russian officials are on the right track and I'm sure they'll have a great future”.

Last year, Rosetti said that the officiating level at the matches of the Russian Premier League was unsatisfactory and the entire refereeing system in Russia needs a radical overhaul. “There are only 3,000 professional referees in the huge country of Russia,” Rosetti said.

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Female Referee quitting Kids' Football

Dec 2013 14:34 Daily Mirror

The qualified coach and mum-of-three is hanging up her whistle at the end of the season after parents have even spat at her. *By Laura Woodcock*

(Ed Note: we thank member **Phil Brown** for bringing this story to our attention.)

Evening Gazette

A female referee says she's been forced to quit due to the "horrendous" abuse she gets from parents at matches.

Mum-of-three **Andrea Ruddy** is hanging up her whistle at the end of the season after parents have even spat at her. Andrea, a qualified football coach for the Durham FA, has officiated at more than 100 children's football matches in the Teesside Junior Football Alliance.

But she told the Evening Gazette: "I have had enough. I have had verbal abuse, have had linesman flags thrown at me and even been spat at.

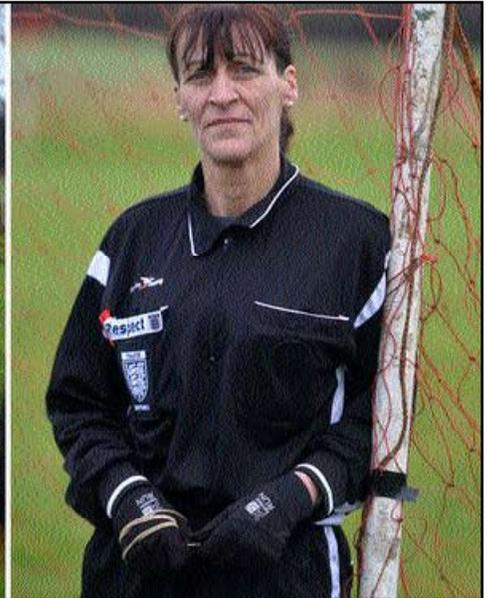
"A couple of weeks ago I also had to be escorted to my car because of it. Up until this season I have really enjoyed the job but I can't take anymore – why should I?" said Andrea, who lives in Oxbridge.

- The abuse I get is horrendous and it happens at just about every match.
- It comes from the parents and managers when they think a decision I have made is the wrong one.
- It happens in front of the kids and it then rubs off on them. They think they can do it too.
- What I have witnessed this season has been nothing short of disgraceful."

It comes after **Gary Lineker** called for an end to the "utterly depressing" behaviour of overly aggressive parents on the touch-line of kids matches.

Andrea got into football at an early age and spent most of her time kicking a ball around with her big brother and his mates. And when she wasn't kicking a football, she was watching it.

When she was 20, she joined the Army



and continued to play – playing regimental football. And after taking a break following the birth of her three boys, Andrea found her passion for the game once again.

Two years ago she decided to train to become a qualified coach.

"Parents should realise the referee is there for the 22 kids who enjoy playing and not for them," she said. "People don't realise what the ref goes through. It is hard enough to find referees as it is. Something needs to be done about this.

"The issues needs highlighting - people need to be aware it goes on. It is bullying at the end of the day."

Andrea added: "I will be sad to say goodbye because I have enjoyed it but I just feel enough is enough now. For me, it isn't worth it any more."

John Topping, company secretary for

Durham FA, said: "It is very disappointing that it has come to this situation.

"If given an opportunity, we would like to try to address it."

Last month Lineker, who is the Three Lions' all-time leading scorer with 48 goals, said the angry approach from mums and dads on the sidelines of children's games are adversely affecting their development. In an interview with *New Statesman* magazine, the Match of the Day presenter said: "The fear they instil in our promising but sensitive Johnny is utterly depressing.

"There is a breed of parent I have seen who hurl ridiculous abuse at officials or even the young player they are meant to be supporting. The competitive nature of most mums and dads is astounding. It's as if they are living their own dreams through their kids."

Founding Member passing

Upon notification of the Calgary District SRA (CDSRA), it is with regret the CSRA announces the death of **Andrew Ungar**. He passed away suddenly at his home on December 7th. Andrew was a founder of the CDSRA in its inception in 1983. Although retired from refereeing, Andrew was still active within the CDSRA and even attended the associations Advanced Referee Training (ART) class on November 23rd. In a statement, CDSRA President **Laurie Hastings** said, "His passion for refereeing and educational improvement of referees is part of our DNA and he will be missed."

Rosetti *Continued from Page 8*

"It's too few. Russia needs much, much more referees to have a variety of the officials to choose from in every division." Rosetti added that Italy's refereeing corps counted more than 32,000 officials, while England had a choice of 38,000 referees. He said that the referees in Russia were under constant pressure with almost every official's mistake in the match of the Premier League becoming the cause of a serious scandal.

"There are too few referees in Russia, it's a fact," Rosetti said. "Besides, the officials here are humiliated after the slightest mistake. It's absolutely impossible that a child would dream to become a referee here in Russia."