

FLAG & WHISTLE

Official Newsletter of the BC Soccer Referees Association • Dec. 2014



BC Referee attends Couple of Referees' Meetings in the German Province of Lower Saxony



Ingo Dependahl (left), President Referees Association of Landkreis Osnabruck (NFV) shows BCSRA's banner.
Inset: **Dieter Freundt** of the VASRA gives Banner to Ingo. See page 6 for article.

Head Referees Meeting a Success!

On November 11th the BCSRA Executive brought Head Referees together to share ideas about how to meet the challenges of on-going referee development.

In spite of a number of soccer tournaments scheduled for the same day, 14 Head Referees, two Referee Development Officers, BC Soccer's Referee Development Co-ordinator and five BCSRA Executive members made their way to Vancouver to attend the meeting.

The first half of the meeting covered topics such as the importance of on-going

education & mentoring, referee meeting tips (how to get referees out, keep it fun, and keep them coming), BCSA's planned program, and the importance of the scheduler in referee development.

The 2nd half of the meeting was devoted to sharing and explaining educational materials developed by the BCSRA. Each attendee was given a USB stick and DVD loaded with educational materials.

Bill McNaughton, VP of BCSRA showed everyone how to access the content and present the PowerPoints and the

related video clips. The two hours went too quickly, and there was limited time for informal sharing of ideas, but there was a valuable exchange among the participants.

Feedback from attendees confirmed that the meeting was well received and that Head Referees value opportunities to get together to discuss common challenges.

Head Referees who were unable to attend and who are interested in getting copies of the materials can contact: the BCSRA: **email. bcreferees@gmail.com**



Art Bandeniaks (Head Referee of Aldergrove Soccer Association) addresses the Participants.

Inset: Jose Branco, BC Soccer Referee Development Coordinator 2nd from left.

Positions Up For Election On Vancouver Area Branch (VASRA) Executive

Four positions will be voted on at the Vancouver Area Branch's Annual General Meeting on Monday, January 26, 2015.

A nomination committee has been formed to find individuals to run for the following positions: President, 2nd Vice-President, Secretary and Director. All positions are two year terms. The nominating committee is comprised of:

Elvio Chies

Lvo@direct.ca or 604-266-0741

Joe Cireasi

jocirciasi@shaw.ca or 604-431-9507

Dominic Pace

dominicpace@shaw.ca or 604-299-0024

Ron Schaeffer

schaeffer.ron.d@gmail.com
or 604-922-6628

Although these gentlemen will be searching for individuals, anyone wishing

to run can approach any member of the nominating committee to express a wish to run for a position.

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the meeting.

The VASRA Annual General Meeting will be held at the Bonsor Community Center in Burnaby (South Burnaby Metro Club Room) starting at 7:00 pm January 26th, 2015.

Members signed up as of that day are eligible to both vote and run for a position.

Women's World Cup Draw: 6 Months and Counting

It was fitting that on the field adjacent to the Hillcrest Community Center, a girl's match was being played. For inside the Center, the Local Organizing Committee for the Women's World Cup had arranged for a viewing party to witness the draw for next year's quadrennial event.

In keeping with the spirit of Christmas, the weather outside was frightful. Well, west coast style pouring rain and wind. Inside, the mood was so delightful – anticipation of not only who Canada would play but also which teams fans in Vancouver would get to see.

"The Women's World Cup Draw on December 6 was an exciting time and the officially viewing party in Vancouver was a great event," said **Jose Branco** Referee Development Coordinator for BC Soccer who was on hand for the viewing with his daughter. "Vancouver will get to host **Switzerland, Cameroon, Ecuador** and the reigning World Champions **Japan**.

But the city will also see a match between **USA** and **Nigeria** which will definitely make for some amazing group stage matches."

Approximately two hundred people got up early on Saturday, December 6th- six months to the day of the opening match- to witness the draw which was broadcast from Ottawa on TSN.

On hand were members of Canada's Women's National Team, sans **Christine Sinclair** who was in Ottawa for the event.

After watching CSA President and former BC Soccer President **Victor Montagliani** welcome the world to

Canada, after waiting agonizing minutes for the pre-draw festivities to finish, the moment everyone had waited for began.

The drawing of teams finally put the event center stage, and not without drama. A mistake by FIFA General Secretary

Jerome Valcke during the draw, unusual to see in a highly choreographed event such as this, only added to the excitement.

And with that, the race for the Cup has officially begun.

Thoughts On The World Cup Draw

Ed note: *With the results of the Draw now in, we asked members of the F&W Staff to weigh in on how the draw went.*



Elvio Chies

Elvio Chies,
F&W Editor

While everyone talks about the USA, Australia, Sweden, Nigeria group being the "Group of Death," nobody mentions the "mini-Group of Death" in Moncton: France, England, Mexico, Columbia.

This is sure to cause a few interesting moments during the group stage.

Although many will feel disappointed with Japan being seeded in Vancouver, despite being the reigning world champions, in retrospect it makes sense.

A large part of the tournament is getting people to games and Vancouver is a big attraction for Japanese tourists. They will come for the two times they play here. As will everyone from Seattle for the USA-Nigeria match.

Tom Babic,
F&W Staff Writer

I don't have too much to say about the Women's World Cup.

The game is very simple at its roots. But for some reason FIFA continues to complicate things when they can and should be simple. This is taking away from the build up to what is a pinnacle moment in the players' careers. They have spent years to get to the ultimate tournament.

For it to be anything less due to technical issues is sad commentary. I can only say, if they can bring in real grass to a temporary facility like Empire Stadium for an exhibition match between Man City and the Whitecaps – then they can



Tom Babic

bring in the same for the women. It would only be fair.

I'm not well versed in the world ranking so I won't give you wise insight into the draw. But I will say that with their player development program being light years ahead of most, the Germans will be hard to beat.



Emil Udovich

Emil Udovich,
F&W Research Assistant

Canada has drawn a difficult group. I believe that they will have a difficult time advancing to the next round.

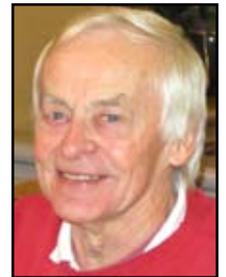
Based on their recent performances, we may not even see them play at BC place stadium at all.

Dieter Freundt,
F&W lay-out

Having watched Germany play Canada earlier this year, I don't consider the side the favourite to take the hardware home. That distinction belongs to ... France. Yes, you read it here. They defeated the German squad few months ago 2:0 in a friendly. It is not so much the result but how they did it.

This leads me to refer to the groups. Contrary what **Elvio** wants you to believe, his "mini-group of death – Group F" must be considered together with Group B the weakest one.

As the top 2 teams of each group and the four best 3rd-place teams qualify for the next round, my prediction is – group finish in this order: Canada, Netherlands; Germany, Norway; Japan, Switzerland; Sweden, USA; Brazil, Spain; France, Mexico. 3rd place teams: China, Nigeria, Korea, England.



Dieter Freundt

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GROUPS AT 2015 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

These are the six groups and its order of finish as forecast by Dieter Freundt. The four Countries in bold italic type will also qualify as they have the best third place finish record. However, Ivory Coast might just eke out Nigeria, because the former will trounce Thailand and end up with the better goal difference.

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E	Group F
Canada	Germany	Japan	Sweden	Brazil	France
Netherlands	Norway	Switzerland	USA	Spain	Mexico
China PR	Ivory Coast	Cameroon	<i>Nigeria</i>	<i>Korea Republic</i>	<i>England</i>
New Zealand	Thailand	Equador	Australia	Costa Rica	Colombia

So what exactly went wrong during the Draw?

Ed note: *Jonathan Cohen, a referee friend of F&W Editor Elvio Chies living in Brookline, Massachusetts, wrote to FIFA asking about the error that occurred during the draw... and FIFA wrote back! Here we present their response.*

Subject: RE: FIFA Women's draw from Ottawa

Date: Fri, 12 Dec 2014 11:39:44 +0100

Dear Mr. Cohen,

Thank you for your interest in the Women's World Cup.

You might have witnessed that there was a small mistake by drawing Colombia into Group E together with Brazil which was not possible because they are in the same confederation (CONMEBOL).

Therefore, by drawing South Korea (or Korea Republic), this mistake had to be corrected and Colombia moved one

group further to Group F, while Korea Republic was then allocated to the spot of Colombia in Group E. During this confusion the drawing of Korea Republic might have gone under a bit. However, our Secretary General **Jerome Valcke** mentioned Korea Republic being allocated on position E2.

You can watch the highlights of the draw again under the following link:

<http://www.fifa.com/womensworldcup/videos/y=2014/m=12/video=womens-world-cup-official-draw-summary-2488853.html>

As of minute 3:10 you will see the described. We hope this answer is satisfying. Kind regards,

Communications & Public Affairs Division FIFA Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
www.FIFA.com

Christmas Wish List Flag & Whistle Style?

Ed note: *The F&W staff have been very good this year. So much so that they've been sharpening their pencils. Here's a sampling of their Christmas wish list.*

Elvio Chies, F&W Editor

1. While it would be nice to see Canada in final, as a referee I would like to see another all-Canadian crew officiate the Final. And if (Canadian FIFA Referee) **Michelle Pye** gets appointed, it would be nice for FIFA to give her a middle in Vancouver. She's not only a colleague but also a friend to many of us which would make that game more special than the Final itself (unless she gets the Final of course!).

- I would like to see every soccer event, be it league or a meeting, shut down on World Cup game days. Too many times we can't see the forest for the trees. C'mon people – have a sense of occasion!

- I would like to volunteer inside BC Place for the Final. I volunteered for the Olympics and actually got to volunteer at Canada Hockey Place for the Men's Gold Medal hockey game. I was posted outside... (did I also mention I was the 1,999,999th fan in the Vancouver Giants 2 millionth fan search? – true story)

Emil Udovich, Research Assistant

- An illustrated dictionary for **Marcel Geiger** to help him understand the definition to the word "deliberate" in the context of Law 12.

- Regarding the "Entertainment Value Style" Refereeing currently used in the MLS, end the excuses and simply let the referees get their job done!

- A harassment free soccer season for all referees!

Tom Babic, Staff Writer

For my Christmas wish, I sincerely hope that we are not served up another Canadian lineup of 9-1 for the formation with **Christine Sinclair** as the lone striker. I know we are defenders of peace the world over and are known as polite to a fault. But trust me **John Herdman**, you won't offend anyone if you mount an offensive attack strategy for a change.

Canadian referee gets top Position

Source: *MLSsoccer.com*

CONCACAF announced the appointment of **Sonia Denoncourt** as its Director of Refereeing on Thursday, tasking the Canadian with leadership of a push to "support referee development at multiple levels" across the region and eventually guide more refs towards FIFA status.

A retired referee who officiated at the 1995, 1999 and 2003 FIFA Women's World Cups (above) and the 1996 and 2000 Summer Olympics as well as men's professional matches in El Salvador and Brazil, the Quebec-born Denoncourt will oversee all aspects of refereeing within the confederation.

"Ms. Denoncourt not only brings a vast global knowledge of the refereeing arena, but also a solid vision to gear, advance and professionalize the region," CONCACAF president **Jeffrey Webb** said in a statement.



Sonia Denoncourt communicates.

"Refereeing has an extremely important role within the game. We are confident that her guidance will reinforce education and training, overcoming the intrinsic challenges of this fundamental position."

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Tom Speaks

The “Moment of Truth” a broken Record / scratched CD?

The questions are rhetorical and redundant at best. At least that’s what it would seem on the surface, especially in the heat of the moment. Why, who can hardly concentrate on all the shenanigans going on at the sidelines with the flurry of activity on the field in a well contested match.

Yet as referees we are continually tasked with not only making split second decisions as players hurtle about at break neck speed. But as the game wears on we are faced with multiple further options – such as “do I really need to address that coach, substitute, spectator or bystander?”; who happens to be carrying on in some verbally abusive fashion.

“Do I need to again remind the midfielder at my back for the 43rd time that my decisions are final and that no amount of remonstrations by he or she will change the fact that their teammate has just committed the most obvious of fouls – for only the umpteenth time?”

And yes, they likely are run-on sentences. But I’m sorry; this topic comes up again and again without fail. Like always, it really does get me riled up and sometimes I don’t know when to stop myself ... with an appropriate form of punctuation that is.

Grammar like reffing soccer games (never thought you would see that comparison put together – did you?) can be a series of difficult decisions. None of your decisions likely to be completely wrong. Yet much like an English scholar being able to poke holes through my use of the language and the way I form it.

Similarly a veteran referee could critique my choice to ignore or address certain outbursts that get played out as the match moves along.

They call it the moment of truth for a referee. The point in time where the dramatic occurs and you, as the official, have to make that decision which will set the tone for the way the rest of the match carries out.

Quite heady stuff when you think of it; the fact that you alone dictate how the 22 players, handful of subs and coaches will interpret and respond to your moment’s decision. But with all the excitement of a good game, why does it seem that the moment of truth is about verbal abuse?

The games come in all shapes and sizes. Different levels of competition, different ages, and different levels of skill and talent. But in many instances the vocal reactions by the participants are the same. Repetitive, loud, foul, abusive, insulting and an element of the game that really should stop. It is your job to make it clear that it stops with you.

Certain leagues are making strides to curb the culprits. Hefty fines and suspensions do help to drive the point home that verbal abuse must be eliminated.

I have had many positive experiences this season due to the on field discipline that certain refs handed out. People are noticing that verbal abuse is being dealt with and the word is getting around. It’s refreshing to hear that things are starting to improve.

But the real change will only come into effect when the two most influential people on the field take it upon themselves to make the difference.

The first is the coach. He or she must set the standard by controlling the sidelines and establishing a culture of sportsmanship that doesn’t tolerate or condone abusive behaviour.

The final solution is always the first person – the referee. You are in control before, during and after the match.

What you do in each phase, dictates whether we ever move past this distasteful topic. Let people know what your expectations are prior to the kickoff. It doesn’t have to be a novel length speech about what you will and won’t listen to.

But do set the tone with a polite word that reinforces the message. No more abuse. Then during the match stop it in tracks – caution and send off as necessary.

Afterwards, report the persistent ones who continue to have a hard time. They will listen, even if it’s at the expense of the referees repeating themselves.

Canadian Referee *cont’d from page 4*

CONCACAF says it has tabbed MS Denoncourt, the first-ever female referee to obtain a FIFA international badge, to lead “the implementation of a performance-based plan to evaluate and train the region’s referees.”

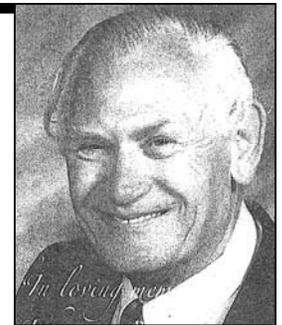
She arrives at her new post after a stint at FIFA, where she served as Head of Women’s Referee Development and Refereeing Senior Manager. She previously held a similar role at the Canadian Soccer Association.

“It’s an honor and privilege to be in this position to help raise the level of professionalism in the region,” said Ms Denoncourt, a member of the Quebec Soccer and Canadian Soccer Halls of Fame. “There is a lot of potential in CONCACAF, and we need to provide more support to all 41 member associations in order to build a stronger structure leading to improved performance on the field.”

A REFEREE PASSES

It is with regret that we inform you of the passing of **John Van Manen**. He died on November 29th after a bout with pneumonia. John was a member in the early days of the association.

After retiring from refereeing he made his way back into the association in his later years affiliated with the Vancouver Area branch (VASRA). John was an avid soccer fan and a supporter of Chelsea. He is survived by his son **Mark Van Manen**, a photographer for the Vancouver Sun.



A Celebration of Life was held at the South Burnaby United Church on Saturday, December 6th.

Referees Meeting in Germany

Editors Note: *Dieter Freundt* was born and grew up in Osnabrück, Lower Saxony. He attended a Referees's Course in the city during the 1957/58 season and officiated his first game in April 1958.

This was a match between two senior teams. No junior team ever had official referees until many years later.

During my trip to Germany last September I got the opportunity to attend a couple of Referees Meetings in Osnabrück. A few months earlier, I had contacted **Ingo Dependahl**, chairman of referees in **Osnabrück County** about date, time, and location of meeting venues.

Ingo was most helpful and advised me not only of the location closest to my living quarters but also mentioned the Referees Meeting in **Osnabrück City**.

Weeks before my departure I had talked and discussed my plan with **Elvio Chies**, past President of **BCSRA**. Elvio was kind enough to supply me with a couple of banners for my colleagues in Germany.

Osnabrück County, because of its area, is divided into four zones (north, east, south, and west) and has about triple the number of referees compared to Osnabrück City.

Each zone conducts its own meeting once a month on consecutive weeks. If a referee, theoretically, misses his zone meeting this weeks, he or she can attend the other zone's meeting the following week.

I attended the meeting of the south zone in the first week of September. The meeting was held in the Klubhaus of **SV Harderberg**, a small soccer club just outside the city and only a 10-minute drive away from my home.

As a responsible individual I made sure to arrive at the meeting long ahead of its starting time, and shortly after met and talked to Ingo Dependahl ... who incidentally chairs all meetings in the County.

I was quickly welcomed by members ... and offered communication on the first name basis instead the stiff German "Sie."

When the meeting officially opened, Ingo introduced me to the membership, and asked if I could talk about referees assignment and education in our Province.

I mentioned about assignment here where some referees officiate five to six games on a weekend.

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L-R: **Torsten Aderhold**, Chairman NFV Osnabrück City; **Dieter Freundt**, Director VASRA; and **Ingo Dependahl**, Chairman NFV Osnabrück County displaying their banners



Addressing the meeting at the NFV Osnabrück County
L-R: Scheduler **Andreas Landwehr** in front of computer; Instructor **Florian Heft**; and guest speaker **Dieter Freundt**.

Stoppage Time: often home-cooked especially in Major League Soccer

By Carl Bialik source: fivethirtyeight.com

I wrote last week about the vagaries of stoppage time at the World Cup. The referee decides how many minutes to add at the end of each half of play — ostensibly based on how much of each 45-minute half was lost to injury, bookings, goal celebrations and other major delays. The referee doesn't have to explain the decision, and it can sometimes puzzle fans and rankle teams. Trailing sides think they're due more time, and leading sides want to get things over with quickly.

Researchers have found that more than just time delays influence the amount of stoppage-time allotted. Refs in Spanish club football "systematically favor home teams by shortening close games where the home team is ahead, and lengthening close games where the home team is behind," Luis Garicano, Ignacio Palacios-Huerta and Canice Prendergast reported in 2005.

At the World Cup, only the host — Brazil, this year — truly has a home-field advantage. But in club soccer, home advantage is more relevant, and current data shows it's not just Spanish club refs who favor the home side. Many of the clubs that enjoy the biggest home advantage in stoppage time play in Major League Soccer, the top U.S. and Canadian professional league. Although some U.S. fans objected to the amount of stoppage time awarded at the end of the U.S.-Portugal match, their domestic league is the club king of home-cooked stoppage time.

To estimate home advantage in club soccer, I asked soccer stats providers TruMedia Networks for data from the major European club competitions, plus MLS. Using Opta data, TruMedia compiled the average amount of stoppage time awarded for clubs when playing at home, when entering second-half stoppage time in two different game states: ahead by a goal or trailing by a goal.

That's when the amount of stoppage time matters most: The leading team wants less time awarded, to hang on to the lead, and the trailing team wants more time to seek an equalizer. Teams' motivations in tied games are harder to detect, and teams leading by two or more goals usually can rest easy entering stoppage time. (The data for the European clubs covers matches in the English Premier League, Spain's La Liga, Italy's Serie A, Germany's Bundesliga, France's Ligue 1 and the Champions League since 2010-2011; in MLS, it covers all matches since 2012, through last Tuesday.)

Average Allotted Stoppage Time

In all, the data included 1,884 matches in which the home team led by a goal entering stoppage time, and 1,326 matches in which the home team trailed by a goal entering stoppage time. (There are more of the former because home teams win more often than they lose.) On average, the home team gets eight more seconds when it needs more time than when it doesn't: Three minutes and 59 seconds compared to three minutes and 51 seconds. That's a 4 percent increase: small, but enough to get the average home team a net gain in goals when it needs them over thousands of matches.

The home edge varies widely across leagues. In **Ligue 1**, it's somewhat surprisingly reversed: The home team gets 1 percent less time, on average, when trailing by a goal than when leading

by a goal. **Serie A** and the **Premier League** — despite the fame of Fergie time — are around average. And in the **Bundesliga** and **MLS**, the home edge is a whopping 11 percent. That amounts to a more significant edge in absolute soccer terms for MLS home teams, however, because the average amount of stoppage time awarded is greater in the U.S. club league:

CLUB	LEAGUE	HOME, DOWN BY A GOAL	HOME, AHEAD BY A GOAL	HOME EDGE
1 Stuttgart	Bundesliga	3:43	2:22	57%
T-2 Chicago Fire	MLS	6:02	4:04	49
T-2 LA Galaxy	MLS	4:53	3:16	49
4 Bor. Dortmund	Bundesliga	4:29	3:02	48
5 Deportivo	La Liga	4:35	3:15	41
6 Liverpool	EPL	5:10	3:43	39
7 Vancouver	MLS	5:20	3:52	38
8 Real Salt Lake	MLS	5:48	4:13	37
9 Sporting KC	MLS	6:08	4:30	36
10 West Ham	EPL	4:47	3:45	28
...				
T-108 Rayo Vallecano	La Liga	3:27	3:59	-13
T-108 Almeria	La Liga	3:39	4:11	-13
T-108 Levante	La Liga	3:40	4:13	-13
T-111 Hertha Berlin	Bundesliga	3:01	3:30	-14
T-111 Werder Bremen	Bundesliga	2:54	3:24	-14
T-111 St Etienne	Ligue 1	3:13	3:45	-14
114 FC Dallas	MLS	4:16	5:02	-15
115 Celta Vigo	La Liga	3:27	4:06	-16
T-116 Hannover	Bundesliga	2:23	2:55	-18
T-116 Real Zaragoza	La Liga	3:35	4:22	-18

Home teams trailing by a goal get an average of 28 more seconds than those leading by a goal in MLS, compared to just 19 more seconds in the Bundesliga.

It's impossible to say over a single match, or a small set of matches, that stoppage-time awarding is flawed:

Cont'd on page 8

Stoppage Time *cont'd from page 7*

Maybe the game in which the home team trailed did have more disruptions, by chance or because there's something systematic about such matches that eats more time.

But the gap in MLS and Bundesliga, over more than 300 matches in each, is big enough to be suspicious. That doesn't mean refs are consciously favoring the home side: It's possible they're influenced by the crowd or other circumstances without knowing it.

Some clubs get an especially immense home advantage at the end of matches. Most of the biggest outliers are in the MLS.

Among the 183 clubs studied, 117 had at least five home

LEAGUE	Goal down	Goal ahead	Home edge
1-1 MLS	4:48	4:20	11%
1-1 Bundesliga	3:09	2:50	11
3 EPL	4:40	4:26	5
4 Serie A	4:06	3:56	4
5 La Liga	3:47	3:44	1
6 Ligue 1	3:42	3:43	-1

matches in the sample in which they entered stoppage time behind by a goal and also had at least five matches in which they entered stoppage time ahead by a goal. Among these 117 clubs, the five with the biggest favorable home edge in absolute terms all were in the MLS. Ranking instead by percentage edge, these same five clubs place in the top nine. They are the **Chicago Fire, the Los Angeles Galaxy, the Vancouver Whitecaps, Real Salt Lake and Sporting Kansas City.**

Garth Lagerwey, general manager of Real Salt Lake, wasn't surprised by the findings. He attributed them in part to the inexperience of MLS refs.

Few have been full-time employees, though their number has increased this season after a lockout, "so they're right at the beginning of the curve in terms of referee-growth development," Lagerwey said in a phone interview. The influence of the crowd on refs "shows up in every sport: the NFL, the NBA and soccer," he said. "The more experienced the referee, the less variation" he'd expect in stoppage time depending on the situation.

Peter Walton, general manager of the Professional Referee Organization, which employs MLS refs, said he'd take a closer look at the issue of fairness in stoppage-time decisions. "I was not aware of any patterns in stoppage-time allowance," Walton said in an email. "However, on the strength of your data I will be taking more interest in stoppage time per club. This is such a subjective topic and I feel more definitive guidelines are required to become more transparent in its use."

PRO GM Peter Walton positive about video replays

Nov 5, 2014 Source: *proreferees.com*

The General Manager of the Professional Referee Organization **Peter Walton** is positive about the use of video replays in soccer after visiting Holland to see the system in action.

The Royal Netherlands Football Association (KNVB) are using the software at certain games as a testing exercise and Walton, along with **Jeff Agoos** from Major League Soccer, attended the Phillips Stadion to watch PSV Eindhoven versus AZ Alkmaar, where the software was being tested.

The video replay technology works by having a parallel feed alongside the real-time action, on a three-second delay, with six to eight different camera angles available for the video referee to review an incident just seconds after it has happened on the field.

A number of Football Associations around the world are taking an interest in the introduction of video replays and PRO's General Manager believes North American officials will embrace it.

He told *proreferees.com* "Video replays are very much still in the infant stages but the testing over in Holland was valuable to witness. "The video referee wasn't actually used as it hasn't been sanctioned yet – it's all purely data collection at this point in time – but it was certainly useful to see the software in action.

"The system is designed to only review plays when the referee has actually stopped the game.

"All red cards can be reviewed as there's a game stoppage, and the same goes for all penalty kicks given, as there's a game stoppage. It's not to be used to review a possible PK when the referee hasn't called it.

"It can take up to a minute for a PK to be taken after it has been given and it's during that time that this new technology will come into effect, with the video official being able to ascertain whether the decision was correct or not. given and it's during that time that this new technology will come into effect, with the video official being able to ascertain whether the decision was correct or not.

"The contact between the video official and the center referee will be made via the communication channels that are already in place. The coaches don't have a video replay – it is purely for the referee and the authorities.

"The Dutch referees are really embracing it. They see it as a way forward and I believe if introduced North American referees will embrace it as well."

The next steps will see the the KNVB compile a report on the software early next year, and report back to FIFA and the International Football Association Board, who are responsible for any proposed changes to the Laws of the Game.

Walton is a supporter of the concept, but insisted consideration for the officials is crucial.

"If the experiment is successful and we can introduce it in some guise as a more practical experiment then I'm all for it," he added.

"I will support anything that will help the referee get those big match decisions correct. If it does that, it has to be good for the game, providing it doesn't undermine the authority and integrity of the officials concerned."

Report: Commissioner Don Garber says MLS is interested in becoming the first League to use Video Replay

Instant replay is coming to world soccer, and Major League Soccer could be the first league to try it out.

FIFA President **Sepp Blatter** recently called for a video replay system to be tested in 2015 in one of the world's domestic leagues, and MLS is throwing its name into the hat.



Instant replay is coming to world soccer, and Major League Soccer could be the first league to try it out.

FIFA President Sepp Blatter recently called for a video replay system to be tested in 2015 in one of the world's domestic leagues, and MLS is throwing its name into the hat.

The league has been a strong proponent of using technology in soccer where it enhances the game, and the latest news continues that trend. In an interview with SI.com on Thursday, **Garber** said he told FIFA that MLS is interested in becoming the first pro soccer league to experiment with a video replay system that would allow coaches to challenge referee decisions.

"I would love to be able to do that," Garber told SI.com. "[MLS deputy commissioner] **Mark Abbott** was out in Zurich at a meeting last week [at FIFA headquarters] and let folks in Zurich know that we'd be happy to work with them to be that league. I don't know what their plans are to experiment with that, but I believe the time has come for there to be a mechanism so that games are not determined by [referee calls] that are not right."

Under the new system a coach would have the right to challenge a refereeing decision once or twice per half when the game is stopped, according to Blatter.

MLS can only introduce the video replay system after the sport's governing body for the laws of the game - the International Football Association Board - offers its approval

Referees in Germany

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Although there is a shortage of referees in both jurisdictions, a referee generally officiates no more than a single game over the weekend. The assignments are computerized, similar to our **Ref Centre**.

But with one big difference. Their program works and referees are assigned according to their qualification. There are approximately 400 referees in both association and close to 1,000 teams.

Each **Zone** and **City** have their own referee scheduler displaying the names of all available referees - from top to lowest level (for example national to district) - the scheduler assigns the referees accordingly from Oberliga to Kreisklasse.

Referees attending their meetings receive priority. May be something similar should be introduced in our jurisdiction.

The meeting was attended by about 40 - 50 referees. Ingo called the meeting to order. The discussion mostly covered match reports as referees **must** file their game report on time. Thereafter **Andreas Landwehr** (*scheduler West*) and **Florian Heft** (*County Instructor*) talked about proper procedure of restarting play.

One week later I attended another meeting. Ingo kindly had notified **Torsten Aderhold**, *chairman of referees in Osnabrück City* about my attendance wish.

Different venue yet same impressive

result seeing so many referees attending their monthly meetings. Of the 100 members about 50 per cent were in attendance of which probably 10 were youth referees.

Besides similar topics at my previous meeting and the standard educational session, this interesting point came up - due to shortage of Assistant Referees.

- When the ball goes out of touch, teams decide who is entitled to the throw in.

A controversial topic indeed. Yet, while watching a cup game during the week (played on red clay), that referee applied this procedure ... and it worked.

Only once a slight controversy occurred.

Of course, I was curious why so many referees attend each meeting - on average 50%. Referees **must be club members**.

The answer is simple. The local Referees Associations are part of and backed by the NFV, Niedersächsische Fussball Verband (same as BCSA). Referees **must** attend a certain number of meetings each year (quite understandable because of the education sessions).

Every new year the referee gets a stamp in his ID card. If the referee falls short of the required attendance at meetings, a note appears in his ID card, the club will be notified and a 100 Euro fine issued.



Referees show up for the Osnabrück County meeting at the SV Harderberg Klubhaus