

THE CENTER CIRCLE

SEPTEMBER 1, 2016

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

THE BALL ROLLS ON	1
AM I WEARING THE RIGHT SHIRT?	2
CAN I CHANGE MY CALL?	2
GAME ASSIGNMENT PROTOCOL	3
REVISIONS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME	3
GOING PLACES? ...STATE AFFILIATIONS	4
UPCOMING EVENTS	4

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Concussion initiatives and special rules for U9 through U12 take effect this Fall.
- Referees can accept games from any assignor and league in Eastern Pennsylvania.
- The LOTG has had its biggest revision in 130 years and has a whole new look. It takes effect this Fall.

THE BALL ROLLS ON - a word from the President

The cool breeze that's blowing through Berks County is an indicator that the Fall soccer season is right around the corner. Teams have been practicing and assignors are asking for availability. The RBSRA Chapter is also gearing up for Fall by putting the finishing touches on a Fall Mentoring Program. We are pleased to be able to offer this program and are now looking for newer referees that would like to buddy up with one of our experienced referees as their mentor. The Mentor Program details and a registration form can be found on our website, rbsra.com.

I want to call your attention to three things that will affect the way you referee your games this Fall. They are, significant revisions to the Laws Of The Game (see page 3), implementation of a concussion initiative for our U9-U11 games that, in part does not allow heading, and implementation of new rules for small-sided games; 7v7 and 9v9. Every referee should read up and understand what rule changes have been made and how you are to apply the LOTG to them.

Looking past the Fall soccer season, the RBSRA Chapter is beginning to prepare for the

annual, year-end dinner and membership drive. Traditionally, we elect the new Board at the dinner. This year we will use the website for voting, so all dues paying members have a chance to vote, even if they are not at the dinner. If you'd like to run for a Board position, send me an email. We are looking for help with our committees. These are the Newsletter, Facebook, Website, CrossTalk, Mentor, Reading United game, and Tournament committees. If you are interested in participating on one of these committees or have expertise in any of them, send me an email. You don't have to be elected to the Board to help.

And, we will be kicking off our membership drive. The RBSRA Chapter supports all referees in the Berks County and surrounding area, whether you are a member or not. However, it is the dues paying base that fund the Chapter and allow us to provide this support. If you like what we've been doing for the past year, please consider becoming a Chapter member. Membership details for 2017 will be released soon.

Carry on!
Bob Geyer



Shane Anton (center) leads a crew at the Girls Spirit United Kickoff Classic in Downingtown



Shane Anton backpedals during a Girls Spirit United Kickoff Classic game in Downingtown.

Nice moves!

AM I WEARING THE RIGHT SHIRT? *by Michael DiGiacomo*

As referees, we are always required and expected to bring all the shirts we own, just in case of possible uniform conflicts. While most people simply look for a different colored shirt when they arrive at the field, I sometimes find myself scrambling for an entirely different uniform – specifically a player’s jersey. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, high school boy’s teams from around Berks County compete in a summer league, where the games are played at Wilson High School and Oley High School, respectively. These games are a great way for high school teams to improve their tactical and technical skills and develop chemistry that will carry over into the regular season in the fall. They are also an opportunity for referees to stay with the game and keep

“conditioned” over the summer in anticipation for the upcoming season. As someone who has refereed a handful of these games so far, the players compete at an impressive skill level and the games move at a fast pace, especially since they are played sideways on a regular field.

Prior to this summer, the oldest age group I center refereed was U13 or U14, so the step up in age was a challenge I was aware of before I even stepped on the pitch. What I did not expect was how difficult it would be to referee high school games as a fellow high school soccer player. I sometimes find myself biting my tongue just to keep from yelling for the ball, or creating enough distance from the immediate area of play so I won’t be able to lunge out for the ball or take

a shot on goal. Even though these games can sometimes be challenging – especially for a younger and newer referee who is not used to players questioning their decisions – they are definitely worthwhile and beneficial for those who are interested in progressing as a referee and doing higher-level games. They allow referees to become acquainted to a higher level of play without the added stress of increased competition or fear of missing a minor call, as the coaches are all fairly composed and respectful. However, it is not unrealistic to receive criticism or “feedback” from the players and coaches if a referee does not perform to their ability, which helps keep us on our toes at all times. Oh, and don’t worry, I haven’t broken character as the referee... yet.



Youth referee Mike DiGiacomo also plays for Twin Valley. The summer league had him roaming the field in both roles.

“What I did not expect was how difficult it would be to referee high school games as a fellow high school soccer player.”

CAN I CHANGE MY CALL? *by Hank Arbo*

Two opponents leap for a head ball. One obviously pushes off with his hands. You blow your whistle and point the direction for the kick. Everyone looks puzzled, but moves into position. Then, a quiet voice says, “Wrong direction ref.” You now realize that the players were both facing their own goal and the kick should be going the opposite direction. Can you change your call? Absolutely, as long as the

kick hasn’t been taken! The ball becomes out of play when you blow the whistle. It doesn’t come back into play until the kick has been taken. During that time you can review the play and correct a mistake. This applies to fouls, cautions, and also send offs. However, once the ball has been put back into play, your decision, right or wrong, stands.

In this case, blow your whistle two or three times to

get everyone’s attention and call out that you pointed the wrong way. Hold up the kick until the defending team has a chance to get into position, and then allow the restart.

If you mistakenly carded the wrong player and the game has restarted, the card stands. Put the information in your game report so the league knows not to take action against the wrong player. Identify who committed the cardable offense.



But, maybe it’s the right thing to do!!

GAME ASSIGNMENT PROTOCOL *by Al Cross*

Reading Berks area referees can accept games from any assignor and league in Eastern Pennsylvania. Game assignments in this area can come from several different assignors. If you use more than one assignor, you will need to closely manage your personal schedule and availability, and apply some common courtesies when accepting games. Keeping a good schedule and being aware of required courtesies will help you have a trouble free season.

Many assignors reach out and ask for your availability for the coming season, before they begin to make assignments for the league(s) they manage. Other assignors post their available games and ask you which games you are interested in. You should do your best to provide accurate availability

when asked. Updating the assignor with availability changes as the season progresses is a good practice. It helps minimize the chance that you will have to decline a game and make the assignor work harder.

You need to make every effort to work accepted games. Turning back an accepted game for another assignment that you may like more is like breaching a contract. If you are offered a better game than the one you already have, contact the assignor of the accepted game and ask to be released. Most assignors will do that for you for the betterment of the game and your own development. An example of this is a State Cup U16 game versus a league U9 game, which usually offers the referee a more intense game. Make your request as soon

as possible; the more lead time the assignor has, the better chance you will have of being released.

Never give your assigned game to another referee. This will cause all sorts of difficulties for you and the person taking the game. If you know someone who is willing to take the game and is qualified to work that age group, suggesting them to the assignor may help the decision to release you. The assignor does not have to give the game to the suggested individual, but they may.

Remember, you are working with your assignors to help get all games covered. If you become unreliable in covering your assigned games, why would the assignor look to give you more games in the future? Treat your assignors well and they will treat you well, too.



Hey, this is important!

“Keeping a good schedule and being aware of required courtesies will help you have a trouble free season”

REVISIONS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME *by Bob Geyer*

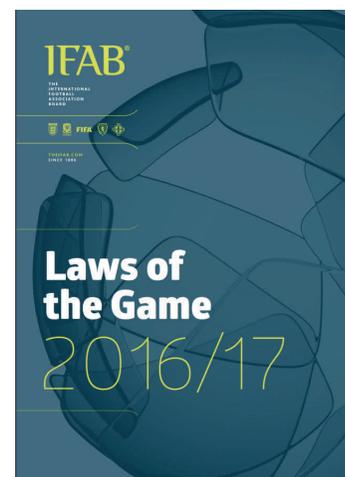
In March of 2016, the International Football Association Board (IFAB) announced “the most extensive revision of the LOTG in 130 years”. EPSARC says, “The Law book has been reorganized and updated to make it easier to understand, not just for the referee, but for anyone interested in the game of Football”. Major areas of change include a simpler structure, updated titles that rename some Laws, attention to the words

and phraseology used in order to present a more consistent and readable text, and updated content to bring the Laws in line with modern Football. Two new sections include an explanation of changes to the Laws and a glossary that defines important words and phrases that are sometimes misunderstood.

With the release of the new LOTG revisions, the printing of the "Advice to Referees" book was discontin-

ued in September of 2015. The LOTG rewrite has made the information in "Advice to Referees" outdated and it should not be used.

The revised LOTG for 2016/2017 can be found at <http://theifab.com/#!/laws> The revisions take effect for our Fall season, so look them over and become familiar with the new format and changes that have been made.



We're on the web, mobile devices, and Facebook!

<http://www.rbsra.com/>

<https://facebook.com/RBSRA>



BE INVISIBLE...
UNTIL YOU'RE NEEDED

READING BERKS SOCCER REFEREE ASSOCIATION

President:	Bob Geyer	484-941-1107	capnbg@aol.com
Vice President:	Brad Brejle	484-400-7889	babssoccer@aol.com
Secretary:	Jerry Catagnus	610-587-1574	jercat2000@yahoo.com
Treasurer:	Al Cross	610-926-9689	across55@gmail.com
Trustee:	John Perini	484-824-2253	ibdref@gmail.com
Trustee:	Eric Balash	484-599-1067	embalash@gmail.com
Trustee:	Rick Daniels	610-451-3815	rokacoty@aol.com
Trustee:	Denny Dornes	610-926-4714	dornden@aol.com
Youth Trustee:	Mike DiGiacomo		maxdoutmike1127@aol.com

The RBSRA mission is to increase the knowledge and performance level of all Association members through training, mentoring, and assessing. We seek to promote, foster, and perpetuate the game of soccer and its officiating. As we interact with members, coaches, players, and fans, we strive to instill a spirit of good sportsmanship, honesty, respect for authority, and fair play. We actively develop, teach, promote, and regulate soccer for individuals of all ages. Our members generally come from Berks County, but are not limited to living in that area.

The RBSRA is affiliated with the Reading-Berks Junior Soccer League (RBJSL), the Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association (EPYSA), the Eastern Pennsylvania Soccer Association Referee Committee (EPSARC), and the United States Soccer Federation.

GOING PLACES?...STATE AFFILIATIONS *by Eric Balash*

For many of us, once we became referees, we automatically became a member of EPSARC (Eastern Pennsylvania Soccer Association Referee Committee). For myself, that was also the case, but then things changed. I have written before about finding other assignors when a younger referee leaves for college, but this time I am writing about switching affiliations. As a student at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, I have been reffing in Western PA for over four years. I began to notice that I was barely doing any reffing back home in Eastern PA. To better myself and to be introduced to more assignors in Western PA, I realized that I had to switch affiliations from ESPARC to PA West. The process was very simple. I contacted those in EPSARC and explained my situation. They reached out to those in PA West who accepted my "Request to Switch" and got me properly set up in their assigning system with all their assignors. It has been a great experience so far, but there is one major difference that I have noticed. Eastern PA offers many more opportunities when it comes to tournaments and leagues. Many teams in Pittsburgh travel out of the area for larger tournaments, so majority of the games here are lower level club games. My next step is to explore NISOA and get into collegiate reffing. If you have any questions on switching affiliations, please feel free to contact me (embalash@gmail.com).

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ **Ed Marco** has been appointed to be 1 of 3 Referee Assessors for the FIFA Futsal World Cup this fall in Colombia. He will be responsible for observing, training, and rating the appointed FIFA Referees at the tournament. In addition to being a local assignor, Ed is a US Soccer National Referee Emeritus, US Soccer National Referee Assessor, and US Soccer National Referee Instructor. He has been on the FIFA International Panel of Referee Instructors and Lecturers since 2008.
- ◆ Referees should notify assignors if they've changed their e-mail address or telephone number. Also, update their USSF account.
- ◆ Intentional heading by U9-U11 players is no longer permitted in USSF games. The restart is an IFK by the opposing team.
- ◆ For U9-U12, some leagues play 7v7, some 8v8, and some 9v9. Referees should check each league's website for rules, spectator placement, substitutions, etc.
- ◆ **September 9/10:** RBJSL/Delco/PAGS Fall league begins
- ◆ **December 6th:** RBSRA Annual Year-End Dinner @ Anthony's Trattoria at 6:30pm



Ed Marco