

THE CENTER CIRCLE

DECEMBER 1, 2016

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Family, friends, referees, and teammates come together to show support for FC Revolution REDS player, Ainsley McClain.**
- **Assistant Referee responsibilities and skills are discussed.**
- **EPSARC is offering an Entry-Level Instructors Course in January.**

THE BALL ROLLS ON - a word from the President

The RBSRA Chapter is finishing the first of three rebuilding years. This year we transferred our website to a new platform and added content, established a Facebook page, and focused on new(er) referees, with our *CrossTalk* event and a new Fall mentoring program. We introduced ourselves at the RBJSL new referee class. We attended the RBJSL Fall coaches meeting and participated in a discussion about the new USYS rules for small-sided games. The Chapter used its website to post links to USYS slides that recapped the rule changes and to EPYSA videos that interpreted them from a team perspective. We posted our own interpretation, from a referee's perspective. The Chapter gathered at a Reading United game, with free entry to all referees and a \$5.00 food voucher for Chapter members. Our final event was the annual dinner. Twenty of us met at Anthony's Trattoria for several hours of camaraderie. Ed Marco spoke to the group, telling us about his recent assignment as a FIFA referee instructor at the FIFA Futsal World Cup, in Columbia.

For the first time, Chapter members cast their votes

online for the RBSRA Board elections. The new Board officers are listed on the last page of this newsletter. I want to thank the 2016 officers and Hank Arbo for their support to the Chapter. Brad Brelje and John Perini are leaving the Board after many years of holding office. We'll miss them, but I am excited about the new cast of characters coming onto the 2017 Board and working with them, to strengthen our relationship with RBJSL, improve and expand our mentor program, begin sponsoring new referee classes, and unveil a *Referee In College* event. We also hope to be at a local tournament, so look for us and drop by to say "hi".

My parting message is that Chapter events and activities that support you and the local referee community require a modest budget. Budget funds come from you, when you become an RBSRA Chapter member. This year's Membership Drive has just commenced. If you like what we are doing, consider joining the Chapter. The RBSRA website homepage (rbsra.com) has all the details on becoming a member.

Carry On! - Bob Geyer



The RBSRA Chapter is finishing the first of three rebuilding years.



The RBSRA Membership Drive is underway. Help the Chapter grow! We can't do it without your support.

Find membership details on the RBSRA website homepage.

www.rbsra.com

BEYOND THE LAWS OF THE GAME by *Michael DiGiacomo*

As referees, our duty is to preserve the integrity and order of the game. Whether that is disciplining a player who commits a dangerous foul, keeping up with all of the rules and procedures, or simply allowing the youth players to enjoy a beautiful game with their friends, the referee plays a monumental role in the sport of soccer. Along with the regulations and formal aspects of our job, there is also a wholesome side to the game that goes beyond any rulebook and requires referees to show their humanity rather than objectivity. This is what makes soccer so much more than a just a game and allows people to appreciate the core fundamentals of athletics in general that are important both on and off the pitch.

On October 30th a moment like this shone through at the Berks County fields (Big Vision Sportsplex) when the U11 Girls FC Revolution REDS faced off against Hulmeville SC. The star player for the REDS was Ainsley

McLain, who led her team on to the pitch like an official captain would do in a FIFA match. Ainsley is an incredibly talented and passionate young woman, who has a genuine love for the game and is an overall outstanding person. Following the coin-toss and the exchange of gifts from the opposing team (a new blanket for the honorary captain), the moment was fully captured in a group picture between the two teams and referees – including Dennis Havens and Margaret Singer. Even without a captain’s band, Ainsley exhibited all the characteristics of a true leader – such as courage and bravery – simply by attending the game, as she has been battling cancer. Ainsley was recently diagnosed with Lymphoma and has been receiving chemotherapy treatments at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), yet she was able to return home that weekend and show her support by going to the REDS’ game. Through all the love and support, Ainsley has kept her

spirits high and has put up a tremendous fight, and returns for her second round of chemotherapy in the middle of November.

It is the moments like this one, where people from all different ages and walks of life can unite and celebrate the determination and strength of one individual, which reaffirms one’s love of athletics and faith in society. As we are in the midst of the season of thanks, family and appreciation, hopefully this moment resonates with our referee and soccer community as well as it did with the FC Revolution REDS and the parents and family members of the team. On behalf of the RBSRA, we are wishing the best for Ainsley and her family and excited to see her return to the pitch. Special thanks to Eric Franks (Ainsley’s coach), Mike Maccausland (FC Revolution REDS Team Manager), Mike Moyer (FC Revolution Owner) and Alexis and Dave McLain (Ainsley’s parents) for their support in the publication of this article.



Ainsley McLain and the FC Revolution REDS

“It is moments like this one, where people from all different ages and walks of life can unite and celebrate the determination of one individual...”

NOT THE ROLE MODEL HE EXPECTED... by *Al Cross*

At a game recently, another referee told me of a funny situation he encountered prior to a U9 girls game. While preparing for the game, two of the U9 players approached the refer-

ee. One girl had a soccer ball under her jersey. They asked the referee what his name was. He told them his name (we will use the name Bill here) was Bill. The girl without the ball in her shirt said

to the referee "we like you, Bill, and my friend is pregnant and wants name the baby after you. The seasoned referee was stumped, did not know what to say. The girls bounced away.



Margaret Singer, Ainsley McClain, Dennis Havens, and Michael DiGiacomo Hulmeville SC vs FC Revolution REDS

BEING A GOOD ASSISTANT REFEREE *by Brad Brelje*

So, you just got assigned to a game as an Assistant Referee (AR). If you're a newer referee you may be happy you got the assignment and are thinking that this is a good opportunity to observe and learn center referee (Referee) techniques from a more experienced referee. You're right, but your first priority is to put what you've learned about the AR position into practice and work to perfect it. A more experienced referee may be less happy and thinking that they should be the Referee. He should recognize that the AR is just as important to the game as the Referee and be working to refine his skills at this position. It is my opinion that many good Berks County area Referees are not very good ARs. I believe that the biggest contributor to this is the lack of games using the 3 referee system and, to some extent, the idea that the AR is not as important to the game as the Referee.

I would like to touch on several important AR responsibilities, beginning with your two main responsibilities; "ball in and out of play" and "the offside violation".

Ball in and out of play situations may seem very simple but following a few guidelines will help you communicate effectively with the Referee and ensure that the game proceeds smoothly, when one occurs.

1: Ball out of play over the touchline on your half of the field. If you are sure of the throw-in direction, raise the flag at a 45 degree angle and point in that direction. If you are not sure of the throw-in direction, hesitate and look at the Referee for direction. When he makes his signal, mirror it and point in the same direction. This will avoid having the Referee pointing in one direction and you pointing in the opposite direction.

2: Ball out of play over the touchline on the other half of the field. The Referee should point in the direction of the throw-in. You should then mirror his signal and point in the same direction.

3: Goal Kick or Corner Kick. All signals for goal kicks and corner kicks should be made at the goal line. Why? Because your proper position is to be even with the second-last opponent or the ball, if it is nearer the goal line than the second-last opponent.

This means that you should be on the goal line when the ball goes over it. It is understandable that you cannot always run as fast as the ball is traveling, but you should get to the goal line as quickly as you can. Signal immediately, if the ball goes over the goal line on your side of the field. If you are not sure how to make the call, hesitate and then mirror the Referee's signal. Hold your signal and

then mirror the Referee's signal, if the ball goes over the goal line on the Referee's side of the field.

4: Goal. If a goal is scored that is fairly obvious to the Referee, you should immediately turn and run up the touch line to be even with the top of the penalty area. For a less obvious goal, remain at the goal line, stand still, and snap the flag straight up. Hold this position until the referee acknowledges you and then run up the touchline, as mentioned. If you were to immediately run up the touch line and the Referee does not realize that a goal was scored, he may look for you on the goal line and you will not be where he expects to see you. This may delay the Referee's ability to determine that a goal was scored and cause active play to continue when it should have stopped. Delays of this sort can make the referee crew look bad and allow the possibility of a foul or injury that would not occur if active play had stopped when the goal was scored.

Looking for and calling the offside violation is the second of the AR's two main responsibilities.

Continued on page 4.



Hey, this is important!

"It is my opinion that many good Berks County area Referees are not very good ARs."



Shane Anton at the PA Classics Girls Showcase

BEING A GOOD ASSISTANT REFEREE, *continued*

I'm not going to go in depth on offside, but will touch on a few key items. As usual, the AR should be even with the second-last opponent or the ball, if it is nearer the goal line than the second-last opponent. Remember, the second to last defender could be the goal keeper. Being in an offside position is not a violation; the attacking player must also be involved in active play. Do not raise the flag (straight up) until you are sure that the player is involved in play. A slightly delayed flag is better than a quick flag. Snapping the flag up can make a bit of noise and cause the Referee to then look and see that it is raised.

Here are some other important parts of your AR duties:

Pay close attention to the Referee during the pre-game conference. If something is not clear; ask him for clarification. He is in charge and will lead the pre-game, but an active discussion between the Referee and ARs is encouraged.

Always hold the flag in the hand that is closest to the Referee, to help him see the flag. Your body may block his view of the flag if it is in the opposite hand. Move the flag from one hand to another when you change direction of movement or change it for a signal; always doing it with the flag below

the waist.

The proper way to make a signal is to stop and square up to the field, then signal. I want to repeat that - stop and square up to the field then signal. Signaling while moving looks unprofessional.

Side stepping to stay square to the field is recommended and should be done as much as possible. It gives you a better view of the field and players. When you turn to run or sprint, don't ignore your view of the field.

Eye contact with the Referee, throughout the game, is critical. Establishing eye contact at important points in the game will aid in making proper calls and keep you both working as a team.

Keeping time is primarily the Referee's job, but backing him up with your watch could be important, if his malfunctions. You should know the time remaining in a half and also be able to record the time goals are scored and cautions or ejections are made. This is important game report information and could be used to substantiate the Referee's notes.

The Referee will call most of the fouls and good ARs will give him the first crack at making the call. However, sometimes you may see the foul more clearly than the Referee, if he was shielded, his head was turned or you had a better angle. If this is the case,

make the call. Remember, stop and square up to the field, then raise the flag and wiggle it, to indicate the foul. The harder the foul, the more decisive a wiggle or snapping of the flag is called for. If you think the foul is worthy of a card, touch or tap your shirt pocket to indicate a caution or Yellow Card. Reach behind you and touch or tap your shorts pocket to indicate an ejection or Red Card. Be prepared to give the Referee information about the foul if he approaches you to discuss it. He will certainly want this information, if you are indicating an ejection. Remember, it is the Referee's decision to issue cards. You give your input and he makes the decision.

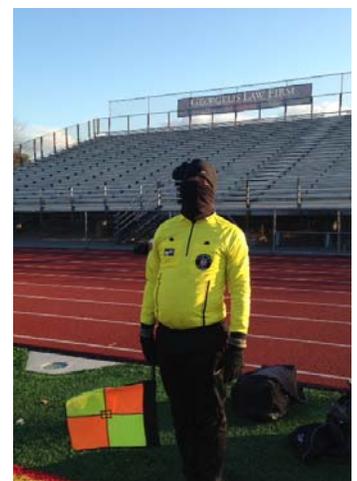
My last game day pointer is for the referee crew to have a post-game discussion. This is a great opportunity to review and discuss plays and situations, and to learn from them.

To wrap up this article, my recommendation is to watch an MLS, EPL, International, or any other high level match. Instead of watching the players, watch and observe the referees. Take the opportunity to learn. Enjoy the sport!



Keep reading, it's all important!

“Establishing eye contact at important points in the game will aid in making proper calls and keep you both working as a team.”



Shane Anton at the PA Classics Girls Showcase

RECERTIFICATION—THE TIME IS NOW *by Jerry Catagnus*

Registering/recertifying for next year can be a confusing process for new and experienced referees alike. ESPARC has sent out recertification information to all current referees and we have listed it below.

1. Referees must register each year with U.S. Soccer through their State Referee Administrator. The governing documents of U.S. Soccer state that a referee must be registered for the current year to referee games affiliated with U.S. Soccer directly or indirectly. The Referee Administrative Handbook tells you the steps to recertify.
2. The email addresses for all state referee administrators can be found at [ussoccer.com/Referee Programs](http://ussoccer.com/Referee_Programs).
3. If you don't know when or where to recertify for the upcoming year, contact your State Referee Administrator (SRA), State Youth Referee Administrator (SYRA) or State Director of Instruction (SDI) in the fall or winter, before the beginning of the next year.

4. Referee registration for the calendar year with U.S. Soccer ends on June 30th of each year. To referee in the fall, you must recertify before June of that year. You must be registered for a calendar year, before you take the field in that calendar year.
5. If you wish to be considered for an upgrade, let your SRA/SYRA or SDI know in advance of registration. They can give you instructions on what you need to do to qualify for the next grade. You can find the criteria for upgrading from grade to grade in the Referee Administrative Handbook, which you should receive at your entry level clinic. If you lose this book, you can also find it at [ussoccer.com/Referee Programs](http://ussoccer.com/Referee_Programs), under Referee Development.
6. If you miss a year of registration, you can register take a recertification course again and pass the test, however you cannot register until after January 1 of the year for which you are registered.

According to ESPARC, referees should satisfy the following requirements in the order in which they appear below to **register for 2018:**

1. It is strongly recommended that you stay up to date on current USSF and EPA rules and Directives.
2. Ensure your Background Clearances are up to date. Currently, clearances are good for 5 years from the date of issuance.
3. Complete the online Prerequisite Modules; Laws 11, 12, 13, 14. **EPSARC will provide information on when and how to do this.**
4. Attend an Advanced or Intermediate Clinic in 2018 and pass the written refresher exam with 80% or better. Class dates and registration information for 2018 will be listed on the EPSARC website.
5. Current referee Grades 5, 6, and 7, and those wishing to upgrade must pass the fitness test in 2018. ESPARC 2018 recertification link: <http://epsarc.org/2018>



New USSF Referee patch. Time's a-wasting. Get recertified! Now!

“Referees must register each year with U.S. Soccer through their State Referee Administrator.”

WHAT DOES “SUBS ON STOPPAGE” MEAN? *by Hank Arbo*

FIFA has used this substitution method for at least 30 years for their national and international games. The phrase means exactly what it says: The referee can allow substitutions on any stoppage of play: throw-ins, goal kicks, corner kicks, after a goal, fouls, injuries, and for

dealing with misconduct.

When to allow a substitution is at the referee's discretion. The referee decides whether holding up play would be harmful if a team is on the attack or if it would affect the flow of the game. Substituting is not mandatory just because players are wait-

ing at the halfway line.

Substituting isn't a problem in FIFA games because only 3 to five players can be substituted in and because players substituted out can't re-enter. It becomes more of a time-consuming problem with leagues that allow unlimited re-entry.



AR signal for substitution

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:	Shane Anton	610-909-3606	santon2@msn.com
Secretary:	Andy Halsey	484-651-4458	andyha@ptd.net
Treasurer:	Al Cross	610-926-9689	across55@gmail.com
Trustee:	Jerry Catagnus	610-587-1574	jercat2000@yahoo.com
Trustee:	Denny Dornes	610-926-4714	dornden@aol.com
Trustee:	Kevin Creamer	484-431-8555	kevin.creamer@PenskeCorp.com
Trustee:	Colin Kunkle	610-406-3707	cokunkle12@gmail.com
Youth Trustee:	Mike DiGiacomo		maxdoutmike1127@aol.com

BECOMING A USSF INSTRUCTOR *by Hank Arbo*

To become a USSF instructor, you must take a one day (6-8 hours) class in which the Laws and Points of Emphasis, how to make presentations, and the paperwork for classes are discussed. After the class, you're titled as an Associate Instructor. USSF then offers a one day class to train you to make more effective presentations, a "Train the Trainer" class. This class is designed to teach you how to focus on the main points of each Law and how to manage the time allotted for presenting each Law. Most recently, this class stresses the need to teach younger people in a way that is entertaining as well as informative. High School aged people zone out quickly if you're just a talking head.

This class will upgrade an associate instructor to Instructor level. Additional classes can upgrade an instructor to State Instructor level. I don't know if there's a national instructor level.

The EPSARC Director of Instruction, Robert Ong, usually has a 3-4 hour meeting each year to review new interpretations and questions that are frequently missed on the entry exam by the new referees. This review session ends with a 50 question exam to be certain the instructors know what they're talking about!

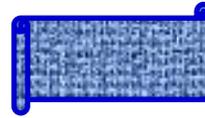
EPA YOUNG REFEREES OF THE YEAR *Congratulations!*



Michael Grello



Courtney Browning



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ **January 21–22:** Entry-Level Instructor Course Cost: \$60. See EPSARC website for details.
- ◆ **February 28, March 1, 7, 8:** Entry-level Referee Class hosted by Reading Berks Junior Soccer League. See EPSARC website for details: [Entry Level Class](#)
- ◆ **March 12 :** Boys Legacy College Showcase
- ◆ **March 19:** Girls Legacy College Showcase
- ◆ Keep up with EPA referee happenings on EPSARC's facebook page: www.facebook.com/epareferees

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 (RBJSJL), the Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association (EPYSA), the Eastern Pennsylvania Soccer Association Referee Committee (EPSARC), and the United States Soccer Federation.

PA CHILD ABUSE CHECK

PA STATE CHECK

FBI BACKGROUND CHECK

Three background clearances must be obtained and **mailed** to EPSARC before you can register.

Remember, you can email any chapter officer if you have any questions about the Laws Of The Game, registration, game reports, or any other situation you need assistance with.