

THE CENTER CIRCLE

DECEMBER 1, 2017

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THE BALL ROLLS ON - a word from the President

Recertification season is upon us. If your referee, assignor, or instructor certification was obtained before June 30, 2017, you must attend a recertification clinic and complete pre-clinic requirements before you can work games in 2018. It's an annual requirement. EPSARC has done a good job laying out what you need to do, both on their website and via email. If you haven't been receiving email from EPSARC about recertification, you should check with them to see how to remedy that.

The first thing you need to do is sign up for a clinic. I'd recommend that you do it NOW. In past years, clinics used large spaces and an instruction approach that accommodated a large number of attendees. That has changed. The new instruction format dictates accepting fewer folks per location. Because of this, you can expect clinics to fill up and close. Also registration will close 1 week prior to the clinic date. Grade 8 and 9 referees can attend an Intermediate clinic. The Advanced clinics are for Grade 7 and above referees, assignors and instructors.

After registering for a clinic, you will need to complete

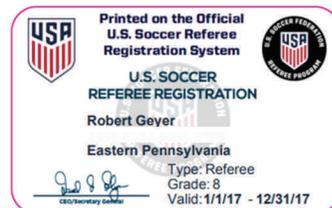
the pre-clinic prep work. All referee grades, assignors and instructors have to view and pass five on-line modules; Concussion and Laws 11, 12, 13, & 14. As you complete each module, you will receive a completion certificate. Print it and bring it to the clinic. You only need to do the modules once, even if you have more than one role, such as referee and instructor. EPSARC has a link to the modules on their Recertification webpage.

You will also need to take and pass an on-line test. Each role has its own test, so you will have to take more than one test, if you have more than one role. Passing grades are 80% for all roles. You will need to log into your account at www.epsarc.org to access the links for your tests. The login link is in the upper right corner of the EPSARC webpage. Once logged in, click on the "View your account" box, in the upper right corner. This will open a webpage that shows you what you have registered for and a link for the associated test. Take each test. If you don't pass with an 80% score, a written retest will be given at the clinic. Good luck.

Carry On!

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Bob Shannon passed away on November 4th.**
- **Pre-game responsibilities are reviewed.**
- **Have an inside look at a new referee's first game experience.**
- **Ball placement for an offside restart can be in the defensive end of the field**



You need to complete all of the recertification requirements before you can work any games in 2018.

ROBERT E. SHANNON August 3, 1949–November 4, 2017

Bob Shannon, a long-time soccer official in Berks County, passed away after a 2 ½ year battle with cancer on November 4, surrounded by his family. A legend, Bob was involved with USSF and PIAA soccer for over 25 years, presiding as an officer in both the Reading Berks Soccer Referees Association and the PIAA Berks County Soccer Officials Association. For many of those years, Bob was the key resource and coordinator for the RBJSL’s mentoring program that helped newer referees become acclimated to the challenge of being a referee during their learning years. Bob maintained the documentation that all the senior mentors would use when helping a new referee and managed the compensation of the mentoring program.

The number of games Bob worked as a referee must approach three thousand! He officiated youth games on the weekends, tournaments during the summer, countless PIAA games in the spring and fall, and adult games as well. If you ever worked with Bob, you know

that he was always trying to improve his knowledge and skill at refereeing, as well as helping those who worked with him. Bob would always be willing to offer critical support or ask you a question as to why you did something during a game, all to make you think about your decisions. He was certainly a strong proponent for not calling a “hand ball” foul when the player did not intentionally play the ball, long before it was stressed by the soccer gurus. Bob would also assist the RBJSL with “fun” coaches, accepting games from Mark Yocum where he knew he would be providing extra instruction to the coaches on the Laws of the Game and their behavior.

Bob was a highly regarded official by both coaches and his peers, evidenced by his working numerous high-level games throughout his soccer career. He was involved in numerous PIAA Berks County playoff games, District 3 and State playoff games – including two PIAA State finals in 2007 and 2010 (he really did look like Steve McQueen on TV).

On the lighter side, Bob developed the “SHANNON RULE” for 3 man PIAA games. If a referee was hit by the ball during play on the field, he or she had to buy dinner for the crew, a rule that lives on today with many of his fellow referees. He was also the unofficial controller of when you could wear your long sleeve shirts, which was almost always never (except the last few years).

Bob was generous with his computer skills, assisting RBJSL and BCSOA with the management programs that both organizations needed to assign games. He spent hours assisting his friends with new programs and updates, with an occasional dinner as his only payment. Richard Oswald and Mark Yocum will always be grateful for Bob’s assistance and friendship.

Known as “Binky” or “Bobbie” to his many friends and family, he will be greatly missed by his wife Betsy, children Amy and Tim, and his 2 grandchildren. Betsy can be contacted at 1060 Hilltop Rd, Leesport, PA 19533.



Bob Shannon
Aug 3, 1949 – Nov 4, 2017

“Bob was involved with USSF and PIAA soccer for over 25 years”

VIBRATING WATCH by Hank Arbo

An important function of the referee is to keep accurate time, both for the length of the game and for reporting goals and disciplinary problems. Most of us have a digi-

tal watch that counts down and beeps. With crowd noise and loss of hearing (yes, repeated loud whistles can cause that), we don’t always hear the beep. Consider

getting a vibrating watch that counts down. It’s impossible to miss the end of a half. Amazon sells them for as low as \$25 and holiday gift giving is just around the corner!



The Casio Illuminator is \$22.36, on sale at Kohl’s

JUST IN TIME ARRIVALS *by Denny Dornes*

When you arrive at the field at the last minute it makes us all look like we don't care and leads to the remaining games scheduled for that field to have late starts. If you arrive at 12:50 pm for a 1:00 pm game, it's like being late. There is just too much you need to do before the game to get it all done in 10 minutes and start the game on time. We, as solo officials, should be arriving 20 to 30 minutes ahead of the game. This will allow time for you to check the field markings, field conditions, and do the player pre-game check. When you arrive, check the goals to be sure that they are anchored and in proper position. The nets should be secured and have no large openings for the ball to slip through. Look for broken glass or sliced up soda cans on the field. Check the corner flags to make sure

they are correctly positioned, of safe construction and are not too short. Next, I would go and introduce myself to both coaches and see if all the players are here and ready for the pre-game check. Checking player passes differs by league. RBJSJL has started using e-passes and is still getting used to that. If individual passes are being used, ask the coaches from each team to give them to the players for checking. While checking passes, be sure all players are legally equipped for the game; hint – proper size shin guards, taped medical necklace or bracelet, no jewelry, etc. I would also use this time to review the new build out line, if it's a u9 or u10 game. Let the players know what you expect from them during the game; such as, for throw-ins and substitutions. When you have a crew of 3, you have a

little more to do. Arriving 30 minutes ahead of the game will be enough time to do the extras. You should walk the field as a crew to check the field and goals. You should also be talking about field positioning, reviewing how to work with one another, and going over rules that you need to have clarified. The crew can now split up and check the player passes and players. The center official collects the game fees and pays the AR's. She also calls for captains and meets with the crew at midfield for the coin toss. The home team should supply the game ball in good condition and properly inflated. If you have arrived early enough to accomplish all of this, the center official will be able to blow the whistle to have both teams on field and begin the game, right on time!



A just in time arrival means that you are actually arriving late! Remember, you have some pre-game responsibilities that can take up to 30 minutes to complete.

“There is just too much to do before the game to get it all done in 10 minutes and start the game on time”

ELECTRONIC PLAYER PASSES *by Kevin Creamer*

RBJSJL introduced Electronic Player Passes (EPP) in the recent fall season. Although they still had the old laminated player passes, RBJSJL teams were expected to use the EPPs. Did you know that? Feedback from several sources indicates that this did not occur and there was uneven use across the league. The RBSRA Board would like to know how you liked using them. We've

put a survey box on the website, www.rbsra.com, for you to give us your comments.

Here's how it was supposed to work. A coach, assistant, or manager is required to have the GroupNet app on their phone. The coach gives you a paper roster and the players line up for the equipment check and player verification as usual; this did not change. However, the coach or manager will

now present the EPYSA player passes on their phone. Do not hold their phone! Allow the coach or manager to slide the photo while you check the game card and APPROVED roster. Hopefully they have the players in order of the passes on the phone to expedite the process.

This article is continued on page 4.



RBJSJL is using electronic player passes.

MY FIRST GAMES by *Jordan Neiheiser*

As a newly college graduate and as a dedicated soccer player for eighteen years, it was hard for me to accept reality. I was now officially an adult stepping into the real world and my days of playing competitive soccer were over. I thought to myself if I can't be on the field playing, I could at least be on the field refereeing. Right after my college graduation, I attended the classes to become a referee and shortly after I passed my test and received all my equipment needed to begin.

After a month and a half of introducing myself to assignors and trying to find a tournament close to my home, I was assigned to work my first two games. For both games, one U14 boy's game and one U14 girl's game, I was assigned as an Assistant Referee (AR). When I arrived at the field (30 minutes before my scheduled game time) the nerves immediately set in. To calm myself down, I carefully looked over my little cheat-sheet for all the flag signals one last time. It was basic signals for me because I knew them from playing soccer all my life; however, I

still used it as a method to compose myself and to remind myself that being anxious is normal for the first time.

As I approached the other referees, I shook their hands and introduced myself. I was honest with them and told them that it was my first game as a referee, I was extremely nervous, but also tremendously excited to get back on the field. The referees (both male and female, older and younger than me) welcomed me with comfort and positivity. One by one they each gave me a piece of helpful advice: be engaged and show interest in the game, be firm and confident in your flag signals, and lastly if unsure on who the ball went out of bounds on, still raise your flag to show it went out and let the center ref make the call. Although I was still uneasy, hearing their recommendations gave me a sense of support and made me realize that even though I was new and they didn't know me, my fellow referees had my back.

My first game had started and I was running the parent's sideline. Despite the

cheers, comments, and screaming from both teams I kept my focus on the game and made certain to make the right calls. It wasn't long until my nerves faded and I really began to enjoy my new position. At the end of my first game, the referees quickly boosted my confidence by telling me they would have never known that was my first game if I hadn't told them.

Going into my second game, I switched it up and took the coach's sideline. It wasn't as loud and noisy as the parents side, but now it came with the pressure of the coach watching your every call. In a strange way it made me feel more calm because it was less noisy, but also made me focus harder. When the final whistle blew, I was filled with excitement for many different reasons. I survived my first games as an AR, I didn't expect to get over my nerves and anxiety as quickly as I did, and I'm extremely excited for my future as a referee. It was the best decision I made coming out of college; however, I wish I would have started this journey sooner.



“As I approached the other referees, I shook their hands and introduced myself.”

ELECTRONIC PLAYER PASSES ...continued from page 3

The great advantage of the electronic passes is that referees no longer have to figure out and enforce issues over who can participate in a

game. If the photo of a secondary player, disqualified player, or coach is not on the phone, they are not approved to participate. RBJSL can

add or remove player photos right up to game time. For fields with limited or no cell coverage, revert to the old plastic pass procedure .

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

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

<https://facebook.com/RBSRA>



BE INVISIBLE...
UNTIL YOU'RE NEEDED

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OFFSIDE POINTERS *by ProReferee.com*

The following discussion comes from a ProReferee.com blog that was discussing the offside offense. The discussion centered on placement of the ball for the restart and whether offside could be called in the defensive half of the field. Here's what they had to say...

The offside offense is most definitely NOT committed by the teammate who last kicks/last touches the ball (even if the ball is played toward a player in an offside position).

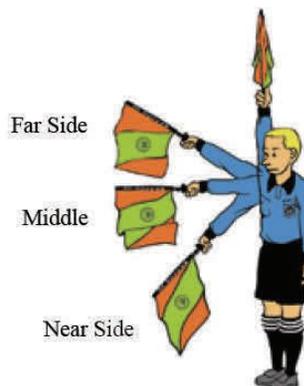
Rather it is the restricted player (who was in an offside position at the moment the ball was last touched by a teammate) getting involved in

active play that is the offense. It is for this reason that assistant referees are instructed to "wait and see" to ensure a restricted player actually gets involved in play prior to raising their flag. This "wait and see" approach is also why so many spectators/commentators believe that an AR is "late" in raising the flag.

Wherever the restricted player gets involved is where the offense occurs and where the restart is taken.

Hence, a player in his attacking half of the field who is in an offside position at the moment the ball is played/touched by a teammate runs to his defensive half of the

field and gets involved in active play commits the offside offense and the restart is taken in the offending player's defensive half of the field.



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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ RBSRA End of Year Dinner @ Anthony's Trattoria: December 4
- ◆ West Chester Advanced Clinic: Dec 9
- ◆ Lancaster Intermediate Clinic: Dec 10
- ◆ Reading Intermediate Clinic: Jan 27
- ◆ Valley Forge Intermediate Clinic: Jan 28
- ◆ Allentown Intermediate Clinic: Feb 3
- ◆ Harrisburg Intermediate Clinic: Feb 4
- ◆ RBJSJL Club Representative Meetings: Dec 13, Jan 10, Feb 14, Mar 14

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.