



# The Flag and Whistle

Newsletter of the Soccer South Bay Referee Association

January 31, 2014

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[www.ssbra.org](http://www.ssbra.org) and Facebook

President: Warren Howell

Vice President: Michael Hinz

Secretary: Veto Galati

Treasurer: Steve Brandon

Member-At-Large: Chris Nevil

Assigner: Bill Cook

Mentoring: Ralph Quiroz

## THE ASSOCIATION DEALS WITH A CRISIS MEMBERS GET MORE BAD NEWS AT THE MONTHLY MEETING FRIENDLIES, CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS ARE THE ORDER OF THE DAY

Warren “Bluto” Howell started off the January meeting with bad news - the rather sparse crowd was told that, alas, the meeting would be relatively brief. Though wildly disappointed, those in attendance were able to take the letdown in stride. Warren then had more bad news, reporting that **Bill “Grampa” Cook** was hospitalized in Hawaii after taking a fall, and that **Larry “Broken Chair” Stern** would be filling in till Bill got better (editor’s note: Bill returned to California after about a week and returned to full duty). That bit out of the way, it was time to turn to more pleasant news, and new Members **Misha Ostapchuk**, **Armando Quiroz**, **Chris Hinz** (yes, son of **Michael “Waikiki Mike” Hinz**), **Shegaemi Watanabe** and **Timothy Reynolds** introduced themselves to the Members, receiving an enthusiastic welcome in return.

The next topic was a discussion of assigner's fees for "friendly" matches. Since there were about 300 of these in 2013, it was noted that they had taken on a life of their own. The only known reasonable way that this could be paid for those games that are not invoiced (refs are paid in cash on the field) is for each ref to forward Bill \$2 a game, with possibly the lead/center ref doing all the collecting and forwarding. Noting that this fee would have been negotiated into the total fee in advance, Warren wanted to hear the Member's opinions, which they were more than willing to give. Everyone seemed OK with the idea, and that is how it will work till further notice.

**Steve "I Am Not English" McCall** was scheduled to speak as the SBPSL representative, but was unable to attend at the last minute. He did share with the Board that the league is quite pleased with the job SSBRA is doing, and hopes it will continue. If anything, he would remind us that they are looking for protection in that league - we should call the fouls, give the cards, and use advantage sparingly. Warren then made a comment that our referees should never touch a player.

It was then shared that, since a year had gone by, the Board had made a proposal to South Bay Sports in a bid to cover their games again. After thinking about it for a month, the SBS owner, **Dennis Fox**, declined the offer, but invited SSBRA to make another bid in 2015. It was also mentioned that contracts and/or "handshake" agreements were in place for the various leagues, and that other new opportunities were in the works. Warren continued on about something or other with the Website, Facebook page and the newsletter, and then turned the meeting over to our Vice President.

Mike Hinz got right to it. He reminded us that you must sign-in for each day you are at State Cup, we do NOT use a 2-man system for a 3-man game (Lawndale excepted), pull player ID's for all red cards in PSL, and pull player ID's in DSL/CSL for violent conduct or referee abuse.

**Chris "Not So Large Member" Nevil** was chomping at the bit to speak (our younger Members unfamiliar with the phase can Google it), and talk he did. He reminded us to fill out those incident reports (sticking to the facts), and also that the Referee Development Program (RPD) meetings were continuing in Glendora and elsewhere, and were a great way to improve our skills and get upgrades. The Soccer Nation expo (put on by Cal South) was also being held February 8 - 9.

**Steve "Check Is In The Mail" Brandon** took his turn to pass out some checks and told us about 1099's. Then, to everyone's relief, **Veto "Jersey Boy" Galati** announced that he had nothing to say, and the meeting was adjourned.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, December 16, 2013**

- Accepted application for Membership from **Trevor Wiseman**
- Still looking for a Director of Mentoring. Veto will put together a job description
- WH will contact Manny about Soccer One
- New contract signed for Manhattan Beach league. Rules modified again
- Assessor fee will be \$25
- SSBRA covered 5800 games in 2013 (!)
- Follow-up needed to complete a disciplinary issue

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, January 23, 2014**

- The Board met with a Member at their request to discuss an item of concern
- Mike has completed some additional training with a Member
- Accepted application for Membership from Christopher Hinz

- Board approved Veto's job description and **Ralph Quiroz** for Mentoring Director
- Larry Stern will continue as Training Director but not as a Member of the Board, at his request
- Our proposal to South Bay Sports was not accepted. Dennis Fox invited SSBRA to submit a proposal in a year's time
- Steve McCall has asked to speak at the January meeting in his role as SBPSL liason
- Assigner fees for friendlies will be collected by the referees at the game site and passed on to the Assigner, as appropriate
- State Cup is coming, there will be fewer games available than in years past
- Contracts are in place for Manhattan Beach, Beverly Hills and Lawndale.
- We have never had contracts for CSL, DSL, PSL and J-league, but these are set to go too based on the usual "handshake" agreements
- A new friendly "Chevon" tournament is good to go

## NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

**THE NEXT MEETING IS ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2014 AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE LIBRARY OF NORTH TORRANCE HIGH SCHOOL, 3620 182<sup>ND</sup> ST. (AT YUKON - SEE SSBRA.ORG FOR DETAILED MAPS). COME AND FIND OUT ABOUT UPCOMING STATE AND NATIONAL CUP GAMES, EXPERIENCE CAL SOUTH TRAINING, AND ENJOY A SPECIAL SURPRISE!**

### Quote of the Month (attributed to Friedrich Nietzsche)

"The most common form of human stupidity is forgetting what one is trying to do."



**"I don't believe it's a concussion,  
but out of an abundance of caution,  
I've called for an attorney."**

## Happens All the Time (attributed to Oscar Wilde)

“In America, the young are always ready to give to those who are older than themselves the full benefits of their inexperience.”

## Doing Good Work (Recent news article, submitted by Veto Galati)



By **Larry Altman**, Daily Breeze

**Z Dewart** says she doesn't feel like anyone's hero, but the Torrance resident still welcomes the opportunity to talk about the Allison Dewart Memorial Scholarship Foundation. "I don't feel like I do that much," she said. Dewart, however, does plenty, all in the name and memory of her daughter, **Allison Dewart**, a West High School graduate and Loyola Marymount University student whose life was cut far too soon and unnecessarily in 2006.

Since 2007, 14 young women from West High have received Allison Dewart Memorial Scholarships totalling \$20,000 to send them to college.

Dewart and her husband, **Michael Dewart** (a former SSBRA Member), established the scholarship after donations poured in following the Jan. 7, 2006, death of their daughter, Allison, an 18-year-old woman who starred on the soccer field. Allison, along with 19-year-old South High School graduate **Michella Matasso** were killed when a wrong-way drunken driver plowed into Matasso's car on a freeway in Rancho Bernardo. Three other young women in the car were

seriously hurt. The crash also killed the wrong-way driver, **Atso Sedor**, 37, of Murrieta.

At first, the Dewarts suggested donors send money in Allison's memory to West High and the 1736 Family Crisis Center, haven for victims of domestic violence, runaway and homeless youth, homeless families and others in need of assistance. Allison often made donations of her own there. "1736 said they never had so many contributions made for anybody as they did for Allison," she said. Money sent to West helped establish a scholarship that since has become endowed, has a foundation and board of directors, and has continued to draw contributions. "We decided we wanted to give the money to girls like Allison, so not the top of their class, not the bottom of their class, but girls involved in athletics and who were well-rounded," Dewart said. Girls must have a grade-point average from 3.2 to 3.8, compete in athletics, be involved in school clubs and activities, and perform community service — all things Allison was doing to prepare for college. Allison volunteered at the Salvation Army and provided free child care at her church so parents could attend board meetings. Recipients of the Allison Dewart Memorial Scholarship have gone on to school at UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, San Diego State University, El Camino College, Cal Poly Pomona, Santa Monica City College, Elon University, Cal State Monterey Bay, Seattle Pacific University, UC Davis, UC Berkeley and Biola.

"It was so important for Allison going to college. She just looked forward to that and really wanted to. She only got one semester there," her mother said. "It's nice that we follow these girls through their four years."

Every year, the young women send in their grades, along with a note for Dewart. Dewart said it makes her feel like she is helping the women do "what Allison always wanted to do." In addition to the scholarship, Dewart, family and friends have participated in Mothers Against Drunk Driving walks and activities to collect funds to battle drunken driving. She regularly organizes a fundraiser at El Paso Cantina in Torrance to raise money for the scholarship. Dewart said she does it for her daughter, instead of planning for her graduation and wedding. "People all say how strong I am, and giving and loving," she said. "This is what I have to do. This is how you learn to live with your life the way it is. You find the joy that is still there and you find ways to continue a relationship with your child even though she is not there."

## **Thought of the Month (attributed to Nelson DeMille)**

"The problem with doing nothing is not knowing when you are finished."



**Kirk and Colin Jackson** know how to enjoy themselves at the State Cup in Lancaster

## **Something to Keep in Mind at the Next Monthly Meeting (Recent horoscope)**

"You hate getting stuck in a boring meeting, but your attendance will be extremely important."

## Our Assigner Has a Reminder for Us Too (submitted by Bill Cook)

As professional referees we must expect a certain amount of sideline grumbling for, as we know, every call is seen by one side as a great call while the other side, not so much and they will voice their displeasure. That is all part of the game and we must tune that out.

However, when the sideline behavior becomes persistent, insulting or abusive then the referee **MUST** act. By allowing persistent, insulting and abusive behavior you are sending a message that this type of behavior is acceptable and it is most certainly not.

It is not fair to your ARS nor is it fair to the referee teams who will get the teams after you when you have not dealt with the improper behavior.

You have the tools in your game management tool box, you just need to pull them out and use them.

1. ***Never engage the sidelines verbally***, those of us who have been around for awhile know that **YOU CAN NEVER WIN AN ARGUMENT WITH THE SIDELINES**, so don't even try.
2. Once the sideline behavior has become improper, **YOU MUST THEN APPROACH THE COACH/ADMINISTRATOR**, who, by League rules is responsible for their sidelines.
3. You **MUST** tell the Coach/Administrator, **politely**, that their sidelines has become unruly and **MUST** be asked to control their behavior.
4. Most Coaches/Administrators will then take the proper action but, if not, then you **MUST** inform the Coach/Administrator, **politely**, that you will be forced to suspend the match until such time as the sidelines becomes cooperative so the match can continue.
5. If the behavior does not improve then you **MUST** approach the Coach/Administrator again and caution him/her for Unsporting Behavior and remind him/her that if the bad behavior still continues then the Coach/Administrator will be sent for Unprofessional Conduct and the match will be suspended.
6. If the match is suspended for sideline misconduct then most of our Leagues will make the offending team forfeit the match.

Usually by step 4 the problem is solved and the game can continue and we certainly don't want to see a sudden rash of suspended games because of sideline misconduct as that is the absolute **LAST RESORT**.

## We All Know This Guy (attributed to John Bright)

“He is a self-made man and worships his creator.”

## Trials and Tribulations of the Soccer Referee (reprint, submitted by W. Howell)

Your life changes forever once you start refereeing 100 or more games a year. To begin with, since so much of your free time is taken up with it, your old non-soccer friends eventually give up on you, as you are never around for fishing, golfing, watching non-soccer games on TV, or just hanging out. It is hard for them to understand that you can be so interested in a ‘strange’ activity like this, or that it can become so consuming. Your friends talk about the way you were in the days Before

Soccer (commonly known as B.S.), and wonder what happened.

For your family it is worse, even if you got involved in soccer in the first place to support your kids, and only took-up refereeing as your own hobby later. All of us have had to answer the question “you’re not going to spend the whole week-end at soccer fields again, are you?” from a spouse or spouse-equivalent. The answer that I do not recommend, even if it is accurate, is “well, yes, actually...”. Many of the family activities that you used to do together do not happen anymore, or at least as often. Gardening and yard-work, activities that some of us like to do as a hobby in moderation, never seem to happen. One’s house becomes a neighborhood example of deferred maintenance. Repairs and upkeep are constantly put-off, only the most dire of emergency repairs gets your attention, and those really cool projects and improvements that you would like to do, never get done. In addition to your absences, this neglect of normal stuff annoys everyone in the family, even yourself, after awhile. All of us make choices, and there are usually more choices than time to do them all, as choosing soccer can make abundantly clear. Without a supportive family, it would not work out very well all.

At least one would think you can escape this when you go back to your regular job on Monday after a busy two days of athletic activity. But even then, it quickly becomes obvious that the little real interest that your co-workers have in the answer to the question “How was your week-end?” goes to zero when you start talking about yellow cards and penalty kicks. The amount of indifference in these kinds of casual social settings can be monumental, and helps develop a robust feeling of general isolation. Even the neighbors start to have the same reaction. Though they usually do not laugh out loud when they see you coming and going from your house in your referee colors, it does mark you as one of the odd guys on the street.

The physical conditioning is an aspect of all of this that becomes part of your life. Especially as you get older, training becomes more important if you do not want to disgrace nor injure yourself out there. You must keep at it all the time, even when you are not really in the mood. It does make you fitter and generally healthier than your B.S. friends, family and neighbors, but for some reason it also seems to make them more suspicious. It probably has something to do with those mysterious night-time runs you take through the streets while everyone else is watching Monday Night football. Injuries are also a real problem, and probably the one thing that we all secretly fear the most. Add in the classes, meetings and assessments of your performance, and you learn that doing this job is something that can take on a life of it’s own.

But with every game, you know that you are making these sacrifices in a good cause, helping and promoting organized team sports with all of the positive things that come out of that. Unfortunately, the coaches, parents, fans and players do not look at it that way. Each game is an opportunity to have your ego deflated a little more by complaints and insults. Some of them are rather good at this, and seem to have made referee-baiting a hobby of their own. The more games you do, the more abuse you take, until it gets to be a part of your life. Most referees stop listening to this stuff after a short time, and many get secret amusement at the antics of the participants as they become excited. Still, there is a universal lack of respect, let alone expressed appreciation, from those involved, except of course for your fellow referees.

All of this, and other aspects, is probably why the drop-out rate of soccer referees is so high, up to 40 % a year by some estimates. One hopes that most of these folks do not drop out of the sports programs altogether, but still help out in other capacities. As for the rest of us who stick with it from one year to the next, it has to be one of the best hobbies around, and most of us would not want to do anything else.

## **Let’s Hope You Don’t Know This Guy (attributed to Samuel Johnson)**

“He is not only dull himself; he is the cause of dullness in others”.

## America, Finland, Education and Sports (Recent interview)

**Fareed Zakaria** speaks with journalist **Amanda Ripley**, author of 'The Smartest Kids in the World and How They Got That Way,' about what other countries can teach the U.S. about education. America is exceptional in many ways. Sadly, secondary education is not one of them. The most recent rankings for the Program for International Student Assessment has American 15 year-olds ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in reading, 17<sup>th</sup> in science and 25<sup>th</sup> in math, among other developed nations. Countries like Finland and South Korea always rank near the top.

F.Z.: So what did you find about those three countries (including Poland) that struck you? You actually have three models that you say that they represent. What are they?

A.R.: So, South Korea is the pressure cooker model...Finland is, in many ways, the opposite extreme of South Korea. Finland is what I call the utopia model – they've really invested in quality over quantity and the kids are, on average, doing less homework than our kids, but still achieving at the very top of the world on tests of critical thinking and math, reading and science, with very little variation from school to school or from socioeconomic status from one to the other...

F.Z.: What makes Finland work? Why are those test scores so high?

A.R.: One thing that they've done that's very clear and is very unusual around the world is, in the late 1960s, they shut down their teacher training colleges, which were like ours, of highly variable selectivity and quality. And they reopened them in the top eight most elite universities in the land as part of a broader reform of higher education. When they did that, it set off a series of cascading consequences that I don't even know that they realized. One thing that happened is the obvious – you eventually have teachers who, themselves, have the advantage of a very strong education, which makes it easier to teach higher order thinking skills.

F.Z.: ... (Finland) draws their teachers from the top 10 or 20 percent of the graduating class. We tend to draw teachers from the bottom third.

A.R.: We educate twice as many teachers as we need. And in many, many of these (U.S.) colleges, there's a very low bar for entry. So you don't have to have very good grades yourself in order to get in. Finland is unusual, yes, for doing that. But I think what's really surprising about it, and what I noticed when I spent time with kids in Finland, is that the kids pick up on this. So there's a signaling effect, like economists would say, where you know how hard it is to get into teacher training colleges...it sends this message to everyone – the parents, the taxpayers, the politicians and the students – that this is serious, that you are serious about education and that teaching is really hard, not just in rhetoric, but in reality. And so it adds this credibility to the whole enterprise that helps kids buy into the promise of education.

F.Z.: You also point out something about all these countries – and this is true of all three of them – which is, there is almost no sports in the best schools in the world.

A.R.: Right. Kids play sports, but not in school. It's sort of separate from school – pickup games or community rec centers, but it's not a part of the core mission of school. This is controversial. I get in a lot of trouble when I talk about this, because Americans love their sports and American kids love their sports..... The problem is that sports can sometimes, if you don't constantly keep it contained, eat away at the mission of school, which is supposed to be education, right? So when we are routinely spending two to three times per football player what we spend per math student, when we routinely have teachers leaving to go coach away games and have to bring in substitutes, and we're spending tens of thousands of dollars on buses for the marching band, that's something that should be weighed against the benefit...the systems are quite different in all these countries, the structures are different. The one thing that's true is there's a psychology that says school is hard. You've got to spend a lot of time at it. You've got to work hard. You've got to succeed. And that's missing in America. It's almost exactly the same attitude many of us take towards sports, towards academics. It's literally: this is important, there's a big contest at the end, not everyone is going to win. To get better, critically, you have to practice and work harder, you know, and get more help. But you're not innately just bad at math. So that's a really powerful combination, when you take that intensity on education, when you make it rigorous through highly trained, highly supported teachers and then back it up. Kids know if this is bogus or not.....I mean you could make a case to pay teachers more, to give them more freedom in the classroom, and to finally give that profession the respect it deserves.

F.Z.: Good luck getting sports out, though.

A.R.: Yes, forget about that. That's never going to happen.



## Yet Another Thought of the Month (Recent horoscope)

“Usually the one with the most courage isn’t going on and on about how brave he’s being. Courage often looks like quietly showing up and doing what has to be done.”

## This Explanation Could Take Awhile

