



# WASRC BRIEFING FOR NEW REFEREES

The following information was originally compiled by Brian Allen of Seattle Chapter for the Washington State Referee Committee (WASRC), and is subject to periodic updates. It is meant to help answer the most frequently asked questions by new referees, and serve as resource in your ongoing development as a referee. We welcome any questions or feedback about this document.

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So you've passed your test, received your badge, and are now registered as a referee: **congratulations!!**

For starters, please check with your local Chapter president whose name you can find by going to **www.wasrc.org** and then clicking on "**Administration**" and "**Referee Chapters**". Most referee chapters have their directory of officers listed on their website. If there is no website in existence yet then you may consult with one of your peers to find out the "who's who" of your local chapter. Try to attend the monthly chapter meeting where you will find people to be very helpful. So now what?

## FIRST STEPS

There are three important steps you should complete right away, on the web:

- 1) The Area Referee Administrator (the person who took your registration forms at the clinic) will register you on the State Referee website within a day or two. Once you get the "Welcome to WASRC.org" email, go to [www.wasrc.org](http://www.wasrc.org) and make sure your profile is correct. You'll find that once your profile is registered on the State site, you can synchronize your contact information with your local chapter website. You'll also gain access to more information and referee forms at the state level.
- 2) **Register** yourself on your **local chapter website**. Find your local chapter by looking it up in WASRC.org under "Administration: Chapters". Your local chapter is the most important resource for you to find information and to sign up for games. If you have any problems registering, please send an email to the webmaster, and they will help to get you signed up and ready to go.
- 3) As a new referee you will start your refereeing career by working **Youth** games. In the state of Washington, anybody who comes in contact with kids on the soccer pitch in ANY capacity (Coaches, Assistants, Referees) must obtain what's called a **Risk Management Acceptance** (RMA) card. If you didn't already fill out a Risk Management Application when you took the clinic, you should go to the Washington Youth Soccer website ([www.WSYSA.com](http://www.WSYSA.com)). Look in the main menu under "Administration: Forms & Publications: Risk Management Application". Do it ASAP, since it takes several days to process. ***You can't referee a youth game without one!*** Contact the **Head Youth Assignor** of your chapter for more information.

Explore all three of these sites. Each has a wealth of information about refereeing in general, and the specific procedures, resources, and key individuals who will help you navigate the system. The "**Referee**" and "**Services**" sections are the most important ones for your use.

You'll notice that game assignment happens under the **"Match Inquiry"** function of the *Referee* section, but that you're not able to sign up for any games yet (because you're a new referee). For now, you'll be able to get matches by request to the **Assignor** who is responsible for getting referees to fill games for a given **League** or **Club**.

Use the **"List Assignors"** function under the referee section to find out who the current assignors are for your chapter. You should contact the appropriate assignor in order to introduce yourself and discuss how to begin getting assignments to referee matches.

Depending upon your past experience, an assignor may decide to give you a **Ranking** right away, which will allow you to **Self-Assign** games up to the level of that ranking. As assignors get to know you better, and have an opportunity to watch you perform on the pitch, they'll grant you higher rankings for the leagues and clubs that they're responsible for. BE PATIENT with this process: it can take a long time to increase your ranking, especially if you're brand new to refereeing (this is not a process you want to rush).

The assignor can help you to get information about the various **League Rules** differences for the games you'll be initially working (yes, despite the class you just completed, there are STILL additional things to learn about game length, substitutions and player cards, plus paperwork and match reporting requirements.)

Now that you're ready to referee, you'll need the proper **Referee Gear**. There are several retail outlets and company representatives here in Washington State who carry referee gear and who will ship purchases. The official supplier of referee gear for USSF is **Official Sports International** ([www.officialsports.com](http://www.officialsports.com)). Their local representative is:

Josh Wilkens (Seattle, WA)

[joshwilkens@yahoo.com](mailto:joshwilkens@yahoo.com)

If you're also interested in working **High School** games, you need to obtain an additional certification from the **Washington Officials Association** as well. But don't worry, it's not a big deal. While the High School rules do vary from the official FIFA Laws of the Game, each chapter usually has a special clinic during both the Spring and Fall season when you can listen to the presentation, find out how to take the online test, and get your WOA badge. Contact your chapter **High School Assignor** for more details about this process.

Finally, you'll need to take the certification test and re-register **every year** from now on. As a **Grade 8** referee you need **five continuing education hours** annually, though this is a pretty easy requirement to fill just by attending chapter meetings. To simplify your re-registration process, keep track of those hours on the appropriate USSF recert form (download a copy from your chapter website). If you ever want to **Upgrade to a Grade 7**, you'll need to keep careful track of the games you work, including information about who assigned you the match and whether you worked the center or a line. A sample **Game Log** can be found at the WASRC website.

## **MORE ABOUT THE LOCAL SOCCER REFEREES ASSOCIATIONS (SRAs)**

Each SRA holds a monthly meeting, generally during the mid week of each month in the evening. The meeting includes a 30-minute business meeting and a one hour referee instruction session about various aspects of becoming a better referee. You should plan on attending these meetings. It's particularly important for new referees to attend local chapter meetings, for several reasons:

- 1) You'll get to meet other referees and assignors, and they'll get to meet you.
- 2) The instructional sessions count towards the five continuing-education hours which you're required to complete towards your certification renewal the following year.

- 3) Re-Certification tests are offered (at the appropriate time of year) before certain meetings.
- 4) Referee clothing and equipment is frequently available for sale before and after meetings.
- 5) And last but not least: You can pick up your paycheck unless your chapter has direct deposit procedure!

Special **Clinics** and **Workshops** are also important meetings for you to attend in order to become a better referee and take yourself to the next level of officiating (you can find a full list of ALL clinics happening in Washington on the SRC website under the **Instruction** section).

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Here are some answers to other frequently asked questions about refereeing soccer in Washington:

### ***How many referees are there in Washington?***

The number for registered referees changes from year to year. As of August, 2008 there were over 4,600 registered referees in the state of Washington. This includes assessors, assignors, and instructors.

### ***I think there's something wrong with my registration. Who do I talk to about this?***

The Area Referee Administrator (ARA) is the person you need to talk to about this. Ask any officer in your chapter who the ARA is for your area or contact **Phoebe Russell, Registration Staff** at (206) 933-5769 or [phoeberuss@comcast.net](mailto:phoeberuss@comcast.net).

### ***I heard that I'll get in trouble if I referee games for "outlaw" leagues. Is this true?***

You won't get in "trouble", but there are some things you need to be aware of when working for soccer leagues who are not affiliated with the WSSA or Washington Youth Soccer (the official USSF entities for the state of Washington). If you choose to referee for them, you must NEVER wear your USSF badge while doing so. You should verify what their insurance coverage is like, since you are NOT covered by the USSF in ANY way when you are working a non-certified match. While the level of play in some of these leagues is quite high and can be useful in developing your skills as a referee, you should also be aware that you cannot count any of these games towards a USSF upgrade – and you may be running a significant liability risk if they do not have proper insurance coverage.

### ***Oh man, I just gave out two yellow cards and a red. Do I need to tell someone about this? And what am I supposed to do with these game sheets, anyway?***

Each league has its own rules and procedures regarding misconduct reports. Some, like all Youth leagues, require full reports for everything. Others, like some Adult leagues, just require an email or phone call with infraction, team name, and player identification number. Check with your assignor for the correct procedure to follow. Most leagues also require that you mail, fax or email them the game sheets afterwards, or you won't get paid! Again, ask your assignor for more details.

### ***What are Rankings and how do they work?***

Most leagues are divided into **Divisions** of varying skill levels. Higher-level games are more challenging to referee, requiring more experience and skill. In order to standardize and simplify the way matches are assigned, the idea of **Rankings** was created. Simply put, the higher your ranking for a given league, the wider range of games you are allowed to referee (and importantly, self-assign on the website).

You'll eventually receive an initial ranking from each assignor you work with. As you work more games, gaining more experience and skill, you may find yourself asking the assignor for more difficult

games. When you are able to successfully complete those matches without any problems, and as assignors get to know you better (and watch you in action), they may choose to slightly raise your ranking. Or, you may ask them about it, and see if they think it's time for you to begin working more challenging games. A higher ranking is desirable because it allows you to self-assign a wider range of matches on the website, making it easier and more convenient to fit games into the rest of your life (remember, the rest of your life?)

***I keep hearing about all these tournaments, but can't find out how to work them as a referee. How can I find out when and where all the tournaments are, and who to contact about this?***

Fairly complete lists of the tournaments going on in Washington (with contact information) are available as the WSSA (adult) and Washington Youth Soccer (youth) websites. You should also ask around at chapter meetings for information about additional tournaments which may be happening in your area. Many tournaments are NOT assigned through the websites, so you will need to contact the referee coordinator for tournaments you're interested in working. The general tournament contact person can point you in the right direction.

***I'm a little confused about the different websites. Why don't they all have the same features?***

Each chapter maintains its own website, choosing from a range of features available to them. Some chapters have more resources available for this, and have implemented more advanced features. An effort to synchronize data between local chapter websites and the SRC website has already begun, and improvement to each website is an ongoing process. Future features will include online registration for clinics, re-certification testing, practice tests, and other useful tools.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND ADVICE**

This briefing should help to get you started, but it's important to emphasize again: USE THE WEBSITES! The SRC website has a great links section which will point you to the other chapters in our area. Referees frequently work matches for more than one chapter, especially in the Puget Sound region, so check with assignors of other chapters.

Here are some other important websites with resources for you:

<b>FIFA</b>	Fédération Internationale de Football Association	<b><a href="http://www.fifa.com">www.fifa.com</a></b>
<b>USSF</b>	United States Soccer Federation	<b><a href="http://www.ussoccer.com">www.ussoccer.com</a></b>
<b>USL</b>	United Soccer Leagues	<b><a href="http://www.uslsoccer.com">www.uslsoccer.com</a></b>
<b>USASA</b>	United States Amateur Soccer Association	<b><a href="http://www.usasa.com">www.usasa.com</a></b>
<b>USYSA</b>	United States Youth Soccer Association	<b><a href="http://www.usysa.org">www.usysa.org</a></b>

Remember that watching professional or semi-pro matches can be a great way to gain insight into the challenges of refereeing, so try to catch some good games as a spectator and above all, HAVE FUN!

<b><a href="http://www.seattlesoundersfc.com">www.seattlesoundersfc.com</a></b>	The NEW MLS team in Seattle
<b><a href="http://www.pgepark.com/timbers">www.pgepark.com/timbers</a></b>	Portland's A-League team
<b><a href="http://www.whitecapsfc.com">www.whitecapsfc.com</a></b>	Vancouver (BC) A-League team
<b><a href="http://www.soccertv.com">www.soccertv.com</a></b>	A great site that lists soccer games on TV, worldwide
<b><a href="http://www.soccercommercials.com">www.soccercommercials.com</a></b>	You'll laugh, you'll cry. But mostly you'll laugh.