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So It Begins.....

Every Fall Season starts with our Roadshow Recertification! This year we were so fortunate to have Kermit Quisenberry, former FIFA AR, as our Lead Instructor! We hosted clinics in Mobile, Montgomery and Birmingham. We were disappointed with the turnout for this event as we received incredible reviews! *"This was the best roadshow yet. Kermit did a wonderful job of explaining not just the highest levels but also bringing it back to the typical Saturday Sunday Rec through D1 matches. I really appreciated that this was an interactive session with good back and forth to elicit participation from all attendees and generated discussion that showed thoughtful consideration of the points."* was the observation by Michael Burnap, Birmingham!



How do I get selected to go to Regionals? Making a good impression counts!

I am often asked by referees on how they can be selected to some of the premiere events such as: President's Cup, Georgia State cup and Regionals to name a few. What are some of the criteria used by the SRC to select referees to these events? For example, did you know that our State has a program for youth referee development called the Smokin' Aces? In the next few paragraphs I will attempt to answer some of these questions in the hopes of inspiring referees to become more involved, improving their skills and most of all using these skills for the enjoyment of the game.

So you are a new referee or you have been doing this for some time, what do you expect out of your referee career? For some of you, you are happy to certify as a grade 8 each year and support your local area and do some tournaments. For some others, you have higher goals, you want to upgrade and want to become the next FIFA referee. In both cases, we have programs in place to help you become a better referee and attain your goals.

It starts with getting certified each year. And what better way than to attend one of our State-wide recertification clinics where we bring in National and FIFA referees as instructors. This is also a good opportunity for you to meet face to face with some of our SRC members. During the State League season, it's a good idea to keep in constant contact with your assignor. If you feel comfortable at a certain level, request to be assigned to older age groups. Remember that no matter the level of competition, or age group you are refereeing, there is always an opportunity for learning and improving. For example, if you have done many U10/U11/U12 games and they are easy for you, the next time you get assigned to a U10 game, set a goal for yourself to be no further than 10 yards from the ball for the whole match. This will increase your work rate and prepare you for the larger fields. Besides the assignors, we have mentors and assessors who attend the many tournaments in our state and can watch you during a game and provide feedback on what you need to work on to improve your game. Your best opportunity to gain visibility is to attend our State Cup (either Spring or Fall) where we have mentors, assessors and most of the SRC present.

Identifying talent is a continuous goal of the SRC. We are lucky to have the ODP event for both boys and girls in Alabama each year during the June-July time frame. For this event, we ask the assignors in our state to give us their recommendations on referee candidates who would most benefit from this training. While the event does not pay referees, the training referees receive from National and FIFA level instructors is invaluable and really is your first step in getting recognized by those who can help you the most if you want to advance your referee career. Another way to get recognized is by attending our State Cup. It does not matter whether you are a center referee or assistant referee, what matters is how well you perform at your position together with your attitude and desire to learn and improve.

It is from these venues, local tournaments, ODP and State Cup that the SRC selects candidates for male and female youth referee of the year as well as candidates to go to Regionals and other select events. As for how you can be selected to be part of the Smokin' Aces, there are some requirements you have to meet such as age and being recommended by a member of the Smokin' Aces.

Written by Ohannes Younanian, SYRA

final thoughts...

Refereeing is a very important part of soccer in Alabama, the United States, and the world! However, referees, like any other athlete, must take care of themselves. Accepting too many games in a day or a weekend does nothing to help the program. You cannot possibly be at your best doing a large number of games in a single day. We must recruit and keep more referees so we can do a great job for every game we accept! Hold yourself to a higher professional standard and don't try to do too much!

We wanted to share with you some of the general observations from the Fall Season. Hopefully, these will assist you:

We, as Referees and Assistant Referees, have to be very careful of **ball watching** during running play. For the Referee, always remember that a ball does not commit the foul. Players commit fouls and if you are concentrating on the ball on the ground, you may miss some activities that might require a word or even a punishment. Open up your view of the play and players, just as you, the player, would if you had the ball in one of your games and were looking for the next opportunity. Assistant Referees need to ensure that they are primarily monitoring the offside line as that is, for the most part, the area that a Referee cannot see. You need to make sure that the majority of your concentrated effort is with the second-to-the-last defender or the ball whichever is closest to the goalline. Do not get caught ball watching when the ball is in the other half of the field. Your need to catch up to your offside line could be a critical call in any of these matches.

We need to ensure our **positioning** on any set play allows us the greatest view of activities as well as gets us out of the way of players. Always make sure you continually check for players behind you that you might be in their way or they may be able to use you for a "pick" because of your positioning. This is especially important as you get closer to the goalline or to a goal-scoring opportunity. We should never be the reason a player cannot get to the ball to defend. If you are having trouble figuring out where to go, pick an attacking midfielder to tuck behind until you can judge the direction of the play.

Be prepared to modify your diagonal patrol of the field if the play is pinching farther out than normal. You want to make sure that you are **close enough to play** to be influential, if needed. Do not become a slave to a strict diagonal but move continuously with play. Remember, a gentle jog will save your energy when you have multiple games in a

weekend and you don't have to have wild sprints to get everywhere. Stay moving and get to where you need to be. Also, make sure you are always prepared for any challenge of the keeper. You need to be close enough to get there if needed so don't stop at that imaginary wall about 20 yards out.

Everyone needs to ensure that their **fitness** is at its highest level. If it is not, you need to look for a fitness program that works for you. You should not be refereeing to get fit; you should be getting fit to ensure you are the best referee. Your mental capabilities diminish as your body tires so you have to be as fit as possible when you are doing multiple games in a weekend.

Check your **whistles!** You should be able to talk with the whistle. If you cannot, change it! The players, coaches, and spectators should know what you are calling by the tone of your whistle. Make sure it is continually giving the correct message!

Finally, **concentrate, concentrate, concentrate.....** don't let yourself get distracted. If you are finding yourself getting distracted by something, such as a bold/loud coach, then it is time to deal with it. Concentration is the key to making great calls. Concentration is the key to ensuring you have good communication with the rest of your refereeing team. Concentration is the key to making sure that coaches are managing themselves well and never taking the game into disrepute!

Keep working hard!



Klaus Staefe, SDA, as Referee Coordinator at the USWNT Victory Tour



Fitness Test for Grade 7 and 6 plus those who wish to upgrade will be conducted Jan 10, 2016, 8:00 a.m., Prattville High School!



SRC

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Contact us at alasoccerref.com

Are You Ready to Upgrade?

If you are ready to upgrade from Grade 8 to 7, you need to plan to attend the Fitness Test and the Intermediate Clinic on Sunday, January 10, 2016, Prattville High School. You should notify Klaus Staefe, SDA, immediately of your intention and let Kris Bailey, SDI, know that you intend to attend that clinic!

If you wish to upgrade from Grade 7 to Grade 6, you need to notify Klaus Staefe, SDA.

Your upgrade process starts with your first event!