



# Western New York State Referee Association

Report to New York State West Youth Soccer Association - 2016

*William A. Campbell, State Youth Referee Administrator*

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## **REGISTRATION REPORT:**

The referee population remained about the same with 1769 referee registrations in 2016 from 1740 referees in 2015. Due to increasing issues with both the USSF registration database and ArbiterSports the SRC has determined that it will be changing back to the Game Officials registration system because it interfaces better with the new USSF database. We have had increasing difficulties using the ArbiterSports software in many ways. They appear to have made a corporate decision to only worry about their college and high school sports clients and seem uninterested in dealing with issues faced by USSF referees, assignors and administrators. For this reason we expect that over the next few years, many if not all of our districts will be changing over to GameOfficials for assigning referees. Our number of state level referees (who focus primarily on higher level matches) declined again significantly from 46 in 2015 to 27 in 2016. This is not viewed as a major issue however because it was caused mainly by the restructuring of grades by USSF two years ago. Also due to some new regulations regarding who can and cannot be an emeritus referee, it is very possible that this number may rise significantly in 2017. Our number of Grade 7 (entry level adult) referees increased again significantly from 59 referees in 2015 to 81 in 2016.

## **RECREATIONAL YOUTH REFEREE PROGRAM:**

With the new policy adopted by USSF that took effect in 2016 that ALL affiliated games MUST be assigned by a USSF certified assignor, clubs should be aware that if they need referees to handle these younger aged (U14 or lower) recreational matches, they should contact the SYRA ([syra@wnyreferee.org](mailto:syra@wnyreferee.org)) to set up instruction for these new referees. If a club has not been using a certified assignor for their games, they should contact the State Director of Assignors ([sac@wnyreferee.org](mailto:sac@wnyreferee.org)) to get a list of certified assignors. There is no longer any allowance based on whether or not the assignor is paid... (s)he MUST be certified. This was adopted to give national more control on whether or not the referees doing these matches are doing so in accordance with national policy.

## **REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COMPETITIONS:**

Western New York referees enjoyed another solid year at the regional and national level.

**REGION 1 PRESIDENT'S CUP:** Walthough NYSW and WNYSRA were not planning on sending any referees or teams to this event, WNYSRA was asked to provide referees for PAWest who decided not to support the event with referees. PAWest paid all of the referee expenses. WNYSRA sent 5 referees to the tournament this year in Maryland. Attending the tournament were Josh Bovet, Charles Lowecey, Douglas Scaffidi, Yasir Soliman and Antonio Triana. Based on their performance at the event, both Charles Lowecey and Josh Bovet were invited to the National Finals. Josh was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

**REGION 1 ODP TOURNAMENT:** 10 referees and 2 assessors attended the event held the weekend after state cup in the Lawrenceville/Princeton area of New Jersey. Assessors attending were Dick Reif and Sam Akinbami. Referees in attendance were Bojan Atanasovski, Mason Callahan, Erin Buckley, Khiem Chau, Charles Lowecey, Yaser Soliman, Douglas Scaffidi, Garrett Brzozowiec, Amy Shmoys and Wyatt Buerkle. Due to the level of their performance at this tournament, Khiem Chau, Charles Lowecey and Mason Callahan were invited and attended the regional finals in Kirkwood, DE. This

is the highest number of referees attending the regional finals from WNYSRA ever. The challenges being posed in 2017 with the tournament being split in half and taking place in both New Jersey and Delaware may pose some interesting problems for our state.

*REGION 1 DIRECTOR'S PREMIER LEAGUE FINALS:* Western New York nominated three referees to attend the finals in Kirkwood Delaware. They were Daniel Kaluzhnyy of Binghamton, Douglas Scaffidi of Buffalo and Jonathan Bilinski from the Soutern Tier district. Both Jonathan Bilinski and Daniel Kaluzhnyy were invited to represent the Premier League at the Regional Championships. Daniel Kaluzhnyy was unable to accept due to prior work committments.

*REGION 1 CHAMPIONSHIPS:* 15 referees and 2 assessors attended the Region 1 Championships at Huntington, WV this year. Six of the fifteen referees were attending for the first time. Assessors attending were Dick Reif and Art Jaspe. Referees invited to the tournament were Mackenzie App, Bojan Atanasovski, Jonathan Bilinski, Wyatt Buerkle, Mason Callahan, Hannah Geitner, Danny Iadanza ,Charles Loweecey, Daniel McCagg, Alex Parent, Joseph Revell, David Rousseau and Amy Shmoys. Unfortunately, our 16th invited referee, Kheim Chau, was injured at the ODP Regional Finals and was unable to make the trip.

All but 1 of our referees were assigned to semis with centers going to Mason Callahan, Under 12 Boys, Antonio Triana, Under 14 Girls and Bojan Atanosovski, Under 17 Girls. Six of our referees received final assignments. Those were David Rousseau, AR2, Under 18 Girls; Amy Shmoys, 4th Official, Under 14 Girls; Hannah Geitner, Under 19 Girls, 4th Official; Mackenzie App, AR1, Under 15 Girls; Charles Loweecey, Under 12 Boys, AR1; and Jonathan Bilinski, AR1, Under 12 Boys 8v8.

**OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE:**

WNYSRA is under continuing pressure to support the Region 1 ODP camps in July in Rhode Island. We have not been supporting these camps in recent years because the games have been slowly, over the years, become less competitive and the instruction offered has become quite basic. We have been using our WNY Academy to train more of our referees on more competitive games for less money. We may be required to send a few pre-State Cup referees to the tournament either this year or in future years.

WNYSRA now has two FIFA Assistant Referees. Amanda Ross was placed on the panel a few years ago and now Kathleen Nesbitt has been added. We also had one National Assistant Referee (David Mon) and a new National Candidate (Lauren Dearman.)

Respectfully submitted,

***William A. Campbell***

*State Youth Referee Administrator*

*New York State Youth Soccer Association and the Western New York State Referees' Association*

## From the State Director of Instruction - Thomas Ross

Several districts struggled to fill entry clinics this year, and we have not been able to identify a reason for that. Some early courses had to be cancelled for lack of registration. Districts hope to reverse that trend in the coming year, and will be counting on the local leagues and clubs to assist in marketing the training classes.

The 2016 season brought significant changes in the application of the offside law. In addition to providing training to referees, we offered to provide training to coaches through the various leagues. Only two leagues took us up on the offer – in Rochester and Buffalo – and instruction was provided to some coaches at these sessions. This is an ongoing process and we will continue to build on the instruction provided to our referees in coming training sessions.

We held another Academy for developing referees. Seventeen “up and coming” referees were selected to participate in the Academy held at a local tournament. This year we invited one of the referee administrators from the NWSL to attend as a guest instructor and observer. Brenda Wright, a national referee coach, attended the event and provided classroom instruction and on-the-field feedback to our officials. Brenda is one of the people responsible for assigning officials to the NWSL matches, and she identified several people who she’d like to see at certain events as possible candidates to be added to the pool of referees working the women’s professional matches. We will be following up by providing an opportunity for some of these referees to attend high level tournaments.

A new addition this year was our first Annual General Meeting (AGM). The event was held at a downtown Rochester hotel on February 19-21, 2016. The schedule included training sessions, both for large groups and smaller break-out sessions. High level instructors and officials from around the country provided the instruction, and the agenda included a banquet on Saturday night. About 80 officials attended the events of the weekend, a decent showing for a first effort. Our administrators were very happy with the event, and attendees gave excellent reviews. We are already planning the 2017 event, and anticipate a significant increase in attendance because of word-of-mouth talk from last year’s attendees.

We are already looking forward to 2017 with some level of trepidation. FIFA has implemented the “most dramatic changes in the Laws of the Game in 150 years.” Some changes are minor, but many will result in a complete change in the way the referees do their job. Training material is already being prepared, and we will again offer a shortened training program to interested leagues. This will be a long term process, and referees, coaches, players and spectators will have to allow for the learning curve to take place. More on that in the future.