

NYW Member Clubs Referee Compliance Notice: USSF staff attorney alerts NYSW Member Clubs that they must be officiated by USSF registered Referee's.

In a recent letter to NYW President, Michael Radecke, USSF Staff Attorney, Gregory Fike, writes in part:

*"I am writing to address issues regarding the assignment of referees for soccer matches sanctioned by New York State West Youth Soccer Association ("NYSW"). NYSW is a State Association member of United States Soccer Federation. As a member, NYSW has agreed to abide by and be governed by USSF Bylaws and Policies. **One of those policies requires that all matches played by members of NYSW must be officiated by USSF registered referees. This includes both "recreational" and "competitive" matches.***

Specifically, USSF Policy 531-8 provides that:

No one shall officiate as a referee or assistant referee in any match under the sanction or jurisdiction (direct or indirect) of the United States Soccer Federation who is not registered with the Federation for the current year unless that person is a visiting foreign referee who has been properly accredited by his or her national association.

To be clear, all members of USSF must comply with Policy 531-8, including U.S. Club Soccer, Super-Y League, MLS, USL and all State Associations. To our knowledge, the vast majority of USSF members comply with Policy 531-8 without any problems. Failure to abide by USSF Bylaws and Policies may result in sanctions by USSF, including probation, fines and even expulsion from US SF.

It is our understanding that NYSW wants to ensure that it is in compliance with USSF Policy 531-8, but currently is facing some challenges in that area. Based on statements by the NYSW State Referee Administrator ("SRA") Curt Hamlin, it appears that matches are being played with referees that are not registered with USSF. Furthermore, the SRA believes that very few, if any, matches involving "recreational" teams use USSF registered referees.

While we understand that not all of the matches will be in compliance immediately, it is incumbent upon NYSW to inform its membership about the requirements of USSF Policy 531-8. If the membership of NYSW wants to continue its affiliation with USSF, the membership must come into compliance."

Certainly NY West wants all its member clubs to comply and use certified

referees for all soccer matches, as we see this to be in the best interest of our players. However, the reality is that if we all requested certified referees today, there are not enough referees for our matches. With that in mind, we have two objectives: (1) Help grow the referee population to serve our clubs, and (2) Ensure that we are in compliance by using certified referees.

We need your help on both fronts.

Over the summer months NY West discussed this issue at length with the State Referee Administrator in an effort to come up with a plan for growing the number of certified referees to comply with the Federation policy. The SRA has deemed that full compliance is using certified referees for all matches where the age of the participants is in the U10 or above age groups.

For more information regarding the compliance rule USSF 531.8 please contact Curt Hamlin, State Referee Administrator. You may contact Curt by email: SRA@NYREFEREE.ORG or by calling 877-661-9927. There is also an enormous amount of information on the Western NY Referee Association Website; www.wnyreferee.org.

A few of the popular links are:

- Upcoming Clinics
- Recertification Instructions for WNY
- Information about Recreational Youth Referee Program

Please visit their website and the various educational sites.

The Western NY Referee Association is currently working on the 2008 program to promote training and retention of current referees along with courses to train new recreational referees (grade 9) as well as assessors, assignors and instructors. When the SRA and the SYRA schedule training courses in your area we will contact you. **Please encourage all coaches, parents, referees and players to become involved.** This will help us all meet the member compliance requirement and should increase the number of quality referees for our matches.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this education and certification effort.