

# **Combined Report of the Western New York State Referees Association to the New York State West Youth Soccer Association 2009**

## *PART 1: From the State Referee Administrator, Pat Tata*

There have been many changes in the past year. First, Mr. William Fahey stepped down as the State Assignor Coordinator and Mr. John R. Kramer has been appointed to this position. Mr. Kramer's term ends on August 30, 2011. Mr. Fahey also held the position of chairperson and Mr. David Baxter has been appointed to the chair for the State Referee Committee.

Second, the Western New York Referees Association had an increase in the total number of referees; up approximately 200 registered referees for a total of 2,056. This is the first time that WNYSSRA has surpassed the 2,000 mark of registered referees. We had an influx of over 600 newly registered referees and about 100 returning referees after 5 or more years of absence from officiating.

Third, there has been an increase of state referees. In 2008, we had a total of 61 referees with a state level badge and this past season there were 67 registered state referees.

Fourth, WNY saw two of its referees attain a national referee badge honors and both have been working USL and the new Women's pro league matches.

This last item is not really a change, but Mr. William Campbell has been reappointed as State Youth Referee Administrator. Mr. Campbell's reappointment is a testament to his dedication and commitment to soccer in Western New York. Mr. Campbell will continue to provide his services for the State Cup and Region 1 tournament. He will also be focusing on recreational leagues and clubs to provide further assistance in referee retention and recruiting.

### **What is the plan for 2010?**

The plan is to focus on retaining referees and developing quality officials. This seems to be a yearly project. We continue to have a greatest loss in referees with less than three years of experience. The Rochester district tends to have the greatest number of referee turnover. Each year Rochester makes up the deficit with new referee enrollments. Although Rochester is used in this example, each district has the same problem with varying degree.

In addition, we will begin using our resources to enhance referee development and the State Referee Committee is looking at appointing an individual as the Coordinator of Referee Development. This position is still in the planning stages; therefore, referee development continues to be the duty of each state director within his sphere of influence.

Finally, the State Referee Administrator and State Youth Administrator will be looking at more involvement not only within the state association, but with regional and national opportunities as well. In 2009, the State Referee Administrator was appointed to the Region 1 referee committee and has worked with Frank Giancroce (Region 1) as well as other State Referee Administrators throughout U.S. Soccer in developing a uniformed referee development program that assists referees who work not only the adult matches, but the youth matches as well.

The 2010 season looks to be promising and the State Referee Committee is looking forward to a very successful and rewarding season. With the help of the state association 2010 can be a golden year.

## *Part 2: From the State Youth Referee Administrator, William Campbell*

### **Regional Competitions**

We have had an extremely successful year as officials at Regional and National Competitions. At the ODP tournament, held in June at Rider College, Lawrenceville, NJ; 9 of our most promising young referees were honored with assignments. They were William Edgecomb of Ithaca, Molly Cunningham of Buffalo, Michael Ertel of Buffalo, Taylor Carr of Rochester, Ray Tam of Rochester, Kyle Smetanka of Elmira, D. Andrew Kubena of Buffalo, Jaimi Lyn Beaty of Rochester and Stephanie McKay of Rochester. From that competition, Stephanie McKay was invited to the ODP Regional Finals and from there to the National ODP finals to be held in March of 2010.

At the Region 1 Championships, perhaps our youngest group of officials to ever attend found honors awaiting them in West Virginia. Attendees were Casey Byrne of Ithaca, Molly Cunningham of Buffalo, Phil Cunningham of Buffalo, William Edgcomb of Ithaca, Ashley Cedro of Buffalo, Michael Ertel of Buffalo, Nicholas Geisler of Ithaca, David Monroe of Buffalo, Brian Morgan of Rochester, Ray Tam of Rochester, Chris Trottier of Rochester, and Samantha Randall of Ithaca. Western New York had all of our officials appointed to semi-final matches and 4 of them were given center assignments. Officials working centers in the semis were Chris Trottier (Under 16 Girls), Phil Cunningham (Under 14 Boys), Molly Cunningham (Under 12 Girls 11v11) and Samantha Randall (Under 12 Girls 8v8). Remarkably, 7 of the 12 also received final assignments. Those were Ashley Cedro (Under 19 Girls-Center), Chris Trottier (Under 17 Boys-AR2), Nicholas Geisler (Under 14 Boys-AR2), Molly Cunningham (Under 12 Girls 11v11-AR2), Samantha Randall (Under 12 Boys 8v8, AR1), Casey Byrne (Under 12 Boys 8v8, AR2), and Will Edgcomb (Under 12 Boys 8v8, 4<sup>th</sup> Official). Of special note were the national championship appointments earned by our referees. Ashley Cedro attended the National Championships as a Referee and Chris Trottier attended as an Assistant Referee.

**The Recreational Youth Referee Program** continues to grow though our total retention is still sub-par, remaining at 54% total retention this year. We continue to work with individual clubs and recreational leagues to bring them into compliance with USSF mandates but we are still discovering many clubs that have either not complied, or complied a few years ago and failed to keep certification and annual recertification of their referee population a priority. We are contacting these clubs and leagues as we find them and helping them to remain in good standing with NYSW and USSF. The chart below shows our current statistics, remembering that our goal as outlined by USSF is 400 Recreational Youth Referees.

<b>STATUS</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
New Grade 9	127	196	209	13	107%
Returning Grade 9	54	49	80	31	163%
Total Grade 9 Referees Registered	181	245	289	44	118%
Grade 9's Upgrading to Grade 8	23	50	52	2	104%
Total Grade 9's Returning	77	99	132	33	133%

**Referee Mentoring** continues to be my primary focus. Most of the larger districts now have a mentoring program of some sort in place but many of these programs still need to grow significantly to have a major impact on referee retention, particularly in the first 3 years of certification when we are losing 2/3rds of our population. The Broome County Soccer Association program continues to grow and expand this year mentoring 160 Under 10 matches and 64 other youth matches representing 28% of the matches played in the league. Our Buffalo mentor program was successful this year in accomplishing its many objectives. In 2009 we mentored over 120 referees, using more than 50 mentors. We used an experienced referee with two new referees in over 520 games at the U10 and U12 level. We continue to mentor first year referees in the BWNYJSL travel program, regardless of their age. The program has resulted in fewer incidents of referee abuse, and helped to educate coaches on the developmental aspect of referee development-a phenomena which has been noticed everywhere that a mentoring program has been successful and growing. This program was funded by the Junior Soccer League of WNY. A proposal to increase the size of the mentoring program will be presented to the Rochester and District Youth Soccer League by the Rochester Unit of the WNYSRA to expand mentoring efforts in that area. In Syracuse, 30 entry level referees and six second year referees participated in their program. 60 games were mentored and most referees were evaluated twice.

### *Part 3: From the State Director of Instruction, Thomas Ross*

**Entry Classes.** In 2008-2009 we had over 850 new Grade 8 and 9 referees take entry classes, with most districts reporting higher attendance than normal. In fact, we had so many people on waiting lists that we had to schedule additional classes.

**Recertification.** Annual recertification training was conducted in all districts. This training is conducted to help referees meet their recertification requirement of five hours of classroom training per year. Training topics included changes in the Laws of the Game and interpretation, review of local issues, and in depth

analysis of game situations.

**Written Testing Guidelines.** In 2008, new written tests were prepared by national. A separate “Entry Level” test was created, making the Grade 7/8 Recertification Test a bit more challenging. In 2008-2009 recertification, all referees were required to take and pass the full 100 question recertification test.

**Trained 6 new Associate Instructors.** A 16 hour Associate Instructor Course was conducted, where six of our referees were certified as Grade 9 Instructors. As Grade 9 Instructors, they will work with experienced instructors to gain experience, before attempting to upgrade to Grade 7, Referee Instructor status.

**ITIP Class.** A 24 hour Instructional Theory Into Practice (ITIP) course was held. Upon successful completion of this course, a Grade 9 Associate Instructor is upgraded to a Grade 7 Referee Instructor. After upgrade, these instructors are permitted to instruct without supervision, and to serve as lead instructor in classes. The class included instructors from several states.

**Advance and Intermediate Training.** Referees wishing to upgrade must complete additional training courses before being eligible for upgrade. In 2009, the WNYSRA held a two day Intermediate and Advanced clinic, attended by almost 50 of our referees. In addition to referees seeking an upgrade, other referees attended simply to receive the benefit of additional instruction.

**Referee 101.** The “Referee 101” course is designed to help new referees understand exactly what they have to do when they show up for their first game - and all their other games. Because there is not enough time during the entry class, this optional course was created to explain things like completing required game reports, checking in players, basic positioning during play, how to get paid, what to do after the game ends, etc.

**My First Match,** This program was started in the Rochester District in 2009. Because the majority of games in that district have only one official, new referees were offered the opportunity to request that a senior official come to their first game to help them acclimate to their new duties. Happily, the unit was able to honor all requests and the feedback was very good. The new officials felt a little more comfortable having “a friend” there to help them out.

**Mom and Pop Classes.** Also called, “Understanding the Referee and the (REAL) Laws of the Game”, this program is designed for coaches and parents. The first part of the program introduces them to the referee and what the referee is trying to accomplish. The second part of the program clarifies some of Laws of the Game, particularly those that are most often misunderstood. Feedback from parents and coaches who attended was very positive. We are a bit disappointed in the number of clubs that are willing to sponsor a program, but we hope to increase that number over time.

### *From the State Director of Assessment, Arthur Jaspe*

Over the past year, 125 officials were assessed and/or evaluated as Referee and/or Assistant Referee at the youth, Senior Amateur and professional level.

The National Referee Assessment program made a quantum leap. As of September, 2009, all assessments of full length games will be posted on line through the national office. Completed assessments will automatically be forwarded to the national office and the feedback will be sent electronically to each official. These assessments will be available to the State Referee Committee for training, education and further assignment purposes.

Based upon their assessments, youth officials will be encouraged to participate at the highest level of officiating. Premier Regional Youth assignments are now available throughout New York state and Region 1. Age appropriate officials will be encouraged to attend professional Referee Training Seminars as they become available.

We continue to assess our referees at selected regional league matches and on most state cup final four matches.

