

SRC Meeting Minutes

June 22, 2025

8:00 PM – Called to Order at 8:01 PM

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30 PM

Attendance: Michael Copeland, Kris Kenney, Steve Faria, George Cobia, Marion Shull, Jack Schultz, Bucky Jones, Joe Balazs, Gary Smith, Chris Wood, Linos Cotsapas, Sofia Hernandez, Rick Rogers

I. Minutes

- The minutes were from the May 18th meeting accepted and entered into the record with a unanimous vote.
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II. Reports

1. State Director of Instruction (SDI) Rick Rogers –

- Reported that it is the end of certifications for the 2025 Badge. July will start the process for a 2026 Badge and the courses have been posted. Complete numbers will be emailed out early to mid-July. Currently less than 1% of officials that registered did not complete the process.

2. State Director of Assessment (SDA) Danny Thornberry – Not in attendance

3. State Assignment Coordinator (SAC) Kris Kenney

- Reported issues on getting nominations for the Referee of the Year Awards. Will have full discussion during the later portion of the meeting.
- Continuing to work on a method for tracking upcoming officials. Getting them into a statewide database may not be as much of an issue, but assisting ARA's and Assignors in tracking development on the Regional Organizational level may not be as easy.

4. Area Referee Administrators (ARAs)

- **Greenville/Spartanburg #1 – Steve Faria:**
 - Final field training was last weekend. 2 of his area registrants did not complete the process to earn a badge.
 - Currently working on ordering referee supplies for the August sessions.
- **Rock Hill #2 – George Cobia:**
 - No sessions in June. He has 2 officials that did not complete registration.
 - There is a plan for a classroom session in August followed by an on-field session at Manchester Meadows.
- **Columbia #3 – Marion Shull:** 1 referee who still needs a field session, multiple attempts but did not get a response.
 - He has also reported to Danny that he has an official that wants to upgrade and hopes that it will be completed in the Fall.
 - Plans for 2026 classes on August 9 & 10. Will do them at LSA and SC United.
- **Myrtle Beach #4 / Florence #6 – Jack Schultz:** 4 field sessions completed in June.
 - Plan for August is to offer a course on August 9th in Myrtle Beach and August 10th in Florence.
 - He is also going to hold a zoom session for officials in his region to review the new Law changes and league rule changes. This should occur mid-August.
- **Charleston #5 – Bucky Jones:**
 - 1 official still needs the on-field session to gain their badge, hope to do that in August
 - Plans for an in-person training session to occur August 9/10 for new officials to be held at Oceanside Collegiate Academy.
 - August 23 field session/refresher at CSC Summerville complex will be offered.
 - The August session will also help identify officials that are interested in upgrading.
- **Aiken #6 – Brian Marshall – Not in attendance.**
 - Chris Wood announced that Brian worked his first MLS game as an AR. **Congratulations, Brian!**

5. Treasurer Gary Smith

- The following information was reported via email in addition to being shared during the meeting:
 - **Wells Fargo Bank Account – \$159,308.67**
 - **Fidelity**
 - PNC Bank CD – 25k matures July 8, 2025 (4.15%)
 - Western Alliance Bank - \$25k matures Oct 30, 2025 (4.2%)
 - Goldman Sachs Bank - \$25k matures Jan 28, 2026 ((4.15%)

- Wells Fargo Bank – \$25k matures May 27, 2026 (4.15%)
 - Money Market Savings - \$604.46
- **Fiscal Year 2024-25**
 - Ends 6-30-25
 - EOY and 4th quarter 2024-25 Reports out no later than 30 July 2025
- **2025-26 Budget**
 - Emailed out to the SRC
 - Approval/ vote by the board is due no later than 1 July 2025
- **Issues**
 - Need to make sure 2025-26 budget and expense report posted on new website

6. State Youth Referee Administrator (SYRA) Chris Wood

- Southern Regionals: Leaving on Thursday. They will return July 2. Goals are being sent in for Chris to review
- Chris Park, Honorio Ojeda, Jonathan Senkier and Hudson Ramsden have been selected as our RG3+ representatives. They will all be assigned to a US Soccer Coach to work with at Southern Regionals.
- Presidents Medal Cup was a success! Malinda Moore received the Excellence in Leadership Award, Fernando Barlongo and Joey Urbanic were both assigned finals. Torren Thomas was selected to represent SC at the 2026 President's Cup Nationals.
- Fall Training session \$10,000 allotted to do a mass training session open to officials across the state– ideally a 2 day process. On Saturday 50-70 officials meet in Columbia for a large training session with break out groups, classroom and on field training. Then, on Sunday that corps of referees will go back to their Regional Organizations and share what they learned to a larger number of officials. Request for a good weekend to offer this was made – Rick said the last weekend of July. Chris was concerned that if they rush it, it will not be quality and maybe we should move it toward the end of the season before State Cup.

7. State Referee Administrator (SRA) Joe Balazs reported:

- Officials that attended NC Adult Amateur Regional Competition last weekend: Paige Bell, Ashton Miller.
 - Numbers were reduced due to a lot of teams dropping out.
 - Paige Bell is the only one that actually got to officiate for an assessment; Ashton's game was canceled.
- We need to find another tournament that our officials can use to get exposure in an area out of our state. Discussion on the issue followed with Rick Rogers stating that he knows the assignor for that event and there is consideration to move it to another date potentially March. Chris Wood wondered if the increase in UPSL, WPSL etc. is the reason for the lack of participation in the Adult Amateur competition. Linos said he did not think that was the case, it is more of an apathy issue across multiple states and a declining interest to travel to regional events. Chris asked what the "prize" is that the teams will get if they go and win. Sofia said that they will get to go on to compete against other regional winners and then on to Nationals. Teams from our state do not usually make it past competing against other region teams, so she is uncertain how that next step to nationals occurs. Sofia also feels that the lack of centralization for our region is an issue and that is too large of a region. Linos pointed out that they are working with new ideas and the goal is to improve participation, however the interest is not really there.

8. SCYS Representative Kevin Kollegger – Not in attendance

9. SCASA Representative Linos Cotsapas

- The Adult amateur players will use a new registration system starting with the Fall Season. He expects games for the Fall leagues to start mid to late August.

III. Old Business

1. Website Update –

- **Marion** reported movement on the website is going well. Expect it to be up and running in about a week or so – no later than mid-July.
- A request was made that there is a governance tab that will have the Bylaws, budget and expense reports for transparency.

2. Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures –

- Michael presented the SRC with his Mission Statement and Vision Statement suggestions. Has requested input or edits from the board.
- Michael will email the suggestions to all SRC members for input.

3. **Youth Regional & President's Cup Referee Selection –**
 - Covered in Chris Wood's earlier report
4. **Region III Amateur Regional Referees –**
 - Covered by Joe in his earlier report.
5. **Identifying and Tracking Up-and-Coming Referees –**
 - Kris to share a Google Doc for ARA/Assignors to enter officials that should be tracked because they are potential upgrades or State Cup candidates. This document has been shared with Michael and Danny. With tweaks to be made.
 - Kris is going to work on developing a way to streamline and track locally the officials so there is a way to ensure that all officials from a region are being afforded the opportunities to develop.
 - Goal is to get buy in from the assignors to enter information into the spreadsheets and increase communication between ARA's and Assignors. Question was posed by Chris Wood asking if we can mandate participation through the bylaws. In short – the answer is no. Discussion recap: Rick Rogers pointed out that they are independent contractors that are hired by the leagues/clubs. That message was reiterated by Bucky. Primary goal of many assignors is to fill games. However, the assignors should also be part of the recruitment and development of officials. Communication between assignors and the ARA's is necessary to track that what is in the best interest of the game and referee community is what is being done. Another suggestion is to have a ranking system can be pushed through Arbiter to ensure that the referees are getting the right opportunities and more of them outside of their regional organization. The SRC cannot force participation but can go to SCYS and SCASA to recommend different assignors if there is concern that the assignors are not doing their part to provide developmental opportunities to the officials that they assign. Communication between the ARA's and Assignors is key and finding a way that each Regional Organization can track the development and training of local officials should be the starting point.
6. **Referee of the Year Awards –**
 - Kris: Google Form was sent out all assignors and SRC members requesting nominations on 5/19 with a reminder on 6/6..
 - Minimal responses were received. Committee asked that the vote get postponed and that was challenged. Recap of discussion: Jack was concerned that it is hard to vote on people that you do not know, response was that you can read the write ups and decide. Secondary concern was that there was no criteria for entering nominations. That was a valid point. In the past, those selected would go to Regionals, however it is too late for a winner to go so it was suggested that we scrap it until next year. Kris pointed out that the nominees did attend state cup events and therefore they may have already been selected to go to Regionals. Bucky pointed out that there were some nominees and just because other people didn't add nominees, those that were nominated should still be voted on. He also reminded everyone that SCYS had a hand in picking the referees of the year in the past and that was not done consistently. Marion stated that it is important that we follow through and do what we say we were going to do and even though there are very few names to choose from, we can still vote on those that are listed. Since these officials will not be sent as referees of the year to regionals, there was a discussion to send them OSI gift cards as the award. Voting needs to be made ASAP so the names can be presented at the Regional slide show next weekend.
 - Kris will email out the spreadsheet with the nominations and write ups, vote closes tomorrow evening and then she will tally votes and send the results to Michael Tuesday.
 - Recommendation – criteria for Referee of the Year should be set at the beginning of the fall season. Those being considered should then be asked to attend State Cup and then the Mentors/Coaches present at State Cup can help pick the referees that should be recognized.
7. **USSF Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP) – Joe – nothing to report**
8. **Mentor Course Update:**
 - Rick reported that USSF has restructured the mentor program and there will not be an in-person course as originally anticipated at the end of July. Interested persons can register for the course and then talk to Rick or Danny. You will not need a recommendation to become a USSF mentor under the mentor plus program.
9. **2025–2026 Budget –**
 - Gary emailed everyone a copy of the finalized budget for the 2025-26 year. He reminded everyone that it can be amended throughout the year
 - Concern over for Paid Administrator position/SRC member (a line item in the budget)
 - Discussion was made over the payment of \$24,000 to the SDI for registering and tracking referees in the statewide Arbiter system. This began in 2021. Michael spoke with Rick to discuss the amount of time and duties that he is doing to earn this money. It was reported that Rick works 15-25 hours a week updating Arbiter and tracking referee certifications.

- Questions posed
 - a) Do we need to continue to pay someone to do this job, or is he covering duties that actually fall under other SRC members'?
 - b) Do we want a single member of the SRC to be paid, or should there be a position created that is separate from an SRC and have that administrator position covered?
 - c) How exactly did this position come about – was there an email and what duties was he requested to cover?
- Discussion Recap: We need to find out exactly what Rick is being paid to do. If we decide that this is a position that the SRC should pay, we need a full job description so we can find a replacement if necessary and give Rick the chance to train that person. Another question we should ask is – does Rick want to continue as a paid Administrator or should we replace him as the SDI? Michael will reach out to gather more information on Rick's thoughts. Consensus is that the SDI and paid Administrator (if needed) need to be separate so the SDI can focus on training opportunities.
- Decision - We will continue to pay the \$2,000 a month to Rick until a decision on the position is made.
- No further questions on the Budget were addressed
- Gary moved that we accept the budget as emailed out, Jack Schultz seconded the motion. A unanimous vote to accept the budget as written with the knowledge it can be amended was made.

IV. Next Meeting

- **Zoom Meeting: July 22 at 8:00 PM**
- Agenda items:
 - Referee of the year criteria for next year.
 - Discuss paid administrator position
 - Discuss Fall Training session

Meeting adjourned at 9:30. Jack moved that we adjourn, Gary 2nd. All approved.