

# Off The Pitch

Volume 3, Issue 1 January 2001

NM State Referee Committee Newsletter



## Attending the Upgrade Orientation Clinic?

A special discount rate has been arranged at the Radisson Inn & Conference Center (-I-40 and Carlisle) with indoor pool, hot tub, and free breakfast! Call (505) 888-3311 for reservations. Food will be provided starting at 6 pm in the Reception room next door to the meeting room. The meeting starts at 7 pm.



Questions about the Clinic? Contact Gary Bauerschmidt at [gbauers@unm.edu](mailto:gbauers@unm.edu)



## 2001 Referee Upgrade

The time to declare your intention to upgrade is here. To do this, contact and inform your District Referee Administrator (DRA) of your intent. Your DRA will work with the State Director of Assessments (SDA) to get you in the upgrade process. Your intention needs to be made on or before **1 February 2001**.

This year the process for upgrade to Referee Grade 7 will be community oriented. This means once you have declared, the SDA will work with your DRA and a local Assessor to conduct the required assessment on a local qualifying match. (A qualifying match is defined as an U-19 game.) No Development and Guidance (D&G) assessment is required. If a D&G is desired let your DRA know.

To upgrade to State Referee Grade 6 or 5 will continue to require focus and dedication. This means the candidate will need to concentrate on and study the game; travel to in-state and out-of-state tournaments working all levels of matches; and work on one's physical and mental conditioning. This must begin with your declaration to upgrade with your DRA. Your DRA will then work with the SDA to arrange D&G assessments (usually during the Classic FC Tournament in February) as well as the two full assessments as Center and one assessment as Assistant Referee.

Additionally and to complete the process all candidates must attend the annual re-certification clinic (held the second week end in August) and successfully complete the required USSF physical re-certification for the attained grade.

Once all the above is completed, the paperwork needs to be completed. The paperwork can be completed by working with your local Registrar and DRA.

So see your DRA and see you on the Pitch.

- *Bob Linebaugh, State Director of Assessment (SDA)*

## It's Upgrade Time



Did you know that in 1998, there were 97,000 referees registered with USSF? In that population, 84,320 were Grade 8; 4,277 were Grade 7; and 2,824 were Grade 6 and above. To upgrade (advance) in Grade, there is a process in New Mexico that begins with the spring season and models the USSF process for upgrading. This process not only helps the referee but also advances the game of soccer in New Mexico.

Upgrading requires a level of commitment to improving yourself and soccer. To upgrade get involved in the following process:

- Declare your interest to upgrade to your District Referee Administrator (DRA).
- Referee and DRA must agree that the time in Grade and required game count meets the requirements in the USSF Referee Administrative Handbook.
- Attend the orientation clinic prior to the Classic FC tournament in February.
- Be available for Developmental and Guidance (D&G) assessment during the tournament then follow through on other assessments required for upgrading.
- Attend the state referee clinic in mid-August.
- Successfully complete the physical test required by USSF, be in training prior to testing.
- Successfully complete re-certification written test for the proper Grade.
- Complete all paperwork required in concert with your DRA.

This must all be accomplished within the calendar year you declare your intent to upgrade.

So you want to upgrade, you have declared to your intent to upgrade to the DRA, you attend the orientation, and receive a D&G assessment. You will need to work on aspects of refereeing identified by the assessor during the D&G. If the D&G is favorable, you will be assigned an assessor to do a formal assessment. It is the referee's responsibility to coordinate with the scheduler and assessor to identify an appropriate time and match. Make sure you provide a Referee Profile sheet to the AWSL/ASL scheduler.

Two conditions of upgrade assessments you need to be aware of are assessor payment and filing of game reports. In the event you are not recommended for upgrade, your game fee will be paid to the assessor. Your assessor needs a copy of your game report. The assessment system provides feedback on match mechanics but our job is not complete until the paper work is done. Level of professionalism is determined on the field and by the game report submitted to the leagues. Game reports give the assessor insight to the Grade of a referee.

Good luck to all those desiring to advance refereeing in New Mexico, contact your DRA and see you on the pitch.

- Stan Harrison, DRA, District 1

*Haven't registered for 2001 yet? Contact your DRA:*

**Albuquerque-West:**

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**Santa Fe** (Eldorado, Pojaque, Espanola, Las Vegas):

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Marce Gomez, 722-9152  
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Please send corrections to:  
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## New Fitness Requirements



Physical fitness is an important aspect of referee development and is one of the 11 points in the code of ethics for referees. The minimum physical fitness requirements that are required for registration, annual renewal and upgrading have been changed to more accurately reflect the requirements of a referee. As referees we should set our standards higher than the minimums set in this table. These standards must be met or exceeded within 6 months of the date of registration. All parts of the test must be completed in the same fitness session. These are truly minimums. If you don't quite make the distance or you are a fraction of a second over the specified times, you must retake the test until you meet or exceed these requirements.

	Age	Referee I (Grade 7)	State Referee
<b>Endurance Test</b> (Meters [Miles] run in 12 Minutes)	Under 38	2200 m [1 3/8 miles]	2400 m [1 1/2 miles]
	38 to 45	2000 m [1 1/4 miles]	2200 m [1 3/8 miles]
	Over 45	1800 m [1 1/8 miles]	2000 m [1 1/4 miles]
<b>50 Meter</b> [55 yard] run	All	9.0 seconds	9.0 seconds
<b>200 Meter</b> [220 yard] run	All	40.0 seconds	40.0 seconds

- Paul Mix, SDI

### History of the Laws

*Reprinted with permission (from FIFA magazine):*

The dictionary definition of a referee, as "a person to whom a matter in dispute is referred for decision," was appropriate in football [soccer] until 1973 when his duty, "to decide disputed points," was deleted from Law 5. It was finally recognized that the law enforcer's role and responsibilities had evolved to cover all aspects of an organized game. In effect, today's official is an operating agent of football authority with wide powers on and off the field of play.

More like a superintendent: one who is in charge of an activity, who manages, directs and controls with authority.

Volunteers all, referees are expected to be dedicated experts on the game and its rules, to be available, always at peak physical form, and prepared to withstand much abuse in their service for football. Our sport could not be so enjoyable without them. Hats off to all ladies and gentlemen of the whistle!

The **NMSRA website** will be online very soon...  
e-mail [NMSoccerRef@aol.com](mailto:NMSoccerRef@aol.com) and you will be sent the website's URL

## Systems of Officiating

Esse Baharmast, Director of Officials

The United Soccer Federation has approved only one system for officiating outdoor matches, namely the “*diagonal system of control*.” The diagonal system of control consists of one referee and two assistant referees.

In order to comply with the Laws of the Game, adopted by the National Council (by law 104), all soccer games sanctioned directly or indirectly by member organizations of the United States Soccer Federation must employ the diagonal system (three officials).

As a matter of policy, the National Referee Committee prefers the following alternatives, in order of preference:

1. One registered Federation referee and two registered Federation Assistant Referees (the standard all organizations should strive to meet).
2. One registered Federation referee, one registered Federation Assistant Referee and one club linesman.
3. One registered Federation referee and two club linesmen, both unrelated to either team participating in the game.
4. One registered Federation referee and two club linesmen who are related to a participating team.

The last three (2, 3 and 4) should only be used when emergency conditions arise – when the assigned officials do not show up for the scheduled match. An emergency situation cannot be assigned in advance. If a team or league is assigning only one or two officials to a match, that team or league is not following proper procedure and is in violation of Federation policy.

Except in emergency situations, officials assigned to affiliated matches not employing the diagonal system of control will not be covered by the Federations liability insurance and those games may not be counted in the official’s game experience record.

Member organizations and their affiliates should make every effort to assist in recruiting officials so that enough Federation referees will be available to permit the use of the diagonal system of control for all their competitions.

*Postscript: (Paul Mix, SDI)*

Note: The two-referee system, approved for high school competitions, is **never** appropriate for USSF competitions. In addition to Referees Grade 8, requiring a 16-hour course, USSF has several other grades that may be used to meet the requirement for “registered Federation Assistant Referees”:

1. Linesman Grade 10, requiring a 4-hour course, may be used for all youth competitions,
2. Assistant Referee Grade 12, requiring a 7.5-hour course, may be used for both youth and adult play below the professional level, and
3. Recreation Referee Grade 9, requiring an 8-hour course, may be used for recreational games to U-14. Grade 9 referees may also be used as the “registered Federation referee” for these games.

Certification clinics for all USSF referee grades must be requested by the leagues and will be held, if possible, on the date(s) specified by the leagues.

# The Referee

In Spanish he's the árbitro and he's arbitrary by definition. An abominable tyrant who runs his dictatorship without opposition, a pompous executioner who exercises his absolute power with an operatic flourish. Whistle between his lips, he blows the winds of inexorable fate either to allow a goal or to disallow one. Card in hand, he raises the colors of doom: yellow to punish the sinner and oblige him to repent, and red to force him into exile.

The Assistant Referee, who assist but do not rule, look on from the side. Only the referee steps onto the playing field, and he's absolutely right to cross himself when he first appears before the roaring crowd. His job is to make himself hated. The only universal sentiment in soccer: everybody hates him. He always gets catcalls, never applause.

No one runs more. The only one obliged to run the entire game without pause, this interloper who pants in the ears of every player breaks his back galloping like a horse. And in return for his pains, the crowd howls for his head. From beginning to end he sweats oceans, forced to chase the white ball that skips along back and forth between the feet of everyone else. Of course he'd love to play, but never has he been offered that privilege. When the ball hits him by accident, the entire stadium curses his mother. But evens, just to be there in that sacred green space where the ball floats and glides, he's willing to suffer insults, catcalls, stones and damnation.

Sometimes, though rarely, his judgment coincides with the inclinations of the fans, but not even then does he emerge unscathed. The losers owe their loss to him and the winners triumph in spite of him. Scapegoat for every error, cause of every misfortune, the fans would have to invent him if he didn't already exist. The more they hate him, the more they need him.

For over a century the referee dressed in mourning. For whom? For himself. Now he wears bright colors to mask his feelings.

- Dan Healy, *State Referee Administrator* (from *SOCCER in sun and shadow* by Eduardo Galeano)

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## Pleasanton: Too competitive to be Camelot

*Reprinted with permission (Ron Kroichick, San Francisco Chronicle):*

This looks like a tidy sample youth sports in suburban America: Saturday morning, mid-November, Pleasanton Sports Park. Here come the Volvos, the SUVs and the minivans, parading into the parking lot, unloading young boys and girls dressed for soccer.

The park bustles with activity, practically an endless row of well-maintained, grass-covered fields. There are small kids and big kids, advanced players and beginners, grim-faced coaches and calm ones, adult referees and teenagers. Parents are scattered along the sideline, most of them offering polite encouragement.

The scene seems altogether civil. No way two spectators could rush onto the field and attack a referee in

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## Pleasanton: Too competitive to be Camelot Cont.

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this setting, right? Or wrong?

This particular morning offers nothing more disturbing than one loud man in a Raiders jacket—the friend of a player's parent, it turns out. He roams the sideline of an under-10 girls "house" game (rec-league level), screaming instruction/orders at players on the Peppermint Blast, using animated body English in a curious attempt to produce results.

The referee warns Juan Alonso, coach of the Blast, about the man in the Raiders jacket. Alonso was so engrossed in the game, he says later, he had not heard the shouting. The man eventually pipes down and the game proceeds peacefully.

Not even three months earlier, on August 21, referee Mark Mendonca never had a chance to issue warnings. Mendonca, a soccer referee for the past 15 years, was working an under-16 boys tournament game matching teams from Walnut Creek and San Jose.

The game ended abruptly, prematurely and violently—with Mendonca, 47, taking two punches and Pleasanton police subsequently stopping a van carrying two suspects and several small, soccer-playing kids.

According to officer Tim Martens' report, the trouble started when Mendonca gave one player a red card (signifying ejection) for misconduct. That triggered an angry response from the player's sideline.

"Mendonca then felt someone hit him on the back of his head with what felt like a closed fist," the police report reads. "He saw several of the players' parents starting to go toward the playing field. He held his arms out to deter people from entering the field, when a male in his late 20s ... hit him in his face with a closed fist. The punch glanced off his chin and hit his neck."

The game had been physical, but this was ridiculous. Both suspects quickly left the field. Mendonca stopped the game and began to nurse an epic sore throat, courtesy of the second punch.

"I had the old Barry White voice for a couple of weeks," he said.

Steve Petrakovitz, who serves on the board of directors for the local referees' association, was a linesman for the game. He placed some blame on Walnut Creek's coach, who came onto the field to protest (a hearing on his possible suspension is scheduled for later this month).

But the parents and spectators who followed—including the alleged assailants, whom Martens said were apparently relatives of a player in the game—did not exactly distinguish themselves either.

"They came onto the field yelling choice expletives," Petrakovitz said. "What really bothered me was they didn't give it a second thought."

Mendonca refused to press charges—he did not want to deal with the judicial system—so the case lingered in the background for more than three months. Then, last week, Alameda County deputy district attorney Bob Aloe filed charges against the one suspect who was positively identified.

Daniel Ayala, 34, of San Pablo, was charged with violating section 243.8(a) of the California Penal Code—"battery on a sports official." This might qualify as an uncommon crime, but it's common enough to merit

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## Pleasanton: Too competitive to be Camelot Cont.

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its own entry in the penal code.

Mendonca traced the whole mess back to the preoccupation with winning. He called the attack an isolated incident; soon thereafter, he resumed his role as a referee in Pleasanton.

"I think parents and coaches are more wrapped up in winning now," Mendonca said. "It could just be our lifestyle. Everyone gets up at 4 a.m. to beat the traffic. They rush to work, then they rush home. I can't help but think that puts stress on people all the time."

But enough stress to send two grown men dashing onto the field, fists raised? The equation begins, as Mendonca suggested, with how much coaches and parents care about the outcome of these games. At the highest levels of youth soccer in Pleasanton—namely, the Ballistic United Soccer Club—winning matters plenty. That's evident in the paid coaches, ultra-competitive tryouts, extensive travel schedule and lofty expectations.

Even at the lower levels—such as the under-10 girls "house" team—coaches try to strike a delicate balance. Alonso, the coach, does not consider it incidental that his Peppermint Blast went unbeaten in the regular season.

"Winning and losing is very important to the kids," he said. "It's the coach's responsibility to prepare the girls to have a chance to win. If you give up eight or nine goals, you're not going to have a lot of fun. Winning does a lot for their self-confidence."

Fair enough, but that proverbial line—where winning moves from objective to obsession—remains blurry in Pleasanton. Soon after Alonso's team completes its latest win, 13-year-old Caitlin Petrakovitz strolls onto the field to referee another under-10 girls "house" game.

Her father, Steve, is the board member who witnessed the attack on Mark Mendonca. Her mother, Annamarie, sits nearby as Caitlin works her game, to provide a security blanket if any coaches or parents get carried away.

Caitlin played soccer since she was 5, at one point in a select league. She bolted when the atmosphere became "win at all costs," as Annamarie Petrakovitz put it.

"Some parents are more concerned about their kids getting a scholarship than anything else," she said. "Other kids dream about being Mia Hamm. My girl didn't. It became an emotional roller coaster for her."

It can happen, even in idyllic Pleasanton.

[ Editor's note: It happened in Pleasanton, the site of the 2000 Far West Regionals, can it happen here? ]



Do you have ideas, comments and/or suggestions for future newsletter topics? Or even an article????? Send it to the Off The Pitch editors:

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Off The Pitch

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## Calendar of Events

Feb 10-11	NMSSA Mark Underwood Memorial Soccer Tournament, Socorro
Feb 24-25	Classic FC Spring Cup 2001 (and Referee Upgrade Orientation)
Mar 2-3, Mar 31-Apr 1	12th Annual West of the Pecos Shootout, Roswell
Mar 31-Apr 1	Las Cruces Border Cup 2001
Apr 28-29	Tide American Cup, Albuquerque
Apr 28-May 20	Snickers New Mexico (NMYSA) Open State Cup, Albuquerque
May 26-28	Sandia Cup, Albuquerque
May 26-28	9th Annual Memorial Day Soccer Classic, Farmington
Jun 2-3	Southwest Zia Cup, Albuquerque
Jun 24-30	Far West Regional, Albuquerque, NM

<< **VENUE CHANGE:** ASRA MEETINGS: Jewish Community Center, 5520 Wyoming NE, Albuquerque—2nd Tuesdays, 7:00 PM >>