

# MIDLANDS SOCCER OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

## SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER



### Note from the President:

Hello everyone! We hope that you are having a restful Summer and letting our bodies recovery from the Spring season and any post season action you might have been fortunate to experience.

There is a lot to cover before the start of the Fall season primarily dealing with events that happened in the Spring, updates to the MSOA and State Refereeing Communities.

IFAB 2025-2026 is officially released, and the updates will be listed below. Another update that will make you happy is that several leagues (not all) will be giving us a pay bump, read below. Shout out to the local officials from the midlands who were invited to attend the USYS Nationals and Southern Presidents Cup.

Upcoming entry level refereeing classes will start in August. There will be at least two weekends for your friends, players, or parents to become soccer referees, let them know.

James

### MSOA and SRC Updates:

Some positional changes occurred in MSOA to avoid conflicts with SRC appointments.

Joe Balazs is now the Member at Large (NISOA Representative)

Marion Shull is now the ARA Representative

Congratulations to the following MSOA Board Members appointed to the SCR:

Joe Balazs the new State Referee Administrator and Michael Copeland is now the Chairperson of the SRC

### Assignors Corner:



Contact either Brian Paulen (Lexington Assignor), Dennis Cook (Columbia Area Assignor), or Sofia Hernandez (Adult League) to make sure they have your information and that you are ready to work in the Spring/Fall. Also, and this is critical, UPDATE YOUR ARBITER availability weekly. If you know you cannot work on any given weekend or weekday, block the time/day accordingly.

Brian ~ [referees.lexsc@gmail.com](mailto:referees.lexsc@gmail.com) (USSF)

Dennis ~ [denniscook@aol.com](mailto:denniscook@aol.com) (USSF & HS)

Sofia ~ [admin@columbiascsoccer.org](mailto:admin@columbiascsoccer.org) (Adult league for refs 18 years or older)

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## Referee Spotlight

Congratulations to Chris Park and Fernando Barlongo from the Columbia Area (MSOA region) for being picked to go to the National Championship Series and the Presidents Cup.

If you have any interest to go to any of these events in the future, please reach out to MSOA or Marion Shull (ARA)

with your interest so we can get you



Tiago Dos Santos -- Charleston  
Honorio Ojeda-Osorio -- Upstate  
Ezra Hoffman -- Upstate  
Julian Noble -- Charleston  
Chris Chu -- Rock Hill  
Hudson Ramsden -- Rock Hill  
**Chris Park -- Columbia**  
Jonathan Senkier -- Rock Hill

Malinda Moore -- Charleston  
RJ Mack -- Florence  
**Fernando Barlongo -- Columbia**  
Joey Urbanic -- Upstate

### Referee Pay Update:

The SYSA Board has approved a referee pay increase for PMSL/OPEN and National/Challenge leagues effective this Fall. Update your pay chart you hopefully carry with you.

League Level	AGE	Ref	AR1	AR2
Division 2/3 - (PMSL / Open)	U13-14	\$50	\$35	\$35
	U15-16	\$60	\$40	\$40
	U17-19	\$70	\$45	\$45
Division 1 - (National/Challenge)	U13-14	\$60	\$40	\$40
	U15-16	\$70	\$45	\$45
	U17-19	\$80	\$50	\$50



# SC REFEREES

### Fall Referee Clinics:

To start off the season with heavy recruitment, we will be offering up to four “All in one day” training to get new referees in the system and on the pitch. August 9-10 there will be sessions at the SEFL facility in Columbia and August 16-17 there will be sessions at the Barr Road Complex in Lexington. If you have friends, family, or enemies that are interested in refereeing, please send them to <https://screferees.com/> to get registered for the session of their choice.

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## Did you know?!?!



**Q&A**

A goalkeeper easily catches a weak shot and then falls to the ground. The goalkeeper stays there for a few seconds (without being challenged by any opponent) and then stands up to release the ball. What is the referee's decision?

The eight seconds started when the goalkeeper had control of the ball, not when the goalkeeper stood up. If the referee judged that controlling the ball with the hands/arms took longer than the time limit, the opposing team is awarded a corner kick.

While taking a penalty kick, a player kicks the ball with their right foot in such a way that the ball clearly moves, accidentally touches the player's left foot and then goes into the goal. What is the correct decision?

The kick is retaken because the second touch was accidental and occurred immediately after the first touch (as clarified by The IFAB in Circular 31).



**Q&A**



A player from Team A kicks the ball which then touches an opponent (Team B) and is clearly going out of play for a throw-in. While the ball is still on the field of play, very close to the touchline, a coach from Team A stops it in an attempt to help their team quickly restart play.

What is the correct decision?

The coach made contact with the ball while it was still in play but when it was clearly leaving the field, without any intention of unfairly interfering with play. In this case, the referee awards an indirect free kick to Team B at the position where the coach touched the ball. There is no disciplinary sanction, unless the coach has persistently left the technical area, which would be cautioned (yellow card).

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# IFAB 2025-2026 Law Changes

## Law 3 – The Players

- Competitions have the option of implementing the 'Only the captain' guidelines

## Law 5 – The Referee

- Signal to be used by referees to count down the last five seconds of the eight-second restriction on goalkeepers controlling the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s)

## Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play – Dropped ball

- If, when play was stopped, the ball was:
  - inside the penalty area – the ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area
  - outside the penalty area – the ball is dropped for a player of the team that has or would have gained possession if this is clear to the referee; otherwise, it is dropped for a player of the team that last touched it. The ball is dropped at its position when play was stopped

## Law 9 – The Ball in and out of Play

- Indirect free kick and no disciplinary sanction when a team official, substitute, substituted or sent-off player or player who is temporarily off the field of play touches the ball as it is leaving the field of play and there is no intention to interfere unfairly

## Law 11 – Offside

- When the goalkeeper throws the ball, the last point of contact should be used for the purpose of determining an offside position



## Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- A goalkeeper who controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds will be penalised, with a corner kick being awarded to the other team

## Law 16 – The Goal Kick

- Reference to other Laws detailing situations which result in a goal kick

## Law 17 – The Corner Kick

- Reference to other Laws detailing situations which result in a corner kick
- Kick to be taken from the corner area nearest to the goalkeeper's position when penalised

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## Youth Referee Update:

US Soccer is reintroducing the “First Year” referee badge in a the NEW “Green Referee Badge”. The obvious difference is that referees under the age of 18 will be issued these badges up until the turn 18 as a reminder to parents/officials that they are not abuse or approach our young “in training” referees. Older referees should understand and ENFORCE this new initiative.

### NEW FOR 2026 - Green Referee Badge WORN BY OFFICIALS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

The badge is part of the #RespectTheCall campaign – a national initiative to foster a more respectful and supportive environment for young referees. The green badge is a visible reminder to coaches, players, and spectators that these referees are still learning and deserve patience, encouragement, and protection. Our goal is to not only reduce abuse but also create a culture that values growth and mentorship.



As part of our commitment to supporting our refereeing community, we have our email set up for you to send your questions to regarding:

How to get registered to become a referee,

How to get recertified,

Accessing red card reports and where to send them to...etc. etc....

Thank you again for all your hard work!!!!

See you on the pitch,

**MSOA Staff**

Look us up:

Instagram: msoa\_sc

Twitter : @SoccerMidlands

Facebook : MSOA - South Carolina (James Neary)