



Memorandum

October 12, 2005

TO: All Referees in Metro DC - Virginia

FROM: Scott K. Meyer, State Referee Administrator

SUBJECT: Appropriate Matches for Senior Referees

For the past year or so, I have heard complaints from assignors that senior referees (Grade 7 and above) have been or are being told that they should not be working youth matches. I have also heard recently that referees are accepting assignments from assignors and then turning them back later in the week when they receive “better games.” Finally, I have heard many contradicting statements about game priorities. This memorandum addresses each of those issues.

Senior Referees and Youth Matches

As referees advance in grade, they are expected to work the more competitive matches in the state. These include State Cup competition (both youth and adult), adult National Cup competition, matches sanctioned by the Metropolitan DC-Virginia Soccer Association (MDCVSA), and eventually, professional games. However, all senior referees, including our National Referees, have a commitment to support games sanctioned by the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA).

Copied below is an extract from Policy 201 of the State Referee Policy Manual:

1. Each referee certified through the State Referee Program (SRP) of the Metropolitan DC–Virginia Soccer Association, Inc., and the Virginia Youth Soccer Association, Inc., must satisfy the following minimum match requirements each year:

Referee Grade	Annual Amateur Matches	Annual Youth Matches	Total Annual Match Required
Grade 4 and above	16	8	24
Grade 5	16	8	24
Grade 6	8	8	16
Grade 7	0	8	8

2. Amateur matches must be regular league matches in the SRP service area. Amateur Cup matches may not be used to meet the minimum match requirements.
3. Youth matches must be league or tournament matches in the SRP service area. League matches must be 45-minute half matches suitable for assessment. Tournament matches must be U-17 or above and must be at least 40-minute half matches. Where 45-minute half matches are not

available, referees are expected to officiate the highest level of youth matches available in their area of the SRP service area.

4. If no amateur matches are available in the area of the referee in the SRP service area, the referee may substitute youth matches as provided under paragraph 2.

5. A referee may use professional and international matches to satisfy not more than 50 percent of the annual match requirement of the referee.

If any senior referee is told that he or she no longer needs to work youth matches, please correct that person. And let me (or the SYRA, SDI, SDA, or State Assignor Liaison) know. Not only are senior referees required to work both youth and amateur matches, but equally important, all our soccer playing customers – both youth and adult – need their expertise and experience on the field.

Turning Back Assignments for “Better Games”

It is a violation of the referee code of conduct to turn back assignments in order to accept a “better game” *unless* the “better game” is of higher priority and the assignment comes more than 72 hours prior to scheduled match. (The current priority of games is listed in the next section). Consistent with United States Soccer Federation Policy 531-8, the SRA is authorized to downgrade or not re-certify any referee who consistently turns back games that he or she has accepted.

Game Priority

The 2005 edition of the Referee Administrative Handbook lists the following matches as having precedence or priority over all other matches:

1. All FIFA Appointments
2. All CONCACAF Appointments
3. International A Matches
4. Any U. S. National Team Matches
5. Professional Division 1 League Matches (MLS)
6. Foreign Pro Club vs Foreign Pro Club
7. National Cup Finals (all matches)
8. All Regional Cup Finals
9. Other Professional League Matches (A-League, D3 Pro)
10. National Tournaments (Adult and Youth matches –must be 90 minutes in length)
11. Interstate National Cup Competitions (Adult)
12. National Adult Leagues
13. Intrastate National Cup Competitions (Adult)
14. State Cup Competitions (Adult and Youth matches – must be 90 minutes in length)

No other match (with the exception of the above) has appointment priority or precedence over any other match within the state.

With the exception of National Referees and National Candidates, the only games that have priority for most of our senior referees are the last five (National Tournaments, Interstate National Cup Competitions, National Adult Leagues, Intrastate National Cup Competitions, and State Cup competitions).

The Referee Administrative Handbook goes on to say, “The priority policy does not

apply within 72 hours of the scheduled match time unless an emergency situation exists.”

What all this means is this: If a referee has accepted an assignment and then is asked to referee a game that has higher priority *and* that request comes more than 72 hours before the other scheduled match to which he or she is assigned, then that referee is expected to take the higher assigned match. The referee should notify the assignor who assigned the original match. For example, assume that a referee has accepted assignments to work a set of youth or adult games the following Saturday. On Tuesday of the week before, the referee is asked to work a State Cup competition or a National Cup competition that same Saturday. The referee should accept the State Cup or National Cup game and contact the assignor who assigned the original games. If the request comes in on Thursday (within 72 hours of the games on Saturday), then the referee must keep the original assignment *unless* an emergency exists, in such case, I would hope that the two assignors would communicate and resolve the problem as best as possible.

As stated in the previous section, turning back games to accept any other type of assignment is a violation of the Referee Code of Conduct and may result in the referee being downgraded when the referee next applies to be re-certified.