



**Western New York State Referee Association, Inc.**  
**State Referee Committee**  
**Member of the United States Soccer Federation, Inc.**



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I would like to introduce myself. I am Curt Hamlin and I have been the State Referee Administrator now for 4 years. As I look over where we have been in the past and the goals of NYSWYSA and USSF for the future, it became increasingly obvious that not much can be done without the assistance of the clubs/leagues/facilities, which are affiliated with USSF through NYSWYSA.

The numbers of youth involved in the great sport of soccer, which we all love, has been on an increase now for quite a few years. The numbers of referees involved has been rather steady...which means our coverage is becoming increasingly more difficult every year that goes by.

According to USSF Policy, in a perfect world, every game would be covered by three USSF Referees and assigned by only USSF Assignors. USSF realizes this is not a reality and therefore has relaxed the rules as it pertains to recreational clubs/leagues by stating that it is a desire to use USSF Assignors...but it is not required. It is also not a reality at this point with the number USSF Referees we have currently just are not enough to cover every single game with three referees in all areas around the state. For the majority of games across WNY this is a reality at the "travel" level, but almost unanimously it is not a reality when it comes to the recreational game.

I believe that parts of this problem (and the solution) lie in that clubs/leagues are not aware of the opportunities that the WNY referee association offers. There will be an USSF Assignors clinic offered some time early in 2007 so that they are in place for the upcoming season. You may contact the State Coordinator of Assignors listed to the left if your organization is interested in taking advantage of this.

There are also entry-level clinics being set up across the state as we speak. I encourage you to identify those people who would make good referees to check out these various clinics. The list of clinics can be found on our website [www.wnyreferee.org](http://www.wnyreferee.org) and is updated on a regular basis as clinics are added. These clinics are for either the entry-level referee (travel) or the recreational level referee.

I know that not everyone wants to take a "referee" course (8 hours for a recreational referee and 16 hours for a "travel" referee) and get out on the field...but there is almost always a person, or a set of people, that each team relies on to be the "flag" person for the referee while their sons/daughters are playing. If teams have individuals, whom they can identify, then we are going to start offering an Assistant Referee course starting in 2007.

The course will only take approximately 4 hours and it will help these people be more aware of their responsibilities, helps them understand the game better and will educate them so that they are a bigger help to the referees. This will allow the referees to concentrate more on the game and less on the responsibilities, which can be covered by trained Assistant Referees.

The biggest concern that clubs/leagues have in using USSF referees is the increased cost to the club/league. With the introduction of the Assistant Referee grade of people, this cost is basically nil. The club does not HAVE to pay these people (even though you may if you wish), they can remain volunteers assisting with their child's team just like they are now. The club/league may want to pick up the fee for the one-time training clinic and the annual registration fee (\$15) for these people which always helps in finding volunteers.

The same is true for those recreational clubs, which choose to implement the recreational referee program. The club/league can continue to use the people they currently have...but they will now be USSF certified! The club can choose to defray the initial cost of the one-time training clinic, modified uniform and the annual registration fee (\$20). Since you are using the same people that you have always used, you may even pay them the same fee which you have been paying them.

With getting all assignors trained and certified with USSF. Either using three "regular" referees or one referee along with two trained Assistant Referees...then NYSWYSA and the WNY referee association are one step closer to this "perfect world" situation which USSF informs us that we have to strive for.

At this point I'm asking that everyone fill out the enclosed questionnaire at their earliest convenience and return it in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. We need the information as soon as possible to make sure we have enough time to implement this project properly. This will give NYSWYSA and the WNY referee association a good idea of where we are so that plans can be made as to where we need to go from here. Please be sure to fill in #6 below to bring up any questions/concerns/comments you may have. If anything comes up in the future, you may feel free in contacting any of the executive referee team that you find on the letterhead. We are here to service your club/league/facility and we need to have your input as to how best to do that now, and in the future.

Sincerely,

Curt Hamlin, SRA

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