

**R. Scott Ryder**

**President**

**West Michigan Soccer Referees Association**

To All Members of WMSRA:

This open letter to our membership is to clear up any misunderstandings that may be circulating as to what is required to be a "Member in Good Standing" with the association and what it means for each of us. But before I go into the details let me start by saying that one of the challenges that WMSRA faces is that we serve several masters. First and foremost we serve our membership, and in doing so we offer opportunities to increase our referee knowledge and competency, test our fitness levels and be registered to officiate. The fellowship and friendships that the association offers can also never be taken for granted. However we also serve the leagues that use us, and those leagues do not always mesh in their priorities and certainly not in their scheduling, just ask Wayne Wilkinson!

The MHSAA has determined that in order to be eligible for high school tournament matches, an official must be a member in good standing of an approved association. WMSRA is such an association, but with that designation comes the responsibility to offer at least 5 hours of instruction each year. USSF, or USA Soccer, also recognizes us as an approved association and with that recognition comes the responsibility to test for fitness, all those referees grade 7 and above and any other official that wants more challenging matches. We also have a requirement to provide training and referee education for USSF, as well as testing and registration. It should be noted that the MHSAA also requires a fitness test, and we provide testing for both USSF and MHSAA.

What this all means is that WMSRA has decided, in order to fulfill our responsibilities to our membership and those leagues and players that we serve, that to be eligible to receive assignments as a member of WMSRA a member must attend at least 50% of the offered trainings. It is of utmost importance to the credibility and continued existence of our association that the referees we put on the field are fit and know the laws of the game.

Right now there are approximately 60 members of our association who, for whatever reason, have not participated in any of the offered trainings since the annual meeting last November. There is another training coming up on March 16 at Portage Northern High School. There will be at least 2 more training sessions after that for a total of 5 for the year. Remember in order to receive matches you have to attend 50% which would be the one on the 16th to start. As much as we need all available referees, the Board

has decided to enforce this rule. If you don't participate in the required trainings you **WILL NOT** be assigned games.

I look forward to a great spring season and hope to see all of our members on the pitch!

Best wishes for good refereeing,

R. Scott Ryder, President

Here are the dates for the remainder of the meetings. All meeting times and locations will be posted on the Arbiter WMSRA group.

March 16, 2010 – 6:30 pm at Portage Northern High School

August 4, 2010 – Time and location TBD

November 7, 2010 – KVCC time TBD