

Meeting summary for USA Virtual Ref Assignor Meeting (07/14/2024)

Quick recap

The team discussed the potential use of Got Sport's platform to improve communication and efficiency in the soccer referee assignment process, with a focus on integration with leagues and standardizing procedures. They also addressed concerns about the reliability of referee assignments, the need for improved payment processes, and the organization of meetings with referees to review procedures. Lastly, they deliberated on the challenges of managing game cancellations and scheduling issues, the issue of water breaks during games, and a conflict of interest concerning the club president acting as a referee for his own team.

Next steps

- Here are the key action items from the meeting:
 - Sheri to follow up with Rick from GotSport regarding the ability for assignors to view uploaded game cards and reports.
 - Sheri to send out a request to center assignors to confirm their current banking information for payments.
 - Carlos to look into the "Bill" app as a potential payment system for assignors.
 - Sheri to create a system for acknowledging receipt of game reports emailed by referees.
 - Alan to bring up at the next board meeting the possibility of center assignors handling U9 and U10 games.
 - Alan to discuss at the next board meeting guidelines for water breaks during hot weather games.
 - Sheri to send out a follow-up email to confirm correct phone numbers for text alerts about field closures.
 - Center assignors to hold meetings with their referees to review USA League rules and procedures before the season starts.
 - Sheri to update the website with field closure information during inclement weather.
 - Alan to address at the next board meeting the issue of potential conflicts of interest with club-affiliated referees.
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Summary

USA League Admin 2 Karen's Granddaughter's Emergency and Got Sport Representation

Sheri confirmed Karen had a medical emergency with her granddaughter, though details were unknown. They discussed Covid-19 cases potentially rising again. Jason from Florida Soccer Referees and Becca from Celtic introduced themselves for the meeting. Allan hoped the Got Sport representative would attend to address Ed's question about the software used by most local assigners.

Consolidating Soccer Game Management Websites

Ed raised concerns about the use of multiple websites for managing soccer games, suggesting that it could lead to confusion and double booking of referees. Sheri clarified that no decision had been made to make a specific website mandatory, but it was an option to consider. Allan agreed to discuss this further with Rick from Got Sport. Sheri also welcomed Rick to present, with the aim of keeping the discussion short and allowing time for questions. Rick acknowledged the discussion points and emphasized the importance of maintaining a conversational approach to the presentation.

Improving Soccer Referee Assignment Process With GotSport

Rick, a former CEO of the Arizona Soccer Association and now a representative of GotSport, discussed the company's efforts to improve communication and efficiency in the soccer referee assignment process. He highlighted how GotSport's platform integrates with leagues, providing them with oversight into referee assignments and allowing them to manage and control assignments more effectively. Rick also demonstrated how the platform streamlines communication, eliminating the need for multiple emails and notifications, and helps to ensure that all parties are informed of any changes or cancellations. This, he argued, not only improves efficiency but also reduces the risk of misunderstandings or disputes over referee fees.

New Communication Capabilities and Referee Tracking

Rick introduced new communication capabilities such as email and text messaging, and explained the limitations of each platform. There was a discussion about referee assignment and tracking, with Rick detailing the functionality of the system and its integration with the US Soccer Learning Center. The team also explored the background check procedures used by the Florida State Referee Committee, and Rick suggested that standardizing the process across the board could assist with integration. Lastly, Rick discussed the unique referee rating systems and tracking features of the God's Sport platform used by the Indiana Soccer Referee Committee.

Efficient Referee Profiling and Assignment Process

Rick outlined the most efficient methods for loading referee profiles and assigning referees to matches using a registration program, while also detailing the functionalities of the referee assignment system. He demonstrated how to view upcoming matches, receive notifications, and share event URLs for referees to sign up directly. He further explained the process of assigning referees to matches, managing assignments, and how to use the notify button to inform referees of their assignments. Rick concluded by stating that while assignments can be made on a mobile device, the majority of the assignment process is done on a desktop.

Gotports Assigning Platform and Referees

Rick discussed the benefits of the Gotports assigning platform, its usage in various states and leagues, and the process of assigning and paying referees through the platform. Sheri asked about assignment visibility and partnership status, which Rick agreed to follow up on. Ed raised concerns about the reliability of referee assignments in Gotport, while Rick proposed utilizing Gotports for supplementary reports and reducing unnecessary communication. The U.S.A. League assigns centers, and Becca confirmed her responsibility for ARs for Celtic.

Addressing Communication and Staff Changes

Sheri and Rick addressed communication issues, with Rick agreeing to respond to Sheri's emails in the future. Carlos shared feedback from a previous meeting with some referees, urging team members to share their ideas with Sheri, Carlos, and Allan for decision-making. Allan announced staff changes, including Sheri's continued role as admin one and the addition of Karen Bingham as admin two. Sheri also announced the continuation of the partnership with several experienced assigners for 2023 and reminded the team about the assigner contract, requesting its return. Ed confirmed his intention to send his contract back within the week.

Improving Payment Processes and Accessibility

Sheri confirmed that the team would continue with the bank transfer method for the time being, and Tony agreed to resend the necessary banking information by the end of the month. The team discussed the need for improved payment processes, with a focus on prompt payment and efficient processing. They agreed to implement a new system to inform team members when their payments were received and considered using a billing app called Bill App for submitting invoices and payments. The team also recognized the need for accessibility in payment methods and committed to reviewing their own internal processes for immediate bill payment.

Center Assigners, Referees, and Game Reports

Sheri emphasized the importance of center assigners organizing meetings with referees to review procedures and U.S.A. League rules before the upcoming season. She also addressed concerns raised by Tony regarding the accessibility of referees' game reports

and the process of reporting injuries and red cards. The team agreed to inform all coaches about the process of updating the game card and the deadline for adding players. Sheri also stressed the importance of submitting the supplemental report within 48 hours and the process of uploading these reports to Got Sport.

Addressing Scheduling Challenges and Communication

Sheri, Tony, and James discussed the challenges they were facing with the current system of managing and communicating game cancellations and other scheduling issues. Tony raised concerns about the Got Sport website notifying referees about cancelled games, whereas Ed suggested implementing a good field scheduler and improving communication through separate emails to assigners about game changes. Sheri agreed with Tony's proposal and suggested that the board might need to follow up on this issue. They also agreed to use a text alert system in addition to email notifications to ensure timely information dissemination, and to mentor and support referees. Lastly, Sheri and Allan agreed to address the issue of assigning referees for U9 and U10 games in an upcoming board meeting.

Water Breaks, Substitutions, and Conflict

The team discussed the issue of water breaks during games, agreeing that each team should be allowed to substitute during a stoppage, not just the team in possession. They also expressed concern about the duration of water breaks, with Allan suggesting that referees should tighten up the time spent on these breaks. The team also addressed a conflict of interest issue concerning the club president acting as a referee for his own team. They decided to investigate this matter further at a board meeting.

All agenda topics covered.