

NOTES from the
USA JUDO REFEREE COMMISSION
WINTER 2012 MEETING

Mojave Room – Chaparral Hotel & Suites Conference Center
SCOTTSDALE, AZ
January 20-22, 2012

Present: Russ Scherer (Chair); Joon Chi; Roy Englert; Hector Estevez; Kei Narimatsu;
Ralph Palmer – Chairman's Assistant (recording).

Absent: Frank Morales; Tom Seabasty; Grace Jividen; John Serbin.

Guests: Gary Berliner (for a portion of the Friday meeting)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm in the Mojave Room of the Chaparral Conference Center. The Meeting recessed at 11pm on 1/20 and reconvened at 5:30 on 1/21; there was a break for dinner and the meeting reconvened at 9:30pm on concluding at 11pm 1/21.

Additional Chairman Assistant Designated and Transition Explained

Ralph Palmer was introduced as new assistant to the Chairman, with a couple of years of planned mentoring from Bill Graves, and continued partnering with Ralph to transition duties. R. Palmer will start receiving mail correspondence for the commission going forward.

Discussion occurred on appropriate award for Bill Graves for his many years of service. It will be presented at Senior Nationals.

Honorary A Licenses Awarded

It was reported that honorary A licenses were given by the IJF to Jim Cogan and Jim Takemori and each were presented their awards at local events. Arrangements have been made to recognize this honor at the Senior Nationals and the referee dinner will be dedicated to their accomplishment.

Tournament and Travel Reporting Requirements and Recent Problems:

R. Scherer indicated that both international and national events are not properly being reported; International event reports have not been received from some referees who are traveling. Reports are required from each referee who travels internationally, unless a “group report” is reviewed by all and submitted on behalf of the group.

Event Reports (the responsibility of the Chief Referee) have not been received for specific events by Bill and Referee evaluation information was lost/not reported.

Commission Approved Rule Enforcement Problems

Chief Referees are not universally following Referee Commission policies and enforcing the rules. Example: using/allowing video tapes that are not part of the CARE system for arbitration/jury review. The RC policy is that only the CARE system (under the direct control of the jury) is to be used for review. Another example is the enforcement of gi size and color requirements in IJF competition categories. Chief Referees are responsible for enforcing Commission approved policies.

Adoption of “No matside coaching except between matte and hajime” IJF Rule

The Referee Commission recommended adoption by USA Judo (for all domestic and international events) of the “no mat side coaching except at matte” rule implemented by IJF

It was stated that our athletes and coaches should abide by IJF rule or when we go to international events USA will be penalized because our coaches are not used to the rule (and will infringe/violate rule). Our coaches must be prepared by implementation.

[NOTE: Subsequent to the RC meeting, this recommendation was forwarded to the Executive Director and we were notified that USA Judo will not be implementing this rule change.]

Commission Action - all IJF rules to be implemented

It was proposed and approved to recommend to USA Judo for adoption:

That US Referee Commission implement, at the appropriate levels, all IJF rules when they are implemented by the IJF, with exceptions as follows for non IJF athletes: white gi with blue belt allowed; match time adjustments; no kansetsu waza and/or no shimewaza for appropriate age groups (under 17 and under 13, respectively); The application of common sense adjustments may be considered as exceptions when appropriate, for non IJF competitors only.

Motion has carried unanimously

Discussion continued on interpretation of approved motion. There should be some leeway for common sense interpretations.

It was stated that there is a need to fully implement gi sizing rules. If an athlete steps onto the contest area wearing a gi that does not meet the size requirements – hansokumake should be awarded. This is not currently being implemented uniformly around the country. Referees (off the mat) are encouraged to suggest to players with obviously non-compliant gi's that the player (with the help of their coach) should check their gi prior to stepping onto the competition area, but the responsibility remains with the player and coach.

The Chairman was directed to request a copy of the current IJF rules with all current modifications (as applied at IJF level events) from the PJC. The issue of the US Referee Commission allowing/recommending the use of specific mouth guards (which conflicts with IJF and PJC rules) is to be further investigated.

Later, in the continued meeting, reconsideration of this motion (to routinely adopt all IJF rule changes) was requested by R. Englert because there may be several other exceptions or unintended consequences to be considered. This reconsideration was voted down. The new policy will be implemented.

Rules will not change until a specific direction from the Chairman to the referees is announced and written notification occurs. Specific rules mentioned; Mat side coaching, White Competitor on Right (aka), line (tape) removal for competitors position on mat.

[NOTE: Subsequent to the RC meeting, the recommendations to adopt “white player to the right of the referee” and elimination of the “blue and white marker tapes” were forwarded to the Executive Director and we were notified that USA Judo will implement this rule change immediately.]

Review of Conference Presentation Materials

A review of the Workshop/Training Power Point outline and discussion occurred of the intent/purpose of the outline topics.

A review of the IJF Rule Interpretation Power Point outline was discussed, clarified and modifications of interpretations occurred. It was agreed that the Power Point will be presented as overhead projection only for discussion at the conference and reworded for written distribution after the conference.

Evaluation Events and International Travel

Executive Session: Discussion of specific referees and selection policies were discussed.

Miki Takemori will be sent to test for A license in Hungary.

Discussion: Should inactive A referees (many years of not refereeing or acting as jury at the national level) be assigned as Chief Referee or as an evaluator? The consensus of the Commission is that this should be avoided when possible.

Role of Commission in Developing Referees at Different Levels

The Commission discussed their role in developing international referees. Some feel that the focus should be on national and developing referees to the A level. After A level is achieved, more of the responsibility belongs to the IJF and PJC. The Commission must encourage and develop referees at all levels, including an Olympic level referee every four years. Nominal resources are available to financially support this development. Discussion continued about resources and the approach to developing an Olympic referee for 2016.

How are funds to be allocated that the Commission has? To top A level development? To Evaluator Travel? To development of new A's? There was no conclusion.

Annual Referee Ranking

Discussion of Referee Rankings for 2012. Commission member feedback occurred and new levels determined.

“Designated referees” for national championships was discussed. It will be attempted this year. All referees at the appropriate level may attend but most resources will be utilized for the “designated referees”

Referee ranking recommendations have been completed and notification letters need to be sent out.

Discussion of identified B and C level referees and readiness for testing and a review of ratings occurred. Rating tracking/readiness criteria was also discussed. It was mentioned that the number of events annually worked should be stressed more than it has recently.

Under Age Referee Development

Discussion of the standards for referees below the national level is not what commission is currently responsible for. Junior referees and how they are certified by state organizations and the liability issues and limitations on their participation was discussed. There are not any national standards. No age or competency requirements, state organizations are doing the certifying. Does US Ref Commission need to develop standards?

Commission Action: Guidelines for Underage Referees

Commission Recommendations only (guidelines) to Local and Regional referee certifying bodies:

1. Local Ref -age minimum 14,
2. Regional Ref- age minimum 16,
3. Underage referees should only referee age appropriate groups (below their own age/ rank level).
4. Underage referees should be accompanied on the mat by appropriate qualified (N level minimum) referee teammates and qualified Jury oversight.

Approved by all members present

Approval of Light Weight Summer Uniform

Discussion of light weight, optional summer uniform shirt developed by US Ref Commission as a fund raiser (sale to referees). An example was presented. The development of referee jackets for sale was discussed. Also discussed was the use of an online store and what style of shirt would be offered.

Motion to approve light weight summer uniform shirt (multicolor sample presented) available for sale.- must be different from anything USA Judo sells, color design to be decided later. **Approved**

[Note: The use of the optional summer uniform would be at the discretion of the Chief Referee at any given event. If the optional uniform is selected, ALL referees must wear the same style shirt. It is important to remember that all referees must wear the same uniform – either the traditional jacket and tie or if designated by the Chief Referee, the special sports shirt.]

Travel Requests/Planning

PJC events that we need to recommend/send referees:

Pan America Cup Buenos Aires-March- RC may be able to recommend referees (need to confirm with PJC).

Pan American Championships - April PJC will select 2; RC may be able to recommend 2 additional refs

Commission will send emails to members to decide/vote on recommendations.

Selection of Chief Referees

Gary Berliner was selected for 2012 Senior Nationals and Joon Chi for 2012 US Senior Open

Discussion of Policy on Referee selection for weigh-ins at Senior Nationals

Should evaluators supervise weigh-ins? It was agreed that the Chief Referee will decide and assign referees at N level or above.

Evaluators Needed

Need 2 evaluators for Scholastics, Russ Scherer will call and solicit volunteers from A's in the region.

Unrated International Event Participation

A request from Charles Wall, PJC Regional Referee, was received to officiate at a minor junior international tournament in St Petersburg, Russia. The Commission approved permission to officiate.

A request to attend the World Masters Veterans Tournament (Veterans Competition) has been requested by several referees; Referees for this event are now selected by IJF per Joon Chi

Some other masters events are prohibited by IJF from A or B Level referees attending. RC should exercise caution approving referees to those events.

Joon Chi identified a Korean junior sports event to which he is interested in taking junior athletes and referees (N and C). This is not an IJF rated event. RC members present thought this was ok.

New Business

Consider developing a travel reimbursement policy for sending high level A referees to Europe, this was tabled for full commission review later.

Meeting adjourned at 11pm 1/21/12

Prepared by Ralph Palmer

Approved by Russ Scherer