

The Center of the Ring

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Seasons greetings and welcome to the third and final installment of the USA Taekwondo Referee Development Program e-Newsletter. Since this will be the last e-Newsletter delivered for the 2008 calendar year, we would like to take this opportunity to update our referee corps on current events since the last e-Newsletter and provide a glimpse of what lies ahead in the year to come...

To bring our referees up to speed since the Beijing Olympic Games, Mr. Leon Preston (2008 Olympic Referee) has been appointed to serve as one of the Vice-Chairs of the World Taekwondo Federation Referee Committee. Mr. Preston's new role will focus on referee education and training, and is seen by many as a major step forward in the development and training of referees around the world. The appointment of Mr. Preston indicates that our referee corps is learning and receiving training from a very knowledgeable and experienced team of world class referees.

With the strong growth of poomse competition and the standardization of poomse becoming prevalent on the world stage, it was deemed essential that poomse competitors in the U.S. be brought more in-line with what the rest of the world is doing. As a result, USAT Referee Co-Chairs Mr. Leon Preston and Mr. John Holloway have appointed Ms. Vicky Serbin to serve as the poomse coordinator for USAT. Ms. Serbin will be responsible for the development of referees in poomse. Ms. Serbin was one of the first USAT referees to become a WTF-certified International Poomse Referee. Poomse development will focus on the internationally-accepted standards for performance. By training referees to adjudicate poomse according to the international standards, we will be able to apply the rules more effectively which will, in turn, help our players understand the game better and develop their skills to be more competitive on the international stage.

As we enter the holiday season and draw near the end of what has been a memorable and exciting year, we are eager to welcome the wonderful opportunities that await our referees next year! Although this is a slow period of time in terms of referee activity for the USAT, the RDP is keeping busy to find the best ways to develop the referees in our pipeline. The RDP plans to schedule a number of programs to achieve this goal through Referee Instructor Training seminars, a Referee Development Camp, and Poomse Training seminars in 2009. Referees should expect to see poomse certification seminars to be conducted at USAT events. Once the dates and locations of these events have been finalized, they will be posted right here, in the referee section of the USAT website. The RDP is also expanding into the New Year by offering poomse certification at the grassroots level. All of the programs that are being refined or initiated next year are to make the referees in the U.S. the best referees in the world!

In conclusion, we would like to thank our referee corps for their time and support and wish them all a happy and healthy holidays! We look forward to working with you again next year!