

Michael Ross

Candidate for Vice-Chair of Rules and Examinations

Dear Fellow Referees,

I am running for Vice-Chair of Rules and Examinations because I believe our rules should be a bridge to better fencing and results for our athletes. I am committed to ensuring that our athletes and cadre are supported by a system that is transparent, modern, and fair.



Experience and Dedication

For the last 25 years, I have lived the challenges experienced by referees at tournaments ranging from the local to Grand Prix level. As a Certified Referee Instructor, Observer, and long-time advocate for referee rights, I approach every discussion with empathy and respect. My fellow referees are more than just colleagues; you are my community. If elected, I will work with the other Vice-Chairs.

My Priorities

- **Labor Advocacy:** We must be compensated correctly for our work and protected from being overworked. Having served on the Ombudsman committee for nearly a decade, I have seen firsthand how policy changes impact our lives as referees. I will advocate for a modernized, data-driven approach to track referee hours and ensure healthy working conditions.
- **Transparent Communication:** Rules should not be a "mystery box" opened only at the start-of-season meeting. I plan to re-establish dedicated communication channels to provide quarterly updates on FIE and domestic interpretations. By working directly with our international referees, I will translate verbal instructions from World Cups into clear, actionable guidance for our grassroots and national development programs. My goal is a "no-surprises" environment where referees, coaches, and fencers are all on the same page.
- **Modernized Examinations:** Our examinations for both able-bodied and para-fencing must align with FIE best practices. By integrating video, still images, and practical phrasing into the exams, we can provide new referees with a stronger foundation before they ever call their first "On Guard."

I welcome your feedback and questions. Please feel free to reach out to me at foilreferee@gmail.com, and I will respond as soon as possible. I would be honored to have your vote and the opportunity to serve our community.