

# The Bronx-Manhattan Division

## SPORTS UNITED BORO-WIDE OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

Young people in the Black and Spanish speaking communities of New York, such as Harlem, the South Bronx, and Bedford-Stuyvesant, depend on and especially appreciate, their neighborhood facilities for sports and recreation. There, they meet with friends, and participate in team and individual sports and other activities.

In many cases, private citizens and non-profit organizations work hand-in-hand with city-supported agencies to provide the personnel and facilities for the young people. And often, a private organization will provide services unavailable from any other source. Such was the case with the **Bronx-Manhattan Sports United Boro-Wide Officials' Association (SUBOA)**.

Nine years ago, in 1966, eight men, Billy Clarke, Rozier Hansborough, Rudolph Mims, John Purvis, Richard Reed, Victor Jeffers, James Murray, and Robert Ware, recognized the great interest young city people have in basketball. At the same time, they realized that there was no official organization to provide skilled officials referees and guidance for school-aged players, especially in Harlem the South Bronx.

Inspired by Rozier Hansborough, who was one of the first two Blacks admitted into the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials organization. These dedicated men developed the ways and means of organizing an official basketball referee program. To aid the referees entered the program, Hansborough outlined the basic techniques concepts of basketball officiating.

Just about one year later, on September 23, 1967, the non-profit Broman Officials' Association was formally organized, with the eight original men as founding members. Word of the organization's existence spread, and within five months, twelve new members were accepted into Broman. By the time the Spring 1969 basketball season ended, Broman's membership had grown to thirty-three.

That Autumn, Broman's executive body met with the Brooklyn Chapter of Sports United Brooklyn Officials' Association, with the intention of uniting the efforts and resources of the two organizations. As a result of this merger, Broman became the Bronx-Manhattan Division of the group, now called "Sports United Boro-Wide Officials' Association" (SUBOA). Three years later, on October 7, 1971, the Broman Officials' Association became a chartered organization in the state of New York. By becoming a chartered group, Broman was officially recognized as a serious, organized corporation and not just "a bunch of guys" interested in basketball. That credibility was important to Broman's continuing success.

Broman's impressive growth, due to the influx and enthusiasm of young candidates, led to the need for a training school in basketball officiating and rule interpretation. This is an intensive ten-week program in which the trainees meet for two and a half hours every week to acquire the knowledge and experience needed to pass the rigorous written and floor examinations required for membership in the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials (I.A.A.B.O). Through the efforts of John Purvis, current Broman president, who had more than twenty years' experience in basketball playing, coaching and officiating, many young officials have acquired the in-depth knowledge of techniques and rules necessary for becoming skilled basketball referees.

Then, Broman is in its ninth year of operation. **Today SUBOA is in its 50<sup>th</sup> year.** Its purpose is, and always has been, twofold. First, to provide a pool of skilled basketball referees for the many private and city agencies and community organizations where young people are involved in sports and recreation programs. For example, Broman serves the basketball programs and tournaments of the Holcombe Rucker Community League, Inc., the Boys' Athletic League, Phipps PAL, the South Bronx Community Corp., and the City-Wide Athletic Association. Broman's second purpose is to prepare young Black and Hispanic men graduating from high school and college for careers in basketball officiating.

Many of Broman's members have been recognized for their competence in the New York City Public School Athletic League and in the college and professional ranks of basketball officiating. Today, Broman boasts members in the National Basketball Association (NBA) and various Collegiate Basketball Officials' Associations.

At the Community level Broman referees frequently donate their time free charge or at the most, for a minimal fee. They are in it because they love the sport, and they want to help young men develop their potential both as athletes and human beings